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INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF
CULTURE & SOCIETY
PRESENTS

Andrew M. Schocket

Monday, October 1, 2007**2:30 pm**

Mylander Room (207)

Bowen-Thompson Student Union

Errand to Africa: Boston King, the British Empire, and the Founding of Sierra Leone

What were the early goals of British colonization in Africa?

How did the primary agents of that colonization both meet and confound those goals?

What can the story of one remarkable African-American man – Boston King – tell us about the nature of empire, race, and revolution?

In 1792, Boston King and nearly 1,200 other black loyalists (refugees from the American Revolution) established Sierra Leone, Britain's first African colony. Historians have interpreted the settlers' anguishing early years as resulting from the Sierra Leone Company's profit-seeking and condescension to the settlers on the one hand, and on the other hand, conditions on the ground and the settlers' own difficulties adjusting to Africa. Professor Schocket will argue that there was something much bigger at work: namely, a conflict between the British imperial project and the Atlantic revolutionary project of which the Sierra Leone settlers were a part. The Sierra Leone colony demonstrated strong continuities in British cultural and religious imperialism as well as imperial policy. These continuities were at odds with the settlers' African-American revolutionary agenda as revealed by Boston King's words and experiences.

Andrew M. Schocket is Associate Professor of History at BGSU. His teaching and research focus on the American Revolution, colonial North America, and the Atlantic World. His work includes the book *Founding Corporate Power in Early National Philadelphia* and essays published in *Journal of the Early Republic*, *Enterprise & Society*, and *Reviews in American History*. He has served as a member of the national steering committee of the History News Service and has directed a student-researched public policy history project officially commended by the Ohio General Assembly's Speaker of the House. Currently a Fellow at ICS, he is at work on a biography of Boston King.

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