

## Feeling Fragmentary: A Graduate Student Material Culture Symposium



The isolation of the past year as a result of COVID-19 safety measures has left many of us feeling as though parts of ourselves are missing with fewer connections to the wider world. In many ways, we are feeling fragmentary. Yet, fragments in their material form are often sculptural and present critically important clues for scholars of all kinds. Taking its cue from these evocative items, “Feeling Fragmentary” is a symposium that aims to build community across the UW campus via short presentations that not only

point toward speakers’ larger research practice, but together through assemblage form a new kind of “whole.”

### Call for Participants - now accepting proposals

The University of Wisconsin–Madison [Material Culture Focus Group](#) invites graduate students to apply for the virtual symposium taking place on Friday, May 14th, 2021. This is an event by and for graduate students at UW–Madison with the goal of connecting individuals with mutual interest in Material Culture.

The Material Culture Focus Group defines material culture broadly: as a methodology in which practitioners use objects, materials, or physical processes as their primary entrypoint for inquiry. The Group is designed to serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and research related to the study of objects, artifacts, cultural landscapes, the built environment, and other material traces/facets of daily life.

Graduate students from any department at UW–Madison are encouraged to participate as presenters, moderators, or attendees whether they label themselves art historians, anthropologists, folklorists, social or cultural historians, literary scholars, designers, artists, archivists, or scientists.

This event is organized through the [Center for Design and Material Culture](#) and the [Design Studies](#) department at the [School of Human Ecology](#).

**Proposals are due by 11:59PM (CDT) on April 16, 2021.**

## Event Format:

The day will be organized around concise and focused presentations which either explore one object/material/process or an aspect of methodology related to material culture studies that speaks to the presenters' core interests and approaches. Each presentation will be 5-7 minutes long followed by a 10 minute seminar-style discussion.

The day-long symposium will take place virtually via Zoom on Friday, May 14, 2021. Two sessions will reflect the diversity of disciplines at the University.

An additional unstructured hour at the end of the day after presentations will conclude the symposium to facilitate socialization and/or feedback. One goal of this time will be to define future avenues and directions for the Material Culture Focus Group and how it can best serve students on campus.

Further details will be announced closer to the event including how to register.

## Proposal Format:

Presenter: Presentations should help the audience and other participants to understand what questions drive your research. Proposals should be no more than 250 words with one accompanying image. Images must feature a description and credits. We discourage reliance on exclusionary discipline-specific jargon without explanation.

Moderator/Chair: Those interested in moderating panels and discussion should send a brief introductory email with information regarding your academic interests in relation to this event, and if applicable, any moderating experience.

Correspondence and proposals should be sent to symposium co-chairs Natalie Wright ([newright3@wisc.edu](mailto:newright3@wisc.edu)) and Maeve M. Hogan ([mmhogan3@wisc.edu](mailto:mmhogan3@wisc.edu)).



This call last updated March 23, 2021. Featured image: Salt fragment (possibly), ca. 1675-1700. Delftware. 3 x 4 x 4 cm. Ex. Noël Hume Collection, [The Chipstone Foundation 2019.58](#).