



CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

WILKINSON COLLEGE OF
LETTERS AND SCIENCES

Esthetic History and the Knowledge of the Human

Generative Anthropology Summer Conference

Chapman University, Orange, California

Thursday 26 June -- Sunday 29 June 2008

Call for Papers

Chapman University is pleased to present the 2nd annual Generative Anthropology Summer Conference, with the thematic focus "Esthetic History and the Knowledge of the Human."

Generative Anthropology is an ambitious, interdisciplinary way of thinking initiated by Eric Gans in books such as *The End of Culture* (1985), *Originary Thinking* (1993), *Signs of Paradox* (1997) and *The Scenic Imagination* (2007). Its current vitality is indicated by the recent publication of an anthology of pieces devoted to GA, *The Originary Hypothesis: A Minimal Proposal for Humanistic Inquiry*, edited by Adam Katz (2007); by the continuing fullness of the online journal *Anthropoetics*; and by the robust success of the first GA weekend conference held in Vancouver last July.

Scholars unaware of GA may visit the *Anthropoetics* website for information about it. We emphasise that Generative Anthropology will be of congenial interest to a wide range of workers in humanities disciplines such as literature, literary theory, literary history, esthetic history, philosophical anthropology, cultural politics, philosophy of mind, and the sociology of art and religion. Researchers in the social and natural sciences with an interest in human origins, the origins of language, cultural

evolution, evolutionary psychology, cognitive psychology and other disciplines will also find its hypotheses thought-provoking.

The organizers of GASC 2008 therefore invite interested researchers to submit proposals for papers that explore the possibilities for analytical interaction between Generative Anthropology and topics falling under the umbrella formulation of "Esthetic History and the Knowledge of the Human." We welcome analyses of particular literary texts, artistic works, esthetic trends, or crucial events in the history of an art (music, theatre, painting, architecture, design); analyses of the contributions made by specific philosophers, theologians, artists, and other intellectual figures to the history of human self-knowledge as mediated by esthetic production; studies of the competition between popular and high art; considerations of "primitive" art and the archaeology of early human artifacts in relation to hypothesis formation about human origins; philosophical reflections on representation and the sign, especially as these might sharpen the differentiation between esthetic experience and experience of the sacred, and the differentiation between esthetic cognition and "scientific" knowledge of the human.

Preference will be given to papers that explicitly engage with ideas contained in that body of intellectual activity designated as Generative Anthropology. However, we will also welcome submissions by scholars new to but curious about GA who are engaged in fundamental reflection on the human as it relates to our theme of Esthetic History and the Knowledge of the Human.

All papers should be a reading time of 20-25 minutes. Proposals, 500 words maximum, should be sent by attachment in MS-Word to schneide@chapman.edu. **Deadline:** 31 March **2008.**

GASC 2008's Chief organizer is Matthew Schneider, Professor of English and Dean of Humanities at Chapman University, Orange, California. All correspondence, questions and proposals, should be sent to Dr. Schneider at schneide@chapman.edu. Canadian participants may send inquiries also to the Canadian co-organizers, Andrew.Bartlett@kwantlen.ca or IanDennis@uottawa.ca.

This conference is endorsed by Wilkinson College of Letters and Sciences at Chapman University.