



The Humanities Center  
Brown Bag Colloquium Series 2003-2004

Presents

a talk on

**“Acker Unformed: Against Architecture  
and Postmodern Childhood”**

Date:  
January 13, 2004

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English

Location:  
2147 Old Main

*All Lectures are Free and  
Open to the Public*

Time:  
12:30 p.m. -  
1:30 p.m.

“Acker Unformed” is a literary essay that focuses on several of the later works by the postmodern novelist Kathy Acker. Central to my consideration is Acker’s deregulation of the space of the novel through her presentations of childhood. In order to elucidate, or demonstrate, the relationship between the difficult narrative spaces of Acker’s prose and her stagings of childhood, I turn to several concepts, including “a-subjectivity” and “unedifying architecture,” discussed in Denis Hollier’s well-known interpretation of George Bataille, Against Architecture. While the essay predominantly engages Acker’s work, it also represents a conversation, between my own artistic practice and Acker’s, in regards to the deregulation and redistribution of prose narrative and childhood. Forthcoming in an anthology on Acker’s writings, the essay contributes to on-going commentaries on the overlays of modernism and literary innovation in contemporary women’s writing

Kathy Acker (1948-1997) “was a literary pirate whose prodigious output drew promiscuously from popular culture, high literature, current events, and the raw material of her own life.” She is the author of dozens of innovative prose writings and twelve major novels including Pussy, King of the Pirates; My Mother, Demonology; In Memorium to Identity; Empire of the Senseless; Blood and Gust in High School; and Great Expectations. Her selected essays, Bodies of Work, was published in 1997, and a posthumous reader, Essential Acker: The Selected Writings of Kathy Acker was published by Grove press in 2002.

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