

# Think Spatial

The UCSB brown-bag forum on spatial thinking

## Presents

Kate McDonald

Department of History  
University of California, Santa Barbara

## The Accidental Digital Humanist: The *Bodies and Structures* Project and the Challenge of Spatial Humanities

Tuesday, May 15, 2018

12:00 p.m.

3512 Phelps Hall

### ABSTRACT:

Kate McDonald is excited to share a digital spatial history project, *Bodies and Structures: Deep-Mapping the Spaces of Japanese History*, which she is currently developing with her colleague David Ambaras (History, NC State). *Bodies and Structures* is a platform for researching and teaching the spatial histories of Japan, its empire, and the larger worlds of which they were a part. It begins from the premise that space and place are fundamental to humanistic inquiry. It unfolds into a method of writing spatial histories that reveal the multiple topologies of historical experience rather than a chronology of spatial thought or territorial transformation.

The talk will introduce the site and the intellectual stakes of the project. In particular, she will focus on two themes: (a) how she started with a plan to write a new kind of spatial history and ended up knee-deep in the digital humanities; and (b) why, after two years into the project, she argues that the spatial humanities need a digital platform like *Bodies and Structures*.

**There will be time to explore and discuss the site—please bring your laptop in addition to your lunch!**

### BIO:

**Kate McDonald** is Assistant Professor of Modern Japanese History at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She is the author of *Placing Empire: Travel and the Social Imagination in Imperial Japan* (University of California Press, 2017) and co-director of the *Bodies and Structures: Deep-Mapping the Spaces of Japanese History* project.



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