



Hynes Convention Center



Marriot Copley Place



Sheraton Boston

HUMAN RIGHTS AND CRITICAL GEOPOLITICS OF OUTER SPACE Call for Papers

October 7, 2016

Dear Colleagues,

Building upon panels on the Geographies of Outer Space held at the 2015 and 2016 Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, we seek to again bring together critical geographers interested in non-Earth spaces. In accordance with one the major themes of this year's AAG meeting, '*Mainstreaming Human Rights in Geography and the AAG*', this paper session is particularly interested in perspectives which address the intersection of the critical geopolitics of outer space and human rights issues. Papers are encouraged to address the ramifications of processes in outer space geopolitics that have manifest outcomes related to global human rights.

As discussed in previous panels, human endeavors are extending many of the most central issues in geography—property rights and enclosures, the politics of knowledge production, and questions of pollution and conservation, *inter alia*—to places beyond our terrestrial home. The engagement of off-Earth spaces by both academic geographers as well as by practitioners in the fields of aerospace engineering, communications, planetary exploration, and warfare (amongst others) take place within varied sets of discourses and values.

To this point, Outer Space as both a place, and space, of human endeavor has yet to emerge as a major sub-field of geography, despite its importance in everyday life. With paper sessions and networking over the past several years in the US and the UK, the organizers of this session wish to continue the productive dialogue amongst outer space geographers. The goal of the

AAG 2017 sessions is to convene a special issue journal publication on the session topic and the eventual formation of an AAG specialty group.

The organizers invite papers that contribute to the continuing maturation of the field focusing on this year's theme of the intersection of the critical geopolitics of outer space with human rights issues. **Topics may include, but are not limited to:**

Access to space-based technologies as a human right (e.g. education, communication)
Satellites, surveillance, and orbital debris
Capitalist construction of Outer Space geographies and materials
Discourses of Armageddon, survival, and the avoidance of Earthly inequalities
Discourses of colonialism in space exploration
Gendered discourses within the space industry
Gendered or sexualized productions of planetary bodies and objects
Histories of warfare and war profiteering in the Space industry
International space partnerships with human rights-violating regimes
Planetary contamination and intergenerational equity
Public funding of private space companies
Public and private international space cooperation
Space assets and environmental justice in addressing climate change and natural disasters

The **format** of the session will be built around short papers (2 - 5000 words) exploring empirical, theoretical, and/or epistemological dimensions of these or other related themes. The purpose of the required format is to gather submissions for inclusion in a special issue or edited volume on the topic of the session. Accordingly, the organizers request complete paper drafts by March 1, 2017 in order to allow adequate time for review and revisions in advance of the Annual Meeting.

Paper Session Deadlines:

1. Please submit an abstract to the organizers by **October 25th, 2016**.
2. You must complete your registration and abstract submission at <http://www.aag.org/cs/annualmeeting/register> by **October 29th, 2016**.
3. Please send a complete draft of your paper to the organizers by **March 1, 2017**.

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**Participants and Interested Researchers are Cordially Invited to a Networking Reception
Immediately Following the Sessions**

Time and Location Announced Following AAG 2017 Schedule Release