

## KOREA LECTURE SERIES

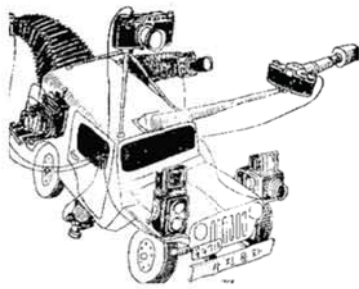


## Overcoming Atomization: Postwar Enlightenment Visuality and The Family of Man

**Monday February 4, 2019**

**4:30-6:00 pm**

**Brower Commons A**



After the Second World War, the United States launched a global information campaign to promote positive images of American life and values in the fight against communism. Among its sponsored projects was Edward Steichen's photographic exhibition, *The Family of Man*, initially designed to promote global peace and collaboration in the wake of worrying developments in technologies of nuclear warfare. The exhibition traveled the world, arriving in Seoul's Kyōngbok Palace in 1957. Contrary to previous commentators of Steichen's exhibit, who have focused on the utopic democratic vision of its curatorial design, I displace the exhibit's primary meaning-making outside of the metropole and the walls of the museum, where South Korean cultural actors appropriated and re-scripted its significance. Furthermore, I develop the idea of *postwar enlightenment visuality* to situate these media events as part of neo-colonial authority's overlapping deployment of discipline, biopower, and necropower, which must somehow compensate for the inherent contradictions of supranational sovereignty. If *visuality*, as Nicholas Mirzoeff has argued, is a visualization of history enacted by authority while making the legitimacy of that authority self-evident, I explore fascinating expressions of *countervisuality* through South Korean postwar fiction and human-interest stories that contested the techniques of subjectification deployed by Steichen and emerging modes of liberal-consumerist and technically mediated vision.



**Prof. Jae Won Edward Chung** was born in Seoul and grew up in Philadelphia. He received his B.A. in philosophy from Swarthmore College and his Ph.D. in Korean literature from Columbia University. He is currently assistant professor of Korean at the University of Colorado Boulder and affiliate faculty in the Department of Ethnic Studies. He is working on a book manuscript that examines the discourse of everyday life in South Korea during the 1950s as a crucial site of post-colonial and Cold War contestations, revealing a range of complex ontological, aesthetic, affective negotiations underway. He teaches courses on literature, film, and popular culture.