



CFP: University of Michigan 2018 Graduate Student Conference in U.S. History

“Constructing America: Identities, Infrastructure and Institutions”

Friday May 4 and Saturday May 5, 2018

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

The world has constructed America, just as America has shaped itself - as a real and imagined place, constructed and reconstructed by transnational forces and figures. America materializes through global alliance and opposition, immigration, urban development and rural economies, organization, consumption, and rebellion. In whose image is America constructed? Where are its borders? The American History Workshop at the University of Michigan invites papers for its 2018 graduate student conference themed “Constructing America: Identities, Infrastructure and Institutions.” Our keynote speaker is Professor Laura Barraclough (Yale University), whose work integrates archival, ethnographic, and spatial analyses of urban life and culture.

Papers might investigate the construction of America in any number of ways: as an “imagined community”-- a product of historical memory intertwined with assumptions about race, class, sex, faith, ethnicity and gender; as an object of knowledge in the social and natural sciences, the arts and humanities; as a material entity made of machines, buildings, bodies, landscapes, and infrastructure; or as a network of political, economic, cultural and social institutions.

We are particularly interested in papers that approach the idea of construction in innovative, counter-intuitive, or interdisciplinary ways. We encourage papers that consider the intersection of public history and traditional scholarship, and the ways in which that might destabilize established national narratives. Scholars working in all periods of American history are welcome. Please submit an abstract of 150–300 words and a CV to to the conference planning committee at umusgradconference@gmail.com. Proposals are due by Sunday, January 28, 2018.