SAHS
Southern African Historical Society
Currently hosted by the Department of History, University of Stellenbosch
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25th Biennial Conference -

"Unsettling Stories and Unstable Subjects"

Hosted by the Department of History, University of Stellenbosch, 1-3 July 2015

2015's theme is both a celebration and a challenge. The Southern African Historical Society's (SAHS) 50th birthday marks an important milestone. At this, our 25th conference, we come together to delight in the best our discipline has to offer; to exchange fresh research, novel methodologies, and to engage in robust debate and revision. Our "unstable subjects" – be they themes or historical agents – resist historiographical consensus. The dead rest uneasily in southern Africa, and historians are haunted by our responsibility to them. Amidst controversy, confession and accusation and amidst a multiplicity of sites of memory and meaning, those who research the past have to deal with the uncomfortable ghosts of previous centuries. We historians must offer bold analysis based on a nuanced understanding of the complexities of change over time. Our stories can disrupt the complacent presentist narratives of the status quo, but while they have the power to unsettle, they – in turn – are unsettled by each new generation of historians. Of course, we also come together to acknowledge and confront critical challenges in the profession and strategise ways to negotiate and overcome these. This biennial conference creates space for professional historians and post-graduate students, and cognate specialists like archivists, documentary film-makers and heritage practitioners. As the professional body for Southern Africa, this conference is not exclusive in terms of its theme. We strive to reflect the broad diversity of the discipline – we are therefore open to individual papers or panels on unrelated themes. We are, however, particularly interested in papers on the following themes:

- Disciplining the disciplines: changes, constraints and opportunities in a globalising academic world
- Raiders of the Lost Archive: archival survival in twenty first century Southern Africa
- The geists in our machines? New ways of thinking about industrialization
- The Anthropocene and the end of anthropocentric history?
- Festivals of History: exhibitions, museums, tours, war commemorations and public history
- Whither (or wither) Political History?
- Let a thousand flowers bloom? Reflections on Southern African historiography
- Business history in Africa: corporations, consumers, culprits, casualties and cronies
- Versions of Africa: victors, victims, vitality in socio-economic history
- Lives through the lens: history, photography and film
- Thirsting for the truth: water histories and watering history

Further details regarding procedures for the Editor's award for best article in the *South African Historical Journal*, the SAHS Vice-Presidential annual student essay prize, as well as the special conference edition of the *South African Historical Journal* will be published on the SAHS conference website in due course: http://www.sahs.org.za/.

Paper submissions should include an abstract (max 200 words) and a very short CV (of a brief paragraph). Panel submissions should include a minimum of three papers (each with a 200-word abstract and short CV), a proposed chairperson (if possible), and a 100-word panel abstract. Send to sss@sun.ac.za.

We are delighted to report a confirmed keynote speaker: Jonathan Hyslop, (Colgate University).

Early-Bird Conference registration fee: R2000 (Regular fee: R2 500).
Conference registration commences: 1 March and early-bird registration ends on 10 April 2015.
Post-graduate fee: R1 600. There will also be a limited number of post-graduate bursaries to pay the registration fees. For more information, please email Sandra Swart: sss@sun.ac.za or Prinisha Badassy: Prinisha.badassy@wits.ac.za.