

**New England American Studies Association (NEASA)
Annual Conference, September 19-20, 2008
Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut**

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Call for Papers

Infectious Democracy: Histories and Cultures of American Politics

The 2008 Conference of the New England American Studies Association will examine the histories, complexities, and nature(s) of American political culture and its contentious relations to democracy as expressed both at home and abroad. From the debates about governance between indigenous peoples and settlers, to the pivotal moment in which many of the ideals of American democracy were crystallized in the Declaration of Independence, to the 2008 presidential election, the meanings of democracy in American political cultures have been far from self evident. NEASA's 2008 conference asks how democratic practices and rhetorics can be attractive, contagious, invigorating, and debilitating. The ideals of the early republic, the icons of the founding fathers, the symbolic power of democracy, and the power of democracy to engage and motivate an electorate operate in tandem and in tension with the abuses of settler colonialism, histories of disenfranchisement, the US war and occupation in Iraq, and the belief that the US can and should determine the sovereignty of other nations.

The 2008 conference invites papers and panels that consider the myriad ways in which rhetorics and practices of democracy can be tools for both expanding and limiting freedom. Potential topics for panels include American electoral politics; voting rights and voting wrongs; grassroots movement for freedom and justice; literary representations of democracy; American colonialist/imperialist practices at home and abroad; Native American citizenship and sovereignty rights; civil and human rights campaigns; gay, lesbian, transgender politics; the politics of immigration; and the role of "democracy" in the media. We invite paper and panel proposals in all areas of study and from the range of academic disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Proposals with a New England regional focus are welcome. We especially encourage proposals from those situated outside of the traditional academy, including independent scholars, curators, artists, secondary educators, librarians, activists, administrators, and other cultural workers.

Please submit paper or panel proposals to: neasacouncil@gmail.com by April 15, 2008

Suggested Topics

Iroquois Confederacy

Biopolitics and Biopower

Democracy aborted

Flag waving

Human Rights

Impeachment

Black box voting

Indian Civil Rights Act

Voting Rights Act

Naturalization

Cultural citizenship

Indigenous rights

LGBT rights

Government abuses

Legislative history

Branches of power

Middle East intervention

Racial dictatorship

Shadow states

Crypto-fascism

Rhetoric of infectious disease

NGOs and US imperialism

Native America

US Supreme Court

Democracy Now!

Civil Rights

Media studies

Hacking democracy

Disenfranchisement

Indian Citizenship Act

Class and Democracy

Homeland security

Refugees

Constitutional reform

Executive power

Citizen combatants

Material culture

US policy in Israel

Gender

Palestine

Patriotism

Zionism and the secular state

US borders

Privatization of democracy

Democracy and neo-liberalism

Third parties

Labor and citizenship

Anarchism

Prisoner rights

Public opinion

Youth vote

The "L"-word: Liberal

Environmental Justice

Founding Fathers

Immigration history and Policy

Orientalism

Visual representations of democracy

Politically Transmitted Diseases

Community empowerment

Web-based democracy

Feminist action

Transnationalism

Polling and demographics

Voting blocks

Stolen elections

Presidential icons and images

Symbolic politics

Political economy

Globalization

Campaign financing

Political Propaganda and Artistic
Activism

Myths of democracy