



## summer graduate student fellows roundtable

**Thursday, March 11, 2009, 4:00-6:00 PM**

**Cross Cultural Center Gallery** (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Price Center East)



### **Andrea Dominguez (Literature) – Ghostly Ruins: Disaster and Collective Memory**

This paper examines narratives of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire that are primarily concerned with questions of blood, race, and miscegenation. I consider Sara Dean's *Travers* (1907), Gertrude Atherton's *The Avalanche* (1919), and Alan Crosland's 1927 film *Old San Francisco* in relation to the tension between erasure and memory, between the politicized narratives of destruction and rebuilding that the quake prompted. This paper is thus perhaps most concerned with identifying and problematizing the "type" of Californian that is "most fit" to survive in a post-quake San Francisco. In order to build a stronger city, these texts struggle with the cultural confluences between progress and whiteness. As a result, the quake also prompts a reimagining – a rebuilding - of constructions of whiteness in early twentieth-century San Francisco.

### **Cathleen Kozen (Ethnic Studies) – 'Never Again!': Tracing a Politics of Japanese Latin American Redress as Global Justice**

Via a tracing of the ongoing California-based struggle for redress from the U.S. government for the internment of Japanese Latin Americans during WWII, this paper addresses key questions concerning the politics of redress as it contends with categories of citizenship, local practices of recognition and belonging, and national and global frameworks of racial and social justice. It asks: What are the limits and transformative possibilities of Japanese Latin American redress as justice within the present post-cold war, (post-)colonial global context in which the U.S. continually re-emerges as the world's leading military and moral authority – the administrator of civil and human rights around the globe?

### **Adam Lewis (Literature) – Filibusters, Print Cultures, and the Contradictions of Imperial Citizenship**

William Walker gained notoriety in the 1850s for his two-year occupation of Nicaragua. Walker consistently insisted on his claim to the Presidency as a naturalized Nicaraguan citizen. This article focuses on Walker's claims to naturalized citizenship and the transformations taking place in

Nicaragua following the U.S. acquisition of California. Walker "becoming Nicaraguan" and Nicaragua "becoming American" both highlight what I am calling "imperial citizenship." I look at this process through his newspaper, *El Nicaraguense*, and the pictorial journalism of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*.

### **Eun Smith (Visual Arts) – Korean American Artists and the 1992 L.A. Riot**

Through contextualizing issues of identity formation as influenced by the 1992 social upheaval in Los Angeles, my project explores how social, historical, and cultural ideas as influenced by this event are formulated in the works of Korean American artists. The focus of the project is on understanding how artists use visual art to articulate their conception of self and cultural identification as Korean Americans living in the United States. I will explicate how the artworks show the confluence in the development of identity formation that is achieved through specific struggles in history that involves shifts within the political and ideological relationship, and how it affects the idea of "placeness" in the analysis of the artists and the work that they create.

### **Michelle Stuckey (Literature) – "The Best Kind of People": Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Biofuturity, and the Panama Pacific International Exposition**

In "The Best Kind of People": Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Biofuturity, and the Panama Pacific International Exposition," I explore how Charlotte Perkins Gilman's utopian novel, *Herland*, was informed by the Panama Pacific International Exposition. Both Gilman's *Herland* and the PPIE elucidate the discursive formation that I am calling "biofuturity." Central to *Herland* and the PPIE is not only the extension of U.S. empire, and in conjunction, the restructuring of colonial spaces both real and imagined, but also the envisioning of a eugenic body, a vision of a white American body that has overcome the "disabling" effects of overcivilization. This eugenic body is figured in Gilman's work through the sexually androgynous, "Aryan" women who have managed to implement eugenic breeding without the help of men, thereby creating a race of healthy, genetically fit women. It also pervades the PPIE; for example, one of the most popular displays was the Race Betterment exhibit. By placing Gilman at the San Francisco fair, I attempt to expand on recent Gilman scholarship that has begun to read her work not only in the context of domestic social reform movements but also as deeply entrenched in the complicated politics of nativism and colonialism of this period.