

Maria A. Bollettino
Department of History
Application for CELTSS Travel Funds, October 2016

I have been invited to offer the comment for a panel on “Cities, Sovereignties, and Religious Orders in the Study of Slavery” at a conference on “Region and Nation in American Histories of Race and Slavery,” which will take place in Mount Vernon, Virginia on October 6-9, 2016. The conference is co-sponsored by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon. The conference is timed to coincide with the opening of the first major exhibition interpreting slavery at George Washington’s Mount Vernon.

This conference is the perfect opportunity to become acquainted with the cutting edge of historical research in my field and to forge connections with other scholars of race and slavery. I incorporate this new knowledge into my courses on early American history and the history of slavery and abolition at Framingham State. Learning about the work of other scholars in my field will prove essential as I revise the drafts of three articles and my book manuscript for publication. I will also have the opportunity to have a face-to-face conversation with Simon Newman of the University of Glasgow, with whom I am co-authoring an article. CELTSS funding would provide me with the resources necessary to attend this important conference, where I will make important scholarly and professional contacts and be exposed to ideas that will help me rethink both my research and my teaching. In short, CELTSS funding will facilitate my development as both a scholar and a teacher at Framingham State.

The composition of my panel at the conference, which is scheduled to take place on Saturday, October 8, is below and may also be accessed at <http://oieahc.wm.edu/conferences/mtvernon/saturday.html>:

2:30-4:30

Session 7: Cities, Sovereignties, and Religious Orders in the Study of Slavery

Chair: Scott Casper, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Jared Hardesty, Western Washington University, “A Slave Society, Society with Slaves, or Something Else?: Atlantic Slavery in Eighteenth-Century Boston”

Tessa Murphy, University of Chicago, “Laboring ‘beyond the line’: Slavery in the Neutral Islands of the Southern Caribbean c. 1700-1762”

Steve Lenik, St. Mary’s College of Maryland, “The Jesuits and Plantation Slavery Beyond the Region: Comparing Maryland and Martinique”

Comment: Maria Bollettino, Framingham State University

The following text is copied from an email I received from Dr. James Sidbury of Rice University, one of the organizers of the conference:

Dear Lissa,

Greetings. On behalf of the program committee, I am writing with news at long last regarding “Region and Nation in American Histories of Race and Slavery.” We received a number of very strong proposals for full panels as well as individual papers and ever since the committee has been deliberating on how best to balance themes and topics. This has been especially difficult because after some debate the committee decided to schedule only one panel per time slot so that all the attendees will share the same experience. And so while we read your panel proposal on runaways from slavery with interest, I am afraid we decided we had to cover other bases in the limited time available. We do hope though that you will participate in the conference by providing a comment on another panel.

The title of the panel is “Cities, Sovereignties, and Religious Orders: Alternative Approaches to Region and the Study of Slavery.” Scholars and papers on that panel include Jared Hardesty (“A Slave Society, Society with Slaves, or Something Else?: Atlantic Slavery in Eighteenth-Century Boston”), Tessa Murphy (“Laboring `beyond the line’: Slavery in the Neutral Islands of the Southern Caribbean c. 1700-1762”) and Steve Lenik (“The Jesuits and Plantation Slavery Beyond the Region: Comparing Maryland and Martinique”). The panel is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 8. (By the way, we are just now about to send out acceptances so none of the panelists have heard the news yet. We would appreciate it if you did not mention it to them just yet.)

Would you be willing to serve as Commentator? The OI is happy to pay for your lodging. We are assuming your travel expenses will be minimal since you live in the area but if for reason you don’t think they will be our hope is that Framingham State might help with travel expenses but if that is not the case then we are happy to talk to you about those as well.

We’re asking people to let us know whether they can participate by May 31. I am sure you have a number of balls in the air though so if you need more time just let me know. Once we have firm commitments from everyone we will circulate a full draft of the program and provide a Dropbox link where panelists can upload (substantive) two-page abstracts of their papers and copies of their resumes.

Thanks for considering this request. I very much hope you can join us!

Warm regards,
Jim

Day in May Title and Abstract

“Smaller is Better: The Benefits of Participating in Thematic and/or Regional Conferences”

In this presentation, I will reflect on my experience providing the comment for a panel at a conference on “Region and Nation in American Histories of Slavery” in October 2016 to examine the benefits of participating in smaller, more focused conferences. At such conferences, one may learn about the cutting edge of historical scholarship in one’s particular field of study

and forge connections with scholars who are concerned with questions and topics similar to one's own. At such conferences, conversations that begin during particular panels continue over meals and often from one day to the next, allowing for a level of discussion often impossible to achieve at larger meetings. Such conversations enrich one's current work and often lay the groundwork for future work as well.

Budget:

Flight: \$316.20

Ground transportation (4 taxi rides at \$60 per ride): \$240

Hotel: covered by the conference organizers

Food: $\$32.50 \times 1 \text{ day} + \$40 \times 3 \text{ days} = \152.50

Total: \$708.70

Subtract \$400 departmental funds

Total requested from CELTSS: \$308.70