

Photography and Resistance (New Brunswick/online, 27 Apr 23)

Rutgers Center for Cultural Analysis, Rutgers University / Online, Apr 27, 2023

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History and Theory of Photography Graduate Student Colloquium "Photography and Resistance", The Developing Room Working Group, Rutgers University.

Thursday, April 27th, 2023: 12:30–5:30pm (Eastern Time) free and open to the public (hybrid).

Please join us for the Developing Room's Seventh Graduate Student Colloquium on the History and Theory of Photography. This year, we will focus on the subject of photography and resistance writ large.

Photography, bell hooks tells us, can be liberating. Using the medium, disempowered subjects can connect "to a recuperative, redemptive memory that enables us to construct radical identities, images of ourselves that transcend the limits of the colonizing eye." But across its many historical arcs, photography has also consistently offered another side of the same coin: exploitation. Pictures of unwilling and marginalized peoples abound, be they colonial subjects or incarcerated citizens, or in extreme cases victims of atrocities. How do we understand and historicize these countervailing powers of the medium? In what ways might we account for articulations of the self and others that, as Tina Campt suggests, "resist easy categorization and refuse binary notions of agency versus subjection"? Our next graduate student colloquium at the Developing Room inquires into photography as a dialectical site of resistance and exploitation. The medium may offer innumerable opportunities to thwart forces exercised by institutions, governments, and photographers, and it can contest the hold of images that express such power. But what are the ways in which the medium has been successfully used as a form of refusal despite its frustrating mutability, and are there patterns to the forms of nuanced pushback that it has taken? How do evolutions in the medium's technologies both afford and squelch efforts to image and exercise resistance? And what of the troubled relationship between people engaged in struggle and photographers seeking to speak for them? How might we conceive of self-fashioning and proud quotidian life as itself a form of resistance in pictures, even if the images are "neither wholly liberatory vehicles of agency, transcendence, or performativity nor unilateral instruments of objectification and abjection," as Campt expands? And how might the unveiling of hidden communities and practices contribute to overturning stereotypes and regimes of repression, only to be absorbed into the body politic as false intimacy or spectacle?

This event will feature presentations by four Ph.D. candidates who are working on dissertation topics in which photography – its histories and theories – plays a central role. Each presenter will give a 25-minute presentation on a chapter or a section from their dissertation, along with an

account of how that chapter/section fits within their larger project, followed by 25 minutes of discussion. The Developing Room invites a large audience of faculty and students in order to ensure a rich conversation. In the past, our event has brought together an international group of researchers working across a wide range of topics related to photography.

The respondent will be Dr. Kylie Thomas, Kylie Thomas is a Senior Lecturer at the Radical Humanities Laboratory and Art History at University College Cork, Ireland. She is also a Senior Researcher at NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Dr. Thomas writes about photography, visual activism, feminist, LGBT and anti-racist movements, resistance and protest, and South Africa during and after apartheid. She is the author of *Impossible Mourning: HIV/AIDS and Visuality after apartheid* (Wits University Press & Bucknell University Press, 2014) and co-editor of *Photography in and out of Africa: Iterations with Difference* (Routledge, 2016) and *Women and Photography in Africa: Creative Practices and Feminist Challenges* (Routledge, 2020). She has held numerous research fellowships, including a European Institutes for Advanced Study Junior Fellowship at the Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna, Austria; a British Academy International Visiting Research Fellowship at the University of Brighton, UK; and a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship at NIOD. From April-September 2022 she was a Visiting Scholar at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz. She currently co-directs the NIOD ImageLab, which focuses on war and visual culture from the time of the Second World War to the present.

PROGRAM / Schedule of Events in Eastern Time:

12:30 pm: Introduction and Welcome, Prof. Andrés Zervigón, Rutgers University

12:45 pm: Kimber Chewning, Boston University

The Turn to Experience: Constructing Michael Schmidt's Berlin-Kreuzberg

1:15 pm: Discussion

1:45 pm: Alex Fialho, Yale University,

Lola Flash's "Cross-Colour" Vision of Art, AIDS and Activism

2:15 pm: Discussion

2:45 pm: Break (15 minutes)

3:00 pm: Daniel Menzo, Stony Brook University

Looking Back, Dragging Forward: Visualizing Queer Resistance in Early Portraits from Colombia

3:30 pm: Discussion

4:00 pm: Summer Sloane-Britt, New York University

Imaging the Plantation Zone: Black Feminist Ecologies in Doris Derby's Photography

4:30 pm: Discussion

5:00–5:30 General Discussion with Dr. Kylie Thomas, University College Cork, Ireland

The Developing Room at the Rutgers Center for Cultural Analysis
Academic Building, West Wing, Room 6051
15 Seminary Place, New Brunswick, NJ, 08901

- To attend in person, please RSVP at developingroom@gmail.com
- Register in advance for this event:
<https://rutgers.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYtceuprjliGtG3BFhto3O5o9iYYglTQorl#/registration>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining via Zoom.

More information about the presenters, including their bios, paper titles, and abstracts, can be found on the event website at www.developingroom.com/events. Please send any questions to developingroom@gmail.com.

Sponsored by the Center for Cultural Analysis, Rutgers University.

Reference:

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