

# Voices



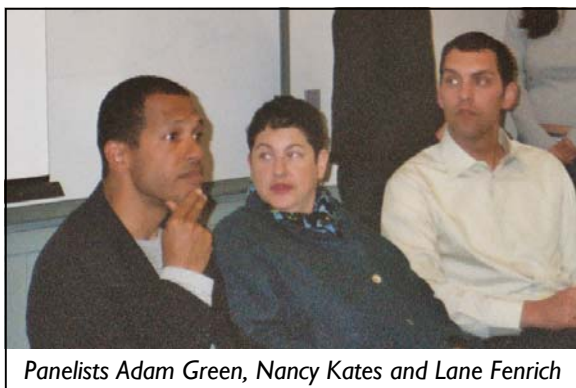
## The Newsletter of the Gender Studies Program at Northwestern University

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### Leslie Hoffmann Colloquium

#### Negotiating Identities: Race, Sexuality, and Human Rights

Panel discussion with **Nancy Kates**, director/producer of *Brother Outsider*; **Adam Green**, Assistant Professor of American Studies and History at NYU; and **Lane Fenrich**, Northwestern History and WCAS Assistant Dean.



Panelists Adam Green, Nancy Kates and Lane Fenrich

#### With Special Screening of

### Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin

This compelling documentary on Bayard Rustin, civil rights activist and organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, whose accomplishments were forced into the background because of his openly gay life, was made an official selection of the 2003 Sundance Film Festival and is currently nominated for a 2004 NAACP Image Award.

By Adrian Frandle

This Spring, the Gender Studies Liaison Committee presented a special screening of the documentary film *Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin* at Block Cinema, with RTVF and Studio 22. The film was shown in conjunction with a Leslie Hoffmann Colloquium on the topic "Negotiating Identities: Race, Sexuality, and Human Rights." Marvelously directed and compiled by Nancy Kates and Bennett Singer, the GLAAD Award winning film chronicles the complex and influential life of Bayard Rustin, a key figure in the Civil Rights movement. Rustin was responsible for the organization of the March on Washington in August of 1963, a friend and advisor to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and an openly gay man who devoted the whole of his adult life to political activism. These achievements barely scratch the surface of the accomplishments that mark the life of this "Angelic Troublemaker."

Born in 1912 in Westchester, Pennsylvania, Bayard achieved local fame early through his talents as both a high school football hero and an eloquent singer. Rustin's music and words underscore the film in the absence of an omniscient narrator, allowing Rustin a voice in the exposition of his life. He continued to pursue music and voice when he entered Wilberforce University in 1932, but his college career ended abruptly after he was asked to leave for organizing a strike opposing the University's "unpalatable" meals. What could have been a major setback did not deter Rustin from causing a stir in other parts of the country, but rather

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**"We need in every community a group of angelic troublemakers. Our power is in our ability to make things unworkable. The only weapon we have is our bodies, and we need to tuck them in places so wheels don't turn."**

**-- Bayard Rustin**



Gender Studies "Angelic Troublemakers." Back row: Annie Lee, Jennifer Probst, Prof. Fran Padon, Emily Hagenmaier, Tony Rella Front row: Tresca Meiling, Lizzy Venell

# Word from the Director

This summer marks the end of my tenure as Director of the Gender Studies Program. Come September, I will be a faculty fellow at the Alice Berline Kaplan Center for the Humanities here on campus. I will miss living in the cacophony of people and events bubbling out of 2-360 Kresge Hall. My heartfelt gratitude to everyone in the Gender Studies community for your collective warmth, your dedication, and genius. As Director, my task has been to connect the various aspects of our complex enterprise and to make that whole apparent to ourselves. Our expanded newsletters over the past two years reflect the whirlwind innovative courses, new faculty, student awards, speakers, seminars, and a major conference. Your energy and enthusiasm enliven these pages.

This issue of the newsletter especially highlights student contributions to the Program. We lead off with events surrounding this Spring's Leslie Hoffman Colloquium focusing on the complex issues linking politics and sexuality presented by the life of civil rights leader Bayard Rustin. First Professor John D'Emilio, a distinguished historian and pioneer in gay and lesbian history, provided a rich context for considering Rustin's unresolved conflicts in relation to American politics and culture. With Nancy Kates' and Bennett Singer's award winning documentary *Brother Outsider*, Bayard Rustin, the man, came alive through his voice and image. When stu-

dents and faculty came together for the panel discussion featuring Nancy Kates, Adam Green (Assistant Professor of History and American Studies at New York University) who knew Rustin as a family friend, and Lane Fenrich (Assistant Dean and Lecturer in History and Gender Studies), the conversation very quickly and substantively focused on those aspects of Rustin's life that resonate with us today: the unsettled questions of race, sexuality, and respectability, as well as the problems of political mobilization in a homophobic world.

My thanks to the Liaison Committee for coordinating and seeing through these linked events. Your work shows us clearly that the questions animating our classrooms have an importance and relevance in the world. Similarly, news from alums, filmmaker Yvonne Welbon ('01) who returned to NU to discuss her films in Professor Enteen's class and activist Katy Quissell ('02) who spoke to Pat Scharfe about her work on the recent March for Women's Lives in Washington, remind us that these links are forged continuously. Annie Lee's report on this year's Take Back the Night event and Tony Rella's article on the Midwest Bisexual, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, and Allied College Conference document the extent of continued student activism.

New courses introduced this Spring also underscore the conversation between living gendered lives and their academic

examination. For example, Joan Sherman's professional linkage seminar stressed that economic development is never gender neutral. In her class, students studied both sides of social change: how international agencies have shaped social patterns by cultivating gender explicit programs, and equally, how the same agencies have had their unexamined assumptions come back to haunt their well-intentioned plans. Nhi Lieu's course on the politics of beauty posed questions not often studied academically because the topic is often deemed frivolous. Yet as students in the class point out, beauty ideals encapsulate power relations and moral assessment. They are well worth interrogation and political struggle. These insights were interestingly echoed in this Spring's Edith Kreeger Wolf Lecture by Professor Kim F. Hall on aesthetics and commodification in early modern Europe. Rebecca Rossen's class brought theories on the performativity of gender into dance and choreography as sites where the bodily replication of gender can be examined outside its everyday routines. Two graduate student performances: Jeffrey McCune's *Dancing the Low Down*, and the collaboration of Michelle Campbell and Coya Paz in their queering of *West Side Story* further underscore the vitality of this line of inquiry on staging and negotiating identities.

*Cont. on p. 16*

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## *Gender Studies Year-End Party*



Jennifer Probst, Eric Hoyt, Emily Hagenmaier



Laura Hadden, Tessie Liu, Lars Johnson



Clare Cavanagh and Annie Lee



Amy Partridge and Tresca Meiling



Eric Hoyt, Michelle SanPedro, Emily Hagenmaier,  
Lizzy Venell, Mel Bostwick



Irene Brondi and Shannon Summerfield



Pat Scharfe, Joan Sherman, Kate Doehring, Kristina Hughes



Tresca Meiling and Lizzy Venell



Jane Winston and Meredith Buse

### ***Congratulations to Gender Studies Award Winners!***

#### **George C. Casey Undergraduate Essay Prize**

Eric Hoyt, "World War II VD Training Films: Disease, Gender & American Wartime Culture"

*Honorable Mention to*

Michelle San Pedro, "Sex, Lies, and Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome"

#### **Betty Jo Teeter Dobbs Prize for Outstanding Senior Thesis**

Emily Hagenmaier, "Untitled (Queer Mourning and the Art of Felix Gonzalez-Torres)"

*Honorable Mention to*

Mel Bostwick, "The Scientific Study of Homosexuality: Sex and Gender in the Search for a Gay Gene"

#### **Gender Studies Student Leadership Awards**

Elizabeth Venell and Tresca Meiling

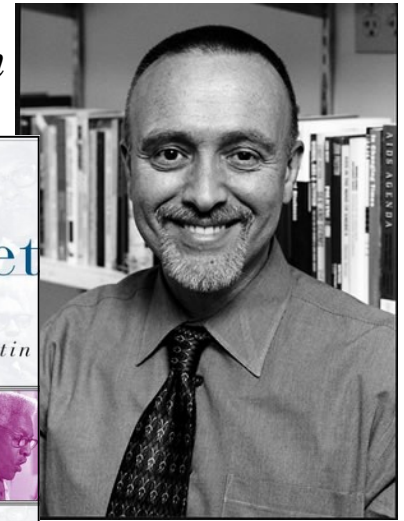
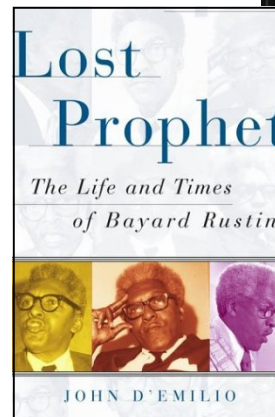


# Professor John D'Emilio Speaks on Bayard Rustin

By Emily Hagenmaier and Eric Hoyt

"If you're looking for a historic figure with whom you can align yourself on every issue, Bayard Rustin is not the person," said Professor John D'Emilio in a March 30 lecture at Northwestern.

D'Emilio, Professor of History, Gender, and Women's Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago, is the author of such influential works as *Sexual Politics*, *Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* and *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*, co-written with Estelle Freedman. In his latest publication, 2003's *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin*, D'Emilio offers a biography of the civil rights organizer and activist.



John D'Emilio

Initially, D'Emilio set out to write not a biography of Bayard Rustin but rather a broader history of the American 1960s. In Rustin, D'Emilio saw the shifting exuberance, disillusionment, and hopelessness of the 1960s. From the Cold War to the Civil Rights Movement, Rustin's life traversed the key social and political issues of the 1960s. In the early '60s, Rustin was a "radical's radical." However, by the end of the decade, Rustin had formed a tenuous relationship with the Johnson administration. Throughout these years Rustin's life provides a "panoramic view of mid-twentieth century progressive activism."

For D'Emilio, Rustin's story reveals how a person's political commitments may change over a lifetime. In the 1930s, Rustin developed a strong awareness of issues of racial injustice perpetuated under capitalism. By the end of that decade, Rustin came into contact with Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence. Boldly protesting World War II and Cold War militarization, Rustin devoted his activism to nonviolent protest. In addition, he remade American pacifism by incorporating racial injustice as a key tenant.

Throughout his work towards social change, Rustin encountered the constraints of homophobia. His opponents, both within and outside the civil rights movement, used his sexuality as a weapon against his activism. During his 1944-1946 imprisonment for refusing to enter the wartime service, Rustin organized his fellow inmates in a prison protest against segregation. Administrators



*For many years the main barometer of civil rights in this country related to its treatment of Black people.... Today the main barometer of human rights is attitudes towards gay, lesbian and bisexual people."*

— Bayard Rustin, 1987

charged him with sexual misconduct in order to silence the demonstration. Later, in 1960, Congressman Adam Clayton Powell threatened to spread a rumor that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rustin were lovers. These various accusations had profound effects on Rustin's efforts—sometimes furthering his mission and more often thwarting it.

Despite these attempted setbacks, Rustin continued to pursue nonviolent social change throughout the 1960s. Employing the same skills earlier used to mobilize his fellow Kentucky prisoners, Rustin organized the 1963 March on Washington. Later that decade, however, Rustin revised his strategy for social change. In 1965's controversial "From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement," Rustin advocated a political strategy in which radicals worked within "the system." Moving away from a politics of bus boycotts and sit-ins, Rustin sought more direct involvement in passing legislation. By the end of the 1960s, Rustin, who in the 1950s had protested nuclear armament, avoided directly confronting military action in Vietnam.

D'Emilio upheld that, despite the contradictions of Rustin's political activities, Rustin firmly believed that "justice rather than identity must be the platform for social change." According to D'Emilio, Rustin maintained that identity as the basis for politics would inevitably lead to division. Additionally, Rustin insisted that nonviolence, "both in spirit and in deed, is the only means for effective change." Rustin upheld that every act of violence has consequences; no act of violence is self-contained.

After exploring Rustin's life, the power of his influence and the potential that was lost due to the negative stigma attached to his orientation, D'Emilio concluded the lecture by offering a lesson: "The cost of homophobia in terms of progressive social change has been incalculable."

## Colloquium *Cont. from p. 1*

seemed to give him a taste for actively opposing injustice. He joined the Communist League in 1938 and, soon after, the pacifist group, the Fellowship of Reconciliation League. It was in this organization, under the tutelage of AJ Muste, that Rustin honed his skills as a pacifist organizer and non-violent protester. He traveled around the country with groups of students, preaching non-violence and teaching activists to use their bodies to oppose racism, injustice, poverty, and violence. Rustin believed that persecution of any kind, especially racism, constituted an act of violence in and of itself. Rustin committed himself to a life of opposing violence in all its forms.

Rustin refused to move to the back of the bus in a spontaneous protest to fight Jim Crow laws in North Carolina (more than 10 years before Rosa Parks sparked a national movement by doing the same). His troublemaking continued when he refused to conscribe for the United States Army in 1945, for which he was sent to prison for 2 years. Throughout the 1950s he traveled around the world, attending the first World Pacifist Conference in India, and promoting nuclear disarmament in Algeria. Unfortunately, Bayard was forced to take a backseat in the Civil Rights Movement because of an incident in California where he was arrested on "morals" charges, along with two other men, after a sexual encounter in a car. This marked an important intersection in Bayard's life, that of his racial and sexual politics and identities. His credibility was threatened and the incident was repeatedly raised against Rustin, forcing him to take on less public and more organizational roles in the Civil Rights Movement.

Throughout his life, Bayard Rustin committed all of his energy to fighting injustice and furthering causes of non-violence. Although the arrest in California muffled Rustin's voice time and again, he never became mute, and he continued as an important presence in the Civil Rights movement, the labor movement, and countless other political causes. He used his singing and his talent as an orator to fight inequality, vocalizing his protest so that the whole world could hear. He literally became the voice for a movement: "There are times when you can do



nothing, but you must cry out against injustice. If you do not cry out, even the stones will cry out."

A week after the screening of *Brother Outsider*, Northwestern students and faculty had the chance to discuss the film with a panel including one of the directors, Nancy Kates. Also speaking on the panel were Adam Green, NYU assistant professor of American Studies and History, who knew Rustin as a child and served as historical advisor to the film; and Northwestern historian and Asst. Dean Lane Fenrich, who teaches the popular course "U.S. Gay and Lesbian History." Marking the second half of the Leslie Hoffmann Colloquium, the panel discussed "Negotiating Identity: Race, Sexuality and Human Rights" and addressed questions about the intersection of Bayard's politics and sexuality and offered insight into the making of the film. According to the director Nancy Kates, the team behind *Brother Outsider* used over 200 archives when compiling material for the film. Most of the pictures and film of Bayard Rustin relegate him to the background, so searching out usable footage required an extra keen eye and creative editing to focus on him specifically.

The highlighting of Rustin's marginality is one of the most interesting fea-

tures of the film, for instance, when the camera fixes on a picture of Dr. King then pans behind his shoulder to reveal Rustin, or when footage of the March On Washington slows down to show Rustin walking by, smoking a cigarette, while Joan Baez and Bob Dylan play for the crowd. More than just a method of showing Rustin, the visual technique of panning the scene to find him on the edges presents an apt metaphor for his marginality. Behind King, behind the Civil Rights movement, if history pans to the left a little, is Bayard Rustin, a charismatic man of organizational genius. The intersection of his race and sexuality, distilled in the incident in California, led to his marginalization. However, the synthesis of his identities and the politics attached to both, made Rustin the influential and motivating force for justice that he proved to be. As Nancy Kates reminds us, "Behind Dr. King is an openly gay man. When you talk about Dr. King, you have to talk about that." Professor Adam Green also highlighted the fact that Rustin's interwoven identities led to his understanding of himself as an instrument to approach political change. After all, he understood his person, his actual body, to be a means of disrupting the oppressive system by being an "Angelic Troublemaker."

# Professional Linkage Seminar: Stirring Women into Economic Development

By Erica Futterman and Paige Greenfield

Eleven students gather around a conference table in the room adjacent to the Gender Studies office in Kresge Hall. It is 3 p.m. on a Monday afternoon, and for the next two and a half hours, the students will be discussing and debating with each other and their professor, Joan Sherman. The topic of conversation? “Add Women and Stir: International Development and the Politics of Gender,” a first-time Gender Studies professional linkage seminar introduced in Spring of 2004.



Joan Sherman

This course presents an insider's perspective into the complex relationship between gender and international economic development from a seasoned player. Sherman has extensive background working for non-governmental organizations in this field. Bringing her experiences from her work for CARE International, one of the world's largest development and relief NGOs, and the MacArthur Foundation, Sherman shares with students her knowledge of sectors as varied as micro-credit, mother and child health, and water and sanitation from her work in Haiti and India. Her anecdotes highlight lectures and discussions.

Class discussions revolve around students' understanding and analysis of the week's collection of NGO documents, firsthand accounts and developmental theories, all printed in the hefty course packet. There are two additional books required that provide statistical data to supplement the packet, and the curriculum examines different approaches to international development, both from organizations outside and within developing regions.

The course emphasizes the disproportionate effect of poverty on women. In recent decades, as more women are working as development professionals, the goals and mechanisms of including women in development projects have come under greater scrutiny. The field has realized that economic and social change is never gender neutral. Power struggles over resources, whether between ministries or within a family, are greatly affected by gender issues. Using several real-life situations, students study how competing objectives of different organizations, state policies and philosophies, and challenge the practical implementation of programs to benefit women. Students explore what happens to finite resources when a new actor is suddenly given center stage. Student research papers examine both the desired and unanticipated effects that development projects have had on the quality of life for women in the developing world.

## Pandemic: Imaging AIDS

By Anna Dupont

After its opening at the 2002 International AIDS Conference in Barcelona, the exhibit *Pandemic: Imaging AIDS* made its way to Pretoria, New York, Rio de Janeiro, Paris, Bombay and Moscow. For several weeks in January and February, the collection of international photographic works on the topic of AIDS was on display for the Northwestern community at Norris University Center's Dittmar Gallery. On February 5, Northwestern's HIV/AIDS awareness and advocacy group hosted a closing reception. The event drew about 50 students to the exhibit, which came to NU after having been displayed at the United Nations headquarters in conjunction with World AIDS Day. The evening reception featured a presentation made by individuals from the Chicago-land area group BEHIV (Better Existence with HIV), as well as a video documenting the experience of a Northwestern student infected with HIV and eventually AIDS. For attendees, the night's programming added local salience to the global theme of the exhibition's photographs. The works featured in *Pandemic: Imaging AIDS* are reflective of the worldwide struggle against the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The photographs and accompanying written work depict the range of responses to and effects of a disease that has altered the way that people the world over approach their lives, their bodies, and their relationships, both political and personal.

## The Night is Ours

By Annie H. Lee

I think it's safe to say that the majority of Northwestern students have at least heard of Take Back the Night (TBTN), the march against sexual assault and rape. After all, it's the biggest activist event on this campus, drawing an estimated 1,000 women and men every year. Some students may have even realized that it's not unique to NU—in fact, the first TBTN march took place in London in 1977 and is now held on college campuses all over the world. But facts aside, you would never truly know TBTN unless you've experienced it. The same goes for this year's march, which was held on Thursday, April 15th. If you weren't there, you wouldn't have felt the somber—yet heated—energy surrounding The Rock as students convened. The hush as speakers shared their personal experiences with sexual violence, ending with the empowering message that they have not only survived, but will thrive. The heightened fervor of marching down Sheridan Road, shouting, “We have the power! We have the right! The streets are ours, Take Back the Night!” The quiet moments of reflection as the crowd relocated to Norris for an open mic session. The comfort of being vulnerable in front of a supportive community. The encouragement, both vocal and silent. The power of unity.

Of course, Take Back the Night is a different experience for everyone. If you were at this spring's 17th annual march, you'd probably have a lot more to add to the snippets above. I know that for me, the most important realization I came away with is that my concerns are actually the concerns of many. This is the power behind Take Back the Night—it's an opportunity to coalesce and fight against a common enemy. It's an opportunity to support survivors that you've never even met before. It's a reminder that there are others who recognize the urgency of combating sexual assault and rape, both at Northwestern and beyond. Not only are the streets ours, but the night is as well...and through Take Back the Night, we reclaim it together.



# March for Women's Lives/ Katy Quissell '02

By Pat Scharfe

Washington, DC, is a city of 572,059 people, according to the 2000 Census. To get an idea of the magnitude of the March for Women's Lives, one needs to realize that the protesters tripled the city's population on the Sunday of the march, which organizers say brought in 1.15 million. Observers agree that there were over a million at the march, making it the largest protest in decades of recent American memory. The march was both a protest of the Bush administration's assault on reproductive rights and a mobilization for the current election cycle.

Katy Quissell, a 2002 Gender Studies alum, was at the forefront of organizing for the march as an activist with The Feminist Majority Foundation (FMF). Eleanor Smeal, of FMF and former President of the National Organization for Women, was the inspiration behind the march, which was jointly organized by NOW, the Feminist Majority Foundation, Planned Parenthood, and NARAL. Though the Feminist Majority is the smallest of those organizations, it was in some ways at the heart of the march. Katy told me about her road to high-flying activism, as well as her role at and in the run-up to the march.

During her time at Northwestern, Katy double majored in Art Theory and Gender Studies, and took on leadership positions in both the Women's Coalition and the Gender Studies Liaison Committee. The summer after graduation, she worked with Professor Nicola Beisel to research the intersections of racism and the abortion-rights movement. That fall, she interned with NARAL's political department, helping with the 2002 midterm elections in the state of Colorado. The Feminist Majority Foundation offered her a full-time position in "Under 30 Mobilization" in 2003. Her career path bridges the gap from Gender Studies classrooms to public activism.

The March for Women's Lives began as an alliance between four of the largest feminist and reproductive rights organizations. The sheer size of the march required over a year of planning and mobilization, and eventually other groups including the ACLU, the Black Women's Health Imperative, and the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health joined the big four in organizing activity. Katy works out of one of The Feminist Majority Foundation's main offices, in DC (the other is in Los Angeles). She was primarily concerned with organizing groups from college campuses in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Ohio, and Maryland. The Feminist Major-



Katy Quissell with the Feminist Majority contingent during the March for Women's Lives, April 25, 2004.

ity's activists ran training workshops on publicity for the march, how to table effectively, and how to arrange transportation. They also spoke on panels in conferences on those campuses. They tried to make a trip to Northwestern, but the funding for such a trip wasn't available. Fortunately, our campus' Women's Coalition was able to offer seats on buses bound for DC for \$30.

The march itself was pleasingly colorful and fun. The group I came with had marched in the previous day's protest against the World Bank and IMF meetings. The difference between the two was marked. At the IMF march, reds and blacks of anarchists and socialists emerged among the marchers, and Frisbee was played in the midst of the march. The March for Women's Lives had a lot more pink, tie-dye, and women, as well as being larger overall. I wished the anti-IMF protest had had the coherence of the women's march, but both were very peaceful.

For Katy, the day was not what she had imagined it would be. It had grown beyond the point where she could appreciate the size of it, and many plans the organizers originally held fell by wayside because of the disorder engendered by their own success. The "peacekeepers," however, did an excellent job of separating the counter-protesters from the marchers. Katy's role that day was to use the march to sign up activists for voter registration drives. Her 40 volunteers went into the bustling march and came out with 300 more volunteers from across the country willing to start registration drives in a "Get Out Her Vote" campaign. As a non-profit foundation, the FMF cannot participate in partisan politics, but it can target its activism to empower disenfranchised groups. The march brought in many small donations and allowed grassroots activists from disparate regions to meet and coordinate their actions. The march's success, then, is more than just the powerful message that the protesters sent in this election season. A march of that scale is able to have a multitude of contributions. It could not have been better timed.



A photo from the New York Times of the March for Women's Lives.

# Gender Studies Senior Theses



**Mel Bostwick**

**"The Scientific Study of Homosexuality: Sex and Gender in the Search for a Gay Gene"**

My thesis is a critical analysis of the recent scientific studies which aim to prove and locate a genetic basis for homosexuality. These studies come from three main lines of research: neuroanatomy, evolutionary psychology and behavioral genetics, and DNA analysis. Yet they are all susceptible to the methodological and conceptual flaws which have historically characterized the scientific study of sexuality since the late nineteenth century. The methodological problems, such as selection of participants and questionable measurements, are important, and I discuss them briefly. The focus of my thesis, however, is on the flawed assumptions regarding sex, gender, and sexuality on which the studies rest, and their effect on the collection and interpretation of data.

The evolutionary perspective of the scientists conducting this research leads to a heteronormativity which pervades the studies. Not only are biological sex and gender conflated, but more importantly homosexuality is conceptualized as gender inversion, even at the genetic level. In this way the geneticists of today present the same picture of homosexuality as the scientists of the nineteenth century. One gender-atypical characteristic (attraction to the same sex) is associated with a larger gender nonconformity in behavior, skills and attitudes. Additionally, this research is being conducted in a socio-political atmosphere which is highly charged with arguments about the cause of homosexuality and issues of gay rights, and scientific evidence is being used to back up arguments on both sides. For this reason in particular, it is critical that the science being conducted is accurate and valid in its claims. The present research into the genetic "cause" of homosexuality, as it is based on flawed assumptions about gender and sexuality, does not meet that standard.



**Kristina Hughes**

**"Doctors, Detectives and Pretty Women: Feminist and Postfeminist Discourses on NYPD Blue and ER"**

Representations of women on prime-time television have made great progress since the 1950s. Beginning in the 1990s, many female characters on prime-time television have been cited as postfeminist icons, implicitly assuming that feminism on television is no longer needed or relevant. Frequent examples of postfeminist icons include Buffy Summers of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Samantha Jones of *Sex and the City*, and of course the short skirt wearing attorney and title character of *Ally McBeal*. While these characters are certainly significant, I am more interested in women on television who emerge in the context of prime-time drama as "ordinary" or "routine." What does prime-time drama consider "normal" for women? My analysis of programs in this vein suggests that feminist analysis of the 1970s and 1980s still applies to mid 1990s programming--- that critics calling for postfeminist icons might have stepped forward a little too fast. Feminism is still relevant, highly applicable, and even needed to effectively analyze prime-time television. I focused on the first seasons of *NYPD Blue* and *ER*, broadcast in the 1993- '94 and the 1994- '95 seasons, respectively. Upon closer examination of the construction of these series, specifically concentrating on the characterization of women, narrative structures, and televisual style, it appears that the women of television in a supposedly postfeminist era are still held back by elements of sexism in the narrative and construction of the program as a whole.



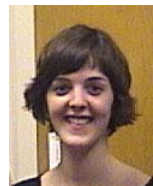
**Elizabeth Venell**

**"Bodies that Menstruate: Constructions of Menstruation, 1950s and Present Day"**

My thesis examines the representations of menstruation in American popular culture, post World War II. Focusing on informational and commercial menstrual hygiene materials from the 1950s, I analyzed the rhetoric used to describe menstruation and the ways that it constructs a particular menstruating body through processes of natural- and normalization of femininity, heterosexuality, and motherhood.

The way that menstruation is discussed in *Molly Grows Up*, a 1950s educational film made by a manufacturer of menstrual hygiene products, now seems humorously dated. For instance, Molly is instructed to "be careful not to square dance... and wear your prettiest dress." However, women's menstruating bodies are conceptualized as vessels of reproduction, to be hygienically and healthfully maintained, married (or at least heterosexually coupled, in the contemporary version), impregnated, and then delivered of another generation of future mothers. This conceptualization is largely shared with the Internet educational materials produced by the same manufacturer, over half a century later, at [www.itsmybody.com](http://www.itsmybody.com).

I offer two suggestions to those interested in changing the discursive production of menstruating bodies. First, the way that 'sex' is conceptualized as male or female affects the understanding of the artifacts of 'sexed' bodies, for example, the fluids they produce. It follows that within a different system of understanding sex, these same fluids are conceived of in very different terms (ever heard of 'male menstruation?') Second, the rhetoric of menstruation is largely borrowed from that of mechanized factory production, as the uterine lining busily prepares for the egg, and so on. The methods of teaching and talking about menstruation must be better articulated to include the functions particular to the menstrual cycle without being imbued with the negative connotations of failed factory production metaphors. Meanings of menstruation must also be understood as they exist amidst standards of heterosexuality and femininity for women. Ultimately, this process of re-thinking about sexed bodily processes in terms of modern gender theory has further implications for all bodies, not simply those that menstruate.



**Emily Hagenmaier**

**"Untitled (Queer Mourning and the Art of Felix Gonzalez-Torres)"**

Working both within and outside of art institutions, from New York art galleries to urban billboards, Conceptual artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres engages art spectators in the production of meaning. My thesis, "Untitled (Queer Mourning and the Art of Felix Gonzalez-Torres)," written with Professor Fran Paden, explores themes of loss and mourning in the artist's work. My project explores the possibility of art as a collective tool in mourning and negotiating losses. I seek to offer conceptions of loss and mourning as not just privatized, individual, and destructive but as public, communal, and creative. Gonzalez-Torres' artwork suggests that the loss of one can be relevant to many and that bereavement need not be a self-contained pathology but may instead impact a community in creative, productive, and hopeful ways.

One of the most compelling aspects of Gonzalez-Torres' work is his insistence on the importance of viewer participation in order to destabilize conventional positions occupied by artist, spectator, museum guard, and art institution in relation to the work of art. For example, all of his works are first titled: "Untitled"—a decision that leaves meaning open to collaborative spectators. Furthermore, in the art of Gonzalez-Torres,



viewer participation is not solely realized through emotional identification or memory; rather, spectators are invited to physically participate in the construction of the art's meaning. The binary opposition between subject and object, viewer and image, comes undone.

With "Untitled (Portrait of Ross in L.A.)," 1991, a glittering pile of multi-colored candies, the artist memorializes the loss of his lover, Ross, to AIDS-related causes. Spectators are invited to take the candies and do with them as they wish-- they can consume the candies right then and there in the museum gallery, give them to a friend, or even forget them in a coat pocket. Regardless, the artist has made arrangements for the museum to forever maintain the candy sculpture at 175 lbs, the ideal weight of Ross. Through this simple gesture, Gonzalez-Torres invites viewers to participate in a collective mourning of Ross—a mourning that transcends boundaries between individual lives and death.

I was first introduced to Gonzalez-Torres' work in Professor Paden's "Gender and Autobiography" course and found it immediately compelling. During the summer before I began writing my thesis, I had the opportunity to work with Chicago-area hospice patients and their caregivers. I found that certain themes in Gonzalez-Torres' art overlapped with some of my experiences with hospice patients and caregivers.

Researching and writing this project gave me the opportunity to combine both personal and academic interests. Together with Professor Paden, I explored theoretical work of Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin, Judith Butler, Douglas Crimp, and Donna Haraway to imagine modes of mourning away from medicalized models that emphasize pathology and alienation. With the generous support of the Undergraduate Research Grants Committee, I was able to travel to New York City to view an exhibit featuring the artist's installations and to speak with Anne Umland, a Museum of Modern Art curator who worked closely with the artist, and Andrea Rosen, a gallery owner and friend of Gonzalez-Torres.

## Honors Projects: Gender Studies and Beyond



**Anneeth Kaur Hundle**

### "Violence and Silence: Intimate Partner Abuse and South Asian Womanhood in Kampala, Uganda"

My gender studies and anthropology thesis is an interdisciplinary project that makes use of historical, political-economic, and battered women analyses to understand domestic violence and South Asian womanhood in Kampala, Uganda. My general awareness of trans-national identity of diaspora populations led to my interest in this particular community of East Africa. I spent six weeks in Uganda, from mid-August until late September 2003. My methodological approach was a series of ethnographic interviews with battered South Asian women. I also discovered the overall prevalence of abuse of South Asian women vis à vis interviews with community members, NGOs and women's rights groups, physicians at public hospitals and private clinics, and intensive archival research—where I found several documented cases of domestic violence, that sadly, led to femicide.

These interviews were conducted in hospital rooms, offices, workplaces, and, for the most part, in the homes of women. My study is based on a total of 30 South Asian women of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan descent—some Ugandan-born and former exiles who have re-settled in Uganda, others newly-arrived immigrants from their countries of birth. Furthermore, my interviews encompassed a variety of women from all class backgrounds, ages, ethnicities, and religions. I interviewed 6 abuse survivors and established about 19 ongoing cases of domestic violence.

Upon returning to Evanston and analyzing my research, I was able to delineate specific reasons why the abuse of South Asian women is so prevalent—and why it has not been addressed. I posit that South Asian women's experiences of domestic violence in Uganda have been intensified by: the marginalized, minority position of South Asians as a community within Ugandan society; the combined negative effects of migration, isolation and male dominance in women's lives; a sexually non-egalitarian legal infrastructure in Kampala (characterized by rife corruption and cultural toleration of domestic violence); and, finally, the disruption of South Asian women's mobilizing and organizing efforts due to the Asian Expulsion of 1972. These interconnected factors have culminated in a contemporary lack of access to resources that potentially could provide battered women with protection and rehabilitation.

Although the stories that the women shared with me are disparate and diverse, several patterns in their lives emerged that allowed me to understand the atrocious violence in a historically post-colonial context. As a South Asian American woman, my insider/outsider identity in Kampala added to the complexities of my research—sometimes in a beneficial way, sometimes not. I hope to return to Kampala someday and create an Asian battered women's shelter, institute Ugandan and Asian women's educational workshops, and support the community as it begins to discuss, address and mobilize around domestic violence. My thesis work has been an extremely exciting project, allowing me to grow as an individual, student, and intellectual. I believe it will provide an excellent jumping-point for my work on Asian and African American identity in graduate school and beyond.



**Jennifer Lynn Probst**

### "Into the Mirror"

My honors project in Theatre culminated in a one woman show performed May 1st, also called "Into the Mirror." I researched, created and performed the piece over the course of the last year. The text was developed from a mixture of my writing and excerpts from published books and songs such as Marya Hornbachers book *Wasted*.

The show dealt with one woman's struggle for identity and self-acceptance through various manipulations of her body, such as anorexia and bulimia. Audience members were encouraged to write down their responses to the piece and to discuss the performance and process with me. Responses reinforced the importance of bringing the issues of the piece out into open and honest discussion, especially with girls around puberty who are beginning to struggle with their bodily and identity changes. Comments also pointed to the importance of communicating with men about these issues as they are often left out of the loop. The purpose of creating the piece was to inspire discussion and change among audience members now and in future performances. I plan to continue revising the piece and use it in the future at a variety of venues with a variety of audiences to raise awareness of women's struggles with their bodies and identities and to promote cultural change.

# GRADUATE STUDENT PERFORMANCES

## *Dancin' the Down Low*

By Elizabeth Venell

"Set to the beat of hip hop," Jeffrey McCune's *Dancin' the Down Low* is a rhythm-driven and enlightening political performance based on McCune's research and ethnographic texts. Staged as scenes from the lives of several black men and women, connected through their complicated relationships to one another and the "down low," a narrator/DJ invites the audience to "remix" their conceptions of black men and sexuality. Four public performances of *Dancin' the Down Low* were given April 23 and 24 at the Wallis Theater.

In this context, the "down low," or "DL," describes the practices of some African American men who have sex with other men but do not identify with the terms commonly used to define their relationships. As McCune writes, they "dis-identify" with available categories of sexuality. Caught in between sexual desires and social definitions, the characters negotiate their identifications and illuminate the multitude of particularities that can occur—but are quite often unexplored or disregarded—in the context of African American culture and the down low.

The characters range from a teenage boy trying to make money for himself and his mother, a married man and father who discovers he and his wife are HIV-positive, and men who hook up over

the anonymous space of an internet chat room, to women who struggle with homophobia and sexism in their own lives. As the vignettes reveal a spread of concerns from the black community, the performance even turns on itself: one character questions the interest of media and society in his DL sex life, which he understands simply as a rewarding, personal choice in a day otherwise spent laboring for low wages. The man is primarily focused on making ends meet, in a culture which is vastly more concerned with black male sexuality than black male employment.

The cleverly interwoven segments follow certain characters as their lives on the DL are exposed. Although the characters respond to tropes of threatening black male sexuality, less well-known aspects of gender and sexuality are also interrogated. For example, women, too, may "get down" with their girlfriends, but these liaisons have not elicited the same kind of popular response as the notorious 'down low.' Instead, sexual encounters between women are often fetishized under a heterosexist male gaze; same-sex relationships between women of color are not charged with the same kind of community disruption that we see with the DL.

Same-sex relationships between people of color, in general, carry the multiple burden of sexism,

heterosexism and racism. In one sense, the down low operates to make a space for homosexual relationships or activities without making a space for those people of color who identify as homosexual. During the talk-back after one performance, an actor claimed that the reluctance of those on the DL to identify as homosexual can send a message to those who do identify as gay men: "we like the way you have sex, but we don't like you." Issues such as these complicate the popular notion that those on the down low are just "closeted" gay men who maintain heterosexual relationships. In fact, as *Dancin' the Down Low* shows, there is not a single type of man on the down low, or one uniform reason why men go on the DL.

During one segment, the characters rotate through different pairings on stage and simulate both violent and erotic couplings. In this way, the performance demonstrates that pleasure as well as struggle exist where a multiplicity of identifications, both personal and political, are at stake. Indeed, the entire performance demonstrates the complexity and the detriment of conflating sexual identification with sexual behavior. *Dancin' the Down Low* is as much about naming and claiming identity in a heterosexist and racist culture as it is about the specific politics of the DL.

## *Queering West Side Story: Pretty, witty, and...*

By Fran Hutchins\*



Photos by Christina Isperduli

1562: Arthur Brooke writes a narrative poem called *The Tragical Historye of Romeus and Juliet*. 1594: The plagiarism begins! Shakespeare steals Brooke's thunder, creating the most overproduced play in Western History: *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*.

During the final weekend of this January, the Jets and the Sharks took to the stage in the Wallis Theater to sing, dance, and shake up notions of gender, race, and performance. Adapted for the stage and directed by Michelle Campbell and Coya Paz, both Performance Studies Ph.D. candidates pursuing the Gender Studies Certificate, the "Drag King Rooftop Karaoke Hootchie Coochie No Name Show and Musical Latin Extravaganza," unofficially (because of copyright issues) called "Queer West Side Story" by participants, played to a full house on both nights of its too-short run at the Wallis Theater. Those who were unlucky enough to be turned away at the door missed a *West Side Story* told as never before. Drag king street gangs, karaoke performances, and two women competing for the role of Maria were just some of the highlights of this highly original take on a very old theme.

1961: The film version of *West Side Story* opens on October 18th. A known homosexual is cast as Tony and a known white girl is cast as the Puerto Rican ingenue Maria. Like all of the "Latino" characters, Natalie Wood and Rita Moreno (the only Puerto Rican in the cast) both sport brownface and bad accents. *West Side Story* wins many Oscars, including Best Picture, Best Direction, Best Supporting Actress, and Best Supporting Actor. Although wildly popular with a range of audiences, the ballet-dancing gangs and tight pants ensure it will be a queer favorite for years to come.

Paz and Campbell, who both grew up as "white-skinned Latina girls," profess to have a complicated relationship to *West Side Story*, including a shared "confused admiration for Natalie Wood." While taking E. Patrick Johnson's Queer Performance class in 2002, the two explored the way that Wood's "brownface performance served as a site of complex racial disidentification," and also considered producing a version of *West Side Story* in which they could both star as Maria.

2002: Coya buys a karaoke machine. Michelle and Coya later realize that they can harness the karaoke machine's power as a mediating technology that disrupts romantic identifications with heterosexual narratives.

Campbell's dissertation is a study of local drag king troupe the Chicago Kings, and Paz works on Latina/o bodies, violence, and representation, so this idea for a production gave them a chance to put theory into practice. Supported by the Performance Studies Winter Performance Hour, the two moved beyond their dream of being Maria and mounted a production that, as they put it, "at once celebrates and expands the 1961 movie's queer significations and critiques the racist structures embedded in the film." That vision made the audience think, and the karaoke performances, audience sing-alongs, and comical choreography, allowed for laughter alongside contemplation. With performances by members of Paz's theatre company Teatro Luna, the Chicago Kings, and several Northwestern students (including the directors in small, non-Maria roles), the show was such a tremendous hit that Campbell and Paz are currently raising funds to remount the performance in the future.

\*Timeline items from production program by Campbell and Paz.

# New Course Explores Radical Stagings of Gender and Sexuality

By Jenna Morgan



Above: Atalee Judy of Breakbone Dance Co. in *Mudwoman*, photo from video by Carl Wiedemann.  
Right: Matthew Hollis in *Tornado, Teardrops, and Tulsa*.



At first glance, a Northwestern student may not see the similarities between such varied dance works as the classical ballet *Swan Lake* and the art of modern striptease and burlesque. But after attending Rebecca Rossen's Spring 04 course "Gender and Sexuality in Physical Performance," one cannot help but notice the ways in which all forms of physical performance and dance follow or subvert conventional ideas of gender and sexuality.

Starting with the Romantic Ballet in the late 19th century, our class analyzed the ways in which the plot and performance of a dance piece, as well as the physical conditions of the dancers' bodies, adhered to past and present institutions of gender and sexuality. For example, after studying the Classical and Russian Imperial Ballet, we moved our attention to modern productions that "queered" the traditional ballet to comment on present-day issues of gender and sexuality such as the all male casting of *Swan Lake* by choreographer Matthew

Borne. Another week, entitled "Queer Kinesthesia and Sexual Heterodoxy: Nijinsky," which included readings on sexuality in the Ballet Russes and viewings of Nijinsky's major works, the class discussed the closeting of homosexuality in male dance. The course ended with dance in pop culture, offering up able opportunity for gendered readings in striptease, music videos, and musical film.

The second paper topic revolved around a special performance on campus, entitled "Warriors and Queens," organized by Rossen with the support of Simon Leland fund of the Weinberg College of Arts and Science. The event featured presentations and performance by Chicago area choreographers Atalee Judy and Matt Hollis, who commented on gender and sexuality in their own work.

Atalee Judy started the Breakbone Dance Company in 1996 to house the extreme emotional and athletic nature of her dance which draws from her background in the 1980s hardcore punk scene and her experience with martial arts.

Atalee's choreography excavates the difference between human frailty and strength. As evident from the two pieces performed, "Logotype 03" and "Mudwoman: Nightmare Vision #1" Atalee's Bodyslam technique works against accepted aesthetics and dancerly notions of "perfection" by developing physiques with remarkable upper body strength that enable dancers to land safely from potentially violent and hard falls.

Matt Hollis, by contrast, explores the tension between movement, words and time. "Sticky emotions are my favorite, secrets seem futile, and lies are easily recognized. Laughter is essential; it gives balance to the sadness.... Pulling from the past I reinvent worlds for the future, sincere, bedazzled, alternate worlds. Every performance makes a mark, sheds a skin, and leaves a trail. Historian, activist, comic, trailer drag princess, my closet is too full of hats to have any skeletons." Hollis' first piece, "Tornadoes, Teardrops, and Tulsa," performed in drag, is an homage to his mother inspired by Bob Dylan's song "Just Like A Woman." His second piece, "That Afterschool Special Feeling" explores unrequited teenage love from that triumphal adult moment when you see that the object of your past longing "is fat" and that you're "over it."

After the performance, Judy and Hollis invited the audience to participate in a discussion, where questions concerning artistic intentions, the viewers' reactions, and the dancers' personal histories were met with eloquent and interesting answers from both performers. The small setting and comfortable audience created an exciting atmosphere that was one of a kind for students from the class, Judy's and Hollis' fans from the city, or those who wandered in out of curiosity.

Throughout the quarter, Rossen's class nurtured this inviting climate. Without any prerequisites needed in dance or Gender Studies to take the course, the class consisted of a wide variety of undergraduate and graduate students interested in learning more about the ways in which the human body can comment on gender and sexuality in performance. This open enrollment allowed those with more interest than experience to engage in conversation with students majoring in dance, theater, gender studies, and anthropology, just to name a few.



# The Edith Kreeger Wolf Lecture

**Kim F. Hall**

*Thomas F.X. Mullarkey Chair in Literature, Fordham University*

By Tessie Liu

In the early 1970s, Chicago philanthropist Edith Kreeger Wolf observed that female students had few role models among the faculty of American universities. In consultation with her daughters, Carol Kreeger Davidson and Margery Kreeger Fridstein, who were both educated at Northwestern, she decided to make a gift to the University that enabled her daughters to develop into successful women. Inaugurated in 1973, the Edith Kreeger Wolf Endowment has brought to campus distinguished women leaders and academics who have been in the forefront of their chosen fields and who have pioneered in realms of knowledge that incorporate and problematize gender. The visiting professorships, public lecture series, and, since 2000, the conferences, have been an invaluable complement to the teaching of our faculty and to the development of the interdisciplinary study of gender and sexuality at Northwestern.

This Spring Professor Kim F. Hall, the Francis F. X. Mullarkey Professor of Humanities at Fordham University, delivered the 2003-04 Edith Kreeger Wolf Lecture entitled "Object into Object? Feminist Readings on the African Presence in Renaissance Art."



Kim F. Hall

As a scholar still early in her career, Professor Kim Hall has achieved already many of the distinctions and goals of the Kreeger Wolf ideal in both research and pedagogy. The recipient of numerous prestigious grants and fellowships from

## Object into Object? : Feminist Readings of the African Presence in Renaissance Art

the American Council of Learned Societies, the John Carter Brown Library, the Folger Library, National Humanities Center, the Newberry Library, to name the most recent, and earlier, from the Ford and Mellon Foundations, Professor Hall has played an active role, in turn, extending fellowship support and building mentoring programs to serve a diverse and engaged professoriat.

Hall's first book *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* was a ground breaking work which first brought together black feminist theory and early modern studies. Pushing beyond the boundaries of received academic disciplines and those of canonical literature, her work has generated a new wave of scholarship on the intersection of race and gender in the study of Shakespeare and Renaissance/Early Modern Literature. Professor Hall has lectured nationally and internationally on her research and is deeply committed to curricular reform, workshops on pedagogy, and developing new materials for classroom use.

At noon on the day before her public lecture, Professor Hall provided Northwestern students and faculty, through the sponsorship of the English Department, with a sample of such materials during her workshop on Colonialism, Women, and Race in Early Caribbean Travel taken from her current book *Sweet Taste of Empire: Sugar, Gender, and Material Culture in Seventeenth Century England*.

Centering our attention on two short pages from a seventeenth-century English travelogue, Richard Ligon's *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbadoes*, Professor Hall culled from our close read-



ings, the complex connection between aesthetic appreciation and commodification in Ligon's description of a dinner encounter between himself, a Spanish Padre and the latter's mulatto mistress. While easily interpreted, at a first reading, as a profession of Ligon's attraction for another man's mistress, Hall guided us through the clinical dissection of the female body in Ligon's description and its systemic valuation of body parts to luxury cloths, precious metals, and jewels. In this critical reading, we began to see the broader social and economic processes at work in the text.

In her lecture the next day, Professor Hall further elaborated this theme

# Race, Class, and the Politics of Beauty

By Helen Cho and Veronica Percia

In American society we often see beauty reduced to one universal ideal -- white and thin. People pour over pictures of celebrities in magazines and become fixated with makeover shows such as "The Swan" and "I Want a Famous Face." These images become embedded into our cultural identity as we obsess over the rich and famous and watch the Cinderella-esque stories come to life.

Though the United States claims to be a multicultural society that glorifies diversity and acceptance, we see dominant culture, through subtle and overt gestures, portraying white as the standard of beauty. As globalization takes effect, the world becomes smaller -- and more susceptible to Western ideals of beauty. The double eyelid surgery that runs rampant in communities of Asian women both in and out of the United States, as well as African-American women who straighten their hair are evidence that the media and globalization are creating raced beauty ideals.

Professor Nhi Lieu's class began with some philosophical approaches to human beauty. In the eighteenth century, beauty was associated with proportion and harmony. Kant, for example, claimed that

aesthetic judgment was disinterested and valid for all people because ideal beauty was the highest realization of the category. Following these ideas, nineteenth century racial theorists claimed that beauty reflected moral capacity. Not surprisingly, those whose features they could not appreciate were consigned to the defective and monstrous. Significantly, ethical and artistic reasoning justified seeing culturally specific aesthetic judgments as a universal objective measure.



Students in *Race, Class and the Politics of Beauty*, clockwise from top left: Annie Lee, De'sha Wolf, Consuelo Martinez, Kristina Hughes.

through her analysis of Elizabethan court jewels and aristocratic portraiture. Examining the ubiquitous but mostly uncommented presence of Africans in early modern European art, Professor Hall focused on the role of blackness in the symbolic representation of whiteness. Like the mistress associated with finery, Hall showed many examples of court jewels that featured cameos of black figures wearing pearls or set in ivory, framed by other gems and gold filigree. For example, the famous Gresley jewel, purportedly given by Elizabeth I to commemorate the marriage of Catherine Walsingham and Sir Thomas Gresley, places a black woman surrounded by cupids in a setting that covers the individual miniature portraits of the couple. By embedding whiteness in blackness, this jewel repeats a familiar trope of Elizabethan colonists that the self discovery of a precious whiteness can be accomplished only by contrast to the dark continents. More significant to Hall's argument, the black cameo is on the obverse side of Catherine Walsingham's

miniature, implying a special connection between white femininity and blackness which she explored in the rest of her lecture.

In successive seventeenth century portraits of the duchess of Portsmouth and the duchess of Cleveland, aristocratic beauties in décolleté, draped in silk and lace, adorned in jewels are represented with young black servants who parallel their mistresses in dress and decoration. Whether offering a rare nautilus shell, a beautiful flower, or tying on a bracelet, the attendant is always depicted as giving, but the primary sitter never acknowledges the gift or gaze. As part of the decorative landscape, these beautifully rendered black children iconically heighten the fairness and the erotic power of the main sitter. Drawing an unexpected parallel between sexual and racial oppression, surprising because the connection is made through adornment and admiration, the tantalizing sexuality of aristocratic women and infantilized dependence of Africans are commodified in association and by analogy. As objects to

Given this deeper history, it becomes, then, a worthwhile project to think about the internalization of beauty ideals not as dormant or benign quirks of contemporary culture, but as active, performative products and producers of the larger American psyche. The practices, rituals, and standards of beauty culture as we enact them and experience them every day are not vacuous or anachronistic, but rather, are loaded artifacts of American culture, throbbing with historical context and present day implications that tell a story about the social, political, and economic realities of our society.

With examples from the cosmetic industry, beauty pageants, the politics of hair, and the increasing turn toward plastic and aesthetic surgery, the course aimed for a better understanding of beauty from a business angle as well, particularly for gaining insights into how beauty culture is sustained. Also, by delving into how marginalized groups have responded to dominant constructions of beauty, and how feminists have engaged this site of intense pressure on women's lives, students in the class embraced beauty culture as a critical tool and a canvas, in the hope of turning it into a vehicle for bringing greater social awareness to promote progress.



Kim F. Hall (right) talks with audience members after her lecture.

be exchanged and not subjects who transact the exchange, Hall speculated that the more troubling commodification and traffic of humans in New World slavery and plantation economies may have found its echoes and social acceptance first in the objectification of women. As in so many of her many other works, this lecture offered us profound insights into the role of gender and race in the cultural elaboration of capitalist relations of production and consumption in its infancy.



# Midwestern Bisexual, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, and Allied College Conference

By Tony Rella

Sixteen members of the Northwestern community spent Valentine's Day weekend at Iowa State University for the twelfth annual Midwestern Bisexual, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, and Allied College Conference. MBLGTACC is as ambitious as its unwieldy acronym, earning its reputation as the nation's largest regional LGBT conference by drawing students and faculty from across the Midwest and beyond, including attendees from Canada and New Hampshire. This year's activist-oriented theme — "Speak Up! Speak Out!" — rallied the energies of the LGBT movement's recent victories and the then-fresh civil disobedience in San Francisco.

The opening keynote speaker, transgendered activist Rikki Ann Wilchins, provided a succinct history of gender theory and postmodernity and illustrated how her organization, GenderPAC, mobilizes theory and activism in Washington, D.C. Second keynote speaker, bisexual activist Robyn Ochs, discussed her work in Massachusetts and the need for a shift away from identities toward idea-based movements, stating that she wanted "to be part of a community that strives constantly, and sometimes successfully, to embrace difference."

Both Wilchins and Ochs stressed the need to embrace "both/and," Ochs in particular argued that the LGBT movement must strive for marriage equality and marriage alternatives to increase access for all people at all levels of society. Every speech aimed to stir the audience to present action. The conference also featured Log Cabin Republican Patrick

Guerriero and concluded with Stonewall Democrat Dave Noble, who reminded both college students and non-student attendees that "we're not the future, we're now."

Conference-goers spent the weekend attending workshops on topics as diverse as crafting "Queer Zines," learning about safer sex, identifying with or resisting labels, organizing activist movements, discussing various privileges within LGBT movements, and queering *The Wizard of Oz*, shockingly, as a lesbian fantasy narrative. Workshops offered something for LGBT folk at various stages of self-identification and political awareness, from those with newly claimed LGBT identities to those who have deconstructed and "post"-prefixed their identities into a queer miasma.

The conference's greatest strength is accessibility for people of varying positions of knowledge and identification. One could acquire a rudimentary knowledge of trans issues at the "Transgender 101" workshop in the morning, then after lunch find one's newly forged assumptions problematized at "Redefining Transgender in the 21st Century." Attendees looking for solidarity within a common regional or sexual identity often instead discover fissures between community college or university, rural or suburban hometowns, multiple ethnic or national heritages. Conversations lead to struggles to define identities such as "midwestern" or "bisexual" with inclusiveness and specificity. The conference is an attempt to create community in spite of often overwhelming difference. Fortunately, there was a really fun Valentine's Day dance which accomplished just that.

Northwestern's first LGBT Resource Center opened its doors in January of this year.

Excerpted from our mission statement, the primary goal of the LGBT Resource Center is to be a safe place. We also act as a hub for resources, services and programs of interest to the LGBT and Allied community at Northwestern.

This Resource Center could not have been possible without the dedication and support of countless students, faculty and staff members.

We would especially like to recognize the leadership and support provided by Bill Banis, Vice President of Student Affairs, Bill Johnston, Director of Norris University Center, the late Gregg Kindle, former Director of Undergraduate Residential Life, and the LGBT Support Network.

Hopefully our presence on campus will increase visibility and awareness of issues surrounding gender and sexuality.

## Contact Info:

LGBT Resource Center  
Norris University Center - Office L  
1999 Campus Drive  
Evanston, IL 60208-2500  
(847) 491-1205

e-mail: [lgbtcenter@northwestern.edu](mailto:lgbtcenter@northwestern.edu)

Hours and more info on the web:

<http://www.lgbtcenter.northwestern.edu>

Co-Coordinators: Jenn Williams and Jonathan Lewis

It's not just a closet anymore...



The LGBT Resource Center is a safe place. We are a hub for resources, services and programs of interest to the LGBT and Allied community at Northwestern. Our aim is to increase visibility and awareness of issues surrounding gender and sexuality.

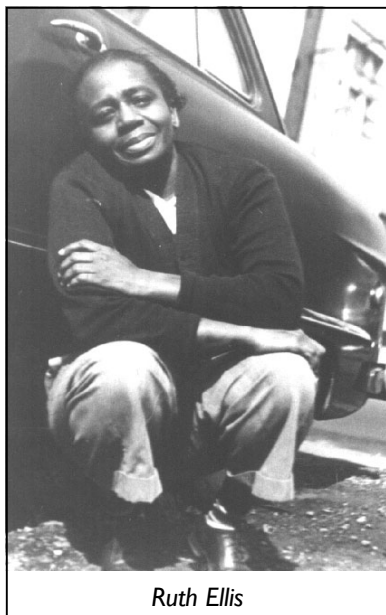


# Filmmaker Yvonne Welbon '01 Discusses

## *“Living with Pride: Ruth Ellis at 100”*

By Eli Brooke

When award-winning documentary film maker Yvonne Welbon first encountered Ruth Ellis, the 97-year-old was out-dancing everyone at the 1997 National Women's Music Festival Women of Color Dance. Intrigued by Ellis' age and vivacity, Welbon set out to learn all about her. She wound up spending the next couple of years interviewing Ellis and her friends, eventually creating a film about her life called *Living with Pride: Ruth Ellis @ 100*. The Gender Studies Program co-sponsored a screening of the film and a visit from Yvonne Welbon during winter quarter, through a WCAS classroom enhancement grant for Jil-lana Enteen's "The Trouble with Normal: Queer Theory" course.



Ruth Ellis

In *Living with Pride*, Yvonne Welbon uses a combination of interview footage, archival photos and documents, and recreations of key scenes of Ellis' life. Born in Springfield, Illinois in 1899, where she grew up with 3 brothers and her father, Ruth came to terms with her attraction to women early on, receiving little negative feedback from her family. Her first crush was

on a gym teacher, and she brought girlfriends home to spend the night with no protest from her father (except one morning when he told her if she made that much noise again he'd kick her out). She believes one of her older brothers was gay as well, since he never had girlfriends and spent most of his time with male companions, but they never talked about it directly.

One of the challenges of making a documentary on a living subject, Welbon explained during the Q&A after the screening, is that the filmmaker has to throw out her own ideas of what will be important in a person's life and focus on the things that mattered most to the subject. All the hardships Ellis faced she met and revisited in interviews with cheerful determination, acknowledging with a shrug her many accomplishments in the face of adversity. She graduated from high school in an era when only 7% of African American girls did so, and went on to learn how to run printing presses from a neighbor.

In 1936, Ruth Ellis met her first and only long-term girlfriend, Ceciline "Babe" Franklin. They moved to Detroit in 1937, bought a house, and Ruth set up a printing press in the front room. This made her the first woman of any race or class to own her own business in Detroit in the 1940s, and Ruth ran the entire operation by herself. She also found time to teach herself photography and painting. This was an exceptional situation for the time, but Ellis treats it as just something she had to do — she considers her life and accomplishments "nothing special," and refers to herself as "just an ordinary little woman."

Babe and Ruth's house became known as the "gay spot" in their neighborhood, one of the few places where gay African Americans could go to socialize in that era, since they were discriminated against even in gay bars. In the film, Welbon recreates scenes from these weekend parties and the years Ruth and Babe lived together. A strong community network



Filmmaker Yvonne Welbon

grew up around their home, and there were always new people coming through, for over 30 years.

In 1971, the couple decided to give up their house, and they moved into separate senior centers — Ruth stayed in Detroit, while Babe went to a suburb. Babe died a few years later, while Ruth went on to be one of the most active people in her community home — she had seemingly endless reserves of energy, went bowling and dancing, and picked up groceries for other, often younger, residents. Around age 80, Ruth was introduced to a network of younger lesbians through her karate teacher. They held her up as a role model, inspiration and "foremother." Through this network, she began to attend conferences and events, where she would occasionally speak, and was able to celebrate her 100th birthday at the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival in 1999, where Welbon's film about her life was shown.

Yvonne Welbon received her Ph.D in Radio/TV/Film from Northwestern in 2001. She cites Fran Paden's Gender Studies course "Writing Women's Lives" as a major influence during her time at NU. "Living with Pride: Ruth Ellis @ 100" has won ten Best Documentary awards and been seen at over 150 film festivals around the world. Her most recent film, "Sisters in Cinema" (2002-03) explores the history of independent filmmaking by African American women. More information about Yvonne Welbon and her work can be found at her website, [www.sistersincinema.com](http://www.sistersincinema.com).

## George C. Casey Prize Winner



Eric Hoyt

Eric Hoyt, a junior Radio/TV/Film major and Gender Studies minor, won the 2004 George C. Casey Prize, given annually for the best undergraduate essay written in any department or program in the university on a topic addressing gender and society. Hoyt won the prize for his paper, "World War II VD Training Films: Disease, Gender and American Wartime Culture," written in an Independent Study in Winter 2004 with Radio/TV/Film Professor Chuck Kleinhans.

In his essay, Hoyt explores three significant anti-venereal disease training films made by the U.S. military during World War II: the Army's *Sex Hygiene* (1941), the Navy's *Sex Hygiene* (1942), and the Army's *Pick Up* (1944). Hoyt argues that these three films tell us much about the cultural constructions of gender during World War II. The films, which were made at different times during the war, expressed a gradual shift in the military's thinking about where VD originated and how it spread. In this way, the films participated in the construction of a new image of the American woman. As the films focused less on prostitutes and more on "amateurs," wartime women became imagined as powerful, dangerous, duplicitous, and unknowable — similar to the femme fatale characters in film noir.

Hoyt plans to continue exploring military training films and the relationship between film and the military in his senior thesis, which will be written in the Performance Studies Department with Professor Paul Edwards.

### **Word from the Director** *Cont. from p. 2*

One of the greatest honors for me this year was to be part of the celebration of Professor Rae Moses' career on the occasion of her retirement. One of the founders of the Women's Studies at this University in the early 1970s, Rae Moses served as Director of the Women's Studies Program between 1986 and 1991 and again in 1994. She was Director of Undergraduate Studies several times and a long standing member of the Advisory Board. Under Rae's leadership, the Women's Studies program made significant institutional strides. In 1990-91, the first faculty positions in Women's Studies were created with the appointments of Alex Owen in History and WS and Micaela DiLeonardo in Anthropology and WS. In 1992, the Program awarded the first graduate certificate. In '93, students could major in Women's Studies. The minor had been established in '86. By the year 2000, when Women's Studies became Gender Studies, the new expanded program was built on an institutional structure that had been carefully laid in place by the tireless work of many dedicated faculty members chief among them: Rae Moses.

Rae came to Northwestern in 1966 as Assistant Professor of Linguistics. Her career has encompassed a period of tremendous ferment and advancement for women faculty. In the late 1960s and '70s, feminist students and faculty linked questions of equity and professional status to the need for inquiry on women and to addressing needs specific to women. When we ask what happened to this radicalism and unified vision by the 1980s -- a question that is often asked of Second Wave Feminism -- well, at Northwestern, we can see its institution parts in Rae's service to the University community. Not only did Rae chair Women's Studies, but in the 1980s, Rae also helped to organize (co-chairing in '84/'85) the Organization of Women Faculty. She was active in sustaining the Kreeger

Wolf Endowment (see article on Kim F. Hall). She played a formative role in the residential colleges, and in growing the Women's Center. At her party, we celebrated a wonderful human being, a great scholar and teacher, and honored an activist who has contributed so much to Northwestern. In doing so, she has swept our lives into one of the most significant social movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> and hopefully the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

With Rae Moses' stunning example before us, we see the kind of community to which we aspire. Our inclusiveness and diversity is not just as a description of who we are, but represents a goal. I have gained my deepest insight as Director working towards this goal. The lesson is actually very simple. To tell it, I am reminded of the story that when famous trumpet and flugelhorn player Clark Terry tried out for Duke Ellington's band, the enigmatic Ellington just wanted Terry to *listen* when Terry wanted to strut *his* virtuosity.\* Eventually the young musician understood that he had to pay attention to the voices around him and appreciate the spaces and silences around them. He had to hear the other musicians. In Gender Studies, we bring scholars from various disciplines from across the University into conversation. We speak from the differentness of our lives and our desires. But more than encouraging forthright expressions, we also cultivate the art of listening. I take this small piece of wisdom with me back into the classroom, into my research, and into my life as a continuing participant in this community. My best wishes for a restful and fun summer. My thanks to all.

Tessie P. Liu

\* As told in George Lipsitz, *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Mu-*

## *Celebrating a Career...*



*Renée Redd and Rae Moses*



*Fran Paden, Rae Moses and Tessie Liu*

In honor of her career-long dedication to women at Northwestern,  
the Gender Studies Program, along with its affiliates and friends,  
is pleased to establish

### **The Rae Arlene Moses Leadership Award in Gender Studies**

This award will be presented each spring to a graduating senior who has fostered initiatives and demonstrated leadership both within the classroom and in co-curricular activities sponsored by the Gender Studies program, such as the Leslie Hoffmann Colloquia, Kreeger Wolf Conferences, Liaison Committee Work, and newsletter production.

For information on the fund-raising drive to recognize Rae Moses or to make a contribution,  
please contact Eli Brooke at 847-491-5871 or [gender@northwestern.edu](mailto:gender@northwestern.edu).

Information is also available from Kristen Williams in the Development Office (847-491-4585)  
or Amy Washington at Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences (847-491-4583).



*Phyllis Lyons, Gregory Ward, and  
Sylvie Romanowski*



*Cathy Coppolillo and Vrinda Nabar*



*Cynthia Bowman and Nancy MacLean*



# Faculty and Graduate Student News

**Hollis Clayson** (Art History) was a Fellow at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts in fall of 2003. She is presently a Visiting Scholar at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, and she has been named the Sterling and Francine Clark Professor in the Williams College-Clark Art Institute Art History Graduate Program for the fall of 2005. She is currently working on a new book project that studies American artists in Paris, 1870-1914.

**Jillana Enteen** (Gender Studies and English) has been invited to Chiang Mai University's Graduate Program in Women's Studies in Thailand this August to deliver the lecture "Phet: Non-Thai Interpretations of Thai Sex/Gender." She also gave the keynote address, called "Queering Digital Space," at Bowling Green State University's Cultures of Technology Virtual Conference in March, 2004, and gave a featured presentation for Communications Week at BGSU titled "Re-Searching Cyberspace/Re-Producing Cyberculture." She will be giving the paper "Hacking a New Poetics: Nalo Hopkinson's Human-Technology Interface" at the Third International Conference of the International Society for Literature and Science in Paris this June. Enteen, who was also a Kaplan Center for the Humanities Faculty Affiliate this year, was recently nominated for a Northwestern University Teaching Excellence Award.

**Paula Kamen** (Visiting Research Scholar) helped review a new chapter for the updated (April) 2005 edition of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* on chronic pain and chronic fatigue syndrome. Her first two books and a play about Jane, the underground abortion service are being acquired by the Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture at Duke University, primarily for its Third Wave feminism collection. These papers on Jane are also at the NU Special Collections Library.

**Chuck Kleinhans** (Radio/TV/Film) has recently published "Court TV: The Evolution of a Reality Format," with Rick Morris, in *Startling! Heartbreaking! Real! Reality TV and the Remaking of Television Culture* (Laurie Ouellette and Sue Murray, eds., [New York: NYU Press, 2004], 157-175), as well as the article "Virtual Child Porn: The Law and the Semiotics of the Image," in *Journal of Visual Culture* (3:2, April 2004, 35-52).

**Phyllis Lassner** (Writing Program) has written a new book, *Colonial Strangers: Women Writing the End of the British Empire*, published by Rutgers University Press.

**Susan Manning** delivered a lecture titled "Making a (Queer) American Dance" at the University of Chicago, Wesleyan University, and Stanford University this year. Her new book, *Modern Dance, Negro Dance: Race in Motion* (University of Minnesota Press, 2004) was published in April.

**Fran Paden** (Gender Studies and Writing Program) has an essay, "Emblematic Sculptures: Autobiography and the Art of Felix Gonzalez-Torres," forthcoming in *Teaching Life Writing Texts*, a publication of the Modern Language Association. In collaboration with Bill Paden (French and Italian), she is translating medieval lyric poetry from Provence for a British press.

**Sandi Wisenberg** (Visiting Scholar) was married to Linc Cohen March 9 at the Bourgeois Pig Cafe in Chicago. Wisenberg published an excerpt of her novel-in-progress in the spring 2004 issue of *Third Coast*, a literary magazine out of Western Michigan University. At the Association for Writers and Writing Programs annual conference in March, she participated in a panel, "Beyond Bellow: Jewish Women Writers in the 21st Century." Additionally, she has published a poem in *Poetry from Sojourner: A Feminist Anthology* (University of Illinois Press, 2003).

## GRADUATE STUDENTS

**Nancy Deutsch** (HDSP) will be defending her dissertation, "There are Birds in the Projects: The Construction of Self in an Urban Youth Organization," in June. In the fall, she will join the faculty at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education as Assistant Professor of Education.

**Fran Hutchins** (French) has been awarded a fellowship to take part in the Paris Program in Critical Theory for 2004-2005. She is also the recipient of a Humanities Center Mellon travel grant.

**Rebecca Rossen** (Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Theatre and Drama) taught "Gender and Sexuality in Physical Performance" this quarter for gender studies. Rebecca earned a Weinberg Course Enhancement grant to produce and moderate "Warriors and Queens: Radical Stagings of Gender and Sexuality in Chicago's Dance Scene," featuring performances by Matthew Hollis and Breakbone Dance Co. The event attracted eighty enthusiastic audience members. Rebecca plans to complete a draft of her dissertation this summer before she travels to Fairfax, Virginia where she will be an Assistant Professor in George Mason University's Dance Department.

**Shelly Scott** (Theatre & Drama) published an article entitled "Been There, Done That: Paving the Way for the Vagina Monologues" that appeared in *Modern Drama*, Fall 2003.

**Ebony Utley** (Communication Studies) recently published an article, entitled "Instrumental and Constitutive Rhetoric in Martin Luther King Jr.'s 'Letter from Birmingham Jail,'" co-written with Leff Michael. The article appears in *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* [7:1 (2004) 37-52].

# Undergraduate Student and Alumni News

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

**Mel Bostwick** (Psychology and Gender Studies, 2004) received honors in Gender Studies and honorable mention for the Betty Jo Teeter Dobbs Prize for her thesis "The Scientific Study of Homosexuality: Sex and Gender in the Search for a Gay Gene." She won the William A. Hunt award for best honors thesis in Psychology for "Concreteness and Symbolic Development: The Effect of Manipulatives on Children's Early Literacy Skills," and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

**Magdalyn Griffith** (Theater and Gender Studies, 2004) received the Winifred Ward Award for 2004-5 from Zeta Phi Eta for outstanding work in creative drama. She plans to enter graduate school at Northwestern next fall to earn a Master of Science in Elementary Education.

**Emily Hagenmaier** (SESP and Gender Studies, 2004) received the Betty Jo Teeter Dobbs prize for her honors thesis in Gender Studies, "Untitled (Queer Mourning: the Art of Felix Gonzalez-Torres)." After graduation, she will be doing research on aging and end-of-life care at the Buehler Center on Aging, a division of Northwestern's Feinberg School of Medicine.

**Eric Hoyt** (Radio/TV/Film major, Gender Studies minor, 2005) received the George C. Casey Prize in Gender Studies for his essay "World War II VD Training Films: Disease, Gender, and American Wartime Culture," which he also presented at the Undergraduate Research Symposium on May 24. Eric was recently inducted into the Lambda Pi Eta Communications Honors Society.

**Kristina Hughes** (Radio/TV/Film and Gender Studies, 2004) received honors in Gender Studies for her thesis "Doctors, Detectives and Pretty Women: Feminist and Postfeminist Discourses on NYPD Blue and ER." After graduation, she plans to live in Chicago and work in media and communications.

**Jennifer Kerner** (History and Legal Studies majors, Gender Studies minor 2004) published an article entitled "Adopting a New System" in the inaugural issue of The Northwestern Undergraduate Journal of Race and Gender Criticism. The article dealt with the issue of about homosexual adoption and the *Lofton v. Kearney* Supreme Court case.

**Viviana Martinez** (English and Gender Studies, 2004) has been accepted to the University of Illinois School of Law (Urbana-Champaign) in the fall.

**Tresca Meiling** (SESP major and Gender Studies minor, 2004) received honors in SESP for her thesis "Exploring the Role of the Facilitator in a Video Club." She was awarded the 2004 Senior Leadership Prize for Initiative and Outstanding Service to the Gender Studies Program. After graduation she is moving to New York City to work for Teach for America.

**Ha-Thanh Nguyen** (History and Gender Studies, 2004) received honorable mention in the William Henry Exum Award for her essay "What It Means to be a Vietnamese in America."

**Jennifer Lynn Probst** (Theatre major and Gender Studies minor, 2004) received honors in Theatre for her one-woman show "Into the Mirror" which she performed May 1st, 2004.

**Tony Rella** (English in Writing major and Gender Studies minor, 2004) received honors in English for his novella *Callings*.

**Naureen Shah** (Medill and Gender Studies, 2004) has been accepted to Columbia Law School in New York City this fall, where she will pursue a career in public interest law.

**Rachel Sockut** (Communication Studies and Gender Studies, 2004) was given the George M. Sargent Award for the best record in regular course of study and outstanding commitment to the department by the Communication Studies department. She was invited into the membership of Lambda Pi Eta, the new School of Communication Honors Society.

**Suzi Sutton** (Communication Studies and Gender Studies, 2004) received the Big Ten Scholar Athlete Award, the Waldo Fisher Memorial Scholarship, the NU Center Court Jean Youngs Baddeley Spirit Award, the NU Alumni Association Scholastic Achievement Award, The Lisa Ishikawa Award, the School of Communication Madeleine Robinson Memorial Award, and was awarded honors in the School of Communication for her thesis "Why Female Athletes Play-Through Pain."

**Lizzy Venell** (Psychology and Gender Studies, 2004) received honors in Gender Studies for her thesis "Bodies that Menstruate: Constructions of Menstruation, 1950s and Present Day." She was awarded the 2004 Senior Leadership Prize for Initiative and Outstanding Service to the Gender Studies Program.

## ALUMNAE

**Blaine Bookey** (2003) is working for the Law Office of Robert B. Jobe in San Francisco, one of the only law firms in the country that represents immigrant gay and transgendered asylees. Her job encompasses both social service and policy making.

**Lauren Gutterman** (2003) is currently working as a housing advocate at a homeless agency in Humboldt Park in Chicago and at the Evanston Domestic Violence shelter. In April, she gave a talk on representations of feminism in pop culture at a Third Wave Feminism conference at Beloit College. She plans to move to New York at the end of the summer and continue working in non-profit.

**Katy Quissell** (2002) has been accepted in the program leading to a Masters in Public Health at Columbia University.



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