

***The Role of Public History Within and Outside the United States:
Critical Reflections***

Deadline: 5 May 2024

Since its establishment as an academic research field in the U.S. in the late 1970s, public history has grown significantly, serving as a vital tool for examining contemporary issues, community memories, and conflicts at both scholarly and practical levels. In the 21st century, the field has become a prominent platform for “making history with the public(s)”, moving beyond the confines of academia. Despite its popularity, comprehensively defining public history without oversimplification remains challenging. Indeed, in addition to the audience’s centrality and its dual identity as both a scholarly research field and a practice, public history encompasses a variety of methodologies to (co-)investigate peoples’ cultures, memories, and histories. Furthermore, there is a multiplicity of media and organizations through which public history projects can be shared, ranging from participatory initiatives to studies addressing complex topics of public interest. Moreover, recent internationalization processes have added another layer to the epistemological framework of public history. As James B. Gardener and Paula Hamilton noted in the introduction to the *Oxford Handbook of Public History* in 2017, “Given that both the state and the nation have been central to the development of public history, we ask what we can learn if we engage with the local context within a wider international frame”.

With this call, we aim to investigate the discipline of public history from our unique perspective as a journal focused on American Studies from outside North America. USAbroad seeks to engage with studies and practices of public history concerning US history and politics, whether originating in the United States or elsewhere. As each public history project is influenced by its location, we are interested in comparing studies and practices regarding US politics and history across different countries. For this reason, the call also welcomes contributions that explore the challenges and possibilities of engaging with US history outside the US, as well as articles that question the methodological and epistemological foundation of public history as a discipline per se vis-à-vis US history.

USAbroad invites public history or public history-related contributions investigating US compelling past(s), heritage, memories and socio-economic fractures. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the field, which benefits from the integration of various research areas and communication methods, contributions may draw from, but are not limited to, the following research areas related to American history:

- Foreign relations (e.g. soft diplomacy actions);
- Postcolonial studies;
- Intellectual history (e.g. international circulation of ideas);
- Global history;
- Cultural studies (e.g. culture wars, Lost Cause);
- Ethnic studies; (e.g. migrant communities, transnational connections)
- Economic politics;

- Media and game studies (e.g. the impact of American products over communities at home and abroad);
- Military history (e.g. historical reenactments, war cemeteries)
- Urban studies;
- Heritage interpretation in museums, libraries, parks, rural or urban settings, etc.;
- Teaching and education (e.g. historical anniversary);
- Memory studies (e.g. analysis and practices over monuments; memories of trauma in communities or families)

Please submit your abstract (500 words max) and your CV (2 pages max) to usabroad@unibo.it by **May 5, 2024**. Successful applicants will be notified by May 15, 2024, at the latest.

The selection of abstracts will be based on a range of criteria including scientific originality, clarity of the proposal submitted, use of primary sources and adherence to the themes of the call for papers. Please highlight in the abstract whether your contribution will offer a scholarly analysis of public history, explore a specific case study/practice of public history, or it will do both. Abstracts that do not clearly address these criteria will not be considered for publication.

Please note that, if your application is successful, you will need to submit a full 7000-word article by **August 31, 2024**.

More info can be found at <http://usabroad.unibo.it/>