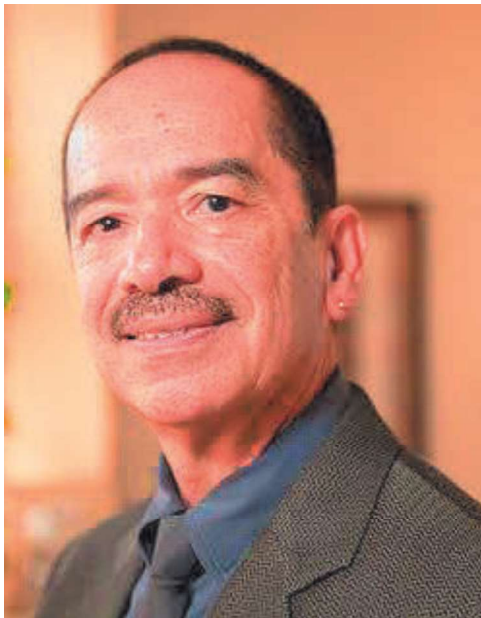




Speculative Realism & Metafiction: Jennifer Egan's Utopian Fantasies

**Tuesday,
June 6, 6-8p.m., c.t.
Casino Cas 1.811**



Ramon Saldívar, PhD
Stanford University

This talk begins from Egan's satirized notion of the "utopian fantasy" of a postracial near-future hyper-technologized U.S. polity. In Egan's *A Visit From the Goon Squad* (2011) and *The Candy House* (2022), the idea of a postracial utopian fantasy helps identify the historical contradictions in the explanations for the persistence of racial injustice, discrimination, and oppression in terms that can then be related to the form and language of the literary text. I address the significance of the novel's central metaphor of social media and the internet as elements of a complex social system for searching for and recovering memory and lost time, and the consequences and limitations of reading Egan's works as "mnemonic art" in the forms of speculative fiction, speculative realism, and speculative history.

Ramón Saldívar, professor of English and Comparative Literature and the Hoagland Family Professor of Humanities and Sciences at Stanford University, was awarded the National Humanities Medal by President Barack Obama in 2012. His teaching and research focus on the areas of literary criticism and literary theory, the history of the novel, 19th, 20th and 21st century literary studies, cultural studies, globalization, and issues concerning speculative fiction, quantitative formalism, transnationalism, and ChicanX studies.

American Studies Research Colloquium

Summer Term 2023

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