

Second Annual Berkeley International and Global History (Big-H) Graduate Student Conference

Call for Papers

“Actors and Agency in the International Past”

The Berkeley International and Global History (Big-H) committee invites graduate students and postdoctoral scholars to submit proposals for the Second Annual Berkeley International and Global History (Big-H) Graduate Student Conference to take place at the University of California, Berkeley, on March 15-16, 2013.

In recent years, historians have offered new kinds of stories about the past to describe and explain processes that transcend nation-state boundaries. These efforts challenge us to reconsider our understandings of responsibility and power in history and in particular, who and what can effect change. This conference will consider the transnational histories and agency of non-state actors—such as people, ideas, cultures, environments, businesses, commodities, institutions—as well as their encounters, collaboration, and conflict with state actors.

How and under what conditions have non-state actors been able to influence the actions of states? For example, how have businesses and states collided or cooperated in history?

How have non-human actors, including microbes, plants, and animals, aided or undermined the actions of states?

How do actors working at a local scale shape, import, and change international and global processes and narratives?

It is the intent of the conference organizers to put scholars in dialogue across regional and temporal specializations in the hope that broad comparison might reveal recurrent historical dynamics. While we welcome researchers who study the general processes of international change we also welcome specialists of particular regions who seek to position their work within a broader geographic framework. Specialists from Berkeley and beyond will provide commentary on the papers. The conference will conclude with a plenary session, at which several leading scholars in the field of international and global history will discuss broad issues pertaining to the theme of the conference.

Graduate students and postdoctoral scholars who are interested in participating in the conference should submit a one-page paper proposal and one-page curriculum vitae (in Word, RTF, or PDF format) to bighist@gmail.com. Participants will be asked to pre-circulate their paper drafts. We will not accept panel proposals. Applications must be received by October 15, 2012, in order to be considered. Notification of acceptance will be made in November. For additional information, please e-mail the conference organizers at bighist@gmail.com.

