

[CFP: An Ending of Sorts: Disappearance and Disenchantment in Modernity](#)

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Call for Papers

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Maryland, United States

Subject Fields:

Art, Art History & Visual Studies, Intellectual History, Literature, Philosophy, Humanities

An Ending of Sorts: Disappearance and Disenchantment in Modernity

The Graduate Students of the Humanities Center of Johns Hopkins University are pleased to announce a conference to be held on March 3 and 4, 2017. We are honored to host keynote speakers Peter Gordon (Amabel B. James Professor of History, Harvard University) and Megan Quigley (Associate Professor of English, Villanova University).

What does it mean for a thing to come to its end? What marks the passage from being from non-being? What persists beyond erasure? Beneath these ontological questions lie even more intricate epistemological knots—by which channels are things or ideas even legible or detectable in the world?

People, institutions, and ideas can and do disappear, or transform in unrecognizable ways. The loss of objects or sensibilities and the endeavor to recover, rehabilitate, or document, is widely explored in psychoanalysis, literature, art, and philosophy. These engagements register a more generalized kind of disappearance that alters or even constitutes our experience of the world.

This experience of loss is typified by the uniquely modern problem of “Disenchantment” [Entzauberung]. With origins in German Romanticism, disenchantment received its most prominent analysis in the work of Max Weber, heir to Nietzsche’s announcement of the death of God. The question of how and why we ought to live, once self-evident in the unity of nature and culture, goes unanswered. Weber’s metaphor of the “the iron cage” [stahlhartes Gehäuse] describes the subject of the disenchanted world, condemned to meaningless activity without the redemption once promised by religion.

How do we understand loss? Does value disappear, or is this sentiment its own form of false consciousness? How does absence shape experience? Can memory counteract loss? Can strategies of redemption or re-enchantment be formulated?

In the interdisciplinary spirit of the Humanities Center, we invite papers from literature and the arts, philosophy and critical theory, anthropology and sociology, and any other relevant field that take up

questions of disappearance, loss, and disenchantment, as well as those that consider the scholar's role in the recuperation or preservation of the object of inquiry.

Abstracts of up to 350 words for a 20 minute presentation should be submitted to disappearancehc2017@gmail.com by December 16, 2016. Please include your affiliation, contact information, and paper title.

Contact Info:

Please feel free to contact organizers Jacob Levi and Ben Gillespie at the email below.

Contact Email:

disappearancehc2017@gmail.com

URL:

http://humctr.jhu.edu/graduate/Grad_Conference_2017