

CALL FOR PAPERS

Projecting the Past and Recalling the Future: Orienting the Self in Time

15th annual Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies Graduate Student Conference

The University of New Mexico, Albuquerque

April 7-8, 2023

Keynote lecture to be delivered by: Dr. Rebecca Kennedy, Denison University

When the world came to a grinding halt in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the disruption of the societal inertia brought into relief problematic social structures of our present, which opened a space of possibility for reflection on the complex historical currents that birthed this present. We may wonder where these historical currents will lead us in the future, and what sorts of futures may be possible. In the disorientation of upheaval, how does our conceptualization of and relation to the now-uncertain future shift?

Often, we use invocations of the past and visions of the future to aid in the orientation of the self in the liminal space that is the present. This conference is intended to be a forum for the exploration of examples across cultures and epochs wherein the past (in the forms of histories, mythologies, identities, Edens, primordial soups) and the future (in the forms of fantasies, nightmares, predictions, premonitions, cautions, prophecies, singularities, environmental catastrophes) are summoned and mobilized. In so doing, we pursue an understanding of how the present, and the self in the present, is constructed in the liminal spaces between these past and future reference points. From which utopias and dystopias do we descend, and toward which do we incline? For what political purposes do we summon the past and future? Can we conceive of a narrative, or a self, without any temporal reference points?

We welcome topics which engage with these questions in any form of media (Literature, Cinema, Fine-Arts, etc.). The conference is open (but not limited) to fields such as Languages, Classics, History, Literature, Anthropology, Philosophy, Art History, and Sociology.

Possible session topics include, but are not limited to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Utopias and dystopias of the past and future<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Pre/post-colonial utopias and dystopias• (Un)imagined futures and futures past• History, historicization, historiography• Weaponizing/Mobilizing the past (or future) in the present	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classical reception• Philosophical notions of temporality (Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, Benjamin, Arendt)• Narrativity and time• Notions of identity and authorship through time
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Conference Structure: The conference will be in-person (with the option of synchronous online participation for out-of-state participants) and will consist of the keynote address, panels and a closing workshop led by the keynote speaker. Panel presentations will be 20 minutes in length, plus discussion time (10 minutes). There will also be a closing reception on Saturday evening, which is open to all participants and audience members.

To submit your proposal, please send a 500 word abstract along with a brief biographical statement to csconference.unm@gmail.com by January 29, 2023. Selected participants will be notified by February 8, 2023.