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96th Annual ASALH Conference African Americans and the Civil War

Richmond, Virginia, October 5-9, 2011



The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) is soliciting papers and panels for its upcoming 96th Annual Convention. This year's conference theme is: "African Americans and the U.S. Civil War." Although the program committee welcomes papers and panels on any aspect of African and African American history and culture, special preference will be given to submissions directly related to this year's theme. Using a wide variety of disciplines, this year's conference seeks to explore many aspects of African American involvement in the Civil War, 1861-1865. Important topics include African Americans and the abolitionist movement, African American women and life on the homefront during the war years, African American participation in the military, and African American life and politics during the Reconstruction Era, 1865-1877. In addition, recent popular and scholarly debates over causes of the Civil War will be explored.

In 1861 as the United States stood at the brink of civil war, people of African descent, both slave and free, waited with a watchful eye. They understood that a war between the Union military and the Confederacy might bring about the "day of jubilee" and the destruction of slavery. When the Confederate troops fired upon Fort Sumter on 12 April 1861 and hostilities began, President Abraham Lincoln maintained that the paramount cause was to preserve the Union, not to end the practice of slavery. Frederick Douglass, the most prominent African American leader, declared that regardless of Union intentions, the war would bring an end to the South's "peculiar institution." Over the next four years, the four million people of African descent in the United States sought to prove Frederick Douglass right. Free and enslaved African Americans rallied around the Union flag and the cause of freedom. From the cotton and tobacco fields of the South to the small towns and big cities of the North, nearly 200,000 black men joined the Grand Army of the Republic and took up arms to destroy slavery

and the Confederacy. The ASALH convention theme for 2011 honors the role of people of African descent in ending slavery and preserving the Union. Given the recent political and academic debates about the legacy of the Civil War, papers and panels offering interdisciplinary analyses and perspectives of the continuing legacy of the Civil War in American and African American life are particularly welcome.

The deadline for the submission of panel and paper proposals is 30 April 2011. All proposals must be submitted electronically to ASALH through the All Academic online system at <http://www.asalh.org/callforpapers.html>. For complete panels that are submitted by March 30, day and time preferences will be given on a first come, first served basis. Please refer to the FAQ page for what constitutes a complete panel at http://www.asalh.org/files/FAQs_sheet.doc. Proposals should include title of the paper or panel, author(s) and affiliation(s), an abstract of paper or panel of 200-250 words, and all contact information. Only panel proposal submitters will receive complimentary audio/visual equipment on a first come first serve basis. For information on how to make electronic submissions, please visit www.asalh.org/96thconvention.html and visit the FAQ page at http://www.asalh.org/files/FAQs_sheet.doc for important information regarding submissions. Derrick P. Alridge, Academic Program Chair, dalridge@uga.edu