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Professor of Art
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Wendy Hesford
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The Ohio State University



Amy Shuman
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Anthropology
The Ohio State University

Human Rights: Confronting Images and Testimonies

Thursday-Friday, March 4-5, 2010
Wexner Center for the Arts
1850 College Road, Columbus, OH 43210

Organizers

[Ann Hamilton](#), Department of Art

[Wendy Hesford](#), Department of English

[Amy Shuman](#), Department of English and Anthropology

See a [streaming video](#) of the keynote lecture by Ratna Kapur. This streaming video requires RealPlayer. If you do not have RealPlayer, you can [download it free](#).

Overview

This conference begins with the question "What is Evidence?" Art offers a lens through which we come to recognize the politics of power and abuse. Human Rights: Confronting Images and Testimonies brings together artists, activists, and scholars who will discuss their work in the context of human rights as it transforms the raw material of individual and collective suffering into legible and convincing data, confrontational imagery, and testimony.

This conference will begin on Thursday, March 4, at 4 p.m. with a presentation by artist activist Coco Fusco. It will conclude with the collaborative project *Combatant Status Review Tribunals, pp. 002954-0034064: A Public Reading*. The conference will be held both days at the Wexner Center for the Arts.

Participants

[Carroll Bogert](#), Human Rights Watch

[Brenda Brueggemann](#), The Ohio State University

[Coco Fusco](#), Parsons The New School for Design

[Andrea Geyer](#), artist

[Sam Gregory](#), Witness

[Sharon Hayes](#), artist

[Andrew Herscher](#), University of Michigan

[Amy Horowitz](#), The Ohio State University

[Ashley Hunt](#), The Corrections Project

[Ratna Kapur](#), Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations

Schedule

Thursday, March 4, 2010

1:30-3 p.m. - Student Forum: Witnessing Authorship

Students will examine theoretical, ethical, and methodological issues of witnessing as they relate to several contemporary human rights narratives. Presenters include Jen Herman, Annie Mendenhall, Kate Parker, Erika Strandjord, and Julia Voss. *311 Denney Hall, 164 W. 17th Ave.*

4 p.m. - Opening Keynote

Coco Fusco, "Torture, the Feminine Touch: Exploring Military Interrogation as Interculture Performance"

Fusco is a performance artist, writer, and associate professor in the fine arts program at the Parsons School for Design. *Wexner Center Film/Video Theater, 1871 N. High St.*

Friday, March 5, 2010 - Conference Symposium

Wexner Center Film/Video Theater, 1871 N. High St.

9 a.m. - Welcome

Valerie Lee, Interim Vice Provost of Minority Affairs

9:30-11:30 a.m. - Panel 1: Questions of Evidence

Andrew Herscher (Assistant Professor, University of Michigan, College of Architecture and Urban Planning) will discuss architecture in presentations of atrocity and the visualization of humanity in distress.

Sam Gregory (Project Director at WITNESS) will discuss video documentary and new media in the human rights campaigns of Witness.

Sharon Hayes (Multimedia Artist) with Andrea Geyer and Ashley Hunt, will discuss their project Combatant Status Review Tribunals held at the U.S. military prison camp in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, between July 2004 and March 2005.

Amy Horowitz (Jerusalem Project) will discuss music in disputed territory, focusing on an Israeli example.

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. - Keynote Speaker

Ratna Kapur, "W(h)ither Human Rights: A Critical Reflection"

Kapur (Director of the Centre for Feminist Legal Research in New Delhi and lecturer at the Indian Society for International Law) will examine the "dark side" of the human rights project and how it has been based on assumptions about difference, the cultural "Other," produced partly in and through the colonial encounter.

12:30-1:30 p.m. - Lunch Break

1:30-3:30 p.m. - Panel 2: Narrating Atrocity

Brenda Brueggemann (Professor, English/Disability Studies, The Ohio State University) will discuss cinematic representations of disability from a human rights perspective

Caroll Bogert (Associate Director, Human Rights Watch) will discuss the role of testimony and personal narrative in the activist work of Human Rights Watch.

Amy Shuman (Professor, English/Folklore, The Ohio State University) will discuss cultures of silence and atrocity narratives in the political asylum process.

4-8 p.m. Performance: A Public Reading

West Reading Room, Thompson Library, The Ohio State University

Sharon Hayes with Andrea Geyer, Ashley Hunt, Katya Sander, and David Thorne

Combatant Status Review Tribunals, pp. 002954-003064: A Public Reading, is a four-hour public reading of unedited transcripts from 18 Combatant Status Review Tribunals held at the U.S. military prison camp in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, between July 2004 and March 2005. A part of the larger collaborative work, *9 Scripts from a Nation at War*, which premiered at Documenta 12 in 2007, this performance stages a 118-page excerpt from a massive collection that documents 558 tribunals, all of which were released on the Internet in 2007 by the U. S. Department of Defense in response to a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit filed by the Center for Constitutional Rights.

8-9 p.m. Conference Wrap-Up

Buffet dinner provided.

Sponsors

This conference is co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Humanities; Multicultural Center Collaborative Programming Grant; Institute for Collaborative Research and Public Humanities; Institute for Women, Gender, and Public Policy; Mershon Center for International Security Studies; Project Narrative; Rhetorical Visions Fund; Center for Folklore Studies; Department of Women's Studies; Women in Development; Disability Studies; Melton Center for Jewish Studies; Sexuality Studies; and the Folklore Students Association.

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