

ASALH Conference on Civil Rights in America, Memphis, TN

Posted on April 21, 2014 by Rosemary Feurer

September 24-28, 2014, at the Peabody Hotel in Memphis, TN. **CFP Deadline, May 31, 2014.** This year's theme involves the role of women and members of the gay and lesbian community who participated in the struggle for Civil Rights.

Proposals must be submitted electronically on the All-Academic website at <http://convention2.allacademic.com/one/asalh/asalh14/>. This link can be found at <http://asalh.org/callforpapers.html>

2014 National Black History Theme: Civil Rights in America

The revolutionary Thomas Paine held that "civil rights are those which appertain to man in right of his being a member of society." From the beginning of our Republic, free people of African descent have seen themselves as citizens, members of society, and therefore due equal rights. From the nation's origins, Americans believed that religion should not be a basis for abridging a citizen's rights, but very few believed color should be treated similarly. And gender and sexual orientation were not even open for discussion. The resulting struggles over civil rights have remade our nation for more than two centuries.

The history of civil rights in the United States is largely the story of free people of color and then African Americans to define and enumerate what rights pertain to citizens in civil society. It has been the history of enlisting political parties to recognize the need for our governments, state and federal, to codify and protect those rights. Through the years, people of African descent have formed organizations and movements to promote equal rights. The Colored Convention Movement, the Afro-American League, the Niagara Movement, the National Council of Negro Women, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference carried the banner of equality when allies were few. In the modern era, integrated organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Urban League, and the Congress of Racial Equality fought for and protected equal rights. The names of America's greatest advocates of social justice—Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Du Bois, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Fannie Lou

Hamer—are associated with the struggle for civil rights.

Within this struggle for civil rights, many of the important leaders have been men and women whose rights as women and as members of the gay and lesbian community were subordinated to the general cause. Pauli Murray, Bayard Rustin, James Baldwin, and many others litigated, organized, and wrote on behalf of civil rights, believing fully in the path towards equal rights for all. Their struggles accentuate the universality of the movement for equality in America, and form a central part of the 2014 National African American History theme.

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History has selected this theme to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and we invite all Americans and the global community to join us in exploring the history of equal rights for all.

All participants must be members by May 1st and registered by August 1st. There are no refunds for membership dues and none for registration fees after August 20th, 2014. Early Bird Panels—those received by March 31st—and accepted for the program will receive preference in selecting the day and time of their sessions. May 31st is the deadline for all proposals.

Proposals must be submitted electronically on the All-Academic website at <http://convention2.allacademic.com/one/asalh/asalh14/>. This link can be found at <http://asalh.org/callforpapers.html>. While individual papers will be accepted, please note that all papers and presentations will be grouped together and formed into multi-presentation sessions (with rare, pre-approved exceptions). Moreover, a decided preference will be given to complete panels. Please refer to the FAQ page (http://asalh.net/docs/FAQs_sheet_call_for_papers.pdf) for what constitutes a complete panel.

Author



[Rosemary Feurer](#)

Rosemary Feurer is Professor of History at Northern Illinois University. She is the author of *Radical Unionism in the Midwest, 1900-1950*, among other books and essays.

She is working on The Illinois Mine Wars, 1860-1940 and a new biography of Mary Harris "Mother" Jones.