



March 15-16, 2012

Thursday, March 15

7:00 pm – *Opening Address, “Beauty and the Pact of Aliveness”*

Elaine Scarry

Introduction: Geoffrey Harpham

Friday, March 16

8:00 am – *Registration and continental breakfast*

9:00 am – *How do literary and cultural artifacts emerge from or intervene in human rights issues, and how can the practices of literary and cultural criticism inform human rights work and interventions?*

Panelists: Elizabeth Anker, Eduardo Cavada, James Dawes

Moderator: Michael Valdez Moses

10:30 am – *Break*

10:45 am – *Does the concept of human rights require a transcultural and transhistorical standard of moral judgment?*

Panelists: Wim Blockmans, Eva Kalny, Domna Stanton

Moderator: Gerald Postema

12:15 pm – *Lunch*

1:30 pm – *How can the history of humanitarianism or other rights movements illuminate our understanding of human rights? How pertinent to the practical application of human rights law today is an understanding of prior movements?*

Panelists: Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Samuel Moyn

Moderator: Gertrud Lenzer

2:45 pm – *Break*

3:00 pm – *Do we have a concrete vision of what the world would look like if everyone’s rights were protected? Do we need one?*

Panelists: Ian Baucom, Anat Biletzki

Moderator: Cara Robertson

4:30 pm – *Concluding Address, “Pathetic Fallacies: Human Rights, the Humanities, and the Human”*

Joseph Slaughter

6:00 pm – *Reception & Dinner*

Speakers

Thursday, March 15

Elaine Scarry is the Walter M. Cabot Professor of Aesthetics and the General Theory of Value at Harvard University. Her interests include theory of representation, the language of physical pain, and structure of verbal and material making in art, science and the law. She is the author of eight books including *The Body in Pain* (1985), in which she argues that physical pain leads to destruction and the unmaking of the human world, whereas human creation at the opposite end of the spectrum leads to the making of the world. Her 1999 volume, *Dreaming by the Book*, a synthesis of literary criticism, philosophy, and cognitive psychology exploring the practices by which writers bring things to life for their readers, received the Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism.



Other works by Scarry include *Thinking in an Emergency* (2011); *Rule of Law, Misrule of Men* (2010); *Who Defended the Country? A New Democracy Forum on Authoritarian versus Democratic Approaches to National Defense on 9/11* (2003); *On Beauty and Being Just* (1999); *Resisting Representation* (1994); and *Literature and the Body: Essays on Populations and Persons* (1990). Scarry is the recipient of numerous awards and honors; she was a Fellow at the National Humanities Center in 1979-80.

Friday, March 16

Elizabeth S. Anker is assistant professor in the department of English at Cornell University, and her research and teaching focus on contemporary world literature, law and literature, and the relationship between aesthetics and politics. Her first book, *Fictions of Dignity: Embodying Human Rights in the Postcolonial Novel*, is forthcoming this fall. In addition to essays in *Modern Fiction Studies*, the *James Joyce Quarterly*, and *Theory & Event*, she has recently published on animal rights and phenomenology in *New Literary History* and the 9/11 novel in *American Literary History*. She is currently working on a new book project provisionally entitled *Constitutional Failure and the Aesthetic Formations of Sovereignty in Crisis*, as well as two edited collections. She holds a J.D. from the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. from the University of Virginia.



Eduardo Cadava is professor of English at Princeton University where he specializes in American literature and culture, literary and political theory, comparative literature, media technologies, and theory of translation. He is the author of *Words of Light: Theses on the Photography of History* (1997) and *Emerson and the Climates of History* (1997), and co-editor of *Who Comes After the Subject?* (Routledge, 1991), *Cities Without Citizens* (2004), and a special issue of the *South Atlantic Quarterly* entitled *And Justice for All?: The Claims of Human Rights* (2004). He is currently finishing a collection of essays on the ethics and politics of mourning entitled *Of Mourning* and a small book on the relation between music and techniques of reproduction, memorization, and writing entitled *Music on Bones*.



James Dawes is Chair of English and Founder and Director of the Program in Human Rights and Humanitarianism at Macalester College. His research interests include US literature from all periods, literary theory and cultural studies, and interdisciplinary approaches to literary studies. Dawes is the author of *That the World May Know: Bearing Witness to Atrocity* (2007) and *The Language of War* (2002), as well as numerous articles on topics ranging from international law to Shakespeare. His forthcoming book is entitled *Evil Men*.



Wim P. Blockmans is professor emeritus of medieval history at Leiden University and was rector of the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study from 2002 until 2010. An expert in medieval history, the formation of states, and economic and cultural dynamics, Blockmans is the author of numerous books on late medieval and early modern state power. His most recent books include *Introduction to Medieval Europe, 300-1550* (2007); *Emperor Charles V, 1500-1558* (2002); and *A History of Power in Europe. Peoples, Markets, States* (1997). He has also reflected extensively in writing and public talks on the historical emergence of human rights discourse in Europe and serves as an advisor for several entities engaged in addressing human rights around the world, including the Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation in The Hague.



Blockmans is a member of the British Academy, the Royal Historical Society, Academia Europaea, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Verfassungsgeschichte, and a foreign member of the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts (Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België). In 2008 he was made a Knight in the Order of the Dutch Lion.

Eva Kalny is researcher and lecturer in the sociology department at Leibniz University in Hanover, Germany, where her work is focused on human rights, indigenous rights, gender, globalization, and social movements, particularly in Latin America. She is an anthropologist by training and has taught at universities in Vienna, Graz, Linz, and Klagenfurt. Her publications include *La ley que llevamos en el corazón. Una aproximación antropológica a los derechos humanos y normas familiares en dos comunidades mayas (Sacapulas, Quiché)* (*The Law we carry in our hearts: Cultural anthropology of Human Rights and Family Law Standards in Two Mayan Communities*), (German version 2001, Spanish version 2003); and, as a coeditor, *Pop-Korn und Blut-Maniok. Lokale und wissenschaftliche Imaginationen der Geschlechterbeziehungen in Lateinamerika* (*Popcorn and blood cassava. Local and scientific imaginations of gender relations in Latin America*), (2003).



Kalny has published a number of articles in both scholarly and popular scientific journals about indigenous rights, globalization, and the work of NGOs. Recent contributions include "Globalización desde abajo. Desafíos al activismo anti-neoliberal en el Petén, Guatemala." *Iberoamericana* 26:196-201 (2007); "Against superciliousness. Revisiting the debate 60 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." *Critique of Anthropology* 29(9):371-94 (2009); "They Even Use Us as a Factory for Their Children'. Perspectives on Free Trade Agreements in Guatemala." *Social Analysis* 54(1):71-91 (2010); and "Genozid." in *Handbuch Globalisierung. Anthropologische und sozialwissenschaftliche Zugänge zur Praxis*, edited by Fernand Kreff, Eva-Maria Knoll, and Andre Gingrich, to be published in September 2011.

Domna Stanton is distinguished professor of French at The Graduate Center, The City University of New York. A renowned scholar of seventeenth-century and early modern France, her first book, *The Aristocrat as Art: A Study of the Honnête Homme and the Dandy in 17th- and 19th-Century French Literature*, is considered a classic. Her most recent books are *Women Writ, Women Writing: Gendered Discourse and Differences in Seventeenth-Century France* (forthcoming 2012) and she is now completing *The Monarchy, the Nation and Its Others: France in the Age of Louis XIV* (2006). Her edited volumes include *Feminisms in the Academy* (1995); *Discourses of Sexuality from Aristotle to AIDS* (1992); *The Female Autograph* (1987); and *The Defiant Muse: French Feminist Poems from the 12th to the 20th Centuries* (1986). She has just published two co-edited volumes, *A Woman Who Defends all the Persons of Her Sex: Gabrielle Suchon, Selected Philosophical and Moral Writings* (2010) and *Enchanted Eloquence: Fairy Tales by Seventeenth-Century French Women Writers* (2011).



Among her extensive professional accomplishments, Stanton was the first female editor of *PMLA*, the journal of the Modern Language Association, and served as president of the MLA in 2005. Previously, Stanton was the Elizabeth M. Douvan Collegiate Professor at the University of Michigan. Her recent teaching and writing have focused on international human rights and she is still an active member of the Women's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch, after serving on its board of directors for 10 years.

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham is the Victor S. Thomas Professor of History and of African and African American Studies at Harvard University. She is currently the chair of the Department of African and African American Studies and has held this position since 2006. Higginbotham was the inaugural John Hope Franklin Professor of American Legal History at the Duke Law School in 2010-11. She also served as acting-director of Harvard's W.E.B. Du Bois Institute in Spring 2008. Her writings span diverse fields—African American religious history, women's history, civil rights, constructions of racial and gender identity, electoral politics, and the intersection of theory and history.



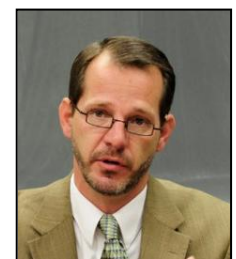
Higginbotham is the author of *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church: 1880-1920* (1993), which won numerous book prizes, most notably from the American Historical Association, the American Academy of Religion, the Association of Black Women Historians, and the Association for Research on Non-Profit and Voluntary Organizations. *Righteous Discontent* was also included among the *New York Times* Book Review's Notable Books of the Year in 1993 and 1994. She is also coeditor with Henry Louis Gates, Jr., of the *African American National Biography* (2008)—a multivolume reference work that presents African American history through the lives of people. In 2010 she was coauthor of the revised and re-written classic African American history survey *From Slavery to Freedom*. In 1993-94, Higginbotham was a Fellow at the National Humanities Center.

Samuel Moyn is professor of history at Columbia University where he is also codirector of the Consortium for Intellectual and Cultural History. His research focuses primarily on modern European intellectual history—with special interest in France and Germany, political and legal thought, historical and critical theory, and Jewish studies—and on the history of human rights.



Moyn is the author of three books: *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (2010); *Origins of the Other: Emmanuel Levinas between Revelation and Ethics* (2005); and *A Holocaust Controversy: The Treblinka Affair in Postwar France* (2005). He is currently completing two books, *A New Theory of Politics: Claude Lefort and Company in Contemporary France* (forthcoming) and a new project on human rights in the recent and contemporary period. He is also the editor of the journal *Humanity*, coeditor of *Modern Intellectual History*, and a past editor of the *Harvard Human Rights Journal*. His work has been recognized with a number of prizes and he has received fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, NJ.

Ian Baucom is professor of English and director of the Franklin Humanities Institute at Duke University where he also serves on the faculty advisory committee of the Duke Human Rights Center. Baucom works on twentieth century British Literature and Culture, postcolonial and cultural studies, and African and Black Atlantic literatures. He is the author of *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History* (2005); and *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire and the Locations of Identity* (1999); and co-editor of *Shades of Black: Assembling Black Arts in 1980s Britain* (2005). He has edited special issues of the *South Atlantic Quarterly* on Atlantic



Studies and Romanticism, and is currently working on a new book project tentatively entitled *The Disasters of War: On Inimical Life*.

Anat Biletzki is professor of philosophy at Tel Aviv University and Albert Schweitzer Professor of Philosophy at Quinnipiac University. She has traveled widely, as a visiting fellow and professor at Cambridge University, Harvard University, Boston University, MIT, the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, and the Wittgenstein Archives in Bergen, Norway, among others. Her publications include *(Over)Interpreting Wittgenstein* (2003); *What Is Logic?* (2002); *Talking Wolves: Thomas Hobbes on the Language of Politics and the Politics of Language* (1997); and *Paradoxes* (1996). Currently she is working on two book projects tentatively titled “Detranscendentizing Religion: Hobbes and Wittgenstein” and “Philosophical Investigations into Human Rights.”



Biletzki has been active in the peace movement and in several human rights projects in Israel for over 25 years. In 1997-98, she helped establish the human rights movement “Open Doors” which worked on liberating Palestinian administrative detainees in Israel. She is on the board of Faculty for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, and was chairperson of the board of B’Tselem - the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, from 2001 to 2006. In 2005 she was chosen as one of the 50 most influential women in Israel by *Globes*, the Israeli business monthly, and was nominated among the “1,000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005.”

Joseph Slaughter is associate professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia University where he teaches and publishes in the fields of postcolonial literature and theory, African, Caribbean, and Latin American literatures, postcolonialism, narrative theory, human rights, and 20th-century ethnic and third world literatures. His many publications include articles in *Human Rights Quarterly*, *Research in African Literatures*, *The Journal of Human Rights, Politics and Culture*, and *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature*. His essay, “Enabling Fictions and Novel Subjects: The *Bildungsroman* and International Human Rights Law,” appeared in a special issue on human rights of *PMLA* (October 2006) and was honored as one of the two best articles published in the journal in 2006-07.



Slaughter is a founding coeditor of *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*; he has coedited a special issue on “Human Rights and Literary Form” of *Comparative Literature Studies*. His book, *Human Rights, Inc.: The World Novel, Narrative Form, and International Law* (2007), which explores the cooperative narrative logics of international human rights law and the *Bildungsroman*, was awarded the 2008 René Wellek prize for comparative literature and cultural theory from the American Comparative Literature Association.

Moderators

Michael Valdez Moses is associate professor of English at Duke University where his primary research interests are in modern comparative literature, the history of film, and in the interdisciplinary study of literature, political philosophy, and economics. He is the author of *The Novel and the Globalization of Culture* (1995), and has edited several collections of critical essays including *The Writings of J. M. Coetzee* (1994); *Modernism and Colonialism: British and Irish Literature, 1900-1939* (2007); and *Modernism and Cinema* (2010). He is currently at work on a book project, *Nation of the Dead: The Politics of Irish Literature, 1890 to the Present*. He is co-editor of the journal, *Modernist Cultures*, published by Edinburgh University



Press, contributing editor to *Reason*, and a member of the advisory boards of *Modern Fiction Studies*, *jouvert*, and *CONTEXT*.

Gerald Postema is Boshamer Professor of Philosophy and professor of law at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he has taught since 1980. Postema's scholarly interests have focused primarily on legal and political philosophy and ethics and he has published extensively on these subjects. He has edited the Cambridge Studies in Philosophy and Law and (with Michael Corrado) *Law & Philosophy*. He wrote *Bentham and the Common Law Tradition* (1986/1989) and has edited *Racism and the Law* (1997) and *Rationality, Conventions, and the Law* (1998). Recently he edited *Philosophy and the Law of Torts* (2001) and two volumes of critical essays on Bentham, *Jeremy Bentham: Moral, Political, and Legal Philosophy* (2002). He published in August 2011, *Legal Philosophy in the Twentieth-Century: The Common Law World*. Currently, he is working on two book-length projects: a history of Anglo-American jurisprudence in the 20th century, on a collection of Sir Matthew Hale's writings on jurisprudence, and a book on Hume's theory of justice. Among many honors and fellowships, Postema was a Fellow of the National Humanities Center in 1986-87 and again in 2005-06.



Gertrud Lenzer is professor of sociology and children's studies at Brooklyn College and The Graduate Center, CUNY, where she is also the founding director of the Children and Youth Studies Program and Center. With expertise in the history of social thought, history of sociological theory, contemporary sociological theory, history of philosophy, sociology of children children's studies, development theories, and sociology of religion, Lenzer has written widely on these topics and particularly on the human rights of children. Among many honors and awards for her work, Lenzer was a Fellow at the National Humanities Center in 1980-81.



Cara Robertson is a scholar of English literature and legal history working this year as a resident associate at the National Humanities Center. She previously served as associate legal officer for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague and as law clerk to The Honorable John Paul Stevens and The Honorable Byron White at the United States Supreme Court. Robertson is currently working on two book length projects on the trial of Lizzie Borden and on the Elizabeth Canning Affair. A trustee of the National Humanities Center, Robertson also serves on the Stanford Law School Board of Visitors, the professional advisory board of the Borchard Foundation Center on Law and Aging, and as an advisory board member for the Casden Institute at the University of Southern California. Previously she was a team member on the Council on Foreign Relations. She was a Fellow at the National Humanities Center in 2004-05 and 2005-06.

