

**SIMPSON CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES
FUNDED PROJECTS FOR 2008-2009**



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SOCIETY OF SCHOLARS

Jonathan Brown (Assistant Professor, Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations)
Lying about the Prophet of God: Forgery, Manipulation, and its Unmasking in the Islamic Tradition

Brown's project examines the history of forgery in the Islamic religious tradition. Although Sunni Islam was founded on preserving the authentic teachings of Muhammad, countless reports about his words and deeds were forged for various political, sectarian and legal ends. This project traces debates over whether or not reports about Muhammad can be forged for the purpose of homiletics. It places this question in the theoretical framework of the relationship between Truth and reality, utility and authenticity, and also examines similar debates in other scriptural and historiographical traditions.

Jordanna Bailkin (Associate Professor, History and Women Studies)
Cold War Dreams: Social Science and the End of Empire

Social Science and the End of Empire analyzes the impact of decolonization and migration on the social sciences in Britain after WWII and explores the ways in which postwar developments in anthropology, legal theory, psychology, and sociology illuminate British efforts to grapple with the distinctive demands of a collapsing, multiethnic empire.

Alexander Dressler (Alvord Fellow, Classics)
Calling the Soul to Syllables: The Philosophical Art of Writing in Seneca's Moral Epistles

Dressler explores the ways in which the *Moral Epistles* of the Stoic philosopher and statesman Lucius Annaeus Seneca, reclaim writing as part of ethical and philosophical practice from the critique of textuality in Plato's *Phaedrus*. Following Foucault's late work, numerous scholars have turned to Seneca to understand the origins of the self in recent years, but few have considered the role of writing in Seneca's development of selfhood. Dressler highlights the important role played by minutes philological details such as diction and metaphor in global theoretical issues of self and other, and ethics and identity.

Habiba Ibrahim (Assistant Professor, English)
The Racial Turn: Blackness, Mixed Racialism, Colorblindness, and the Impasse of Racial Recognition

Ibrahim's project tracks the transformation of racial rhetoric and argues that late twentieth century recognition of mixed racial identity is not ultimately reducible to any particular political regime or outcome. Instead, it is an impasse that asks how "race" will continue to signify the demands of history, public policy, and popular representation. Ibrahim examines the rhetoric of black-white multiracialism as it relates to representations of blackness, "black" identity and cultural history. Aware that blackness has traditionally encompassed various modes of multiplicity as a result of the law of

hypo-descent, Ibrahim intends to highlight how “multiracialism” interfaces with this earlier category, while focusing on late-century rhetorics of race. In short, she asks whether the rhetoric of contemporary mixed racialism operates on a denied recognition of the historical “mixedness” of blackness.

Matthew Levay (Dissertator, English)

Modernism's Crimes: Violence, Degeneracy, and Detection

Levay's dissertation provides an extensive critical account of the representation of crime and criminality in Anglo-American modernism, focusing on the ways in which twentieth-century authors grappled with a pervasive anxiety about criminal behavior and utilized that anxiety in an effort to theorize the functions of violence, rationality, subjectivity, and psychological motivation in literature. Drawing upon a wide variety of sources – including journalistic accounts of urban violence, early studies in criminology, popular crime fiction, and literary works by both canonical and virtually ignored modernists – Levay argues that modernism uses the criminal as a case study for making larger claims about the role of subjectivity in the modern world, often conflating criminality and subjectivity in startling and unprecedented ways.

Ted Mack (Associate Professor, Asian Languages & Literature)

Textual Identity: The Literature of the Japanese Diaspora

Mack focuses on the Japanese-language literature and criticism of Brazil, particularly during the period of migratory expansion (1908-1941), in order to explore the boundaries of “modern Japanese literature.” This study brings to light examples of the hybridity that has been suppressed in order to preserve the illusion of linguistic, territorial, and cultural identity, stability, and homogeneity that underlies the discipline.

Lorna Rhodes (Professor, Anthropology)

Institutional Interiors

Rhodes' project examines the total institution, particularly in light of the contemporary expansion of the prison, and considers how recent changes in the “social” are manifested and reflected in institutional practice. Her work includes an ethnographic analysis of a therapeutic prison in England as well as an exploration of the relationship among the camp, the panopticon, and the therapeutic community in the history and practice of the total institution.

Stephanie Smallwood (Associate Professor, History)

Africa in the Atlantic World: Historical Geographies of Power and Possibility

Smallwood explores the “Atlantic world” spatial metaphor that has come to dominate the literature on early modern contacts between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. With particular interest in the ways the metaphor distorts our understanding of the places and peoples of Africa, Smallwood draws conceptual and analytical insights from the work of historical and cultural geographers in order to better illuminate the uneven power relations that shaped early modern Atlantic spatial relations.

Honni van Rijswijk (Dissertator, English)

The Poetics of Personal Injury: Liability for Suffering in Twentieth-Century Law and Literature

Van Rijswijk's project evaluates the legal category of personal injury and how it is used as a starting point to investigate representations of pain and suffering. Van Rijswijk focuses on different

strategies and techniques used in both personal injury cases and novels to address the interconnected problems of representing suffering, and creating or adjudicating responsibility for that suffering.

Adam Warren (Assistant Professor, History)

Growing the Colony: Embattled Reformers and Disease Prevention in Bourbon Peru

Warren researches the tangled history of efforts by Peruvian doctors and intellectuals to modernize the Spanish colony and generate population growth using early modern science and medicine in the years prior to independence in 1821. Drawing on a wide range of archival materials and focusing on a period of government concern about the effects of epidemics on colonial productivity, Warren explains how a colonial medical politics emerged in Peru, a politics that was rooted not only in elite medical discourse and the decrees of the Crown, but also in the broader tensions of local elite and popular political culture and religiosity.

Sasha Welland (Assistant Professor, Anthropology and Women Studies)

Experimental Beijing: Contemporary Art Worlds in China's Capital

Welland examines the social role of visual art and competing ideas of aesthetic, cultural, and market value in reform-era China, with a particular focus on how gender shapes contemporary Chinese art worlds. In an analysis of how artists, art objects, and theories such as feminism travel temporally and spatially, Welland's ethnographic research addresses the mixed legacies of anticolonial and socialist art practices in Chinese art education, the visual representation and interpretation of Chinese femininities and masculinities, encounters between Chinese artists and Western arts professionals, and the intersection of art with transnational urban planning in the capital city.

SUMMER DISSERTATION RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

Todd Borlik (Dissertator, English)

Green Pastures: Eco-criticism and Early Modern English Literature

Borlik brings eco-critical concerns to bear on early modern English literature, uncovering a compelling link between Sidney's *Arcadia* and fiscal forestry, between Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the climate change known as "the Little Ice Age", between Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*, Milton's *Nativity Ode* and vestiges of nature worship in Catholicism outlawed by the Reformation, between the recurring cultural fantasy of the Golden Age and anxieties about environmental instability. Renaissance literature offers a vista onto a pre-Enlightenment sensibility from which this study will critique Enlightenment principles responsible for our current ecological crisis, while at the same time advocating a more historically informed appreciation of eco-criticism as a contemporary "version of the pastoral."

Elizabeth Campbell (Dissertator, English)

Christian Monasteries in the Early Islamic Middle East

Campbell explores the place of Christian monasteries in Islamic society and imagination through the lens of medieval Muslim authors, particularly as the setting for encounters and exchanges between Muslims and Christians. In the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, Muslim authors portrayed the monasteries of Iraq and Greater Syria as strategically and symbolically important sites, as holy places where shared Muslim and Christian rituals of devotion continued, as a world outside Islam

where moral transgression was possible, and finally as a field for confrontation and conflict between the two religions.

Maureen Jackson (Dissertator, Comparative Literature)

Transformative Urban Space and Artistic Collectivity: Jews Making Ottoman and Turkish Classical Music

Jackson's project investigates the multiethnic art world enabling Turkish Jewish religious music to parallel broader musical practices in the Ottoman empire and Turkey. Utilizing ethnographic methodologies and new communal sources to explain multiethnic continuities despite 20th-century Turkish nationalism, her research articulates the significance of alternative commercial and civic spaces, as well as ongoing cross-communal artistic relationships, to the musical culture of Jews in Turkey today. As such, the project generates a revised historical periodization and narrative of Turkish Jewry typically represented as a minority in decline.

Zhenya Lavy (Dissertator, Drama)

Pathological Theatre: Infection, Contagion, Performance

Since ancient times, the performing and medical arts have shared a complex history around the concept of infection. Lavy's research traces and analyzes this history, resituating the *communication* of the art as practice and developing *aesthetic pathology* as a new category through which to trace concerns in the humanities such as otherness, the validity of the image, and technologies of power.

Dipika Nath (Dissertator, Women Studies)

Feral Disorders and Colonial Exclusions: Animal-reared Feral Children, Discourses of Animality, and the Treatment of Animals in Colonial India

Nath performs a cultural materialist reading of three representations of animal-reared feral children in colonial India in order to trace the simultaneous and inter-implicated workings of the ideologies and practices of race, animalism, gender, and species difference. Nath is specifically interested in exploring the relationship between the discursive animalization of human populations on the basis of race, culture, or gender and the material treatment of nonhuman animals.

Yukiko Shigeto (Dissertator, Asian Languages & Literature)

Tenko and the Crisis of Representation

Shigeto's project examines the phenomenon of *tenkô*, a mass ideological conversion from Marxism undertaken by Marxist writers, critics, and political activists in 1930s Japan. Rather than taking the matter of conversion as an individual ethical problem under the rule of militarism, Shigeto probes this historical phenomenon by relating it to the crises of representation that surfaced within the political, economic, and literary systems.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR INITIATIVE

Leah Ceccarelli (Communication)

The Frontier of Science Metaphor: The Rhetoric of Exploration and Exploitation in a Postcolonial Transnational Context

Ceccarelli examines the use of the “science is a frontier” metaphor in speeches, popular books, and op-ed essays by American scientists, and what happens when this familiar figure of speech encounters audiences from other nations, or purposes that conflict with its connotations, or ambiguities of public memory regarding America’s frontier history. Assisting Ceccarelli is **Celia Lowe** (Anthropology), who brings expertise in postcolonial and transnational science studies.

Madeline Dong (History and International Studies)

Stories from the Wilderness: Unofficial Histories of the Qing Dynasty

Dong’s project examines popular narratives of the history of the Qing and the significance of this genre in the creation of historical consciousness among the general population. **Alys Weinbaum**, (English), will provide her with direction in literary interpretation of text and with information about debates in contemporary theory and criticism.

Glennys Young (History and International Studies)

The World the Refugees Made: The Niños de la Guerra in the USSR and Beyond

Young is working on the first transnational study of the political, social, and cultural consequences of the evacuation, during the Spanish Civil War, of Spanish Republican children to the Soviet Union, their return to Spain (whether immediately after official permission was granted in 1956 or in the 1980s and beyond), and the participation of a few of them as advisors during Castro’s Cuban Revolution. In consultation with Professor **Tony Geist** (Spanish & Portuguese Studies), she will acquire expertise in the literature about the Spanish emigration during and after the Spanish Civil War, and of how issues of Spanish identity were treated in twentieth-century Spanish literature.

FULL PROFESSOR CROSSDISCIPLINARY CONVERSATION AWARD

Lorna Rhodes (Anthropology)

Institutional Interiors

An ethnographic study of psychiatric hospitals and prisons, *Institutional Interiors*, addresses the larger question of how institutions come to express and instantiate the “social.” (*See Society of Scholars for a full description of Rhodes’ research project.*) Rhodes will collaborate with **Katherine Beckett** (Sociology), whose work addresses precisely those aspects of the social world “outside” the total institution that are most relevant for Rhodes’ concerns: criminology, policing, and neoliberal social policy as they are reflected in the representation of crime, the geopolitics of mass incarceration, and the expansion of “broken windows” policies. Rhodes and Beckett will read one another’s work together in the contexts of social theory, geography, and critical criminology, and develop a joint writing project.

PUBLIC HUMANITIES

Seeing What Queer Youth Know: A Seattle Photovoice Project

Organized by Calla Chancellor (Women Studies)

Chancellor’s research study and public humanities project explores visual practices, including a politics of visibility in Seattle’s local lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBT/Q) communities. Using photovoice, a participatory action research method, this project will create a discussion group of LGBT/Q identified young adults and will teach them to use photography as a tool for critical reflection – both personal and social – as well as for promoting community dialogue.

After six months of discussion and using photography as a critical thinking tool, the young people will produce a community photovoice exhibit designed to promote public dialogue about a range of themes in regards to visibility and LGBT/Q politics and culture. Other audiences will also be engaged through a website dedicated to the photographs and accompanying photographer's comments with a space for moderated public comment.

Senior Lecture Series – “Music, Culture and the Human Experience”

Organized by Steven Morrison (Music)

This series is designed to provide senior members of the Seattle community the opportunity to hear recent scholarly work presented by UW faculty in an engaging and accessible format. Combining both community's desire for intellectual engagement and their interest in music, this series reexamines several common assumptions about music knowledge and expertise as (1) limited to a small population of highly trained and/or talented individuals, (2) the product of a structured formal regimen of training and (3) largely productive (performance-based) in nature. In contrast with this view, these lectures will explore music as an essential human phenomenon, a collection of knowledge and skills acquired by virtually every individual simply as a result of informal learning, appropriation and enculturation. Specifically, these lectures will focus the natural emergence of music making among children, the process by which musical understanding is shaped informally by cultural norms, ways in which one may investigate the cognitive and neurological basis of musical understanding, and the use of music in the development of individual and group identities.

CROSSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CLUSTERS

Queer Worlds: The Will to Institutionalization

Organized by Calla Chancellor (Women Studies), Jessica Johnson (Anthropology), Jason Morse (English), Travis Sands (English)

Queer Worlds will critically evaluate the institutionalization of Queer Studies programs at the university level including the latest initiative to begin a Queer Studies undergraduate minor and graduate certificate at the University of Washington. The organizers are committed to producing an intellectually rigorous space for interventionist queer and allied scholars to work together to understand both the stakes and contradictions of incorporating Queer Studies into the neoliberal university. *Queer Worlds* seeks to bring as many students and faculty as possible into dialogue to produce a robust queer intellectual public that crosses disciplinary, administrative, and institutional locations, and to develop strategies for inhabiting newly available institutional spaces.

The Race/Knowledge Project: Anti-Racist Praxis and the Global University

Organized by Suzanne Schmidt (English), Sooja Kelsey (English), Simon Trujillo (English), Christian Ravela (English), Jed Murr (English), Kathleen Boyd (English), Pacharee Sudhinaset (English), Jason Morse (English)

The *Race/Knowledge Project* considers the contemporary status of race within what the "global" university. The contours of this year-long research program include public lectures, roundtables, study groups, and a symposium centered on how "anti-racist praxis" might negotiate the discourses of the colorblind, multicultural university. These discourses which most often work to, at best, delimit and, at worst, disallow conversations about race/racism even as the university is a site for the (re)production and contestation of racial meanings. To plot new concepts of "anti-racist praxis," our trajectory moves back and forth between the university and other publics; between the global/national and the local; between the work of academic, artist, and activist intellectuals.

(dis)Orienting Asian American Studies

Organized by Heyang Julie Kae (English), Marites Mendoza (English), Matthew Nicdao (English), Su Ching Wang (English), Jon Olivera (History)

A year-long project of the Asian American Studies Research Collective, *(dis)Orienting Asian American Studies* pursues an inquiry into what presently constitutes “Asia” and “America,” denaturalizing the joined terms that continue to animate institutional research in the field. This year's activities thematize two specific paradigms, "Comparative Racializations" and "Asia America(s)," which will undergird the graduate student working group, the speaker/film series, and a UW faculty roundtable to address new methods and domains for conceiving Asian Americanist scholarship.

Human Rights Public Culture: Toward a Translocal Digital Humanities Resource

Organized by Ron Krabill (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UWB), Bruce Kochis (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UWB), and Greg Mullins (Evergreen Community College)

Human Rights Public Culture will bring into focus research energies that are currently dispersed in three areas of activity: 1) new directions in the public humanities; 2) innovations in digital humanities; and 3) humanities research on human rights. The new research envisioned by this cluster, in coordination with human rights advocates, community organizations, and scholars in the wider community, has two particular aims: first, to generate more widely accessible means of disseminating research and to break down traditional barriers between the university and publics outside academia; and second, to stimulate broad conversations among diverse publics about the ethical, political, and cultural concerns that human rights frameworks address. Organizers plan to develop an interactive web-based resource for human rights education in future years. In order to lay a solid foundation for this digital resource, the scholars in the research cluster wish to devote the 2008-2009 academic year to four meetings of the working group and one event for the wider community: a spring quarter lecture given by an internationally prominent scholar.

Early Modern Research Group

Organized by Juliet Shields (English)

The *Early Modern Research Group (Emerge)* provides a crossdisciplinary forum for exploring the meanings and histories of modernity. During the 2008-09 academic year, *Emerge* will run two complementary programs: a series of formal lectures by visiting scholars and an informal works-in-progress group through which UW faculty and graduate students in a range of disciplines can share their research. Together, these programs will examine the concept of modernity from both synchronic and diachronic perspectives as a state that emerges at different times in different places. The group will trace the genealogies of modernity across the shifting spatial boundaries of nations and empires in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas, and across the often debatable historical periodizations that vary with these boundaries.

Visual Praxis Collective

Organized by Bonnie Tilland (Anthropology), Laura Newlon (Anthropology), Shana West (Museology), and Shin Yu Pai (Museology)

The *VPC* is an interdisciplinary graduate student group exploring visual praxis—defined as balanced visual theory and practice—in research, pedagogy, and public scholarship, with an emphasis on projects that engage with non-textual forms of analysis and knowledge production. At a time when

much knowledge production and transmission relies upon video, photography, and digital media, critical and engaged inquiry into the use of visual practices is vital to contemporary scholarship in the humanities and social sciences. As most forms of academic evaluation continue to privilege textual production, this research cluster has sought to address this gap by cultivating a space for examining how visual work can add to the scholarly record, contribute to theoretical debate and development, lead to graduate student research innovation, enhance teaching, and engage diverse audiences in research.

CONFERENCES, COLLOQUIA, SYMPOSIA

Global Justice in the 21st-Century

Organized by William Talbott (Philosophy), Jamie Mayerfeld (Political Science), Maureen Kelley, Michael Blake (Philosophy), and Adam Moore (Philosophy and Information School)

This two-day conference will bring together leading scholars from philosophy, political science, public affairs, law, and medicine to consider questions such as: How can global problems of health care, poverty, and environmental degradation best be addressed? Will those problems require new transnational institutions? It is hoped that this conference will contribute to the development of an interdisciplinary community, both within the University of Washington and beyond, committed to dealing with the new ethical challenges created by a changing global society.

The Ethical and Policy Implications of Attenuating Growth in Children with Profound Developmental Disabilities

Organized by Benjamin Wilfond (Bioethics and Pediatrics) and Paul Steven Miller (School of Law)

This project brings together a 20-person interdisciplinary working group representing bioethicists, disability scholars, lawyers, pediatricians, and parents, to address the ethical and policy implications of medical interventions attenuating growth in children with profound developmental disabilities, and to articulate areas of common ground and points of disagreement. This work will result in a manuscript that maps the field of ethical, legal, and social issues regarding growth attenuation, rather than establishing and defending any particular position within it. The project will culminate in a half-day public symposium on the UW campus in January 2009, designed to communicate the substance and insights of the working group's deliberations.

Metropolis and Micropolitics: Contesting Imaginaries and Conflicting Processes in South Asia's Sutured Cities

Organized by Anand Yang (International Studies), Purnima Dhavan (History), Sunila Kale International Studies, Vikram Prakash (School of Architecture), Ashish Nangia (Built Environment), Rowan Ellis (Geography), Juned Shaikh (History)

Metropolis and Micropolitics will host a two-day cross-disciplinary conference on South Asia's burgeoning metropolitan spaces in the Spring Quarter of 2009. The conference will bring together faculty and graduate students from the Pacific Northwest and other U.S. universities, social activists and performers from South Asia, and several leading and junior scholars from the U.S., South Asia, Europe, and Australia studying the cultural practices and material processes of urbanization in South Asia. Participants will explore urban change in the colonial and the postcolonial periods and discuss ways in which scholars, performers, activists, and students can advance our understanding of the macro-processes and micropolitics that shape and reshape South Asia's cities through an interdisciplinary dialog.

LARGE SCALE COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND/OR PUBLIC PROJECTS

Science Studies Network

Organized by Alison Wylie (Philosophy and Anthropology), Stephanie Fullerton (Medical History & Ethics), Celia Lowe (Anthropology), Phillip S. Thurtle (Comparative History of Ideas and History), Simon Werrett (History)

The *Science Studies Network (SSNet)*, established in 2007-2008, is an inclusive University of Washington-based network of faculty and graduate students who share an interest in science studies and a commitment to establishing a strong, well-integrated Science & Technology Studies presence on campus. SSNet's goals in this second year are, first, to convene a year-long graduate and faculty seminar on "Democratizing Science" organized around three themes: "science in democracy," "diversity in science," and "normative claims for a democratic science." Further SSNet's goals for 2008-09 are to lay the foundations for a graduate certificate in science studies and to play a coordinating role in the development of undergraduate science studies curriculum initiatives. Third, SSNet will build an expanded web presence in the form of an innovative, interactive website to support all these initiatives.

OTHER: SHORT COURSE, PUBLIC LECTURE, AND CAMPUS VISIT BY COLLABORATING INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS

Analysis of the 4500-year-old Indus Script using Machine Learning and Data Mining

Organized by Rajesh Rao (Computer Science & Engineering)

The Indus civilization flourished c. 2550-1900 BC in what is now Pakistan and northwestern India. Although no historical information exists about this civilization, archaeologists have uncovered about 4000 samples of their writing system on stamp seals, amulets, and small tablets. The script on these objects however remains undeciphered. With collaborators across multiple institutions in India, Rao has begun a systematic analysis of the script using quantitative and statistical techniques from computer science, particularly machine learning and data mining. Rao seeks to invite three of these international collaborators for a short 10-day stay at UW during which he will: (a) hold a short course on the Indus civilization, focusing on the script decipherment problem, (b) give a public lecture on the topic, and (c) make further progress in the analysis of the Indus texts using new techniques for grammar discovery from data. The short course and lecture will expose the UW and Seattle community to a new area of cross-disciplinary research that straddles the boundaries between the humanities and the sciences.