

Displacement, Memory, and Cultural Consciousness

Kim Benston, English (Seminar Leader)

David Dawson, Religion

Doug Davis, Psychology

Steve Finley, English

Maris Gillette, Anthropology

Paul Jefferson, History

Michael Sells, Religion

Debra Sherman, English

Kathleen Wright, Philosophy

Tina Zwarg, English

The Faculty Seminar in the Humanities for 1998-99 will explore the production, disruption, and refabrication of "culture" through various projects of memory--e.g., aesthetic, historiographical, political, philosophical, medical. Our discussions will engage such broad questions as:

- How do individuals and communities (re)fashion themselves in the face of bereavement, dislocation, repression, and social transformation?
- How do memory and narratives of identity generate or obstruct each other?
- By what interactions of experience, ideology, and representation are structures of collectivity produced?
- How do differing accounts of "culture" affect consideration of social and discursive identities?

More specific topics for consideration might include: violence and cultural memory; diasporic figurations; "border-crossings," migrations, and translation; the rise of contrasting genres of remembrance and preservation since the Enlightenment (autobiography/memoir; travel narratives; the encyclopedia; psychoanalysis; philology; folklore/ethnography; documentary photography/film; the museum); functions of "the past" in constructions of race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and nation; competing discourses of historical consciousness in various modes of historiography, hermeneutics, and aesthetics, including the politics and poetics of 'counter' histories.