

Call for Papers

"Making Publics: Media, Markets, and Association  
in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800"

An Interdisciplinary Conference Sponsored by  
the Early Modern Center at  
the University of California, Santa Barbara

March 9-10, 2007

What were early modern publics? How were they formed? What needs did they serve for those who participated in them? And how did they relate to the emergence of a cultural formation that we recognize as distinctly early modern? These are among the questions we seek to address in this conference.

We invite paper proposals from a wide range of disciplinary perspectives that either examine particular instances of publics and their formation or address the broader, more theoretical issues raised by this wide-spread and under-studied phenomenon. If new media and the markets through which their products were made available led to new forms of voluntary association and identity, as they surely did, how can we best describe the workings of that process and what significance should we ascribe to it? How, in short, did the publics for playgoing, for natural history, for madrigal singing, for antiquarian scholarship, for amateur drawing, for geographical learning, and for dozens of other voluntary activities come into being? And what does it mean for a society when such groups grow and proliferate?

This conference is being organized in conjunction with the collaborative and interdisciplinary "Making Publics" project centered at McGill University and funded by the Canadian Social Science and Humanities Research Council ([www.makingpublics.mcgill.ca](http://www.makingpublics.mcgill.ca)). The limit dates of the McGill project are 1500-1700. Given the mission of the Early Modern Center at UC Santa Barbara, we are extending the second of those dates to 1800. This not only opens the way for the inclusion of specifically eighteenth-century publics, but also invites consideration of the relation between the multiple publics we examine and the Habermasian "public sphere" that has long been a focus of intense attention in eighteenth-century studies. Is the existence of multiple publics a precondition for the emergence of a public sphere? Or have they some more complex relation to one another?

Keynote speakers include Michael Warner, English, Rutgers University; David Harris Sacks, History, Reed College; Ann Bermingham, History of Art and Architecture, UC Santa Barbara; and Lesley Cormack, History and Classics, University of Alberta.

Abstracts and c.v.'s should be sent to [EMCConference2007@gmail.com](mailto:EMCConference2007@gmail.com) by December 1, 2006. We hope to complete the program and notify applicants no later than December 8, 2006. Proposals for fifteen to twenty-minute papers should be 300 words or less.

Find out more about our conference at <http://emc.english.ucsb.edu/conferences/2006-2007>