gender:dynamic

The Newsletter of the Gender Studies Program at Northwestern University

SPRING 2009, Volume 19

Q&A with Director Ann Orloff

Professor Ann Orloff assumed the directorship of the Gender Studies Program in September 2008, but has been at Northwestern University since 1999. To introduce her, we asked Prof. Orloff a few questions.

How have you been involved with the Gender Studies Program since coming to Northwestern?

I became involved with what was then the Women's Studies Program as soon as I arrived. This was a particularly exciting time for the program, which was then becoming a Gender Studies Program. The change in focus this implied became the occasion to host a Kreeger-Wolf conference in 2000 on "Gender, Race and Reproduction: Bodies, Ideas, Cultures," and to introduce the first of three Faculty/Graduate Seminars the following year.

In 2003, I ran the final Faculty/Graduate Seminar, which focused on "Gender, Social Theory and the Possibility of Explanation" and accepted a rotating appointment in Gender Studies. Since then, I have taught two of the core graduate courses and several undergraduate courses. The course I taught this fall, "Gender, Policy and Politics," was particularly fun since it coincided with the elections and we were able to spend a lot of time thinking about how gender and politics were playing out in each of the presidential campaigns.

What has impressed you most about the Gender Studies Program?

The intellectual rigor of the program, the congeniality amongst the affiliated faculty and graduate certificate students, and the serious and committed undergraduates that the program attracts. This year we have had wonderful Teaching Assistants (Laura Ephraim and Amanda Baugh), committed Gender Studies Cluster Fellows (Greg Mitchell, Ali Boyd and Chris Shirley), a dedicated work-study staff (Marissa Faustini, Carol Millington, Amalia Oulahan), and the amazing Katy Weseman as our Program Assistant.

Are there particular initiatives you hope to introduce during your tenure as director?

We began a "Keywords" series this year in an effort to create more opportunities for intellectual exchange amongst our affili-

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Program Director Ann Orloff

for the Study of Gender and Sexuality. Nick Davis discusses the Keywords series on page 7. The Gender Studies Reading Group, which meets once or twice a quarter, is another forum for our affiliated faculty and interested graduate students to come together to discuss key concepts and new work in Gender and Sexuality Studies. Kasey Evans describes of the Reading Group on page 4. I want to thank Nick and Kasey for doing such a great job coordinating these series this year!

My predecessor, Jeff Masten, laid the foundations for enhanced support for the graduate program, in collaboration with the Graduate School's Interdisciplinary Cluster Initiative. We've continued the Doctoral Colloquium this year, under the able leadership of Laura Ephraim and Greg Mitchell, and we have worked to increase the graduate course offerings; next year we will be introducing two new Gender Studies graduate courses, "Queer Globalizations" (taught by Ramon Rivera-Servera) and "Sociology of Sexuality" (taught by Héctor Carrillo).

Next year, we hope to institute a Gender Studies Colloquium series. For now, the theme of the 2009-2010 colloquium is "Gender and Sexuality in (Trans)ition." This title signals a dual focus— on the transformations that the fields Gender and Sexuality Studies have undergone as they have been brought into conversation, and on the emergence of "transgender," "transsexual," and "transnational" as concepts (or keywords) that inform much recent work in both fields.

I am also delighted to announce that several new Northwestern faculty members will join Gender Studies as affiliated faculty in the fall: Jan Radway (Communications), Laurie Shannon (English), and Steven Epstein (Sociology/Science in Human Culture). Héctor Carrillo will be taking a joint appointment in the Gender Studies Program and Sociology. These scholars' renowned work on gender and sexuality enables us to offer new core and crosslisted courses that will expand the focus of our undergraduate and graduate curricula.



Undergraduate Board Update

by Samuel Levy ('10)

The Gender Studies Undergraduate Board is a faculty advised, student-run group within the Gender Studies Program at Northwestern. While many of our members are Gender Studies majors or minors, some are not - we are open to anyone interested in our work. Run democratically, the Undergraduate Board values each of our members; the vast majority of our events and projects are entirely dependent on individual members' particular interests. We explore varying iterations of gender in relation to contemporary societies, often in an attempt to broaden Northwestern students' understandings of non-normative sexualities/genders while simultaneously exposing them to under-circulated art forms or narratives. In this light, the 2008-2009 school year has been extremely exciting for the board. social components of Brenna's music are weaved seamlessly together with her own personal narrative - of growing up, discovering radical sub-cultures, and searching for non-coercive forms of romance. The evening was a positive experience for everyone who came. Not only were we treated to free music, but Brenna hosted a talk back after the show. As a member of the explicitly political Riot Folk music collective, she fielded many questions about the collective/co-operative process, the underground music industry, and the "do-it-yourself" ethic of Riot Folk. Additionally, we spoke at length about the relationship between art production and social activism. Brenna's goal is to use her music as a catalyst for constructing intentional (radical) communities which re-imagine traditional social relations.



Gender Studies students and friends at the "Teaching Rebellion" event, an interactive lecture focusing on the Oaxacan resistance to state government abuses. Visitors included slain journalist Brad Will's relatives.

In November, we screened filmmaker Parvez Sharma's *A Ji-had for Love* (2007). While many Western academics, theorists, and artists have attempted to shed light on homosexuality in Islamic countries and communities, there are few widely circulated narratives created by self-identified homosexual Muslims. In this well-crafted documentary film, Sharma (who himself is Muslim and gay) interviews many homosexual-identified Muslims who refuse to choose between their sexuality and maintaining an active, faith-based relationship with Islam. Drawing a record attendance of over 40 students from a variety of academic departments and student groups, the screening was followed by a lively and engaged discussion, moderated by Öykü Potuoglu-Cook (Ph.D. Performance Studies, 2007).

This March, the Undergraduate Board brought folk musician Brenna Sahatjian to play on campus. Usually starting as free verse poetry, her songs often consider the complexities of gender, class, and sexuality in contemporary American society. The

Throw Like A Girl by Mugsie Pike ('10)

In each newsletter, Gender Studies asks a student to introduce a course to our readers. Mugsie Pike '10 contributed this description of a Fall 2008 course by Holly Hughes, this fall's Edith Kreeger Wolf Distinguished Visiting Professor of Gender Studies and Performance Studies.

think everyone who took her class would agree that we were extremely lucky to have had Holly Hughes here in the fall teaching "Gender, Sexuality, and Performance: Throw Like A Girl." It was one of the best classes I've taken at Northwestern.

It was also one of the best performance classes I've ever had. It's rare for a teacher to create such a fertile and supportive environment. The class was offered through the Gender Studies Program, so it was not a performance class per se and roughly

44 If gender is a kind of doing, performed, in part without one's knowing and without one's willing, it is not for that reaon automatic or mechanical."

- Judith Butler, Undoing Gender

half the students had no background in performance. Despite, or perhaps because of that, by the end of the quarter, the class had created both an incredibly diverse body of work and a close community. It was the first time this class was taught at North-

western. Holly was not originally planning on having the students do performance work but offered it as a possibility and, because everyone felt comfortable, the class voted to become more performance -centered. The class brought together very different groups of students and Holly's flexibil-



ity allowed the class to accommodate all of them, while never getting out of control.

Holly not only encouraged creativity, she also created a safe space for her students and helped build a community. Everyone was seen as capable of anything the class took on



and as having something valuable to contribute. As a result, the final performances incorporated students' own styles, experiences, and strengths. There was no pressure to conform to a particular mold, so no one produced a formulaic piece.

The class began with a number of readings on influential performance artists and groups, such as Tim Miller and Split Britches. Then we moved

into group performance exercises, such as theater games, improvisational yoga, and small performances of group-revised fairy tales. Class ended with a fireside in Jones Residential College and two days of individual performances. Fortunately, Holly Hughes is back for more this quarter and is teaching "Performance Art" in the Performance Studies Department.

A Visit with Katherine Frank

by Christie Stiehl ('10)

Then studying a controversial topic, most anthropologists Shy away from actually sharing the experiences of the population being studied. Sometimes for reasons of safety, sometimes in the name of objectivity, but often because of the professional and social stigmatization associated with topics such as recreational drug use, polygamy, and sex work. Katherine Frank caught my attention because she dared to explore what it means to be a stripper by sharing the experiences of the population she studied. For her dissertation, Frank worked at five different strip clubs and interviewed over thirty male strip-club regulars. Her resulting ethnography, G-Strings and Sympathy: Strip Club Regulars and Male Desire, offers insight into the dynamics of strip clubs that could only be gleaned from an insider's point of view.

The Gender Studies Undergraduate Board collaborated with Northwestern's annual Sex Week in April this year to bring Dr. Frank to campus. While on campus, Frank gave a larger public lecture on her strip club findings and had a smaller lunch discussion on her recent work on polyamorous relationships and the trouble with monogamy. For the larger lecture, Frank shared her findings on the purpose strip clubs serve for their male patrons, provided suggestions for new ways to look at the gender, racial and class implications involved in sex work and discussed her own experiences as a cultural anthropologist who also worked as a stripper. Not only did Frank's lecture shed light on a stigmatized, often unstudied industry, it also re-sparked an older feminist debate about whether women can ever truly be empowered by sex work.





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GRADUATE STUDEN

Doctoral Colloquium

by Gregory Mitchell (Ph.D. Candidate, Performance Studies)

nder the leadership of Ph.D. candidates Laura Ephraim (Political Science) and Gregory Mitchell (Performance Studies), this year the Gender Studies Doctoral Colloquium (GSDC) has once again been providing a space for feedback on, dialogue around, and the workshopping of a variety of graduate student writing. In the Fall and Winter Quarters, we had a wide range of interdisciplinary projects. Meghann Pytka (History) workshopped a grant proposal for her dissertation research entitled "Policing the Binary: Roman Dmowski and the Polish Right on the Eve of the Holocaust." Ashley Black (Performance Studies) workshopped her Ph.D. performance recital "Consider California!" that was subsequently performed for a standing room crowd at the Annie May Swift Studio. Elena Krell (Comparative Literature) solicited feedback on a seminar paper entitled "Butler and the De[con]struction of the Subject." And Kareem Khubchandani (Performance Studies) presented a draft for his upcoming debut at the American Studies Association/Popular Culture Association conference in New Orleans.

The GSDC holds its sessions in the form of working lunch meetings approximately once a month, and is also planning a social outing to attend an evening of autiobiographical storytelling, "Second Story," at Webster's Wine Bar in the Spring Quarter. All students currently working toward, or potentially interested in, either the Gender Studies graduate certificate or cluster, are welcome to attend our meetings. Students who wish to be added to the group's listserve should contact the Gender Studies office via e-mail at: gender@northwestern.edu.

Gender Studies Reading Group

by Prof. Kasey Evans

The Gender Studies Reading Group has enjoyed four lively meetings during the 2008-09 academic year. Aided by good food, good wine, and the insights of our brilliant colleagues, these four exuberant conversations have afforded myriad perspectives on gendered labor and value in the post-industrial global economy.

On December 4, we met to discuss *Temporarily Yours*: *Intimacy, Authenticity, and the Commerce of Sex* (University of Chicago Press, 2007), by Columbia University sociologist Elizabeth Bernstein. *Temporarily Yours* explores the evolution of the commercial sex trade across rapidly changing technological, spatial, and social lines. In this new postindustrial economy, Bernstein argues, the sex trade has changed not only in form but in content. *Temporarily Yours* thus uses sexual commerce to achieve a new perspective on the organization of social and economic life, and the interdependence of private, affective experience and public economic exchange.

On March 23, the GSRG convened to discuss Deborah Spar's book The Baby Business: How Money, Science, and Politics Drive the Commerce of Conception (Harvard Business School Press, 2006). Spar assumed the presidency of Barnard after twenty years at Harvard, where she earned her doctorate in government; became the Spangler Family Professor at Harvard Business School; served as senior associate dean of the business school; chaired the University's Committee on Human Rights; and created an executive leadership program in Africa called Making Markets Work. The Baby Business investigates the economic and ethical quandaries created by the largely unregulated market in reproductive technologies. While GSRG discussants appreciated Spar's insights about the lack of government oversight of reproductive markets, many were perplexed by Spar's apparent reification of reproductive desire per se, and wished for a book that considered the ways in which such markets might create, foster, and sustain the very desires they purport to satisfy.

During the spring, the GSRG ventured into new territory with two meetings focused on creative rather than critical texts. On April 21, we met to discuss two films: Bertolucci's 1998 *Besieged* and Jorge Gaggero's 2004 *Cama Adentro / Live-in Maid*. The former film follows an African refugee who has fled her unidentified homeland after her husband's imprisonment during a military coup. The latter film, a semi-comedy, explores gendered labor and class distinctions in Buenos Aires. *Cama Adentro* explores these issues as they condition the relationship between Beba, a privileged divorcée, and Dora, the maid who has lived with her for nearly 30 years. In May, we met to discuss Monique Truong's 2004 novel *The Book of Salt*, inspired by a fleeting reference in Gertrude Stein's *Alice B. Toklas Cookbook* to "Indochinese" men employed by the famous literary couple.



44 Discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling -block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy.
77 - Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*





Alumnae/Alumni Updates

Krista Larson (2000) works as a journalist for The Associated Press in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In fall 2009, Öykü Potuoglu-Cook (Graduate Certificate, 2007) will be joining the Franklin Humanities Institute as a Posdoctoral Associate. At Duke University, she will revise her manuscript, "Pluralist Aesthetics and Fractured Publics in Turkey," and participate in the themed faculty seminar on "Innovation." **Rebecca Rossen (Graduate Certificate, 2006)** has moved to Austin where she is an Assistant Professor in the University of Texas at Austin's Performance as Public Practice Program in the Department of Theatre and Dance. She is also happy to be an affiliate faculty member in the Center for Women's and Gender Studies. **Amanda Schwartz (2005)** will be graduating from Columbia Law School this May and will be clerking with Justice Helen E. Hoens on the New Jersey Supreme Court next year.

Katherine Zwick (2001) will complete an MA in Clinical Psychology at the American School of Professional Psychology in April of 2010. Next year she will work as a therapist-in-training with survivors of sexual assault and sexual abuse with Rape Victim Advocates in Chicago. Zwick is developing theoretical and therapeutic interventions for survivors and perpetrators of rape with the goal of developing strategies for future generations of parents to assist raising their children in ways that might prevent rape.

Gradudate Student Updates

Hollis Griffin (Radio/Television/Film) presented "Public Screens, Commercial Spaces, and Media Culture's Gay Consumer-Citizen" at the School of Communication's Graduate Research Symposium in the fall. In November, Griffin was a panelist on the Chicago Film Seminar's roundtable discussion "Current Issues in Media Historiography." In February, he was selected to participate in the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities Dissertation Forum. In March, Griffin contributed "Queer, There, Everywhere: Buying & Selling Citizenship on Gay Cable TV" to *In Media Res*.

Jenny Korn (Sociology) became this year's director of Northwestern University's Colloquium on Ethnicity and Diaspora. Korn organized a panel on race research and a panel on health issues, and she presented on online racial identities at the Mid-South Sociological Association conference.

Margo Miller (Radio/Television/Film) participated in a roundtable discussion on "Failure" at The University of Texas at Austin's "Flow" conference in October and gave a talk titled "Why 'Leave it to Beaver' When You Can Ask Your Queer Uncle?: Television Comedy, Transgender Culture, and the Camp Archive, 1955-1969" at Yale University in April.

Gregory Mitchell (Performance Studies) presented a paper entitled "Sex Tourism as Civil Right?: Neoliberalism, Gay Rights, and Brazil's Gay Sex Tourist Industry" at the American Anthropological Association's annual meeting. He also published a book review of Patty Kelly's "Lydia's Open Door: Inside Mexico's Most Modern Brothel" in the *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology.* Mitchell is the co-coordinator of the Gender Studies Doctoral Colloquium this year, and the organizing committee chair for "Radical Intersections: Performance Across Disciplines," a national graduate student conference being held at Northwestern in April.

Michal Raucher (Religion) recently received a Fulbright grant to conduct her dissertation research in Israel. She is chairing a graduate student conference on "Religion and Identity" this spring.





Faculty News and Honors

Nick Davis (Gender Studies and English) recently published an article in *GLQ* about John Cameron Mitchell's *Shortbus* and other recent commercial narrative films featuring explicit, unsimulated sexual acts among the cast members. He also has book chapters forthcoming about the political activism of Julie Christie and Vanessa Redgrave in the 1970s and about the films *The Wild Party* (directed by Dorothy Arzner, the pioneering studio filmmaker of the 1920s and 1930s) and *Brokeback Mountain*. Penelope Deutscher (Philosophy) published *The Philosophy* of Simone de Beauvoir: Ambiguity, Conversion, Resistance same argument at a conference in honor of Louise George Clubb at the University of California, Berkeley. In early May, at the Spenser Society Sessions at the International Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo, she delivered a paper on Edmund Spenser's beast fables, that tried to answer: Why do Renaissance poets all pretend that they're old gossipy women? **Bonnie Honig** (Political Science) is on leave this year at Oxford University writing a new book called *Antigone*, *Interrupted: Justice, Gender, Humanism*. The book grew out of one of her lectures in "Moral Dilemmas and Political

(Cambridge UP, 2008). In 2008-2009, she held a Humboldt Research Fellowship at the Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung in Berlin. Deutscher also gave "The Age of Sex and the Sex of Age," as the keynote address at the "Age/Aging: On Simone de Beauvoir's The Coming of Age" conference at the University of Vienna, in February 2008. Her exchange with Alison Stone and Mary



Audience of faculty, students and guests attend Holly Hughes' Kreeger Wolf lecture in Fall 2008.

Beth Mader on Stone's new book on Luce Irigaray was published in *differences* in 2008.

Alice Eagly (Psychology) published Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders. The book won the 2009 Distinguished Publication Award from the Association for Women in Psychology. Eagly and Linda Carli gave a joint invited address at the recent (March) meeting of this organization. Kasey Evans (English) has been delighted to serve the Gender Studies Program this year as a member of the Advisory Committee and the Events Committee, and the continuing director of the Gender Studies Reading Group. In her own research, she continues to explore issues of gender and sexuality in Renaissance English and Italian literature. Her article, "Misreading and Misogyny: Ariosto, Spenser, and Shakespeare," will appear in the upcoming special issue of *Renaissance Drama* dedicated to "Italy and the Drama of Europe," edited by Albert Russell Ascoli and William West. In late April, she delivered a version of the

at Cornell in September, he has given lectures on Shakespeare and the history of sexuality this winter and spring at U Maryland, U Alabama, Penn, and Middlebury College. Carol Simpson Stern (Performance Studies) won the Galub Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award through the School of Communication this year. She received the award at the school's Honors Convocation on May 20, 2009. Sandi Wisenberg (Visiting Scholar, Gender Studies) began her book tour for The Adventures of Cancer Bitch (University of Iowa Press, 2009) in Grand Rapids in March, sponsored by the Writing Department at Grand Valley State University and Women's Studies at Aquinas College, where she spoke to a feminist theory and activism class. She has also published work recently in Lilith, Colorado Review, Pinch and the Chicago Reader (a review-essay on humor in cancer memoirs).

Shakesqueer Conference

44 What use will she make of **liberty** when she has so long been **sustained** and **restrained**.⁷⁷

-Margaret Fuller, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*

Keywords Conversations

by Prof. Nick Davis

The Keywords Conversations series was one of the first initiatives that Ann Orloff catalyzed as the new director of the Gender Studies Program. The basic format invites two to three speakers representing different field specialties and different levels of seniority within Gender Studies to make informal presentations about how some shared, central term guides or influences their research on gender and sexuality. After these individual pitches have been made, the panel opens the floor to the audience for a wider discussion or debate about the "keyword" of the evening. The series has brought a new form of intellectual vitality and a new opportunity for broad, cross-disciplinary exchange to the program.

In conversation with several members of the Gender Studies faculty, and building from suggestions and models shared by colleagues in other institutions, Orloff proposed a format in which both senior and junior professors as well as graduate students could convene to discuss a pivotal term that they explore, stretch, subvert, or otherwise wrestle with in their research and teaching. This mutual investment in similar discourses helps to underscore both the linkages among the work performed by different scholars, as well as the key disciplinary divides that nonetheless orient these scholars into markedly different relationships to the terms they at least superficially share in common.

In the first Keywords conversation, held in the fall of 2008, involved a panel and discussion of the word "Queer." Featured on the panel were: professor Nick Davis, of English and Gender Studies, and Ph.D. candidates Christine Wood and Theo Greene, both specializing in Gender Studies and Sociology. On May 12, professor Helen Thompson of the English Department explored the contours and functions of "Sex" in gender-related scholarship, as will Gender Studies graduate certificate students Jennifer Tyburczy and Gregory Mitchell. On June 2, Spring Quarter concluded with a fascinating exchange about "Politics" as a rubric for gender and sexuality studies. This panel was comprised of professors Mary Dietz, from Political Theory; current Director of Undergraduate Studies; and Hollis Griffin, a graduate student in Gender Studies and Radio/TV/Film.

Sweet Tea, Something to Say

with Prof. E. Patrick Johnson

Professor E. Patrick Johnson's new book, *Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South--An Oral History* (University of North Carolina Press, 2008) chronicles the lives of 63 African American gay men who were born, raised, and currently live in the South. Ranging in age from 19 to 93, the men speak on various topics from coming of age, coming out, religion, sex, and relationships, among others. The title riffs on the staple drink of the South: sweetened iced tea, but also black gay vernacular formulations of "tea" as "gossip." The research for the book was conducted over two years with Johnson traveling to over 15 different states below the Mason-Dixon line. *Sweet Tea* debunks many myths about homosexuality in the South, including the notion that only northern urban cities have thriving queer communities.

In addition to the book, Johnson has created a one-man show called "Pouring Tea: Black Gay Men of the South Tell Their Tales," based on some of the men's narratives, which he has toured to over 30 college campuses around the country. The show tells of Chaz, a transgendered person who lives as a man on Sunday so he can sing in the church choir, but lives as a woman during the rest of the week; Larry J., whose early years of sexual experimentation is both humorous and disturbing; Freddie's story of being raised by parents who did not want him is heartbreaking, but also delivered with an ironic twist; Countess Vivian, the oldest narrator, recounts his life during the 1920s and the 1930s on the streets of New Orleans; and, Stephen, one of the youngest

men, shares the moving story about being pressured to conform to a traditional notion of masculinity and enter a heterosexual relationship that produces a son. The show will be produced by About Face Theater in conjunction with the Ellen Stone Belic Institute

Weet

E. PATRICK JOHNSON

for the Study of Women in the Arts and Media at Columbia College in the fall.



Prof. E. Patrick Johnson, Performance Studies Chair & Gender Studies Advisory Committee Member The Gender Studies Program at Northwestern is an interdisciplinary program, with faculty affiliates drawn from more than 25 departments across four of the University's schools.

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Top Left: Students socialize over dinner at the Teaching Rebellion event. Top Right: Program Assistant Katy Weseman displays the progam's course description flyers. *Bottom*: Judith Butler joins Peg Birmingham (DePaul), Mary Dietz (Northwestern), Sussanah Gottleib (Northwestern), and Linda Zerilli (University of Chicago) during a panel discussion following Bulter's lecture "Keeping Comany With Onself: Arendt on Eichman Contra Kant."

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