

# Words Matter: Politics, Rhetoric, and Social Justice

Indiana University Bloomington

March 24-25, 2017

We are issuing a Call for Proposals for scholarly and creative submissions for the 15th Annual Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference entitled “Words Matter: Politics, Rhetoric, and Social Justice,” hosted by the English Department at Indiana University Bloomington, March 24-25, 2017.

This conference aims to interrogate politics, rhetoric, and social justice in moments of national and international upheaval. We aim to address these terms individually, but also their entanglements across historical moments and geographical locations.

What are the modern and pre-modern histories of these terms? How do literary and visual texts engage questions of politics, rhetoric, and social justice? What are the physical and material manifestations of these concepts? How do genre, discipline, and methodology impact the representation and study of these topics? What roles do both written and spoken words have in politics? Who/what has a voice and who/what is silenced socially and politically? How is rhetoric informed by politics, and what are the implications of their entanglements? What do we mean by “social justice” and how has this term been shaped historically? How do digital and virtual cultures intersect with social justice, and how have those cultures changed our perceptions of political movement and rhetorical engagement?

We invite submissions from all disciplines addressing, but not limited to, the following topics:

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Black Lives Matter, critical race studies, (anti-)colonial and postcolonial literature

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materialisms, phenomenology, object oriented ontology

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testimony, witnessing, civic duty

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anatomy, bodies of texts (corpora), the blazoned body

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language(s), translations, textuality, signification, vernacular/discourse studies

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advertising, memes, slander, mudslinging, rumors, gossip, virality, trolling, verbal abuse

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articulations of remembrance, monuments, postmemory, therapy writing, memoirs, trauma study

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tattoos, body art, graffiti, banners

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protest literature, pamphlets, broadsides, community activism, grassroots politics

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reproductive rights, gender and sexuality studies

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legality, legislation, legal personhood, “the letter of the law,” sovereignty

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writing as activism, digital activism, Twitter, journalism, letter-writing campaigns, epistolary cultures

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communication studies, composition studies, pedagogy

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lyrics, music/sound studies, poetry

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global citizens, peace studies, area studies, nationhood

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vocality, muteness, silence, censorship, animal advocacy, post-humanism

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storytelling, myths, typology, “a people’s history”

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close/distant readings, scales of reading, big data, text mining

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structuralism, poetics, aesthetics, formalism, figurative language

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sacred words, religion, naming

We invite proposals for individual scholarly papers, creative works, and panels organized by topic. Please submit (both as an attachment and in the body of the email) an abstract of no more than 250 words along with the following personal details: name, institutional affiliation, degree level, email, and phone number.

**Submission Deadline: December 16, 2016** (email to [iugradconference@gmail.com](mailto:iugradconference@gmail.com))

This conference is generously supported by the Department of English, Department of Anthropology, Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies, and Cultural Studies Program.