

# Cultural Studies Newsletter

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## Director's Note

The Cultural Studies Program has had a busy spring, collaborating with different programs to organize three separate conferences. Vivian Halloran, director of the Asian American Studies Program and Cultural Studies faculty member, headed an initiative, with colleagues from the American Studies, Asian American Studies, Cultural Studies, and Native American and Indigenous Studies programs, to organize an "Ethnic Studies Research Workshop" for graduate students on February 18-19, 2011. The workshop brought together graduate students from across the disciplines for a stimulating discussion of their works-in-progress, and featured a keynote ad-

dress by Frances Aparicio. In early March, Cultural Studies faculty members Radhika Parameswaran, Ranu Samantrai, and Purnima Bose, along with Susan Seizer and Rebecca Manning, organized a conference on "South Asian Feminist Studies" as part of an effort to initiate a scholarly dialogue among South Asianists located in the Midwest. Invited participants included Liz Wilson, Tithi Bhattacharya, Lucinda Ramberg, Srimati Basu, and Rini Bhattacharya Mehta.

On April 1-2, 2011, the Cultural Studies Program will hold its annual conference on this year's topic: "Cultural Studies and Marxism." Janet Sorensen, Laura E. Lyons, Ursula

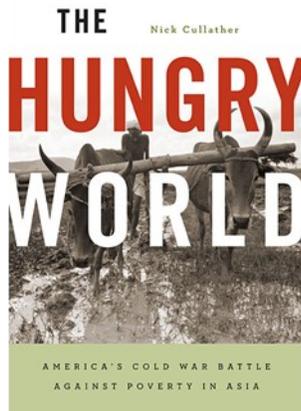
McTaggart, and Dianne Feeley, along with colleagues from IU, will speak on the contemporary relevance of Marxist analysis. (The conference schedule is inside). S. Charusheela will deliver the keynote on "Rethinking Marxism in Times of Turmoil," which considers recent events in Egypt, Algeria, Libya, and Wisconsin as a conjoining of the crisis of capital accumulation with the crisis in legitimacy in governance. Believing that the current moment makes cultural methods in the Marxist tradition propitious, S. Charusheela will consider what kinds of alternative analyses make sense this time around.

—Purnima Bose

## Upcoming Events

**April 1-2** Cultural Studies and Marxism Conference (see pp. 6-7).

**April 18** Georges-Claude Guilbert, a professor of American Studies, Gender Studies, and Cultural Studies at University Francois Rabelais – Tours, will give a public lecture, "Mama Mia!: Dancing Queen Indeed. When Gay Subtext is Gayer than Gay Text" on Monday, April 18th, at 4:00 pm in Woodburn 120.



**Nick Cullather's *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia***



**Angela Pao's *No Safe Spaces: Re-casting Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in American Theater***

## In Press and at the Podium: Recent Activities of Cultural Studies Faculty

**Purnima Bose** was an invited participant at a symposium on "Academia and Activism" at Wesleyan University on February 11, 2011. She also presented her paper, "Love Marriage, Neo-Liberalism, and Indian American Chick Literature," at the South Asian Feminist Studies Conference at Indiana University on March 5, 2011. At the annual Cultural Studies Association meeting in March 2011, she will be a speaker on a panel, "Petroleum Plots and Critical Corporate Studies." She has been invited to give a talk at the University of Washington in May. Bose published an essay, "From Humanitarian Intervention to the Beautifying Mission: Afghan Women and Beauty Without Borders" in *Gender*, and has an article, "Transnational Resistance and Fictive Truths: Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Agnes Smedley, and the Indian Nationalist Movement" which will be simultaneously published in *The Journal of South Asian History and Culture* and Babli Sinha's edited volume on South Asian Transnationalisms.

**Claudia Breger** recently co-edited *Empathie und Erzählung*. [Empathy and Narrative.] Freiburg/Breisgau: Rombach, 2010 with Fritz Breithaupt.

**Linda Charnes** published an essay in the book *Shakespeare Studies*, Vol. 33, 2010, entitled "Shakespeare and the Gothic Strain"; and an

essay entitled "Extraordinary Renditions: Toward an Agency of Place," in *Shakespeare After 9-11: How Social Trauma Shapes Interpretation*, eds. Julia Reinhardt Lupton and Matthew Biberman, Mellen Press 2010. Charnes's doctoral student, Maura Smyth, who graduated in December and who Charnes nominated for a Fellowship with the Harvard Society of Fellows, was the recipient of this prestigious post-doc, for 2011-2014. Maura is the first IU PhD to receive the Junior Fellowship from the Harvard Society of Fellows, according to Provost Karen Hansen.

**Nick Cullather's** recent book, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia*, received two prestigious prizes: the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations' Robert H. Ferrel Book Prize and the Organization of American Historians' Ellis W. Hawley History Book prize. The Ferrel Prize recognizes "distinguished scholarship in the history of American foreign relations, broadly defined" whereas the Hawley Prize "is awarded annually for the best book-length historical study of the political economy, politics, or institutions of the United States, in its domestic or international affairs, from the Civil War to the present."

**Michael Dylan Foster** recently received the IU Outstanding Junior Faculty Award.

**Ilana Gershon** just edited a special issue of the *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 20 (2) called *Media Ideologies*. The volume explores how the concept of language ideologies can be useful for thinking about the relationships between people's beliefs, attitudes and strategies about media and their actual media practices. Gershon's article in this collection is "Breaking Up Is Hard To Do: Media Ideologies and Media Switching." Gershon also received the IU Outstanding Junior Faculty Award.

**Jason Baird Jackson** has recently published an article on "Boasian Ethnography and Contemporary Intellectual Property Debates" in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* and a chapter on Native American dress in *The Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*. Last year he was elected to the Executive Board of the American Folklore Society and spoke at a number of conferences, including the Academix 2010 conference organized by Apple Computer to explore open access issues in higher education. He is finishing work on a book about the history of the Yuchi Nation and editing the journal *Museum Anthropology Review*.

## In Press and at the Podium: Recent Activities of Cultural Studies Faculty

**De Witt Douglas Kilgore** and Ranu Samantrai are the co-editors of a "Special Section on Octavia E. Butler" for the November 2010 of *Science Fiction Studies*. SFS is the premier peer-reviewed journal in its field. Butler was a prominent writer of science fiction, a winner of the MacArthur Foundation "Genius" Award, and the first African American woman to come gain fame in the genre.

In 2010, University of Michigan Press published **Angela Pao's** *No Safe Spaces: Recasting Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in American Theater*.

**Radhika Parameswaran** has two recent publications from fall 2010: a co-authored encyclopedia essay "Women's Movement Media in India" published in the *Sage Encyclopedia of Social Movement Media* and a journal article "The Rise of India and China: Promising New Directions for Global Media Studies" in *Global Media and Communication*. She also has two forthcoming publications: a book chapter "Erasing Color: Gender and Transnational Visual Economies of Beauty" in the NYU Press book *Tracking Visibilities* and another book chapter "Producing Cosmopolitan Citizens" in the Routledge book *Making the University Matter*. Her previously published article "Global Queens, National Celebrities" (2005) was selected for

reproduction as a book chapter in the 2010 volume *Women Worldwide: Transnational Perspectives on Women*, edited by Janet Lee and Susan Shaw. She served as an evaluator at the National Fulbright Screening Committee meeting in New York in late fall 2010, and she joined the editorial boards of the journals *Critical Studies in Media Communication and Communication Monographs*. She presented a paper at the annual cultural studies conference in Berkeley, California, and gave two invited talks, one at University of Texas-Austin and the other at Trinity University in San Antonio.

In 2010, **Phaedra Pezzullo** edited *Cultural Studies and the Environment, Revisited*. London: Routledge (previously published as a Special Issue of *Cultural Studies*, 22.3-4, May 2008.)

**William Rasch** recently published two articles: "Enlightenment as Religion" in *New German Critique* 108 (Fall 2009), 109-31 and "Justice, Amnesty, and the Strange Lessons of 1945." *Ethics and Global Politics* v. 3, no. 3 (2010), 239-54. Rasch's article, "Theory after Critical Theory," is forthcoming in *Theory after Theory*, ed. Jane Elliott and Derek Attridge (Routledge, 2011).

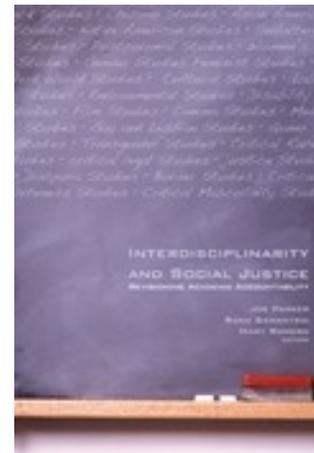
**Ranu Samantrai** co-edited *Interdisciplinarity and*

*Social Justice: Revisioning Academic Accountability* with Joe Parker and Mary Romero (SUNY Press, June 2010). She also co-edited *Science Fiction Studies* #112, special section on Octavia Butler with De Witt Douglas Kilgore (volume 37, part 3, November 2010).

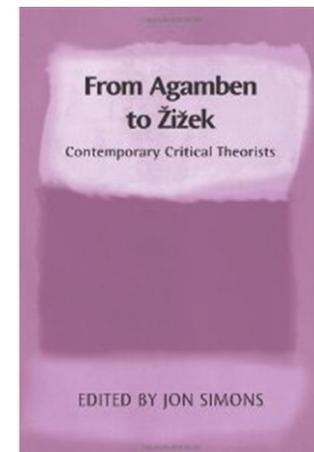
**Jon Simons** recently published *From Agamben to Žizek: Contemporary Critical Theorists* (Edinburgh University Press, 2010). This is the third and final volume of a series that Simons has edited about critical theorists. For this volume, Simons wrote the introduction.

Simons has also edited two other popular guides to critical theory: *From Kant to Lévi-Strauss: The Background to Contemporary Critical Theory* and *Contemporary Critical Theorists: From Lacan to Said*. He has also recently been awarded an Indiana University, College of Arts and Humanities Institute, (2010-11) Travel Research grant for a project on "Images of Peace in the Israeli Peace Movement."

Indiana University Press recently published **Rakesh Solomon's** *Albee in Performance*. "A premier playwright, Edward Albee is also a gifted director. Albee in Performance details Albee's directorial vision and how that vision animates his plays. Having had extraordinary access to Albee as director, (Continued on page 5)



**Ranu Samantrai's Interdisciplinarity and Social Justice: Revisioning Academic Accountability**



**Jon Simons's From Agamben to Žizek: Contemporary Critical Theorists**

## IMAGES AND PUBLIC CULTURE: THE IN/VISIBILITY OF AMERICA'S 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY WARS

### **IMAGES AND PUBLIC CULTURE: UNDERSTANDING IMAGES ACROSS THE HUMANITIES**

As America enters the twenty first century the scene is being set for a paradoxical and simultaneous normalization and spectacularization of war. Instead of war being an exceptional state for America (which has been at war for roughly one quarter of its existence), war is becoming the normal state of affairs for the USA, which is currently still engaged in its longest ever war, in Afghanistan. The militarization of American society proceeds apace, with continued centrality of the military-industrial complex and the prioritization of international and homeland security among the country's political goals. Yet the nature of America's 21<sup>st</sup> century wars fought by volunteer, professional armed forces means that, first, large portions of the domestic public experience war only at a distance, so that war seems abstract, somewhat of an afterthought, or to have disappeared; and, second, that it can be fought without sacrifice by the vast majority. 21<sup>st</sup> century war is very different from the "total war" of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. An obvious example of the disappearance of the sacrifice of war was the Bush administration's ban on the photographing of the coffins of dead US service people being returned home. A key aspect of the normalization of war in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is that it is made visible and legitimated through popular, commercial, mediated culture. War occupies the contemporary public sphere in the forms of films, video games, military emblems in daily photojournalism (boots), military brands of vehicles (Hummer, Jeep), camouflage clothes worn as fashion, advertisements in which corporations brand themselves with their contribution to America's military power (such as Boeing). War is also made visible to the public through highly managed access by journalists to the conflict arena, while the representation of war is significant for the ratings and profitability of the news media and journalism. The in/visibility of war also renders the imaging of peace more problematic, in that if peace is conceived as the absence of war, then in the current cultural imaginary to some extent war *is* peace. What is the significance of this simultaneous in/visibility of war? Does it produce a particular visual grammar and aesthetic sensibility? Does it constitute a new form of the militarization of society that operates almost imperceptibly in visual, public culture? How do its spectacles serve to hide the costs of war at the very time that it displays representations of war? What space does it leave for critical dissent of war and advocacy of peace?

**For more information, please contact Dr. Jon Simons: [simonsj@indiana.edu](mailto:simonsj@indiana.edu)**

The workshop will have three foci, each informed by the guests we plan to bring to Bloomington (in some cases guests have expertise in more than one focus). We will explore conceptually the ways in which America's wars are paradoxically both present and absent, actual and virtual, visible and invisible. We will study different visual media and popular culture genres through which America's publics experience war, such as film, video games, and photography. We will engage with critical practices of the visual arts that also function as public art, in particular photography that renders visible some of the experiences of war that the processes and structures that we have studied under our other foci have made in/visible. In this way we aim not only to gain a new, critical understanding of in/visible wars but also to resist and challenge in/visibility by developing critical practices of public engagement.

The workshop will consist of a series of some eight guests, who will lead a seminar with the workshop participants. The guests will also be asked to make a public lecture while on campus, so their scholarship can be made accessible to a wider community of faculty and students.

The workshop is being supported by a Remak New Knowledge Seminar grant, by a Themester co-curricular program grant, by the Center for Integrated Photographic Studies and the Departments of Communication and Culture, Gender Studies, and Political Science.

## In Press and at the Podium: Recent Activities of Cultural Studies Faculty

(continued from page 3)

Rakesh H. Solomon reveals how Albee has shaped his plays in performance, the attention he pays to each aspect of theater, and how his conception of the key plays he has directed has evolved over a five-decade career. Solomon pays careful attention to the major works, from *The American Dream* and *Zoo Story* to Albee's best-known work, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, as well as to later plays such as *Marriage Play* and *Three Tall Women*. The book also includes interviews with Albee and his collaborators on all aspects of staging, from rehearsal to performance."

**Michiko Suzuki's** (EALC) book, *Becoming Modern Women: Love and Female Identity in Prewar Japanese Literature and Culture* (Stanford University Press, 2010) has been selected as a 2010 *Choice* Outstanding Academic Title. She has also received the Association for Asian Studies Northeast Asia Council Japan Studies Grant for summer 2011 to travel to Tokyo libraries to work on an article about late 1930s representation of female bodies, eugenics and purity.

**Richard Wilk** recently published a number of articles, including: "Power at the Table: Happy Meals and Food Fights" in

*Cultural Studies: Critical Methodologies* 10(6): 423-427; "Consumption in an Age of Globalization and Localization" in *Beyond the Consumption Bubble*. Edited by Karin Ekstrom and Kay Glans, Routledge Interpretive Marketing Research. "Consumption Embedded in Culture and Language: Implications for Finding Sustainability" in *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, 6(2): 1-11.

In 2009, Wilk co-edited *Time, Consumption and Everyday Life: Practice, Materiality and Culture* with Elizabeth Shove and Frank Trentmann and in 2010, he co-edited a special issue of *Environmental Communication*, "Food, Culture and the Environment: Communicating about What We Eat" with Andrew Opel and Jo-sée Johnston.

### Brantlinger-Naremore Prize

Ligia Bezerra has been awarded the Brantlinger-Naremore prize for her essay, "Everyday Life in the McOndo World." Bezerra considers Claudia Piñeiro's *Las viudas de los jueves* in the context of the Argentine economic crisis at the turn of the twenty-first century. Noting that the novel represents the transformation and privatization of urban space in Buenos Aires, she

argues that Piñeiro offers a nuanced critique of the excesses of consumer culture and their differential impact on social subjects. In its conclusion, the essay grapples with the capacity of McOndo literature, in particular, and, more generally, the novel as a commodity form to provide a serious analysis of neo-liberalism.

### Cultural Studies Travel Awards

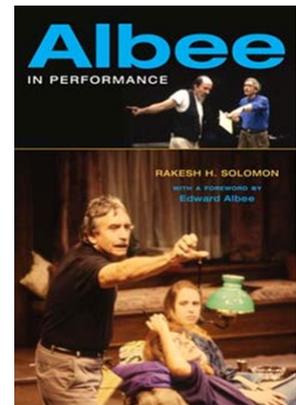
**Ligia Bezerra** to present her research at the 2010 National Popular Culture & American Culture Conference and the 2010 Kentucky Foreign Language Conference.

**Katarzyna Chmielewska** to present her paper "Now It's Personal" at the 2010 Console-ing Passions Conference.

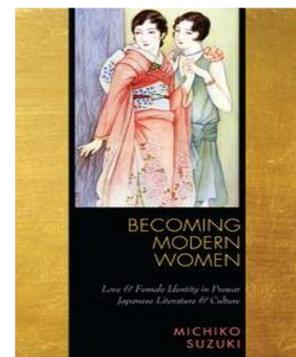
**Shannon Bennett** to present her paper on "The Politics of Mobbing" at the 2010 annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians.

### Cultural Studies Graduate Students

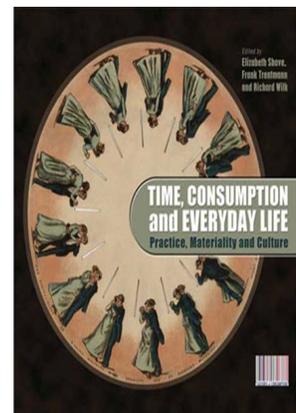
**Anne Delgado's** article "Bawdy Technologies and the Birth of Ectoplasm" will appear in the Fall 2011 issue of *Genders*.



Rakesh Solomon's *Albee in Performance*



Michiko Suzuki's *Becoming Modern*



Richard Wilk's *Time, Consumption and Everyday Life*

## Cultural Studies Annual Conference Schedule, April 1-2

**FRIDAY**  
**Opening Keynote:**  
**S. Charusheela**  
**Ernie Pyle**  
**Auditorium Room**  
**220**

**FRIDAY, April 1 (Ernie Pyle Auditorium, Room 220)**  
**4:00-6:00 pm; Opening Keynote Delivered by S. Charusheela,**  
**"Rethinking Marxism in Times of Turmoil"**

**SATURDAY, April 2 in the Faculty Club on the Second Floor of IMU**

**10:00 am-12:00pm; Panel I: Marxism and Cultural Analysis**

- Laura E. Lyons, "'I'd Like My Life Back': BP, Corporate Personhood and the Intimate Public Sphere"
- Patrick Dove, "Muddying the Waters: The Politics of Populism in Peronist Argentina"
- Lessie Frazier, "(Counter) Revolutionary Cultures"

Moderator: Nick Williams

**12:30pm: Screening of "The Word in the Woods"**

**1:00 pm-3:00 pm; Panel II: Marxism and Social Movements**

- Gardner Bovingdon, "What's Class Struggle Got to Do with It? Social Mobilization and Framing"
- Dianne Feeley, "Building Feminist Consciousness in a Male Workplace"
- Jeff Gould, "Marxism and Christian Base Communities: Notes from Morazan, El Salvador"

Moderator: Micol Siegel

**3:15 pm--5:15 pm; Panel III: Marxism and History**

- Janet Sorensen, TBA
- Ursula McTaggart, "Change as Code for Black Radicalism: Barack Obama and Right-Wing Charges of Socialism"
- Matt Guterl, "Class Passing and Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Globalization"

Moderator: Patrick Brantlinger

**SATURDAY**  
**Panels I, II, and**  
**III in the Faculty**  
**Club at**  
**IMU**

### Featured Speakers

Invited outside speakers include: Dianne Feeley (UAW and *Against the Current*) Laura E. Lyons (University of Hawai'i), Ursula McTaggart (Wilmington College), and Janet Sorensen (University of California, Berkeley). S. Charusheela (University of Nevada) will deliver the keynote address which will consider the "return" to Marx and the political limitations of a too-easy embrace of economic determinism for cultural analyses.



Indiana University

**Cultural Studies  
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**New Faculty**

**Arlene Diaz**, a Latin American historian, is particularly interested in understanding gender relations and their relationship to broader issues of politics, law, and race in slave and post-slavery societies such as those of Venezuela and the Caribbean. Her research seeks to understand the ways in which Latin American women responded to the limitations imposed on their lives by a pervasive patriarchal social and political culture, racial prejudice, and poverty from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries. Diaz's scholarship has been guided by the need to understand women in their own terms as an essential aspect of explaining the particularities of family organizations and forms of political struggle in Latin America.

In her book, *Female Citizens, Patriarchs, and the Law in Caracas, Venezuela, 1786-1904*, she examines the debates over the meaning and responsibilities of gender relations that transpired between ordinary people and the official culture during the process of state formation in Caracas, Venezuela between 1786 and 1904. She analyzes the interactions between competing constructions of femininity and masculinity in the government, the court, and the household during a period when liberalism—an ideology that supported the autonomous individual, equality and liberty—became increasingly entrenched in Caracas society. Currently, Diaz is investigating discourses of equality among elites and common people in nineteenth-century Venezuela.