NC PH

"REPAIR WORK"

CALL FOR PROPOSALS
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PUBLIC HISTORY
2019 ANNUAL MEETING
HARTFORD, CT | MARCH 27-30, 2019

Public historians have long been engaged in acts of repair. We restore and preserve objects and buildings. We reconstruct fragmentary evidence about the past and reconsider the stories it has been used to tell, including stories about past commemorations themselves. We contribute, directly or indirectly, to economic and civic revitalization efforts. Increasingly, we also align our work with social and environmental projects of reparation, putting ourselves in service of overcoming or resisting the effects of past damage, injustice, and exclusion.

NCPH invites proposals for its 2019 conference in Hartford, Connecticut that explore how public history intersects—sometimes purposefully, sometimes with unintended consequences—with the ongoing task of making and remaking places, narratives, and communities.

Hands at work at the Colt's Patent Firearms Mfg. Company, Hartford, CT, July 1942. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, LC-DIG-fsa-8b07472.

Proposals are due by 11:59 pm local time on July 15, 2018.

Some ways of thinking about the conference theme may include:

Repair work and time

- How can public historians negotiate the tension between the ongoing, present-oriented work of repair and the notion of history as only about the past?
- How does the work of public history relate to the planned obsolescence and novelty that drive consumer culture and technological change?
- How do we assess the success or outcomes of repair projects?
- Is repair always positive? How can we interpret past acts of commemoration and repair whose legacies trouble the present?
- What might it mean to think of repair work as visionary and generative rather than simply fixing what's broken?

Repair work and collaboration

- When and how should public historians ally themselves with other projects of repair—environmental, civic, economic—not necessarily centered around history?
- Does the language of repair matter? What does it mean to engage in restoration, reparation, renovation, revitalization, rehabilitation, re-creation?
- What can be repaired? How do tangible, physical acts of repair relate to more intangible ones?

Repair work and equity

- Who decides what is worth repairing?
- How do we repair and restore ourselves, professionally and personally? What lines of difference and privilege shape those tasks of "self-care"?
- What repair work needs to be done within our own field?

NCPH strongly urges participants to dispense with the reading of papers and welcomes a wide variety of session formats. We encourage sessions that push past "show and tell" to share lessons learned, identify implications for future work, and invite substantive exchanges between presenters and audience.

Preference will be given to:
- Complete session proposals (we seldom accept individual papers—use our Early Topic Proposal option to find co-presenters!)
- Proposals that highlight historically underrepresented voices; contribute to broadening or internationalizing discussions of public history practice; or otherwise engage critically with public history in an inclusive and expansive way
- Sessions that consider public impact and the points of view of relevant collaborators

PRESENTATION FORMATS MAY INCLUDE:

- ROUNDTABLE (90 mins): Roundtables are typically limited to 30 minutes of presentation, followed by 60 minutes of discussion and feedback. Presenters should bring targeted questions to pose to others at the table in order to learn from and with those attending.

- STRUCTURED CONVERSATION (90 mins): Sparked by a shared interest or need, these facilitated, participant-driven discussions are designed to encourage audience dialogue. Start with a provocative or problem statement and see where the conversation goes.

- TRADITIONAL PANEL (90 mins): At least three presenters, chair, and commentator.

- COLLABORATIVE CONVERSATION (90 mins): A session that highlights a variety of stakeholder and collaborator perspectives.

- EXPERIENTIAL (90 mins): May incorporate simulation, role-play, or games; staged or performances; visual art; pop-up installations; or other participatory and active formats.

- FILM SCREENING AND DISCUSSION (90 mins): For the screening of most or all of a documentary, film, short film, or other visual media. Allow time for a conversation/Q&A with the audience.

- PECHA KUCHA (90 mins): Facilitators quickly move the session through a series of images or ideas. Typically a Pecha Kucha is a multiple-presenter activity where each presenter shows 20 slides in 20-second increments. Allow time for debriefing.

- POINT-COUNTERPOINT (90 mins): A moderated discussion that offers opposing points of view in a debate format.

- WORKING GROUPS (2 hrs): In these seminar-like conversations between facilitators and up to 12 discussants, participants discuss questions raised by specific programs, problems, or initiatives in their own public history practice with peers grappling with similar issues. Before and during the meeting, working groups articulate a purpose they are working toward or a problem they are actively trying to solve and aim to create an end product(s). Proposals are submitted by facilitators; an open call for discussants will be issued in Fall 2018. For more information, see http://bit.ly/2019workinggroups.

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

See http://ncph.org/conference/2019-annual-meeting for details on submitting proposals.

EARLY TOPIC PROPOSAL OPTION
Gather suggestions on a topic and look for collaborators/co-panelists by filling out a "topic-only" form online by June 1, 2018 (especially if you're submitting an individual proposal). Topics will be distributed to NCPH members via email and posted to ncph.org. Respondents will contact the original submitter directly, helping to complete a final proposal for the July deadline.

FINAL PROPOSAL DEADLINE
Submit your fully formed session, working group, individual paper, or workshop proposal online by July 15, 2018