John (Song Pae) Cho

“Faceless Things: South Korean Gay Men, Internet, and Sexual Citizenship”

Date: Friday, March 4, 2011
Time: 3:00-5:00 PM
Place: Price Center West, Marshall Room

In this presentation, Cho will examine the connections between the internet and globalization of sexual cultures in one of the most wired and internet-savvy hotspots in the world, South Korea. The explosion of new media (mobile phones, electronic message boards, etc.) has sparked a revolution on this tiny, crowded, and resource-poor but information-rich peninsula. No group has felt its impact more profoundly than South Korean LGBT communities, who have relied on this media technology to covertly express their sexual identities in a country notorious for regulation of information and sexual conduct. In chronicling two very different ways that South Korean gay men have taken up the internet, Cho will highlight the formation of non-state-sanctioned sub-communities within the Korean nation—ones biased more on affect, taste, and lifestyle than on generation, ethnicity, or gender. He will also further a transnational dialogue on what it means to be gay today in face of strident market reforms, neoliberal governance, and global circuits of Internet-mediated queerness.


The lecture series is sponsored by a grant from the Office of the Dean, the Division of Arts and Humanities and additional support from the Korea-Pacific Program, IR/PS.