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# Negative Cosmopolitanisms: Abjection, Power, and Biopolitics

University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada

11–13 October 2012

## *Keynote Speakers:*

Timothy Brennan (University of Minnesota)  
Pheng Cheah (University of California, Berkeley)  
Sneja Gunew (University of British Columbia)  
Peter Nyers (McMaster University)

This interdisciplinary conference seeks to explore the array of negative cosmopolitanisms operating today—all those ways in which cosmopolitan subjects are still stigmatized, disempowered, excluded, and denied. Against the superficial liberal celebration of cosmopolitan diversity in the world today, negative cosmopolitanism instead reveals experiences of rupture, exile, oppression, and imperialism. The conference will bring researchers together to explore the histories and constitution of cosmopolitanism past and present, with the aim of better understanding the complex experience of power today.

We invite theoretical and historical contributions to these and related topics:

- \*The history and/or representations of cosmopolitanism
- \*Slum- or ghetto-based cosmopolitanisms
- \*Imperial cosmopolitanism (e.g. the military complex, the War on Terror)
- \*Labor and Internationalism
- \*Community or the Commons
- \*Piracy
- \*Trafficking, dislocation, border-crossing
- \*State sovereignty/state vulnerability/ the penal state
- \*Communication and information technologies, new media
- \*Biopolitics
- \*Religious movements
- \*Feminism

Proposals should consist of an abstract of 350-500 words and a one-page CV.

Please send applications to Dr. Terri Tomsky  
<[tomsky@ualberta.ca](mailto:tomsky@ualberta.ca)> by 21 October 2011.

## Notes on Contributors

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**Adam Barrows** teaches British and postcolonial literature in the Department of English at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario. His book, *The Cosmic Time of Empire: Modern Britain and World Literature*, was published by the University of California Press in 2010 as part of its Flashpoints series.

**Fu-jen Chen** is Professor and Chair of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at National Sun Yat-sen University, Taiwan, where he teaches American literature and psychoanalysis. He is the author of *The Traumatic Thing* (2005) and *The Adoption Triad Reconsidered* (2010). He has published articles on ethnic American writers in journals such as *Critique*, *Women's Studies*, *Journal of the Southwest*, *CLCWeb*, *Children's Literature in Education*, *The Comparatist*, and *The International Fiction Review*. He has also contributed to the Greenwood Press sourcebooks, including *Asian American Novelists*, *Encyclopedia of Ethnic American Literature*, and *Encyclopedia of Women's Autobiography*.

**Jo Collins** teaches English and American Literature at the University of Kent at Canterbury. She has published on the 'Uncanny,' colonial Australian women writers, Jung's writings on Africa, Kipling and terror, and Haitian American writer Edwidge Danticat.

**Rocío G. Davis** is Professor of English at the City University of Hong Kong. Her research interests include Asian North American writing, academic autobiography, life writing and history, and children's literature. She has published *Relative Histories: Mediating History in Asian American Family Memoirs* (U of Hawaii P, 2011), *Begin Here: Reading Asian North American Autobiographies of Childhood* (U of Hawaii P, 2007), and *Transcultural Reinventions: Asian American and Asian Canadian Short Story Cycles* (TSAR, 2001). She has co-edited, among others, *Aesthetic Practices and Politics in Art, Media, and Music: Performing Migration* (with Dorothea Fischer-Hornung and Johanna Kardux,

Routledge, 2010), *Ethnic Life Writing and Histories: Genres, Performance, Culture* (with Jaume Aurell and Ana Beatriz Delgado, LIT Verlag, 2007), and *Literary Gestures: The Aesthetic in Asian American Writing* (with Sue-Im Lee, Temple UP, 2006).

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**Cindy Gabrielle** is a doctoral student in the English and American Literatures Department at the University of Liège, Belgium. Her research interests include Janet Frame, postcolonialism and neo-colonialism, and representations of cross-cultural encounters in literature. Her PhD dissertation, “The Unharnessed World: Janet Frame and Buddhist Thought,” examines Janet Frame’s (shorter) fiction from the standpoint of the author’s lasting interest in Buddhism and aims to demonstrate that some central Buddhist principles permeate the author’s poetics from her early fiction to her later work.

**Anna Guttman** is Associate Professor with the Department of English at Lakehead University, where she teaches postcolonial literature. She is the co-editor of *The Global Literary Field* (2007) and author of *The Nation of India in Contemporary Indian Literature* (2007). Her current research, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, examines representations of Jews and Jewishness in South Asian literature.

**Adrienne Kertzer**, Professor of English at the University of Calgary, is the author of *My Mother’s Voice: Children, Literature, and the Holocaust* (Broadview 2002) and numerous essays on Holocaust representation. Recent publications include essays on Wes Anderson’s *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, Patrick Ness’s *Chaos Walking* Trilogy, and Sherman Alexie’s *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*.

**Matthew Kriz** is a PhD candidate in English at the University of Calgary. His dissertation examines representations of masculinity in American fiction of the 1950s. He has an article on Norman Mailer, who was himself very much concerned with race, ethnicity and nuclear war, forthcoming in the 2012 edition of the review *Anglophonia*.

**Sofía Muñoz-Valdivieso** is Associate Professor in the English Department at the University of Malaga. She has published on film adaptations of English classics and appropriations of Shakespeare on screen and literature. She is interested in the interaction between historical and fictional texts, and her current research focuses on the rewriting of history in black British fiction. She has given numerous papers at international conferences, and she has published articles in such journals as *Afroeuropa*, *Cahiers Charles V*, *The European English Messenger*, *EnterText*, *Interactions*, *Journal of European Studies*, and *Obsidian III: Literature in the African Diaspora*.

**Catherine Nelson-McDermott** has taught in the English Department at the University of British Columbia since 1996. Her research and teaching interests lie in the areas of colonial discourse analysis, Caribbean women's literature, postcolonial narratives, gender studies, rhetoric and composition, and British Modernism. She is currently co-authoring an online course on the Modern British Novel, and she has been the CGA-Canada's CM1 Course Author and Examiner since 2003. She also sings soprano on a weekly basis with Opera Pro Cantanti, Canada's only ongoing repertory opera group.

**Pramod K. Nayar** teaches in the Department of English at the University of Hyderabad, India, and has published mainly in the areas of postcolonial studies (especially colonial discourse studies), cultural studies (including vampire fiction, superhero comics, celebrity culture) and digital culture studies. His most recent works are *Colonial Voices: The Discourses of Empire* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), *Writing Wrongs: The Cultural Construction of Human Rights in India* (Routledge, 2012), and *States of Sentiment: Exploring the Cultures of Emotion* (Orient Black Swan, 2011). His essays have appeared in *1650–1850*, *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, *Prose Studies*, *Journal of British Studies*, *College Literature*, *Studies in Travel Writing*, and *Postcolonial Text*, among others. His book on digital culture is forthcoming.

**Benjamin H. Ogden** is a doctoral candidate in the English Department at Rutgers University. His articles have appeared in *NOVEL*, *Philosophy and Literature*, *Mississippi Quarterly*, and *Studies in American Fiction*, among other journals. His first book, co-authored with Thomas H. Ogden, *The Analyst's Ear and the Critic's Eye: Rethinking Psychoanalysis and Literature*, will be published by Routledge in 2012. He is currently completing his dissertation on the early writing of J.M. Coetzee.

**Eiko Ohira** is Professor of English at Tsuru University in Japan. She has worked on British fiction of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with particular reference to *Wuthering Heights* and *A Passage to India*. She is the author of *A Study of Wuthering Heights* (1993). Her research interest for the

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**Samuel Pane** likes old paper. He completed a PhD at Université de Montréal in *études anglaises* on palaeontological field notes and the documentary tradition in Robert Kroetsch's *Badlands*. Most recently he taught Canadian Literature and film adaptation at Brock University. He also makes freelance radio documentaries and earns a living writing speeches.

**Richard F. Patteson** was Professor in the Department of English at Mississippi State University, where he taught from 1976 until his death in 2010. Dr. Patteson was the author of *A World Outside: The Fiction of Paul Bowles* (1987), *Caribbean Passages: A Critical Perspective on New Fiction from the West Indies* (1998), and *The Fiction of Robert Antoni: Writing in the Estuary* (2010), and editor of *Critical Essays on Donald Barthelme* (1992). His articles on Vladimir Nabokov, Thomas Pynchon, Olive Senior, Oscar Hijuelos, and Paul Auster, among others, have been published in journals including *Critique*, *College Literature*, *Journal of Narrative Technique*, and *ARIEL*.

**Kathleen Williams Renk** is Associate Professor of English at Northern Illinois University. The author of *Caribbean Shadows and Victorian Ghosts: Women's Writing and Decolonization* (Virginia, 1999) and critical essays on the works of A.S. Byatt, Wilson Harris, Peter Carey, Pauline Melville, and other British and postcolonial authors, she teaches British modernist, postcolonial, and women's literatures. Her latest book, *Magic, Science, and Empire in Postcolonial Literature: The Alchemical Literary Imagination*, was published by Routledge in 2011 as part of their Interdisciplinary Perspectives in Literature series.

**Hyacinth M. Simpson** is Associate Professor in the English Department and the School of Graduate Studies at Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada. She is the Editor of the peer-reviewed and award-winning journal *MaComère*, author of several book chapters, and has published numerous journal articles and reviews on Caribbean literature. Her forthcoming books include *Caribbean Identities: Essays in Migration, Transnationalism, and Diaspora*.

**Lamia Tayeb** teaches English literature at the Higher Institute of Human Sciences in Tunis, Tunisia. She received her PhD from the University of Arts and Letters at La Manouba, Tunisia. She has published articles on E.M. Forster, Doris Lessing, Michael Ondaatje, and David Malouf. She is the author of *The Transformation of Political Identity from Commonwealth through Postcolonial Literature: The Cases of Nadine Gordimer, Michael Ondaatje and David Malouf* (Edwin Mellen P, 2006).

## Contributors

**Sungfu Tsai** is a PhD candidate in English at the University of Calgary. His research interests include postcolonial theories and Chinese diasporic literature. His most recent conference paper titled “Chinese Diaspora in Laurence Yep’s *The Lost Garden*” was presented at the ACLA conference in 2011.