

George Mason University presents
The Sixth Annual Visual Cultures Symposium
Unthinking Television: Visual Culture[s] Beyond the Console
Johnson Center Cinema
Thursday, March 26, 2009
9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Schedule of Events

8:30 a.m. Complimentary coffee and pastries

9:00 a.m. **Welcome and opening visual presentation**
Lynne M. Constantine, George Mason University

Visual Presentation: Holland Wilde's "Baudrillard's Blender: Recreating the 2008 Presidential Election Television Coverage."

9:30 a.m. **Panel: Unthinking New TV Technologies**
Dava Simpson, George Mason University, moderator

Max Dawson, Indiana University: "Convert Your Mom!" Neoliberalism, Generation, and the Visual Culture of the Digital Television Transition."

Elana Levine, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee: "Selling the HD Set: The Cultural Meanings of TV Technology."

Michael Z. Newman, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee: "Cultural Legitimacy and Technologies of Agency."

11 a.m. **Panel: Hypervisuality**
Karen Wolf, George Mason University, moderator

Glen Scot Hamilton, Corcoran College of Art and Design. "Gaming the Game: Baudrillard in High Definition."

Eugenie Brinkema, Brown University: "Some Things, Once Seen, Cannot Be Unseen: Torture(d) Television and Abu Ghraib."

Elizabeth Gough-Gordon, Rutgers University: "Concentration or Distraction? An Analysis of Television Viewing Practices and Devices."

Rhiannon Bury, Athabasca University: "Shipping News."

12:30 p.m. **Keynote Address: "Media Homes: Practiced and Imagined."**

Lynn Spigel, Frances E. Willard Professor of Screen Cultures, School of Communications, Northwestern University

- 1:30 p.m. **Panel: Reception/Consumption/Colonization**
Tracy McLoone, George Mason University, moderator
- Shayne Pepper, North Carolina State University: “‘If PBS Doesn’t Do It, Who Will?’ HBO and the Negotiation of Profit and Public Service.”
- Sharon Sharp, California State University, Dominguez Hills: “*Mad Men*: Nostalgia & Post-Network TV Advertising.”
- Mark Auslander and Bryce Peake, Brandeis University: “YouTheory: Dialogic Adventures Through the Looking Glass.”
- 2:45 p.m. **Panel: Unthinking Identities**
Elaine Cardenas, George Mason University, moderator
- Ron Becker, Miami University: “Gay TV after TV?”
- Jennifer Fuller, University of Texas-Austin: “Worlds of Difference in Reality TV’s Swap Shows.”
- Dara Persis Murray, Rutgers University: “Postfeminist Sensibility and ‘America’s Next Top Model.’”
- Wendy Burns-Ardolino, Clayton State University: “Female Foursomes.”
- 4:00 p.m. **Roundtable: Screen Life**
Katy Razzano, George Mason University, moderator
- Erica Anderson, independent journalist, blogger, content creator
Christine Quail, McMaster University
Mark Sample, George Mason University
Kristin Scott, George Mason University
Chris Wren, George Mason University
- 4:45 p.m. Closing remarks
Ellen Gorman, George Mason University
- 5:00 p.m. Reception: JC Cinema Lobby

Sponsors

University Life, Department of Art and Visual Technology, Women and Gender Studies Program, New Century College, Department of Philosophy, Cultural Studies Program

Participants

Erica Anderson was the Washington, D.C. correspondent for MTV's Street Team '08, a group of 51-specially recruited citizen journalists assigned to cover the 2008 Election. As a one-man-band, Anderson wrote, edited, filmed, produced, published and marketed her own pieces. Her reports appeared on MTV, MTV2, MTV.com, in Associated Press and U.S. News & World Report and have been aggregated by blogs including Gawker, e.Politics and techPresident. On her weblog, EricaAmerica, Anderson follows the relationship between politics and the media, Web 2.0's impact on news and innovation in online news. Anderson spends her days working at Washington-based health care PR Firm called Spectrum Communications. As the Senior Digital Strategist, Anderson develops comprehensive digital plans for clients, educates senior management on Web 2.0 etiquette and engagement, and speaks regularly on behalf of the firm on the use of Web 2.0 tools to reach audiences online.

Mark Auslander is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Brandeis University, where he directs the interdisciplinary M.A. program in Cultural Production. His research explores power, ritual and historical consciousness in southern Africa and in African-American communities in the American South. He has strong interests in Afro-Atlantic art, landscape symbolism, and the cultural politics of museums and historical reenactments. He is completing a book project on memories of slavery in a small community in the Deep South. In his current teaching he collaborates with students and community partners in exploring the possibilities of YouTube and related social networking technologies in promoting conversations about social and cultural theory.

Ron Becker is an assistant professor of Communication at Miami University. His work on the history of television and the politics of gay, lesbian, and queer representation in such places as *The Television Studies Reader*, *Television and New Media*, *Queer TV*, and the *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television*. His book, *Gay TV and Straight America*, was published by Rutgers University Press in 2006.

Eugenie Brinkema is a Ph.D. student in Modern Culture and Media at Brown University. She is currently completing a dissertation on affects in film theory and continental philosophy. Her work focuses on film, philosophy, violence and horror, and her articles have appeared in "Camera Obscura," "Women: A Cultural Review," "Criticism," and "The Journal of Speculative Philosophy," in addition to several anthologies.

Wendy Burns-Ardolino is Assistant Professor and Director of The Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program at Clayton State University located due south of Atlanta where she teaches interdisciplinary courses in women's studies, media studies and liberal studies. Her publications focus on feminist theory, body studies, media studies, globalization, and popular culture. Her book, *Jiggle: (Re)Shaping American Women* was published by Lexington Books in December 2007.

Rhiannon Bury is an Assistant Professor of Women's Studies at Athabasca University, Canada's Open University. Her research interests include popular television, fan culture and online identity and community. Her book, *Cyberspaces of Their Own: Female Fandoms Online* is published by Peter Lang.

Elaine Cardenas is Director of Business Development at Gallup, Inc. and a Ph.D. Candidate in Cultural Studies at George Mason University. Her research focuses on media reception, ethnography of communication, reality television and beauty. She co-edited *The Hummer: Myths and Consumer Culture* (Lexington Books) with Ellen Gorman and has published articles on teens' online diaries.

Lynne M. Constantine is Assistant Professor of Art and Visual Technology at George Mason University and a doctoral candidate in Cultural Studies at Mason.

Max Dawson is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication and Culture at Indiana University, where he teaches courses on television and digital media. He has published articles in the journals *Technology & Culture* and *Convergence* and in the edited volumes *American Thought and Culture in the Twenty-First Century* (Columbia University Press, 2008) and *Television as Digital Media* (Duke University Press, 2009). His current projects include editing a special issue of the journal *Wi* on mobile video and a manuscript entitled "TV Repair" which traces the history of the belief that technological innovations will rehabilitate or reform television.

Jennifer Fuller is Assistant Professor in the Department of Radio-Television-Film at the University of Texas-Austin. Her work focuses on race and television history.

Ellen Gorman is an adjunct instructor at the Corcoran College of Art and Design, Georgetown University, and George Mason University, and a Ph.D. candidate in Cultural Studies at Mason. She co-edited *The Hummer: Myths and Consumer Culture* (Lexington Books) with Elaine Cardenas.

Elizabeth Gough-Gordon is a doctoral student in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. Her current research topics include the impact of technology on television aesthetics, and the relationship between television, gender, space and place. In addition, she has taught undergraduate courses in introductory media studies; gender, race and class in the media; and television programming. She received her MA in Sociology of the Media from the New School for Social Research and her BS in Sociology and Anthropology from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Glen Scot Hamilton, Ph.D. Social and Theoretical Psychology, Georgetown University, 2000. Adjunct Faculty (Humanities), Corcoran College of Art and Design; Homeless Shelter Coordinator, Washington DC. Current Academic interests: Surveillance Studies; The Study of Reality Television and Documentary Forms; Group Behavior; The Psychology of Creativity.

Elana Levine is Associate Professor in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She is the author of *Wallowing in Sex: The New Sexual Culture of 1970s American Television* (Duke, 2007) and co-editor of *Undead TV: Essays on Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Duke, 2007). Her work on television has also appeared in a number of journals and edited collections.

Tracy McLoone is an instructor in the Honors Program in General Education, Women and Gender Studies, and New Century College, George Mason University and a Ph.D. candidate in Cultural Studies at Mason.

Dara Persis Murray is a doctoral student in Journalism & Media Studies at Rutgers University, where she is concurrently pursuing a certificate in Women's and Gender Studies. She received her M.A in Media, Culture, and Communication from New York University and her B.A. in Art History from Bryn Mawr College. Her research examines the intersections of popular feminism, consumer media culture, and the production/consumption of beauty ideologies in Western culture.

Michael Z. Newman is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His work has appeared or will soon in *Film Criticism*, *Film Studies: An International Review*, *The Velvet Light Trap*, *First Monday*, *Cinema Journal*, and *Flow*, and his book about indie cinema is forthcoming from Columbia University Press.

Shayne Pepper is a Ph.D. student in the Communication, Rhetoric, & Digital Media program at North Carolina State University. His dissertation research examines HBO's AIDS-related programming over the past two decades (1987-2007).

Bryce Peake is an MA student in Cultural Production at Brandeis University with a background in medieval musicology, 20th century music theory and compositional techniques, and anthropology. His ethnographic work examines the ways in which people construct, manipulate, and alter space through art, sound, performance, and imagination in urban spaces around the Arabic Mediterranean; and his research interests include literary-philosophical approaches to anthropology, meta-theory, psychoanalytics, phenomenology, and urban semiotics. He is currently completing a thesis, a philosophically informed anthropology of the social imagination, on zombie performances in Toronto, ON. In Fall 2009, he will begin doctoral studies in sociocultural anthropology.

Christine Quail (PhD, University of Oregon), is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication Studies and Multimedia at McMaster University, Canada. Her research has concentrated on television and popular culture from a cultural studies and political economic framework, with an emphasis on reality TV in a global context. She is a guest contributor this season to FlowTV, the critical online television forum at the University of Texas Austin. Other recent publications include: "Battle for the Toybox: Christogimmicks and Christian Consumer Culture," in the Steinberg & Kincheloe edited volume, *Christotainment: Selling Jesus Through Popular Culture* (2009, Westview Press), and an article on the diaspora politics of Iraqi-Canadian hip hop artist Narcy. She is the author of the upcoming primer on Media Literacy with Peter Lang.

Kathalene A. Razzano is a PhD candidate in the Cultural Studies program at George Mason University. She is the co-author of *Vulture Culture: The Politics and Pedagogy of Daytime Television Talk Shows* (with Christine Quail and Loubna Skalli). Her current research is on the social, political and economic effects of the paternity test.

Kristin Scott holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Columbia College Chicago, an A.M. in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of Chicago, with a focus on postmodern literature and culture, and is currently a PhD student in the Cultural Studies program at George Mason University. She has been teaching courses in literature, composition, popular culture, cultural studies, cybercultures, and applied critical writing about the arts and media since 2005. In addition to six chapters in a recently published book about success in online learning, Kristin Scott has published a variety of pieces in DEMO, the University of Chicago Magazine, South Loop Review, and NewCity Chicago. Her research and teaching interests include the use of technology in education, postmodern and interactive literature, visual and media culture, virtual identity re/constructs, and the performance of digital/virtual and cyborg bodies. She is a doctoral student in Cultural Studies at George Mason University.

Mark Sample teaches and researches both contemporary American literature and New Media/Digital Culture, and he is always exploring how literary texts interact with, critique, and rework visual and media texts. He has published on *The Omega Man*, a cult science fiction film from the seventies, and contributed to and co-edited a special edition of *Works and Days*, a journal devoted to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Professor Sample's current research projects include a book manuscript on the early fiction of Don DeLillo and Toni Morrison, exploring their engagement with consumer culture, particularly how they use what Walter Benjamin calls "dialectical images" to reveal the latent violence of everyday things. Another project concerns the interplay between video games, the War on Terror, and the production of knowledge.

Sharon Sharp is an Assistant Professor at California State University, Dominguez Hills. She has published a number of articles on television and gender, and is currently writing a book on science fiction television.

Dava Simpson is a doctoral student in Cultural Studies at George Mason University.

Lynn Spigel is the Frances E. Willard Professor of Screen Cultures at the School of Communications at Northwestern University. She has written and lectured extensively on postwar culture and popular media. Her books include *Make Room for TV: Television and the Family Ideal in Postwar America* (University of Chicago Press, 1992) and *Welcome to the Dreamhouse: Popular Media and Postwar Suburbs* (Duke University Press, 2001). She has edited and co-edited numerous anthologies, including *Television after TV* (Duke University Press, 2004) and *Feminist Television Criticism* (2nd edition, McGraw-Hill, 2007). She is the general editor of the *Console-ing Passions* book series at Duke University Press.

Karen Wolf is a student in the MAIS program in Women and Gender Studies at George Mason University.

William Christopher Wren is Assistant Professor, Computer Game Design, in the College of Visual and Performing Arts, George Mason University.