



RE-ENVISIONING AFRICA



1: *Duala Night*. 2005. Photo by Danny Hoffman.

2: Map of the Mano River region

3: Danny Hoffman (Anthropology)

The trouble with most images of Africa is that they are no longer believable, writes art critic **Okwui Enwezor** (San Francisco Art Institute) in the catalogue for the exhibit *Snap Judgments: New Positions in Contemporary African Photography* he curated at New York's International Center of Photography in 2006.

For decades the “photographic imaginary” of the African continent has been dominated by extremes: natural and human catastrophes on one page, unspoiled and unpopulated landscapes on the next. What we need now is counter-reporting, Enwezor argues. We need images that break from the standard tropes and make it possible to envision different futures in Africa.

2006-2007 *Society of Scholars* Fellow **Danny Hoffman** (Anthropology) is working on such a counter-reporting project on Africa, one that draws on his previous experience as a photojournalist based in Johannesburg. Entitled *The Mano River Sketches*, it includes Hoffman's photographs taken in the region along with his reflections on the work of African image producers.

Located between Sierra Leone and Liberia, the Mano River region has experienced horrific violence in recent decades. In *The Mano River Sketches* Hoffman is creating a new aesthetic to document war-time and post-war experiences of the members of militias with whom he has worked since 2000. Hoffman is also writing a book entitled *Building the Barracks* that deals with the militarization of youth in the region.

“For a long stretch through the rainforest,” Hoffman explains, “the Mano River is the functional and political border between the two states. The combatants I followed from one country to the next are only one segment of a long history of trade, migration, and kin-

ship ties spanning the region. The wars in these two countries are most often labeled separately. I chose to unite them under the title of the Mano River to emphasize both the union and division of these nations and their histories. Ultimately my subject is the people who define that border by having repeatedly transgressed it.”

The Mano River Sketches

Danny Hoffman

The following excerpts are from “Life in Motion,” the opening essay of *The Mano River Sketches*.

The conceit of The Mano River Sketches is simple. It begins with a question: What might we see if we view a troubled region of West Africa through a visual frame other than that of conventional documentary realism?

For six years now I have photographed the lives of combatants in various irregular militias in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Trained as a photojournalist and then an anthropologist, I have routinely edited my own work in accordance with the conventions of print journalism and the discourses of social science. Judged by those criteria certain images stand out. Of the thousands of photographs I have made in the region, there are a handful I routinely use in my essays, presentations, and teaching. By and large these are photographs which wed content and composition in ways familiar from both newspapers and anthropological monographs.

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The Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities promotes innovative crossdisciplinary research and teaching in the humanities and fosters exchange and debate on cultural and intellectual issues among University of Washington scholars and the Seattle community. The role of the Simpson Center is to support initiatives in the humanities at the leading edge of change, to encourage interdisciplinary research and learning among UW faculty and students, to establish public programs in the humanities that engage the public, and to support inventive crossdisciplinary courses for undergraduates and graduates.



MANO RIVER SKETCHES CONTINUED

Yet I've come to understand that these images do little to challenge the conventional politics of ethnographic representation. These photographs have never really led me (or anyone else) to rethink the standard visual tropes through which the West African war-scape is made visible to most audiences.

In the winter 2005 issue of Public Culture, Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall outline a methodology for a new African studies. They implicitly position the Africanist scholar as artist, charged with “drawing on new critical pedagogies—pedagogies of writing, talking, seeing, walking, telling, hearing, drawing, making—each of which pairs the subject and the object in novel ways to enliven the relationship between them and to better express life in motion.” “Identifying such sites,” they write, “entails working with new archives—or even with old archives in new ways.”

What follows is an attempt to realize that promise in my own work. The Mano River Sketches is an experiment in seeing what emerges when the frames of reference for selecting images from my own visual archive are shifted.

What becomes visible, and what becomes knowable, when the referents by which individual pictures or groups of pictures are judged come not from the conventions of realist documentary photojournalism but from a reading of various African visual archives?

The Mano River conflict as a whole has been labeled anarchic, economic, apocalyptic, political, and millenarian. The one consistent element in all of these formulations is that the war was first and foremost a problem of—and for—youth. The vast majority of combatants in all factions were young men.

The young men with whom I worked encounter the crisis landscape that is contemporary West Africa as a visual habitus. Both violence and the State are constituted through the spectacle. Power is the ability to produce certain images and to hide from others. To be seen is both a liability and a strategic necessity. Young people in particular are highly attentive to the pathways by which images circulate, whether those images are personal snapshots in a mash note sent across town or a Tupac Shakur album cover copied by the rebels in a Freetown mural.



Popular Culture and the Arts in Africa

Headed by **Lynn Thomas** (History), *Popular Culture and the Arts in Africa* is a year-long project designed to enrich the research of faculty and graduate students and to connect them with members of the community who share interests in African contemporary music, visual media, and graphic arts. The program will feature a series of speakers, workshops, and African-made documentary and feature films.

Celebrating the growth of the African Studies Program, *Popular Culture and the Arts in Africa* stems in part from a speaker series supported by the Simpson Center and organized by Thomas in 2004-2005. Prominent Africanist scholars including **J. Lorand Matory** (Anthropology and African American Studies, Harvard University) and

Gillian Hart (Geography, University of California, Berkeley) helped to generate a campus-wide discussion on ways to develop a more expansive and outward-looking African Studies Program.

In 2004 the African Studies Program, housed in the Jackson School of International Studies, was awarded a Title VI Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language (UISFL) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Since then the number of undergraduate minors has more than tripled and offerings in Swahili language study have been substantially enhanced.

The Art and History of Viet Nam

Two projects supported by the Simpson Center in 2007-2008 will focus on Viet Nam, promising a year filled with dynamic reflection on the recent history of this nation and its relationship to our own.

Harrell Fletcher (Art, Portland State University) will speak at the University of Washington this autumn in conjunction with the Henry Art Gallery's new University Art Institute (UAI), an annual event featuring lectures, artist and scholar discussions, and film screenings on topics relevant to today's society. This year's UAI is reconsidering the legacy of the Viet Nam War as

portrayed in the work of **An-My Lê** (exhibit from August 18-November 4) and **Kim Jones** (exhibit from October 20-January 20) and will explore how we image, record, and discuss war in contemporary culture.

Last March marked the beginning of a series of three important conferences in Viet Nam Studies organized by **Judith Henchy** (Head Librarian, Southeast Asia Section, University of Washington Libraries) and **Christoph Giebel** (International Studies and History).

Beyond Dichotomies: Alternative Voices and Histories in Post-Colonial Viet Nam, the second conference in the series, will be held in spring, 2008. It will re-examine post-colonial Vietnamese history in ways that contest European and U.S. presumptions and Cold War dichotomies. Papers will focus on cross-border and

transnational identities, non-nationalist socio-cultural phenomena, non-communist thought in Viet Nam's revolutionary movement, and “third force” groups on the margins of the Republic of Viet Nam.

Last spring's conference centered on historical approaches to colonial Viet Nam and drew participants from New York University, University of California at Berkeley, the Sorbonne, and the Center for Khmer Studies in Cambodia. Award-winning author of *Postcolonial Vietnam: New Histories of the National Past* (2002), **Patricia Pelley** (History, Texas Tech University) was the keynote speaker. The third and final conference will be held in 2008-2009 and will focus on the Vietnamese diaspora.





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- 1: *Twilight*. 2005. Photo by Danny Hoffman.
2: *Marie Teah*. 2005. Photo by Danny Hoffman.
3: *Gold Mining*. 2005. Photo by Danny Hoffman.



An Interview with Visiting Scholar Derek Gregory



Above: Derek Gregory (Geography, University of British Columbia)

Derek Gregory (Geography, University of British Columbia), author of *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, and Iraq* (2004) and *Geographical Imaginations* (1993), visited the Simpson Center in October 2006 as Katz Distinguished Lecturer in the Humanities. Since 9/11 Gregory’s scholarship has focused on the long history of British and American involvement in the Middle East, tracing how centuries of imperial and colonial practice continue to shape global imbalances of power and perception in the region.

During his week-long residency at the Simpson Center, Gregory gave two public lectures that examined the imaginative geographies and the spatial practices that organize ‘the war on terror’ and the global war prison. He also led a graduate seminar entitled “New Wars? Terror, Military Violence, and Performances of Space” and recorded an interview with the *Public Rhetorics, Permanent War (PRPW)* research cluster.

Organized by three doctoral students in English, **Keith Feldman**, **Anoop Mirpuri**, and **Georgia Roberts**, *PRPW* has focused on understanding the conditions of permanent war and on thinking through the critical counter-tactics offered by activist, artistic, and scholarly projects that address larger publics.

The following is an excerpt from their conversation:

Gregory: *If we conceive of theory as a purely analytical project then the dangers of co-option and complicity are extraordinary. So, one needs to think both in terms of ethics and affect, and of course as soon as you introduce either of those then you’ve moved beyond a formal theoretical apparatus and you start to engage with creative artists in all kinds of extraordinary ways.*

Seyla Benhabib says that critical theory can redeem its promise in either of two environments. One is the explanatory diagnostic manner, which is the analytical moment I’ve been talking about. So, I can expose what happens in Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib, I can show how those two sites which the Bush Administration prizes apart are intimately connected. I can show analytically how the global war prison is folded into the larger project of the war on terror. But Benhabib says that the other crucial moment is the anticipatory utopian moment. It seems to me that the anticipatory utopian moment is simply inconceivable without either ethics or affect. Inconceivable, that is, without people understanding that theory helps imagine a different world and explore the ethical implications of these alternative futures. Without having people

invest in that with a sense of hope and joy rather than simply despair and horror, then the anticipatory utopian moment is forever deferred.

That’s why I’ve gotten very interested in artistic rendering. . . . In my own field of geography we’re very good at using the visual in an analytical sense. It’s a world of maps and diagrams, often very sophisticated, and you can see how the analysis unfolds. But I’ve gotten much more interested in the ways in which the political art that seizes me, particularly animated art on the web, captures the world of ethics and this extraordinary recognition of affect in a way that the diagrams never do.

PRPW: *Do you ever start with art as a theoretical entry point, rather than say, Agamben?*

Gregory: *I do. I do less in terms of visual art, where I simply recoil in awe at the power of visual artists. I can read it, and I think I can make sense of it, but it’s different to start creating it. But I think in terms of drama. I always intended to leave the academy and go to drama school. Because that’s such a very powerful way of capturing the three things I want: analysis, ethics, and affect. And I find myself returning to it, not as a metaphor. I talked earlier in the week about conceptions of space and space as a performance, as a doing. That’s not simply a metaphor for me. I’ve become more and more interested in actually collaborating with theatre groups to stage [issues] in different places, and in working in a much more mixed media/multimedia way. So I do.*

And I do for another reason. I am uncomfortable with the ways, for instance those images from Abu Ghraib came to be aestheticized and used, no matter how powerfully, by guerilla artists. There’s something about the gaze being arrested by the image that I find really very troubling. . . . Your gaze is so directed at the muselman that you never see the police roundups, the internment camps, the trains making their way across occupied Europe, the watchtowers, the chimneys, the camp, everyone else in the camp. And it’s this single-minded, determined, unwavering focus on this lone wretched figure. I think that means that the whole landscape which made that possible disappears. But worse, it makes it seem inevitable, logical, determined, this sight that then haunts this landscape in which we live. So I’m much more interested in the capacity of either drama or a kind of mixed media/multi-media presentation.

- 1: An-My Lê. *29 Palms: Marine Palms*. 2003–2004. Gelatin silver print. Collection Lannan Foundation, Santa Fe, NM.
2: An-My Lê. *Small Wars: Explosion*. 1999–2002. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy of Murray Guy Gallery, New York, NY.
3: Kim Jones. *Venice, California, December 1975*. 1975. Gelatin silver print. Photo: Ned Sloane. Courtesy Luckman Gallery, California State University, Los Angeles, CA.



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AMERICAN SABOR:

REINVENTING RESEARCH THROUGH
CREATIVE COLLABORATION



Sabor – The Spanish word for taste or flavor commonly used to describe good music.

This October an innovative interactive exhibit—*American Sabor: Latinos in U.S. Popular Music*—will open at Seattle’s Experience Music Project (EMP). The first of its kind, the multi-layered and multi-sensory exhibit will explore how Latinos have shaped American popular music, culture, and history. The exhibit opens Saturday, October 13, 2007, and runs through September 7, 2008.

“What’s exciting about *American Sabor* is that it compels a rethinking of American popular music and its development,” says **Michelle Habel-Pallán** (Women Studies), one of the University of Washington researchers and curators. “It shows that music emerging from Latino communities in the U.S. has been, and is, a core element of American pop music, not just a branch of it.”

The exhibit’s opening is a milestone for the curatorial team,

1: Joe Cuba band member dancing with partner at the Palladium, New York, NY circa 1955. Courtesy of Johan Kugelberg.

2: Poster for El Vez with the Elvettes and the Memphis Mariachis, Los Hornets, Los Mex Pistols, at the Crocodile Cafe, Seattle, WA, February 28, 1997 + with Girl Trouble. Experience Music Project permanent collection.

3: Ramón “Mongol” Santamaría, circa 1960. Courtesy of Johan Kugelberg.

which represents a deep and committed collaboration among University of Washington faculty and graduate students together with staff at EMP.

In 2004 **Shannon Dudley** (Ethnomusicology) and Habel-Pallán made a proposal to the Simpson Center outlining a multi-year project of collaborative research to be undertaken with **Marisol Berrios-Miranda** (Ethnomusicology and Latin American Studies). They envisioned bringing important scholarship to bear on the dominant narratives of American popular music, while finding a form for scholarship that was as exhilarating and participatory as the music itself. Three graduate students have also played special roles in the project: **Rob Carroll** (Ethnomusicology), **Francisco Orozco** (Ethnomusicology), and **Amanda Soto** (Music Education).

The exhibit is organized around five regional centers of concentrated musical activity: New York, Miami, San Antonio, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. By following the travel of musical idioms and sounds, the exhibit will trace cultural connections across genres and geographies. When the exhibit closes in Seattle, it will travel to these cities as well as others in the U.S. with prominent Latino communities.

2007-2008

KATZ DISTINGUISHED
LECTURES IN THE HUMANITIES

October 16, 2007
Derek Attridge
(English, University of York)

A distinguished Joyce scholar and literary theorist, Attridge is the author of *How to Read Joyce* (2002) and *Joyce Effects: On Language, Theory, and History* (2000). *The Singularity of Literature* (2004), his most recent book, won the European Society for the Study of English Book in 2006.

January 31, 2008
Vincente Rafael
(History, University of Washington)

Renowned scholar of Southeast Asian history, Rafael is the author of *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule* (1993) and *The Promise of the Foreign: Nationalism and the Technics of Translation in the Spanish Philippines* (2005).

April 22, 2008
Wendy Brown
(Political Science, University of California, Berkeley)

Best known for intertwining the insights of Marx, Nietzsche, Weber, Freud, and other theorists and philosophers, Brown’s current work focuses on the relationship of political sovereignty to global capital and other transnational forces, including religion, law, culture, and moral discourse. Her latest book is *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (2006).

NEW BOOKS IN PRINT

The Simpson Center’s *New Books in Print* series invites UW faculty to discuss their recently published books. Books for 2007-2008 include:

Hazard Adams (Emeritus, Comparative Literature)
The Offense of Poetry
University of Washington Press, 2007

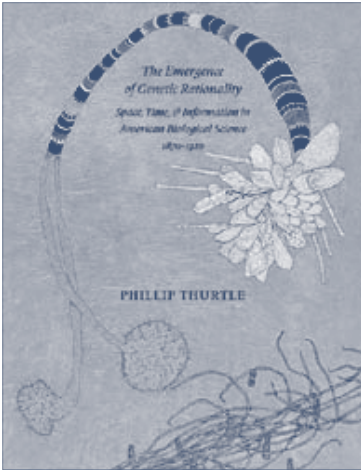
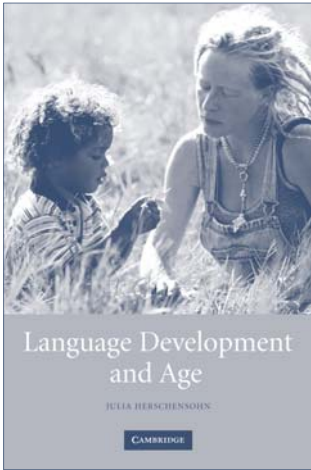
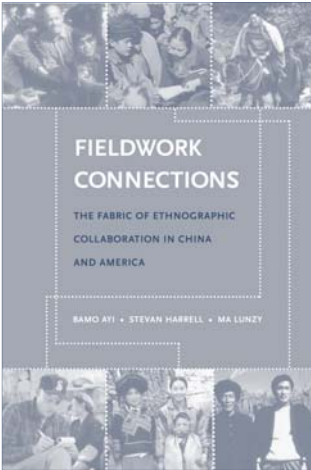
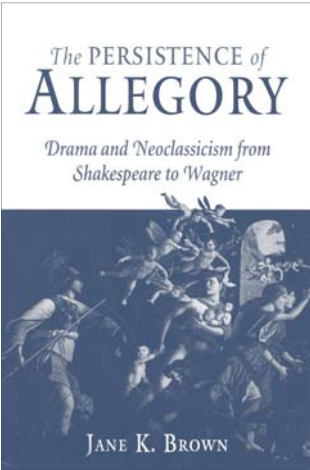
Jane K. Brown (Germanics)
The Persistence of Allegory: Drama and Neoclassicism from Shakespeare to Wagner
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007

Stevan Harrell (Anthropology)
Fieldwork Connections: The Fabric of Ethnographic Collaboration in China and America with Bamo Ayi and Ma Linzy
University of Washington Press, 2007

Julia Herschensohn (Linguistics)
Language Development and Age
Cambridge University Press, 2007

Scott Noegel (Near Eastern Languages & Literatures)
Nocturnal Ciphers: The Punning Language of Dreams in the Ancient Near East
American Oriental Society, 2007

Phillip Thurtle (Comparative History of Ideas and History)
The Emergence of Genetic Rationality: Space, Time, and Information in American Biological Science, 1870-1920
University of Washington Press, 2007



A Graduate Seminar on Visual Documentation Praxis



1.-2. Participants in the *Visual Documentation Praxis* seminar.
3. Joe Sacco (reporter and comics artist)

Praxis is the process by which a theory, lesson, or skill is enacted or practiced. —www.wikipedia.org
How can methods of visual documentation help develop, support, and assess collaborative research relationships between university scholars and community partners? What are the politics of producing and reflecting on images with others?

These are just a few of the research questions raised by *Visual Documentation Praxis*, a graduate course offered through the Simpson Center in Spring 2007. Led by **Danny Hoffman** (Anthropology) and **Kari Lerum** (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW Bothell) participants explored visual forms—from photo and video documentary to graphic novels and theater—as social practices and as flexible research methods themselves.

“In framing this as a seminar about visual documentation praxis, we wanted to highlight three things,” explained Hoffman. “First, we wanted to explore visual research methods not only as social practices but also as sensory ways of knowing and communicating information. Next we wanted to foreground questions about documentation and research, the work that documents do and what documenting events does in different contexts and for different audiences. And last, in praxis, we wanted to connect theory and practice, knowledge and action, through experiential learning.”

Experimental in design, the course included collaborative projects with local community organizations—Seattle Girls’ School, Planned Parenthood of Western Washington, and the Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic among others. At the clinic, for example, a team of graduate students worked with teenagers, teaching them how to take and interpret photographs. The resulting photographs were part of a study undertaken by

these teenagers on how questions and concepts of health and wellness manifested in their lives. Traditionally academia has favored the written word. But Hoffman and Lerum believe that the visual is the new frontier for academic research. “Contemporary visual culture is so rich and so ubiquitous,” says Lerum, a sociologist. “Visual studies is only beginning to engage academia with its complexity and potential. Students, on the other hand, come primed to engage with visual material and use visual technologies.” Hoffman and Lerum are currently co-authoring articles on “Undisciplined Ethnographies” and on “Visual Documentation Praxis for Cultural Studies.”

That the course drew students from many academic fields suggests the current reach of visual methodologies. Students also brought with them a diversity of professional backgrounds, including experience as labor organizers, environmental activists, K-12 teachers, radio journalists, actors, musicians, curators, filmmakers, writers, and reviewers. This rich wealth of experience in turn helped support the collaborative projects.

Though projects relied chiefly on photography and videography, students explored other media in special workshops organized in conjunction with the course. There was a special session with reporter and comics artist **Joe Sacco**, author of *The Fixer: A Story from Sarajevo* (2003), *Palestine* (2001), and *Safe Area Gorazde: The War in Eastern Bosnia 1992-95* (2000). These graphic collections document everyday truths and realities in occupied territories and war zones that escape typical reporting formats. At another session students worked with performance methods (including image theatre) and taped a public access television segment at SCAN-TV. Work from these sessions and the collaborative community projects was showcased at an open house event on Monday, June 4 at the Simpson Center.

Sponsored jointly by Seattle Arts & Lectures and the Simpson Center for the Humanities.

Teachers as Scholars (TAS) is a professional development program that joins K-12 teachers with university faculty in a climate designed to enrich the teaching and learning of both groups. The Puget Sound adaptation of this national program has forged links between schools, universities, and local cultural organizations. By participating in small seminars led by outstanding UW faculty in the humanities, K-12 teachers are reconnected to the world of scholarship. In turn, university faculty become more fully involved in the ongoing efforts to improve primary and secondary education. In 2007-2008 the Simpson Center is launching a new initiative to involve doctoral students in this important program.

Wednesday University provides Puget Sound residents the opportunity to continue their education in the humanities and visual arts. Each year *Wednesday University* offers three non-credit courses taught by University of Washington faculty in the beautiful auditorium of the Henry Art Gallery. These courses, which meet on Wednesday evenings, are open to anyone. This autumn, *Wednesday University* will kick off the 2007-2008 season with Professor David Domke on “Religion, Politics, and the American Presidency.” See www.simpsoncenter.org for detailed courses and seminar offerings.

Teachers as Scholars and Wednesday University

A Conference on Roman Imperial Art & Ritual



On April 18-19, 2008 a conference on *Roman Imperial Art and Ritual* will bring together leading scholars around a topic that was both central to Roman culture and is an emerging field in the study of the ancient world: ritual. The conference is being coordinated with Seattle Art Museum’s exhibition in the spring on “Roman Art from the Louvre.” The exhibition runs from February 21-May 11, 2008.

Ritual permeated every aspect of Roman life from the official state religion to individual dedications and household practices. More importantly, Roman religion was based on actions rather than theological dogma. Rituals were there to be observed, they occurred in a specific place, and they relied on objects for their successful completion. Roman art depicts these rituals and played a part in them.

Organized by **Alain Gowing** (Classics), **Sandra Joshel** (History), and **Margaret Laird** (Art History), the conference will be the keystone event of a year-long series of courses on Roman imperial art and culture for both graduate students and undergraduates. There will also be a *Wednesday University* course and a *Teachers as Scholars* seminar related to the conference and exhibit.

The conference will serve as a focal point to unite these diverse audiences, provide them with the necessary background to understand the exhibition, and nurture an enthusiasm for Roman art, history, and religion. The organizers anticipate that conference presentations will address women and gender, the imperial cult, the religious life of slaves and ex-slaves, and art and religion.

The speakers include **Mary Beard** (Classics, Cambridge University), **Keith Bradley** (Classics, University of Notre Dame), **John Clarke** (Art History, University of Texas, Austin), **Natalie Boymel Kampen** (Art History and Archeology, Columbia University), **Lauren Hackworth Petersen** (Art History, University of Delaware), and **Jennifer Trimble** (Classics, Stanford University).

SOCIETY OF SCHOLARS 2007-2008

The Society of Scholars is an intellectual community in which UW faculty and dissertators across generations, ranks, and departments contribute to and learn from one another’s work. Each year members are selected through a competitive process and are offered awards releasing them from some of their teaching responsibilities to focus on their research. The group meets biweekly over lunch to discuss their research.

Paul Atkins (Assistant Professor, Asian Languages & Literature), “Systems of Medieval Japanese Poetic Practice”

Tani Barlow (Professor, History and Women Studies), “Iconicity and Advertising: Shanghai, Mukden, Tianjin”

Tami Blumenfield (Dissertator, Anthropology), “Visual Representations of the Na: Reclaiming a Medium”

Tom Foster (Professor, English), “Ethnicity and Technicity”

Trevor Griffey (Alvord Graduate Fellow in the Humanities, History), “‘Integrating a Burning House’: Black Worker Struggles for Affirmative Action in the Age of Deindustrialization”

Craig Jeffrey (Assistant Professor, Geography and International Studies), “The Cultural Politics of Student Activism in India”

Moon-Ho Jung (Associate Professor, History), “Bleeding Red: Antiradicalism and the U.S. Empire”

Ron Krabill (Assistant Professor, Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW Bothell), “Starring Mandela and Cosby: Media, Democratization, and the End(s) of Apartheid”

Linda Nash (Assistant Professor, History), “Engineering a Modern World: Environments, Technologies, Agency”

Vince Schleitwiler (Dissertator, English), “Shades of a World Problem: Reading the Literatures of Black and Asian Migrations”

Crispin Thurlow (Assistant Professor, Communication), “Elite Mobilities: The Discursive Production of Luxury and Privilege”

Ta Trang (Dissertator, Anthropology), “Spectacles in the Streets: Medical Drama and Public Pain”

Geoffrey Turnovsky (Assistant Professor, French & Italian Studies), “The ‘Literary Market’: Authorship, Society, and the Birth of a Modern Cultural Field in Old Regime France”

A Workshop on Developing a Dissertation Prospectus

The Simpson Center will sponsor a pilot workshop this year aimed at helping pre-dissertation graduate students develop research projects and proposals in interdisciplinary fields. Inspired by the Dissertation Proposal Development Fellowship program of the Social Science Research Council, the workshop will be organized around a particular interdisciplinary domain, and will aim to gather graduate students from across UW in the humanities and social sciences departments around common intellectual questions.

Eva Cherniavsky (English) and **Nikhil Pal Singh** (History), Simpson Center Executive Board Members and scholars in Transnational American Studies, will lead the pilot workshop. While the workshop rubric is still under discussion, they are interested in projects that conceptualize and study social relations that extend beyond the nation, engaging such questions as empire, globalization, and ethno-nationalism.

The workshop will likely gather some ten students for a series of intensive formative meetings in June 2008, and reconvene them at the end of the summer before classes resume. The emphasis, Cherniavsky suggests, will be on “how to generate projects that engage specific archives.” Graduate students at the dissertation proposal or pre-proposal development stage will be eligible to participate.

Research Clusters

Research clusters provide graduate students with opportunities to incubate and develop individual and collaborative projects in dialogue with students, faculty, and visiting scholars. In 2007-2008 five interdisciplinary clusters will be supported by the Simpson Centers: *Critical Animal Studies*, *Forum for Urban Studies in South Asia*, *Students Writing in Public*, *Queer Worlds*, and *Modernist Studies Group* (now in its third year).

Public Scholarship
Seattle Reads *The Namesake*

Each year the Washington Center for the Book at the Seattle Public Library hosts a major author for a series of free programs called *Seattle Reads*. Directed by **Chris Higashi**, *Seattle Reads* selected Jhumpa Lahiri’s novel *The Namesake* (2003) for 2007. Seizing the opportunity to join in the discussion, UW faculty member **Chandan Reddy** (English) recruited graduate students as well as members of Seattle’s South Asian community organizations to lead dialogues last May around the novel’s themes of migration, ethnicity, and race.

“As a story of a South Asian family in America, *The Namesake* not only asks us to look at what is the immigrant experience, but what that experience might tell us about the world we live in and about our collective modern experience, with all its attendant violence, newness, historical legacies, and future possibilities,” says Reddy. The work of the dialogues was to get at these issues as they emerged from *The Namesake* but also as they intersected with the work of South Asian organizations and the experiences of members of the community.

With Reddy as prime organizer, participants included doctoral students **Amy Bhatt** (Women Studies), **Jeff Chiu** (English), **Kellie Holzer** (English), **Sharleen Mondal** (English), **Dipika Nath** (Women Studies), **Vince Schleitwiler** (English), **Shiwani Srivastava** (South Asian Studies Program, International Studies), and **Ji-Young Um** (English) in addition to visiting South Asian scholars and representatives from Tasveer (a non-profit for South Asian independent cinema), Chaya (a South Asian anti-domestic violence network), and TriKone (a South Asian queer social and political network).

For graduate students, participating in the dialogues and book groups offered rigorous on-the-job training in critical public intellectual work. Students said that the experience prompted them to contend with new questions practically and theoretically. What kind of audience has come together for this event? How do I raise critical issues while respecting readers’ love for the book? How can I thematize the contradictions and limits of the discussion itself, and move discussion to another level?



Above, from left to right, Chandan Reddy (English). Photo by Erik Stuhau. Courtesy of Seattle Public Library. Jhumpa Lahiri (author of *The Namesake*). Photo by Erik Stuhau. Courtesy of Seattle Public Library.



“As graduate students, we tend to see specialized research as the prerequisite to interpretation,” reflected participant Vince Schleitwiler. “That can be debilitating—particularly in teaching. This was a rare opportunity to be trained for a more improvisational, collaborative engagement in less predictable settings of public culture.”

Keywords for American Cultural Studies on the Web

This autumn New York University Press is publishing *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, co-edited by **Bruce Burgett** (Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW Bothell) and **Glenn Hendler** (English and American Studies, Fordham University). The sixty-four individually authored entries in the book are not meant to be exhaustive but to encourage the further elaboration of keywords. In partnership with NYU Press and the editors, the Simpson Center is hosting an experimental website that aims to do just that.

The website’s central component is the “Keywords Collaboratories.” Using embedded wiki technology, the collaboratories allow groups of users to compose and revise their keyword entries as part of a class assignment or working group project. The resulting entries will be submitted to Burgett and Hendler for possible publication on the site. Excerpts from some of the book’s entries are posted on the website. UW graduate student **Deborah Kimmey** (English) will help administer the site.

The touchstone for the project is Raymond Williams’ seminal *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, which included blank pages in the back of the book as a sign to readers that it remained open to further inquiry and engagement.

“Why are we interested in this as editors

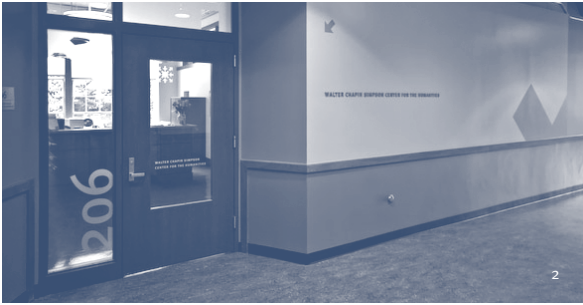
and authors?” asks Burgett. “Mostly because it follows up on the claim of the book to be generative of new work and knowledge projects, and not merely a summary or a short-cut. Why are we interested in using this site as instructors? Because this type of assignment—one with a meaningful publication that circulates beyond the walls of the classroom—ups the ante for students, who tend to learn more and to produce much better work as consequence.”

Visit the *Keywords* site at www.keywords.nyupress.org

NEH Text Encoding Workshop for Faculty and Graduate Students

The Simpson Center will host a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) workshop on digital text encoding for faculty and graduate students on June 16-17, 2008. Organized by **Julia Flanders**, Director of the Brown University Women Writers Project, and supported by a Preservation and Access Education and Training Grant, the workshop is one of twelve offered across the nation to scholars in the humanities.

The workshop will focus on the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), an international standard used to digitize literary and linguistic texts for scholarly research. The focus will be on the theoretical issues that connect text encoding technology to scholarly methods. Workshop leaders will use rare books, manuscript letters, archival documents, and early periodicals to explore the standards, challenges, history, and emerging developments in text encoding. The workshop is being planned in consultation with Textual Studies faculty led by **Leroy Searle** (English and Comparative Literature). **Melinda Van Wingen**, the Simpson Center’s new web information specialist, will coordinate the workshop.



1-2. Simpson Center now
3-4. former home of the University of Washington Center for the Humanities



THE SIMPSON CENTER CELEBRATES ITS TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

In 1997 the University of Washington Humanities Center received an utterly unexpected and wholly welcome pledge of \$5 million from benefactors Barclay “Barc” and Sharon Simpson to endow the center in honor of Barc’s father, Walter Chapin Simpson. That year the Humanities Center was renamed the Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities.

“I never met any individual better than my father in terms of human relations,” said Barc Simpson in making the gift. “He believed that if you are fortunate in life you need to pay something back, to help others.” One of the central missions of the Simpson Center—the public humanities—reflects the Simpson family’s commitment to education and to helping others as it builds and sustains strong ties between scholars in the humanities and people (and partners) in the community.

After residing in a trailer on campus for over ten years, the Simpson Center now occupies a large and beautifully designed suite of offices in the centrally located Communications Building. The Simpson Center has several rooms to offer UW faculty, graduate students, and staff for special events, courses, and lectures. Along with a faculty member who serves as director, the Simpson Center now boasts five full-time staff.

“I cannot overstate how important the Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities is to the University of Washington,” says **Nikhil Singh** (History), a member of the Simpson Center’s Executive Board. “A center of vibrant collaboration across scholarly disciplines, a site of diverse and flourishing exchange between the University and the wider Seattle community, and a source of generous support for teaching innovation and new faculty research, it is the very heart and soul of what the University can be and should be.”

Over the past ten years the Simpson Center has received major grants from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, and the Ford Foundation as well as support from the Silk Road Foundation. It has been the administrative home of the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI).

“The Simpson Center is free-wheeling and elegant, hospitable and fearless,” says **Julie Ellison** (English, University of Michigan), the founding director of *Imaging America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life*. “It is a place to gather one’s wits and knowledge, a place for code-switching and translation. It is a community of practice, manifest in metropolitan relationships, and its best energies

“The Simpson Center is free-wheeling and elegant, hospitable and fearless,”

—Julie Ellison (English, University of Michigan)

flow into complex public cultural partnerships. Most importantly, it pioneered the annual *Institute on the Public Humanities for Doctoral Students*. This intensive annual seminar is a nationally influential model of the co-creation of knowledge for the public good, made by and for a new generation of civic professionals.”

This year the Simpson Center is honoring Barc and Sharon Simpson for their gift with a series of events dedicated to the Simpson family. Please check our website at www.simpsoncenter.org for events and updates.

Humanities Advocacy

1. Katharyne Mitchell (Geography and Simpson Professor in the Public Humanities)
2. Participant in “Kids Speak Out” event at Seattle Town Hall.



Frances McCue Looks Back on the *Reclaiming Childhood* Project

When **Katharyne Mitchell** (Geography) submitted a proposal for the *Simpson Professorship in the Public Humanities*, a three-year appointment beginning Autumn 2004, she was inspired to bring her scholarship into a wider public.

Mitchell is a geographer whose spatial ethnographies examine and illuminate the politics of racial formation, neighborhood transformation, and institutional realignment under the conditions known as globalization. Her latest book, *Crossing the Neoliberal Line: Pacific Rim Migration and the Metropolis (Place, Culture, Politics)* (2004), looks at the transnational movement of people and capital and is considered a seminal study of contemporary urbanism, multiculturalism, and the nation-state.

For the *Simpson Professorship*, Mitchell first considered a project on the education of immigrants and how they became citizens. “But that was too limited and too focused on the social sciences,” she says. “It wasn’t really a conversation. I wanted a subject that would engage a wide range of disciplines.”

The *Simpson Professorship in the Public Humanities* is a prestigious chair with a generous salary and project budget. One of the goals of the appointment is to create a bridge between humanities scholarship and life in the region. The Simpson Center sends academics off campus and brings public intellectuals, artists and scholars not affiliated with the university onto the grounds. Around the region, the Simpson Center is known as an oasis, a set of cherry-lined rooms where scholars and artists gather. It is also a conduit—one of the University’s great connectors to public scholarship and the give and take of intellectual thought.

Mitchell’s winning proposal, *Reclaiming Childhood*, led her on an inquiry to explore how schooling, media, public space, the arts, parenting, and other issues affect contemporary children. “There are lots of institutions that impact how kids grow up in America,” says Mitchell. “They affect the imagination, the experience of nature, and even engagement with siblings. I wanted to see how these things are linked with broader political and economic structures in society, and how we might be able to talk about them across the usual town-gown divides.”

Her first step was to gather scholars and practitioners who knew about childhood from different vantage points. As Mitchell spoke with colleagues around campus, she collected names of people who would work well in a research group and then interviewed them. She recruited **Patricia Campbell** (Music), **Sharon Sutton** (Architecture, Urban Design & Planning), **Walter Parker** (Education), and myself. Later, Mitchell invited video and installation artist **Cheryll Hidalgo** to join the group and to design a large interactive piece called “Constructing Childhood.”

For the past eight years the National Humanities Alliance (NHA), based in Washington, D.C., has sponsored Humanities Advocacy Day, drawing people from around the country to discuss humanities policy and to visit the offices of their senators and representatives on Capitol Hill. **Kathleen Woodward** (Simpson Center Director and a member of NHA’s Board of Directors), doctoral student **Zhenya Lavy** (Drama), and University of Washington’s **Sarah Spreitzer**, Assistant Director of Federal Relations in Washington D.C. participated in last March’s meeting.

They urged a \$36 million increase in the budget of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), which would bring funding up to \$177 million, and found a warm reception in the offices of Senators **Maria Cantwell** and **Patty Murray** and Representatives **Norm Dicks**, **Brian Baird**, **Jay Inslee**, **Jim McDermott**, **Cathy McMorris Rodgers**, **Dave Reichert**, and **Adam Smith**.

“We are exceedingly fortunate,” says Kathleen Woodward, “that Norm Dicks—first elected to Congress in 1976 and an alum of the UW—is now the Chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, which is responsible for appropriations for NEH. He has been a strong and articulate advocate for the humanities for years.”

Looking back over the past three years, what Mitchell produced was not a predictable set of events—no talking heads bestowing their expertise upon the public nothing stiff and tweedy—and no formless rehashings on the failures of schools and social services either. Instead, Mitchell commissioned new work and created a collage of voices expressed through presentations, roundtables, kids’ forums, lectures, and an incredible room-filling art installation at the UW’s Allen Library. The exhibition ran from April 24 – June 23.

At one event last spring, staged downtown at Town Hall Seattle, young students talked about their relationships with media and how their cell phones, text messages, iPods, emails and Game Boys influenced their social and academic lives. “Go with it,” one kid advised the audience. “This stuff is here to stay and we’re still kids just like you were.” Mitchell gave voice to hundreds of children, school principals, teachers, parents, humanities scholars, and artists.

What drew Walter Parker to the project was his interest in civic education, he says “especially loyalty and allegiance in the work of schools.” Knowing he could find a place to explore these ideas further, Parker signed on with *Reclaiming Childhood*. Parker is tremendous fun. Like Mitchell and the other members of the research team, he’s a great listener, has a wry sense of humor, and loves good dialogue. Our meetings were lively and the ideas inspired by good will and intelligence. We were all surprised by what we learned in conversation with Mitchell.

After countless hours spent generating ideas for events and research and then bringing them to life, Mitchell says, “I’m more a public scholar now than when I embarked upon this project. I had an abstract idea of it at the start, but now it’s part of who I am.”

Reclaiming Childhood has been an enormous civic conversation.

Frances McCue is a widely published poet, scholar, and essayist who examines the intersection of writing and community life. She was the Artistic Director and co-founder of the Richard Hugo House, the largest and liveliest literary center in the West. She is currently working on a book about Richard Hugo.

Networking Science Studies

The University of Washington is nationally ranked in a wide and rich range of sciences. But it has no comparably ambitious interdisciplinary program in science studies. With support from the Simpson Center in 2007-2008 and beyond, **Alison Wylie** (Philosophy and Anthropology), **Stephanie Malia Fullerton** (Medical History & Ethics), **Celia Lowe** (Anthropology),

This year, Congressman Dicks included an additional \$19 million in funding for the NEH during the Interior funding bill markup for fiscal year 2008, the largest increase for the NEH since 1979, which would bring NEH funding to \$160 million. The Senate included a smaller increase of \$5 million in its version of the funding bill, which would raise NEH funding to \$146.3 million next year. The Interior funding bill must now be conferenced between the House and Senate. This will allow the differences of the two bills to be resolved and is expected to happen in September.

“What does advocacy entail?” asks Woodward. “It is more than a practical matter. I’m particularly drawn to the philosopher Lorraine Code’s ideas about advocacy. For her, ‘Advocacy is at once dependent on the quality—the careful sensitivity—of the knowledge informing it and on the level of epistemic responsibility and the climate of trust where it circulates.’ That’s from her book *Ecological Thinking*.”

Founded in 1981, the NHA is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing support for the humanities in the areas of research, education, preservation, and public programs.

Phillip Thurtle (Comparative History of Ideas and History), and **Simon Werrett** (History) have committed themselves to developing the *Science Studies Network*.

Their goal is to catalyze an inclusive University of Washington-based network of faculty and graduate students in three broad and overlapping areas: history and philosophy of science, social and cultural studies of science, and normative issues in the sciences (ethics, equity, and policy).

At twice-monthly meetings faculty and graduate students across the campus will gather together over lunch to present their research. Subjects with crossdisciplinary reach include democratizing science, science in transnational contexts, and biosecurity studies. There will be visiting speakers and ongoing discussion of ways to develop a science studies curriculum and program here.

Two important conferences designed to concretize science studies will take place during the year. On March 7-9, 2008, the University of Washington will host the 10th annual gathering of the *Philosophy of Social Science Roundtable*, organized by Wylie. **Nancy Cartwright** (Philosophy, London School of Economics & Political Science and Philosophy, University of California, San Diego) and **Charles Mills** (Philosophy, Northwestern University) are the featured speakers.

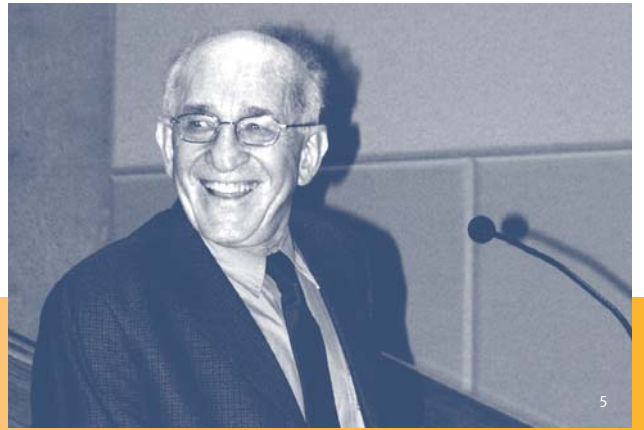
Later in the spring there will be a two-day working conference on community-based participatory research entitled *Expanding Interdisciplinarity from Campus to Communities: Exploring Innovation in Collaborative Research*. It is being organized by **Kelly Fryer-Edwards** (Medical History & Ethics) and Wylie.

A working definition of Science Studies Alison Wylie

Science Studies is an interdisciplinary field of research that takes the sciences in all their complexity—their practice, their history and socio-cultural formation, their philosophical underpinnings, their impact on our lives—as a subject for systematic investigation.

The point of departure is, for many, an appreciation that science is a jointly intellectual, material, and social enterprise; it brings diverse resources to bear on the project of constructing stable, reliable systems of knowledge about the natural and social world. It is the goal of Science Studies to understand how such knowledge is produced and authorized, what distinguishes it as scientific knowledge, how it evolves and is inflected by the contexts of its production, and what its normative implications are: what ethical obligations and other forms of accountability constitute “research integrity” in particular contexts of practice.

06 07 » Highlights



1. Ruth Wilson Gilmore (American Studies and Ethnicity, University of Southern California)
2. Sean Wong (English), David Guterson (local author), Charles Johnson (English), and Alison Danz
3. Stephen Kern (History, Ohio State University)
4. Peggy Phelan (Drama and English, Stanford University)
5. Herbert Blau (English)
6. *Performance & History: What History?* conference poster
7. Kathleen Woodward (Director, Simpson Center and English)
8. David Clark (English and Cultural Studies, McMaster University)

ADDITIONAL CONFERENCES 2007-2008

SOVEREIGNS AND SUBJECTS: JEWISH POLITICAL THOUGHT AND EXPERIENCE IN THE 20TH CENTURY | Winter 2008
Organized by Gad Barzilai (International Studies), Richard Block (Germanics), Susan Glenn (History), Noam Pianko (International Studies), and Michael Rosenthal (Philosophy).

CULTURES OF PERFORMANCE IN MODERN AUSTRIA
The annual meeting of Modern Austrian Literature and Culture Association (MALCA) | April 24-27, 2008
Organized by Sarah Bryant-Bertail (Drama), George Bozarth (Music History), Brigitte Prutti (Germanics), Heidi Tilghman (Germanics), and Sabine Wilke (Germanics).

SUMMER DISSERTATION FELLOWS 2007

For the second year in a row, the Simpson Center awarded summer dissertation fellowships to six doctoral students in 2007 with funds from the Robert Bolles and Yasuko Endo Endowed Fund, the College of Arts & Sciences' pledge-match program for graduate student support, and the Divisional Dean of the Arts & Humanities: **Stefan Baums** (Asian Languages & Literatures), **Jennifer Benner** (History), **Fabrizio Cilento** (Comparative Literature), **Rachel Devitt** (Ethnomusicology), **Thomas Stuby** (English), and **Ted Wayland** (English).

SOME OF OUR VISITING SPEAKERS FOR 2007-2008

Ian Ang (Centre for Cultural Research, University of Western Sydney) | **John Archibald** (Linguistics, University of Calgary) | **Robert Barnett** (East Asian Languages & Cultures, Columbia University) | **Mary Beard** (Classics, Cambridge University) | **Ellen Bialystok** (Psychology, York University) | **Olga Borovaya** (Jewish Studies, Stanford University and Johns Hopkins University) | **Keith Bradley** (Classics, University of Notre Dame) | **Matei Calinescu** (Comparative Literature and West European Studies, Indiana University) | **Nancy Cartwright** (Philosophy, London School of Economics & Political Science and Philosophy, University of California, San Diego) | **John Clarke** (Art History, University of Texas, Austin) | **Jean-Louis Cohen** (History of Architecture, New York University) | **Okwui Enwezor** (art critic and dean, San Francisco Art Institute) | **Steven Epstein** (Sociology, University of California, San Diego) | **Harrell Fletcher** (Art, Portland State University) | **Fred Genesee** (Psychology, McGill University) | **Henry Giroux** (Communication Studies and Multimedia, McMaster University) | **Michelle Goodman** (local author and freelance writer) | **Peter Gordon** (History, Harvard University) | **Linda Gregerson** (English Language & Literature, University of Michigan) | **Nancy Hornberger** (Educational Linguistics, University of Pennsylvania) | **E. Patrick Johnson** (Performance Studies, Northwestern University) | **Natalie Boymel Kampen** (Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University) | **Sonja Kufnec** (Theatre Arts and Dance, University of Minnesota) | **Ngo Vinh Long** (History, University of Maine) | **Leerom Medovoi** (English, Portland State University) | **Anthony Michels** (History, University of Wisconsin) | **Charles Mills** (Philosophy, Northwestern University) | **Silvina Montrul** (Linguistics, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) | **Samuel Moyn** (History, Columbia University) | **Lauren Hackworth Petersen** (Art History, University of Delaware) | **Derek Penslar** (History, University of Toronto) | **Terry Pinkard** (Philosophy, Georgetown University) | **Daniel Schroeter** (History, University of California, Irvine) | **Susan Sherwin** (Philosophy, Dalhousie University) | **Merrill Swain** (Curriculum, Teaching & Learning, University of Toronto) | **Jennifer Trimble** (Classics, Stanford University) | **James Vernon** (History, University of California, Berkeley) | **Robyn Wiegman** (Women's Studies and Literature, Duke University) | **Paul Willis** (Social & Cultural Ethnography, Keele University)

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The Simpson Center is a member of the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI), an organization of over 150 humanities centers across the nation and around the world located at the John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute at Duke University. Srinivas Aravamudan (English, Duke University), director of the John Hope Franklin Humanities Institutes, is president of the CHCI.

Simpson Center for the Humanities Administration

Kathleen Woodward, Director
Miriam Bartha, Assistant Director
Lauren Fleming, Program Manager
Melinda Van Wingen, Web Information Specialist
Lynette McVey, Fiscal Specialist and Travel Coordinator
Renée DeLong, Administrative Coordinator
Peter Leonard, Website Consultant
Deborah Kimmey, *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* Project Coordinator
Jennifer (Zhenya) Lavy, *Teachers as Scholars* Program Coordinator
Kristy Leissle, Research Assistant
Brandon Olsen, *Science Studies Network* Research Assistant
Theresa Ronquillo, *Difficult Dialogues* Coordinator
Ashley McClammy, Student Assistant

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Sabine Wilke, Germanics
Kathleen Woodward, Simpson Center and English

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