Violence and Redemption

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Harry Garuba on animist materialism; Sarah S. Lochlann Jain on race and the semiotics of smoking; John D. Kelly on discourses of U.S. power; David Pederson on “uncomfortable wars” and commensurability; Janet Roitman on debt in Northern Cameroon; George Steinmetz on the new American imperialism; a visual essay by Arnold Mesches; and more . . .
Editor’s Note

This issue of *Public Culture* was produced in conjunction with the Late Liberalism Project of the Center for Gender Studies at the University of Chicago. In 2000–2001, the Late Liberalism Project sponsored a series of lectures, workshops, and colloquiums to critically interrogate the imaginaries and practices of a variety of global social movements and contestations, some self-consciously liberal, some self-consciously not, others working to free themselves from the grip of this seemingly inevitable choice—to be or not to be liberal. The conceptual linkage of violence and redemption offered a particularly rich place to begin rethinking the genealogies of liberalism outside its own terms. In October 2001, the Late Liberalism Project sponsored a conference on Violence and Redemption to start a discussion on the subject of this special issue. Some of the essays collected in this issue were first presented at the conference. These discussions were generously supported by the University of Chicago’s Provost’s Office, the Lesbian and Gay Studies Project, and the Department of Anthropology’s Lichtstern Fund, and by the Center for Transcultural Studies. Members of the Late Liberalism Project’s collective are Lauren Berlant, Elaine Hadley, Charles Hirschkind, Saba Mahmood, Patchen Markell, Elizabeth A. Povinelli, Michel-Rolph Trouillot, and Candace Vogler. It is fortuitous that the responses to John Borneman’s essay and his reply are also contained in this issue since they speak so directly to its theme.

—Elizabeth A. Povinelli
*New York City*
*December 2002*
Call for Contributions

**miscellany, n.**: a collection of various kinds, especially news clippings, literary extracts, postcards, and other images. Includes media accounts of items relevant to public discourse and debate throughout the world. The section seeks to highlight not only the reported phenomena as such but also the mediated nature of media coverage. *Public Culture* especially seeks pieces that are witty or (unintentionally) ironic. Submissions should include all relevant facts of publication and should be no longer than three pages.

**etymologies, n., pl.**: true sense or form of the network of keywords: public, publicity, public opinion, public sphere. Investigates the contemporary uses and meanings of the terms public, publicity, and public opinion. Short essays (of approximately six to eight pages) that consider the semantics and pragmatics of one or more of these interrelated terms in the context of a particular language and a particular people are welcome. How do these terms compare across cultures and languages? Do their meanings “translate,” and what do their “mistranslations” bode for comparative social theory grounded in what may be hidden ontological statements about civil society?

**artworks, n., pl.**: brief reports (up to 750 words) on innovative critical cultural work within and outside established institutions. Includes new kinds of museums; alternative or oral history projects; the expansion of musical performance and recording into forgotten musical histories or the dissemination of a broader range of musics; alternative publishing ventures or exhibition practices in film, theater, and dance; innovative cultural work with children; public art and art in public such as murals and graffiti; innovative uses of television, radio, or other mass media; and reports on past cultural work—the modernist, socialist, and avant-garde counterinstitutions of the early twentieth century. Send material and proposals to artworks editor Katie Trumpener.

**from the field, n., sing.**: briefly annotated single photographs for inclusion as a photo feature at the end of the issue. Submissions are not limited by style or content but should be glossy prints of at least 5" × 7".

CyberSalon: To join *Public Culture*’s on-line discussion group, send an e-mail message, “Add me to on-line discussion,” to public-culture-journal@uchicago.edu.

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