



Celebrating P.T. Barnum's 200th Birthday!

***From Andrew Jackson to Michael Jackson:
P.T. Barnum and the American Cult of Celebrity
Presentation at The Barnum Museum by Associate Dean of Yale College***

On Saturday, September 11 at 1 p.m. a program called: *From Andrew Jackson to Michael Jackson: P.T. Barnum and the American Cult of Celebrity* will be presented at The Barnum Museum. Mark J. Schenker, an Associate Dean of Yale College and Dean of Academic Affairs, will discuss the career of P. T. Barnum in the context of showmanship and celebrity status, with references also to the celebrity of Abraham Lincoln, Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain.

Noting that Andrew Jackson became one of the first national celebrities of 19th-century America, Schenker will discuss how the Age of Jackson set the stage for the populist success of Barnum's new showmanship—a showmanship in which he made himself a celebrity. Barnum's influence on the cult of celebrity extended well into the 20th century, which witnessed the continued development of the mass culture that Barnum helped to create.

Mark Schenker holds a Ph.D. from Columbia University in English and Comparative Literature; he has been at Yale since 1990 and currently serves as the Dean of Academic Affairs. He has led book discussions on a wide range of topics for more than 20 years and also given numerous lectures on writers and their works at public libraries and other venues throughout Connecticut. He was the recipient of the 2001 Wilbur Cross Award for Outstanding Humanities Scholar.

Celebrating the 200th birthday of Phineas Taylor Barnum, born July 5, 1810 in Bethel CT, this year the Barnum Museum is chronicling the life and times of this extraordinary showman and the history of Bridgeport where Barnum served as Mayor. For a complete listing of anniversary year events celebrating this amazing – and sometimes outrageous – showman, civic leader and politician, visit www.barnum-museum.org. The original museum building, owned by the City of Bridgeport is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

What: *From Andrew Jackson to Michael Jackson: P.T. Barnum and the American Cult of Celebrity. A presentation by Mark J. Schenker*

Where: The Barnum Museum, 820 Main Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604

When: Saturday, September 11, 2010 at 1 p.m.

Cost: Program is free with General Admission: Adults: \$8, Seniors and College Students: \$6, Children 4 - 17: \$5, Under 4: Free. Lecture is not appropriate for children under 12. Call 203-331-1104 for more information.