WORDS FROM THE DIRECTOR:
Race or Gender or Age in the Presidential Election

The current election has been touted as a historic one in that either a woman, Hillary Clinton, or an African American, Barack Obama, will be the Democratic candidate for President of the US. A victory in the nomination fight will thus constitute a historic “first,” signaling a major victory over either sexism or racism. If Clinton were to triumph in the final election she would become one of the few women heads of states, and if Obama were to win, he would be the first person of color to lead a western nation. In the meantime, the Republican nominee, John McCain at age 71 would be the oldest person elected to a first term, thus giving a kick in the butt to ageism.

What is most notable about the rhetoric surrounding the nominations for us at the CRG is that once again race and gender are being posed as mutually exclusive competing categories. Hillary Clinton stands for “woman,” while Barack Obama stands for “Black.” In actuality Hillary Clinton is a “white woman,” and Barack Obama is a “black man.” Thus political commentators and pundits are speculating about which candidate suffers from the bigger disadvantage—Clinton for being a woman or Obama for being black? Voters are said to confront a choice between overcoming their bias against women or their bias against racial minorities. Many black voters, both men and women, are clear about their preference for Obama, while women—white, Asian, Latina—are more split.

Some of her campaign appearances have been interrupted by chants of “iron my shirts;” a Facebook group called “Hillary Clinton: Stop Running For President and Make Me a Sandwich,” reportedly had 20,000 subscribers and a Clinton nutcracker figure was being sold in airports. They can also point out that Obama’s campaign appearances have not been met by chants of “shine my shoes,” and as of yet no “stepin-fetchit” Obama dolls have appeared. Nonetheless, race has been a subtext in many critiques of Obama. For example Geraldine Ferraro’s comment that Obama would not be where he was now if he were a woman, whether intended to elicit anti-black sentiment or not, called up the specter—continued on page 12
New Works from CRG Affiliated Faculty

Loïc Wacquant, Sociology

Loïc Wacquant takes the reader inside the black ghetto of Chicago and the deindustrializing banlieue of Paris to discover that urban marginality is not everywhere the same. Drawing on a wealth of original field, survey and historical data, Loïc Wacquant shows that the involution of America’s urban core after the 1960s is due not to the emergence of an ‘underclass’, but to the joint withdrawal of market and state fostered by public policies of racial separation and urban abandonment. In European cities, by contrast, the spread of districts of ‘exclusion’ does not herald the formation of ghettos. It stems from the decomposition of working-class territories under the press of mass unemployment, the casualization of work and the ethnic mixing of populations hitherto segregated, spawning urban formations akin to ‘anti-ghettos’. By specifying the different causal paths and experiential forms assumed by relegation in the American and the French metropolis, this book offers indispensable tools for rethinking urban marginality and for reinvigorating the public debate over social inequality and citizenship.

Laura E. Pérez, Ethnic Studies
Chicana Art: The Politics of Spiritual and Aesthetic Altarities (Duke UP, 2007)

Laura E. Pérez examines the work of more than forty Chicana artists across a variety of media including printmaking, sculpture, performance, photography, video, comics, sound recording, and fiction, poetry, and plays. Pérez describes how Chicana artists invoke a culturally hybrid spirituality to challenge racism, bigotry, patriarchy, and homophobia. They make use of, and often radically rework, pre-Columbian Mesoamerican and other non-Western notions of art and art-making, and they struggle to create liberating versions of familiar iconography such as the Virgin of Guadalupe and the Sacred Heart. Filled with representations of spirituality and allusions to non-Western visual and cultural traditions, the work of these Chicana artists is a vital contribution to a more inclusive canon of American arts.

Rodolfo Mendoza-Denton, Psychology

Prior research has demonstrated that stereotypes affect negatively stereotyped groups in part through the implied immutability of group members’ abilities. Accordingly, a belief that ability is malleable through effort and hard work has been shown to boost the performance of negatively stereotyped groups. We predicted, however, that among favorably stereotyped groups, a belief that ability is fixed would reinforce the immutability of the group differences upon which stereotype-induced social comparisons are made and result in enhanced performance. We found experimental support for these predictions in two favorably stereotyped groups in math: Asians and men. Implications of schooling emphasizing innate ability for exacerbating achievement gaps are discussed.

Catherine Ceniza Choy, Ethnic Studies

Choy historically contextualizes the life of Encarnacion Alzona, the first Filipino woman to earn a doctoral degree, and a pioneer of Philippine women’s history.
The January 31st CRG Thursday Forum, “Documenting the Struggle: Immigrants’ Work and Activism” featured presentations from Professor Irene Bloemraad from Sociology and Shannon Gleeson of the Demography department.

Shannon Gleeson’s presentation, “Papeles y Derechos: Workplace Violations and Claims-Making Amongst Latino Immigrant Workers” was based on interviews with immigrant workers in San Jose, California and Houston, Texas. Gleeson reaffirmed the common assertion that undocumented workers are more susceptible to abuse; however, she shows that such workers are knowledgeable of their formal rights via local Spanish language media and community outreach. She offered three main explanations for why, despite increased incidence of abuse and considerable access to resources, aggrieved undocumented workers are less likely to seek recourse. First she suggested that the constant fear of deportation makes speaking up and drawing attention to oneself undesirable. Secondly, she argued that undocumented workers often take on an alternative hegemonic identity that may rationalize their present working conditions creating a work-ethic that defines and justifies their presence in the US. Lastly, Gleeson discussed the role that irregular status and an uncertain future play for the undocumented worker. Many undocumented workers are oriented towards an idealized future in their home country that justifies the working conditions here, which are in turn seen as temporary and bearable. Gleeson emphasized that these dynamics are not inherent to the unauthorized immigrant worker, but rather created by the state’s reluctance to accept and incorporate these workers.

CRG presents Jackson and Romero’s Translations of Blackness

The Shadow and the Archive: Translations of Blackness, was the theme for the February 7th CRG Thursday Forum featuring Zakiyyah Iman Jackson from African American Studies and Mercy Romero from Ethnic Studies.

In her talk, “Kara Walker’s Scatology: Towards a History of Gothic Perversity,” Jackson offered a close reading of what she described as, “one of Kara Walker’s most striking panoramic friezes,” The Battle of Atlanta: Being the Narrative of a Negress in the Flames of Desire—A Reconstruction. Jackson found that although rarely written about, this tableau from Walker contains perhaps some of the most shockingly grotesque representations of violence and erotics of power in her catalogue of work. Jackson described Walker’s vision of slavery marked by monstrous forms of violent erotic power that disfigure and amputate, “Kara Walker’s panorama attempts to visually project the conflict between and vicissitudes of the Freudian drives as they intersect with pleasure, unconscious racial fantasy, and desires engendered by the strange fictions of representation in a racial order.” Jackson sees Walker’s imagery as a method to draw out racial fantasy and affect in the spectator. “Of particular concern,” closed Jackson, “is the performance of the installation—its intersubjective relationship with the viewer, how it impresses upon the viewer and draws out affect, and activates memory—breaking with modernist fantasies of subject/object relations between viewer and cultural objects, thus providing an alternative to Western modernist conceptions of difference and intersubjectivity.”

On February 21st the CRG Thursday Forum presented Professor Guatam Premnath of the English department and Riyad Koya of the History department speaking on the theme “Cooile Odysseys: Post-Indenture Narratives in the Indian Diaspora.”

Riyad Koya began with his talk, “The Jurisdiction of Custom and the Remoralization of Community at the Abolition of Indian Indentured Labor.” Koya recognized that a crucial theme that linked twin campaigns by Indian migrants and indentured workers for free passage within the Empire and the abolition of indentured labor was the question of the legal recognition of customary marriage.

Koya presented two examples of challenges in the legal recognition of marriage. In Transvaal, Gandhi led the community of free “passenger” Indians in protest of new requirements for the registration of migrant Indian women. Koya noted that Gandhi claimed a “customary” recognition of Indian marriages that had been abrogated by legal decisions that refused admission of the “plural wives” of Indian migrants in South Africa. In Koya’s second example he notes that Gandhi’s associate C.F. Andrews argued against the prevailing form of civil marriage in Fiji, claiming that it lacked the ceremony, solemnity, and publicity of Indian customary marriage.

Ultimately, concluded Koya, at stake in these debates were the jurisdiction of Indian custom, the idioms of morality under which Indians were to be governed, and the vexed question of how Indian women were to be brought before the law.

With the context of Koya’s diasporic history, Prof. Guatam Premnath presented, “Behind the Humming Bird: Counternational Romance in Sam Selvon’s Indo-Trinidadian Fiction.”

The March 6th CRG Afternoon Forum featured the theme of Violence and Embodiment with speakers Christine Quinan from the French department and Laurel Westbrook from the Sociology department.

In the first talk “Hidden Memories and October 17, 1961: Physical and Symbolic Violence in Michael Haneke’s Cache”, Christine Quinan presented part of her larger dissertation that interrogates and explores images, narratives, and representations of the body during two key moments in twentieth-century French history: the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962) and the student and worker movement of May 1968. Quinan presented a portion of her chapter that deals with the Algerian War’s move from the colony to the métropole and examined the treatment of the oft-forgotten Paris police massacre of Algerians on October 17, 1961, as represented by Austrian director Michael Haneke in the 2005 French-language film Caché/Hidden. Quinan’s analysis was framed around the idea of physical and Pierre Bourdieu’s symbolic violence, both in the film and in the actual historical event of 1961. She examined the notion of forgetting and remembering as well as the effects the massacre had on an individual and collective consciousness.

Laurel Westbrook in her talk, “Fighting Violence With Identity: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Struggle Against ‘Anti-Transgender’ Violence,” explored questions of intersectionality and identity-based anti-violence activism through a trend by anti-violence activists in the US to explicitly or implicitly deny the possibility of multiple causes for the violence experienced by people they label as “transgender.” Westbrook noted that despite data showing that...
Granado & Campos talk on Immigrant’s Sexual Identities

The March 20th forum hosted Mike Campos, from the Graduate Theological Union, and Alma Granado, a PhD student in Ethnic Studies. They presented their research on the sexualized landscape of race and immigration. Both researchers offered critical analyses of common conceptions of sexuality, their relationships with the modern state and colonialism, and the role sexuality plays in identity formation and discourse. While Granado focused on the state immigration policy and its relation to the sexuality of people moving across borders, Campos’ ethnographic research sought the remnants of colonialism in the gendered and diasporic Bakla, imagined as stereotypically effeminate, gay Filipino men, and the identity formation involved in negotiating spaces and group attributes.

Alma Granado’s research was concerned with sexuality at the border and the ways in which sexuality is regulated through the immigration control apparatus, a term coined by Eithne Luibheid. Immigrants who enter legally must submit themselves to a bureaucratic evaluation process before entering the US, a procedure that, at various points in history, screened specifically for “abnormal sexualities.” The rhetoric of sexual exclusion in medical discourse began with the Immigration Act of 1917 and was reinforced in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1954 through medical certification, wherein homosexuality was seen as a mental disease on the level of psychopathic personalities. The American Psychological Association stopped providing immigration officials with this medical certification in 1973, and the Public Health Service followed suit in 1979. This is a concrete example of how

Rodríguez & Ochoa Dialogue: Racialized Sexual Subjectivities

The April 3rd CRG Forum “Sexography: Documenting Racialized Sexual Subjectivities” featured Professor Juana María Rodríguez of Gender and Women’s Studies and Professor Marcia Ochoa of Community Studies at UC Santa Cruz.

Rodríguez and Ochoa engaged on the topic of racialized sexuality and sex within an academic landscape where the sexual practices of racialized subjects have long been a source of intellectual fetishism, speculation and inquiry. Rodríguez and Ochoa ask how can scholars chronicle, document, theorize, and respond to the messy, complicated and politically charged sexual realities of racialized subjects in ways that do justice to the people who live them.

Rodríguez noted, “racialized sex is all over the archive. Many discussions of sexual practices that do not conform to the cultural expectations and norms of academics are presented in a negative light. Later we see moves by these marginalized subjects to document their own sexualities.” She closed with observations about the Lawrence v. Texas Supreme Court decision about the constitutionality of state sodomy laws. The case came to the attention of the Supreme Court because it involved an interracial sexual encounter between two men. “What the decision protected was ‘certain intimate sexual conduct,’ but leaves out idea that one does not have to have intimate relationship to engage in forms of sexual conduct. What type of citizen do you need to be to have a constitutionally protected sex life?” asked Rodríguez.

Ochoa began with the infinite plane image from Saussure’s Lectures on General Linguistics as way to talk about racialized sexual subjectivities. Ochoa took the audience through different ways of mapping, naming, and finding “spaces of (in)articulation” for sexual practice. Ochoa noted the emergence of a dialectic between language and silence when expressing sexual subjectivities.
Maldonado-Torres & Mahendran: Fanon’s Critical Race Theory

Professor Nelson Maldonado-Torres of Ethnic Studies and Dilan Mahendran of the School of Information presented “Fanon’s Critical Race Theory: Existential Phenomenology and the Human Sciences” at the November 1st CRG Thursday Forum.

In the first talk, “Reading Frantz Fanon Today,” Maldonado-Torres presented an overview of Fanon by tracing the trajectory of Fanon scholarship from the work of early Europeanists to contemporary academics. Maldonado-Torres noted that early Fanon readings inspired radical movements in regions such as Bolivia, and that Fanon still presents a threat as a form of radical thought. Recent scholarship shows how Fanon fed political theory and impacted post-colonial theoretical work, applying his concepts beyond the time and place he had lived. “The moment has come that we can read Fanon canonically for the value of his ideas universally applied and beyond his anti-colonial context, applied to contemporary globalization,” said Maldonado-Torres. Maldonado-Torres closed with a reflection on how to read Fanon in the post-Cold War era and provided a contrast between colonialism as institutional administration and the idea of coloniality as a power that precedes and persists. Maldonado-Torres defined three categorical imperatives of coloniality, “accumulate capital, maintain your humanity and don’t ever forget that everyone is not human to the same degree.” Maldonado-Torres sees decolonialisation as the systematic critique of coloniality with a gesture to form the new, and reads Fanon as calling for move from the Western episteme, not simply the freedom of

Smith & Jones: Intraracial Conflict on the College Campus

Professor Sandra Smith and Jennifer Jones from Sociology presented on “Intraracial Conflict on the College Campus” at the December 6th CRG Thursday Forum. Smith spoke on, “The Effect of Institutional and Social Psychological Factors on Intraracial Conflict among Black, Latino, and Asian Students,” based on a quantitative analysis of data collected from black undergraduates. Jennifer Jones carried out 29 interviews with respondents from Smith’s original survey and provided a qualitative look at intraracial dynamics through, “Intraracial Conflict and Conceptualizations of Blackness: How Black Students Negotiate What it Means to be Black at the University.” Smith and Jones noted that the literature on black college students’ success and social adjustment focuses on the impact of interpersonal relations with white members of the campus community; as a result of being a being both a numerical and racial minority on college campuses it is widely established in the literature that poor interracial relations lead to poorer outcomes among black students. What is assumed, and left unexamined, they noted, are the relations among black students, which are assumed to be unified and close. Rather than examine intraracial relations empirically, previous models have treated black racial identity as narrow and monolithic.

Smith and Jones drew their analyses from a survey and in-depth interviews to investigate the academic gap between black and white students. Their research focused on the presence and nature of in-group harassment in order to illustrate how and why poor intraracial relations occur by examining how black students on a predominantly

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Ann Laura Stoler, the Willy Brandt Distinguished University Professor of Anthropology and Historical Studies at the New School for Social Research presented the November 15th Fall 2007 CRG Distinguished Lecture on “Imperial Dispositions of Disregard: Beyond Ignorance and Bad Faith.”

Stoler began with the question, “What should effective histories of empires past and present look like now?” and moved into an examination of what remains after the absence of empire. She cited academics such as Edward Said and Pierre Bourdieu who noted that knowledge production and its strategic absence is essential to the building of empire. “Imperial rule cultivates ignorance to prevent critiques that expose imperial hypocrisies and at least its basest acts.” She observed that the dichotomy of ignorance versus knowledge fails to capture a range of social ambiguities; the preservation of ignorance as an ongoing operation, “How is ignorance maintained? ‘Ignorance’ and ‘acceptance’ are easy labels, but assumes the involvement of two-dimensional individuals. Such a view refuses recognition of comparisons, convergences and accommodations that implicate ourselves.”

Stoler framed her talk with personal histories from the late 19th century Dutch East Indies. Stoler asserted that, “empire’s agents and actors are those who scholars claim to know more about than they actually do.” She asked about a messier space of knowing, not knowing and self-deception and examined it through those she considers to be, “neither malicious nor sympathetic figures.” Stoler chose to study the letters of the family of Frans Carl Valck (1835-1892), a “mediocre” member of the Dutch Colonial Administration, and a colonist. She found in Valck one who was ensconced in the elite but only partly protected by it. Her investigation contrasted his public persona with his private, family one. Through him Stoler presented what she labels a “charmless colonial history” to question standard empirical and authorized accounts of empire.

Knowledge acquisition is only a piece of what makes empires work, as the force of rule lies in producing affiliations, loyalties and allegiances among one’s own agents as much as those colonized. Stoler noted that such affective dispositions are rarely approached in the literature on colonial analysis.

Stoler delved into “imperial dispositions of disregard,” defined as methods of living in and responding to ways of knowing. She referred to, “the averted gaze, acts of ignoring rather than ignorance, inattention and shock of recognition and abrupt awakenings. Imperial dispositions marked by a negative space, those with privilege and standing can excuse themselves from raw engagement. They can refuse to acknowledge what one has witnessed conferring almost legal legitimacy as well-tended conditions of disregard.” Despite these acts of disregard, Stoler noted that ethics are not absent, but provide exemptions from “that one need not attend to. To what extent this stance requires sanctioned ignorance, self deception, cognitive dissonance or the unflinching security of habit is not a transhistorical issue-these habits are located in implicit meanings in which people assign and reassign their own acts and agency.”

What political measures and psychic procedures produce such activities that instantiate disregard is a condition of imperial histories Stoler inveighed scholars not to ignore.
Molly Babel
Linguistics
PHONETIC CONVERGENCE AS A SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROCESS
I examine how the social variable of race affects Phonetic Convergence—the process whereby interacting talkers sound more like one another as the interaction progresses. My research explores how the social and psychological distance of interlocutors affects the degree of phonetic convergence. Participants are asked to repeat words produced by a computer that presents the image of a talker. While the audio signal remains the same, there are two experimental conditions: in one condition the talker is African American and in the other the talker is European American. It is predicted that the degree to which the participants converge with the talker will depend on their score on an Implicit Association Task that measures racial biases. The results of this experiment will contribute to a more complete view on how talkers alter their speech in social situations.

Funie Hsu
Education
MOTHER TONGUE: SIGNIFYING RACE, CLASS AND GENDER THROUGH AMERICAN ENGLISH ONLY LANGUAGE POLICIES IN COLONIAL PHILIPPINES
This project analyzes the intersection of race, class and gender as signified through US colonial education language policies in the Philippines. English Only language policies were incorporated as strong-arm elements of American colonial education. I seek to examine how Standard Academic English instruction was used to create racialized and gendered subjects. I aim to understand the violence of American colonial education in relation to the notion of a colonially constructed patriarchal family structure to interrogate the positioning of Filipinos as racialized, infantilized subjects without proper language/knowledge.

Sang Lee
Environmental Science, Policy, and Management
THE OTHER DOMÉSTICAS: MIGRANT WOMEN CARING FOR MIGRANT FARM WORKERS IN COSTA RICA
While south-north migration studies dominate the field of migration studies, other international migrants and their movement dynamics warrant attention theoretically and empirically. Using the case of Nicaraguan migration into Costa Rica, I examine Nicaraguan migrant women who provide domestic services to Nicaraguan migrant farm workers. While in the global north, domestics provide services to upper and middle class families, this group of women provide similar services to who are arguably the most marginalized workers in the global economy. This study examines the social and economic dynamics of the social structure created by migrant women in the global south.

Esperanza Sanchez
Social Welfare
ASSESSING FOOD CONSUMPTION USING PHOTOVoice
Past food consumption studies of US-based migrants indicate a relationship between length of time in the US, a shift towards a “westernized” diet, and an increased incidence of nutrition-based chronic disease. Analyses of Latino migrant food consumption patterns in the US lack community of origin factors that may explain how consumption changes with transnational movement. ‘Photovoice’ is a feminist ethnographic methodology that incites community member participation to define concerns relevant to their daily lives using single-use color cameras. 25 campesinos (rural small-landholders) living in Guanajuato, Mexico will photograph their household food consumption. Storytelling via photographs to other campesino participants will generate data that will be used to develop a food consumption assessment tool.
The CRG hosted the *Los Illegals* workshop and reading in collaboration with the Artistic Director of Cornerstone Theatre Company Michael John Garcés from February 11-12th in the Lipman Room of Barrows. The event was co-hosted by: Asian Pacific American Student Development; Chicana/Latino Student Development; Cross Cultural Student Development; Theatre, Dance Performance Studies; Institute for the Study of Social Change (ISSC); Ethnic Studies; and American Cultures.

The basis of the *Los Illegals* workshop was the Cornerstone Theater Company’s 2007 three-year Justice Cycle, five world premiere plays exploring how laws shape and disrupt communities. The first play in the cycle, *Los Illegals*, was written by Garcés and created in collaboration with undocumented workers, their families, immigration activists, lawyers, judges and others on the front lines of the battle over illegal immigration. The cast included many community members such as day laborers and domestic workers, whose stories were the inspiration for the play; the project was unprecedented in having undocumented populations actively involved throughout the creative process.

On the first day Garcés along with Antonia Grace Glenn held the Cornerstone Methodology Workshop, a hands-on interactive workshop that introduced the participants to Cornersone’s unique community-based theater methods. Garcés and Glenn led the group through community building practices such as story circles, communication games and inclusive auditions where participants had a chance to become directors in short scenarios of their own creation.

The workshop culminated for participants with rehearsals followed by a reading of the original *Los Illegals* script, a product of many hours of interviews with undocumented workers, in a public performance on the evening of February 12th. Juan José, one of the original *Los Illegals* actors, was there to play the lead role and encourage participants with his rousing performance. The reading was followed by a question and answer session with Garcés and CRG Director Evelyn Nakano Glenn.

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**Bradley Rogers**

**Rhetoric**

**The Petty Larceny of the Black Crook**

I argue that the 1866 production of *The Black Crook*—generally regarded as the first American musical—brings together concerns of blackface and women’s bodies under the influential melodramatic mode of the 19th century, thereby setting the stage for the later “integrations” of *Show Boat* and *Oklahoma!* The interpolation of *The Black Crook* by the San Francisco Minstrels suggests that *The Black Crook* may have been in certain respects structurally similar to a blackface minstrel show and that the gendered transformations of *The Black Crook* may have been intimately tied to the racial transformations of the blackface afterpiece derived from it.

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**J. George, Linguistics**
Eva Holt-Rusmore
ISE, IAS

Reintegration of Post-Conflict Children: Sierra Leone
During the Sierra Leone civil war girls belonging to various ethnic groups were abducted by soldiers. When the war ended girl mothers returned to their communities with their “rebel babies.” My research will address effects of community stigmatization on children of girl mothers. Ethnographic observation of these children’s lives as well as informal interviews will supplement the original research of a team that is working with this population. My goals are to improve understanding of the development of stigmatized youth in a post-conflict community and provide insight on the ways such communities are constructed.

Jaimee Comstock-Skipp
Near Eastern Studies

Reading Colonial Overtones in British Orientalist Art of Cairo via Arabic Text and Islamic Design
Britain was an active imperial power in Egypt, so I hope to discover remnants of this fact in the visual arena of Orientalist art. I will research Cairene monuments along with their illustrated counterparts within English institutions. I will investigate the inclusion of Arabic script, the details of Islamic art, and the role of the “Nubian” figure within select paintings. Specifically, the role of Arab women as political and pictorial subjects will be examined. These works of art are not merely static remnants of a past era’s mentality as Orientalist ideas have justified western presences in eastern regions during the colonial period and today.

Rhae Lynn Barnes
History

The Print Culture & Gender Relations of Amateur Minstrelsy
I will track amateur minstrelsy’s print culture between 1890 and 1960. I will: expand the chronology of previous studies; expand minstrel-research geography to the American Midwest; illuminate the neglected cross-dressing gender conflict in minstrelsy scholarship; and provide a bibliographical analysis of amateur minstrelsy by tracking its print culture. I will fill the baffling 100 year gap between 19th century professional minstrelsy covered by historians and contemporary coverage by interdisciplinary scholars. I will provide evidence of minstrelsy’s evolution and answer the questions of who performed amateur minstrelsy, what they performed, and why.

Roxana Sandoval
Ethnic Studies/Latin American Studies

Educational Attitudes Across Borders: Mexican Mothers’ Views on Ed in Mexico & the US
Mexican students have lower levels of educational attainment when compared to other groups. Parental involvement is essential for the success of students, thus it is important to understand how Mexican mothers in Oakland, California perceive the educations system and the obstacles they face. In addition, analyzing how mothers in Atotonilco el Alto, Jalisco, Mexico understand and navigate the educational system can illuminate the experiences Mexican mothers have in their home country. Through my comparative study, an understanding of how Mexican mothers view the educational system in the US can be gained.
Faculty Spotlight on Marcial González, Literature

“W hen I transferred to Humboldt State University, my initial aim was to study political science, history or some field that would enable me to become a better labor organizer—however, at this time I discovered my passion for literature and writing.” Marcial González eventually went on to complete his PhD at Stanford University in Modern Thought and Literature, focusing on how postmodernist theory has influenced Chicano literary and cultural criticism. He now is an Associate Professor in the UC Berkeley English Department.

Marcial González grew up and spent most of his youth in the San Joaquin Valley. His father came to California in 1928 as a Bracero to lay track for the Santa Fe railroad and eventually became a legal resident. González’s entire family, including he and his six siblings, worked as farm workers. González started working in the fields when he was six. He did not go to college right away as he ended up dropping out of high school to work. Later he completed his GED and an Associate of Arts degree at Colegio de la Tierra, a private Chicano College, one of many such schools that came to rise in the late 60s and early 70s. During this formative period, he became a political activist and worked with groups such as the Brown Berets. In the 1970s he helped to set up a workers’ cooperative, La Tierra Nueva, and a consumer’s cooperative, La Cooperativa Económica. Despite early success, the cooperatives eventually failed due to the difficulty of competing with large-scale businesses.

Beginning in 1980, González worked for ten years in a non-profit that organized farm workers; however, he and his colleagues had to work in the fields as farm workers themselves in order to support the organization as it had only a limited budget, and they held a commitment to poverty in their service to the cause of farm laborers.

In 1990 González started attending courses at a Junior college. He transferred to Humboldt State University the next year, and completed his B.A. in 1992. His interest in creative writing led him to complete an MFA at the University of Utah in 1994. At Utah González enjoyed the opportunity to devote most of his time to writing fiction, but he developed strong relationships with literary critics who encouraged him to pursue a career in theoretical literary criticism. As a result he entered the Stanford PhD program in Modern Thought and Literature. He wrote a dissertation entitled “The Postmodern Turn in Chicano Cultural Studies.” While some postmodern concepts and terms are useful in the explication of Chicano literary production, they can also be problematic for investigating Chicano literature as an attempt to come to terms with history, to recover a repressed or erased history, or to correct a misrepresented history. Postmodernism tends to emphasize the unknowability of history, so the theory is at odds with the centrality of recovering history in Chicano literature. González argues for a more material-based historical approach for understanding literature and culture in general.

Among González’s mentors at Stanford were Ramón Saldívar, who influenced González’s view of narrative form, and Paula Moya, at the time a new professor who introduced...
Race or Gender or Age—cont. from cover

Marcial González—cont. from page 11

of Affirmative Action and white resentment of blacks being given an “unfair racial advantage.” Similarly, a skit on Saturday Night Live, which depicted the press as lobbing soft ball questions at Obama and directing skewering inquiries at Clinton, seemed to resonate with many white viewers who feel that Obama was treated with kid gloves because he is black.

Because the differences between Obama and Clinton have been framed in either/or terms, African American women were once again placed in the position of being asked to choose between gender and racial allegiance—to decide whether sexism trumps racism or vice versa. One of the best known and beloved public black figures, Oprah Winfrey, experienced considerable backlash for her support of Obama in the form of postings on her website, some of which accused her of being a traitor to women or for being racist for siding with Obama when a well qualified woman was running.

As historically been the case, African American women have offered an angle of vision that encompasses the complexities of race and gender and their entanglements. In two separate opinion pieces, Kimberle Crenshaw (with co-author Eve Ensler) and Patricia J. Wilson, both prominent African American law professors spoke out against the “either/or” logic that has pervaded both mainstream and feminist commentary. Crenshaw and Ensler’s opinion piece is directed at white feminists, arguing that feminism needs to be viewed as “intersectional and global rather than as essentialist and insular.” In their view a vote for Obama is consistent with feminism because of his political stance with respect to war, power, and diplomacy. Williams addresses the liberal audience of Nation magazine and does not endorse either candidate in her column. She expresses her dismay at the framing of the nomination fight as a “competition of oppression.” She argues that ideas of race/gender trumping flattens the candidates complexities, and that these complexities are what we need to pay attention to in making our choices. She notes “Both Democratic candidates represent diversely layered demographics—ones that describe our future. Clinton is a strong, determined, immensely resilient woman; Obama is a culturally amalgamous, quietly brilliant, elegantly intellectual man.”

We at CRG hope that this more complex and intersectional understanding of race and gender will ultimately take hold among the American people.

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Evelyn Nakano Glenn,
CRG Director

González’s first book, Chicano Novels and the Politics of Form: Race, Class, and Reification, is due to be released by the University of Michigan Press in the fall of 2008. In this book, he presents a theoretical study of literary form in Chicano novels, examining a collection of specific Chicano novels as case studies. “Form is not simply made up of elements such as structure, style, and genre, but constitutes rather the relationship between social experience and literary representation—form refers to the way experience becomes embedded in literary works, and informs the structure and content of those works.” González’s experiential, qualitative approach allows one to understand the way aspects of social experience such as class struggle become part of the very fabric of Chicano literature and other literary traditions focusing on identity. One key concept for González is reification—“one can think about ways which cultural and ethnic identity is often reified. Reification is not always negative unless seen uncritically. To critique reification in the study of literature is to unpack the literature, to open up a critical methodology that conceptualizes form in social terms on the level of cultural production.”

In his current project González returns to one of his original areas of interest, farm worker narratives. He uses the literature to engage with the history, organizational strategies, and social movements of the Mexican farm worker experience. “Farm workers have contributed to the building an American empire in the 20th century. Yet many have become what Mae Ngai refers to as ‘impossible subjects’—persons who are needed but not wanted; visible but not recognized; absolutely necessary for the economy, but denied citizenship rights. This tension between presence and invisibility, between inclusion and exclusion, holds true not only for the undocumented worker, but to some degree for all Latinos. In the US today, there is still a perception of Latinos as subservient laborers no matter how far up the social ladder we climb.”

González has four grandchildren and he spends his free time attending their school functions and sports activities, especially baseball. Most of all, he enjoys spending quality time with his family.
as full members of American society.

In the second talk, “Does Parents’ Documentation Status Alienate or Activate Kids’ Political Energies?” Irene Bloemraad examined the mobilization of youth in the context of immigrant families, asking about the inter-generational dynamics that facilitated the mass immigration marches and boycotts of Spring 2006 that included participation of nearly a million children and teenagers. Bloemraad examined US-born kids in families with undocumented parents, non-citizen legal permanent resident parents, naturalized parents and US-born citizen parents. She made the case for a model of bi-directional political socialization. Bloemraad found that dual socialization is evident in many families, but is particularly relevant for immigrant families where adults face legal, linguistic and experiential barriers to civic participation. The children of immigrants, who have greater access to the English language and mainstream institutions can provide political information, and encourage parents’ participation. Bloemraad considered how intergenerational communication and interaction increase a family’s engagement by pooling different information sources and networks.
Granado & Campos—cont. from page 5

homophobia was crystallized in institutionalized power structures through allegedly “rational” procedures. Furthermore, the 1980 Refugee Act provides asylum to anyone facing discrimination because of his or her membership in a particular social group, but sexuality was not seen as an “immutable” characteristic of one’s identity, claiming that homosexuals choose to put their sexuality out in the open and can refrain from doing so. However, in the 2000 decision of the U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit in Hernandez-Montiel v. INS, the logical contradiction between discriminating against sexual deviants in the refugee process, in this case a gay transgender man from Mexico, and offering refugee status to members being discriminated against for being part of a particular group was settled in favor of Hernandez-Montiel. Through this type of analysis, the role and discourse of sexuality in migration can be critically examined.

Michael Campos began with a video of a popular icon from the Philippines, Micahel V., a Bakla himself. As the video progressed, Micahel V., playing the fictitious Tom Yam, became increasingly effeminate; it was obvious that Tom Yam was a parody of himself and the Bakla. The song ends with the lyric, “I am not Bakla, I am a woman.” This example illustrates the point that the Bakla are engaged in a dialectics of space and identity, denying Bakla in favor of womanhood, but at the same time embracing it as a way to navigate colonial spaces. Campos’ subject, Babylan, was a Filipino immigrant working in a bathhouse in San Jose who, in this space, was engaged in the discourse of Bakla. Babylan’s partner did not fit the effeminate stereotype of Bakla, but it became clear that Bakla was conceptual space drawn in opposition to not only colonialism, but also ideas about sexuality in the West. In a very real way, the Bakla served as a reminder of national and sexual identity for Filipinos, which often came into opposition with Western notions of gay men and the relationships between them.

Campos sought to redefine the ethnographic research he conducted as a form of engaging discourse and creating a postcolonial critique. In the same vein, Granado critically analyzed the medical discourse concerning sexuality and immigration. Efforts like these are aimed at deconstructing notions of sexuality and examine the ways in which these concepts have been communicated through history to modern society.

Fanon Theory—cont. from page 6

Algiers from France. Dilan Mahendran presented the second talk of the day, “Fanon’s Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment.” Mahendran provided a critique of early scholars who read Fanon as empirical, or primarily experiential rather than theoretical, creating a distinction between those who can transcend their empirical environments and those who cannot. He argued for, “an embodied understanding of racism rather than the dominant intellectualist account of race which posits an objective racial knowing. Racial knowing privileges race as a discursive formation, as the only definitive and legitimate account of race and racism. An outcome of privileging of objective racial knowledge marginalizes subjective experience of race as always leaning towards an essentialist understanding.” Mahendran noted that one’s experience of being racialized is not merely a fact about the individual. Ultimately Mahendran demonstrated that Fanon sought to move away from the object/subject distinction in order to aim for the source of knowledge of human existence.

Smith & Jones—cont. from page 6

white, highly selective university campus cope with feelings of alienation. Smith and Jones found that harassment among black students is in many ways a racial project. Black students who are having difficulty adjusting to the campus environment interpret their experience in racial terms and engage in racial projects that intend to build a tight-knit black community to meet their needs, presuming that other blacks can and should share their orientation toward blackness. Rather than build solidarity however, Smith and Jones saw that conflicts over what it means to be black and how to signify such meanings erupt, leading to greater feelings of isolation and alienation, more rigid repertoires of performing black identity, and consequently, greater harassment. More specifically, they found that the ways in which students construct their understanding of blackness as either abstract or experiential and internal or external, directly impacts whether they become harassers or become harassed. Smith and Jones ultimately theorize that this understanding of blackness becomes particularly salient in the context of group isolation, intensifying the desire for group closure.

D. Paredes, Sociology
J. George, Linguistics
J. George, Linguistics
CRG Dissertation Writing Group

The CRG now sponsors an interdisciplinary dissertation writing group. We welcome graduate students from both the Humanities and Social Sciences who share a common scholarly interest in the study of Gender and Race. The purpose of the group is to support and encourage members to start, continue, or finish their dissertations. Each member is asked to submit a chapter draft that the group discusses and critiques. Please contact Alia Yap at acyap@berkeley.edu for any inquiries.

CRG Spring 2008 Grants Program

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 and $500 to $2,000 to support graduate students 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 or any student enrolled in a graduate program at UC Berkeley. Applications are particularly sought from students working in areas where race and gender issues have not previously been of major concern as well as areas where they have been more central. Proposals that support dissertation or thesis research are strongly encouraged.

GRANT PERIOD AND USE OF FUNDS: Grants will be awarded for a period of one year for graduate students and six-months for undergraduates 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 equipment rental. Funds may not be used for equipment purchase, stipend, living expenses, conference attendance, or educational travel. Grant payments will be in the form of reimbursements for expenses.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Find downloadable forms and application requirements at: http://crg.berkeley.edu/programs/grants/undergrad.html or http://crg.berkeley.edu/programs/grants/graduate.html

APPLICATION DEADLINES: The Fall 2008 Undergraduate Grant application deadline will be October 8th at 3 p.m. The Fall 2008 Graduate Grant application deadline will be November 3rd at 3 p.m. Awards will be announced within a two weeks of each deadline. Direct inquires to centerrg@berkeley.edu.

Afternoon Forum: Call for Speakers

The Center for Race and Gender invites presentation proposals from graduate students for its Afternoon Forum Series. Any research project dealing with the nexus between race and gender is welcome. Please submit an abstract of 300 words and resume by May 5, 2008 to rng2@berkeley.edu with the subject line: “Forum Call for Submissions.” Questions about the forum series may be directed to centerrg@berkeley.edu or (510) 643-8488.

CRG Faultlines Call for Writers

Are you planning to attend a CRG sponsored event or have a short article on Race and Gender? The Center for Race and Gender invites students to write for the Faultlines newsletter. Your name will appear as an issue contributor in the newsletter. For details, please mail rng2@berkeley.edu or call (510) 643-8488.

Make a Donation to the Center for Race and Gender to Support Graduate & Undergraduate Research

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Jumpstarted by Ann Stoler’s visit last fall, the CRG is introducing semesterly Affiliated Faculty Luncheons to build community amongst our affiliates and create flourishing synergies. These luncheons are a chance to meet and talk in a small intimate group with colleagues in a variety of disciplines. The conversation is informally structured beginning with short remarks from a visiting professor – one speaking for the CRG or visiting for another conference, as was the case this semester with professor Peggy Levitt of Wellesley. Levitt, in Berkeley for the Spotlight on Immigration Conference, spoke to a cadre of affiliated faculty from various departments including political science, geography, and sociology, and the ensuing discussion followed the theme of how transnational space transcends borders. Levitt advocated for the different discoveries that can be made when we look beyond the hard boundaries of a single nation state in our research, such as when one applies a multi-sited framework to understand cultural diffusion.

T L Stover, Sociology