



# Lecture

## ALAN LIU

English

University of California, Santa Barbara

Thursday, May 7, 2009

4:00 pm

Communications 120

### When Was Linearity? Linear Thought, Graphics, and Freedom in the Age of Knowledge Work

Does the digital age of networked information herald new modes of thought and association? Does it displace others—historical thinking, logical argument, realist representation, individual authorship—that have organized values central to modern culture and scholarship?

In this lecture and multi-media presentation, Liu explores the common assumption that our culture is shifting from print-based, linear thought to the digital principles and graphic sensibilities of non-linear movement. In the process, he asks us to reconsider how we make sense of the past, the present, and the future and how we conceive the possibilities of knowing.

Alan Liu is the weaver of *The Voice of the Shuttle*, a major web portal for humanities research, and a leading scholar of information culture whose recent books include *Local Transcendence: Essays on Postmodern Historicism and the Database* (2008) and *The Laws of Cool: Knowledge Work and the Culture of Information* (2004). He is Professor and Chair of the Department of English at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the principal investigator of the University of California's Transliterations Project, a multi-campus research group on online reading practices, technologies, and aesthetics.

Alan Liu's lecture inaugurates the Simpson Center's Campaign for the Digital Humanities Commons. Through a program of fellowships, lectureships, and courses, the Commons will incubate new digital cultural understanding and innovation, supporting creative research, education, and collaborative partnerships.

The National Endowment for the Humanities has endorsed the Simpson Center's vision to establish and endow the Digital Humanities Commons with a challenge grant. The NEH promises \$625,000 towards this goal *if we can raise funds to match*. Your gift will help us achieve the Commons. For more information, contact Christopher Landman, [clandman@u.washington.edu](mailto:clandman@u.washington.edu).

### Colloquium with Alan Liu: Literature +

Friday, May 8, 2009 ~ 1:30—3:30 pm Communications 202

Alan Liu's visit is sponsored by the Simpson Center for the Humanities, the Department of English, and the Hilén Fund.