



# News

**American Historical Association Annual Meeting.** New York. January 2-5, 2009.

## Roll out the red carpet, Historians TV is here!

The AHA Annual Meeting is the first in the world where you can watch Historians TV – the new online television channel dedicated to historians' news and views.

We'll be screening a new special episode each and every day of the conference. You can watch around the conference, in your hotel room and online: [www.historianstv.com](http://www.historianstv.com).

Whether it's a workshop, debate or speech, Historians TV will be there to cover all the important issues that emerge. You'll also be able to watch exclusive reports produced especially

for the conference from organizations across the United States who are leading the way in the industry.

**And remember, you're the stars!**

The Historians TV team will be touring the exhibition and conference to get your views about what you feel on various issues. Comment on speakers and sessions you've just attended, and let us know what parts of the conference you are looking forward to.

Visit us at our booth on the 3rd Floor promenade for more information and we look forward to speaking with you then!

### President's Message:



**Welcome to New York!**

The American Historical Association has partnered with WebsEdge of London to produce a daily television program, **Historians TV**, during the 123rd Annual Meeting. Each day of the meeting a new 30-minute news program will be broadcast on screens in the hotels and on a dedicated TV channel in hotel rooms of meeting attendees. After the meeting it will be available online and in DVD form. The program will include interviews with key speakers, news from the meeting floor, and several five-minute, prerecorded segments sponsored by history departments and organizations.

The AHA expects to bring around **5,000** historians and **56** affiliated historical societies to its 123rd Annual Meeting in New York, N.Y. this year. Sessions and events at the meeting will investigate the major currents and controversies in historical studies around the globe. For instance, this year's meeting features a special plenary roundtable, **Election 2008: How "Historic" Was It?**, on President-elect Barack Obama's historic win in the 2008 election. Other important events at the Annual Meeting include the presentation of the sixth Theodore Roosevelt-Woodrow Wilson Public Service Award to Adam Hochschild, author of *King Leopold's Ghost*, a number of presidential sessions, and the annual film festival.

Thanks for joining us at the Annual Meeting,

**Gabrielle Spiegel, president of the AHA**

## Story Corps Griot: Collecting the Spoken Word

The National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Smithsonian Institution's newest museum, is busy building a collection in preparation for its opening on the National Mall in 2015. In addition to seeking out the objects and artwork that make up a museum's collection, the NMAAHC is also researching and collecting another aspect of African American culture – the spoken word.

Oral traditions are an essential part of African American history and the museum wants to make sure that they are represented in its collections and programs. One of the ways in which they did that was through a program called Story Corps Griot.

Story Corps Griot was a one-year initiative sponsored by the Corporation

for Public Broadcasting (CPB) to record intergenerational African American stories of everyday people in different parts of the country. Using an airstream trailer as a recording booth, museum staff worked with local NPR radio stations and a mixture of African American and non-African American cultural institutions.

"We began in Atlanta interviewing about 200 people in each city, says John W. Franklin, Director of Partnerships and International Programs at the NMAAHC. "We developed questions specific to learning about the African American experience and visited southern, northern and western cities in order to have a range of experiences that African Americans had in the different regions."

While the one-year program has concluded, with nearly 2000 stories were recorded, museum officials hope to renew it in the near future. Many of the stories can be heard on the museum's website at [nmaahc.si.edu](http://nmaahc.si.edu).

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The museum also plans to exhibit African American oral traditions at the Smithsonian's annual Folklife Festival this summer. In a program called "Giving Voice: The Power of Words in African American Culture," the museum will explore a range of oral traditions from formal story telling by

professional storytellers to spoken word artists, poets, musicians, singers, debaters, and radio programs.

"We are particularly interested in the distinctive voice of African American community based radio," says Franklin, the son of legendary historian John Hope Franklin. "In the same way that African American newspapers developed so that people could express their own opinions; people have used radio for generations to express their political and social concerns. They have used radio as a

way of connecting with our community while sharing an interest in the music," Franklin explains.

This year's festival will take place June 24 through 28 and July 1 through 5 on the National Mall in Washington, DC. For more information visit [folklife.si.edu](http://folklife.si.edu).





## Program Highlights



### Cultural Economic Development that Works

Historians TV showcases Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Idlewild as two prime examples of how Michigan is transforming its economy by creatively leveraging its unique cultural and historic resources.

*Sponsored by Michigan Dept. of History, Arts & Libraries*



### Doing History at JMU

Historians TV sees how James Madison University encourages students to practice history in multiple forms, from independent research and writing, to individual and group projects intended for public audiences.

*Sponsored by James Madison University*

### History at Princeton University

Historians TV takes a look at how Princeton's variety of faculties, from Late Antiquity to modernity, has stimulated life-long interest among its undergraduates and led to many becoming professors in their fields.

*Sponsored by Princeton University Department of History*



### The Revitalization of Navy History

The Naval History and Heritage Command is in the process of improving the management and quality of Naval History and the restoration of infrastructure for the protection of precious historical documents; Historians TV investigates.

*Sponsored by Naval History and Heritage Command*



Smithsonian  
National Museum of African American  
History and Culture

### A New Smithsonian Museum

Director Lonnie G. Bunch introduces Historians TV to the National Museum of African American History and Culture and explains the museum's history and what's happening in preparation for opening on the National Mall in 2015.

*Sponsored by Smithsonian Institution – National Museum of African American History and Culture*



### An Exceptional History Program at a Regional Powerhouse

MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY™ Historians TV takes a look at how staff initiatives at the only public university in Kentucky, Murray State University, are helping the university to maintain its position getting high ratings in Forbes, US News & world report, and others.

*Sponsored by Murray State University*



### History at UMass

Using the extraordinary local resources in public history and archival collection, UMass has built a program uniquely suited to its location in Boston. Historians TV explores this distinctive program and finds out how close interaction with faculty has improved student relationships and experience.

*Sponsored by the University of Massachusetts, Boston*

## Where to Watch

You can watch **Historians TV** on plasma screens around the Hilton and Sheraton hotels throughout the conference and online at [www.historianstv.com](http://www.historianstv.com). Be sure to catch our daily program in your hotel bedrooms too.



### Meet the Host of Historians TV:

Stephen Horn, CEO of WebsEdge is one of Britain's leading corporate communicators. Previously Stephen was Director of Communications at the Confederation of British Industry, the employer's federation in the UK. Before joining the CBI Stephen spent seven busy years at the BBC as lead producer on flagship news programmes. Stephen holds two MAs in government and journalism from the University of Williamsburg and the American University at Washington.

## Production Credits

**Executive Producer** ..... Stephen Horn  
**Output Producer** ..... Yolanda R. Arrington  
**Camera/Editor** ..... Travis Minyon

**Would you like a copy of Historians TV? Let us know.**

**Please send your name and address to [answers@websedgetv.com](mailto:answers@websedgetv.com)**



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