



Natural Not Yet Understood: The Supernatural from Antiquity to the Medieval Period

Department of Classical Studies, Brandeis University
Graduate Student Conference

April 13th, 2019

Keynote Speaker:
Professor Debbie Felton, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Humans have always been drawn to the idea of creatures and worlds that exist alongside or outside of our own. These extraordinary ideas can take many forms, from average people with usual abilities to worlds of the dead and fantastic beasts. But as Elbert Hubbard once said, “The supernatural is the natural not yet understood.” Today, we have realized that many of the past’s supernatural events were simply misunderstood natural phenomena. We seek papers roughly 10 minutes in length that explore this idea of the supernatural of the distant past either within its original context or through a modern lens.

Possible topics include: Ancient religion, cultic practices, divination, ghosts and spirits, magic and witchcraft, monsters and the monstrous, mythology, and the preternatural more generally.

We welcome submissions that touch on these and similar topics from graduate students of all levels and from disciplines including: Anthropology, Art History, Classics, Comparative Literature, History, Jewish Studies, Near Eastern Studies, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Sexuality Studies, and Women’s Studies.

Abstracts of no more than 300 words must be received by January 31, 2019. Please submit an anonymous abstract to brandeisclasgradconf@gmail.com in PDF (.pdf) format. AV support will be provided.

Please send all questions to the conference committee: Derrek Joyce (djjoyce@brandeis.edu),

Matthew Previto (mjp6853@brandeis.edu), and Katherine Riggs (kriggs93@brandeis.edu).