Hierarchies of Color Conference
The CRG Presents Transnational Perspectives on the Social and Cultural Significance of Skin Color

On December 2-3, 2006, the Center for Race and Gender hosted “Hierarchies of Color: Transnational Perspectives on the Social and Cultural Significance of Skin Color,” a conference that emerged from the work of the CRG sponsored Colorism Working group. The working group, made up of faculty and graduate students from various UC campuses, has met over the last several years to explore the societal impact of skin color. The conference grew from the research and discussions that resulted from this interaction.

Chancellor Birgeneau opened the conference by remarking on the necessary work of racial inclusion that lays ahead for Berkeley--in particular he noted that September’s incoming class of 800 engineering students did not include a single African American. He went on to say that the diminishing diversity on campus is an example of the “educational apartheid” that initiatives such as Prop 209 have created. Birgeneau emphasized the importance of the CRG’s work in collaboration with the newly initiated Berkeley Diversity Research Initiative for supporting diversity, equity and inclusion on campus. “This conference is an absolute paradigm for the research needed to move us forward on diversity.” Coverage of the Colorism Conference continues on page 12.

Modern Day Slavery: In Our Own Country?

The mandate given to the Center for Race and Gender by UC Berkeley was to focus on two intertwined dimensions -- race, and gender. In recent weeks and months, a truly shocking situation has been uncovered, layer by rotten layer, which shows how race and gender have been and still are manipulated by the most powerful political and commercial groups in our society for their own greedy monetary purposes. Unfortunately, this incredible situation has been in part enabled by persons in our own backyard.

My guess is that a poll of UC Berkeley students asking, “what is the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands?” would produce mostly vacant stares and shrugged shoulders. The same would be true of the vast majority of Americans. Yet thousands, even millions of us, unknowingly are wearing garments made in this “commonwealth” – made by young Asian women, held in conditions of virtual slavery, subject to sexual and physical harassment, unprotected by wage, hour, health or other protections--all working long hours under grim circumstances.

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) is a United States territory in the mid-Pacific about 1,200 miles north of the Philippines. It consists of 14
New Works by CRG Affiliated Faculty

Aihwa Ong, Anthropology
Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty,
This book offers an alternative view of neoliberalism as a malleable technology of governing that is taken up in different ways by different regimes, be they authoritarian, democratic, or communist. Ong argues that an interactive mode of citizenship is emerging, one that organizes people—and distributes rights and benefits to them—according to their marketable skills. As the seam between sovereignty and citizenship is pried apart, a new space is emerging for Non-Govermental Organizations (NGOs) to advocate for the human rights of those excluded by neoliberal measures of human worthiness.

David Alan Sklansky, Boalt School of Law
This article explores the nature and extent of the demographic transformation of the police workforce. The virtually all-white, all-male police departments of the 1950s and 1960s have given way to departments with large numbers of female and minority officers, often led by female or minority chiefs. Openly gay and lesbian officers too, are increasingly becoming commonplace. But our beliefs about the police have had trouble keeping pace with these changes. We still tend to believe that police behavior is shaped by a monolithic professional subculture, to which all recruits either assimilate or fall victim. That belief has made it hard for us to see the ways in which the new diversity of police workforces has altered the dynamics of law enforcement.

Margaret W. Conkey, Anthropology
This article is about the possible intersections between what may be considered feminist and indigenous archaeologies. Two dimensions of archaeological interpretation that are integral to both feminists and indigenous scholars are the place and role of “experience,” and the uses of oral traditions and storytelling. Two additional aspects of archaeology are discussed where intersectionality and collaboration may be particularly fruitful: the understanding of gender roles and in the archaeology of space. By suggesting that both archaeologies are working towards the transformation of archaeological practices, this review aims to encourage further development of transformative coalitional consciousness.

Leti Volpp, Boalt School of Law
At the height of the civil rights movement, anti-discrimination laws focused on eradicating racism, that is, individual animus toward members of other racial groups. Today, surveys of public opinion
On February 9 the Center’s Afternoon Forum featured presentations by Leigh Raiford, Assistant Professor of African American Studies, and Waldo Martin, Professor of History. Their papers shared a focus on the historical and political capacity of media—specifically photography and music—to negotiate a complex dialectic between radical Black cultural politics and commodity-based popular culture. Professor Raiford’s presentation recounted both the limitations and possibilities of the medium of photography in the history of black cultural politics while Professor Martin explored issues of cultural affect produced by R&B and soul music of the 1970s and their political role in Black radical social movements. Both presentations advanced new ideas and questions on the historical relation between racial politics, form, and cultural affect.

Professor Raiford began the forum with a paper entitled “Restaging Revolution: The Black Panther Party and Photographic Memory,” which focused on theorizing a progressive potential of photography for Black cultural politics. In spite of photography’s limitations—insofar as the current hypervisibility of black bodies often serves as a false proxy for racial equality—Raiford emphasized the importance of recognizing that African Americans have historically capitalized on the unique properties of photography to resignify the meaning of the black body that had been dehumanized by centuries of white domination and control over the signs of blackness.

One of the primary features of photography Raiford emphasized was its ability to record rather than simply depict reality—to serve, according to poet and physician Oliver Wendell Holmes, as a “mirror with a memory.” What this means, she explained, is that photography is a medium that is always in dialogue with the past. Therefore, African American attempts to positively resignify the meaning of blackness through various photographic forms and manipulations are nevertheless made intelligible by a history of images included in what she called the “shadow archive,” a term coined by Allan Sekula to refer to the sum of images that accounts for one’s position in a socially prescribed hierarchy. For instance, 19th century portraiture, a popular means for African Americans to remake themselves by employing visual tropes of uplift and respectability, was inseparable from a shadow archive that included images of lynching, criminality, and sexual and scientific objectification.

Looking to more recent examples of African American photography, Raiford examined the role of the shadow archive in contexts of black social protest. In particular, she noted the political potential of the shadow archive in a 1965 photographic reproduction of a 1910 lynching of three unnamed men, under which the word “Mississippi” is written. The effect of reframing the original photograph, Raiford explained, is that it sends a clear message about the 1965 murders of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner, members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) who were abducted and killed during Mississippi’s Freedom Summer, a campaign organized to increase black voter registration. The 1965 manipulation of the 1910 photograph not only puts the SNCC murders onto the historical continuum of violent white repression, it also inscribes new meaning into the original photograph by re-presenting the three lynched men as stand-ins for Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner.

Raiford also pointed to more ambivalent negotiations with images from the shadow archive, particularly in contemporary fashion spreads featured in the popular urban music and cultural magazine, Vibe. In these fashion spreads contemporary black celebrities, such as Cynda Williams and Nas, pose as Black Panther revolutionaries such as Angela Davis and Huey Newton. Featuring stars in brand-name revolutionary drag and positioned under provocative text headings—for example, “Free Angela”—these celebrity photographs summon an era of black radicalism and serve a hybrid purpose of commemorating a radical past while repackaging Davis and Newton as icons of revolutionary style rather than revolutionary social change. Despite the clear commodification of black radicalism by Vibe photographers, Raiford cautioned against the wholesale dismissal of this pop cultural homage to the icons of the Black Power movement. She emphasized instead the power of these contemporary images to speak to a political desire to connect with a radical past. Photography, Raiford concluded, is a repository of cultural values and meanings that shift over time and can provide us with clues to further define black cultural politics.

Waldo Martin followed with “Be Real Black for Me: Representation, Authenticity, and the Problem of Modern Black Cultural Politics,” a paper that explored the history and politics embedded in an early 1970s song “Be

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O n March 2, the Center for Race and Gender revealed its musical side and hosted presentations by two UC Berkeley music scholars, Francesca Riveira and Kevin Fellezs. Rivera, a PhD candidate in Ethnomusicology and Fellezs, a President’s Post Doctoral Fellow in Music, presented new writing from their current research projects. United by the theme “Music, Race, and Nation,” both focused on the relationships between music-making, discourses about music, and the negotiation of racial identities in two distinct contexts.

Dr. Fellezs began the program with his paper, “Hiroshima: Performing a Hybrid Identity” which situates the successful Asian-American fusion band within discourses of jazz authenticity and cultural diversity. Fellezs argued that this group of Japanese-American musicians combines elements of “traditional” Japanese music with a variety of “American” musical styles and in the process, challenges racialized notions of musical categories as well as black/white binaries that pervade much discourse on race in the United States. Fellezs pointed out that, despite—or perhaps because of—their commercial success, Hiroshima has been largely ignored or disparaged by jazz critics who view them as “inauthentic” in comparison to other Asian-American jazz musicians working in more avant-garde settings. On the other hand, he noted, the identities of band members and their proficiency on Japanese musical instruments such as koto and shakuhachi are often overlooked by those who lump them into more general categories such as “fusion,” “smooth jazz,” or “world music.” Building on the variety of contradictory ways Hiroshima is classified and citing comments made by the band’s leader that valorized diversity, Fellezs pointed out that although their music does defy easy categorization by the music industry, it still manages to reach a broad public. Using this point, and questioning the common conflation of commercial success and poor music, Fellezs concluded that, rather than falling into a “liminal space” between dominant genre typologies and racial categories, Hiroshima carves out a position for itself as a “central part of a continuum” of categorizations, bridging differences with its own distinctly hybrid identity.

[Hiroshima] challenges racialized notions of musical categories as well as black/white binaries that pervade much discourse on race in the US.

The second paper of the afternoon was given by Francesca Rivera, who presented a chapter from her dissertation, Mucho Mas que un Canal: Musical Emblems and the Construction of the Nation. While Rivera’s larger project is based primarily on ethnographic fieldwork, her presentation focused on the place of blackness in Panama’s national imaginary through the close reading of an influential text written in 1930 by Panamanian statesman and composer Narcisco Garay. According to Riveira, Garay’s collection of folk songs was conceived and written during a period of intense searching for national identity in Panama. Referencing two critical events of the time, the violent uprising of an indigenous group and a treaty limiting Panama’s control of the Canal, Rivera contextualized Garay’s work and politicized his inclusion of indigenous practices and his conspicuous exclusion of those that might be marked as “foreign.”

For Garay, the cultural influence of Africa, which came to Panama via Afro-Caribbean immigrants from the West Indies, fell into the latter category and was therefore omitted or obscured in his text. Rivera illustrated this argument by juxtaposing a contemporary recording of Panama’s national music and dance, the tamborito, with Garay’s description of it from 1930. She pointed out several clear sonic markers of African musical influence and then illuminated how Garay either ignored these elements or described them in a way that masked their ties to Africa. Rivera concluded her talk by noting that Garay’s work established the paradigms by which music and race are discussed in Panama today; the tamborito is embraced as Panama’s national music and dance, while its African derived characteristics continue to be occluded, along with blackness more broadly, from typical constructions of national music and identity.

Following the two presentations, the panelists fielded a variety of questions related to their particular studies, but the discussion tended to focus on some of the broader implications of the paper topics. For example, Hiroshima’s relevance for young Asian Americans was queried in comparison to other musics such as Asian-American hip-hop. Similarly, the lasting impact of Garay’s work was discussed further. When asked about the status of other African-derived practices in Panama, Rivera noted that these musics, while sounding much like the tamborito, lack its discursive construction as “national” and are therefore, marked as black and “not Panamanian.”

Jeff Packman
PhD Student, Music
Representations and Articulations of Gender and Nation in India

The December 2005 CRG Forum featured Smitha Radhakrishnan, a PhD Candidate in sociology and Huma Dar, a PhD Candidate in South and South Asian studies. Their talks centered on the theme “Representations and Articulations of Gender and Nation in India.” Both talks focused on cultural politics and mainstream portrayals of particular group-portraits motivated by the desire to gain or impact political capital nationally and globally.

Radhakrishnan began her talk “‘Global Indian’: Women and the Cultural Politics of IT India,” with observations on an image from the cover of Wired Magazine, “Her palm is covered in Mehndi, a traditional form of decoration in India and the Middle East that has become popular in mainstream media culture. At a closer look, we find the Mehndi is not the floral and abstract designs that usually cover the palms of Indian brides and Bollywood starlets. The Mehndi includes software code. The headlines read, ‘Kiss your cubicle goodbye, tech jobs are fleeing to India faster than ever.’” Radhakrishnan called attention to a number of dynamics played out in the image, including the projection of a feminized, sexualized image of India at a time when media attention centered on outsourcing in the US and the growing high tech sector of India. Radhakrishnan saw a juxtaposition of globalization, cultural politics, nationalism and gender within the image.

Radhakrishnan moved on to address dynamics underpinning the representation of India as an Information Technology (IT) success and discussed the central contradiction of the image. The tech boom centers on urban areas such as Bangalore, with a 500% growth of the IT industry over the last five years; however, this industry only represents 0.2% of the workforce. The central question she posed was, “How does this tiny elite come to symbolize a new India both for a broad international audience and an urban domestic audience?” She resolves this contradiction by theorizing and analyzing a concept of Global Indianess defined by, “A hybrid nationalism that infuses a sense of national belonging with a sense of global belonging.” Middle class women working in the IT industry are the key agents and icons of this new India, and simultaneously embody the sanctity of national culture and the profitability of a global economy.

Radhakrishnan went on to focus on how this image of a global India is lived out through gender and class. Her focus was couched in the literature on gender and nationalism including Nira Yuval-Davis’ (1997) work that emphasized the centrality of gender and meaning in nation building projects, and Partha Chatterjee’s work on India’s nationalist period, at time when the middle-class woman was viewed as the embodiment of India’s superiority to the West. “Chatterjee’s work helps us to see that the invocation of a sacred, spiritual core in gender terms can be an effective nation building tool.” Using data from 60 in-depth interviews she conducted with professional IT women, Radhakrishnan demonstrated that these ideas are still relevant contemporarily.

Radhakrishnan saw women in high tech industries as global and making up a population that makes the nation look global. Her other resolution to the central contradiction of the identification of the new India with a tiny elite is based on this gendered center, “The public face of Indian IT is a woman, so that the IT revolution of India signals a gender revolution too. A gender revolution looks and sounds a lot more broad base than if we just saw the IT base as elite men.” Radhakrishnan pointed out that women articulate their ability to be simultaneously global and Indian through discourses of restraint. Particular aspects of a global lifestyle are made compatible with what interviewees called core ‘Indian values’ which are commonly tied to the notion of family. She went on to discuss gendered restraint using examples from the interviews. Two areas of this restraint were in consumer values—spending is linked with being a good Indian woman—and in sexual norms, with the fear that women adopting global or Western sexual norms is a serious threat to the nation and reason to remain in India.

Radhakrishnan closed her presentation with the initial image from the magazine, “Is the hand covering the face a challenge to American tech workers, or the new veil? Is it a symbol of asserting national assertiveness and autonomy, or a symbol of a new form of restrictive womanhood? The answers to these questions are necessarily unclear. That in imagining a new India, a global India, is a process that inherently is encoded in terms of gender and class.”

Huma Dar’s talk entitled “Gendering Kashmir and En-Gendering the Terrorist” centered on the representations of the Kashmir people in cinema and literature. She demonstrated how the mainstream dialectic on Kashmir is infused with politically motivated misrepresentations that in effect reposition the history and efforts of the Kashmiri people to assert their independence.

She began with words attributed to Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, on a visit to Kashmir in 1940, “I wandered about like one possessed and drunk with beauty, and the...”
On February 17 the Center hosted a launch of three edited collections that chart exciting new ground in Latin American, Caribbean, and African diasporic social thought. Presenters included Lewis Gordon, Laura H. Carnell Professor of Philosophy at Temple University, who introduced two of the three volumes, Not Only the Master’s Tools: African-American Studies in Theory and Practice, and A Companion to African-American Studies, both which he co-edited with Jane Anna Gordon, Lecturer in the Department of Political Science at Temple University. Introducing the third text, Latino/as in the World-System: Decolonization Struggles in the 21st Century US Empire, were its three co-editors from Berkeley: Ramón Grosfoguel, Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies; José David Saldívar, Professor of Ethnic Studies and English; and Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Assistant Professor of Ethnic Studies. Each of the four editors made presentations that outlined the main goals of each collection while identifying linkages among them and their connection to a growing constellation of work devoted to what Professor Grosfoguel referred to as the “decolonial shift” in the Eurocentric epistemologies of knowledge.

Lewis Gordon began the session by contextualizing the arrival of the three anthologies as the mark of an end of an intellectual era, one he felt was stifled by oversimplified race theorizing and what he called “prolegomenal” discourses, that is, discourses that question the abstract origin of certain, usually non-European, epistemologies, such as: “What is Latin American philosophy?” or “Does Africana existentialism exist?” The problem with prolegomenal discourses, Gordon explained, was that their engagement was caught up in a level of formal abstraction that often eclipsed the real issues of race or gender difference. Thus the three new books usher in a post-prolegomenal era that does not simply question the possibility of Native American phenomenology, for instance, but rather produces work committed to its understanding and development.

The first book Gordon discussed, Not Only the Master’s Tools, attempts to challenge anti-theoretical biases in the field of African American studies. Reconsidering the powerful legacy of Audre Lorde’s phrase from which the title borrows, contributors in this collection demonstrate that the master is not the only one with tools available and that destroying the master’s tools is not the only valid response to oppression. They do so by showing that theory can take into account complex processes of creolization and social interaction that can form more effective tools of liberation. Arguing for the creative and constructive role of theory in struggles for liberation, then, the collection attempts to challenge what Gordon termed “epistemological colonization,” referring to the wholesale rejection of or blind dependence on European theory. By outlining the significance of theory to liberation praxis, the text also charts the parameters of a post-European science drawn from various western and subaltern knowledge systems. As Gordon explained, this philosophical undertaking does not reject the totality of continental philosophy but rather cultivates the liberatory dimensions of reason to undermine the non-reflexive systems of positivism and instrumental rationalism that infect western philosophy.

The central concern of the second volume, Companion to African-American Studies, is to reassess 30 years of African American academic institutionalization and to consider future directions in the field. One of the impetuses of this critical reevaluation of the field was the need to move beyond traditional models of black scholarship that Gordon identified as outmoded and myopic, particularly those focused on a trajectory of black assimilation, separatism, conservativism, and liberalism. As Gordon explained, this trajectory no longer forms the central problematic of African American Studies. Rather, he identified a widespread intellectual movement out of nation-based contexts of analysis, which have contributed to making legible a host of historical and social intersections between the African diaspora and other groups in the Americas.

Professor Grosfoguel followed by introducing the third text of the launch, Latino/as in the World-System. He explained that this text is the first of a 3 volume series that represents the collective outcome of conversations on liberation theology, border thinking, and decolonization—dialogues that have largely taken place at Berkeley and have involved interlocutors from across the US and the Americas. Thematically related to the two other titles in the series, Settling Postcoloniality and Mapping the Decolonial Turn—both due out later this year—the central concern of this first

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Ramón Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Lewis Gordon (J George)
The Race for Roots: People of African Descent in the Genomics Age

In an overflowing gathering on Thursday February 24th, UC Berkeley welcomed Yale professor Alondra Nelson to campus to present a talk entitled “Genealogical Branches, Genetic Roots, and the Pursuit of African Ancestry”. The event, which grew out of collaboration among the Center for Race and Gender, the Science, Technology, and Society Center, and the department of Sociology, was one of the first of its kind at UCB to focus on the impact and meaning of genomic science for people of African descent.

Based on ethnographic fieldwork among African American genealogists in the US and Britain, Nelson described the consumption and interpretation of genetic heredity tracing services in peoples’ effort to determine their African-based origins. She argued that the academic milieu, in which the epistemological basis of ‘race’ is most often debated, routinely overlooks the perspectives of those for whom the stakes of the debate are especially high.

The terms of the Race-Genes Debate, as Nelson calls it, whereby the biological basis of race (race-naturalism) and the social construction of race (race-pragmatism) are counterposed, is not an especially useful dichotomy through which to understand the crafting of African diasporic subjectivities in the Genomic Age. In the everyday lives of the people Nelson encounters, racial identity is indeed being transformed by scientific practices that seem to provide an objective origins account, but the uptake of genomics science is rarely ever accepted so absolutely. Instead, the meaning accrued to new-found information about genetic ties to particular African regions takes shape alongside social ties culturally, and historically mediated. These processes, in turn, are occurring in a novel space—a digitized Black Diaspora where race is not simply reified in the geneticists’ lab, but in the everyday lives of those who participate in online chat communities like AfricanAncestry.com, who purchase genetic heredity tracing kits from companies like Ancestry by DNA, and who associate in genealogical clubs with others in leisurely or hot pursuit of their roots. While we find people incorporating genetic test results into their identities in very different ways, one constant among Nelson’s respondents is that the results gain meaning through a deeply social process that never wholly defers to the authority of science.

The Motherland group in the UK is one example where we find the negotiation between science and sociability hard at work. Members of this group were initially brought together through participation in a BBC program that utilized genetic heredity tracing technology to connect Black Brits to Africa. But while findings from the genetic tests led members of the group to form very deep attachments to their resulting regions of origin, when confronted with an evolutionary geneticist that revealed major inadequacies with genetic heredity tracing technology, Motherland members barely heeded the scientific skepticism. Most of their newly formed attachments to specific ethnic groups in Africa were too strong for new scientific information to sever the ties that were created by genomics tracking services. One of Nelson’s respondents, Beulah, had gone so far as to get engaged to a man and build a school in her newfound “community-of-origin” in equatorial Guinea. Upon hearing the evolutionary geneticist say that her genetic information could equally link her to a completely different region, Beulah dismissed the new information that undermined the “diasporic genetic kinship” that she actively fashioned. Examples like this lead Nelson to argue that the contest among race-naturalists and race-pragmatists inadequately captures the complex amalgam of biological proofs and sociabilities that characterize the race for roots.

In the discussion following Nelson’s talk, participants raised a number of interesting questions that queried the relationship between the African diasporic subjectivities that Nelson described, and low-tech identity crafting [e.g. tribal affiliations that were created by slaves in Bahia] as well as high-tech crafting in the roots pursuit among Anglos in the US. In the first instance, the questioner raised the issue of whether the process Nelson documents is all that novel, at which she responded that in many ways she is describing a socio-cultural process of identity formation like any other. But the role of scientific knowledge in identity formation at a time when such techniques seem to have mass appeal opens the possibility that many more people can take part in this particular racial project. To the second question, involving genetic heredity tracing among other groups, Nelson responds that she actually finds many similarities. While admitting that her sample of predominantly African American middle and upper class women, limits her ability to describe patterns in the ways that people are interpreting genetic heredity tests, she notes at least two ‘kinds’ of African American and Black British consumers--those for whom genetic heredity testing is part of their role as ‘kin keepers’ [i.e. those who keep track of a family’s history], or those for whom testing is tied to a sense of personal loss that is experienced as a result of being severed from one’s African origins.

Two additional queries were raised, both of which I found deeply troubling the very interesting story of...

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Faculty Spotlight: Sandra Smith, Sociology

“W hen I discovered William Julius Wilson’s *The Truly Disadvantaged*, that was my fun reading outside of class. I ultimately decided that sociology was the thing I wanted to do.” At the time Sandra Smith started as an undergraduate at Columbia University, she was a pre-law student who intended to major in political science. However, she found that sociology offered more direct answers to the questions of social inequality that had been instilled in her as a youth growing up in Hartford, Connecticut. “My father was terribly engaged in the questions of inequality, and it planted the seeds of interest that created my sociological imagination. Instead of thinking about inequality in terms that a lawyer might, I preferred puzzling through it like a sociologist would.” Smith had interest in exploring the underlying factors in the formation of an “urban underclass.” She saw her time as an undergraduate as an opportunity to better understand the sociological phenomena that informed her experiences growing up.

Smith’s father arrived to the US from Jamaica on the day John F. Kennedy was assassinated. More crucially, his arrival coincided with the formation of the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War, in which he was drafted to serve. According to Smith, these iconic social events infused him with a strong interest on issues of racial relations and the roots of racial and ethnic inequality. His experience led him to engage in intense debates on race and class in society; these dialogues formed a rich, intellectually driven social foundation for Smith. The fact that her family lived in a predominantly black populated area of Hartford also influenced Smith’s intellectual trajectory. Hartford was the insurance capital of the US with an affluent suburbia and a significant number of white collar jobs, but despite this affluence, the employment rate for blacks in the central cities remained low. As a teen, she found it difficult to understand this disjunction, especially since the unemployment rate for blacks was steadily growing as many working class jobs were leaving the area in the 70s and 80s. As an adolescent, Smith saw the disconnection between the growing poverty of the working class and the large availability of white-collar jobs in the surrounding area.

After graduating from Columbia, Smith went on to the University of Chicago to pursue a PhD. Her decision was partially influenced by one of her mentors, and Smith also found an affinity for Chicago’s program. A key influence for Smith was Katherine Newman, famous for critiquing the notion of the black poor’s social isolation. Smith feels that Newman’s work has impacted her own.

Smith is currently completing her first book, *Lone Pursuit: Distrust and Job-Finding among the Black Urban Poor*. She explores the question of persistent joblessness and problematizes the notion that the social capital deficiencies in reference to black urban poor are the result of social isolation from the mainstream. She argues that the black urban poor are not as isolated as the literature indicates, since they have networks that extend beyond their own communities. She examines what factors prevent those who can make job connections and influence hires from doing so for those who are not directly connected to the market. “What I argue is that there is actually pervasive distrust. Unfortunately, a lot of people within the black community buy into the notion that blacks are ‘screw ups’ so have to be very protective of their own status and reputation. It creates this generalized distrust about assisting, because there is this fear that it is a risky move. They tend to help those whose reputations matter a great deal, and they have networks that extend beyond their own community.”

Smith feels that Newman’s work has impacted her own. Smith identifies such hyper-individualism as a great barrier to a population who crucially requires cooperation to build a job network necessary for finding gainful employment.

The notion of trustworthiness led Smith naturally to the question of, “how does one make a determination of ‘impeccability of character?’” Smith explains the weight that prior relationships have on trustworthiness, “One of the interesting things I found when I first started doing this research was that people said, well of course relatives and close friends will always step in for you because of that bond. The bond mattered but only because those people had a history of information from a long period of time and could assess worthiness or risk. People were turning down brothers and sisters, even mothers, left and right. The closeness, in my estimation, was based on how well they knew the person, so that they could vouch for them without feeling that they would get burned.” Smith found that reputations mattered a great deal, but because they often lacked information about others’ reputations, job holders frequently felt the need to have information about people based on personal experience and knowledge.

Although not a direct aim of the study, Smith increasingly saw the role of institutions in the dynamic involving the connection between the employed and unemployed. She noted that mainstream institutions perpetuate distrust since they don’t provide services or infor—continued on page 22
Real Black For Me” from the hit duet album, Roberta Flack and Donny Hathaway. Using the song to think through and locate a form of revolutionary affect evident in music from the politically-charged era of the late 1960s and 1970s, Professor Martin focused on the extent to which social revolution is guided by great feelings of love—and the extent to which R&B and soul music were central conduits of those feelings. His attention on Roberta Flack and Donny Hathaway in particular served to underscore the multiple and complex traditions that informed their musical training and contributed to their musical accomplishment.

After playing Flack and Hathaway’s “Be Real Black For Me” for the audience, Martin introduced the notion of the “secular hymn” to characterize the hybrid tradition that anchors the song. In addition to being a tribute to joy and spiritual triumph similar to a prayer song, Flack and Hathaway’s song also evokes an emotional register of the Black Power movement. To this extent Martin defined the secular hymn as a form that occupied the liminal territory where the secular and sacred meet. He noted in particular that the spiritual intensity and emotive power of the song are most resonant in the piano and vocals—specifically Flack’s alto and Hathaway’s tenor—musical techniques that were cultivated in the space of the church. Martin observed how the song also reflects a growing black emphasis on the logic and imperative of black love in the context of radical black social movements. Inspired by theorists such as Franz Fanon, a key concern of this evolving emphasis on African American affect was to inspire the political insurgency to account for the toll of white supremacy on black spiritual and emotional health. Flack and Hathaway, in affirming blackness and black love in their music, brought together a number of issues related to black cultural nationalism and the role of black love in framing possibility and hope for those involved in revolutionary struggle. At the same time, Martin underscored the strategic rather than essentialist core of Flack and Hathaway’s project even while their song boldly attempts to racialize love in the context of the Black Power movement. He stressed that freedom and equality, similar to love, remains abstract and elusive—that being real black and loving blackness are above all an unfinished process that Flack and Hathaway reiterate in their lyrics: “in my head I’m only half-way together,” emphasizing an evolving state of being and becoming. Here affect channels an active identification and interaction with an ongoing black struggle that hinges on the enhancement of black spiritual and emotional well-being.

Three New Volumes

collection is to decolonize western epistemology through non-European and subaltern perspectives that originate in the Americas. Grosfoguel was careful to distinguish these subaltern perspectives from those linked to the field of postcolonialism, which he argued was limited by its allegiance to exclusively western paradigms of thought. In order to move beyond postcolonialism, therefore, the volume introduces the concept of “transmodernity,” derived from liberation philosopher Enrique Dussell, to underscore its engagement with multiple epistemologies and to undermine western philosophical claims to “abstract universals.” It is this acknowledgement of the multiplicity of knowledge systems that forms the core of the text’s decolonial theorizing. Although the volume centers on Latino/as, Grosfoguel explained that it is inclusive of other voices, particularly Native American, African American, and Jewish American scholars who also engage in the problem of decolonization under conditions of empire. Professor Saldívar continued the session by reiterating the significance of the three new books in signaling a new stage in approaching philosophy, one that was thoroughly dialectical, interdisciplinary, post-national, collaborative, and interethnic and interracial. For Professor Maldonado-Torres, the telos of this project was its rethinking of the philosophical basis of the modern university, particularly the abstract premises of the human sciences that repress questions of race and gender difference. To this extent, he observed the many overlappings between the concerns of Latino/as in the World-System and Professor Gordon’s edited volumes. In particular, he identified their intersecting attempts to engage a non-European perspective.

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The Center for Race and Gender Undergraduate Grants Program drew an impressive number of applicants for the Spring 2006 semester. The Center funds the undergraduate program to support and motivate research or creative projects with a race and gender focus. Grants awarded this semester ranged from $500 to $700. Congratulations to the seven grant winners.

Jenny Ace
Environmental Science, Policy & Management
Co-management: A Reasonable Goal?

I am interested in the relationships between Aboriginal peoples and Parks Canada in and near National Parks, to see how they can be applied to potential co-management situations between Native Americans and the National Park Service in the US. This summer I will visit two Parks in British Columbia to examine co-management and co-operative management arrangements and evaluate the more and less successful aspects of their implementation. I am grateful to the Center for Race and Gender for supporting this research, which I hope will be useful in my intended career with the National Park Service.

Stefanie Como
Psychology
Regulatory Focus and Interethnic Interactions

Past research by Shelton, Richeson, and Salvatore (2005) has shown that minority group members feel less authentic interacting with people outside of their ethnic group than with their in-group. Feeling inauthentic has larger repercussions externally; people who feel inauthentic also report higher negative affect and lower life satisfaction. There are many reasons why people feel inauthentic during such interactions, but one likely part of the explanation is based on regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997). This theorizes that people interact with the world in two ways. People who are promotion focused gear themselves toward aspirations and gains and eagerly approach challenges. Conversely, prevention focused people vigilantly avoid negative outcomes (Seibt & Forster, 2004). In my project I will test the hypothesis that stigmatized people who interact with someone outside of that group become more prevention focused and less promotion focused which leads them to modify their behavior and feel less authentic.

Alyn Jay Libman
American Studies
East Bay Transgender Drop-In Resource Center

I am conducting a public service project that would create a safe space in which transgender people and their allies can work together to educate the transgender community. Housing my project at the Pacific Center, the East Bay’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) resource center, I hope to target transgender youth and transgender people of color (POC) about their rights, provide useful information about transgender friendly medical care, social workers, and legal professionals, and foster the growth of a diverse, yet inclusive community. Traditionally, the transgender community has been the target of discrimination, violence, and social stigma, all of which could be combated through increasing the public’s awareness and education on the issues and experiences of transgender people. I intend to address this concern by creating a zine by transgender people to increase awareness and promote education about transgender people’s lives.

Lee Moua
Ethnic Studies
Situating Social Capital in Education: A Hmong-American Analysis

As reported by the grassroots organization Hmong National Development Inc., data from the 2000 Census indicates that the median age of the Hmong population in the United States is 16.1 years compared to 35.3 for the US population. In addition, over half (56%) of the Hmong are under the age of 18. This statistic suggests that the Hmong community consists of a relatively young population with many individuals still in primary or secondary education. Thus, it is essential to explore characteristics such as social capital that may
Amanda Pojanamat
Sociology
MIGRANTS, MODERNITY, AND McDoNald’s: A CASE STUDY OF “MODERNIZED” SUBJECTIVITIES IN THAILAND’S GLOBAL CITY

Why do “poor” rural Thai women migrate to Bangkok to work at places like McDonald’s? By conducting interviews with this particular group of McDonald’s employees, I hope to illuminate the independent influence of the “development discourse” (Escobar) – or the cultural values that favor the “modern” over the “traditional” – on the active decisions they make by exploring how these women interpret their exploitation and/or manage it.

My current research interest is geared towards the exploration of discourses of “modernity” and their effects on female subjectivities in the global South; which schemas and frames or attitudes and beliefs about what it means to be “modern” do or do not produce active social change? What forms do dissenting views take in a globalized and exploited “Third World”? To answer these questions is to explore the different challenges and opportunities that globalization and the development discourse have offered women of the global South.

Christine Poitra
Legal Studies
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE IN INDIAN COUNTRY

In the past, the relationship between the federal government and Native American tribal governments has been grossly misunderstood. Recently, the image and governmental capabilities of tribal governments has morphed as a direct result of increased economic development within Indian Country though tribally owned and operated enterprises. In the era of self-determination, tribal governments have become more proactive in their governance over their land and tribal members. I am interested in the changing governmental structures and social obligations of the tribe. I plan to conduct ethnographic research on the Redding Rancheria, the Hoopa Valley reservation and the Grindstone reservation, in Northern California, by living on these reservations during the summer of 2006. My methods will be a mixture of research in contemporary articles regarding on-reservation governments.

Jobert Poblete
Anthropology
MASCULINE MANEUVERS: FAMILY AND PROFESSION IN THE TRANSNATIONAL LABOR MARKET

Immigrant Filipino nurses have become an ubiquitous part of hospitals and nursing homes throughout the United States. My project will look at male Filipino medical doctors that are retraining to be nurses in order to gain access to the American labor market. I will conduct a multi-sited ethnography that will follow their trajectory from the hospitals and nursing schools of the Philippines to the hospitals and nursing homes of the United States. Why do these men engage in this strategy of “downward” and “outward” mobility? How do they navigate the complex web of maneuvers –gendered, professional, and transnational–necessitated by the international labor market? How are they remaking themselves as fathers and health care professionals? My project will interrogate gendered migration flows by looking at the experiences of Filipino men undertaking a transition to a typically female-gender associated profession.

Lee Moua

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Hierarchies of Color Conference

The CRG Presents Transnational Perspectives on the Social and Cultural Significance of Skin Color

**Panel I: Colonialism and the Development of Color Consciousness**

David Theo Goldberg, UC Humanities Research Institute and African American Studies, UC Irvine

“Like, Not Like: Color, Coding and Classification”

Philomena Essed, Critical Race, Gender and Leadership Studies, Antioch University

“Color Evasion: The Dutch Solution?”

Commentator: Paola Bacchetta, Gender and Women’s Studies, UC Berkeley

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David Theo Goldberg of the UC Humanities Research Institute, UC Irvine presented his work as a combination of theoretical reflection and a history of the South African Census. Color, Goldberg asserted, is always a mediated phenomena. Color defines race in conjunction with other indicators such as habits and speech; nevertheless, color is what we recognize viscerally, and it is used as a marker of shared culture. Goldberg noted, “Color is an example of our commitment to seeing the world in fixed terms” and as human beings we make “irrational investments” based on emotional beliefs. Goldberg’s assertion was exemplified by the response elicited from the audience members when he presented images of a black South African woman standing in a shantytown amid shacks beside a door displaying a larger-than-life poster of a white child. All of the images he shared demonstrated starkly the dichotomy between “white space” and “black space” in South Africa, with the former signified by empty, expansive, privatized, walled estates, in opposition to the latter’s tented and tin-roofed communities made up of tiny rooms and tight quarters. Goldberg concluded with a look at the South African census, noting that the South African census documents racial categories that shift over time, with expanding terminology reinforced by the government’s racialized perspective.

Philomena Essed of Antioch University contributed to the panel with her work on colonialism and the development of color consciousness in the Netherlands. Her presentation “Color Evasion: the Dutch Solution?” explored the Anglo-import of the critical study of whiteness. Essed sees in her own students, ‘color evasion,’ the idea of being aware but ambivalent about color, experiencing it but not wanting to acknowledge it. She points out that although there is not a Dutch word for “whiteness” in the Netherlands, there is a commonly used Dutch term allochton meaning “non-native.” It distinguishes non-whites from whites and is used by the government when talking about citizenship. Essed notes that the privilege of white skin is not talked about, while color is referred to suggestively through comments such as, “to me you’re not an allochton,” a comment meant to be complimentary. Essed sees that allochtons may be recognized as Dutch at some level but never seen as “real” Dutch since they are non-white. Her observations about the culture led Essed to examine the lack of critical dialogue on race in her own classroom. Most whites had never thought about race until signing up for the class and none of them felt particularly attached to a definable white culture. When asked to write about whiteness, having come from relatively homogeneous communities that were “racially unconscious,” students invariably wrote about Dutchness. Essed concludes that such a perception preserves ideologies of white superiority under the guise of cultural preservation and allows white Dutch privilege to shape Dutch identity.

Thoughtful commentary by Paola Bacchetta from Gender and Women Studies closed the panel discussion. She led to further reflections through questions such as, “What are the class anxieties tied to race?” and “What is the place of heterosexuality in the construction of race?” Bacchetta further noted that the notion of white is fluid, yet when such a notion is chromaticized, individuals shed nation and ethnicity.

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**Panel II: Hybridity, Racial Democracy and Colorism**

Edward Telles, Sociology, UCLA

“Race and Color: Fuzzy Concepts Lost in Translation”

Lourdes Martínez-Echázabal, Literature, UC Santa Cruz

“Cuban Color Revisited”

Commentator: Stephen Small, African American Studies, UC Berkeley

According to UCLA sociologist Edward Telles, “color” is what fundamentally defines the “race problem” resulting from Brazil’s colonial legacy. It is very common for Brazilians to use race to refer to their national identity and “color” to refer to race. Hence he suggested that we begin to look at color as simply another form of race.

Although Brazil imported seven times the number of enslaved Africans as the United States, no official racial distinction ever emerged. This legacy, Telles added, has created a strong sense of nationalism in Brazil as well as a more fluid system of racial identity in which the zone of ambiguity is much larger than...
the US. Telles problematized the dichotomy between US and Brazilian race relations by looking at the ways in which race in the US may be more of a continuum than people argue. Telles showed that when looking at income, mixed race people in Brazil (pardos) earn only 44% of what whites make, which is only 4% more than their black (pretos) counterparts who earn 40% of what whites earn. In contrast, survey data disaggregating the US African-American population by color shows that those that were “very light” earned 80% of what whites make whereas those in the “very dark” category earned only 53% of their white counterparts. Telles concluded by emphasizing that race relations in Brazil are not static. Recent policies in Brazil such as affirmative action suggest that while the US is moving towards colorblind ideology, Brazil is becoming more color conscious.

Lourdes Martínez-Echazábal presented a similar picture of racial fluidity by examining the Cuban case. Analyzing a book of prologues published in 1931 by Cuban poet Nicolás Guillen, she argued that although most interpretations present him as a black-nationalist figure, his success in Cuba stems from his mulatto identity and ideology which reflects notions of color in Cuba and the possibility of transcending race. Martínez-Echazábal argued that in this work, Guillen tries to avoid mentioning real color classifications by employing ambiguous words like “nisperol,” which is a fruit whose color varies depending on how ripe it is. In many ways this work paints Cuba as a “cocktail” or mixed race nation which will eventually become one race, she added. Martínez-Echazábal argued that this reflects the common notion in Cuba that the country’s history of unwavering nationalism allows for the possibility for the Cuban people to transcend racial categories. Although she acknowledged that Cuba is still far from being color blind, she asserted that the notion of racial transcendence is a process of racial healing and redemption that is important for understanding how Cubans view themselves.

In response to a question posed by moderator, Stephen Small, the panelists agreed that the meaning behind racial categories in Latin America is typically contextual; however, those categories closer to blackness are usually more de-meaning. Martínez-Echazábal said that in Cuba, there are words to describe very specific notions of race and hierarchy like “parejeo,” which is understood as a black person that doesn’t know their “place” in society. Telles added that terms like “moreno,” which is the most ambiguous, yet most used racial category in Brazil, tends to obscure racial hierar-chy and meaning. Small also raised the important issue of non-Latin American academics dominating race scholarship in that region. Both panelists agreed that there is an increasing amount of research on race and color being produced by Latin American scholars; however, most of it is lost in translation.

--Tianna Paschel

**Panel III Colorism Within and Between Communities**

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Sociology, Duke University

“E Pluribus Unum at the Bottom of the New America: Racial Justice in a Latin America-like USA”

Verna Keith, Sociology, Arizona State University


Commentator: Waldo Martin, History, UC Berkeley

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva joined sociologist Verna Keith in this energetic panel where they presented some of their earlier work on the subject of “Colorism Within and Between Communities.”

Bonilla-Silva offered predictions on race in “Amerika.” Racial mandates, he said, attempt to erase race but truly serve to reshuffle race while keeping whites on top. He posited that in the new racial order—no longer a biracial dichotomy of white and black—South East Asians and Blacks—would be contrasted against whites, and honorary whites—consisting of Latinos, East Asians and multiracial people. He predicts that phenotype will have increasing significance and points out that the US racial stratification system is becoming “Latin-Americanized.” “Racial categories are hierarchic in a social climate where the growing population of blacks and thereby erecting a stratified social system.

With a specific look at how racial dichotomies make meaning in peoples lives, Verna Keith spoke to issues of colorism in the privileging of.

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light skin over dark skin among African American women as related to status attainment, self-concept and self-esteem. This status, she said, is primarily influenced by an ability to navigate outside of the black community. Surveys reveal how colorism affects the quality of life. Keith cited a report from 2000 that shows that dark-skinned people are “11 times more likely to report frequent instances of unfair treatment on the basis of race.” Dark-skin is historically undesirable as are other features seen as traditionally African. She argues that attractiveness is shaped by a European model of beauty, and since slavery, light-skinned blacks have been better treated within American society. Keith cited an analysis of data in the National Survey of Black Americans done in 1979-1980 that showed a correlation between skin color and social status. It showed that lighter-skinned women marry up in status more often, and that the lighter the skin, the greater the self-esteem. However, more recent studies show that amongst adolescent females it is dark-skinned African Americans who have greater self-esteem. Margaret Hunter’s recent work, said Keith, tells us that light-skinned young women often have to prove their blackness. Further research that would control for factors such as income and education is needed. Still, questioned Keith, “How do we measure phenotype and how do we make race determinations? Why are particular disparities being recreated generation after generation?”

As a historian, Waldo Martin offered a historic context for this panel, pointing to the immigration act of 1965 as well as social movements that impacted issues of racial identity. “If we look at the changing demographics of the black population in the US today,” he said, “we see black identity itself changing.”

--Rachel Quinn

Panel IV Color Hierarchy in Diasporic Communities

Aisha Khan, Anthropology, New York University
“Caucasian,” “Coolie,” “Black,” or “White?”: The Conundrum of Color in the Indo-Caribbean Diaspora

Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, Sociology, Rutgers University
“Embodying Migration: Color and Class Among Filipina Return Migrants in the Philippines”

Percy Hintzen, African American Studies, UC Berkeley
“Color, Creolization and the Caribbean”

Commentator: David Palumbo-Liu, Comparative Literature, Stanford University

Presentations on the Diasporic Communities Panel converged around the notion that color and hierarchy operate within a global context where meaning is continually negotiated and mediated through migration. Anthropologist Aisha Khan spoke about the ambiguity and complexity of color in Trinidad pre- and post independence, particularly given the experience of people of East Indian descent, who she argued have been twice colonized.

Similarly, Percy Hintzen’s presentation sought to analyze the ways in which the Caribbean, and particularly Trinidad, demonstrates how nationalism works in post-colonial situations to signal and re-center colonial power from Europe to the US. Color politics then play out using the same analytics of hegemony, though fraught with ambiguities and ambivalence. Hintzen explained that in Trinidad, this manifested in the form of a desire to whiten in order to allow for the moral hierarchy, both pre- and post-colonialism. The creation of national identity became articulated through discursive spaces in which to be Caribbean meant to be creolized, open and hybridized. Hintzen explained that color then indicates levels of racial mixing and national identity which had very serious implications on notions of sexuality and gender as well as race more generally. In this, both white Creoles and Afro-Creoles become the vessels of racial purity at the two ends of the spectrum. Caribbean nationalism, Hintzen argued, should then be analyzed within the greater contexts of its conceptual origin which lies in colonialism. Using the examples of Guyana, Dominica, and Trinidad, Hintzen demonstrated the different responses to the postcolonial experience, that included the rejection or challenging of the colonial racial order, and in other cases the inadvertent reinforcement of colonial racial orders. Further, these color hierarchies and identities are highly shaped by the transnational nature of the Caribbean. Indo-Caribbeans, for example brought with them notions of caste, which allowed them to utilize colonial ideologies of racial hierarchy in their favor.
Robyn Magalit Rodriguez said that the analytic of colorism is useful in understanding immigration, especially in places where there isn’t a well articulated lexicon of race. Examining the modes of rationality of how the work of Filipinas in the world market shape notions of work and gender, the anxieties of middle class women in the Philippines around those issues, and the investment in body practices, Rodriguez showed that notions of color are both explicit and implicit in these discourses. Using the example of service workers, she showed that Filipina women are stereotyped as “care givers,” which essentializes them and other third world women as ideal and fitted to specific types of work. These notions are rampant throughout the global economy including other parts of Asia, where Filipinas migrate to work. Rodriguez argued that the low status assigned to Filipina migrants has become the shame of upper class Filipinas. She also argued that it is clear that skin color affects the ways in which notions of body and work are constructed and reified. In Hong Kong for example, jobs in the public spaces tend to have more fair skinned employees, whereas private spaces are populated by darker skinned women. She argued that colorism does exist in Asia, but that it may reflect the emergence of racialization, which merits further analysis. The development of a color coded class hierarchy that privileges mixed race categories, Rodriguez asserted, goes back to Spanish colonialism. Rodriguez also spoke about the ways that skin color serves as a proxy for status among returned migrants, who are marked by the perception that they are not able to acclimate to the “tropics.” Finally, she argued that new racialization and identity formations among Filipinos living in the US seem to be having some effect on the Filipinos in a way that challenges the legacies of colonial racial hierarchies.

-- Tianna Paschel

Panel V: Maxine Craig and Philomenia Essed

Panel V: Jyotsna Vaid and Kamala Kempadoo

Headling off an impressive panel, Kamala Kempadoo gave a powerful presentation on imbedded racial hierarchies in the global sex trade of the early 1990s. “Sex work is associated with an economic imperative,” noted Kempadoo. She went on to say that one would expect that racism as it is tied to poverty would dictate that more sex workers would be of color. Yet it is the light-skinned women who are more desired while black women are paid less for their work. Light skin signifies sexual attractiveness, but “a tinge of color” implies wanton sexuality so that brown women symbolize sexuality. The most impoverished countries are the ones most impacted by the migrant sexual labor force and global sex trade. Kempadoo tells us, in keeping with the privileging of white femininity, the trafficking of women is noticed far more when white women are involved. Further, she problematized the fact that the cannon of critics of the sex worker system is all white, yet they do not critique their own position.

Maxine Craig (CSU East Bay) researched race in pre-1960 black beauty pageants through newspaper articles as well as extensive interviews with pageant winners and contestants. Colorism as she defined it is very much attached to other signifiers such as hair quality, gestures and ways of moving. Craig shows the impact of color by referencing an incident that happened during Miss Light Brown Frame. When a light skinned winner was selected over the crowd favorite, the audience’s obviously displeasure led the judges to retract their decision.

Craig went on to another example of colorism discussing the Miss Bronze pageant organized by Melba Davis. In ’61 there was a dark brown winner and then ’62-64’ light-skinned winners, but by 1965, the judges returned to a dark brown winner, signaling the rejection of European beauty standards at that time. Said Craig, “Beauty queens stand for a nation, representing citizenship and symbolizing black worth to whites.” She sees the pageants as embodying Du Bois’ double consciousness in that they are both a critique of racism and an internalization of it as the contests represent both a rejection of and acceptance of the racial hierarchy. For instance, one contestant used the black power fist in describing what it was like to take the trophy away from a highly qualified light-skinned woman in 1965. Craig concluded that despite the pervasiveness of colorism the primary emphasis of the pageants was to train women to carry themselves in such a way...
way as to transcend their class and their racial identity. While none of the pageant participants were involved in political movements, they were all integrationists.

Finally, Jyotsna Vaid (Texas A&M University) offered extensive examples of the pervasiveness of color consciousness in India amid a growing market for whitening creams, and the attention given to both gender and skin tone at birth. She questioned whether the color consciousness of Indian women is transformed throughout the diaspora and whether or not this desire for lightness changes.

A 1997 Canadian study shows lower self-esteem in Indian women with darker skin, including second-generation Indian women. Vaid explained that in marriage arrangements color can be used to compensate for some lack or used as a bargaining chip. She noted that even dating websites offer six shades of racial coloring for selection.

--Rachel Quinn

Panel VI: Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Gina Dent and Charis Thompson

Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Ethnic Studies and Gender and Women’s Studies, UC Berkeley

“Yearning for Lightness: Global Circuits in the Production and Marketing of Skin Whiteners”

Charis Thompson, Rhetoric and Gender and Women’s Studies, UC Berkeley

“Hierarchies of Color in Gamete and Embryo Gift and Market Economies”

Commentator: Gina Dent, Feminist Studies, UC Santa Cruz

Like many other panelists Rondilla had labored over pre-prepared slides to enhance the presentation of her paper, “Serious About Brightening Their Skin: Skin Lightening Advertisements in the Philippines and the US,” but technology fumbled and the only graduate student presenting at the conference used an old fashioned tool to display her work, the sound of her voice. Rondilla smiled vivaciously, and said, “A popular commercial for a skin lightening product in the Philippines features a light skin baby with darker skinned parents. The camera zooms into the baby’s crib where a bottle of the skin lightener is tucked away, the tag line translates ‘Nobody has to know.’” Gasps, and sarcastic dips of laughter waved over the crowd. Eventually, a series of provocative slides demonstrating the extremes women in all parts of Asia pursue to lighten their skin appeared, but Rondilla stole the show.

Rondilla asked, “Are we moving towards a new kind of beauty?” as a central question in her work. The Guam born PhD candidate in Ethnic Studies explained that advertisers feel a more inclusive, multi-cultural beauty ideal broadens their earning potential. Yet Rondilla demonstrated that mainstream acceptance is far from a non-White beauty.

Glenn knew time dictated the day’s events. She had spent most of the conference signaling colleagues to wrap things up. The convener of the conference, Glenn felt the pressure when it was her turn to present her paper entitled, “Yearning for Lightness: Global Circuits in the Production and Marketing of Skin Whiteners.” Twenty minutes into her talk she said, “I don’t know if I can do this…. I’m slightly going over my time…ho, ho! There’s nobody to stop me,” the audience burst into laughter.

From the EU to Africa and back to the EU again Glenn discussed the health risks inherent in the use of skin lightening products. The Director of the Center for Race and Gender Studies, Glenn mentioned how ingredients like mercury and hydroquinone are illegal in the EU, but they can be legally made and then sold outside of the country. Often the products return to their starting point because merchandisers in places like Africa resell the products to their black counter-parts in the EU. Glenn said it was important to understand skin lightening on three levels: the global circuits of products, capitalist, culture, and people; the entities and processes involved in the elaboration of specific cultural ideals and differentiated marketing to particular national/ethnic/racial/class “consumer” groups; and understanding concerns and aspirations of women seeking to lighten their skin, including the meaning of skin color and its relationship to their identity.

Charis Thompson presented her fieldwork paper entitled, “Hierarchies of Color in Gamete and Embryo gift and Market Economies.” She explained how old ideas of race occupy the present. Thompson worked with the director of a US egg donor clinic to understand how the clinic allows recipients and donors to exercise choice. Two of the case studies were very revealing. One case involved a Japanese couple coming to the US to purchase an egg. The wife wanted the child to be light skinned, but not pale or mixed because she did not want to give the impression that she had been raped by a White man. She finally chose a “gorgeous” light-skinned donor she thought was Japanese. She learned the donor was Korean and refused the egg. Another case demonstrated the rare time the director denied the recipient couple’s choice. A White German couple had recently converted to Bud-
dhism and requested a South Asian egg to produce a child that visibly signified their commitment to their conversion. Thompson said the director thought it unfair to make the child endure the burden of darker skin. Thompson said, “You don’t need to go to the late eighteenth century to see systems of race classification, just scan from sperm bank to egg donor clinic on the internet and you will see every possible system of ethnonational and racial breakdown that any of these fathers of race science could have imagined.” The panel concluded with comments from Gina Dent.

**--LyFranshaua L. Pipkins**

**Panel VII Colorism & the Law**

**Trina Jones, Duke University School of Law**

“The Final Frontier: Legal Recognition of Color Discrimination Claims”

**Taunya Lovell Banks, University of Maryland School of Law**

“Black and White Justice: The Law’s Continued Resistance to Colorism Claims”

**Tanya Hernandez, Rutgers Law School, Newark**

“Latinos at Work: Employment Discrimination and the New Agents of Color Bias in the Workplace”

**Commentator: Richard Banks, Stanford Law School**

The final panel of the day focused on colorism and the legal and constitutional issues raised by its social practice. The first speaker was Trina Jones, who spoke in support of the legal recognition of color discrimination claims. She distinguished between intra-racial colorism—colorism in which the discriminator and the person discriminated against are of the same racial group—and interracial colorism which happens when a person of one race makes distinctions for someone from another race on the basis of skin color. Through colorism, skin color is not used as an indicator of race, rather, there is social meaning afforded to skin color itself that leads to differential treatment. Jones warned that if the law were to exclusively focus on racial categorization, the impact of colorism would not emerge. For instance, she said, an employer who hires only black women who had light colored skin might not be viewed as engaging in impermissible discrimination if investigated under charges of racism rather than colorism.

Jones pointed out the common objections courts have in rejecting colorism claims include: a lack of clarity over the statutory basis of colorism claims, colorism’s inability to fit historical legal understandings of discrimination in the US, and a hesitancy to engage in what one court described as “the unsavory business of distinguishing between skin tones.” Jones found that in the few cases in which colorism was even recognized, the plaintiffs tended to lose.

Countering the anti-colorism stance of the courts, Jones argued that there is a statutory basis for colorism claims. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 expressly recognizes color, and readily allows a textual reading that bolsters colorism suits. Jones concluded by pointing out the need for the courts to move away from narrow, traditional considerations in order to develop a legal acknowledgement of colorism.

Taunya Lovell Banks spoke on the continued legal resistance to colorism claims. She started off with a reference to the September 1993 issue of *Time* magazine. It featured an article entitled “The New Faces of America,” and on the cover was a computer generated image of a woman touted as the new Eve, “created from a mix of races.” *Time* attributed the openness of racial hybridity in America to the influx of immigrants, however Banks noted that a troubling aspect of racialized hybridity was that most Americans avoid considering the manipulation of racial imagery and the meanings embedded in the imagery. Banks illustrated her argument with the digitally darkened mugshot of O.J. Simpson that appeared in the June 27, 1994 issue of *Time*. She saw the image as designed to drive home Simpson’s loss of “honorary white” status and notions of black male criminality. Banks saw the darkening as an admission that there are degrees of blackness in American society and that race has multiple levels in between and within racialized groups. Images of Beyonce on the covers of *Vanity Fair* and *Glamour* magazines show her with a lighter skin tone than her picture on *Destiny’s* latest album. Banks challenged the audience by asking why would Beyonce’s skin color be lightened if the notion of colorism were not prevalent.

Banks problematized the legal emphasis on racial absolutism, underscoring her assertion with a quote from Michael Omi, “members within a racially subordinated group may be differently racialized.” Banks echoed Jones’ earlier sentiments by pointing out that legal institutions facilitate colorism practices by reinforcing dominant social economic and social norms. Bank’s central concerns were that colorism practices reflect societal perception that may influence legal outcomes. She also pointed out that colorism has economic consequences where there is legal regulation in employment and housing, and that light-skin tone privilege, if verifiable as a constant, may be a factor when considering remedial approaches to institutional racism in public spaces.

Tanya Hernandez’s talk, “Latinos at Work: Employment Discrimination and the New Agents of Color Bias in the Workplace” began with a reference to Tonya Bank’s piece on colorism which showed that intra-racial colorism was more readily identified by judges when the plaintiffs were Latino—continued on page 19
SYMPOSIUM

Beauty and Power in Filipino/American Communities

On February 18, 2006, the CRG co-sponsored the “Beauty and Power in Filipino/American Communities” conference, where artists and scholars shared stories and emergent research on different aspects of beauty for Filipino/ Americans. Presenters included Noël Alumit (writer/performance artist), Shirley J. Lim (History, SUNY-Stony Brook), Dawn Mabalon (History, SFSU), Veronica Montes (writer), Elizabeth H. Pisares (Tulitos Press), Barbara Jane Reyes (poet), Evelyn I. Rodriguez (Sociology, USF), Joanne L. Rondilla (Ethnic Studies, UCB), Roland B. Tolentino (Film Institute, University of the Philippines-Diliman), and Jean Venga Gier (English, UCB). Spurred by conversations within the blogosphere, the conference touched on a range of topics, from beauty pageants to debuts, from the Filipina body to Imedific beauty.

Welcoming the crowd of fellow scholars, educators, students, and community members, Gladys Nubla (English, UCB), a member of the Critical Filipina/o Studies Working Group, spoke of beauty as “an ideology, a set of daily practices, [and] a performance of citizenship,” which dually produce feelings of power and powerlessness. Although there is no universal definition of what is beautiful in Filipino/American communities, she posed the question of why Filipinos are so obsessed with beauty pageants and noted that, while the presenters might not have concrete answers, the ideas could very well prompt future research.

The first part of the conference focused on artistic and literary expression, kicking off with a hilarious and interactive pageant reenactment by Noël Alumit, where fellow presenter Shirley J. Lim was named “beauty queen” of the conference. The reenactment was an excerpt from his one-man show, “Master of the (Miss) Universe.” Veronica Montes further captivated the audience with a reading of her short story “Beauty Queens,” which detailed a teenage girl’s experience surrounding the funeral of her grandmother and encounter with her aunt’s White ex-Marine husband, who unabashedly flirts with her and her cousin. Barbara Jane Reyes continued with a spellbinding reading of several poems from her books, Gravities of Center and Poeta en San Francisco, which illuminated complex Filipina and Filipina American identities resistant to Orientalist stereotypes. Rounding out the artistic/literary portion of the event, Jean Venga Gier recounted her experience in the “Filip gigs,” multigenerational and multicultural dances in the Central Valley in the 1960s, and the “social box,” a practice similar to Filipino taxi dancing where young, usually White, Mexican American, and African American women were paid to be temporary dance partners by Filipino migrant laborers in the 1920s and 30s. The social box, however, entailed young Filipina American women instead, whose company for a dance was auctioned off to the highest bidder to raise money. During the second part of the conference, scholars presented their research on the issue of beauty in Filipina/o American communities. In her presentation, “Where Did You Get that Gorgeous Black Ballerina Dress?': Filipino American Postcolonialism and Modernity through Beauty,” Shirley J. Lim stated that scholars have ignored beauty pageants due to the rise of feminist ideology. Yet beauty pageants, she argued, are an integral part of Filipina/o American history and provide sites to study “idealized female citizenship.” Beauty pageants were used to demonstrate the modernity of Filipina/o American society in reaction against stereotypes of colonized “savages.” Dawn Mabalon continued the discussion of beauty pageants, focusing on Stockton’s Filipino American community, with her presentation, “The Ideal Filipina: Filipina Americans and Queen Contests, 1920’s-1950’s.”

She argued that Filipinas were highly valued because of the sexual imbalance in Filipino communities and were strictly guarded and watched. Thus arose a contradiction in which the beauty pageant became a site to cherish the Filipina but also a site where the Filipina image was commodified. Evelyn I. Rodriguez’s work, “Malakas at Maganda’: Debutante Splendor as an Instrumental Cultural Resistance and Empowerment for Filipinos in America,” discussed how debuts can be valuable cultural rituals and sites of resistance. She also argued that these debuts offer the opportunity for intergenerational interaction within the family as well as within the larger Filipino American community.

In “The Lovely Nowhere’: What the Exclusion of Filipina/o Americans from US Racial Discourse Implies for Issues of Gender/Sexuality,” Elizabeth H. Pisares contended that Filipina Americans are chronically misrecognized even though they comprise the second largest Asian American...
community in the United States after Chinese Americans. She suggested that Filipinos’ social invisibility was a result of how Western imperialism, which has deeply marked the history of Filipinos, has become entangled in U.S. racial discourses. Joanne L. Rondilla then presented “Avoiding the ‘F’ word(s): Filipinas and Fat,” arguing that a colonial typology of beauty where beauty and thinness are intimately related serves to control the Filipina body. In a story about an online search, she said that the only instances where “Filipina” and “fat” occur are on mail-order bride websites, i.e. “your Filipina bride will make you fat with her cooking.” Thus the stereotypical image of the Filipina is that of a submissive and delicate Filipina.

Finally, Visiting Fellow Roland B. Tolentino presented “On Imeldific Beauty,” discussing how Imelda Marcos, as the First Lady of former Philippine president and dictator Ferdinand Marcos, strove to epitomize beauty through her sexualized body and the urban landscape. Imelda reinvigorated cultural spaces in the Philippines at all costs and represented in her clothing a mix of modernity and tradition. Tolentino argued that Imelda and Ferdinand Marcos, in a dialogical relation, presented themselves as the ultra-feminine and ultra-masculine symbols of the nation.

During the lively Q&A, audience members and panelists alike addressed, among other things, questions of why the issues presented were not normally included in the greater Asian American studies discourse, and why there was little discussion of transgendered or male Filipinos in relation to beauty and power—ultimately adding to the general consensus on the need for more research and for more conferences like this to occur.

The conference was organized by the Critical Filipina/o Studies Working Group and co-sponsored by the Asian American Studies Program, the Beatrice Bain Research Group on Gender, the Center for Southeast Asia Studies, the Center for the Study of Sexual Cultures, the Department of Ethnic Studies, and the Department of Gender and Women’s Studies.

Trisha Tiamzon, Sociology and Poli Sci
Diana Halog, Sociology

Color Conference—continued from page 17

instead of African American. Hernandez noted that despite the greater receptivity for Latino colorism claims, there are still jurisprudence problems with the assessment of such claims. She found that Latino plaintiffs were only successful in having their claims recognized or seen as actionable when discrimination was at the hands of a white, Anglo employee or supervisor. Underpinning her discussion was the notion that most judicial understanding of race discrimination claims stems from the judicial exposure to civil rights based on African American claims of discrimination in the workplace.

Hernandez noted that judges fail to understand the Latino concept of “functional whiteness” and “functional blackness” that are foundational to color discrimination experiences. She talks about an early colorism case, Felix vs Marquez (1980) that recognizes colorism as a claim separate and apart from racial discrimination. The court opinion was significant because it demonstrated how a plaintiff’s skin tone and phenotype used in tandem with genealogy as racial markers. However, Hernandez saw that the case presented a confused assessment of the Latino colorism experience. The plaintiff, Felix, introduced the personnel cards of other employees to demonstrate that only two employees were as dark or darker than herself, and that there was a prevailing bias against dark-skinned employees in the office in the allocation of promotions in that only white employees were given privileged positions. The court then disputed her claim of dark-skinned bias by enumerating the employees that she had presumably misclassified as white, when in the court’s view, they were really some shade of brown. Hernandez saw the court acting as a sort of a judicial “spectro-barometer.” The court concluded, “these observations tend to contradict the placement of a rigid line between white and non-white employees of the workplace and reflect the fact that a substantial number of Puerto Ricans have mixed ancestry.” Ultimately, the court in recognizing mixed ancestry misperceived the actualization of colorism in Latino communities.

Hernandez referred to the growing literature that expresses how Latino color bias is intimately connected with color, phenotype, hair texture, and socioeconomic class standing—these factors inform who have a shade or not. The judge in the Felix case failed to see the nuanced, attenuated and pervasive Latin American assessments of status. Hernandez viewed the judge as falling prey to the romanticization of racial mixture—the indicator of racial ambiguity and harmony—so despite the fact that the court recognized colorism as a cognizable claim, the court used that recognition to undermine the ability to mount a successful claim. Hernandez iterated that, “the court viewed color simply as a matter of chromatic differences rather than a conceptualization informed by a taxonomy of traits and situational deployment of colorism.”

In conclusion, Hernandez pointed to the disturbing legal trend that prevents the invocation of colorism without the white versus colored dichotomy based on the “pure” paradigm. She saw this pattern as problematic for those exposed to similar color pathologies as the courts read bias only through stark comparisons, rather than the subtler distinctions of Latinos who bring in notions of African-ancestry to play.

Richard Banks closed off the panel with a discussion pulling together the various points from the speakers with a focus on the topic of intra-group discrimination.

Angela Harris, Professor at Boalt Hall, and John Lie, Dean of International and Area Studies, UC Berkeley, finished off the conference in the Closing Plenary session, “Looking Backwards, looking Forwards”. Harris identified emergent themes of the discussion related to the messages color carries and the way people talk about color. She observed how shifting discourses about color tell us about the social spaces we construct and the boundaries around those social spaces. In the final talk, Lie offered comparative reflections on color hierarchies internationally and throughout history.

--J George
Conference Photos by CRG staff unless otherwise indicated.
consistently find increased levels of racial tolerance, yet profound inequality persists. Although practitioners of law and economics seldom interact with critical race scholars, each school of thought has tackled the dilemma of seemingly intractable racial disparities. By comparing these two approaches, scholars can gain some interesting insights into the elusive nature of discrimination and the future of race in America.


Although there was widespread celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, there was relatively little recognition of the thirtieth anniversary of Lau v. Nichols. The Lau decision pushed beyond a paradigm of intentional harm to attack exclusionary practices, whether or not motivated by a discriminatory purpose. Today, this approach is under increasing attack, and the pressing question is how and if Lau will survive the undoing of its opinion.

Frank C. Worrell, Education

This chapter highlights the tremendous diversity in the populations of African descent living in the United States across a variety of indicators. Our research may have potential implications for education and school achievement. Our hope is to situate conversations on Black achievement in the broader historical, political, and psychosocial contexts, contexts which are often not known or considered by school psychologists and other educators.


This study examined the structural validity of scores on the 20-item Multi-group Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) in a group of 196 students attending secondary school in Zimbabwe. The authors suggested that the Other Group Orientation factor may be less viable in majority groups, that the Ethnic Identity items may best be explained by a single factor, and that the MEIM would benefit from more scale development work.

Mario Barrera, Ethnic Studies

This documentary film details the story of the estimated 250,000 to 500,000 Latinos who served in World War II. Until now, their stories have been virtually absent from history books. Included are the stories of Evelio Grillo, a Cuban American who served in a segregated unit with black soldiers and Guy Gabaldon, whose exploits became immortalized (and whitewashed) in the film Hell in the Pacific.

Julian Chow, Social Welfare

Using a qualitative study approach, by conducting three focus groups with Asian welfare recipients in the San Francisco Bay Area, the findings of this study indicate that existing welfare-to-work programs do not meet the unique needs of this population. Instead, findings suggest that welfare-to-work program strategies for this population should incorporate culturally competent support services, human capital development, and strength-based approaches. As more Asian immigrant families lose cash assistance as a result of reaching the five-year time limit, the need to improve welfare-to-work programs and policies for this population has become increasingly urgent.

Sau-ling C. Wong, Asian-American Studies

Since its publication in 1976, Maxine Hong Kingston’s The Woman Warrior has been canonized as an integral part of contemporary American literature. This article compares the reception of The Woman Warrior in several parts of the world and reflects upon canon formation and cultural pedagogy. At times there are “Asian connections” made overseas, e.g., connections through culture or language, but often it is institutional mediation through the American nation-state that makes possible the study of this “minority” text.

Margaret Weir, Sociology and Political Science

New Deal scholarship tends to focus on national politics with little attention to the role of the states in determining the trajectory of liberalism. Taking federalism seriously requires viewing the United States as a layered polity in which federal initiatives were overlaid on states that operated with different administrative capacities and distinct political logics. Among the consequences of state administrative weakness and elite-dominated politics were metropolitan development patterns that exacerbated the racially linked “urban crises” of the 1960s. The states also provided protected venues, congenial political mechanisms, and powerful ideological handles for the enemies of activist government.

Michael Barnes
PhD Student, Sociology
islands, with a population of about 45,000, the largest of which is Saipan. Although a “commonwealth” in name, the CNMI is in every way a colony of the United States, and the economy is totally dependent on Washington. The “commonwealth” status means that products manufactured in the CNMI can be labeled as “Made in the USA” and can enter the US tariff and import-requirement free. Many major US brands, including Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfiger, have garments manufactured in Saipan. However, working conditions in CNMI factories are not subject to any wage, safety, or environmental protections. In fact, the CNMI is specifically exempted from US immigration, customs, and labor laws because of actions taken by the United States Congress.

Approximately 11,000 Chinese and other Asian women, working on the kinds of “labor contracts” that were exposed in the 19th century as virtual slavery, are housed in labor camps surrounded by barbed wire. They are trucked to factories to toil for 10-12 hours and are then trucked back to their barracks. According to Brian Ross, Chief Investigative Reporter for ABC News, “many Chinese are forced to sign secret agreements, known as shadow contracts, before they leave China, severely and in some ways illegally, restricting their activities on American soil. For example, workers are forbidden to participate in any religious or political activity or to ask for a salary increase or even to fall in love or get married….” Moreover management coerces women who get pregnant to have abortions in order to keep their jobs. Eric Gregoire, of the US Department of the Interior, noted, “With 11,000 Chinese workers here, I have never seen a Chinese garment factory worker have a baby in my entire four years on Saipan.” More recently, a sex tourism industry has developed that also relies on Asian women to be held in virtual bondage.

The CNMI is extremely remote, which of course made it a perfect location for the establishment of very low cost “Made in the USA” manufacturing industries using Asian women as virtual slaves. However, in the mid-1990s the medieval working conditions of women workers started to come to light in the US press, at which point the owners of textile factories, and their allies in the CNMI “government,” decided they needed political representation in Washington, DC to head off any adverse legislation. Thus started a series of big money contracts given to super-lobbyist Jack Abramoff and his associates. It is now known that Mr. Abramoff was a major financial supporter of President Bush (a “Bush Pioneer”) and was closely allied with House of Representatives Majority Leader, Tom DeLay. Regrettably, a number of prominent California congressmen were part of Tom DeLay’s leadership team, and helped him pass legislation. Also regrettably, Mr. Abramoff’s influence succeeded in torpedoing any congressional legislation that might have protected the unfortunate women slaving away in the CNMI.

Is there a lesson for us in all this? The dire situation of Asian women sweatshop workers in the CNMI has beenpublished...—continued on back cover

December Forum—continued from page 5

intoxication of it filled my mind. Like some supremely beautiful woman whose beauty is almost impersonal and above desire, such was Kashmir in all its feminine beauty of river and valley and lake and graceful trees—It was like the face of the beloved that one sees in a dream, and that fades away on awakening.” Dar noted that Nehru describes the valley using sensual, almost erotic imagery, while saying nothing about the people who inhabit the Kashmir valley. Dar noted a striking parallel between Nehru’s impressions and the representations of the Kashmiri people on the celluloid screen produced by Bollywood in the early era following indepen-
Nelson—Race for Roots —cont. from page 7

identity construction, 21st century-style, that Nelson portrayed. The first, simply put, was what Africans in Africa thought about this burgeoning industry that relied on their bodily tissues as raw material. Here, Nelson articulated the ways that class and political geography shape a very asymmetrical process whereby the DNA of Africans are collected and stored for the consumption of middle class Black people in Europe and the US, who are attempting to assemble something like a double-helixian bridge back across the Middle Passage. From second hand sources, she commented that it seems some Africans are actually willing to offer their tissues for what they see as worthy spatial and temporal re-construction. But coercion is not absent, as she explains, since these new world Black biobanks often obtain stock by offering basic health services in African towns, at which time they collect DNA samples from clinic patients.

The second question raises an equally ominous issue of whether geneticists and consumers of these technologies are aware of its use in forensics to criminalize people by race. Here, I didn’t think Nelson’s response attended seriously enough to the sinister underbelly of developments in Black subject formation. That is, the very same technology that allows Nelson’s sample of almost exclusively Black middle class women to pursue their deep calling or retirement hobby as ‘kin keepers’, piecing together a violently hacked family tree, also allows ‘pen keepers’ to determine whether a hair follicle left at the scene of a crime belongs to a black or a white person. While the weak predictability of ‘ethnic estimation’ using DNA in one context may result in a confused or unsatisfied consumer of genetic tracing services, the false certainty characterizing forensics work holds potentially lethal effects for the young Black men whose DNA are also being collected and ‘matched’. Somewhat overlaid with postmodern excitement about what new and interesting fusions are filling what old and tragic fissures, the sedimented class and gendered differences among African Americans were not in full view during the talk. Creeping in from the rear, as Troy Duster would warn, these sinister possibilities are closer than they appear.

In all, however, Nelson’s presentation was incredibly illuminating and a much welcomed contribution to the conversation about the significance of genomics science in peoples’ fashioning of selves and communities.

Sandrea Smith —continued from page 8

...mation job seekers need to build necessary connections; these institutions also deploy a dialectic of distrust and treat potential candidates as people who are not trustworthy.

Smith sees three strands for her future work. A continuation of her current study would further explore the role that community institutions play in helping to create interpersonal dynamics between residents that can be characterized as trusting or distrust- ing. She finds that institutions fail to provide necessary supports such as transportation, or childcare—supports which allow more access to the labor market in a meaningful way. Institutions also need to employ discourses that don’t belittle or patronize prospective employees. Currently those who have the fewest resources cannot take part in the labor market. “I want to observe black communities in Oakland to examine the roles within those communities to the extent of interlinkages, individual connections, and institutional connections.” She sees the institutional influence as having an impact on the feelings of trustworthiness and cooperativeness. An extension of this work would include investigation of Latino communities on the rise such as Fruitvale.

Another potential project would involve an examination of the dispersed Katrina victims. Smith sees the outcome as a sort of natural social experiment that raises questions of re-incorporation or incorporation into new environments. Factors for incorporation include local economy strength, and level of government or charitable assistance in the short and long term. She wishes to see how such factors determine whether displaced victims stay or go home and what level of livelihood they can rebuild. “Race relations, structure of economy, opportunity, level of participation by institutions, and a whole host of factors contribute to the victims chance to improve their condition.”

A third project would send Smith to Johannesburg, South Africa to do an examination on interracial relations that exist between the native population and a growing population of American blacks who are starting to make South Africa their home. Smith has a close friend whose sister is a retired NY City cop who fell in love with South Africa on a trip and suddenly picked up and moved there. With her retirement pay she bought two homes and has a variety of amenities such as a maid service. She is part of a rapidly growing population of American blacks in the region. Smith notes that one can construct a narrative about “coming home” to an area that is black power oriented; however, this story is problematized by the fact that the people who move there have a significant amount of capital and are from an entirely different culture. This romantic return home evokes issues of class, ethnicity, and nationalism for Smith. Interactions with the local population put black Americans in positions of authority and status, so Smith senses that there would be some level of social conflict driven by the dynamic of modern hegemony. “It gets me out of the urban poverty discussion and gives me a chance to know a land I’ve never been to. Now I feel very provincial with a good grasp of the American context, but don’t

—continued on back cover
New Working Group: *Gender and Visual Culture*—Call for participants

This working group will explore how race and gender are produced through visual culture. The specific technology of photography will serve as a springboard for conversations. We are also concerned with how race and gender formations have impacted visual representational practices including painting and sculpture, film, television, advertising, and new digital technologies. Our aim is to make sense of the long, entangled and inextricable relationships among race, gender and visuality. If you are interested in joining or would like more information, please contact Leigh Raiford (<mailto:lraiford@berkeley.edu>) or Elizabeth Abel (<mailto:eabel@berkeley.edu>).

Afternoon Forum Series: Call for Submissions

The Center for Race and Gender invites presentation proposals from graduate students for its Afternoon Forum Series. Research dealing with issues of race and gender from any discipline is welcome. To apply, submit two copies of the following, single-sided with no staples:

- Student and Faculty Mentor Information Form (available online)
- 1-2 page project description
- Timeline for project completion
- Budget proposal
- Letter of support from a faculty mentor

To: Undergraduate Grants Program, Center for Race and Gender, 642 Barrows Hall, MC 1074, Berkeley, CA 94720-1074

APPLICATION DEADLINE: The Fall 2006 application deadline will be Monday, October 16th at 3 p.m. Awards will be announced within a few weeks of the deadline. Direct inquiries to centerrg@berkeley.edu.

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CRG Fall 2006 Undergraduate Grants Competition

The Center for Race and Gender (CRG) at the University of California Berkeley, announces the availability of grants of $200 to $1,000 to fund undergraduates for research or creative projects that address issues of race and gender.

ELIGIBILITY: Applications can be submitted by any Berkeley undergraduate not matriculating at the end of the semester. Applications are particularly sought from students majoring in areas where race and gender issues have not previously been of major concern, such as Public Health, Education, Economics, Business, Journalism, Political Science, and Environmental Science, as well as areas where they have been more central.

GRANT PERIOD AND USE OF FUNDS: Grants will be awarded for periods of up to six months from the start date. Funds may be used for direct costs related to the proposed project, such as travel to archival or ethnographic research sites; supplies and services, and rental of equipment. Funds may not be used for purchase of equipment and are not intended for use as a stipend or for cost of living expenses.

APPLICATION PROCESS: To apply, submit two copies of the following, single-sided with no staples:

- Student and Faculty Mentor Information Form (available online)
- 1-2 page project description
- Timeline for project completion
- Budget proposal
- Letter of support from a faculty mentor

Please make checks payable to the UC Regents. Donors may specify other CRG projects or programs for support.

Please send checks to:
The Center for Race and Gender
642 Barrows Hall #1074
Berkeley, CA 94720-1074

APPLICATION DEADLINE: The Fall 2006 application deadline will be Monday, October 16th at 3 p.m. Awards will be announced within a few weeks of the deadline. Direct inquiries to centerrg@berkeley.edu.

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Make a Donation to the Center for Race and Gender to support Undergraduate Research

I would like to donate:

- $500 (Director’s Circle)
- $100 (CRG Sustainer)
- $50 (Sponsor)
- $25 (Friend)
- (Other) please specify $________

NAME

ADDRESS

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lic knowledge now for several years, and yet virtually nothing has changed in their lives. The power centers that link official Washington, DC government policy with huge multinational corporations have managed to avoid any interference with the nefarious and vicious labor policies. Tom DeLay is under indictment, but others have stepped forward to take his place.

Frankly, this is a discouraging picture. We see that exposure of evil is not enough if political and economic power are so embedded that those holding power can thumb their noses at public exposure. It appears the work of the CRG is just beginning.

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Sandra Smith
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know what is going on in the rest of the world. I want to see how the world works from another perspective.”

Smith finds her current work at Berkeley very rewarding. “I love it here. It just feels like a dream job. I have an amazing amount of respect for the intellect of the colleagues that I share this space with. Although she finds the Berkeley academic experience fulfilling, she sometimes finds the need to escape through her hobby, gardening. “There is no time that I feel the type of contentment that I do when I’m gardening. There you forget everything else that is going on in your life and the world; there is this peace that takes over.”

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J George
Interview by M Barnes

Three New Volumes —continued from page 9

in transdisciplinarity and to shift the geography of reason to cultivate transmodern approaches to knowledge. Most importantly, these projects contribute to a process Maldonado-Torres referred to as “epistemic decolonization” by entering into a philosophical collaboration that does not rely on the recognition of a European canon.

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Iyko Day
PhD Cand., Ethnic Studies

The presentation was a stimulating glimpse into the cutting-edge of race theory and will surely attract many readers to these volumes.