

CREST Residential Fellowship Application Cover Sheet
Academic Year 2010-2011

Name Prof. Bridgett Williams-Searle
Rank Associate Professor of History
Department HISTORY/POLITICAL SCIENCE
Campus address 8 Moran Hall
Campus phone [REDACTED] Home phone [REDACTED]
Email address [REDACTED]
Previous CREST Residential Fellow? Y If yes, give year 2006-2007
Title of Research Project "A Nation of Villains: Caribbean Pirates
as an 18th century nation-stateless"

Application materials:

- One copy of proposal narrative of roughly 1,500 words with cover sheet attached. Proposals should describe the project clearly and concisely for a multidisciplinary evaluation panel and address its relevance to current directions of research in the field. Please double-space proposals and use a 12-point type.
- One copy of bibliography not to exceed one page.
- One copy of *curriculum vitae*

Note to department heads:

- Residential Fellows will be released from one course during the fellowship year.
- This semester will tentatively be Fall 2010 or Spring 2011 (please circle one)

Department Head signature Risa Faussette (KAA)
Printed Risa Faussette (Keith A. Hayes)

If appointed in two departments:

Additional Department Head signature _____
Printed _____
Signature of Applicant _____

Applications must be received by Monday, February 1, 2010

Please mail to:

Dr. John Williams-Searle, Director
Center for Citizenship, Race, and Ethnicity Studies (CREST)
The College of Saint Rose
432 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12203-1490

A Nation of Villains: Caribbean Pirates as a 18th Century Nation-Stateless

Project Author: Professor Bridgett Williams-Searle, History

Project Objectives:

My project examines the biographies, behaviors, and political philosophies of five thousand Caribbean pirates operating in the Atlantic littoral between 1680-1724 as a means of exploring the ways in which the early modern stateless operated in counterpoint to the evolving early modern capitalist state. In using these “villains of all nations” as a case study, I seek to reposition pirates as national actors and in doing so, refine the category “nation” as a theoretical and historical concept. The CREST fellowship will provide the time and funds necessary to conduct such research.

Conceptual, historical, and methodological framework

Piracy has fascinated English-language authors since the 18th century. Thanks to the 2007 publication of a comprehensive four-volume set of primary sources generated by captives, merchants, bureaucrats, jurists, biographers, and pirates themselves, one can recover the actions and words of the early modern low-born, people criminal by definition – the very persons least likely to make a dent in the political history of the state. By taking a hard look at their lives and behaviors on- and off-ship, their methods of organization, their economic practices, and their political utterances, I suggest that it will be possible to discover their understanding of pirates as a nation confederated against all who would infringe on their political and social liberties. By examining the whole of the