



UMAN RIGHTS

THEORY, NARRATIVE, POSTCOLONIALITY

A conference at Cornell University

Friday, October 16 & Saturday October 17, 2009

Hollis E. Cornell Auditorium • Goldwin Smith Hall

The philosophical, political, and legal construct of human rights has recently inspired significant debate among literary, cultural, and other theorists, especially in terms of the status of rights within postcolonial societies. While human rights have become the world's dominant language for pursuing social justice, their globalization to the non-western world has not been without substantial costs. At the same time, various critics have posited the intimate relationship of literature to rights, calling attention to how narrative enacts individual and communal recovery, as well as naturalizes the broad ideals that accompany the culture of human rights.

Friday, October 16, 4:30 p.m.
Keynote Address

Homi Bhabha
Harvard University

**“Affects and Interests:
Some Thoughts on the Culture
of Human Rights”**

reception to follow

Saturday, October 17

10:00 a.m. • Panel Discussion

Elizabeth Anker, *Cornell University*
“Taking Paradox Seriously:
Toward an Embodied Theory of Human Rights”

Joseph Slaughter, *Columbia University*
“Pathetic Fallacies; or,
A Drinkard’s Vision of Human Rights”

Chair: Carole Boyce Davies, Cornell University

12:00 p.m. • Lunch

12:45 p.m. • Panel Discussion

Pheng Cheah, *University of California-Berkeley*
“Acceptable Uses of People”

Peter Fitzpatrick, *School of Law, Birbeck, U of London*
“Necessary Fictions: Indigenous Claims
and the Humanity of Rights”

Chair: Chantal Thomas, Cornell Law School

2:45p.m. • Short Break

3:00p.m. - 4:30p.m. • Roundtable Discussion

Chair: Grant Farred, Cornell University

This event is presented by the English Department, and co-sponsored by the Clarke Initiative for Law and Development in the Middle East and North Africa, the Society for the Humanities, the Rose Goldsen Lecture Series, the South Asia Program, Peace Studies, the Population and Development Program, and the departments of Romance Studies, Anthropology, Government, Development Sociology, and Comparative Literature.