An Extreme Attention to the Real: The September 11th Memorial, Pascal’s postmortem, and the Ethics of Reading

Date: Tuesday, November 29, 2011
Time: 4:00pm
Location: Seminar Room 162
Emory Center for Ethics

What are the ethics of reading--as claims and responsibilities? What is "the ethics of reading"--as a program or critical practice? Taking its cues from a passage of non-fiction by philosopher Anthony Appiah, a passage from literary fiction by novelist W. G. Sebald, the newly opened September 11th memorial, and a little-known discovery about the death of Blaise Pascal, Dr. Newton will tie ethics to the event of reading, where "rubbing the text," in Emmanuel Levinas's unusual phrase, represents what that philosopher also calls "an extreme attention to the Real."

Adam Zachary Newton, Chair of the Department of English at Yeshiva University, is the author of four books, including his award-winning first book, Narrative Ethics. A fifth book is forthcoming.