

American Studies Center, University of Warsaw

Friday, April 17, 2009
Interdisciplinary Symposium

**Post-Race? Post-Gender? The Politics of Identity
in Contemporary United States**

The 2008 presidential campaign abounded in references to race and gender, as well as mutual accusations of sexism and racism. On the other hand, it has been suggested that America now enters a post-race, post-gender, as well as post-homophobic era, with women and minorities enjoying unprecedented levels of social inclusion. Our aim is to discuss the politics of race, gender and sexuality in the elections and, more generally, in contemporary U.S. How have the meanings of gendered and racial identities shifted in recent years? Does Barack Obama's "race" signal a new era? What are the rules and limits of public discourse on these matters?

15.00 – 16.30 Keynote Lecture

Suzanna Danuta Walters

Homos R Us: Queerness and the Dilemmas of Integration

Suzanna Danuta Walters is Professor and Chair of the Department of Gender Studies at Indiana University. Her work examines questions of gender, sexuality, family, and the place of (post)feminism in popular culture. She is the author of *All the Rage: The Story of Gay Visibility in America* (University of Chicago Press, 2001) as well as two earlier books: *Material Girls: making sense of feminist cultural theory* and *Lives Together/Worlds Apart: mothers and daughters in popular culture*. In *All the Rage* she looks at the rise of gay visibility in American culture and politics during the last 15 years, raising questions about the politics of this development. The book was the subject of much debate in the media and a finalist for, among others, the Lambda Literary Award.

16:30 – 17:00 Coffee break

17:00 – 19:30 Panel

Post-race? Post-gender? Case Studies in U.S. (Post)identity Politics

William R. Glass

By Any Other Name: Identity and the Labeling of People of African Descent in America

Screening and brief discussion: Byron Hurt (dir.), Barack & Curtis: *Manhood, Power & Respect* (2008)
Documentary film (10 min.)

Agnieszka Graff

“I was different after all. Potentially suspect” – Racial Hybridity and Racial Authenticity in Barack Obama’s *Dreams from My Father*

Aleksandra Szaniawska

“Goodbye to All That?”: Feminist Responses to Sexism and Racism in the 2008 Presidential Campaign

Tomasz Basiuk

How it Feels to be Out There: the Affects of Constructing Gay Visibility