

President's Panel

This session brings together a diverse group of noted scholars to discuss incorporating theory and interdisciplinary insights into the study of media history, offering concrete examples of how we might look outside of our field for ways to better understand our own research questions and help formulate new ones. This panel is designed to help attendees think more about the bigger “so what” in their research and how it fits into a broader body of knowledge beyond media history. This could include social and cultural history, legal history, and book history as well as a wide range of theoretical and conceptual frameworks to aid our study of communication and journalism in democratic societies. Panelists' work suggests other historical forces and conceptual frameworks that help provide fuller, more viable explanations to substantive questions throughout American history.

Panelists:

Carolyn Kitch is the Laura H. Carnell Professor of Journalism in the Department of Journalism and the Media and Communication Doctoral Program of Temple University's Klein College of Media and Communication.

She will discuss cultural history and the arts as well as new kinds of interpretation in public history. Today and in the past, artistic representation and commentary have been able to “say” things about social problems in ways that are often more powerful and truthful than journalism. These other histories offer inspiration for how media historians could ask new kinds of questions about the past and how we might think about evidence and historical truth differently.

The author of *The Girl on the Magazine Cover*, Kitch has explored visual stereotypes in mass media through a feminist lens, revealing the origins of gender stereotypes in early twentieth century American culture and how magazines created a visual vocabulary for understanding femininity and masculinity, as well as class status. She also has connected memory studies to media and social change in a variety of ways. Her work in this area has expanded in recent years to explore public memory in places like memorials and museums.

Michael Stamm

Professor and Chair, Department of History, Michigan State University

This political and cultural historian specializes in media and journalism history. He has published on such topics as the political economy of news, the materiality of media, the relationship between sound and print, grassroots media reform campaigns, the intellectual history of communication theory, and religious broadcasting. His work is international in scope and, notably, incorporates insights from environmental history.

His book, *Dead Tree Media: Manufacturing the Newspaper in Twentieth-Century North America*, for example, is a history of the rise and fall of both the mass circulation printed newspaper and the particular kind of corporation in the newspaper business that shaped many aspects of the cultural, political, and even physical landscape of North America. It is a history of the printed newspaper tracing its production from the forest to the reader. Popular assessments of

printed newspapers have become so grim that some have taken to calling them “dead tree media” as a way of invoking an idea of the medium’s demise. *Dead Tree Media* explores the literal truth hidden in this dismissive expression: printed newspapers really are material goods made from trees. And, in the twentieth century, the overwhelming majority the trees cut down in the service of printing newspapers in the United States were in Canada. *Dead Tree Media* is an international history of these commodity chains connecting Canadian trees and US readers.

Melissa Greene-Blye (Miami Tribe of Oklahoma), assistant professor University of Kansas
William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications
Jared Nally (Miami Tribe of Oklahoma), graduate student, Miami University (Ohio)

These two scholars worked together to offer a particular example of interdisciplinary work through their study of American Indian boarding school newspapers’ significant role in the overall historiography of such institutions. Greene-Blye and Nally’s research focuses on the literary traditions that American Indian boarding school assimilation narratives draw from. They situate such assimilation narratives among America’s literary history and illustrate a connection to components found in both assimilation narratives and American captivity narratives. They further scholars’ understanding of these key sources about America’s era of off-reservation boarding schools through a propagandist narrative lens contextualized as part of early American literature as well as the lens of transnational conflict.