

FAULT LINES



Call for Papers

The American Studies Graduate Committee at the University of Texas at Austin calls for papers for its upcoming graduate conference, “Fault Lines,” to be held in Austin on October 7-October 8, 2010. Our keynote speaker will be Dr. Ann Stoler, Willy Brandt Distinguished University Professor of Anthropology and Historical Studies at The New School for Social Research. In her keynote address, Dr. Stoler will discuss her work on the debris of empire, the political life of archival documents, and the personal and political refusal to engage colonial history through what she calls colonial aphasia.

Our conference will center on questions of crisis and fissure and will also trace the way in which people negotiate the colonial implications of moments of crisis. The recent earthquakes in Haiti and subsequent outpouring of financial, nonprofit, and military support from the U.S. raise questions about neocolonialism and the relationship between the global north and the global south on the world stage. Disasters of this magnitude can alter or reinforce relationships between people and places globally, like the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004, or domestically, like Hurricane Katrina in 2005. How do racial/economic/social differences/disparities play out during times of crisis? Where/how do the cracks in the “global world” begin to reveal themselves? How are these fissures addressed or redressed through national and transnational reactions? What role does sentiment—personal and political, individual and national—play in national crises like these? How, for example, does fault or blame get assigned and meted out after a disastrous event, such as the ongoing BP oil crisis in the Gulf? How do people mobilize or fail to mobilize around emotional response? Moreover, what kind of comparisons can be drawn between contemporary and historical moments of crisis, especially in terms of the way in which these moments of crisis are narrated?

While this conference will solicit papers on a variety of topics, the theme of past and present moments of crisis and fissure and subsequent local/national/global reactions will provide a guide for submissions. Contributors will be encouraged to think about crisis transnationally and within the U.S.

In addition to traditional conference papers, we also invite other presentation formats and creative works, such as short films and poetry/fiction/drama readings.

Though our conference program committee will primarily be assembling the panels out of individual submissions, we also will consider pre-formed panels. Jointly authored presentations are acceptable. We also invite graduate students collaborating with community partners on service, activist, educational, artistic, or other projects to present in conjunction with those partners.

To propose a presentation, please submit an abstract of no more than 200 words and a CV of no more than one page to the American Studies Graduate Committee at utamst10@gmail.com no later than August 15, 2010. Submission text may be embedded in the email or included in a Word attachment. If accepted, each graduate student presenter will be asked to pay a registration fee of \$20 to help cover conference expenses. Those registering by September 1, 2010 may register at the early-registration discount rate, which is \$17.