



**CALL FOR PAPERS
for the 53rd Annual Conference of
The Communal Studies Association**



**October 1-3, 2026
Oneida Community Mansion House
Oneida, NY**

**“Communal History *is* American History”
The deadline for submission of proposals is May 22, 2026**

2026 marks the American Semiquincentennial, the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the birth of the American nation. While there will be no shortage of commemorations of the founding fathers, revolutionary war battles, and fanfare to celebrate the occasion, it will also be a time for grappling with the wider significance of the American Revolution: its promises, shortcomings, and meaning to diverse groups of Americans. Though there are many ideals embedded in the idea of the American Revolution, one stands out: the goal of banding together, breaking away from society, and forming an entirely new nation or world. Indeed, from the first settlers aboard the Arabella to those forming Eco-Villages in the 21st century, the story of communal societies is in many ways the story of America.

As the Communal Studies Association gathers at the Oneida Community Mansion House and Hamilton College, in Central New York's "Burned-over District," it invites papers that interrogate the idea of "Communal History as American History." Papers proposals may include ways in which communal societies have challenged mainstream American society to live up to the ideals of the founders; how intentional communities were founded as a way to escape the injustice of the American nation; communal living as a form of social protest against government injustice; and ways in which communal groups have looked to the past to inform their new ways of living and being.

As always, we are also interested in proposals that concern any other topic about intentional communities. **Please feel free to submit proposal on any aspect of communalism or intentional communities.**

The Oneida Community Mansion House (OCMH) is a National Historic Landmark that operates a 93,000 square foot building constructed by the Oneida Community between 1862 and 1914. The Oneida Community settled in Central New York in 1848 and lived as a commune practicing unconventional conceptions of family, gender, and sexuality until 1881, when the group dissolved and formed a joint-stock company, Oneida Community, Limited, owned by former Community members. The company operated one of the most successful silverware businesses in the world, Oneida Ltd., until it filed for bankruptcy in 2006. OCMH became a 501(c)3 in 1987, acquired the Mansion House in 1988, and is a fully chartered museum by NYSED. Today, OCMH is a historic house museum, arts and event space, and historic inn. Our mission is to use our historic site to share the story of the Oneida Community—one of the most radical and successful of the 19th century social experiments—to explore pressing social issues that still confront audiences today. Our vision is to share the story of the Community's legacy, preserve the built environment, and provide a space for arts and culture that inspires the public to imagine a better world.

Please submit your proposals for individual papers or whole sessions via the website submission portal (www.communalstudies.org/annual-conference). Please include an abstract of 150 words maximum describing your presentation and/or session. Also, please include your biographical statement of 100 words maximum. For information, please contact Program Chair Christian Goodwillie cgoodwil@hamilton.edu **All presenters will be notified of their acceptance by email by July 1, 2026.** A limited amount of financial support is available for graduate student, community member and first-time attendee assistance. If applicable, please indicate your interest with your on-line proposal submission. Successful grant applicants will be notified of financial support by email by August 2026.

The Communal Studies Association is an interdisciplinary organization for people living in intentional communities, historic site personnel and academics representing topics including history, anthropology, religious studies, sociology, political science, and others. The CSA's annual conference is often held at the site of an historic intentional community or other relevant venues. For more information about the organization, see our website www.communalstudies.org.