



November 2009 Issue

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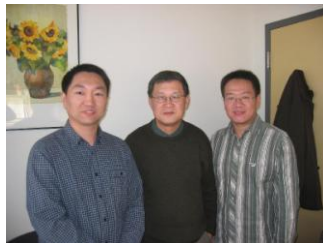
Faculty Scholar
Spotlight
Ralph Cintron



Democracy as Fetish

Associate Professor Ralph Cintron will be discussing his argument that the advent of democracy - not its classical versions but its Enlightenment and modernist versions - can be described as the release of a politics of human potentia. The term potentia refers, in part, to raw enthusiasm and desire aimed against hierarchy and called liberation. This potentia, however, always encounters actual existing

Research Partner Visiting From China



The Great Cities Institute is proud to be continuing their research partnership with China's "Guangzhou Central Business Districts / Central Activity Zones Research Project," headed by Dr. Tingwei Zhang, director of the Asia and China Research Program. A review of the previous research conducted nearly two years ago is under way with the arrival of Ming Yang and Chao Wu, visiting Chicago on behalf of the

Guangzhou Central Business District. As a leading capital city in the southeastern region of China, the intent of this research project is to assess the distribution pattern and roles of the Central Activity Zones / Central Business Districts by comparing Guangzhou to Chicago, Singapore, Seoul, and other global cities.

The review of the previous research conducted in Chicago is intended to reveal underlying forces that are shaping the current developments, promoting innovations to future developments, and identifying possible solutions to challenges brought by the city's rapid growth, especially the modern service industry. Three districts of downtown Chicago will be visited to examine the effect of these forces. They include North Michigan Avenue, State Street, and La Salle Street. These areas have been chosen due to the evolution of the business and financial industries of these areas that are now composed of more service oriented industries. Yang and Wu hope to gain a better understanding of the development models utilized here in Chicago that can be applied to Guangzhou as their city makes the transition from an economy focused on manufacturing to a more service oriented industry.

The research trip in Chicago is scheduled to last three weeks from Monday, October 26 to Friday, November 13.

governance. Both right wing and left wing versions of potentia attempt to reform or transform actual existing governance to fit their own images and desires. The lecture will present some of the stalemates and paradoxes (antinomies) internal to political discourse and action, but more importantly it will argue that actual existing governance is what I call a "mixed system" in which oligarchic tendencies make use of the rhetorics of democracy. Both the left and right in equal measure fetishize democracy as part of a tactic to critique and dislodge the mixed system. But, ironically, these moves also serve to reinforce it. More than likely there is no end to the mixed system because it preserves life as we know it, and, hence, no end to the fetishization of democracy.

Biographical Sketch

Ralph Cintrón holds a joint appointment in English and the Latino and Latin American Studies Program. His research and teaching interests are in rhetorical studies; ethnography, particularly urban ethnography; urban theory; theories of transnationalism; political theory, particularly the anthropology of democracy; and social theory. Research wise, he has been working ethnographically in specific Puerto Rican and Mexican neighborhoods in Chicago. Some of this work has occurred inside an alderman's office where the focus is on housing issues. Other work in these communities has been focused on labor, immigration, the transnational political and economic forces that underpin these neighborhoods, and the evolution of political



Grant to Assist Seven Chicago Low-Income Areas



Neighborhood Initiatives

The University of Illinois Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives (UICNI) was recently awarded a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Children and Families Compassion Capital Fund to help serve seven low-income Chicago community areas. The grant is intended to help create ChiWest ResourceNet (CWRN), a targeted capacity building initiative, which will aim to provide support in the form of curriculum development, technical assistance, and training to leadership of these communities. According to principle investigator and associate director Nacho Gonzalez of UICNI, "The focus will be on serving those organizations with budgets below \$500,000 with whom UICNI has forged a solid bond of trust and respect among leadership of these seven culturally diverse, low-income neighborhoods."

For the full news release on the ChiWest ResourceNet (CWRN) capacity building initiative please visit

<http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/gci/documents/CompassionGrantReleaseNov2009.pdf>.

ideology.



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CNM - Social Media Integration



CNM, UIC's fully online Certificate program in Nonprofit Management, catapulted into the world of social media this October. Unveiled was the introduction of a Facebook social media account, envisioned to engage CNM participants, community academics and professionals in social discussions. With a history in spearheading the e-learning movement nearly a decade ago, and building a strong and trusted following locally, nationally and worldwide, this new site will strive to continue creating a culture of globalization and growth within the nonprofit community.

One of the first scheduled events that will be conducted through the social media site will be a free writing webinar on Wednesday, November 18. Conducted by professional editor Dan Spellerberg, he will illustrate how it is possible to make your professional writing a memorable destination that stands out amongst all the muck through employing some very simple and straightforward techniques.

To attend this writing webinar and to begin receiving news, strategies, and community updates from nonprofit professionals, please become a fan of CNM at

www.facebook.com/NPManagementOnline.