

Public Humanities @ Western presents



MENGELE'S SKULL

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FORENSIC AESTHETICS

Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2011 – 5:30 pm

Somerville House, Room 3317, The University of Western Ontario

In 1960, Adolf Eichmann was tried in Jerusalem and the 'era of the witness' commenced. In 1985, the body of Josef Mengele was identified by a group of forensic scientists in Brazil, giving birth to a rather different notion of evidence in human rights discourse. The talk will explore the emergence of the object in human rights, the conditions of its presentation, and the aesthetic operations involved in deciphering the 'speech of things.'



THOMAS KEENAN

Director of the Human Rights Project and Comparative Literature Professor, Bard College

Thomas Keenan teaches literary and political theory, media studies, and human rights at Bard College, New York, where he is associate professor of comparative literature and director of the Human Rights Project. He is the author of *Fables of Responsibility: Aberrations and Predicaments in Ethics and Politics* (1997), and co-editor of books on Hannah Arendt, the museum, media studies, and the

wartime journalism of Paul de Man. He has published in *PMLA*, *The New York Times*, *Wired*, *Aperture*, *Bidoun*, *Political Theory*, amongst others, and has also served on the boards of WITNESS, the Soros Documentary Fund, and *The Journal of Human Rights*.

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