CALL FOR PAPERS
DEADLINE: January 15, 2015

“Africa Misperceived: Beyond Africa as a Laboratory”
2015 Northwestern Program of African Studies Conference
Northwestern University, Evanston
April 10-11, 2015

Speaker: Dr. Helen Tilley
Associate Professor, Department of History, Northwestern University

The Program of African Studies graduate student seminar (AfriSem) invites graduate student papers with innovative theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of Africa and African communities engaging with the theme “beyond Africa as a laboratory.” Interested participants should submit abstracts by email to: m-bocchese2010@nlaw.northwestern.edu Please include your name, affiliation, and contact details.

Researchers often approach the study of Africa with their horizon of possible inquiries limited by the dominant narratives of the region in both the academy and popular media alike. Africa is often positioned as a place in need of interventions, a source of data, or the unruly exception in case study comparisons. This conference – titled “Africa Misperceived: Beyond Africa as a Laboratory” – aims to bring together graduate students working to counter these trends through innovative theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of Africa and African communities, whether they are located on the continent or beyond its geographic boundaries.

We are interested in novel studies of aspects of society, governance, healthcare, and education that provide a grounded understanding of lived experiences in the region. We welcome papers that consider community involvement and collaboration in research projects through the production, collection, or dissemination of data. Papers from all disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences are encouraged, covering all time periods. We are particularly keen on accepting papers with multi-disciplinary approaches to qualitative and/or quantitative studies, archival, or archaeological studies of Africa.

Potential Panel Topics Include (but are not limited to):

- History of Science and Medicine in Africa
- Art in Africa
- Deconstructing the State: Sub-National Analysis
- The Sociological Implications of Ongoing Economic Change
- Urban Development and Culture in Africa’s Cities
- Navigating State-Society Relations in Africa
- Politics as Performance

This conference is primarily a forum for graduate students to present their research (in various stages of development) to a cross-disciplinary audience. A limited number of travel grants are available on a first-come basis. Please contact Marco Bocchese with questions: m-bocchese2010@nlaw.northwestern.edu