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# Created Equal?



## The Irish Association of American Studies Annual Conference

25 - 26th April, 2014

National University of Ireland, Galway

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### Call For Papers

On the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the IAAS 2014 Annual Conference will investigate the notion of 'equality' in the American context.

The belief that "all men are created equal" was proclaimed self-evident in the Declaration of Independence. The phrase has been repeated and critiqued in the theatre of United States politics from Abraham Lincoln in the Gettysburg Address, Martin Luther King Jr. in his "I have a Dream" speech and Elizabeth Cady Stanton in the 1848 Declaration of Rights and Sentiments. The historic struggle for equal rights in various forms belies the motto, and highlights America's complicated relationship with 'equality'.

Enacted on July 2nd, 1964, the Civil Rights Act "prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin." The reality of a non-discriminatory society on these and other issues continues to be sought and fought on several fronts, as successive movements have challenged inequality in American society. Most recently, in June 2013, two key Supreme Court decisions highlighted the evolution of such movements: the defeat of the 1996 Defence of Marriage Act sparked widespread celebration among equal-rights groups, yet just one day earlier the same court voted to overturn Section 4 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, thereby removing restrictions on nine southern states with a history of discriminatory practice in voting procedure. A Texas State Attorney immediately responded by declaring that Voter ID laws—laws which have historically been used to limit voters of colour—would "take effect immediately."

At the IAAS Conference, 2014, we invite participants to explore America's strained relationship with the concept of equality and its impact on citizens of different race, religion, gender or origin.

Possible topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Historic struggles for equality
- The Civil War
- The Civil Rights Movement
- Media representations: film and television
- Musical expressions of marginalised peoples
- American borders: North and South
- The concept of 'melting pot' America
- Literature, poetry, novels, film and theatre exploring issues of equality
- International relations
- The architecture of equality

Please submit abstracts via <http://goo.gl/W8fro2> (case sensitive)

The deadline for submissions is 10th January, 2014.

Contact [IAASConference@gmail.com](mailto:IAASConference@gmail.com) for more information,  
or visit <http://iaas.ie/events/2014-iaas-annual-conference/>