

JAMES MONROE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM APPLICATION 2010

Turn in the original plus one copy to the Charles Center by noon on Wednesday, November 3.

Please type directly onto the form.

Intended Major(s): Government and History

Title of proposed Monroe project: Manor Rule and Consociationalism in the Hudson Valley, 1760-1801: Transformation or Continuation?

The following information should be single-spaced. Type directly onto the form and please delete extra white space before you email it to your Project Advisor.

1. Title of project

“Manor Rule and Consociationalism in the Hudson Valley, 1760-1801: Transformation or Continuation?”

2. What do you propose to do / what question are you hoping to answer?

This project will explore power relationships in the upper Hudson Valley (what is now suburban and even central New York, generally east of the Hudson River) on the eve of the Revolution, through the Critical Period, and through the Early Republic (following the full internalization of Constitutional measures).

The project is an attempt to study local political transitions in a place where aristocratic governance models predominated prior to the outbreak of the Revolution. I will seek to answer the following question: ‘To what extent did these same patterns of political and social dominance persist [ergo ‘continuation’ in the title] or disappear [ergo ‘transformation’] through the Critical Period and the institutionalization of Constitutionally-based representative government?’

Indeed it will be a top-down analysis in two ways. First, because of the bias present in contemporary source material, it will emphasize elites as its main focus. Second, it will explore the local effects of more broadly conceived (*i.e.*, national) changes regarding the proper locus of power. The records and correspondence of numerous families of an almost regionally dynastic variety – including the Van Cortlandts, Van Rensselaers, Livingstons, and Phillipses – will be particularly informative in the discussion. Preliminary research will be done to determine which particular family will be the main focus of this aspect of the research and illuminate the others. That study of personal experiences will complement a consideration of political incorporation (or lack thereof) beyond the elite class through an examination of the New York national ratification convention (1788), the Township Act of 1788, the New York state constitutional conventions of 1777 and 1801, and local voter registration.

3. Why do you want to do this research / what are your goals in undertaking the project? Why is this project the best way of achieving these goals? How will this research help further your academic / intellectual development? Why is this project exciting or unique?

This project interests me because I have always been particularly fascinated by the study of political change in a historical context. The history of early America is my primary area of interest in my coursework, and this research is to take place in a geographical area that is of unique importance to me. I have lived for my entire life (before venturing down to Williamsburg) in the Hudson Valley region of New York on land that was once owned by the Van Cortlandt family (Cortlandt Manor) and, more specifically, in a hamlet known as Continental Village, a military post and depot that Washington’s army used continuously from 1776-1783. I went to pre-school in the same brick edifice where Continental arms were stored in this period.

I therefore have two goals. The first, of course, is to attempt to add to the scholarship on early New York with a thesis that, to the best of my knowledge, has not been touched in the current literature – making mine a

novel effort on this scale. If, ultimately, the work were to be published in a journal, that would be a pleasing outcome. Second, this project presents an opportunity to study a transitional period that was fundamental to the evolution of the cultural, political, and social background of my hometown. The study will thus link my curiosity and background to an impressive historical study within a time period and location of interest to numerous scholars in the field.

I have no doubt, since my personal interests align with my scholarly and professional ones, that this project will further my intellectual curiosity and overall understanding of early American history. This is partly the case because the advanced history courses offered at W&M concentrate primarily on Southern history, but I see my long-term interests as being more in the Mid-Atlantic colonies/states. In this sense the project gives me an opportunity to engage materials that classes at W&M do not and therefore round out my body of knowledge.

4. What coursework or other experience have you had that is relevant to this proposal?

Relevant coursework I have completed in history are Colonial Virginia (HIST 400, Spring 2010) and The South in the American Revolution (HIST 490C-06, Fall 2010). While primarily focused on the Southern experience in these periods, both of these courses still covered overarching themes and gave me practice using the proper tools of inquiry in conducting research on early America.

More germane to this specific topic, however, are (a) my personal familiarity with the historiography of both the Revolutionary era and early Republic and (b) an exceptional cognizance of the geographical region on which I will be focusing – a tool that historians do not always have at their disposal. Independent reading that I have done, in conjunction with explorations into the newer (mostly neo-Progressive) perspectives on the Revolution, further augments my body of knowledge on the subject matter.

Additionally, my recent scholarly endeavors in the field of comparative political science and the consequent knowledge of political institutions and processes enable me to investigate this thesis from the perspective of a political scientist as well as historian. This, combined with a strong grasp on early American political/Constitutional history, will enable a thorough historical study.

5. Discuss your methodology – how will you carry out your work? Where do you propose to conduct the research and why is it necessary to be there? Describe the timeline, making sure that the project lasts a minimum of seven weeks. Give detailed information on your final product, which must be an academic paper written in accordance with the standards, expectations and format of the appropriate discipline.

The thesis inherently forces me to delve into personal correspondence, family records, and colonial/state and local records. I will thus utilize resources that are easily accessible through both local libraries and historical collections, specifically those associated with designated historical sites in the Hudson Valley region such as Phillipse Manor or Van Cortlandt Manor. I will live at home while conducting my research and travel by car to all of the necessary libraries and collections – all of which are no more than 45 minutes from me. Since the project is on an aspect of the region where I currently live, it really only makes sense for me to be there.

I will have a comprehensive outline of the paper completed and a general logic to the argument determined before the beginning of exams in Spring 2011. During the 7 week period, the first 3 or 4 weeks will be dedicated almost entirely to research – winnowing through family correspondence, the papers of regional elites, voter records, and any other relevant information that can be found. The other 3 or 4 will be dedicated to putting together a draft of the paper. It is possible that the project could take more than 7 weeks to complete, but I would have no problem taking that extra time to do so.

The final product will be a journal article-styled essay (similar to something found in the *William & Mary Quarterly*) of no less than 20 but probably no more than 35 or 40 pages. It will be written according to the standards of the Chicago Manual of Style. The paper will consider the interpretations of historians who have looked at New York during and after the Revolution – most notably Edward Countryman (*A People in Revolution*, 1989), Alan Taylor (*William Cooper's Town*, 1996), Joseph Tiedemann, John Brooke (*Columbia*

Rising, forthcoming 2010), Paul Gilje, and Daniel Hulsebosch (*Constituting Empire*, 2005) – but offer a fresh thesis that explores a gap in the literature or attempts to revisit the common wisdom.

6. *Protection of Human Subjects. This is from Professor Michael Deschenes, Chair of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee (PHSC): “Any time data is collected from living humans (regardless of techniques used) it is considered research and MUST come to Protection of Human Subjects Committee for review. Since Monroe Scholars must present their findings afterward, everything they do in cases where info is collected from living humans must be submitted for review. The real key is for them to get their project advisors to work with them as they do this (they should since this is vital part of research process) and to go online to see the proposal form (just answer the questions posed with each section) and look over the properly constructed informed consent document.”*

You can access the PHSC forms through my.wm.edu If you have any questions about the PHSC process, please contact Prof. Deschenes at mrdesc@wm.edu

Does this project require approval by the Protection of Human Subjects Committee (PHSC)? If yes, describe where you stand in the approval process.

No.

In over a year at the College, I have sought out advanced coursework, immersion in independent research, and active role in the campus community. For the next three years, I hope to continue these patterns and build on them. A Monroe Scholarship would contribute to my doing just that.

In the classroom, I have carved out a place for myself at William & Mary through genuine engagement. A commitment to consistent participation and a fundamental motivation to engage the material have made it possible for me to successfully tackle advanced (300- and 400-level) courses as a freshman and first-semester sophomore. Most importantly, what I hope to carry on is a fundamental love for the analysis and debate that engrosses classrooms, dorm rooms, and Swem study rooms on this campus. I have found the most rewarding part of academic life here to be this interplay – the life of the mind.

A second area of personal involvement has been independent research. As an intern with the Project on International Peace and Security (PIPS) in the Government Department last spring, I worked with an upperclassman toward a policy brief that offered a revised threat assessment for the Taiwan Strait and offered novel policy recommendations. Additionally, I conducted my own project that explored the existing European defense architecture.

There are innumerable opportunities for independent research, but I will mention a few in which I am particularly interested. Next year, I will be applying for a PIPS fellowship. I look forward to carrying out a yearlong project with Professors Dennis Smith and Amy Oakes. Another opportunity for which I anticipate submitting an application is the new McGlennon Scholars program in the Government Department. This is a very generous program that would allow me to design and conduct a project of my choosing. Similarly, the possibility of an honors thesis in history is also exciting.

I have, moreover, sought to be an active participant outside of the classroom. For one, I am currently on the editorial board of *The Monitor*, for which I review the undergraduate submissions. Over the next two-and-a-half years, I hope to become a member of the executive board and lead this journal toward the achievement of even better scholarship. Additionally, I am one of two student members of the EPC – a position that gives me a unique voice in decision-making regarding the College catalog. I hope to serve on committees for the next two years as well.

I am not only a student of the College but an employee as well. As a resident assistant in Barrett Hall, I oversee 30 freshmen men – planning, publicizing and implementing educational and social programs; providing academic and personal counseling, resources, and referrals; and enforcing College policy. I expect to continue in this capacity for the rest of my time in Williamsburg. Furthermore, I am one of eight associates (higher-tier student employees) in the Circulation Department at Swem Library. I am charged with handling Circulation functions and directing the work and training of student assistants – another position that I hope to continue.

A Monroe Scholarship would complement these three pursuits and lead to improvement in each. Through engagement in the summer research project, I would experience intellectual growth and better be able to contribute in the classroom. During the academic year, tutoring at Matthew Whaley and the Monroe Lunch program would afford me new opportunities for community engagement. I look forward to these exciting opportunities.

At William & Mary:

- *Resident Assistant, Barrett Hall (present)* –I oversee 30 freshmen men in Barrett Hall (2nd West). I plan, publicize and implement educational and social programs. Additionally, I provide academic and personal counseling, resources, and referrals and enforce school policy.
- *Undergraduate Member, Educational Policy Committee (present)* – I am one of two undergraduates providing a student voice in deliberations over the integrity of the course catalog. I review course and GER requests and vote on each proposal.
- *Associate, Swem Library (present)* – I work at the Circulation desk nine-to-ten hours per week. I handle Circulation functions such as registering library patrons, checking-out library materials, resolving overdue fees, and interpreting library policies. Additionally, I help plan and direct the work and training of student assistants. Last year, I worked as a student assistant, sorting and shelving library materials and completing related clerical tasks.
- *Reviewer, The Monitor* – I review essay submissions for W&M’s international studies journal. The commitment is one-to-two hours per week.
- *Undergraduate Researcher for Prof. Dennis Smith, Government Department (Summer 2010)* – I worked with Professor Smith toward an article on the scope of homeland coercion in a post-proliferation world. In particular, I focused on the lessons of the 1999 Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan in suggesting policy options for punishing a nuclear Iran. I provided research and generated written analyses regarding the proliferation debate within foreign and American literature.
- *Intern, Project on International Peace and Security (PIPS) (Spring 2010)* –I worked with an upperclassman toward a policy brief that offered a revised threat assessment in the Taiwan Strait and advocated degraded destroyers as a self-sufficient deterrent against the potential for a Chinese blockade. I provided research and writing assistance, as well as help with preparations for two presentations – one at Booz Allen Hamilton and another at the Brookings Institution. Additionally, I completed an independent study project that broaches the incentivisation of European security through an EU-NATO regulatory and rewards structure. The commitment began at 10-15 hours but became 20-30 hours per week by semester’s end.
- *Secretary, Barrett Hall Council (Fall 2009-Spring 2010)* – As a member of the executive board, I collaborated with six other board members, hall representatives, and Residence Life staff members to provide social programming for residents, create effective solutions to dorm problems, handle damage billings, and appropriate the annual budget. Additionally, I handled correspondence among 175 residents, the Hall Council, and Residence Life liaisons and provided weekly email updates for residents. The commitment was roughly two hours per week.
- *Volunteer, SHOW Day (August 2009)* – As a student participant in the annual Students Helping Out Williamsburg Day, I assisted teachers and teacher aides at a nearby Head Start program in their preparations for the beginning of the school year.

At Iona Prep:

- *Editor-in-Chief/Editor, The Gael Force (Fall 2006-Spring 2009)* –I served on the staff and editorial board of my school newspaper, *The Gael Force*, and wrote articles on topics ranging from athletics to politics. In junior year I was an editor-at-large, and during senior year I was editor-in-chief. At its height, my commitment was eight-to-ten hours per week.
- *Member, Iona Prep Leadership Committee (Fall 2006-Spring 2009)* – As part of a group of fifteen students and one dedicated faculty moderator, I oversaw the organization and facilitation of the Iona Prep Leadership

Workshop – an annual, three-day endeavor that involved over 50 students. From October to February, I helped in and managed the selection of participants and the preparation of an agenda. During the workshop, I lead discussions and directed community-building exercises. I committed an average of two-to-three hours per week plus the weekend itself.

- *Tennis (Spring 2007-Spring 2009)* – I earned a third-singles position on my school’s varsity team and was given the Coaches’ Award in senior year. I also played tennis at my local health club two-to-three times per week during the school year.
- *Assistant Tennis Instructor, Premier Athletic Club (Summer 2008-Summer 2009)* – I taught introductory tennis skills to young children for two summers and volunteered during the school year in between in the same capacity. In the summer I also acted as a camp counselor at the in-house tennis camp.
- *Representative, Student-Faculty Council (Fall 2006-Spring 2009)* – I represented my class and helped conduct events such as dances and fundraisers for an average of one hour per week.
- *Member, National Honor Society (Fall 2007-Spring 2009)* – I tutored freshmen and helped lead a school recycling program. I committed one-to-two hours per week.
- *Counselor, Peer Counseling Program (Fall 2007-Spring 2009)* – I co-led a group of eight freshmen as a peer mentor. In senior year, I was also placed in a freshman homeroom for the first marking period to assist freshmen in their transition.
- *Cashier, Abigail Kirsch Catering (Summer 2006-Fall 2007)* – I handled cash register and utility responsibilities at a visitors center and café at the New York Botanical Gardens, Bronx, NY.
- *Representative, ‘Prep Reps’ Program (Fall 2005-Spring 2009)* – I served as a ‘student ambassador’ to prospective students and their families, leading tours and hosting biannual open house events.