

## [Call For Papers, Washington University Graduate History Conference: The Spatial Turn](#)

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Call for Papers

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Anthropology, Geography, Graduate Studies, Humanities, Urban History / Studies

2017 GHA Conference Call for Papers

The Spatial Turn

The Graduate History Association at Washington University in St. Louis is pleased to announce their fifth annual Graduate Conference, to be held March 31<sup>st</sup>-April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 on the Danforth Campus in St. Louis, Missouri. We invite graduate and post-doctoral students engaged in research across disciplines to submit proposals for this year's conference theme: The Spatial Turn. The Conference will explore questions pertaining to the social, political, economic and cultural relations between people and landscapes.

Since the 1980s scholars in the humanities have engaged with the question of space as a historical actor in itself rather than merely a backdrop to history. Spaces are both constitutive and representative. This Conference will interrogate ways in which to analyze human interactions with environments. Participants are invited to critically explore and reflect on at least one of the following threads.

1. **Imagining Space:** How do maps and other visual and textual representations appropriate and construct space? How do visual representations serve as ways of comprehending and knowing the world and ultimately as artefacts of the values and ideologies of their producers? How are past, present and future conceptions of space negotiated through visual and literary representations?
2. **Claiming Space:** How do individuals and institutions conceptualize and claim space as their own? How has order and standardization been imposed upon spaces by institutions, empires, state actors, property owners and investors? What ideologies and beliefs have been created and resolved out of the claiming of space? How have identities, both individual and collective, been shaped by and through human relationships with space?

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3. Landscape and Historical Memory: How are narratives, ideologies and memories—collective and individual—constructed through space? Papers might consider topics such as historical preservation, communal and national identity, remembrance and forgetting.
4. Historiography: How are narratives of the past shaped by present understandings of national, regional or local boundaries? How do they reinforce ideological agendas? Papers might include topics such as the juxtaposition between city and country in historical narratives, position of “the Mediterranean” in constructions of the past, the prominence of sectional narratives in American History (i.e. the idea of the frontier and the North/South divide), or the idea of primitive versus modern spaces in histories of colonialism.
5. GIS and the Digital Humanities: How are the digital humanities revising historical narratives and reshaping our conception of historical landscapes? What is gained and, perhaps, lost through the new technologies scholars are bringing to spatial analysis?

The Conference will include a keynote panel at 5 PM on March 31<sup>st</sup> that will address the methodological approaches scholars have brought to the study of space. The panel will be headlined by geographer Richard Campanella of Tulane University, medieval historian Carrie Beneš of the New College of Florida, and anthropologist Geoff Childs of Washington University in St. Louis. Campanella is the award-winning author of nine broadly interdisciplinary books on the historical urban geography of New Orleans. Beneš is an expert on communal identity in late medieval Italy and the author of *Urban Legends: Civic Identity and the Classical Past in Northern Italy, 1250-1350*. Childs is an expert on demography, migration and land tenure in Tibet and the author of *Tibetan Diary: From Birth to Death and Beyond in a Himalayan Valley of Nepal*.

Please submit a 250-word abstract for your proposed conference paper through the [conference website](#) by December 1, 2016. Although not required, we particularly encourage papers that fit with one of the proposed panel themes. Direct any questions to Taylor Desloge ([tdesloge@wustl.edu](mailto:tdesloge@wustl.edu)) and Luca Foti ([l.r.foti@wustl.edu](mailto:l.r.foti@wustl.edu)).

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URL:

<https://history.artsci.wustl.edu/conference-registration>