

Call for Papers:

Reconsidering “the Orient” and “the Occident” in the 21st Century:
Observing the 30th Anniversary of Edward Said’s *Orientalism*

When: April 12, 2008

Where: State University of New York College at Brockport, NY.

Thirty years ago, Edward Said raised a series of questions in his book, *Orientalism*, that have led to an ongoing debate in several fields:

- What is “the Orient”?
- How do we know it, and
- How do systems of knowledge affect the relationship between “the Orient” and “the Occident”?

Once constructed, Said argued, cultural stereotypes of the “Oriental Other” persist in various areas of public and scholarly discourse, helping to shape relations between the East and the West. “Culture” and power thus come to reinforce one another other.

The State University of New York College at Brockport will host a one-day conference and student-scholar symposium to re-examine questions posed by Edward Said’s work. This is an excellent opportunity for students, academics, and non-academics alike to consider how we think of the Other and how such perceptions impact our lives.

Though it has been critiqued in various ways, the influence of *Orientalism* has outlived its author. This inter-disciplinary event will encourage us to re-examine what Edward Said did, what it has meant in academe and in the larger society, and how the questions he raised might be answered in the 21st century. Some suggested topics might include:

- “East and West” and the culture of fear
- racism, radicalism, and imperialism
- terror, the imagination and its aftermath
- media and reality
- Africa as “Orient” in the Western imagination
- gendered knowledge of the Orient and Occident

We invite scholars and students from all disciplines to submit proposals for papers and panels. We are also interested in exhibits and audio-visual presentations that draw upon or illustrate Said-inspired critiques in the visual arts, plastic arts, news media, film and the like.

As part of this event, we invite students, participants and the public to join in a round-table symposium, which we envision as a free-wheeling discussion of Said, *Orientalism*, and related topics of interest.

Papers, panels and exhibits should foster inter-disciplinary dialogues among anthropology, history, literary studies, media studies, area studies, political science, psychology, sociology, and

other disciplines. Paper and/or panel proposals should consist of a 500-word abstract, a curriculum vita and a statement of equipment needs; exhibit and audio-visual proposals should include a brief description of the topic and medium, a c.v. and equipment needs. Please e-mail proposals and any inquiries to: tnishiya@brockport.edu and include the word "Orientalism" in the subject line. Please submit proposals by January 20, 2008.

For further information, feel free to contact Dr. Carl Davila <cdavila@brockport.edu> or Dr. Takashi Nishiyama <tnishiya@brockport.edu>.