

The Wolfe Institute

*The Ethyle R. Wolfe Institute for the Humanities,
in cooperation with the Department of History and the American Studies Program,
presents*

This is the Skin of the Whit[e] Man: The Material Culture of Violence in Sullivan's Campaign



The historical record of the American Revolution includes a note allegedly written on parchment made of human skin. Dated 1779, it is signed by Luke Swetland, a Patriot soldier in the American Revolution who spent time as an adopted captive among the Seneca. The note tells the torturous tale of the “whit[e] man” whose skin it says it is and offers details about Sullivan’s Campaign in Iroquoia. This lecture investigates the historical possibilities of this source whether it is real or fake, while also discussing the undeniably real material culture of violence attached to Sullivan’s Campaign in what is now New York State.

Zara Anishanslin is assistant professor of history at the College of Staten Island, City University of New York. From 2009-2010 she was the Patrick Henry Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of History at Johns Hopkins University. In 2011, her dissertation won the University of Pennsylvania’s Zuckerman Prize for the Best Dissertation in American Studies. Her first book, *A History of the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic World Told Through the Single Portrait of a Woman in a Silk Dress*, is forthcoming from Yale University Press (2015). Anishanslin serves as co-chair of the seminar in early American history and culture at Columbia University. She is the Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at the New-York Historical Society, where she is working on a new project on the American Revolution for 2014-2015.

**Monday, March 16, 2015
2:15 to 3:30 p.m.
Woody Tanger Auditorium
Brooklyn College Library**

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