

Borders Imagined, Borders Constructed

15th Annual HGSA Conference

February 21, 2020

University of Maryland – College Park

Keynote Speaker: Sandra Enríquez – University of Missouri-Kansas City

A historian of Chicana and Latina history, urban history, borderlands, and social movements, Sandra Enríquez works to abolish the borders between “academic” scholarship and activism. She is the Director of the Public History Emphasis, and has also worked as an oral historian for the Gulf Coast Food Project and the Civil Rights in Black and Brown Oral History Project.

Call For Papers

Borders exist in many different forms. At times they are physical demarcations between two or more places, and at other times they are figments of people’s imagination. They may be a line in the sand, or even words on a page. Borders can also construct a divide between an “us” and a “them,” and they sometimes can create new categories all unto themselves. Whether borders define groups, places, or spaces against one another, or act to claim people and territory, they have been and remain an integral aspect of numerous societies around the globe. Who creates, maintains, and can traverse borders, is then an important topic of discussion, both within historical inquiry and modern policy.

Borders can serve a variety of purposes, as is made evident by a wide array of scholarship. As Gloria E. Anzaldúa said, “borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants.” In speaking about the place of law in the United States, Barbara Young Welke uses the concept of “borders of belonging” to illustrate how “the recognition of personhood establishes the preconditions of effective citizenship.” This conference will consider how understanding borders, broadly construed, has historically been and still is established within society.

We welcome any and all submissions in history, public history, digital humanities, and various interdisciplinary fields on the topic of borders. All time periods and geographic areas will be considered.

About the University of Maryland – College Park

The University of Maryland, College Park is the state's flagship university and one of the nation's preeminent public research universities. Located just minutes away from the National Archives II, UMD is a stone's throw away from an excellent repository of research material, giving

conference participants an excellent opportunity to make their trip to College Park one for both research and sharing scholarship. The Department of History at the University of Maryland is also the home of the Freedmen and Southern Society Project. Established in 1976 by Ira Berlin, the Freedmen and Southern Society Project houses thousands of documents relating to the Black American's struggle to end slavery and achieve freedom from the Civil War to Reconstruction.

The conference will feature a series of morning and afternoon panels, and a lunchtime presentation by our keynote speaker. No registration fee is required, and breakfast and lunch will be included.

Submission Guidelines

- Proposals must be submitted by December 31st, 2019 to umdgradhistconference@gmail.com as a Microsoft Word or PDF attachment.
- Must be no more than 300 words.
- A curriculum vitae of no more than two pages.
- Include: scholar's name, home institution, email address, fundamental research question addressed, evidence and methodological approaches used, and main argument made.
- Conclusions need not be final, but areas of inquiry must be consistent between proposal and presentation.

If selected, participants will be notified by January 10th, 2020, and will subsequently be asked to submit a ten to fifteen-page final version of their paper by February 1st, 2020.