

18TH ANNUAL TUFTS UNIVERSITY ENGLISH GRADUATE CONFERENCE

ON DIFFICULTY

CALL FOR PAPERS:

Difficulty both privileges and excludes. As scholars, critics, students, and educators, we struggle with difficulty and we flirt with it. We revel in it and we strive to master it. At crucial times, we even resist it. While difficult language and concepts can elevate a conversation or expand a critical discourse, difficulty also erects barriers and creates lines of division that are both literal and experiential.

This conference seeks to explore the value and the duplicity of difficulty as the word is received and interpreted across a wide range of disciplines, texts, and genres. It aims to explore the dynamic between the complex and the simplified, and to consider the labor of knowledge production alongside the wonder of the virtuoso performance. What does it mean to experience difficulty? Is the most "difficult" text the most revered? Can difficulty be historicized? How does difficulty create or confine one's sense of belonging? How are the difficult obstacles to knowing otherness commonly figured or represented? Why does critical discourse continue to concern itself with difficulty? What kind of a compliment is it to be "difficult"?

We encourage abstracts that explore and problematize the phrase "On Difficulty" from a wide spectrum of fields and disciplines.

Please send a 1-2 page, double-spaced abstract, including your name, email address and phone number, by July 15, 2006 to:

TEGO Conference: On Difficulty
Amy Woodbury
Tufts University Department of English
East Hall 210
Medford, MA 02155
<http://ase.tufts.edu/tego>



TOPICS MAY INCLUDE :

Genre and identification
Race and legibility
Difficulty and modernity
Challenging the canon
The sublime
Politics of reading
Aporias
The tangible and the intangible
Memory and trauma
Writer's block
Publishing and professionalization
Epistemologies of otherness
The problem of origins
Borderlines
Critique of theory
Power and resistance
The use value of difficulty
Alienation and nation-building
Sprezzatura: the art of seeming artless
Sophistication and vulgarity
Rhetorics of resistance

KEYNOTE SPEAKER LISA LOWE OF U.C. SAN DIEGO

is Professor of Comparative Literature and an affiliated faculty member in the Department of Ethnic Studies and the Program in Critical Gender Studies. She has published books and articles on orientalism, immigration and globalization. She is the author of *Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms*, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*, and the forthcoming book *Metaphors of Globalization*. She is also co-editor of *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital*.

Sponsored by:

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2006