



The Humanities in a Digital World

Cyborg democracy » persistent archiving » the digital university and the public humanities » metadata and data mining » animation in theory and practice » the art and science of social robots »



Above: Cynthia Breazeal and her social robot "Kismet"
photo: Donna Coveney/MIT Press Office

» In 2006-2007 the Simpson Center is launching a special initiative on the digital humanities, one that includes a heady mix of graduate seminars and undergraduate courses, a new research cluster on communities created through blogging, and public lectures by the director of the Robotic Life Group **Cynthia Breazeal** (Media Arts and Sciences, Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and interactive media artist **Simon Penny** (Arts and Engineering, University of California, Irvine), among others.

The compelling collaborative context for this initiative is *InFormation 2006-2007*, an ambitious nation-wide project involving campuses across the country under the rubric of HASTAC. How humanists will explore and use the new digital media is an open question. As a consortium, HASTAC is dedicated to leveraging its collective institutional resources to integrate humanists into the projects and conversations shaping the digital world.

"We live in a time of immense change," says **Kathleen Woodward**, Simpson Center Director. "The future is coming into uncertain focus by the rapid co-evolution of digital technologies and globalization. Our increasingly global society is being drawn together (and driven apart) by all-pervasive communications and information technologies, and our global society is increasingly driven by the exponential increase of new knowledge."

Educational policy with regard to information and communication technologies is currently fast taking shape. The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) recently announced a new digital humanities initiative. The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) has just released an important report on cyberinfrastructure, a word many would have found barbarous ten years ago. This past March, ACLS awarded its first research fellowships—there were five—expressly devoted to scholars working with digital tools. And in 2005 the U.S. National Academies of Science issued a report entitled "The IT Forum: Preparing for the Revolution Redux." It stresses the transformational nature of these technologies, particularly in relation to the new nature of student learning, which is highly nonlinear rather than sequential, active and collaborative rather than passive. "It is preeminently clear," says Woodward, "that we need to make the digital humanities a priority—in research, publication, teaching, and engagement with both local and farther-flung publics."

Last year the UW Graduate School and the Simpson Center organized a series of workshops on the future of graduate education in the humanities, one of which was devoted to the digital humanities. It featured a presentation by **Marsha Kinder** (Cinema, Comparative Literature, and Spanish, University of Southern California), the director of *The Labyrinth Project*, which is creating inspiring work in what Kinder calls "database narrative"—an alternative way of conceptualizing data, one that conjures up multiple paths through cultural history, with memory in the making.

This past July five people in the humanities from the University of Washington—faculty, doctoral students, and administrative staff—participated in the *Cyberinfrastructure Institute for Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences*, hosted by the University of California Humanities Research Institute and the San Diego Supercomputer Center. Topics included virtual research environments, cyberservices, and grid computing.

This year all three of our undergraduate team-taught Danz Courses in the Humanities have both a digital and global component. They include "Diagnosing Injustice: Power, Justice, and Global Health," taught by **Sara Goering** (Philosophy) and **Janelle Taylor** (Anthropology), "When Technologies Are New," taught by **Philip Howard** (Communication) and **Simon Werrett** (History), and "The World in Motion: Animation in Theory and Practice," taught by **Stephanie Andrews** (Digital Arts and Experimental Media) and **Phillip Thurtle** (Comparative History of Ideas).

In addition, three new graduate seminars that focus on the digital humanities are also being sponsored by the Simpson Center—"Cyborg Democracy," taught by **Tom Foster** (English), "The Public Humanities and the Digital University," taught by **Gray Kochhar-Lindgren** (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW-Bothell) and **Ron Krabill** (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW-Bothell), and "Visual Documentation Praxis for Cultural Studies," taught by **Danny Hoffman** (Anthropology) and **Kari Lerum** (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW-Bothell).

**HASTAC: Humanities, Arts, Science, and
Technology Advanced Collaboratory**
www.hastac.org

Database Narratives

When **Marsha Kinder** (Cinema, Comparative Literature, and Spanish, University of Southern California) spoke at the University of Washington last year, she demonstrated several “database documentaries” she has developed collaboratively with artists, technicians, researchers, and students in the fields of narrative, history, and ethnography.

These stimulating documentaries take different shapes, among them the digital city symphony (Kinder took us through multiple pathways of “Bleeding Through: Layers of Los Angeles”) and the urban memoir (she showed us the haunting “Mysteries and Desire: Searching the Worlds of John Rechy”). Both of these documentaries mix fiction and history on the analogy of subjectivity itself and enact in a myriad of ways the processes of storytelling.

Narrative is of course a traditional subject, method, and mode of research in the humanities. But databases, for most people in the humanities, serve primarily as a useful (and largely untheorized) tool for navigating libraries and archives. As a new and wonderfully creative form, the “database narrative” draws on what is unique to the new digital media—their interactive possibilities and database potential—through the central value of narrative. Navigators (we are both readers and spectators of these narratives) generate the text by moving (mousing) through a complex virtual space; one layered aurally, factually, and figurally. The experience—it is often enchanting—combines depth and contingency and suggests the paradigm of possibility that underlies all narratives.

The Cyberinfrastructure Institute: A Call to the Humanities

This past July, the University of California Humanities Research Institute and the University of California San Diego Supercomputer Center hosted the first-ever *Cyberinfrastructure Institute for Humanists, Artists, and Social Scientists*. Part of HASTAC’s *Information 2006-2007*, the *Cyberinfrastructure Institute* invited academic professionals and intellectuals at all ranks to participate in an intensive, week-long introduction to new and emergent technologies. A group of faculty, graduate students, and administrators from the University of Washington—**Peter Leonard** (Scandinavian Studies), **Brian Reed** (English), **Terrence Schenold** (English), **Matthew Vechinski** (English), and **Miriam Bartha** (Simpson Center)—attended together.

Presentations and demonstrations introduced the participants to tools, resources, and terms of the trade—grid computing, gateways and portals, webcrawling, data migration, persistent archiving, storage resource broker, and collection and preservation environments. Participants experimented with building database architecture relevant to their own projects, and presentations showcased some of the collaborative research and teaching projects that take advantage of the resources of distributed and coordinated cyberinfrastructure.

The week, said Brian Reed, was “a window onto what is happening as a result of increased processing power. It was also a powerful call to the humanities to articulate its own questions and find innovative ways to harness this poten-

tial.” Reed, who is working on a book about the experiments across the visual and verbal arts of the post-World War II New York School of poets and artists, found the collaborative possibilities and the access to archives that these technologies provide exciting. But he also acknowledged that several barriers to their full potential would persist—including issues with copyright that will limit file-sharing and our circadian rhythms that will constrain real-time collaborations across time zones.

Doctoral Student Research Cluster Embraces the Blog

Doctoral students **Honni van Rijswijk** (English) and **Matthew Vechinski** (English) are leading a year-long research cluster on *Creating Community through Blogging*, exploring the interactive possibilities of blogging for collaborative research, teaching, and community networking across university and non-academic publics. Blogs are both the subject and the vehicle for their research.

“Humanities disciplines, with their deep investments in print culture, have yet to embrace blogging,” says Vechinski. He and van Rijswijk are developing an account of the blog as a medium with its own techniques, audiences, and methods that enable conversations across disciplines. For them blogs are provocations to research and also legitimate sites for research and publication. “Blogging is a medium that affirms voice,” Vechinski says. “We see blogging as a very promising, very empowering practice pedagogically and politically.”

Vechinski and van Rijswijk are beginning by setting up interfaces that support a virtual space

for multi-authored writing. Vechinski, who attended the *Cyberinfrastructure Institute*, was inspired by its presentation of user portals. But he also notes with pleasure that their project requires very little in computing resources. “Technically-speaking, blogging is low data intensity,” he observes. “Yet its implications for cultural practice are large.”

View their project at <http://community.uwblogs.org>.

Blog (n.): Short for weblog, a type of website where entries are made (such as in a journal or diary), displayed in a reverse chronological order. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. Blogs often provide commentary or news and information on a particular subject; some function as more personal online diaries. **To blog (v.):** to maintain or add content to a blog. — from Wikipedia



ALAIN BADIOU ON THE CHINESE CULTURAL REVOLUTION



Above: Alain Badiou



Poet, playwright, critic, screenwriter, aesthete, and political activist—**Alain Badiou** (Philosophy, École Normale Supérieure) is one of the most innovative thinkers of our time. Trained as a mathematician, Badiou has gone on to rethink and reframe core ideas of European philosophy; ideas such as event, aesthetics, love, and truth. His partition of scholarship into four fields—politics, science, art, and love—and his inventive writing on thinkers ranging from Plato, Saint Paul, and Samuel Beckett to Mao Zedong, Jacques Lacan, and Heidegger demonstrates the power and importance of rigorous philosophical thought. Some of his recently published works in English translation include *Handbook of Inaesthetics* (2004) and *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism* (2003). The journal *positions: east asia cultures critique* dedicated a special issue in winter 2005 to Badiou’s writings on the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

This past February Badiou visited the University of Washington as a Katz Distinguished Lecturer in the Humanities. His lecture on “Politics, Democracy, and Philosophy: An Obscure Knot” also served as an opening keynote for a three-day conference organized by *positions* editor, **Tani Barlow** (History and Women Studies). Framed by the question *Is a History of the Cultural Revolution Possible?*, this intimate working conference drew scholars from three continents and many more countries as well as people from the campus and the Puget Sound region. Conference participants probed questions produced by a tidal wave of newly released archival materials on the Chinese Cultural Revolution. They posed questions of methodological procedure and philosophical perspective and sought to situate the events of these years in broader histories of 20th-century modernity.

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1: Marsha Kinder
2: Cyberinfrastructure Institute, San Diego, California
3: Cyberinfrastructure Institute attendees Matthew Vechinski, Terrence Schenold, Brian Reed, and Miriam Bartha with Peter Leonard holding the camera.

Excerpts of Badiou’s comments

The Chinese Cultural Revolution on the Philosophical Level:

“Philosophically speaking, you know that philosophy was a great question during the Cultural Revolution. It is a strange point for the philosopher. It is not everyday that we can see that philosophy as such becomes a great political question in the mass movement... But why, finally? What is the signification of the presence of philosophy... in the discussion of the Cultural Revolution? Can we say that, by some aspects, the Cultural Revolution was cultural because it was a philosophical movement, or philosophy as movement, or philosophy as a tragedy?”

We have to consider that the Cultural Revolution was presented as the transformation of the soul of man and woman—[as] subjective transformation. It is the first case, I think, where revolution is presented not principally as an objective transformation, but as a subjective one. And the educational dimension of the Cultural Revolution was explicit. You have to be the arrow and the target in the revolution. You have to be an actor of the revolution, and—it was a maxim of the Cultural Revolution—you have to do the revolution and transform yourself by doing the revolution. So you have to be the subject in the active sense but also the subject in the passive sense. You have to be transformed by your proper action, and so on.

During the Cultural Revolution we can observe something like an attempt to transform the status of philosophy. First, by doing philosophy as concrete movement, a process of transformation, of affective transformation of the spirit, the soul of man, of their subjectivity, in fact. Secondly, by transforming completely the social determination of philosophy, which was really new.

I cannot say that we have to do something like that right now—go into the streets saying to all people ‘you have to transform yourself,’ but we probably have to transform the content of philosophy in regard to the fact that philosophy cannot be a pure academic exercise. It is part of my work. It is a moderate conclu-

sion, but it is an important one. Philosophy cannot be an academic exercise with division in some fields like epistemology, aesthetics, history of philosophy, and so on.

So we have to transform philosophy, not necessarily in the direction of the complete study of the work of Mao to do something new, for example, in the growing of tomatoes, but in something which has sense in the concrete transformation of the world. Something which has sense, something which speaks to anybody, something which is addressed to anybody, like a possibility of transformation—transformation of self, world, situation; yet in a dynamic vision of philosophy. I think that sort of vision of philosophy was, for the first time, completely present in the real movement during the Cultural Revolution. It was, probably, like all beginnings, something innocent, something naive... We criticize all that without difficulty. But it was really something important and new.”

The Chinese Cultural Revolution on the Historical Level:

“Finally, on the historical level, we have to inscribe the Cultural Revolution as something which is greater. In its negation, in its official negation, the Cultural Revolution is too isolated. It is something like a monster, a historical monster which is in a dark corner... We have to present the Cultural Revolution in a new light and also integrate the Cultural Revolution in the great history of revolutions. We have to find the novelty of the Cultural Revolution, but also say that it is not a monster, it is not a pathological event—there is something normal, too, in the Cultural Revolution. We have to find the articulation between something which is really extraordinary and new, but also something which is normal in the sense that we can speak of it. And so, we have also to find the means to think the Cultural Revolution as the current of history. This is our task on the historical level.”

1-3: Participants in the conference on the Chinese Cultural Revolution





1: Laurie Sears
2: Kiko Benitez
3-5: Undergraduate students in the winter 2006 Danz Course
6: Sharon Sutton, from the 2005-2006 *Reclaiming Childhood* speaker series



UW Faculty Receive Ford Foundation Difficult Dialogues Grant

The Simpson Center is the home of a two-year Ford Foundation Difficult Dialogues grant awarded last spring to **Laurie Sears** (History) and **Francisco “Kiko” Benitez** (Comparative Literature). Under the title *Engaging Southeast Asian American Pluralism in Seattle: UW Undergraduate Student-Teacher Conversations on Religion, Politics, and Identity*, their important project is one of only twenty-seven selected nationally. Six new team-taught courses will be developed and new ways to strengthen campus-community connections will be explored.

“We are really trying to think through two specific issues,” says Benitez. “First, how can we articulate area studies, particularly Southeast Asian Studies, with ethnic studies, particularly American Ethnic Studies? And second, what pedagogies would be appropriate to this articulation?” Sears and Benitez regard methods like oral history and performance as ways to enable students who have felt marginalized to share their views.

Says Sears, “We see the project helping students find their voices and teaching faculty how to listen for those voices. But eliciting voices is not enough. In order to empower these voices, students and teachers need dialogue and exchange that lead to deeper understanding of the social positions and personal investments of the participants in their specific or perhaps multiple stories. Such an understanding can be transformative and lead to social action.”

The project came out of Sears and Benitez’s experience co-teaching an undergraduate course on “Violence, Myth, and Memory: Southeast Asia as a Crossroads of Modernity” in the winter of 2006. Their course was a part of the Simpson Center’s *Danz Courses in the Humanities*, an experimental series of large-scale, team-taught courses underwritten by a generous gift from Fredric Danz. Sears and Benitez organized their course around three popular films—*Apocalypse Now: The Director’s Cut* (2001/1979), *The Year of Living Dangerously* (1982), and *Perfumed Nightmare* (1975)—to explore ideas of violence, narrative, and global modernity in U.S. relations with Viet Nam, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

In “Violence, Myth, and Memory” Sears and Benitez experimented in deepening student engagement through an assignment that had profound results. Everyone was asked to interview a member of the local Filipino, Vietnamese, or Indonesian American community who had emigrated from Southeast Asia to Seattle. Students transcribed these histories, formed them into narrative monologues, and worked together in groups to combine and connect them in dramatic presentations staged for the class. Thus students were asked not only to solicit new knowledge, but to project themselves into new imaginative positions and come to understand themselves in their relationship to the experiences of others.

This year Sears and Benitez are launching a series of workshops on pedagogy to explore alternative methods, including intergroup dialogue, peer facilitation, and theatrical forums. The workshops and co-taught courses will cross-educate UW faculty to teach classes that will become a permanent part of the new Diversity Minor.

For more information on the *Difficult Dialogues* project please visit <http://depts.washington.edu/diffdial/>.

Reclaiming Childhood

When **Katharyne Mitchell** (Geography) proposed *Reclaiming Childhood* as her focus for the Simpson Professorship in the Public Humanities in the spring of 2004, she had several goals. She wanted to investigate how global competition, public divestment, and fears about safety and security are transforming children’s experiences of childhood. She wanted to open a public conversation about the collective resources, including the arts and humanities, critical to children’s development physically, imaginatively, intellectually, and socially. And she wanted to write a book on these subjects for a broad public audience, not just a scholarly one.

As she enters the third and final year of her Simpson Professorship, that book—*Stealing Childhood*—is well underway. But other exciting projects are also emerging from her work under the rubric of *Reclaiming Childhood*.

One is an edited volume—*Being and Becoming a Public Scholar*—which will gather together pieces from some twenty influential university-based scholars across the humanities and social sciences who have engaged with non-academic publics in significant ways. Some of the scholars contributing to this volume are **Michael Burawoy** (Sociology, University of California, Berkeley), **David Domke** (Communication), **Gerald Early** (English and African and Afro-American Studies, Washington University, St. Louis), **Julie Ellison** (American Culture, University of Michigan), **Julia Lupton** (English, University of California, Irvine), **Peter McLaren** (Education & Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles), **Don Mitchell** (Geography, Syracuse University), and **Dennis Raphael** (Health Policy, York University). Their pieces will weave together autobiographical narratives, meditations on the challenges and rewards of public scholarship, and advice for graduate students and junior faculty entering this new field.

Mitchell intends *Being and Becoming a Public Scholar* to serve as “a road map and a manifesto” for those determined to sustain connections with a wider public as they embark upon academic careers. It will appear as a special issue of *Antipode* next year and as a book from Blackwell Publishers in 2008.

In 2005-2006 monthly presentations by UW faculty and people from the community—among them, **Ann Anagnost** (Anthropology), **Patricia Campbell** (Music), **Denise Gonzalez-Walker** (Pediatrics, Harborview Hospital), **Frances McCue** (Richard Hugo House), **Sharon Sutton** (Architecture), and **Walter Parker** (Education)—proved so successful that Seattle’s Town Hall, one of our community’s most important forums for citywide discussion, will host an event on November 8, 2006 called “Constructing American Childhood.”

This year Mitchell wants to bring the perspectives of young people on their own childhood into play. “Although ideas about childhood have changed over time, most of our beliefs about childhood have come from adults,” she notes. “Scholars now recognize childhood as a historically-interpreted and culturally-constructed category. But children are rarely considered to be important participants in the cultural processes that construct its meanings.”

In spring 2007 an exhibition on childhood is planned for Suzzallo Library. This interactive installation will offer the reflections of middle school and high school students on childhood through poetry, essays, video and audio taped segments, and artwork.

For more information on upcoming *Reclaiming Childhood* events please visit www.reclaimingchildhood.org.

Global Futures

Conversations at the monthly *Reclaiming Childhood* lectures—and a wildly successful cross-class teach-in on “Culture, Nation, and the New Economy in East Asia”—inspired **Ann Anagnost** (Anthropology) and **Andrea Arai** (Visiting Scholar, Anthropology) to organize *Global Futures*. Taking a multidisciplinary and comparative approach, *Global Futures* will study the challenges that youth face across the world as globalization transforms their economic prospects and cultural possibilities. Anagnost and Arai, area specialists in contemporary China and Japan respectively, will be joined by **Craig Jeffrey** (Geography), **Danny Hoffman** (Anthropology), and **Jane Dyson** (South Asia Center), who bring further perspectives on the cultures of West Africa and India.

Global Futures plans to chart the interconnections among these sites, tracking the effects of privatized education, employment insecurity, militarization, and the rise of the security state. The group also intends to develop courses that engage their students in learning how their own futures are deeply intertwined with those of youth elsewhere in the world. Using digital technology, they plan to connect University of Washington undergraduates in ethnographic research with East Asian college students via text messaging and on-line interviews. “The opportunity to link together research and teaching in such an intensive way is thrilling. Students will be an active part of an ongoing collaboration in research across nations,” says Anagnost.

In addition to a speaker series, the group is developing a website that will be an archive for their research and a resource for researchers and educators. To jumpstart the project, the group held a retreat last August with invited speaker and discussant **Chris Philo** (Geography, University of Glasgow).

What’s New in Graduate Education?

Dedicated to preparing graduate students for a rapidly changing world, the Simpson Center is focusing on the public humanities and digital humanities as overlapping domains where the means and the ends of humanistic research can be refigured. These emerging fields offer new and compelling ways of doing research and teaching, and highlight the importance of creative and collaborative thinking about culture both in and across the boundaries of the university. As several Simpson Center projects attest, our graduate students are working with faculty to chart new directions for themselves and for the humanities at large.

The Institute on the Public Humanities for Doctoral Students

The Institute on the Public Humanities for Doctoral Students began in 2003 with support from the UW Graduate School and the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation’s *Responsive PhD* initiative. The first of its kind in the nation, the Institute selects twenty doctoral students who are passionate about developing the public dimensions of their scholarship. In an intensive week of workshops each September, the fellows explore diverse forms of on- and off-campus collaboration and imagine how community-based partnerships might reshape their scholarly ambitions and the paths of their careers.

Site visits and collaborative work have emerged as central to the Institute. To deepen these aspects of the program, the Simpson Center enlisted **Bruce Burgett** (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW-Bothell), who co-directs the Institute with Simpson Center Assistant Director **Miriam Bartha**. Burgett is a leading architect of the new M.A. in Cultural Studies at UW-Bothell and co-director with **Kanta Kochhar-Lindgren** (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW-Bothell) of the *Cultural Studies Praxis Collective*, a research cluster also sponsored by the Simpson Center.

This past September, the fellows visited 826 Seattle, a youth-based writing center. There they took part in a writing and performance workshop for grade school students and discussed the

forms of community promoted by different kinds of writing. Later that week at the LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender) Community Center in Capitol Hill, they learned about planning processes by participating in a focus group and developing implementation proposals. Throughout the Institute, working alongside faculty and people in the community, the fellows learned how to imagine community-based projects of differing scales, how projects develop and evolve, and how to address the inevitable challenges encountered along the way.

There is a close connection between the Institute and the *Cultural Studies Praxis Collective* (CSPC). This year CSPC members will hold three workshops for former fellows of the Institute and other interested graduate students. They will also offer two graduate seminars that bridge the digital and public humanities while they pilot core curriculum for the M.A. in Cultural Studies projected to begin in 2007.

2006 Summer Residential Dissertation Fellows

This past summer the Simpson Center co-sponsored a new initiative—Summer Residential Dissertation Fellowships—with the Divisional Dean of Arts & Humanities. Each of the six fellows received a \$3000 stipend and an office at the Simpson Center. Inspired by a similar program at the Institute for the Arts and Humanities at Pennsylvania State University, this initiative is designed to encourage the development of new relationships and to foster exchange among scholars who hold different assumptions and work with different methodologies.

Broadview University for Teens

Two years ago doctoral student **Amy Reddinger** (English) received a Simpson Center grant to organize a reading group for women in residence at Seattle’s Broadview Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Program. The book group created a “buzz” throughout the shelter. For homeless women whose lives are marked by severe disruption, simply finding the time to read

presents a serious challenge. Wonderfully, the project succeeded in creating a culture of reading and discussion that continues to thrive.

“Perhaps the most exciting thing to come out of that first program was that some of the teenage residents, inspired by their moms’ reading group, approached me to have a book group for themselves,” Reddinger recounts. Many of these teens had been homeless for years, while others were newly homeless refugees of war or family violence.

With support from the Simpson Center, Reddinger co-taught *Broadview University for Teens* this past summer with fellow doctoral student **Georgia Roberts** (English). Readings explored connections between literature and hip hop and included *The Moments*, *The Minutes*, *The Hours*, a book of poetry by Jill Scott and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Participants, age twelve to seventeen, also received journals for recording notes on their reading and for responding with their own forms of creative self-expression.

Reddinger, who has worked at Broadview in various capacities from volunteer to caseworker, thinks that her long history with the shelter has been crucial to the program’s success. “It helps that I’ve been affiliated with Broadview for nine years,” says Reddinger. “The staff knows and trusts me. They know I’m not some green do-gooder looking to make some vague difference. I’m seen as someone who is drawing on her resources to help the agency in the ways that I can. Other staff do this too, but most of the time those resources are other social services. I just happen to be the academic.”

Katz Lecturers Offer Graduate Students Micro-seminars

The Solomon Katz Distinguished Lectures in the Humanities represents the University of Washington’s highest honor for scholars in the humanities. This past year two of the Katz lecturers—**Alexander Nehamas** (Philosophy and Comparative Literature, Princeton University) and **Jonathan Lear** (Philosophy, University of Chicago)

—offered micro-seminars to graduate students. Open to enrollment across departments, these micro-seminars provide students with a wonderful opportunity for reading and discussion with preeminent scholars who have shaped—and in some cases transcended—their fields.

Following the success of last year’s micro-seminars, this fall’s Katz lecturer, **Derek Gregory** (Geography, University of British Columbia), will conduct a micro-seminar on critical issues in the U.S. military’s global war on terror. **Geoffrey Parker** (History, Ohio State University), who teaches courses on European history and military history, will also offer a micro-seminar during his visit in the spring.

CSPC Workshops

October 20, 2006
COMMUNITY AND PRACTICE-BASED COURSE DESIGN

Ron Krabill (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW-Bothell) and **Becky Rosenberg** (Writing Center, UW-Bothell)

November 17, 2006
ARTS AND COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT

Elizabeth Thomas (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW-Bothell), with **Pam Korza** (Americans for the Arts)

February 2, 2007
ARTS AND CULTURAL POLICY, ADVOCACY, AND ACTIVISM

Diane Douglas (Center for Liberal Arts, Bellevue Community College) with **Randy Martin** (Tisch School of the Arts, New York University)



Above: The Institute on the Public Humanities for Doctoral Students

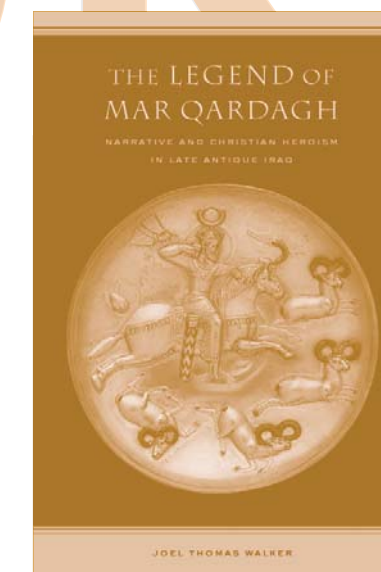
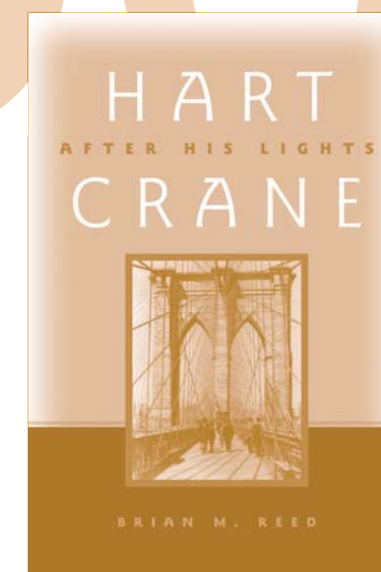
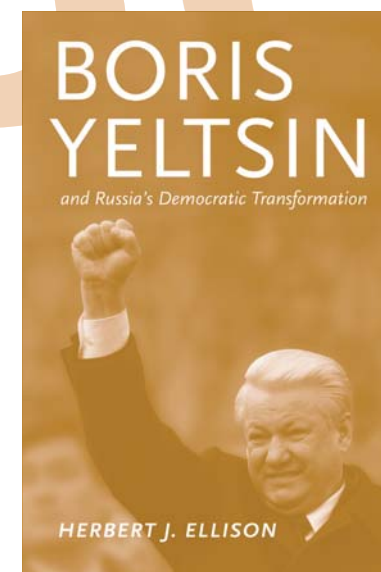
NEW BOOKS IN PRINT

The Simpson Center’s *New Books in Print* series provides an opportunity for UW faculty to discuss their recently published books. Books for 2006-2007 include:

Herbert Ellison (History and International Studies)
Boris Yeltsin and Russia’s Democratic Transformation
University of Washington Press, 2007

Brian Reed (English)
Hart Crane: After His Lights
University of Alabama Press, 2006

Joel Walker (History)
The Legend of Mar Qardagh: Narrative and Christian Heroism in Late Antique Iraq
University of California Press, 2006



Keywords

When most people hear the term “keyword,” they think of databases or “Google” searches. In a book titled *Keywords of American Cultural Studies* (forthcoming from New York University Press in the spring of 2007), co-editors **Bruce Burgett** (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW-Bothell) and **Glenn Hendler** (English, University of Notre Dame) take the term in a different direction.

Extending the influential work of British Cultural Studies scholar Raymond Williams and his *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (1976), Burgett and Hendler consider a keyword as much more than a term providing access to existing sources of information. Instead their book focuses on the ways in which the historical and contemporary uses of specific words create nodal points in many of today’s most critical debates about political and social life, revealing often overlooked connections among different kinds of cultural research, both inside and outside of the academy.

Collaborative in design and execution, the volume collects entries from sixty-four scholars whose work ranges across disciplinary and interdisciplinary domains from political economy and anthropology to ethnic and performance studies. Nine of the contributors are faculty at the University of Washington and many others have participated in recent symposia and colloquia here. When the current book project of **Matthew Sparke** (Geography and International Studies) is taken into account—he is completing the *Blackwell Dictionary of Globalization*—the number of UW faculty involved in work on keywords rises to ten.

Collaboration is in many ways the keyword of these efforts. Burgett and Hendler intend their volume to engage readers as makers of meaning, asking them to revise, reject, and respond to the entries that do and do not appear in the volume.

“The point,” Burgett explains, “is that the discussions we present in the volume need to remain open to further elaboration and amendment. That’s essential to any problem-based understanding of how research is conducted and how knowledge is made, either inside or outside academic settings. So we welcome and expect critique. But what we really want is for our readers to respond by adding or making something new. That thing can be as minor as a new conversation

or classroom assignment or as major as an edited volume, digital archive, or public initiative.”

From “Keywords: An Introduction” by co-editors Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler

This underlining of the “flexibility” of a “vocabulary”—as opposed to the “universality” of a “dictionary”—both points to Williams’s general premise that language systems develop and change only in relation to local and practical usages, and explains his editorial decision to include blank pages at the end of his Keywords in order to signal that “the inquiry remains open, and that the author will welcome all amendments, corrections and revisions” (26). Like institutionally established academic methodologies and disciplines (philology and linguistics in this case), dictionaries, glossaries, and other reference books reproduce a discourse of expertise by downplaying the creative, idiosyncratic, and unpredictable aspects of problem-based thinking and research. Like the forms of critical interdisciplinarity to which Williams’s own work contributes, vocabularies provide a counterpoint to this discourse of expertise. They treat knowledge not as a product of research that can be validated only in established disciplines and by credentialing institutions, but as a process that is responsive to the diverse constituencies that use and revise the meanings of the keywords that govern our understandings of the present, the future, and the past.

UW Faculty Entries in Keywords of American Cultural Studies

Eva Cherniavsky (English) *Body*
Moon-Ho Jung (History and American Ethnic Studies) *Coolie*
Kanta Kochhar-Lindgren (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW-Bothell) *Disability*
Caroline Chung Simpson (English) *Internment*
Nikhil Pal Singh (History) *Liberalism*
Chandan Reddy (English) *Modern*
Alys Weinbaum (English and Women Studies) *Nation*
Bruce Burgett (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW-Bothell) *Sex*
Susan Jeffords (Vice Provost for Global Affairs, English and Women Studies) *War*

Interdisciplinary Futures

Julie Thompson Klein (Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies, Wayne State University), a key figure in interdisciplinary studies, will visit the University of Washington this November. The author of *Humanities, Culture, and Interdisciplinarity: The Changing American Academy* (2005) and *Crossing Boundaries: Knowledge, Disciplinarity, and Interdisciplinarity* (1996), she will serve as a consultant to several campus units and groups seeking to advance interdisciplinary work. She will also deliver a public talk for the University of Washington cross-campus community on the theme of “Creating Interdisciplinary Campus Cultures: Opportunities and Risks.”

The terms “interdisciplinarity” and “public humanities” inform the mission of the Simpson Center: fostering new forms of knowledge that are meaningful in multiple contexts in and beyond the university. Klein’s recent research on transdisciplinarity suggests that these two terms

“Over the course of the 20th century, an important set of shifts has occurred in our images of knowledge and education. The metaphor of knowledge as a foundation or a linear structure has been replaced by images of a network, a web, and a dynamic system. Comparably, the metaphor of unity, with its accompanying values of universality and certainty, has been replaced by metaphors for plurality and relationality in a complex world. Images of the curriculum, in turn reflect a new emphasis on integrating, connecting, linking, and clustering. Taken together, these changes signal a major trend. The ‘Academy in Transition’ is an academy that is becoming more interdisciplinary.”

—Julie Thompson Klein, *Mapping Interdisciplinary Studies* (Washington D.C., AACU, 1999)

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The Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities fosters innovative crossdisciplinary research and teaching in the humanities and works to stimulate exchange and debate on cultural and intellectual issues among University of Washington scholars and the Seattle community. The purpose of the Simpson Center is four-fold: to support initiatives in the humanities at the leading edge of change, to encourage crossdisciplinary research and inquiry among UW faculty and students, to establish public programs in the humanities that promote civic engagement, and to pioneer innovative and crossdisciplinary courses at the undergraduate and graduate level.

www.simpsoncenter.org

Conferences + Symposia

Explorers and Scientists in China's Borderlands

January 19-21, 2007

Organized by **Stevan Harrell** (Anthropology)

Visiting speakers include:

MAGNUS FISKESJÖ (Anthropology, Cornell University)
 DENISE GLOVER (Anthropologist)
 PAUL HARRIS (Documentary Filmmaker, Cologne)
 GENG JING (Sichuan Province Nationalities Research Institute)
 CHARLES MCKHANN (Anthropology, Whitman College)
 ERIK MUEGLER (Anthropology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor)
 MARGARET SWAIN (Anthropology, University of California, Davis)
 PAUL WEISSICH (Lyon Arboretum, University of Hawai'i, Mānoa)
 TAMARA WYSS (Documentary Filmmaker, Berlin)
 GAN XUECHUN (Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences)
 ALVIN YOSHINAGA (Lyon Arboretum, University of Hawai'i, Mānoa)
 DAVID ZUCKERMAN (Washington Park Arboretum)

Performance and History: What History?

February 22-23, 2007

Organized by **Herbert Blau** (English) and **Marshall Brown** (Comparative Literature)

Visiting speakers include:

DAPHNE BROOKS (English, Princeton University)
 DANIEL FOSTER (Theater Studies, Duke University)
 MICHAL KOBIALKA (Theatre Arts and Dance, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities)
 ANTHONY KUBIAK (Drama, University of California, Irvine)
 JULIE STONE PETERS (English & Comparative Literature, Columbia University)
 PEGGY PHELAN (Drama and English, Stanford University)
 JOSEPH ROACH (English, African American Studies, Theater, and Theater Studies, Yale University)
 FREDDIE ROKEM (Theatre Arts, Tel Aviv University)
 PATRICIA YBARRA (Theatre, Speech and Dance, Brown University)

Liberalism, Governance, and the Geographies of Law

May 11-12, 2007

Organized by **Steve Herbert** (Geography and Law, Societies, & Justice)

Visiting speakers include:

NICHOLAS BLOMLEY (Geography, Simon Fraser University)
 SUSAN COUTIN (Criminology, Law & Society, University of California, Irvine)
 MONA LYNCH (Justice Studies, San Jose State University)

Inventions of the Imagination: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Imaginary since Romanticism

May 18-20, 2007

Organized by **Richard Gray** (Germanics), **Nicholas Halmi** (English), **Gary Handwerk** (Comparative Literature), and **Michael Rosenthal** (Philosophy)

Visiting speakers include:

NORA ALTER (Germanic Studies, University of Florida)
 GEORG BRAUNGART (German Studies, University of Tübingen)
 DAVID CLARK (English & Cultural Studies, McMaster University)
 URSULA HEISE (English, Stanford University)
 BETH LORD (Philosophy, University of Dundee)
 BILL NICHOLS (Cinema, San Francisco State University)
 TOMASSO PIERINI (Philosophy, Friedrich Schiller University of Jena)
 ROBERT PIPPIN (Philosophy, University of Chicago)
 TILOTTAMA RAJAN (English and Theory & Criticism, University of Western Ontario)
 ALEXANDER SCHLUTZ (English, City University of New York)
 KLAUS VIEWEG (Philosophy, Friedrich Schiller University of Jena)
 WILHELM VOSSKAMP (German Studies, University of Cologne)
 WOLFGANG WELSCH (Philosophy, Friedrich Schiller University of Jena)

Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities
University of Washington
College of Arts & Sciences
 206 Communications Building Box 353710
 Seattle, Washington 98195-3710
 Tel 206.543.3920
 Fax 206.685.4080
 www.simpsoncenter.org

Simpson Center for the Humanities Administration

Kathleen Woodward, Director
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Some of Our Valued Community Partners

At the Simpson Center we are dedicated to promoting campus-community collaboration in the humanities. Over the course of the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 academic years, our partners include:

Alliance Community Psychotherapy Clinic
 Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture
 Experience Music Project
 Frye Art Museum
 Henry Art Gallery
 Intiman Theatre
 Langston Hughes Performing Art Center
 Microsoft
 Museum of History & Industry
 On the Boards: Behnke Center for Contemporary Performance
 Pacific Northwest Ballet
 Pacific Science Center
 Richard Hugo House
 Seattle Arts & Lectures
 Seattle Biomedical Research Institute
 Seattle Central Public Library
 Seattle Repertory Theatre
 Seattle Shakespeare Company
 Seattle Symphony
 Silk Road Foundation
 Tacoma Art Museum
 Wing Luke Asian Museum

1: Alexander Nehamas (Philosophy and Comparative Literature, Princeton University), 2005-2006 Katz Lecturer
 2: Richard Salomon (Asian Languages and Literature), 2005-2006 Katz Lecturer
 3: Matt Sparke (Geography)
 4: Ann Cvetkovich (English, University of Texas Austin), speaker from the *Feminist Dialogues* conference, fall 2005
 5: Kathleen Woodward, director of the Simpson Center
 6: Saidiya Hartman (English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University), speaker from the *Fictions of the Archive, Rumors of Insurrection* conference, spring 2006

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