

**The Nicholson Center for British Studies** announces:

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

***Principles of Association in British History***

Conference date: Friday, April 8, 2005, at the University of Chicago Campus

Deadline for abstracts: January 31, 2005

Please indicate tentative interest by January 10, 2005. **(Note new deadline!)**

Contact: Mara Marin at [mara@uchicago.edu](mailto:mara@uchicago.edu) or Victor Muniz at [vmuniz@uchicago.edu](mailto:vmuniz@uchicago.edu).

The aim of the conference on Principles of Association in British History is to bring together a small group of faculty and advanced graduate students whose work explores the links, contrasts, and similarities between the principles that are thought to guide human association in different areas of social life. Specifically, we would like to explore how these principles have been manifested, defended, and contested throughout British history.

We encourage papers that address at least one of the following areas:

1. economic institutions and the civil society;
2. marriage and the family;
3. political authority;
4. religious associations.

However, all papers that address the main theme of the conference will be considered.

The topic of churches and religious associations could be addressed by papers that focused on the transformation of the relationship between spiritual and temporal authority during the English Reformation, the challenge to ecclesiastical hierarchy presented by Presbyterian congregationalism, and the more radical alternatives offered by non-conformist religious groups, such as Puritans and Quakers. Under what principles have religious bodies in Britain conceived of their own social existence? Do they understand themselves as corporate entities, as voluntary associations, or as covenantal communities of believers? How have they envisioned their relationship to the British state? What proposals have they made to reform social organization?

The topic of political authority is also central to the debates of the English Reformation, as the patriarchal doctrine of absolute monarchy was forcefully defended, but soon displaced by the principle Parliamentary sovereignty. How were these doctrines arrived at and what were its implications for the relations of different social groups to the state? These questions have persisted throughout modern British history. They resurfaced in the writings of the British pluralists - figures like F.W. Maitland, G.D.H. Cole, John Figgis and Harold Laski - at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, as well as those of fin de siècle guild socialism and the Fabian Society. Their quarrel was not with the sovereignty of Parliament, but of the state in general and its authority to organize and dominate the rest of social life, especially of civic, religious, and labor associations.

The tie between politics and the organization of the economy is hard to disentangle. Yet British

economic history has witnessed the emergence of distinct and important models of association. Conference attendees could address the ways in which relations in the market are conceived and to explore the relations between the market and civil society broadly conceived. One example would be to inquire into the political significance of the invention of the joint-stock company as a new form of commercial organization. On what principle was this new entity founded? Was it an individualistic or communitarian venture? And what did its corporate structure recommend for the organization of other associations, and of social life in general?

Finally, the organization of marriage and the family has been both a model for social organization and a subject of reform. What principles are proposed during the English Reformation and later in the Victorian period for governing family relations? Do the principles that govern relations between married partners differ from those that order relations between parents and children? How is the political status of women impacted upon by such principles? >From the time of Robert Filmer to the twentieth century theorists of the organic state, to what political use are family relations and metaphors put?

We seek to make this conference an inter-disciplinary event. It should be of interest to scholars of political science, philosophy, history, economics, sociology, religion and related fields. The conference will provide graduate students with an opportunity to present their work in a wide-ranging scholarly context, and to draw connections between disciplines and areas of study that are often isolated from each other.

Please indicate your tentative interest in submitting a paper by January 10, 2005. A 250-350 word abstract should be received by January 31, 2005, at [mara@uchicago.edu](mailto:mara@uchicago.edu).

For more information please contact:  
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The conference on Principles of Association in British History is sponsored by the Nicholson Center for British Studies, the Chicago Center for Democracy, the Committee on Social Thought, the Center for Gender Studies and the Department of Political Science at the University of Chicago.

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