

Matthew DeMaio

Curriculum Vitae

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EDUCATION

- 2024** **PhD, Anthropology**
The George Washington University
Committee: Ilana Feldman (chair), Sarah E. Wagner and Mona Atia
- 2020** **MPhil, Anthropology**
The George Washington University
- 2016** **MA, Palestine Studies** with Distinction
SOAS, University of London
- 2013** **BA, Islamic Civilizations and Societies, Arabic Studies Minor**
Boston College
Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2025-Present **Assistant Professor of Anthropology**, Lafayette College
- 2024-2025 **Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology**, Lafayette College

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Displacement, place, placemaking, digital placemaking, belonging, memory, urban space, refugee camps, diasporas, politics and culture of the Middle East, Palestine and Palestinian refugees

PUBLICATIONS

Peer Reviewed Articles

“Accumulating Place: Multiplicities of Movements and Attachments among Palestinian Refugees from Syria.” *City & Society* 37, no. 1 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1111/ciso.70007>.

(Working draft awarded the Suad Joseph Student Paper Award from the Association of Middle East Anthropology of the Middle East Studies Association and an honorable mention from the Graduate Student Paper Competition from the Critical Urban Anthropology Association of the American Anthropological Association).

“THE REFUGEE CAMP AS SITUATION AND RELATION: Yarmouk and the Stakes of Camp Space amid Urban Integration.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* (2026). <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.70060>.

Book Reviews

- 2021 Review of *Understanding Israel/Palestine: Race, Nation and Human Rights in the Conflict*, by Eve Spangler. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 55 (2). <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743821000295>
- 2019 Review of *For the War Yet to Come: Planning Beirut's Frontiers*, by Hiba Bou Akar. *Anthropological Quarterly* 92 (4). <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/746294>
- 2017 Review of *Dying to Forget: Oil, Power, Palestine, and the Foundations of US Policy in the Middle East*, by Irene L. Gendzier. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 29 (4). <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09557571.2016.1271188>.

Blogs

- 2021 “Lenticular Research and the Possibilities of Digital Archival Methods.” *Anthropology News* website, July 30, 2021. <https://www.anthropology-news.org/articles/lenticular-research-and-the-possibilities-of-digital-archival-methods/>
- 2019 “Yarmouk was a City, not a Camp”: Palestinians from Syria Confront an Unfamiliar Meaning of Palestinianness in Lebanon’s Refugee Camps.” *American Ethnologist* website, March 17, 2019. <http://americanethnologist.org/features/reflections/yarmouk-was-a-city-not-a-camp>.

AWARDS, HONORS AND GRANTS

Writing Awards

- 2024 **Honorable Mention: Malcolm H. Kerr Dissertation Award (Social Sciences)**
Middle East Studies Association
- 2023 **Suad Joseph Student Paper Award**
Association of Middle East Anthropology of the Middle East Studies Association
- 2023 **Honorable Mention: Graduate Student Paper Prize Competition**
Critical Urban Anthropology Association

Writing Grants

- 2023 **Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship**
Institute for Citizens and Scholars, to support dissertation writing

Research Grants

- 2020 **Research Fellowship**
Palestinian-American Research Center, to conduct fieldwork in Amman, Jordan
- 2018 **Graduate Student Research Grant**
American Ethnological Society, to conduct fieldwork in Beirut, Lebanon

Teaching Awards

- 2022 **Philip J. Amsterdam Graduate Teaching Award**
GWU award for outstanding teaching
- 2022 **CCAS Dean’s Graduate Instructorship**
Funding to design and teach a GW Dean’s Seminar for first year students

George Washington University Grants

- 2017-2023 Presidential Merit Graduate Assistantship and Fellowship**
Funding for PhD graduate study
- 2021, 2019, 2018 Lewis N. Cotlow Fieldwork Grant**
Department of Anthropology, to conduct archival and ethnographic research in Beirut, Lebanon and Washington, DC
- 2019 PhD Research Grant**
Institute for Middle East Studies, to conduct research in Beirut, Lebanon
- 2019, 2018 Summer Language Grant (Arabic)**
Institute for Middle East Studies
- Fulbright Student Program**
2013-2014 English Teaching Assistantship
Amman, Jordan

TEACHING

Lafayette College

Migration
Theories of Society
Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
Anthropology of the City
Anthropology of the Middle East

George Washington University

Instructor of Record

Spring 2023 Foundations of Anthropological Thought
Fall 2022 Dean's Seminar: Cities and Societies
Fall 2021 Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology
Spring 2021 Anthropology of the Middle East

Teaching Assistant

Fall 2019 Foundations of Anthropological Thought with Dr. Sarah E. Wagner
Spring 2018 Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology with Dr. Erica Wortham
Fall 2017 Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology with Dr. R. Richard Grinker

INVITED TALKS AND GUEST LECTURES

Invited Talks

- 2025** "Finding Refuge in Community," Keynote Address: Every Campus a Refugee Gathering, September 12th, 2025.
- 2025** "Made to Move: Placemaking and Accumulated Attachments among Palestinian Refugees from Syria," Invited Talk: Lehigh University. March 4th, 2025

Guest Lectures

- 2025** "Place, Movement and Attachment among Palestinian Refugees from Syria," Guest Lecture: Refugee, Migration, and Displacement (Undergraduate course). Christopher Newport University. October 17th, 2025
- 2025** "Doing Digital Ethnography," Guest Lecture: *Methods in Sociocultural Anthropology* (Graduate course). George Washington University. March 6th, 2025.

- 2024** “Digital Archival Methods,” Guest Lecture: *Methods in Sociocultural Anthropology* (Undergraduate course). George Washington University. November 20th, 2024
- 2024** “Digital and Archival Methods,” Guest Lecture: *Methods in Sociocultural Anthropology* (Graduate course). George Washington University. March 8th, 2024.
- 2022** “The Science of the Human” Guest Lecture: *An Introduction to MENA Anthropology* (Undergraduate course). AMIDEAST Amman. March 16, 2022

CONFERENCE, SYMPOSIUM AND PANEL ORGANIZING

- 2025** Panel co-organizer, “Re/Considering and Re/Imagining Community in the Middle East. November 22-25. Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting. Washington, DC.
- 2022** Panel co-organizer, “Displacement/Emplacement: Pasts, Presents, Futures,” November 15-19. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. Seattle.
- 2020** Panel co-organizer, “The Meantimes of Displacement,” March 26-28. American Ethnological Society. Austin. *Conference canceled due to COVID-19 Pandemic.*
- 2019** Graduate Student Symposium co-organizer, “Development, Humanitarianism and Security in the Middle East: Legacies and Futures.” September 20. Institute for Middle East Studies, The George Washington University. Washington DC.
- 2019** Graduate Student Symposium co-organizer, “Living Inbetween: Belongings and Exclusions.” April 19. The George Washington University Anthropology Department. Washington DC.

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

- 2025** “Community as Critique: Narratives of Mutual Assistance amid Iterations of Palestinian Displacement.” November 22-25. Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting. Washington, DC.
- 2025** “The Refugee Camp and the Stakes of Urban Life.” March 24-28. American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting. Detroit.
- 2023** “Accumulating Amman: Belongings and Attachments over Iterations of Palestinian Displacement.” November 2-5. Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting. Montreal.
- 2023** “Remembering Refuge: Digital Memorialization and Commemoration of Damascus’s Yarmouk Palestinian Refugee Camp.” October 11-13. Conference: Race, Ethnicity and Place. Washington DC.

- 2023** “‘It Only Lacked a University’: The Urban Identity of Damascus’s Yarmouk Refugee Camp.” April 28. Symposium: Refugee Cities Working Group, Columbia University Center for the Study of Social Difference. New York.
- 2023** “Intersecting Urbanity and Campness in Damascus’s Yarmouk Palestinian Refugee Camp.” March 23-27. American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting. Denver.
- 2023** “Urban Encampment in Yarmouk.” February 16. Conference: Middle East Urbanism Beyond Conflict. Columbia University. New York.
- 2022** “Accumulating Place: Displacement and Belonging among Palestinian Refugees from Syria.” November 15-19. American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting. Seattle.
- 2020** “Accommodating in the Meantime: Resurgent Instability and Precarity among Palestinian Refugees from Syria in Lebanon.” March 26-28. American Ethnological Society Annual Meeting. Austin. *Conference canceled due to COVID-19 Pandemic.*
- 2019** "Finding (a) Home in Beirut: Palestinian Refugees from Syria Negotiating Unfamiliar Spaces of Exile in Lebanon." November 20-24. American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting. Vancouver.
- 2019** “‘The State Should Take Control:’ Palestinian Refugees from Syria on Sovereignty, Security and Weapons in Beirut’s Refugee Camps.” March 14-16. American Ethnological Society Annual Meeting. St. Louis.
- 2018** “Out of Exile: Imaging the Homeland in Palestinian Return Memoirs” June 25-28. Conference: British Society for Middle Eastern Studies. London.
- 2016** “The Use of Culture in the (Re)production of Palestinian Memory: The Case of Jordan” April 2016. Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism Annual Meeting. London.

RESEARCH

- 2021-2022** **Washington, DC and Amman, Jordan**
Ethnographic and archival research on Palestinian Refugees from Syria
- 2019** **Beirut, Lebanon: Ethnographic Research**
Conducted interviews, participant-observation with Palestinian refugees from Syria
- 2018-2019** **Research Assistant**
Assistant to Dr. Ilana Feldman at George Washington University. Conducted archival research on World Bank development interventions in Oslo-era Palestine
- 2018** **Beirut, Lebanon: Ethnographic Research**
Conducted interviews, participant-observation with Palestinian Refugees from Syria
- 2017** **Research Assistant**

Assistant to Dr. Lori Allen at SOAS, University of London. Conducted archival research on international investigative commissions in Palestine.

SERVICE

2023 Selection committee member for the Philip J. Amsterdam Graduate Teaching Award
2018-2024 GW Anthropology Department institutional archive organizer
2018 Member, Anthropology Department Colloquium Series Organizing Committee

LANGUAGES

Arabic: Palestinian/Jordanian colloquial and Modern Standard Arabic.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Anthropological Association
Middle East Section of the AAA
Critical Urban Anthropology Association of the AAA
American Ethnological Society
Refugee Cities Working Group
Association of American Geographers