

Sarah Beth Gable

2022 UELAC Loyalist Scholarship Award Recipient

Sarah Beth Gable is a PhD candidate at Brandeis University. Her forthcoming dissertation, “Policing the Revolution: Massachusetts Communities and The Committees of Correspondence, Inspection and Safety, 1773-1783,” examines the process of identifying, prosecuting, and banishing loyalists and suspected loyalists in Massachusetts communities. She argues that the Committees’ definition of “loyalist” was fluid, adapting to the shifting needs of the Revolution rather than reacting to legitimate military threats. Through this process, the Committees effectively policed dissent in communities, forcing compliance with Revolutionary leadership. Her work pays particular attention to the legacy of forced banishment and community violence on the loyalist diaspora.

Sarah Beth was born in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts and raised surrounded by Revolutionary history. After completing a Masters degree at the University of Edinburgh in 2006, she spent ten years working outside of academia before finally coming back to Massachusetts to pursue her PhD in 2017. She initially came to her program wanting to study the concept of neutrality during the American Revolution but quickly became fascinated with Loyalists, a topic had never encountered in all the years of going on field trips to Revolutionary War landmarks in her home state. She believes that there are many lessons to be learned from the political polarization in communities during the Revolutionary era, lessons that can speak to the potential consequence of political polarization today. She wants her work to move beyond the idea that Loyalists and Patriots were static and easily identifiable groups and explore the gray areas of political allegiance.



In her “spare” time, Sarah Beth is passionate about advocating for graduate students – particularly graduate student parents. She has served as a Graduate Department Representative for the history department at Brandeis as well as a Senator for the Graduate Student Association. She also enjoys annoying her 12-year-old with Revolutionary War trivia and reading drafts of chapters to her 3-year-old. She looks forward to both of them calling her “Dr. Mommy” soon.