

## Bio

Allison Abra is Warden and Vice-Chancellor of St John's College and Adjunct Professor of History at the University of Manitoba. Prior to this appointment, she was Associate Professor of History and a Fellow in the Dale Center for the Study of War & Society at the University of Southern Mississippi. At USM, she also held the General Buford Blount Professorship in Military History (2019-2021), and served as Director of Women's and Gender Studies. Allison is a historian of women and gender, popular culture, and emotion in Britain during the era of the two world wars. She has taught numerous undergraduate and graduate courses in military history connected with all of these themes, and has appeared in historical documentaries for the BBC and Mississippi Public Broadcasting. Her book *Dancing in the English Style: Consumption, Americanisation, and National Identity in Britain, 1918-50* was published by Manchester University Press in 2017. Her current book project is an emotional history of British secret agents during World War II.

## Personal Statement

I first became involved with the SMH in 2012 when my new colleagues at the University of Southern Mississippi invited me to join the organizing committee for the 2013 SMH Annual Meeting in New Orleans. I enjoyed that experience so much and immediately found a new intellectual home at the SMH. I have attended the annual meeting regularly since 2013, and also served on the Program Committee in 2017. Involvement with the SMH has been enriching and incredibly influential to how I have evolved as a historian during the last decade. While I had always studied the history of war through the lens of gender and culture, SMH has expanded my understanding of the broad array of methodologies in military history and made me a better scholar and teacher.

In addition to my service to SMH, I would bring extensive administrative experience from my varied academic positions and past appointments with other professional associations to the Board of Trustees. I was previously a member and then chair of the Morris D. Forkosch Book Prize Committee for the American Historical Association, and have also served on committees for the North American Conference on British Studies. As a Trustee, I would continue promoting expansive and inclusive definitions of military history, and work to ensure the annual meeting is a welcoming and safe space for all members. I can also serve as a direct voice for our Canadian membership. I look forward to the opportunity to give back to an organization that has done so much for me.

**Allison J. Abra, PhD**  
St John's College, University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

**CURRENT POSITION**

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<b>University of Manitoba (Winnipeg, MB, Canada)</b> Warden and Vice-Chancellor, St John's College Adjunct Professor of History	<b>2021-Present</b>
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**PREVIOUS POSITION**

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<b>University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg, MS, USA)</b> Associate Professor of History (tenured) General Buford "Buff" Blount Professor in Military History Fellow, Dale Center for the Study of War & Society Director, Women's and Gender Studies Program Assistant Professor of History	<b>2012-2021</b> 2018-2021 2019-2021 2012-2021 2020-2021 2012-2018
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**EDUCATION**

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PhD	University of Michigan	Ann Arbor, MI	History	2009
MA	Queen's University	Kingston, ON	History	2001
BA (Hons.)	University of Manitoba	Winnipeg, MB	History	1999

**SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**

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Book

*Dancing in the English Style: Consumption, Americanisation, and National Identity in Britain, 1918-50.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017.

Peer-Reviewed Publications

"The Performing Arts and their Audiences." *A Cultural History of Leisure in the Modern Age.* Brett Bebbler, ed. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2024.

"'Her Heroine Mother: Maternity and British Secret Agents during World War II,'" *Nursing Clio*, Online, 2022.

"Popular Culture and Modern War." In *Oxford Bibliographies in Military History.* Ed. Kaushik Roy. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.

“Dancing in the English Style: Professionalisation, Public Preference, and the Evolution of Popular Dance in 1920s Britain.” Brett Bebbler, ed. *Leisure and Cultural Conflict in Twentieth-Century Britain*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012. 41-62.

“Doing the Lambeth Walk: Novelty Dances and the British Nation.” *20th Century British History* 20:3 (2009): 346-369. \*Winner of the Duncan Tanner Essay Prize\*

Book reviews and review essays published in the *Journal of Military History*, *Journal of British Studies*, *Contemporary British History*, *English Historical Review*, *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, *Canadian Journal of History*, *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*, *H-War*, and *H-Diplo*.

### **SELECTED FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS**

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- General Buford “Buff” Blount Professorship in Military History, University of Southern Mississippi, 2019-2021.
- Mississippi Humanities Council Teacher of the Year for the University of Southern Mississippi, Mississippi Humanities Council, 2018-2019.
- Peggy Jean Connor Research Grant, Committee for Services and Research on Women, University of Southern Mississippi, 2018.
- Arts & Letters Junior Faculty Member of the Year Award, College of Arts & Letters, University of Southern Mississippi, 2017.
- Nina Bell Suggs Endowed Professorship, University of Southern Mississippi, 2016.
- Margaret Boone Dale Endowment for the Study of Women and War Grant, Dale Center for the Study of War & Society, 2016.
- Duncan Tanner Post-Graduate Essay Prize, *Twentieth-Century British History* (peer-reviewed journal), 2008.

### **SELECTED INVITED PRESENTATIONS**

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- “What’s New in World War II? Distinguished Historians Discuss the Field Today,” Richard McCarthy Lecture, Dale Center for the Study of War & Society, Hattiesburg, MS, May 4, 2023.
- “Overlooked No More: Women's History in the Classroom and Beyond,” Mississippi Humanities Council Teacher of the Year Lecture, Hattiesburg, MS, March 19, 2019.
- “‘Courage, endurance and self-sacrifice of the highest possible order:’ British Women Spies of World War II,” Women’s History Month Keynote Lecture, Salisbury University, Salisbury, MD, March 5, 2019.
- “We danced as they bombed: Popular Dancing in Britain during the Second World War,” Keynote Speaker for Routledge/Taylor & Francis “War, State, and Society” database launch, American Library Association conference, National World War II Museum, New Orleans, LA, June 23, 2018.

## RECENT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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- Roundtable, “Women at War with America: A 40-Year Retrospective on the Work of Dr. D’Ann Campbell and the Study of Women and War,” Society for Military History Annual Meeting, Arlington, VA, April 18-21, 2024.
- Paper, “‘I hadn’t done anything remotely civil for England during the war:’ Military Identity and the Women of the Special Operations Executive in World War II,” Society for Military History Annual Meeting, March 23-26, 2023.
- Discussant, “Rape and Sexual Violence,” Second World War Research Group - North America Virtual Research Workshop, “Atrocity and Excess,” Online, February 18, 2023.
- Roundtable, “The Legacy of Sonya Rose and the History of Britain in the Second World War,” North American Conference on British Studies, Chicago IL, November 10-13, 2022.
- Paper, “Secret Agent Romances in the Special Operations Executive,” North American Society for Intelligence History, July 18-20, 2022, Online.
- Roundtable, “War in the Classroom: Teaching Military History,” American Historical Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA/Online, January-February, 2022.

## SELECTED MEDIA APPEARANCES AND PUBLIC HISTORY ACTIVITIES

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- Interviews with WWII survivors Anthony Waterman and Manfred Jaeger for All Saint’s Anglican Church Remembrance Sunday Documentary, Winnipeg, MB, November 2024.
- Commented on the death of Queen Elizabeth II: CBC Manitoba radio, CJOB radio, *Winnipeg Free Press*, September 2022.
- Speaker, Veteran’s Day Roundtable Discussion, “World War I: The Most Important War that Americans Ever Forgot,” Hattiesburg VFW/Dale Center for the Study of War & Society, November 11, 2018.
- Interview with Holocaust survivor Leslie Schwartz, *Conversations*, Television Documentary for MPB: Mississippi Public Broadcasting, 2017.
- Historical Consultant and Interviewee, *Dancing Cheek to Cheek: An Intimate History of Social Dance*, Television Documentary for BBC Four, Silver River Productions, 2014.
- State Coordinator, National History Day in Mississippi, 2013-2016.

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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Society for Military History  
North American Conference on British Studies  
Second World War Research Group, North America  
North American Society for Intelligence History