

International Network Popular Uses of the Past (POPUP)

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Introduction

Over the past ten years or so, research into popular uses of the past, popular historical culture and public history (POPUP) has become a booming field in various departments of history and cultural studies all over the world. Several universities also offer Bachelor's and Master's courses about POPUP topics in their education programs. Recently, the German Public History Blogjournal offers interesting contributions and debates on how academic historians, teachers, and others in daily life deal with (public) history (<http://public-history-weekly.oldenbourg-verlag.de/issues/>). In 2010 the Task Force for Public History became an internal commission of the International Committee for Historical Sciences with the support of the National Council on Public History. In 2012 the task force has been transformed in the International Federation for Public History-Fédération Internationale pour l'Histoire Publique. (The [IFPH-FIHP bylaws](#) are in English and in French). The IFPH is an organisation mandated to create international linkages between public historians and promote the development of a world wide network of Public History practitioners. The federation's purpose is to encourage, promote, and coordinate, at an international level, contacts, teaching and research in public history (<http://ifph.hypotheses.org/>).

In the Netherlands, since 2006 the Center for Historical Culture has generated many (externally funded) research projects and education activities in the fields of history education, heritage and historical consciousness, popular uses of (war) heritage (e.g. war tourism and war video games). The History department in Rotterdam also offer the Bachelor's course: 'The Public Role of Historians'. In Belgium the inter-university Institute for Public History organises all kinds of activities (research, education, valorisation) focused on how people deal with the past, including education, museums, commemorations, heritage. In the history department in Ghent Public History is a field of study in the bachelor and master program. In the German master program History in Köln, Public History is an important field of study, aiming at an analysis and reflection of the public uses of history in politics, media, museums and also computer games.

Aims

The International Network Popular Uses of the Past (POPUP) aims

1. intensifying the exchange in research and education in the fields of popular historical culture and public history on an institutional level;
2. stimulating research on the relationship between history education and popular uses of heritage.

We start with a explorative collaboration of three existing research and education groups:

- Center for Historical Culture (Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands). Director is prof.dr. Maria Grever (www.eshcc.eur.nl/english/chc/)
- Institute for Public History (University of Ghent, Belgium). Directors are prof.dr. Gita Deneckere and prof. Dr. Bruno de Wever (<http://www.ipg.ugent.be/>)
- Public History is a field of study within the Master of History (Universität zu Köln, Germany) coordinator is ass. professor Dr. Christine Gundermann (www.histinst.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/master_public_history.html)

Short-term objectives:

- Making the three groups more visible by creating a link on our websites with the latest news on research, activities, publications in the field of popular historical culture and public history.
- Getting to know each other better by organizing one or two meetings a year, and by inviting scholars of the three groups to deliver papers on current research.
- Having the opportunity to refer to each other when we write applications for research grants.

Long-term objectives:

- Exploring the possibilities for joint research applications on European level.
- Organizing student and staff exchange within the three groups.
- Inviting other relevant and interesting centers in the field of POPUP, more particularly those who are doing research in combinations of History Education, Heritage, Popular Historical Culture and Public History.



**Erasmus
University
Rotterdam**