

CFP: University of Michigan 2019 Graduate Student Conference in U.S. History

Making History Public(s): Presenting the Collective

Friday May 10 and Saturday May 11, 2019
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

The United States is comprised of publics. Filtered through media, politics, and social, cultural and economic life, American publics materialize through national, international, state, and local avenues. At what point do they become visible? How do American bodies become public? What are the consequences of these processes?

“Making History Public(s)” will interrogate the creation of publics in the United States, broadly defined. Papers might investigate the making of publics in any number of ways: as citizenry or voting block; as audience or consumer; as the product of, or precursor to political mobilization or disruption; as transnational formation; as agent or passive actor. American publics might be defined spatially or ideologically, shaped through communication, proximity, or knowledge. They might be determined institutionally, informally, or discursively.

At the same time, this conference will investigate the ways in which publics become both producers of, and audiences for historical knowledge. We seek papers that position the historical actor and themselves as part of the active production of history, considering the role of presentation, display, exhibition, and preservation. What is the role of art, visual culture, sound, and material in making history accessible to academic and public audiences, and students? This might also include scholars working in pedagogy, digital humanities, museum studies, mapping, and other fields.

Our keynote speaker is Professor Ellen Noonan (New York University), whose work as historian, media producer, and instructional designer blends historical scholarship with various practices and platforms of public display and education.

Scholars working in all periods of American history, and in various modes of interdisciplinarity are welcome. Please submit an abstract of no more than 300 words and a CV to the conference planning committee at umusgradconference@gmail.com. Proposals are due by Sunday, January 28, 2019.

