

Academic freedom revisited

Watching what you say and do post 9/11

MATTHEW A. KILLMEIER, UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

Welcome to the Brave New World of academic freedom, where the latest “post” to impact the academy is “Post –9/11.” This tri-colored world can render self-censorship, self-preservation, and Althusser’s concept of “Ideological State Apparatus” suddenly salient. In this essentialized world, you’re either with “us,” or giving comfort to “them,” the state’s enemies, who are represented like the dark forces in “The Lord of the Rings.” Controversial tactics, such as racial profiling and even torture, are suddenly part of the media discourse of the “new normal.” In this world, critical perspectives are no longer marginal, but taboo, and can lead to popular attacks, backlash, severe retaliation (such as firing), and even death threats. Now, even academics have to watch what we say in the classroom and beyond.

Am I being a bit hyperbolic?

Consider the case of Sami Al-Arian, a tenured associate professor at the University of South Florida. Al-Arian is a Palestinian national, and a legal U.S. resident who became a magnet for thinly veiled anti-Arab sentiment and public outrage after appearing on Fox News’ “O’Reilly Factor.” Al-Arian believed he was invited by right-wing host

Bill O’Reilly to appear on the Sept. 28 show to discuss American Muslims’ perspectives on Sept. 11. However, O’Reilly, citing Al-Arian’s support for Palestinian statehood and negative remarks about Israel in the 1980s, labeled him a “terrorist.” The incident sparked hundreds of e-mails, phone calls, and even death threats from people incensed the USF would employ a “terrorist.”

Although never charged with or arrested for a crime, or accused of “Anti-American” or “terrorist” activities by any credible source, three days after the show USF President Judy Genshaft suspended Al-Arian, ostensibly for failing to unequivocally state he was not speaking for the university, and for drawing the concerted fire of right-wing critics. Al-Arian was fired in mid-December, an action praised by Florida Gov. Jeb Bush. USF officials further claim Al-Arian failed to contribute to the orderly running of the university and engaged in activities that conflicted with the university’s interests. While Al-Arian’s academic performance was never called into question—he was popular with students at USF—and he unequivocally denounced the Sept. 11 attacks, Genshaft and Provost David Stamps said the firing should be “viewed in

the context” of Sept. 11. The USF Faculty Senate has refused to support Genshaft’s actions and Al-Arian is strongly supported by his union, the United Faculty of Florida, which may file grievances on his behalf.

While Al-Arian’s case is the extreme so far, vocal academic critics of U.S. military, political, and diplomatic practices are receiving concerted scrutiny. In November the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, a right-wing watchdog group founded by Lynne Cheney, published “Defending Civilization: How Our Universities Are Failing America and What Can Be Done About It”—a report that declared “college and university faculty have been the weak link in America’s response.” The report cited as evidence 117 instances of equivocation, “moral relativism,” and opposition that took place on U.S. campuses following Sept. 11, and initially included the names of faculty and university personnel (the list was removed from their website www.goacta.org after a week). The report was discredited by Eric Scigliano in *The Nation*, who noted many of the “instances” involved students and protesters not affiliated with a college or university, or were culled from

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The postmodern canvas of Julian Schnabel

DENNIS RUSSELL, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

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Postmodern philosophy represents a direct challenge to modernist conceptions of truth, reality, technology, capitalism and identity. To explain this complex perspective demands a variety of approaches. This article illustrates the ways in which postmodern critique is developed in the works of artist Julian Schnabel. His works can be used in communication theory classes in the forms of slides or other visual presentations to help clarify the intricacies of postmodernity.

Cultural theorist Andreas Huyssen has observed that modernism in the arts defines itself as outside of and superior to the rest of culture and society. Postmodernism, meanwhile, spans the great divide that modernist art and criticism once tried to place between themselves and mass culture. Since the ‘60s, that perceived split between high and low culture has become less relevant to artists and critics.

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Programming for Miami

MIA CONSALVO, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE

Although our annual meeting won't be until August, thoughts of Miami are certainly warming me up right now. And our program should provide us all with plenty of academic stimulation, even as we're enjoying the sand and surf.



Ralph Believeau and I trekked down to Dallas last December for the Winter Meeting, and came away with a schedule for CCS that allows for some valuable interactions with other divisions, and preserves some spaces for exploration of issues central to the concerns of Cultural and Critical Studies. Our scheduling was made easier during the "chip auction" because of a new scheduling grid adopted by the council of divisions, which limits panels and research sessions to between 8:15 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., for the most part. Imagine—no more panels

at 8:30 at night, followed by 7 a.m. sessions the next morning! Now, the only sessions scheduled outside of the normal working day are business meetings, socials and executive committee meetings. For those of us interested in attending many events, that gives us a much more humane schedule, allowing for intellectual exchange, socializing, and even some time for sleep.

Regarding the specifics of our program for Miami, here are the particulars: We're trying a few new things this year, so please let us know during the conference how you think they've worked out. One of the highlights is moving our best paper presentations to a "blue ribbon research paper session." That will allow more time during our business meeting for the business of the division, and also give our best paper presenters more time and attention for their excellent work. That means that our business meeting may have lost one of its primary draws, but we encourage everyone to continue to attend and help with the work of the division. Another new item on the program this year is an off-site social, scheduled for Friday

evening. In the past, the business meeting has provided a good place to network and reconnect with friends and colleagues, but with increasing amounts of business, things have become more and more rushed. The division officers talked about a social as a way for CCS members to get together more informally and have more time to chat, discuss research, or just have some fun. We will announce the location of the social at the business meeting—and if anyone knows of a good place to get together near the hotel, please let me know.

Our other sessions include more research presentations, including another poster session co-sponsored with Advertising and Communication Theory and Methodology. Last year's session went very well, and co-sponsoring the session gave us increased "foot traffic," giving more people access to our papers than would normally attend one of our research sessions. In addition to research, we have many interesting panels lined up, investigating the particular challenges of critical and cultural

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Division web site <http://gradycollege.grady.uga.edu/>

Website redesign now in progress

JAY HAMILTON, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

The work of a webmaster is never done! But I hope that some recent changes and additions will make the Web site a more worthwhile resource for division members.

First, I've moved the site to <http://gradycollege.grady.uga.edu/CCS/> in order to provide more space for more material.

Second, and in addition to streamlining its look and trying to simplify navigation, I'm revising certain pages and adding a new one.

I've already updated the "Contacts" page with the contact info (names, addresses, phone, fax, and e-mail) of all C&CS officers.

The "Links" page is due for a makeover to make it more visually appealing. I've also been collecting a number of links that I'll be adding (such as an amazing compendium of materials at V.A.M.P., the "Virtual

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Miami conference highlights

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teaching; Native-American women and ways of knowing; approaches to legal teaching; coverage of September 11; representations of women; and how Hollywood treats history. In addition, we're sole-sponsoring one session devoted to "critical studies and the tenure track," to explore how those of us who might be isolated in our departments due to our research (and theoretical) orientations can ensure fair treatment on the path to tenure. In the past, concern has been expressed that CCS is diluting our interests through too many co-sponsored panels, and this year I think we're returning to more of a balance. The co-sponsored panels we've chosen to work on are not difficult fits—and in some instances we were expressly invited to participate because the other division noted that they needed a "critical/cultural voice" on the panel. That's always nice to hear—and indicates that our influence is growing and we are becoming more and more central to the association, as well as to the academic field of mass communication.

Please let me know if you have any concerns or questions about the division or AEJMC. Let's hope that this year will be



better than the last, and we can all move forward in productive directions.

Miami 2002 CCS Program

Wednesday, August 7:

8:15-9:45 a.m. Refereed paper session
10-11:30 a.m. Critical Studies and the tenure track (sole sponsored)
5:00-6:30 p.m. Refereed paper session

Thursday, August 8:

8:15-9:45 a.m. Refereed paper session

11:45-1:15 p.m. Critical-Cultural Teaching and the Institution (w/GEIG)
3:15-4:45 p.m. Native American Women and Ways of Knowing (w/CSW)
5-6:30 p.m. Refereed poster session (w/CTM & ADV)
6:45-8:15 p.m. Business Meeting
Friday, August 9:
7-8:00 a.m. Executive committee meeting
8:15-9:45 a.m. Methods in conducting and teaching legal research (w/LAW)
1:30-3:00 p.m. Mini-Plenary on Coverage of September 11 (w/CTM, RTVJ, MME)
3:15-4:45 p.m. Blue Ribbon Refereed research paper session
5-6:30 p.m. PF&R Award Winner (w/MED)
7-8:30 p.m. Off-site social
Saturday, August 10:
10-11:30 a.m. History by way of Hollywood (w/ESIG)
1:30-3:00 p.m. Mediating women across the world: Beauty queens, athletes, and heroines (w/CSW)

C&CS website redesign

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Alternative Media Project," overseen by Ramona Rush at the University of Kentucky).

As for adding new pages, look for a newly created newsletter archive. From it you can access all QS and C&CS newsletters from 1997 in Adobe Acrobat format. View individual newsletters on-screen, or print them out in the original format and layout.

Unlike what the white-collar crooks at Arthur Anderson did on behalf of defunct energy middleman Enron, we ain't gonna get rid of nothin'!

Some highlights from past newsletters: Edited transcripts of comments of past PF&R Award winners, including Herbert Schiller (remarks by Bob McChesney), Dan Perkins (a.k.a. Tom Tomorrow), Studs Terkel, and Christopher Hitchens. Contributions on teaching by Melinda Robins (Winter 2001), Alison Plessinger (Winter 2001), and Elli Lester

Roushazamir (Spring and Summer 1997). Discussions of the academy and activism in such essays as those regarding the WTO in Seattle (Winter 2000) and academic labor (Autumn 1997 and Winter 1998). The place and role of critical research in AEJMC in such essays as those by Bonnie Brennen (Spring 2001) and Ana Garner (Spring 1997).

Much, much more is here. I hope this can become the core of a public archive of division affairs, concerns, commentary, and activities that can serve as a basis for future deliberations.

I hope these and future changes and adjustments make it more friendly and useful. Please send any suggestions, changes, or reactions to this web site to me. Find contact information on the web page. And, now, back to the grindstone!

C&CS News seeks your contributions

We would like to invite you to contribute to this newsletter. We especially welcome longer contributions and commentary that aren't usually a part of traditional publishing outlets. Graduate-student contributions are encouraged. Editors will get in touch with authors before publishing any materials. Keep your eyes open for the next deadline, which we'll post at <http://gradycollege.grady.uga.edu/CCS/>

To talk over ideas or suggestions, please contact:

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We look forward to hearing from you.

9/11 and the color of bravery:

VIVIAN B. MARTIN, CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

The story of the group of men who fought the hijackers aboard United Flight 93, which crashed near Shanksville, PA, has become an iconic representation of Sept. 11. "Let's roll," which Todd Beamer, a passenger aboard Flight 93, reportedly uttered right before he and several other men tried to wrest control of the plane, has been appropriated by airline passengers, commercial vendors of T-shirts and President George W. Bush. Yet alongside this much publicized story of heroics about Flight 93 was another version that was constructed across email and Usenet news-groups primarily concerned with African-American issues. At the center of this version was the heroic effort of 1st Captain LeRoy Homer, a 36-year-old United States Air Force Academy graduate and African-American. Some who posted emails to email discussion groups for black lawyers, faculty, and those interested in current events did so with little investment in the contents.

Others, like the writer who tried to rally support for a letter-writing campaign to national news networks and newspapers, were looking to correct a perceived slight, despite the fact that local media such as New Jersey's *Courier-Post* covered Homer's well-attended funeral and gave him other attention. Although some emails about Homer were short factual biographical accounts, the following popular version, which was channeled to black faculty and staff on my campus by a faculty member who got it from a friend, clearly ignored the reports that suggest the pilot and co-pilot might have been the hijackers' first victims:

*Did you know that the pilot of the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania was an African-American!!
1st Captain Leroy Homer was a true hero!
As a pilot, he refused to let his plane be used as a terrorist weapon! This act saved the U.S. Capitol, which was in full session! Both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives were in session! Not only did Captain Leroy Homer foil the assault on Capitol Hill, no one on Pennsylvania ground was injured! Now that is a heroic and outstanding act!
The Commercial Bank of New Jersey has set up a fund for Captain Leroy Homer's family. So, as we mourn the results of this tragic event, remember we also have an African American Hero: 1st Captain Leroy Homer.*

Rather than refuting the details of the above email, my interest is in the challenges that such improvisation pose for news reception research; more specifically I am interested in having conversations about how cultural and critical studies approaches, which are less wedded to traditional notions of how and what people do with news, might inform understandings about the news and everyday life. Reception studies opened up the notion of the active audience, and some news reception studies such as Morley's *Nationwide Audience* (1980) are canonical. But a combination of factors – time, resources, complexity, and possibly greater interest in studying the reception of soap operas, cult films and other entertainment has ethnographically informed studies of news and everyday to the backburner. Moreover, studies that have paved some of the more fertile paths, among these is Jensen et al.'s *News of the world: world cultures look at television news*, set out with a definition of news in line with that of mainstream media.

As a former daily newspaper reporter I was a little horrified when I first started teaching and learned that my Journalism I students' conception of news included Oprah segments, humor shows, and word-of-mouth reports about celebrities. "Well it's news to me," students would invariably say when I challenged their notions. Today, even though I still run down the usual criteria of newsworthiness – proximity, timelines, consequence etc – I don't completely dismiss the alternative definitions, which is why I was drawn to the emails about the black pilot. The ways in which people created their own news reports by drawing on mainstream news reports and various sources like the web page the black pilot's organization put up to eulogize Homer provide an opportunity to think about how we research and theorize news and everyday life. Studies in which researchers use previously aired news segments to elicit reactions from focus groups or even those that observe participants as they watch a newscast are not designed to capture the many ways in which people interact with the news. Such research takes at face value news professionals' view that the news is what they say it is rather than treating the news as problematic in the way nonprofessionals do. Cultural and critical studies of journalism can supplement the traditional studies by rethinking assumptions

guiding current methodological and theoretical approaches. A shift in such research is especially necessary now because the main reception studies were conducted before the Internet became a part of everyday life. Conceptually, the Internet, with its infrastructures that facilitate both interpersonal and mass communication simultaneously may more closely model the complicated hyperlinked news reception process better than any medium. Sophisticated conversation mapping tools like Netscan (www.netscan.microsoft.com), among others, and even Google allow research to study archives that can be used to supplement other methods.

Recently, while conducting a Google search of Usenet groups such as "soc.cultural.african.american" for references to the black pilot, I was led me to the archive of "soc.culture.iranian," where people briefly fed on a rumor that the pilot on Flight 93 was of Iranian descent and the only pilot to stand up to the terrorists that day. Like the emails about the black pilot, the rumor about the Iranian pilot reflects the desire of minority group members to see themselves reflected in the faces of heroes and underscores the need to better understand the relationship between media and cultural identities even as we need to avoid essentialism. In particular, there's a need to better understand how people negotiate the competing visions of the world brought to them by mainstream versus alternative media. For instance, while *Time* magazine named Flight 93's Todd Beamer one of its heroes of the year, *The Advocate's* January 2002 issue named Mark Bingham, a gay man who was part of the fighting squad aboard Flight 93, its person of the year. Black media from *Jet* to websites like www.agoodblackman.com and blacknewsusa.com gave special attention to accomplished blacks like Homer who died on Sept. 11.

Ongoing work in anthropology may help tease out the more nuanced aspects of reception. Cultural anthropologist Elizabeth Bird's pioneering studies of reception of scandals and tabloid news (e.g., in *For Enquiring Minds: A Cultural Study of Supermarket Tabloids*) provide some ideas about the connections. Tamotsu Shibutani's conception of rumors as a form of "improvised news," a problem-solving activity that arise out of uncertainty can be observed in

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Academic freedom

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third-hand sources. He notes “ACTA—which according to the Media Transparency project received nearly \$700,000 from the conservative Olin, Bradley, Earhart and Sarah Scaife foundations between 1997 and 2000...was hired by Governor Jeb Bush to train Florida’s 143 university trustees.” Although the credibility of such reports may ring hollow to some, to many citizens, whose information is largely derived from often jingoistic and usually supportive network and cable programming, it is incendiary material.

Critical perspectives in the academy, and their oft-inflated representation in media, can serve as a catalyst for popular attacks and backlash on a number of levels. For critical faculty, at the level of the individual, backlash could range from mild reprimand or rebuke and the political distancing of colleagues, to impacting promotion and dismissal. Backlash could result in stronger consequences for junior faculty without tenure, and severe repercussions for graduate assistants and adjuncts. Of course supportive faculty and departmental chairs or deans can mitigate such backlash and provide a foundation for strong academic freedom. Likewise, strong institutional bodies, such as faculty senates and assemblies, can protect scholars from the need to coddle public opinion, as can unions, which serve to ensure workplace protection. This assumes faculty—particularly those of lower or tenuous status—are not cowed into self-censorship by the dominant support for the Administration and U.S. military actions, which are likely the largest extant threat to academic freedom.

At the institutional level (public), faculties, departments, colleges, and entire universities risk the backlash of legislators, representatives, and governors who control a large portion of operating budgets. That the legislatures of many states are dominated by the right wing in both of the major parties is particularly salient in this regard. As the post-9/11 world features a recession economy shackled to neo-liberal politics, which precludes any real consideration of tax increases (particularly on the wealthy), state revenues are tight and constricting further, making available resources for post-secondary education tenuous in many states. Critical comments may serve as a convenient excuse for further de-funding of public education, and might jeopardize the concomitant corporate largess, and sour well-heeled alumni, thus having a ripple effect on the sources of funding and placing the political nature of it in stark relief.

Critical perspectives could be a catalyst for attacks and backlash

Backlash at the federal level can be broad and sobering. In addition to the suspension of many civil rights on the part of the Justice Department, the passage of the USA Patriot Act introduces frightening powers that could be mobilized against academic freedom at all levels. Non-citizens can be detained and deported for providing “assistance” for the legal activities of groups the Secretary of State designates “terrorist.” The Act amended the definition of terrorist activity to cover use of a “weapon or other dangerous device cause substantial damage to property.” The “damage” does not need to cause injury or present danger of injury. According to the ACLU, “abortion foes who engage in civil disobedience, or protesters at Vieques, Puerto Rico, who damage a fence, would be deemed terrorist organizations.” The next time you or one of your students heaves a USA Today machine through the window of Starbucks as an act of anti-capitalist protest, or if Paper Tiger TV, an organization you’ve financially supported for years is seen as assisting terrorists by Al-Qaida pieces, be prepared to join Osama bin Laden on the list of State Department terrorists. The Act also provides sanctions for First Amendment protected speech for non-citizens, including lawful permanent residents. According to the ACLU, “the USA Patriot Act permits immigrants to be found ‘inadmissible’ for advocacy...a lawful permanent resident who makes a controversial speech could potentially be barred from returning to his family after taking a trip abroad.”

The Act also includes provisions that impact U.S. and international students. Although since Sept. 11, federal officials have tapped over 200 colleges and universities for student information, according to the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers the FBI and other enforcement agencies have conducted numerous interviews across the country; Congress pushed for broader and easier access. The Act allows law enforcement access to data collected for the purpose of statistical research under the National Education Statistics Act. According to the ACLU, “the NESA includes a vast amount of

identifiable student information and—until now—has been held to strict confidentiality requirements without exception. The bill omits good cause requirements and meaningful judicial review to protect against fishing expeditions that violate student privacy or investigation based upon racial profiling.”

While academic freedom is threatened at the moment, there are several intertwined things that can be done to establish conditions that will allow it to flourish:

—Supporting Alternative Media: Without these critical building blocks of a vibrant civil society, academic freedom will be subject to the representational practices of profit-driven, right-leaning organizations, and efforts to effect changes will be difficult. Alternative media provide the investigative resources and the intellectual space for critical reportage, which ensures publicity for threats to academic freedom. You can support alternative media through subscriptions, sharing their insights with colleagues, and introducing your students to them.

—Agitating: Do your colleagues know about the threats to academic freedom, and are they engaged in appropriate measures to protect it? Peer discussions should not be overlooked as a crucial source for vibrant dialogue that ensures threats do not go unnoticed.

—Organizing: To establish the basic conditions for academic freedom, and ensure its not a perk that evaporates during heightened military and political conflicts, we must be organized at many levels. Involvement in institutional bodies that govern your institution is a basic action you can take, assuming they have power. If they lack real power, and serve as window-dressing for presidential accountability, work to make them a real representative force. If your university is unionized, become active in your union to ensure academic freedom is a protected practice through collective bargaining agreements and grievance procedures. If it isn’t, you can be instrumental in getting an organizational effort moving. Get involved in NGOs and civil society groups that emphasize and support academic freedom, such as the American Civil Liberties Union, National Coalition for Universities in the Public Interest. If we’re well organized we can expect to impact politicians, parties, and administrations. If not we’re subject to the dictates of those who are, and their commitments to academic freedom are tepid at best.

If we want academic freedom, then we need to build viable foundation that can be carried into the future.

Schnabel's postmodern vision

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According to Huyssen, postmodernism represents a rejection of modernism's "relentless hostility to mass culture" and moves toward a new situation in which the "pedestal of high art and high culture no longer occupies the privileged space it was used to." For Huyssen, this means that while the role of the arts is to maintain a critical stance toward contemporary society, they no longer do so from a supposed position of superiority.

The term postmodernism first gained widespread use in the art world in the early 1980s. Before that point, the art that tended to be taken seriously by the "official," New York-based art establishment was often cerebral and dry. Various forms of minimalism in the 1960s and 1970s reduced sculpture and painting to the simplest forms and processes (bricks, cubes, slabs, grids, squares, flat fields of color). Other conceptual art of the '60s and '70s involved monochrome photographs juxtaposed with bland text, holes made in gallery walls, and artist performing endlessly repetitive actions. However, by 1980, an early version of postmodernism was seeping into the art world—a postmodernist impulse associated with a pluralist, "anything goes" attitude and an obsession with the past. Old styles and techniques were implemented, and artists quoted from the work of other artists. Abstract art was still being pursued, but by the early 1980s it had a more ironic, tongue-in-cheek edge than was usually expected of abstraction.

By the mid-1980s, postmodernist art had evolved into a stinging critique of the basic assumptions of modernism: progress; optimism; rationality; the search for absolute knowledge in science, technology, society, and politics; and the idea that gaining knowledge of the "true self" was the only foundation for all other knowledge. Also by the mid-80s, postmodernist art was becoming increasingly political in nature, with the mass media and commodities viewed as the instruments of a morally bankrupt capitalist system. As Glenn Ward has noted, "If art was to have any purpose in the contemporary world, it had to set itself up in opposition to this system. How could they subvert (or even compete with) the power of the media? How

By the mid-1980s, Schnabel had helped transform the status quo art world with his confrontational, violent and decidedly postmodern vision of a world in which the only thing certain is uncertainty.

could they oppose the world of commodities without becoming luxury goods themselves?" In an attempt to answer these questions, some artists believed it was necessary to reforge the links between contemporary art, the conceptual art of the 1970s, and the pop art of the 1960s. Additionally, a number of these artists drew inspiration from various European postmodern theorists, such as French thinker Jean Baudrillard and his theory of hyperreality in a media-saturated society.

One of the most poetic, politically charged, and intellectually engaging postmodern artist to emerge from the 1980s art scene is Julian Schnabel—an artist who can only be perceived in extreme terms because of the explosive nature of his personality and the strong emotionality emanating from his work. Violence emerges as a constant presence on the massive canvases of his work, with contrast, clash, crisis, and contention poetically depicted.

Born in 1951 in New York City, Schnabel's family moved to Brownsville, Texas in 1965. From 1969 to 1973, he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts at the university in Houston. In 1973–74, Schnabel participated in the Whitney museum Independent Study Program in New York, but moved back to Texas for eight months, holding his first exhibition at the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston. In 1976, the fledging artist returned to New York, where he worked as a cook at a bistro in the Village. Then in 1978, Schnabel traveled to Spain, Italy, and Germany, painting full-time and gaining inspiration from the architecture of Antoni Gaudi in Barcelona. His first solo exhibition in Europe was held at the Galerie December in Dusseldorf in 1978, and a year later he exploded onto the New York art scene with his first solo exhibition at the Mary Boone

Gallery. And as of 1984, Schnabel held his first show at The Pace Gallery in New York, where he received acclaim from important critics, influential dealers, and famous collectors.

By the mid-80s, Schnabel had helped transform the status quo art world with his impressionability, confrontational, violent, and decidedly postmodern vision of a world in which the only thing certain is uncertainty. As Schnabel has said, "I want my life to be embedded in my work. If my being isn't crushed into my painting like a pressed car, my work isn't just." Schnabel believes there had been an agreement in certain Abstract Expressionist and Formalist enclaves that painting could be broken down to an irreducible image. There seemed to be a presumed relation in this notion of art's progression toward what was conceived as modern. For Schnabel, Modern art hinged on the following factors: the distillation of imagery out of paintings; the description of the integral relation between the outside edge to the center of the painting; and the deletion of all information that didn't seem intrinsic to the material substance of the painting (in other words, being about painting and paint itself). Schnabel believes that all of the meaning of art was being edited out within the Modern framework, adding:

For me, there didn't seem to be that option. On one hand, I felt that performance art had the rudimentary problem of not being able to be scrutinized—you couldn't go back and check the blue. I also had little interest in the wall painting of Mel Bochner and Dorothea Rockburne's work. In fact, most painting I was being offered to look at was not terribly vital to

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Schnabel

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existence as a painter or as a person. I looked around: lyrical Abstract Expressionism, Greenbergian Modernism, Superrealism—they all seemed to be about techniques, doctrines, strategies, signaturizing.

Signaturizing stands as antithetical to Schnabel's philosophy of art because it involves artists believing that their work should always have the same appearance. "They're satisfied to let this appearance to the emblem of their art," Schnabel writes, "because it's what people have come to expect them to do. This is either a sign of arrogance or resignation, or atrophy."

Modernism, Schnabel argues, represented a drift away from content. Content was supposed to be the material the painting was made out of, and there wasn't supposed to be anything that could exist outside of the materials and distillation process. Content as subject matter was considered to be superfluous to Modern art. "The concept 'Art doesn't mean it is' was spent in the most inflationary way," Schnabel holds.

"Modernism had become a club of artists making things only for each other." Schnabel's idea of Modern meant something usable, noting: "I'm not saying it can't be a geometric shape sitting on a flat rectangle taking the place of a figure. I don't think the battle between figuration and abstraction is even an issue. Anything can be a model for a painting—a poplar tree, another painting, a smudge of dirt."

From Schnabel's perspective, all paintings are metaphoric, with the concreteness of a work alluding to a world of associations "that may have a completely other face than that of the image you are looking at." Consequently, Schnabel rejects Formalism for imposing false limits on painting "under the guise of esthetic purity, as if such a thing could exist in real life."

Thematically, some of Schnabel's art resonates with the postmodern concerns expressed by a variety of influential philosophers, particularly Jean Baudrillard. Like Baudrillard, a number of Schnabel's paintings raise doubts about the relationship between reality and representation. The claim here is not quite that nothing is real,

but that there is no simple, direct relationship between reality and its supposed expression in words and pictures. In postmodernist philosophy, questions of reality are often addressed to developments in mass communication and the electronic reproduction of sound, image, and text. Baudrillard is considered chief among the philosophers who argue that the reference principle of images must be doubted, critiquing "this strategy by means of which they always appear to refer to a real world, to real objects, and to reproduce something which is logically, and chronologically, anterior to them. None of this is true...images precede the real to the extent that they invert the casual and logical order of the real and its reproduction."

Similarly, Schnabel's work warns that representation has trumped reality and is now on automatic pilot. In its own orbit, representation exists in contemporary society without having to be grounded in the Modernist faith in facts, reality, and history. This phenomenon depicted in Schnabel's art reflects Baudrillard's theory of simulation, in which what passes for "reality" today are mere reproductions of the real; that is, simulations of reality are so prevalent, so entrenched in postmodern society that they are perceived as being even more real than the originals. In fact, Baudrillard argues that reproduction, rather than production, is the "characteristic hysteria of our time," adding: "What society seeks is the restoration of the real which escapes it. It retains all the features [of the real], the whole discourse of traditional production, but it is nothing more than its scaled-down refraction. Thus, the hyperrealism of simulation is expressed everywhere by the real's striking resemblance to itself." In the fullest postmodern sense, some of Schnabel's paintings echo Baudrillard's assertion that people have lost their sense of what constitutes the real, and have replaced reality with a simulated version of it through computer technology, virtual reality, and media messages and imagery.

But while Schnabel's work involves a postmodern critique of a number of Modernist assumptions, his art also is preoccupied with the myths, symbols, arti-

facts, rituals, and magic of the past. His work often provides politicized reflections on cultures both past and present, emphasizing the inherent contradictions found in extreme poverty and extreme luxury. And the symbol of the cross abounds in Schnabel's paintings, offering an ongoing critique of man's need throughout history to construct an "otherness" that brings order to the chaos and randomness of living—all in the terrifying presence of the silence of God.

Ultimately, Schnabel's vision, whether framed by a postmodern questioning of the nature of reality or one rooted in interpreting and demystifying the dustbins of history, is a relentlessly poetic and psychological one. For Schnabel, the poetic is the "the unanswered accident of the avalanche, of the absurd death, and this absurd life. It is of TV and distance and good intentions and upbringing, and bad memories and prejudices and indigestion and silly things and adolescences and longing and...disappointment. It is the physical embodiment of misunderstanding." As for the psychological impulse of his art, Schnabel sums it up as follows:

The artist's communion with already existing materials makes it possible to commandeer prior topographical meanings for a communion of psychological ones. We are then using the physical to get at an invisible communion, which is about the sameness of the viewer and the artist, not about their differences. I want to be invisible. But I want you to know I'm out there. Painting makes this conversion into invisibility possible and acceptable.

Calls for papers and book chapters

C&CS Miami

The Critical and Cultural Studies Division of AEJMC invites submission of original research papers that are interdisciplinary in focus and are theoretically grounded. We welcome a wide range of approaches and perspectives, including, but not limited to: cultural studies, historical studies, feminist scholarship, news analysis, political economy, literary analysis, philosophy of communication ethics, and media criticism. Submissions should reflect qualitative research methodologies.

Preferred paper length is 7,500 words (approx. 25 pages). Please send six copies of your paper and a 75-word abstract in addition to the requirements under the general call for papers by April 1, 2002. Put your name on the abstracts, but do not staple them to the manuscript copies. Authors are responsible for following all AEJMC guidelines for paper submission. Papers that do not meet these requirements will not be accepted.

Send papers to: Alison Plessinger, Eugene S. Pulliam School of Journalism, Butler University, 4600 Sunset Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46208. Tel: 317-940-9772, Fax: 317-940-9252. aplessin@butler.edu.

MEDIA-TING TERROR: A Reader

Editor: Anandam .P. Kavoori

Deadline: May 1, 2002

Scholars are invited to contribute research papers and critical essays for a volume examining the debate about media and war following the WTC bombings, the Anthrax infections, and U.S attacks on Osama Bin Laden and the Taliban. This book takes as its goal the examination of the media discourse that has emerged in recent months from various media outlets and seeks to understand that discourse within the larger matrix of issues surrounding television/new media and terrorism, terrorism as media event, mediated nationalism, public responsibility and journalistic accountability, terrorism and popular culture amongst others. The book will go beyond the recent events and theorize issues of mediated terror across media (television, new media) and explore issues of alternative mediations.

Please send completed papers by May 1, 2002, to Dr. Andy Kavoori, Dept of Telecommunications, Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602. If you wish to discuss your paper, send an abstract to akavoori@arches.uga.edu and editorial assistant Todd Fraley (Tfraley@arches.uga.edu).

New Online Journal

The newly launched online peer-reviewed journal, NMEDIAC: The Journal of New Media & Culture, is accepting paper submissions for upcoming issues. NMEDIAC has adopted the mission of publishing peer-reviewed papers and audiovisual pieces which contextualize encoding/decoding environments and the discourses, ideologies, and human experiences/uses of New Media apparatuses. In relation to previous work, NMEDIAC hopes to provide an intellectual canvas where the cultural spaces and experiences of new media are theorized and rigorously explored within both global and local contingencies of the present and past. Therefore, papers that take Cultural Studies and 'critical Internet Studies' approaches to analyzing new media are encouraged. Papers should be submitted in APA style by email in .doc, .pdf, .html, or another format to Jonathan Lillie at jlillie@email.unc.edu at the University of North Carolina.

Audiovisual new media art or presentations may be submitted or proposed at any time. Preference is placed on pieces that are submitted along with, or incorporate scholarly work, or that emphasize general or specific themes within new media studies, such as new media as experienced culture. A special issue on new media art is in the works, and we invite preliminary ideas for audiovisual pieces or papers on this broad topic to also be submitted.

Please visit the NMEDIAC web site for further information. The journal was launched on January 15, 2002: <http://ibiblio.org/nmediac>

Democratic Communication and Global Justice.

Union for Democratic Communications, Oct. 10-13, 2002, State College, Pennsylvania
Deadline: May 1, 2002

The Union for Democratic Communications invites the submission of paper and panel proposals, media projects, and workshops addressing the role of democratic communications in the struggle for global justice. We seek submissions with a critical take on existing media structures and practices, such as the continuing global concentration of the media, the commercialization of new media technologies, the creeping influence of advertising from the classroom to the newsroom, and the distortion and suppression of news and information by the mainstream media. We also seek submissions that highlight struggles for global justice from the local to the global level; from preserving

communities and cultures to protesting meetings of the world's rich and powerful.

Please send three hard copies of your proposal (no e-mails, please) to: Ron Bettig/UDC, College of Communications, 123 Carnegie Bldg., Penn State University, University Park, PA 16802.

Bravery

(continued from p. 4)

action when one looks through the archives of many Internet newsgroups and the way people made the black pilot "news" to them. Folklorist Patricia Turner and sociologist Gary Fine in *Whispers on The Color Line: Rumor and Race in America*, has studied the trajectory of contemporary rumors and conspiracy theories among African-Americans. These works give some insight into why some of the e-mails about the black pilot framed the story as a case of mainstream media intentionally overlooking the heroism of a black man. To further understand how media reports become "news" to people, we also need to take more seriously the jokes that arise around news; by this I don't solely mean the late night monologues on talk shows, but rather the jokes people tell among themselves and now spread across the Internet. For example, the online journal *Newfolk's* Oct 2001/Issue 5 has several helpful articles about the trajectory of jokes related to Sept. 11, including Joseph P. Goodwin's update of a 1988 piece in which he connected joke telling to news.

One can assign too much importance to an email that people can forward with one mindless keystroke. Hundreds of African-Americans people may have seen the emails about the co-pilot and, like some people I've talked to, felt the focus on race misplaced. Even some of the intros that people wrote before forwarding the more exaggerated email accounts of Homer's heroism acknowledge the different responses with which such an email might be met. The woman who forwarded the email quoted above, appended this intro: "This is not to detract from the horrible disaster that has affected all of us, however, this is a fact that should be known." What the emails do show is that news reception is more complicated than current methods and theories allow.