

Voices



The Newsletter of the Gender Studies Program at Northwestern University

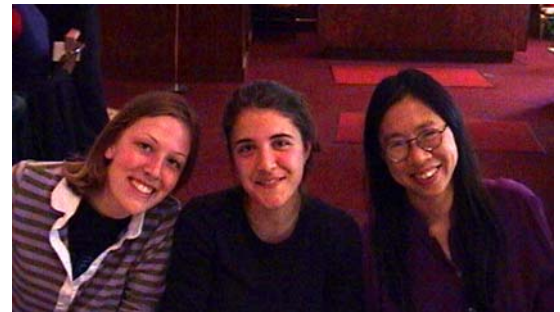
124 Kresge Hall, 1880 Campus Drive, Evanston, IL. 60208. 847.491.5871 gender@northwestern.edu. Vol. 13 #2 Spring 2003

Ends of Sexuality: 2003 Kreeger Wolf Conference

By Tessie Liu

Questions motivate conferences. When the Kreeger Wolf Conference Committee first convened to plan what was to become "The Ends of Sexuality Conference," several sets of questions captured our imagination. The twentieth anniversary of the Ninth Scholar and Feminist Conference held at Barnard College in April 1982, prompted us to ask what had happened to those energizing discussions on the politics of pleasure and its relation to risk and danger? What direction had the theorization of sexuality taken after Foucault? We wished to consider the changing boundaries of the abject and revisit the role of fantasy and pleasure in psychoanalysis.

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Elizabeth Venell, Tresca Meiling, and GS Director Tessie Liu

Judith Halberstam at NU

By Blaine Bookey

In January, the Gender Studies program brought Judith Halberstam, a professor of literature at the University of California at San Diego, for a variety of events. Halberstam, best known for *Female Masculinity*, her book on female masculinity and drag king subculture, spoke about the transgender gaze and queer temporality during her visit. Reality—movies, clubs, youth groups, television, books, and experience—serve as Halberstam's cultural texts. Her theories and unique concepts speak to many, and their accessibility have the potential to radically queer society where strict boundaries and societal structures have no place to call home.



Judith Halberstam

Jillana Enteen's undergraduate Queer Theory class was the first to hear Halberstam speak about her earlier female masculinity work. Femininity and masculinity are no longer attributes relegated to specifically assigned female and male bodies respectively. This single notion radically changes the landscape for looking at gender. As undergraduates, it is often difficult for us to read theory and apply it to our lives; however, Halberstam bases her work in specific cultural examples. For example, she performed ethnographic research, interviewing drag kings, using their real life stories to form a framework for viewing masculinity and queer theory. Queerness exists and is not far from home, opposed to what society would have you think.

In her talk "Shadows on a Dime: Subcultures and Queer Temporality," Halberstam spoke to an audience of 150, impressed by her humor and genuine interest in them. In "queer temporality," heterosexual reproductive standards do not exist, but rather an alternative life narrative thrives. However, there are divisions that society puts in place to further problematize queer life. Queer youth groups create a new binary between youth and adults and generational conflicts emerge. Halberstam calls for a rethinking of

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New Gender Studies Leadership Award Given to Three Seniors



From left to right: David Nyweide, Blaine Bookey, and Lauren Gutterman; the winners of the 2003 Gender Studies Leadership Award.

The Gender Studies Program inaugurated a new prize, the Gender Studies Leadership Award given to senior majors who demonstrated leadership within the program and sought to further the understanding of gender issues in the university and larger society. This year's winners were Blaine Bookey, Lauren Gutterman, and David Nyweide. These seniors were active on the Gender Studies Undergraduate Liaison Committee and took strong initiatives in programming and outreach. Each received a certificate and book chosen by the program.

Word from the Director

At our end-of-the year dinner honoring seniors and prize winners, we all told our favorite memory of Gender Studies. I would like to take this opportunity to share mine. During the Kreeger Wolf "Ends of Sexuality" conference, Michael Warner, standing at the podium in Harris 107 to deliver his talk, was moved to tears. Now teaching at Rutgers, Michael had taught at Northwestern about a decade ago. The campus and the room held many memories and ghosts. Throughout the weekend, we felt Michael's generosity, engagement, and support. The moment at the lectern expressed a private loss for a special friend. I do not wish to claim it for us except to say that I too was moved. Suddenly, for a moment, I saw a split-image contrast with the Northwestern of a decade ago. Much has remained the same. Yet, of course, we have changed. To organize a conference on queer sexualities that held the investment of over two hundred people, and to raise the kinds of theoretical issues that participants posed—these things that would not have occurred when I first came to Northwestern a decade ago. As someone who bridges generations, I see the effects of new faculty, new resources, and new groups of students who bring their enthusiasms and energy. The Women's Studies program of a decade ago was strong and was itself an innovation. On that foundation, we've grown more inclusive, taken in new perspectives, listened to new voices, and learned to think in new challenging ways. This issue of the newsletter is particularly full. I hope you enjoy it and through it, appreciate, as I do almost everyday, the special interaction between students, students and faculty, and among the faculty. My thanks to all. Such changes can only be accomplished collectively.

Wishing everyone a wonderful restorative summer,

Tessie Liu

New Undergraduate Reading Group

By Tresca Meiling

What's that one article you never actually read for that class last quarter?

If you have answers to these questions, we have an opportunity for you! Gender Studies undergraduates met for the second time Friday, May 16, 2003 for the newly formed Gender Studies Undergraduate Reading Group. It's very informal, student-driven, and held at a local Evanston cafe; it's a chance for fellow students to choose and read authors or articles outside of class. We studied Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Pleasure," about film spectators' identification and desire that created controversy among feminist film critics in the 1970s, and selected chapters from Michael Bronski's book, *The Pleasure Principle*, chosen in preparation for "The Ends of Sexuality" conference that the Gender Studies Program hosted at the beginning of spring quarter.

This group is an extension of the Gender Studies Liaison Committee and is looking for anyone and everyone to join us as we continue reading in the fall. Any suggestions are welcome, and the Reading Group is open to inviting other departments to the discussions. Look for more information on the Gender Studies listserv next fall.

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Student Representative

Voices is published twice a year by the Northwestern University Gender Studies Program. Copies may be obtained at Kresge Hall 124 1880 Campus Drive, Evanston, IL 60208-2211.

Phone: 847.491.5871

Email: gender@northwestern.edu

Web: www.genderstudies.northwestern.edu

Program Director

Tessie P. Liu

Associate Director and Director of Undergraduate Studies

Frances Freeman Paden

Director of Graduate Studies

Micaela di Leonardo

Program Assistant and Newsletter Editor

Stephen Motika

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Novelist and UC Berkeley Professor Bharati Mukherjee visits Northwestern

By Alex Switzer

On May 1st, National Book Critics Circle Award-winning author Bharati Mukherjee read from and spoke about her most recent novel, *Desirable Daughters*. Mukherjee, an Indian-born American writer, is now a professor of English at University of California at Berkeley. *Desirable Daughters* tells the story of three women born into a wealthy and traditional Brahmin family who are constrained by a society that undervalues women. When the sisters abandon tradition and leave their home, they find themselves on different continents leading entirely separate lives.

Mukherjee wanted to write *Desirable Daughters* as a nonfiction account about her own feelings about Indian society after having lived abroad for the last three decades. According to Mukherjee: "the book could have been a biography of a class of Bengali women caught up in a 'tilt time' in American culture." Mukherjee describes a "tilt time" as an instant when people are conscious of the changing dynamics of their world, but are unclear on what to do about it yet. Mukherjee abandoned the idea of writing *Desirable Daughters* as nonfiction because she "couldn't do it without a disguise."

Much of Mukherjee's work revolves around the conflict between Indian tradition and cultural attributes of present-day America, intermingling issues of globalism, transnationality, and shifting gender roles. Her work focuses on the "phenomenon of migration, the status of new immigrants, and the feeling of alienation often experienced by expatriates," states Fakrul Alam in his book on the author. Entwined in this complicated matrix of international identities, Mukherjee insists that she's an American. At an informal lunch with Gen-

der Studies students, Mukherjee explained why she does not prefer the label "Indian-American." "I decided to abandon the hyphens because they don't work in a world that doesn't have that sort of pure categorization." By forsaking hyphens, Mukherjee looks to "expand the center" and erase the limitations inherent in categorical identity constructions.

Mukherjee takes issue with multiculturalism and the way it serves as "an appeasement for white guilt" that forces "minorities to fight for the same piece of the cultural pie." She points to the prevalence of festivals and "awareness" projects used to gain recognition for minorities rather than more productive endeavors like increased economic and political power. She does not advocate ignoring culture: "You should know the traditions of cultures but realize that hanging on rigidly and inflexibly doesn't help us at all, and a cancellation of history or a total deletion of history doesn't help either. Know what you have been given but be ready with your machete to clear the thicket. We are heirs to everybody's culture and we get to use these legacies as we see fit."

Mukherjee sees the euphemistic description of the United States as a "melting pot" as outdated because this is a country of immigrant identity that does not necessarily constitute assimilation. "All of my novels look at different ways of constructing identity when faced with uncertainty."

Because Mukherjee's writing entails

reflection on personal experience, her work is very different from the inventions of other present-day U.S. Indian authors. Mukherjee explained that many Indians came over during a wave of immigration in 1972 and harbored the image of an India where the caste system dominates social relations and men dominate women. This has caused Indian Americans to be more traditional, and this nostalgia is reflected in their writing. They write about an India that no longer exists. Mukherjee prefers to write about the "diasporic soul" and highlight the ways immigration shapes experience in a world rife with nostalgia for a homeland where

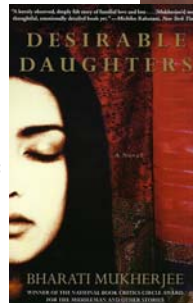
many Indian Americans have in some instances never lived.

Mukherjee enjoys finding fictional characters to "inspire her" and proceeds to work out these issues with that character and metaphoric events; she then opens another file

and starts from scratch with a minor character to make visible a subtext in the life of that character in order to find a morality in the story. "When writing fiction I have to become larger than my daily self to show the motivations of villainous people," Mukherjee mentioned during the lunch. For Mukherjee, the writing process concentrates heavily on the language. "I do most of my storytelling work with verbs, and I want every comma, like Isaac Babel, to stab at the readers' heart's maximum strength."



Bharati Mukherjee (above) and the cover of her most recent novel, *Desirable Daughters* (left).



Sherri Berger, winner of the 2003 George C. Casey Prize

Sherri Berger Wins George C. Casey Prize

by Stephen Motika

Sherri Berger, a sophomore American Studies major, won the 2003 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. Berger wrote the winning paper, "Signifying Gender: Performance and Perception in Professional Wrestling" for E. Patrick Johnson's Fall 2002 Gender Studies course, "Performing Masculinities." In her essay, Berger reads professional wrestling as a field rife with contradictory meanings about gender and sexuality. She maintains that society's readings of the act are as important as the performance itself. Berger writes "gender construction is a function of performance and perception." Berger plans to continue pursuing her gender studies education, and is especially interested in twentieth century American women artists whose work is overtly feminist, although they themselves may not have defined themselves as such.

Gender Studies Senior Theses: *Burlesque in Boston; Dating at NU*

Burlesque in Boston

By Lauren Gutterman

My senior thesis, "Subverting Sex: Burlesque and Its Opponents in 1930s Boston," brings together my American Studies and

Gender Studies majors. This project builds on the work of scholars including Robert Allen, Hazel Carby, George Chauncey, John D'Emilio, Michel Foucault, Estelle Freedman and Lillian Faderman; it combines my interests in performance, sex work and American culture, specifically the historical development of American sexual norms, gender roles and women's rights.

Of the few historical studies of burlesque that exist, most focus on New York City. My thesis moves away from the center of the burlesque phenomenon to Boston to reveal how studying burlesque in a smaller urban setting can provide new understandings of American burlesque and the repercussions of repressive campaigns. In particular, burlesque in Boston took a different path from burlesque in New York City during the late 1930s. Most burlesque theaters in New York City struggled to stay open in the late 1930s, and the city abolished burlesque in 1941. Performers in Boston, however, continued staging burlesque shows in several theaters throughout the 1940s and into the early 1950s. Drawing primarily on reports and correspondence of the anti-vice organization the New England Watch and Ward Society (NEWWS), I maintain that burlesque provided an important space for the transgression of Victorian sexual standards and gender roles in New England during the 1930s, and that the NEWWS anti-burlesque campaign inadvertently made the norms that burlesque fostered more powerful.

To prove this argument, I give a short history of American burlesque since the late 1860s and its relationship to evolving sexual standards. From this, I show how the NEWWS argued against burlesque because it endangered young boys. I contend that NEWWS members' anxiety over gender roles -- undermined by the Depression -- and changing sexual norms made burlesque seem a threat to boys' developing masculinity. The following chapter describes how burlesque in New England continued to provide a space for the transgression of conventional gender roles and Victorian sexual norms by suggesting acts of non-procreative homosexual and heterosexual sex as well as portraying women who were unrepentant about their sexual allure and appetites. The NEWWS reports also provide evidence of women's attendance at burlesque shows. Burlesque offered female audience members an uncommon representation of women who were aware and unashamed of their sexuality as well as a space to gaze sexually at other women.



Lauren Gutterman

In the next chapter, I assert that class and ethnic animosity prevented the NEWWS campaign from success and allowed Boston burlesque to continue. City government officials who depended on an immigrant and working-class electorate would not seriously support the wealthy NEWWS members' campaign, particularly as it would have put immigrants and working-class people out of work. I describe how the NEWWS anti-burlesque campaign failed not only to stop burlesque in Boston, but also to repress its transgressions. The NEWWS campaign introduced burlesque to new audiences, and the Society's few successes against Boston's burlesque theatres increased burlesque's public profile. Without the NEWWS' anti-burlesque campaign, burlesque's sexual standards could not have reached as many middle and upper-class people.

In the conclusion, I explore burlesque's role to the birth control movement of the 1930s. Burlesque's suggestions that sex can serve purposes other than reproduction and portrayals of sexually desirous women may have had a role in easing legal restrictions on the birth-control trade and increasing the acceptance of birth-control's use. The publicity the NEWWS brought burlesque during the Depression could have introduced women to representations of female sexual subjects, encouraging them to separate sex from reproduction, to find pleasure in what had been only their "marital duty," and to use methods of birth control to help them do so.

Dating at Northwestern

By David Nyweide

I remember *The Daily Northwestern* sent me its freshman newspaper several weeks preceding the start of classes. The headline from an article on page 34 attracted my attention: "Love on the Rocks, Yesterday's Song: Looking for Love in All the Right Places is the Key to NU Dating Success." According to the article, dating was virtually nonexistent.

As a Gender Studies major, I thought it would be interesting to investigate the sociology behind the complaints associated with dating at Northwestern for my senior thesis. I interviewed eighteen undergraduates, nine heterosexual women and nine heterosexual men. Their experiences and perceptions about dating at Northwestern were the principal source of information for the thesis. I also researched the history of dating at Northwestern to provide a diachronic perspective that helps explain why many of the respondents from the interviews were frustrated with dating in college.

It seems that a large part of the reason why



David Nyweide

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Writing Women's Lives

Continued from previous page

dating is so difficult today can be blamed on coed housing. When the University's residence halls became coed in 1970, the social structure supporting dating began to erode. Until that time, men lived on North campus and women lived on South campus. Women were required to be in their residence halls by a certain hour each night, and the sexes could only visit residence halls at the other end of campus at certain hours without going beyond the first floor.

Consequently, dating was the principal means of getting to know the opposite sex. Because housing constraints regulated the time and space of interaction for men and women, it was perfectly acceptable for a man to approach a woman he did not know and ask her to dinner or perhaps a Coke date at Scott Hall, the old student center. Gender roles in dating were clear: a man always asked a woman for a date, he picked her up; he paid for their entertainment if it was a first date, and then he dropped her off before retiring for the evening.

Today, however, it is much easier to get to know someone by spending unregulated time together in residence hall rooms, or for juniors and seniors, in apartments. Getting to know someone through dating is, by its nature, somewhat artificial. Why date when a couple could just hang out and naturally get to know each other?

Much of the frustration for many respondents was grounded in their dating expectations. They thought dating should be easy and a quintessential element of the college experience. Hopefully, this paper helps elucidate why their expectations are difficult to fulfill and how dating is no longer a necessary means for Northwestern undergraduates to form relationships today.

By Emily Hagenmaier

In the 1988 edition of *Current Biography Yearbook*, editor Charles Moritz writes, "The aim [of biography] is to provide... sketches [that] have been made as accurate and objective as possible." In Fran Paden's Winter 2003 biographical writing course, "Writing Women's Lives," we sought to prove that the process of biographical writing is anything but.

Over the course of the quarter, we learned about composing and contextualizing lives, challenges with biographical subjects, and the "necessary fictions" of biographical writing. We read a diverse collection of biographical accounts, from

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's record of an eighteenth century post-colonial midwife to Ruth Reichl's contemporary comedic chronicle of her family's tumultuous relationship with cooking. In the introduction to her narrative, Reichl assured us that "everything here is true, but it may not be entirely factual," for, as she learned from her family, "the most important thing in life is a good story."

Instead of urging objectivity and cold, factual accuracy, Paden urged us to rebel. She taught us to embrace the contradictions and confusions that accompany delving into the life of a subject. She discussed the challenges she is facing in her current project of writing the life of her own great, great aunt, Adelene Moffat, (1862-1956), an American visual artist and social reformer.

Paden urged us to aim not only for a large vision in our individual writing projects but to also view these projects as works-in-progress. She emphasized the importance of writing women into history, as well as questioning how history is written and what gets excluded. She urged us to consider how our subjects constituted their own lives rather than being formed solely by

external forces.

As fledgling biographical writers, we were inspired by guest speakers, including Carolyn DeSwarte Gifford, who spoke about writing about Frances Willard, and Northwestern's own, Professor E. Patrick Johnson, who generously shared parts of his narrative ethnographical project of the life of his grandmother, Mary. Finally, our class was privileged to read the script of Professor Frank Galati's new musical of the writings of Gertrude Stein, *A Long Gay*

Book. Galati brought in a rough recording of himself singing the lyrics to all the parts of Stephen Flaherty's score.

Without a doubt, the most rewarding part of this class was our final four-hour meeting in which we each presented our individual biographical projects. From dramatic performances to very personal readings, the

range of presentation formats and subjects was fascinating. Emily Zulauf traveled across the country to interview her grandmother and then choreographed and performed a contemporary dance piece about her own relationship with her grandmother as well as a relationship from her grandmother's past. Blaine Bookey created an installation art project as a response to her work with anti-death penalty advocates. Jessica Carleton performed multiple characters from her extensive interviews with pregnant women and new mothers. For my own project, I wrote a fictionalized biography of my experiences facilitating an exercise group for senior residents of a Chicago area skilled nursing facility. The resident's ages range from about eighty to one hundred and seven.

Several students conducted archival research both at Northwestern and in the greater Chicago area on nineteenth-century social reformers, musicians, and generally "uppity" women. Students also challenged the validity of some of their own families' stories, delved through grandparents' love letters, and upheld the importance of considering lives that might not be present in history books.



The members of "Writing Women's Lives" at their final class meeting, where each student presented her project.

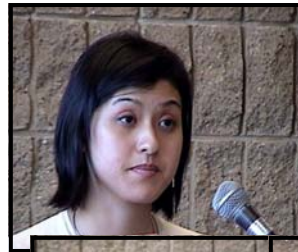
Is Dating Dead? A Panel Discussion Tried to Find Out

By David Nyweide

The February 7th, 2003 Leslie Hoffman Colloquium, "Dating is Dead: Myths and Misconceptions," featured five speakers who addressed how relationships are formed across gender, cultural, and temporal borders. A diverse group of fifty students and several faculty gathered to listen to the speakers and then discuss what made a date different from a hook-up.

The first speaker was Brandy Jensen, an area coordinator in Bobb and McCullough residence halls, who talked about relationships in the lesbian community at Northwestern. While she feels that the university is a tolerant place, she and her girlfriend have experienced verbal harassment. Gender Studies sophomore Ha-Thanh Nguyen discussed dating in Asian American culture and the difficulties her own family faced at the possibility of dating interracially and the expectation that she marry an Asian American. She linked issues of dating and marriage in Asian American communities to political and economic issues prevalent in other immigrant cultures.

I presented a history of dating at Northwestern from



the 1920s and detailed all the barriers that limit a couple from spending time together, from separate residential areas on campus to strict curfews.

David Shor, a psychologist in Counseling & Psychological Services, maintains that men's fear of commitments doesn't mean that they aren't interested in intimacy. He believes

that human connection is as important as the physical, sexual behavior in proving masculinity. In closing, Anthropology graduate student Judi Singleton presented preliminary field study

data on relationships in South Africa, where the institution of marriage is dying because of extreme poverty and the complication of AIDS.

Ha-Thanh Nguyen (top), Judi Singleton (middle left), David Nyweide (middle right), and Tresca Meiling (bottom)

Vrinda Nabar Returns to Northwestern

By Stephen Motika

Vrinda Nabar was welcomed back to Northwestern as a Visiting Professor by the cold of winter quarter and the warmth of two classes of excited students. She taught a Gender Studies course, "South Asian Women: The Dialectics of Diaspora," and a film course, "Women in Indian Film-TV." Her February 12th public reading from her memoir-in-progress, "The Past as Moksha," was followed by lively discussion over a buffet of Indian food.

Nabar likens the process of writing autobiography to an "act of exorcising the past," in which one seeks *moksha* ("a salvation; an ending, a release from the living world"). It's also a chance for Nabar to make sense of her eclectic mother and grandmother—both strong, independent women. But it also demands that she look past the surface, to reexamine her complex emotions regarding India's freedom struggle and her mother's own nervous breakdown. She remembers it as the "one definable nightmare of my growing years."

Nabar's memoir explores the spaces between the senses and the spiritual in light of political and intellectual issues of contemporary India. Although she's not a practicing Hindu, she uses the religion's mythology as a metaphor for the political

and the personal. Several years ago she and Shanta Tumkur translated the *The Bhagavad Gita* for Wordsworth Classics. At first the publisher had asked her to write an introduction and she saw it as a way to undertake "a serious reading in my own tradition rather than the English literature I was trained in." Due to copyright problems, she was forced to collaborate with a Sanskrit scholar and create her own translation. "It was a challenge to create something a contemporary reader would want to read and continue with." She said about the complexity of the text: "The first line of a couplet is always quoted, but the second line is as important. The relationship of the two lines is dialectical." The two lines often contradict each other and a full reading of the text should present both positions.

A similar dialectic appears in the reading list for her courses and surround complicated questions of the Indian diaspora. Nabar has spent a lot of energy promoting writers who have stayed in India, rather than the ones who have emigrated to the West.

Although Nabar studied in England and makes frequent trips to the United States, she is firmly situated in her native Bombay. The complexities of her life mirror those of the city where she lives, a me-



Vrinda Nabar reading at NU on February 12th

ropolis with a diverse population of ten million, a multitude of problems, and need to define its modern, post-colonial identity. Nabar speaks of her native city by mentioning *27 Down*, a 1974 Indian film named for the train line, the Benaras express, that runs to the Holy City. The film exhibits the many levels of urban life in Bombay through the life of a ticket checker traveling through the different parts of the city. Nabar rides a mental railroad through life and literature on her quest to better understand political and spiritual issues. Her memoir will no doubt be a testament to that. Unfortunately, we won't be seeing her back at Northwestern until she has completed her task.

Jeff Masten, from Donne to Dorothy

Leah Guenther, a PhD candidate in English, talked with **Jeff Masten**, Associate Professor of English and Gender Studies and a member of the Gender Studies core faculty and Advisory Board. Masten received the 2003 E. LeRoy Hall Award for Excellence in Teaching.

In Masten's first book, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama*, he begins with an eye-catching first line: "I begin with the desire to sleep with the dead." In its context, this line referred to Masten's project of uncovering what he has called "living and writing arrangements" between English Renaissance playwrights, relationships that were both professional and, he argues, often homoerotic. Ultimately, however, Masten notes the impossibility of doing the history of sexuality this way—"the impossibility," he writes, "even as it figures as an intractable curiosity or desire, of searching the annals of the past for erotic subjects motivated by our desires and living our practices." Outside the book, however, Masten has curiously avoided being more specific about this line, continually dodging the question I've asked him at countless departmental dinners and social affairs: "with which English Renaissance writer would you most enjoy going on a dinner date?" While he has evaded fully answering my question by citing personality quirks that render many Renaissance writers unsuitable for mealtime banter ("religious differences" in the case of John Donne and "commitment issues" in the case of Christopher Marlowe), Masten was much more forthright in a recent conversation concerning his role at Northwestern as well as his current scholarly projects:

LG: You were involved in planning this year's Gender Studies conference, *The Ends of Sexuality: Pleasure and Danger in the New Millennium*. What sorts of conversations did you hope that the conference would spark?

JM: We hoped that the conference would in part review how far feminism and sexuality-studies have come—and in particular all that has happened around the term "sexuality" since the landmark Barnard conference "Towards a Politics of Sexuality" in 1982. But as the title of the Northwestern conference suggests, we were also hoping our conference would look forward, at the future of sexuality studies—that we would think about the ends or purposes of the term "sexuality," even as we contemplated the potential end of its analytical usefulness. How has that term been productive? What other terms might follow that would now be analytically more relevant to us? What has that term given to us, and what has it foreclosed at the same time? I was particularly pleased to see papers that responded by moving both forward and backward. Two quick examples would be David Halperin's and Michael Warner's papers, both of which rethought important current categories (gay male "desire" and sexual "shame") in part by outlining genealogies of the terms in two earlier periods. I'm someone who's always asking that gender and sexuality studies not be perpetually 'presentist' in its focus, and I think those talks, among others, showed the potential benefits for all of us of revisiting terms we think we know, terms that have both a history and a future.

LG: Are these some of the issues that you have addressed in the Gender Studies courses you've taught this year?

JM: Definitely. In both my winter term courses—*Early Modern Sexualities*, an undergraduate course in Gender Studies, and *Early Modern Genders*, a graduate course in English—our goal was to investigate how theories of sexuality and gender lined up in ways that are somewhat different from our own. In the undergraduate course, we read Foucault's *History of Sexuality* and then read scholars who have used and rewritten Foucault to think about the early modern period. In this course, we wanted to ask, "what were the different routes and locations, effects and politics of desire in this period?" We also asked ourselves to what extent we could discuss "sexuality" as an "identity" in this period.

In the graduate course, we explored some similar issues, but largely in relation to Thomas Laqueur's influential book, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*, a book that propounds the "one-sex model" of gender in the Renaissance. In this course, I wanted both to confront the influence of Laqueur's idea on sex/gender studies in the English Renaissance, but also to think about what aspects of the book remain useful and vital, after thirteen years of caveats and critiques from historians of science, scholars of rhetoric, and various positions within feminism. Might there be other, or additional, models for genders and sexualities in the early modern period—different from those based in anatomy and an only-emergent discourse of science? So, for example, we read Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as one possible alternative discourse. But both courses were an attempt to wrestle with what Jonathan Goldberg helpfully calls "the syntax of desire" by looking at some familiar and not-so-familiar early modern poems, plays, and prose texts. Ultimately, I hope that the courses—even for students who don't expect to continue their studies of the earlier historical periods—can show the benefit of studying earlier periods for understanding where we think we are now. And who we think we are now.

LG: Is that something that you see your own research as doing, rethinking the history of sexuality?

JM: Lately, I think a lot of us working in the history of sexuality have been trying to get beyond the question of whether or not there was a homosexuality in the early modern period—a question that was strategically important at a certain point in the historiography but that has seemed less productive recently. There's begun to be, instead, a kind of consensus around



Jeffrey Masten

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Masten interview continued from page 7

Leah Guenther, a PhD candidate in English, talked with **Jeff Masten**, Associate Professor of English and Gender Studies and a member of the Gender Studies core faculty and Advisory Board. Masten received the 2003 E. LeRoy Hall Award for Excellence in Teaching.

In Masten's first book, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama*, he begins with an eye-catching first line: "I begin with the desire to sleep with the dead." In its context, this line referred to Masten's project of uncovering what he has called "living and writing arrangements" between English Renaissance playwrights, relationships that were both professional and, he argues, often homoerotic. Ultimately, however, Masten notes the impossibility of doing the history of sexuality this way—"the impossibility," he writes, "even as it figures as an intractable curiosity or desire, of searching the annals of the past for erotic subjects motivated by our desires and living our practices." Outside the book, however, Masten has curiously avoided being more specific about this line, continually dodging the question I've asked him at countless departmental dinners and social affairs: "with which English Renaissance writer would you most enjoy going on a dinner date?" While he has evaded fully answering my question by citing personality quirks that render many Renaissance writers unsuitable for mealtime banter ("religious differences" in the case of John Donne and "commitment issues" in the case of Christopher Marlowe), Masten was much more forthright in a recent conversation concerning his role at Northwestern as well as his current scholarly projects:

LG: You were involved in planning this year's Gender Studies conference, *The Ends of Sexuality: Pleasure and Danger in the New Millennium*. What sorts of conversations did you hope that the conference would spark?

JM: We hoped that the conference would in part review how far feminism and sexuality-studies have come—and in particular all that has happened around the term "sexuality" since the landmark Barnard conference "Towards a Politics of Sexuality" in 1982. But as the title of the Northwestern conference suggests, we were also hoping our conference would look forward, at the future of sexuality studies—that we would think about the ends or purposes of the term "sexuality," even as we contemplated the potential end of its analytical usefulness. How has that term been productive? What other terms might follow that would now be analytically more relevant to us? What has that term given to us, and what has it foreclosed at the same time? I was particularly pleased to see papers that responded by moving both forward and backward. Two quick examples would be David Halperin's and Michael Warner's papers, both of which rethought important current categories (gay male "desire" and sexual "shame") in part by outlining genealogies of the terms in two earlier periods. I'm someone who's always asking that gender and sexuality studies not be perpetually 'presentist' in its focus, and I think those talks, among others, showed the potential benefits for all of us of revisiting terms we think we know, terms that have both a history and a future.

Gender Studies Liaison Committee

meets twice a month and is open to all Gender Studies majors and minors. Elizabeth Venell, the new chair of the committee, welcomes all who are interested in attending. The committee will be busy planning a Hoffmann Colloquium on gender issues and the law. For more information, send an email to gender@northwestern.edu

Student Advisory Board (SAB)

By Tresca Meiling

The Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, while large and catering to students with varied interests, does have an opportunity for student voices to be heard around academic issues; it is the Student Advisory Board (SAB). It's a valuable resource for undergraduates seeking to initiate change in the college's academic realm. SAB works with WCAS administrators on two main projects during the year: teaching awards and a research project that students on the board put together. Last year, SAB studied distribution requirements ("distros") and presented their findings and recommendations for change to administrators and alumni this spring. The Gender Studies Program has two new representatives who will speak for students, Elizabeth Venell (e-venell@northwestern.edu) and Tresca Meiling (t-meiling@northwestern.edu). Please use these students as your link to the academic administration of WCAS--any thoughts or suggestions will be heard.

Reading Group Notes

By Hyun-Jung Lee

The Gender Studies Reading Group, composed of members of the faculty and graduate students at Northwestern who share an interest in Gender Studies, held two meetings during the winter and spring quarters. The meetings were organized by Jillana Enteen, Visiting Assistant Professor of English, Comparative Literature, and Gender Studies.

The winter quarter meeting took place on Wednesday, January 29. E. Patrick Johnson, a faculty member in the performance studies department, led the group in a discussion of Maurice Wallace's *Constructing the Black Masculine: Identity and Ideality in African American Men's Literature and Culture, 1775-1995*. Beginning with Wallace's analysis of the camera, the gaze, and photographic representations of black masculinity, the conversation touched on such topics as the author's theory of "enframing," visual vs. linguistic representation, image and performance, and the relationship between gender, identity, and environment.

In the spring quarter, the reading group met on Wednesday, May 7 to discuss Patricia R. Zimmermann's *States of Emergency: Documentaries, Wars, Democracies*. Harvey Young, a postdoctoral fellow working in the Theatre department, facilitated the conversation. Responding to Zimmermann's provocative rhetoric and message regarding democracy, war, and the function of the independent documentary, the group held a lively debate on the relevancy and future of activism within the changing landscape of mass media, with specific emphasis on the potential of the internet. Also of particular interest for the group was Zimmermann's analysis on positive and negative media representations of abortion.

got to be real

lane fenrich's transgender course

By Mel Bostwick

It's a sunny afternoon in the middle of May. About fifteen Northwestern students, along with their professor, are sitting on the south steps of the library, talking about drag queens. They've just watched Jennie Livingston's film, *Paris is Burning*, and read "Gender is Burning" by Judith Butler; the students are now debating whether drag performances reinforce or disrupt the norms of the gender binary.

The discussion is a typical example of the weekly meetings of Professor Lane Fenrich's Gender Studies seminar, "Got to be Real: (Re)thinking Sex and Gender." Students in the class read about and discuss topics including transsexuality, transgenderism, and female performances of masculinity (among others)—all with the purpose of reconceptualizing categories that are generally taken for granted.

"It sounds like a simple question," says Fenrich. "But the big question this course takes up is: what makes a body male or female?" Answering this question is far from simple. The first step is understanding and agreeing that this is a question, and dislodging the notion that the body and its sex are biological givens.

Students in the seminar have spent a significant amount of time debating this question and framing it in new ways. "I have been exposed to questions and issues I didn't even realize were up for debate," says junior Laura Meints. "It's interesting and exciting, too, to hear so many different opinions and thoughts from the class...and to realize how intimately power, gender, and sexuality define and influence us all."

In the last few weeks of the course, students are attempting to move beyond this question and

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Johnson's *Nevah* features McCune, Paden

By Lauren Gutterman

Conceived and directed by E. Patrick Johnson, Associate Professor of Performance Studies, *Nevah Had Uh Cross Word* was performed at the Struble Theatre on May 16-17. This project began when Johnson was working on his master's degree. He initially planned to write about Richard Wright, but his thesis adviser, after hearing about Johnson's charismatic grandmother and her experiences, encouraged him to write about her life. His master's thesis focused on his grandmother's stories about her friend Claudine, and his doctoral dissertation explored her eighteen years as a live-in domestic worker for a white family. This world premier performance finally allowed Johnson to stage the interviews he conducted with his grandmother Mary Adams and her employer Mrs. Smith a decade ago.

The show consists primarily of Johnson's interview sessions with his grandmother, but is framed by Johnson's reflections on the questions and challenges he faces trying to piece together his grandmother's life:

"opening and closing a life is not as easy as opening and closing a book," Johnson's character remarks. In her interviews, Adams humorously recounts the daily happenings at Tate Terrace, the community of senior citizens or "crips" in which she resides: Adams describes her friend Claudine's frustrating 7am calls to check on her and how another neighbor claimed that her daughter tried to kill her with a sliding door because she thought her mother ugly --"Well, she has no teeth," Adams concedes, pulling out her bottom lip to demonstrate. Adams' interview sessions were poignant as well as hysterical. When Adams explained how her ex-slave father raised her in the slavery way, by tying her up and beating her, she gave Johnson and the audience a sense of what she must have lived through.

While Adams prefers talking about her neighbors at Tate, Johnson pushes her to describe her experiences as a

domestic. Adams recalls how she raised the Smith children, cooking and cleaning for them, disciplining and supporting them. In contrast to other domestic workers' accounts, Adams claims that there "was never a cross word" between her and the Smiths; she stresses how much they trusted her, how she never betrayed them, and how there was no tension between them even as the civil rights movement was taking place. The picture that Adams paints of her days with the Smiths, however, fails to tell Johnson why his grandmother eventually stopped working for them and why she missed their youngest daughter's wedding. Finally, Johnson's mother informs him that the reason Adams had about why she could not attend their daughter's wedding, is a lie. Adams told the Smiths



From right to left: Patrick Johnson, Njoki McElroy, Jeffrey McCune, Fran Paden, and Rashida Braggs

she had to go to DC to take care of her ailing brother in order to avoid walking behind Mrs. Smith in her daughter's wedding ceremony.

Working on this project was a special experience cast, which included members included Performance Studies doctoral students

Rashida Braggs as Johnson's mother and Jeffrey McCune as E. Patrick Johnson. Njoki McElroy, the first African-American to receive a doctorate from the Department of Interpretation (now "Performance Studies"), played Mary Adams, and Gender Studies Associate Director Fran Paden portrayed Adams' employer, Mrs. Smith. McCune described the show as "gift-giving through performance," and Paden called her experience "inspiring." While Paden, who grew up in the south, participated in civil rights activism during the 1960s, her anger about racial inequality couldn't help her understand the subtleties of race relations the way participating in *Nevah* has. Johnson's grandmother and her employer were able to forge a friendship, not because of principles of human equality, Paden explained, but because of their feelings and intuition. With *Nevah*, Johnson honors his grandmother and sensitively explores how she managed her relationship with the Smiths.

Gender & Representation—from Kahlo to Djebbar

By Dominique Licops

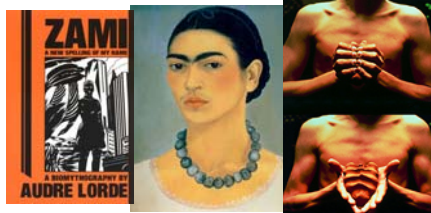
In this new course, we've been exploring how gender and representation impact each other in different social, cultural, and historical contexts. We started by studying Frida Kahlo's art, situating it both within the Mexican political context, and the American feminist critical context. We observed how Kahlo's representations of the female body questions both masculine and Western imperialist traditions. Our visit to the exhibit "Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera and Twentieth Century Mexican Art" at the Mexican Fine Arts museum in Chicago deeply enhanced our understanding and appreciation of her work, by situating her in a context she is often taken out of.

We then discussed Audre Lorde's biomythography, *Zami*. Students expressed how this work opened their eyes to issues of class, race, and sexuality. We discussed how Lorde invents a new form of representation that allows her to express the multiple facets of her being. Her challenge of traditional notions of what stands as biography, and her use of myth taught us the importance of creativity in representing how gender intersects with other factors of identity, and how they impact the formation of one's self.

We had fun watching and discussing two films, Josianne Balasco's *French Twist* and

Stephen Frears' *My Beautiful Laundrette*. These films made for a lively discussion about the role stereotypes of gender and sexuality, race, class, and ethnicity play in social relations and hierarchies. We discussed the very different strategies these two filmmakers use to legitimize their characters' desires.

The students were very intrigued and engaged by Black British/Caribbean writer Caryl Phillips' novel, *Cambridge*, which contains the narratives of both a Victorian



From left to right: Jacket of Audre Lorde's *Zami*; Frida Kahlo, Self-Portrait with Necklace, 1933; Gabriel Orozco, *My Hands Are My Heart*, 1991; Gender Studies major Elizabeth Venell at Block exhibition.

woman who travels to the Caribbean to survey her father's plantation, and an African man who works on this plantation. By setting these two narratives in a single discursive universe, Phillips allows us to consider crucial

questions about the relationship between self-representation and representations of others and otherness (whether in terms of race, gender or class). We continued to consider these issues in our discussion of South African novelist, J.M. Coetzee's re-writing of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, *Foe*. After reading Assia Djebbar's *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade*, we discussed how language, education and history, become crucial factors in the development of a language that can adequately represent and express "postcolonial" women's voices and being.

In April, Stephen Motika coordinated a tour of the exhibit "The Gift" held at the Block Museum, for both our class and other gender studies students. After getting the twenty-minute official tour, each student chose a piece of art to comment on, highlighting the role gender plays in the conception of art as/and gifts.

Teaching this course is a very enriching experience: the students' enthusiasm and commitment to discussing the issues of gender and representation, their ability to relate the culturally diverse corpus to their own experiences and their engagement with the novels, films, and art we are studying have made this class into a wonderfully interactive forum.

Civil Rights Activist Diane Nash Visits Northwestern

By Tessie Liu

Gender Studies was honored to co-sponsor with the departments of Sociology, African-American Studies, and History, the visit of civil rights activist Diane Nash to campus on February 24th. While attending Fisk University in Nashville, Nash, a native of Chicago, became a leader in the student sit-ins to desegregate lunch counters. In the fall of 1959, several dozen students from local colleges, along with adults from the community, attended workshops led by James Lawson, a black seminary student who had learned Gandhi's philosophy and methods while studying in India. In February, after months of meetings and training, the official sit-ins were launched at the lunch counters of two Nashville department stores. The sit-ins continued through the month. Eighty-two students were jailed.

To halt the mobilization, Mayor Ben West of Nashville formed a biracial citizen's committee but events did not turn until April when the home of Z. Alexander Looby, a prominent black attorney who defended the students, was bombed. In the ensuing protest, West pledged to investigate the bombing but said that desegre-

gation was out of his hands. When the Mayor then asked the crowd to pray together, Nash, who had emerged as one of the unofficial leaders of the movement, pushed before the crowd and asked, "How about eating together?" When she followed with: "Then, Mayor, do you recommend that the lunch counters be desegregated?" the response was "Yes," to which the crowd cheered.

Showing the same quick wit and resourcefulness for which she is deservedly famous, Nash captured the admiration and undivided attention of the mostly student audience when she answered questions and spoke informally here. When asked whether she was ever afraid, she responded simply: "Yes, of course." One day when she was checking on demonstrators at a local store, she overheard a group of white teenagers say, "That's Diane Nash. She was in the paper. She's the one to get." Nash recalled trembling so uncontrollably that she gave herself ten minutes to pull herself together. If at the end of the time, she was still as frightened, she would give her duties to someone else. She knew she could not be there for others

if she was so frightened for herself. At the end of the time, however, she found her courage.

She stressed that nonviolence is a theory of power that must not be confused with just refraining from violence. Nonviolent action is always strategic and constructive. It mobilizes against the coercive power of the state by enacting viable alternatives. Nash said that she found unknown courage in herself by finding beautiful things in people who cared enough about other people to put their bodies between another person and danger.

Nash was one of the founders of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and took a leading role with many other black women activists in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). She played a pivotal role in the 1963 confrontation in Birmingham and the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery. Developing nonviolence as a life philosophy, Nash has worked for social justice since her college days. She is currently writing her memoirs, she told the audience, but wonders when she will finish because so many causes keep calling her.

Lane Fenrich's course, continued from page 9

grapple with the intricacies of gender and sexuality, how they have been constructed historically, how traditional definitions have been challenged, and how factors like race and class interact with all of this. Readings have included Judith Halberstam's *Female Masculinity*, excerpts from George Chauncey's *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World 1890-1940*, and Kate Bornstein's *Gender Outlaw: On Men, Women, and the Rest of Us*. The course also deals with films, such as the popular 1999 movie *Boys Don't Cry*.

Due to high demand during the registration period, the course is taught in two completely separate sections. Besides giving individual students more of an opportunity to participate in discussions, this format has some interesting benefits. Fenrich says: "I'm delighted with the conversations: the two groups always go in very different directions with the texts." The contrast between the two groups demonstrates the complexity of the issues dealt with in the course, and the multitude of ways in which they can be understood.

In addition to the weekly readings and discussion, each student in the course is working on an independent research paper, dealing with a topic related to the aims of the

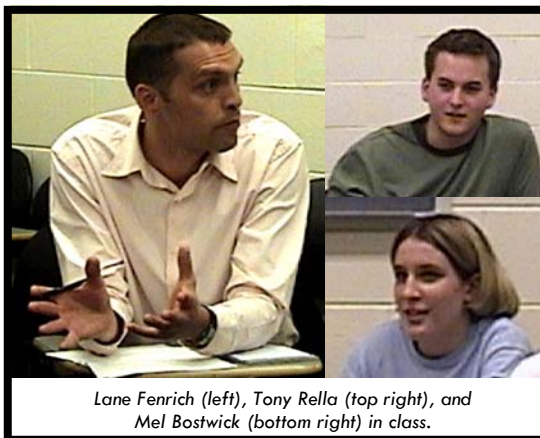
course. The possible areas for research are numerous; one student is writing about the use of camp in filmic representations of transsexuals, others are writing about the possibilities for sex without gender. The assignment gives the students a chance to take the ideas discussed in class and apply them to a particular area of interest.

Fenrich sees his course as an attempt to put the body back into play as a site of theoretical inquiry. "What I most hope students will take away from the course is a radical skepticism about the relation between subjectivity, desire, social difference, and 'the body,'" he says.

Based on the nature of class discussions, it looks like students are certainly on their way to achieving that goal. Says senior Abbey Nickinson, "What makes our class so

amazing is that we read these provocative books to jumpstart our discussions, and then we just run with it. We talk about everything, and it's a really comfortable atmosphere to hash out these huge questions we're grappling with."

Meints agrees with Nickinson's evaluation of the course; she thinks that "if education is opening one's mind to new ideas and perspectives, then this class certainly qualifies as such."



Lane Fenrich (left), Tony Rella (top right), and Mel Bostwick (bottom right) in class.

Congratulations to Gender Studies Students Who Won Awards and Achievements in 2002-2003

Blaine Bookey (GS and SESP '03) presented her performance art piece, "From Loss to Living," developed in Writing Women's Lives at the Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Melanie Bostwick (HS and Psychology '04) received a Summer Research Grant to conduct psychology research this summer. She's been accepted into Gamma Sigma Alpha Greek Honor Society and the Psychology Honors program for next year. She presented her research at the Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Emma Caywood (GS and Theatre '03) won the 2003 Agnes Nixon Playwriting Contest for "Trying to Put the Atom Back Together," presented on May 16-18 at the Wallis Theatre.

Magdalyn Griffith (GS and Theatre '04) was awarded the Mercy Simeral Parkhill Scholarship from the School of Communication for the 2003-4 year. It is "given to an exceptional undergraduate with a commitment to teaching." She was also on the Dean's List for fall quarter and recently started the senior theatre honors program.

Lauren Gutterman (GS and American Studies '03) was named

a finalist by the Fulbright Scholar Program and wrote thesis in American Studies.

Anneeth Hundle (GS and Anthropology) received an Undergraduate Summer Research Grant and also the Friends of Anthropology at Northwestern Grant (FAN) to fund her senior thesis work on violence against Indian women in Kampala, Uganda.

Tresca Meiling (GS minor and SESP '04) made the SESP Dean's List summer 02, fall 02, and winter 03.

Kathryn Monroe (GS and Medill '04) is a member of the Sexual Assault Awareness Education Team and will intern at the *Chicago Reporter* this summer. She's also on the Dean's List.

David Nyweide (GS and English '03) was nominated for honors in Gender Studies and presented his honors thesis at the Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Sarah Warner (GS minor and Communication Studies '03) was named a semi-finalist in Cinestory, a national screenwriting contest.

The Ends of Sexuality: Pleasure and Danger in the New Millennium

Liu on conference, continued from Page 1

Not surprisingly, as the conference drew near, the implicit understanding of “danger” in our title came to stand increasingly for state organized violence. Indeed, Cora Kaplan began the conference with her struggles to think about sexuality in a time of war. Contra Freud’s lament that war promotes the regression to the uninhibited selfishness, the pure egotism, of our dream life, Kaplan asked to what extent can radical views of sexuality be linked with and be part of the affirmation of a wider politics of social justice and equality? A prescient question for the entire conference. Both Kaplan’s and Lisa Duggan’s papers began with the political dangers of our historical moment. The impact of



Clockwise from top left: Cora Kaplan, Lisa Duggan, Dorinne Kondo, and Elizabeth Povinelli

current war on sexual politics, both speakers pointed out, was not just a momentary crisis. Rather this present blood-letting and the official rhetoric that tried to justify and sanitize its violence were symptomatic of longer trends in the re-ordering of international power, class relations and sexual politics under neoliberal capitalist regimes.

Setting the historical stage for our proceedings, Kaplan reminded us of the timing of the Barnard conference: “two years into the Reagan years, three into Thatcherism – Barnard was a response to, a struggle about the premature closing down of a promisingly exploratory politics of sexuality – an intimate part and an analogue to a more general form of utopian thinking.” Citing Carol Vance’s introduction to the Barnard conference volume, *Pleasure and Danger*, Kaplan concurred with Vance that “being a sex radical at this time, as at most, is less a matter of what you do, and more a matter of what you are willing to think, entertain, and question.” Pointing to a problematic

privileging of “voice” over actual struggles, Kaplan noted that “in its ensemble of pieces, *Pleasure and Danger* seems to say that it is precisely the thinking – and speaking – of the previously unthinkable or unspeakable – that redefines the ethical and affective status of sexual fantasy and the unconscious – which become somehow socialized if not precisely moralized even in their unlikely scenarios of desire...”

Lisa Duggan’s paper was a wake-up call to this “sexual left.” Set within a broader analysis of Neoliberalism’s pro-capital, pro-market, non-redistributive, streamlined state, Duggan argued forcefully that the Left must recognize that Neoliberalism has a sexual politics. Normative and repressive forces do not come exclusively from the Right. Since the 1990s, Duggan warned, “single issue campaigns (for abortion rights, for LGBT equality) are moving dramatically to the political right, becoming arms of neoliberal policy rather than sites of opposition.” More pointedly, the Left/Right dichotomy with which we normally characterize American politics must be understood as operating on a neoliberal political terrain. By paring down demands to be more recognizable to the state, the process of mobilization by and on behalf of stigmatized and underprivileged communities has created “single issue” interest groups cut off from their ethical and social movement roots.

Together, Kaplan’s and Duggan’s papers mapped the tensions negotiated within the “sexual left.” Both David Halperin’s and Cathy Cohen’s papers addressed, within a loose genealogy, the relation of pleasure to danger raised by the Barnard conference. David Halperin’s paper began with a 1995 *Village Voice* article in which Michael Warner suggested that for gay men, “the pursuit of dangerous sex is not as simple as mere thrill seeking, or self-destructiveness. It may represent deep and mostly unconscious thinking about desire and the conditions that make life worthwhile.” Congratulating Warner on his willingness to explore the profoundly discomfiting side of desire that subvert “safe sex” practices developed to prevent HIV/AIDS infection, Halperin nonetheless took Warner to task for invoking abjection as the “dirty secret” of gay subjectivity. Halperin considered Warner’s account a retreat into psychoanalysis when, according to Halperin, Warner lost faith in social explanations. Turning to the opening pages of Jean Genet’s *A Thief’s Journal*, Halperin quoted Genet’s recollection of “the stateliness of abjection,” when Genet described “the filthy and despised characters” who were his lovers and companions when Genet was twenty and lived as beggar in Spain. “Never did I try to make of it something other than what it was,” quoting Genet, “I

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2003 Kreeger Wolf Conference

Liu on conference, continued from page 12

wanted rather to affirm it precisely in its sordidness, and the most sordid tokens became for me tokens of grandeur.” Abjection, Halperin suggested, is “a process of making yourself unfindable by those who would destroy you – through discovering abasement itself the erotic and spiritual means of your own transformation and transfiguration.” “The alchemical transmutation of social humiliation into erotico-religious glorification is not a matter of psychology, except in the trivial sense that it takes place in the inner life of the individual,” Halperin argued. “[I]t is a social response to degradation, a hard-won existential resistance to the social experience of being dominated.”

Michael Warner, in his paper later in the day, directly addressed the alchemical relation between shame and pride. Reading both the shameful and shameless in Whitman’s Calamus poems, Warner moved through a number of definitions and cultural constructions of shame. Unlike Halperin, who along with Valerie Traub was one of the organizers of the “Gay Shame” conference in Ann Arbor the weekend before “The Ends of Sexuality,” Warner seemed unconvinced by the central premise of the conference that gay pride has suppressed inquiry into more complex gay subjectivities. Far more interested in the enactment of shame, Warner observed, “queer culture has practiced in countless ways the complexities not just of shame but performances of shame, formally mediated imitations of shame that objectify counternormative experience, squirm-making disturbances in the social field that bring counterpublics into a kind of public copresence while also deploying shame to mark a difference from the public. Staging shame as disruptions of relationality, we paradoxically create new relations insofar as we can school ourselves not to be ashamed of our shame – a project that of course disappears the second we persuade ourselves that not being ashamed of our shame requires us to be proud.”

Lauren Berlant and, more pointedly, Cathy Cohen, pushed Halperin in a very different direction, to contemplate a broader conception of risk and pleasure. Berlant asked about the everydayness of “stupidity” in taking risks (such as that of pregnancy) in pursuit of pleasure. Moving away from the dramatic juxtaposition between safety and death, Berlant called for the need to theorize the problematic from many vantage points, thereby diffusing the discourse of abjection as the “key” to gay interiority by exposing the specificity of that framing. Cathy Cohen’s paper opened up the discussion of queer by stressing the uneven penalties of pleasure seeking in our society’s racialized and class based distribution of gratification. Cohen suggested

that queer studies must include “poor single black women with children whose intimate relationships and sexual behavior [are not only] in conflict with the normative assumptions of heterosexism and the nuclear family, but who also often live under the constant surveillance of the state through regulatory agencies such as the welfare office, courts, jails and prisons, the child welfare agency and public housing...[L]ike many privileged gay, lesbian and queer folks, poor single black women and children are reminded daily of their distance from the promise of full citizenship.” Living in the intersection of marked identities and regulatory processes, Cohen called upon us to consider their contradictory and confounding agency. “It is here that black queer studies must be rooted and a politics of deviance must begin.”

While I have positioned Cohen here as a critic, she shared



Clockwise from top left: David Halperin, Leo Bersani, Valerie Traub, Lauren Berlant, Penelope

Halperin’s motivation to claim a social understanding of the abject and the process of abjection. Like Halperin’s search to characterize the complex, often compromised, agency of gay men, Cohen asked, “what factors facilitate a young woman’s decision to have a baby out-of-wedlock and in some cases as a teenager when the norms of society and her group suggest that it is wrong and self-destructive to do so? Why do transgender youth in and out of black communities defy the sex and gender norms of distant and local groups of influence and daily live open lives, embracing their deviant identity...?”

We can ask, as Valerie Traub did in her remarks at the end of the conference: “How might the assumption of risk-taking among African-American gay

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Michael Warner talk about the conference and his years in Chicago

*The following is excerpted from my conversation with Michael Warner, formerly a member of the English department at Northwestern University, and now a professor at Rutgers University. Warner, one of the keynote speakers at the conference, is most recently the author of *The Trouble with Normal and Publics and Counterpublics*. I am grateful to Michael for granting this interview, which took place at an after-party at Patrick Johnson's home on 5 April 2003. Thanks to Janel Anderson for transcribing the entire conversation.*

Chris Freeman: Let's talk a little bit about this conference, "The Ends of Sexuality."

Michael Warner: I think that a lot of new questions opened up for me—or questions that I thought were old ones got reanimated, both here and at last week's "Gay Shame" conference at the University of Michigan. I think especially the question of what the range of contexts is that generate what *queer* is. For example, that idea got usefully revisited by Cathy Cohen.

CF: Absolutely. She articulated where race figures in and in fact where all other kinds of identities, other subject positions figure in.

MW: And what's the "taken for granted" of queer discourse—how the material conditions that organize politics are often more powerful than some of the ideal images of queerness in places that we don't normally put the center of theory. I mean economics, poverty and globalization, but also reproduction. I mean, in that sense she really expanded well on some remarks of Lisa Duggan's talk the night before about birth control and reproduction rights having suffered some of the parallel transformations in the 90s. And then, this morning, David Halperin gave his paper, which is about an old piece of mine.

CF: The *Village Voice* piece about safe sex from the "Pure Sex" issue in 1995.

MW: Exactly. David's discussion was extremely patient and generous and . . .

CF: Sensitive.

MW: And, you know, really usefully constructive—it reconstructed what I was trying to do at that moment. So, the conjunction made me think in new ways about the relationship between that whole risk problem and the kinds of analyses of shame that Eve Sedgwick and

Douglas Crimp have been doing, which made me suddenly realize that this could be a very interesting problem to focus on because it's so overdetermined.

MW: During my own talk this afternoon, I kept thinking of Larry Steger—I got all choked up. It was kind of embarrassing.

CF: But, look, we're sitting here talking about queer theory, talking about dangerous sex, . . . about affect and about love and all these things, so how can the personal *not* figure in? And you're talking at an institution where you worked, and when you were here, this conference could not have happened.

MW: Yeah.

CF: Northwestern at a particular time. And you're talking about the intersection between culture work that Larry Steger was doing and academic work that you were doing and the intersection of that.

MW: Larry died of AIDS four years ago. He was a year younger than me. He was known locally as a kind of saint. He was a real facilitator for a lot of people. He ran the gallery space that's attached to the school for the Art Institute and he used that space for queer culture building. He would take, you know, students who were interested in doing queer work

and give them exhibition space, he would organize performance events, you know . . . tirelessly and with no money. He would stage performances—guerilla performances—in the middle of one of the department stores and have parties . . . He was a pillar of the community. His performances were really inspiring and kind of brilliant. He was just the motor behind the whole scene. . . .

CF: Let's talk for a bit about your early involvement in gay and lesbian studies and queer theory.

MW: It was a long time in the works, so I think we're talking about the mid to late 1980s. Some graduate students here at Northwestern organized a course that wasn't being offered to them but that they wanted on psychoanalysis and sexuality. And I wasn't scheduled to teach a graduate course, but they contrived this plan where they all signed up for independent studies and I sat in with them and we just read the stuff together. This group was really formative for a lot of us, but then, of course, we discovered that other people were



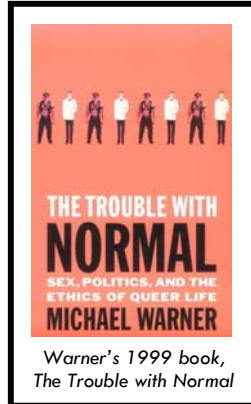
Warner speaking at the conference

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having the same conversation and retrospectively at some point, that all got called “queer theory.”

Chicago was a very exciting town to be in in those days because of the Harold Washington politics. That was my political education, really—coming to Chicago in 1985 and encountering this really vital urban political culture where this extraordinary thing was going on around Harold Washington. And we were organizing—very basic old-fashioned gay movement organizing. Stuart Michaels and I sat at a card table outside of Berlin—the gay bar in Boys’ Town—doing voter registration. We were part of a little movement to do this and registered 17,000 voters in . . .



retical articles were also doing politics in the beautiful shadow of Harold Washington. When I look back on that era, I think it was more of an education than we were able to express at the time because they still felt like worlds out of balance, but not the way that they came to feel in the 90s because that Harold Washington-style politics had tremendous promise for organizing and theoretical reflection and expanding agendas and talking about the connection between sexual politics and urban scenes and economic politics and race politics. It was a very optimistic environment in retrospect. But those days—the Harold Washington days—were not days of political depression. They were the opposite.

CF: It is a voting bloc right there, you know?

MW: Yeah. Exactly. And it changed the political landscape in Chicago. So, most of us who were reading psychoanalysis and social theory and trying to write these theo-

Chris Freeman is associate professor of English at St. John’s University. He is co-editor (with James Berg) of *The Isherwood Century*, winner of the 2000 Lambda Literary Award in *Gay Studies*, and is currently writing a biography of Paul Monette.

The Politics of Cathy Cohen

By Dale Vieregge

Cathy Cohen, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, galvanized the the audience on Saturday afternoon to think past traditional definitions of politics and sexuality. She explicitly called for a politics of deviance in which we, as theorists, activists, and citizens, might begin to examine normatively, and then challenge, the structures that marginalize ethnoracial, gendered, and sexual minorities. The focus of her analysis, which other participants might extend easily to other realms, was the politics of respectability that characterizes contemporary black liberation discourse. Echoing a theme from Lisa Duggan’s presentation, Cohen argued that the politics of respectability motivates continuous cultural redefinition of the group identity and an internalized self-policing that limits the range of approaches and strategies with which black leaders can confront various, simultaneous oppressive forms.

Specifically, Cohen criticized pervasive heterosexism in black communities for privileging traditional, nuclear family forms. Cohen aptly contended that the implications of this approach extend beyond the devaluation of lesbian and gay definitions of family. Such heteronormative myths stigmatize and marginalize certain segments of the community, such as black female-headed household, itself the subject of questionable social science even prior to the now-infamous 1965 Moynihan report.

Thus, transforming the societal valuation and lived experience of poor, black single mothers is inextricably linked to a confrontation with the systemic persecution facing gay men and lesbians of all races and classes. To the extent that the politics of respectability maligns these “deviant” elements in its midst, it will not realize its full oppositional potential in confronting racialism, let alone the array of oppressive forces with which racialism coexists.

This integrative analysis of race, gender, sexuality, class, and power illustrated a valuable model for my own considerations on social and political inequality. From the reactions of my peers within the seminar that complemented the conference, I estimate that they also were challenged by the approach that Cohen takes to her research and her activism. Indeed, the mere fact that one can speak of both her value as a scholar and as an agent of social change suggests the significance of her model to a generation seeking to bridge theory and practice. For those of us who hope to follow, we thank Cathy Cohen for blazing a trail in political science, for breaking the disciplinary (and divisional) boundaries, and for offering her valuable perspective to the Kreeger Wolf conference. To her concern about how long she has spoken, I reply again, “not long enough, Cathy.”



Cathy Cohen at the conference; her book cover above.

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men intersect with, or depart from, Halperin's race-neutral account?" Likewise, Traub asked of Cohen, "to what extent are the risks assumed by young African American women in their heterosexual relations like or unlike the risks assumed by African American gay men? How are their relations to risk different from those of the transgendered youth Cohen so admires?"

If those who seek redress through a rhetoric of rights and respectability have made too many compromises with the normalizing impulse, those who continue (in the spirit of the Barnard Conference) to deepen their exploration of heterodox, marginalized, and stigmatized fantasies and practices face a different problem. What does sex radicalism look like in the new millennium, in an era of an increasingly efficient socially repressive Neoliberal state? What are the contours of such an oppositional politics in practice? How do we resist the charismatic mystique of state power that Foucault was among the first to bring to light? How do we engage the state without looking like the state? Equally daunting is the challenge of imagining our utopia, one demanded by an expanded perspective on "queer."

The non-normative, often outlaw, status around which sex radicalism can be constituted is not unitary. Here, a common irreverence for respectability (a critique that Cohen extends to racial uplift goals of African American elites) is not enough. The routes to deviance grow out of many connected histories and multiple social/psychic conditions and struggles. Are we ready to effectively theorize sexuality from that multiplicity? While the effectiveness of radical mobilization may not rely on a unitary comprehensive theory, acknowledging the limits of generalizing from any one subject position is only the first step. Our social and symbolic worlds are infused with the play of power and difference that desire and fantasy are inseparable from the conflict ridden multi-racial realities and histories that we live, but don't always credit. Is it possible to speak of a race-neutral interiority? I think not. But we await fuller and richer analyses of race in the theorization of subjectivity, a project with stellar accomplishments yet still in its infancy.

Traub observed that "for those of us who work on some of the more disturbing aspects of the relation between desire, erotic practices and subjectivity, psychoanalysis has functioned as a force

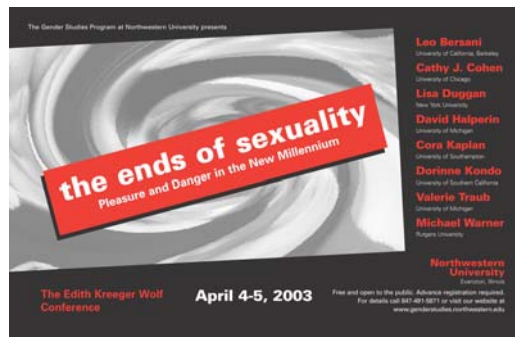
field, pulling everything into its wake. Why should we submit to its imperial designs?" While sympathetic to Halperin's questioning, nonetheless, she asked, "is not his conflation of the unconscious with the death drive, a conflation that authorizes his indictment of psychoanalysis as normalization, perhaps too totalizing a move? To what extent is the death drive an appropriate metonym for psychoanalytic thought?" By contrast, Traub found "Leo Bersani's attempt to think through psychoanalysis, and in particular, through the death drive, as a way to move beyond its pathologizing impulses, provides one alternative to Halperin's full-scale rejection."

Intrigued by the "psychic implausibility" of Almodovar's film, *All About My Mother*, Bersani followed the complex crossings and movements throughout the film "from country to country, from city to city, from one sex to another, between different sons, among different mothers" to track the story's refusal to get identity right. "One suspects," Bersani noted, that "there may be a type of construction very different from the constructed imperatives of desire." The laws of desire "can perhaps be undone only if the subjects to whom they are applied become uncertain." The laws of desire "collapse with the disappearance of the subjects of desire."

Bersani unpacked Almodovar's notion of relationality, in a particularly memorable sequence when Manuela (the mother of the film's title), Rosa (the nun who is carrying the son of Manuela's half transgendered husband, Lola), Agrado (a partially transgendered truck driver and Manuela's long time

friend) and Huma (an actress) improvise a party of champagne, ice cream, and talk. At the party, "the general good humor builds up to hilarity on the subject of the penis. Agrado describes herself as 'a model of discretion, even when I suck a cock,' to which Huma responds: 'It's been ages since I sucked one.' Rosa, the pregnant nun, to the laughter of others, cries out with mock-naughtiness: 'I love the word cock - and prick!' As she joyfully bounces on the sofa."

"The penis does, then, get a great deal of attention," Bersani continued, "which, far from highlighting its sexual appeal, makes it an occasion of fun. Not exactly something to be made fun of, but rather something to have fun with....Unlike the absent father and the fantasmatic phallus, the Almodovarian penis is present even where, in principle, it should not be: on the bodies of such (at least self-proclaimed)



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Course Follows Kreeger Wolf Conference

By Jana Measells

This year's Kreeger Wolf Conference, "The Ends of Sexuality: Pleasure and Danger in the New Millennium" provided an exciting and stimulating two days for all of us in attendance. For myself, however, the excitement continued throughout the Spring term thanks to the many excellent undergraduates who took the Gender Studies course "Dangers, Desires, and Destinies: The Politics of Sexuality," which I had the privilege of teaching this quarter. In the spirit of both scholarly conferences and Edith Kreeger Wolf's desire to expose undergraduates to top scholars working in the field of Women's and Gender Studies, this course sought to provide a forum for students not only to attend and follow up on the themes of this year's conference, but also to pursue projects of their own design.

After kicking off the quarter with an intensive and invigorating two-day conference immersion, we spent the next several weeks exploring the interrelated themes of sexuality, politics, danger, and desire. Using this year's Kreeger Wolf Conference and the 1982 Barnard College conference "Towards a Politics of Sexuality" to frame the course, we examined the shifting meanings and political valence of sex, sexuality, gender and "nature" in the context of splits within second-wave feminism, identity politics, the rise of the New Right, AIDS, pornography debates, and globalization. Readings included recent books by Lynne Segal, Michael Bronksi, Laura Kipnis, Cathy Cohen, and Dennis Altman, and essays by Lisa Duggan, David Halperin, Leo Bersani, Carol Vance, Alice Echols, Gayle Rubin, Judith Halberstam, Susan Bordo, Roger Lancaster, and others.

In their final projects for this course, students have drawn upon materials and ideas from the "Ends of Sexuality" conference and our class. In the best traditions of scholarly conferences and academic course-work, however, they have utilized these resources, as well as their own backgrounds and interests, to develop exciting and innovative projects of their own.

Claire Arctander, a sophomore majoring in Gender Studies and Art, and Blaine Bookey, graduating senior and Gender Studies/Social Policy major, have joined forces to produce an ambitious art installation piece. Combining theory and practice, creative intellect and politics, theirs is a feminist vegan activist endeavor that addresses consumption and exploitation surrounding issues of sexuality and food. Seeking to make gender theory both understandable and relevant, they arranged a table at Norris to display their work and distribute an informative and provocative pamphlet melding fact, theory, opinion, and interactive exercises to stimulate critical thought in the participants and viewers.

Sophomore Gender Studies/Social Policy major Adrian Frandle has taken up questions of pleasure, danger, and identification within twentieth-century cinematic horror, focusing specifically on the subgenre of the "splatter movie," as exemplified by the film *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. His project explores both the formulaic

composition and subversive potential of cinematic horror. Delving into historical continuities with Gothic horror in nineteenth-century novels and drawing on psychoanalysis, Marxist cultural critique, feminist film theory, and queer theory, he argues for inclusive and nuanced readings of the ways that horror films simultaneously inhibit and invite identification, enjoyment and pain.

Emily Hagenmaier, a junior majoring in Gender Studies/Human Development and Psychological Services, has focused her project on the Conceptual, Minimalist artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres. She examines, in particular, the ways in which Gonzalez-Torres' art upholds the importance of personal history, memory, and subjectivity while simultaneously encouraging viewers to draw upon their own experiences in giving meaning to the artwork. As an artist, Hagenmaier argues, Gonzalez-Torres resists rigid boundaries of bodies, spaces, and sexualities, constantly questioning distinctions between "private" and "public" realms.

A junior in Radio/TV/Film and Economics, Amanda Crow has produced a documentary film, "Pornography: Who's Watching," for her final project. Combining interviews with sex shop owners and people on the street, along with a plethora of statistical information on the consumption of pornographic materials in the U.S., Crow's film interrogates attitudes towards pornography, perceptions of the genre's viewers, and discrepancies between what individuals assume and/or will openly discuss and the economic realities of a massive porn industry.

Senior Theatre/Fiction Writing major Jenny Halper has written a paper entitled "Embracing Abnormality: Eroticism, Feminism and the Coming Out of S&M in *Secretary*," which examines the adaptation of Mary Gaitskill's S&M-themed short story into a well-received but, she argues, misinterpreted feature film. Exploring the movie's alleged status as a "coming out" film for sado-masochism, she draws on interviews with Gaitskill, director Steven Shainberg, and screenwriter Eris Cressida Wilson, as well as the works of feminist theorists and film critics. Although the role of women as submissive might appear irreconcilable with popular feminist theory, Halper insists upon the complexity of S&M and investigates the ways in which S&M—in the right context—can be empowering, rather than simply illicit.

Jason Hones's project investigates popular TV culture in the 1970s, focusing on the ubiquitous inclusion of at least one flamboyantly gay male celebrity on comedy-based daytime television game shows. He explores historically and analytically how and why Paul Lynde, Charles Nelson Reilly, and Rip Taylor became household names in this period, examining the ways in which their subversive contributions to popular culture are simultaneously important and underappreciated.

Michelle Park and Danielle Shannon, both Social Policy majors, have designed individual projects that address the politics of sex and gender in countries beyond the US and Europe. Park, a junior, compares gender hierarchy, repression, and indeed, the very definition of "woman" in Western and Middle Eastern societies. She draws atten-

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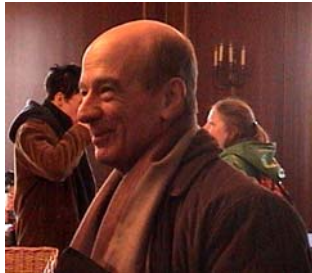
Kreeger Wolf course, continued from page 17

tion to the cultural-specificity of modes of gender domination and explores the implications for different feminist objectives within particular cultures, focusing specifically on the Moroccan context.

Shannon, a sophomore, examines the impact of neoliberal economic policy on the lives of transgendered prostitutes (Travestis) in Brazil. Specifically, she looks at how the capitalist, free-market agenda has shaped individuals' experience of democracy and civil liberties, the social services available to them, and their identities, gender roles, and ideologies. She seeks, furthermore, to draw parallels between these prostitutes and other poor and marginalized members of Brazilian and other societies.

Mark Van Arsdale, a freshman Vocal Performance major, focuses his paper on the dominance of a heteronormative masculinity in debates about homo- and heterosexuality. Identifying similarities between definitions and conceptions of homosexual and heterosexual masculinities, he explores the social need for a standard heterosexual masculinity, the threat homosexuality poses to this ideal, and its dominance even over other possible forms of heterosexual maleness and masculinity.

Senior Political Science major Dale Vieregge scrutinizes the



From left to right: Leo Bersani at Kreeger Wolf Conference reception, Jennifer Brody, and Tim Dean



concept of the family and its relation to pre- and post-industrial political and social thought and practice. His paper seeks to measure the depth and width of the political fault lines that have arisen around questions of the family and to document the state's reification of the concept of family through social policy and judicial rulings. In addition, he addresses the relevance of the family in contemporary social and economic arrangements and challenges progressive thinkers to contest the hegemony of 'family values' rhetoric.

Elizabeth Venell, a junior majoring in Gender Studies and Psychology, explores popular culture, gender, and consumption in the video *Girls Gone Wild: Doggystyle*. Drawing on works by Hazel Carby, bell hooks, and David Roediger,

Venell connects the blatant material exchange of t-shirts for women flashing their breasts to the process of consuming, through sex acts and fetishization, sexual, ethnic, and racial others. In particular, she examines the role of gangsta rapper Snoop Dogg as the ringleader for the camera crew, asking how

and why his race, sexuality, and drug-culture lifestyle serve as a marketable mediator between viewers/voyeurs and drunk girls "going wild."

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women as Agrado and Lola. The penis' many reoccurrences help to de-phallicize it. Lola's penis ... is at once an anomaly and a menace ..., but she can scarcely be said to represent phallic power and authority. And Agrado is anything but a phallic woman; she rather embodies the agreeable (as her name suggests) perspective on the penis as an attractive object of sensual and social interest, detaching it from fixed ideas of male and female identities. And it is perhaps this possibility of the penis lending itself to a non-castrating detachment that accounts for its presence as an enlivening, civilized and non-obsessive topic of interest – a passing topic of interest – at the little party Almodovar's four women throw for themselves in Manuela's apartment."

Almodovar's utopia occurs not in dream life but through sociability. In this analysis, we find a suggestive response to our query on the theorization of sexuality after Foucault (at least, the Foucault of *The History of Sexuality*, vol. one). Moving past desire, beyond kinship, gender, and identity, we find fun, the delicious pleasure (as Foucault attributed to Herculine Barbin) of dispensing with "true sex." Like all utopias, the powers that deny their realization are more than ghostly presences. In our present moment politically, the interdiction of humor at the expense of our phallic fathers is the mood of

neoliberalism.

Significantly, the disciplining logic of racialized hierarchies and its (sometimes inverse) imperatives of group integrity and survival operate through the laws of desire established as rules of identity and property in the law of the white father. If the ungovernability of fantasies and actions overflow and confound attempts to rationalize object choice on which depend heterosexual marriages that produce progeny and reproduce class privilege, race must have at some point entered the fray. After all, its reproduction also mandates the "right" object choice.

Bersani's analysis accommodates the incorporation of race (although he did not take it in that direction). As Jennifer Brody suggested in the question and answer period after Bersani's paper, the racial logic of the film may unfold in the north-south movements across nations and climates. Manuela and Esteban left Argentina for Spain. Esteban then departed for Paris, but returned to Barcelona as Lola, a half trans-sexualized woman with her male genitals intact. Almodovar's fluid space of nonidentities, then, occur in the "hot" climes where those unable to be fully transformed by the rules of the "Enlightened north" find home.

In her two plays excerpted for the conference, Dorinne Kondo's heroines enact the contrasting ends of inter-racial coupling. In *Seamless*, object choice appears overdetermined. Cross-

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racial desire seems rational as an exchange between status and a taste of the exotic. For an upwardly mobile, educated Japanese American woman, who are her likely objects of desire given her ambitions? Only a white Anglo-Saxon Harvard man is liberal and secure enough to chance a brush with danger. Yet memories of internment cloud this anxious couple. Fantasies of assimilation fight against a haunting recollection of naturalization papers and birth certificates blowing in the Nevada desert. By contrast, "She," a thirty-something Asian American woman in *But Can He Dance* moves through a series of "exotic" lovers, Asian, black, Latino men, a Jewish woman, but refuses white men. Here the disruption of miscegenation lies in the refusal to settle on any object. When the Latino lover accused "She" of preserving a shell of privacy, perhaps—and this is a guess, having only seen part of the play—her "fear of commitment" is symptomatic of her need to live outside the laws of desire, an individual picaresque journey in Kondo's play, but a collectively enjoyed moment in Almodovar's women's party.

Raising questions of race does not merely ask for equal time for marked peoples to express their variant of queer. Rather, the queering analytical gesture is incomplete without race. Let me add my own spin on Valerie Traub's question to David Halperin. How do gay white men in their abjection retain their whiteness? Or do they?

If sex radicalism is part of wider politics for social justice and equality, the art of community building, finding common cause but not asking for identical solutions, is the basis of mobilization. Participants at "The Ends of Sexuality" conference continue to explore (in expanded venues) the questions raised by the Barnard conference. Like the Barnard conference, we come away with more questions than answers. Most pressing is Lisa Duggan's reminder that sex radicalism is under siege. How do we translate our (as yet fragile) solidarity into power to engage the state is a question that we have yet to answer. But it is a question, I hope, that we have renewed our determination to address.



From left to right: David Halperin, Cora Kaplan, Michael Warner, and Dorinne Kondo

Ends of Sexuality Speakers and Talk Titles

Friday, April 4, 2003

Cora Kaplan

Southampton University

"Pleasure and Danger in the New Millennium"

Introduced by Linda Zerilli, Northwestern University

Lisa Duggan

New York University

"Twilight of Equality: The Sexual Politics of Neoliberalism"

Introduced by Lane Fenrich, Northwestern University

Response: Elizabeth Povinelli, University of Chicago

Dorinne Kondo

University of Southern California

"The Pleasures and Dangers of Cross-Racial Desire:

Readings from Recent Works"

Introduced by Jane Winston, Northwestern University

Response: Dwight Conquergood, Northwestern University

Saturday, April 5, 2003

David Halperin

University of Michigan

"Monsters From the Id: Gay Men, Risky Sex, and the Inner Life of Male Homosexuality"

Introduced by Jennifer Brody, Northwestern University

Response: Lauren Berlant, University of Chicago

Leo Bersani

University of California, Berkeley

"Sexuality, Purity and Art"

Introduced by Alessia Ricciardi, Northwestern University

Response: Penny Deutscher, Northwestern University

Cathy J. Cohen

University of Chicago

"Sex, Deviance and Agency: Old Themes for a New Black Politics"

Introduced by E. Patrick Johnson, Northwestern University

Response: Sharon Holland, University of Illinois, Chicago

Michael Warner

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

"The Pleasure and Danger of Shame"

Introduced by Jillana Enteen, Northwestern University

Response: Tim Dean, State University of New York, Buffalo

Valerie Traub

University of Michigan

"Closing Remarks"

Introduced by Jeff Masten, Northwestern University

Faculty and Graduate Students News

Cynthia Bowman (Gender Studies and the Law School) recently published "Wife Murder in Chicago: 1910-1930" in the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* (with Ben Altman); "Theories of Domestic Violence in the African Context" will appear in the forthcoming *Journal of Gender, Social Policy and the Law*.

Jennifer Brody (English and Performance Studies) is a recipient of the Paul Monette/Roger Horwitz Trust Achievement Award for 2003 for producing a body of literature that combats homophobia.

Peter Carroll (History) will be at the Library of Congress August-January on an ACLS Library of Congress Fellowship in International Studies. February to September, he will be at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences on a Fulbright Fellowship. He will use both fellowships for a new project, "Suicide, Modernity, and Imagining Society in China, 1900-1950."

Clare Cavanagh (Gender Studies and Slavic Languages and Literatures) received a Senior Fellowship at the Northwestern Humanities Center for 2003-2004 for work on her book, *Czeslaw Milosz: A Critical Life*. Her translation of Wislawa Szymborska, *Non-required Reading* was one of three finalists for the 2003 PEN/Book-of-the-Month Club Prize for outstanding translation. She has been invited to participate in the International Poetry Festival in Krakow, Poland in July 2003, where she'll be presenting on a panel on Czeslaw Milosz along with Seamus Heaney and W.S. Merwin.

Hollis Clayson (Art History) has been awarded fellowships at the Clark Art Institute and the Getty Research Institute for next year, 2003-04, to work on a new project: "Mary Cassatt's accent, or the (un)making of a cosmopolitan in Paris."

Jillana Enteen (Gender Studies and English) published "'Subject: Re: Why I HATE Achebe!': World Literature on the World Wide Web." in *Teaching Literature: A Handbook*. She will speak at the Center for Cultural Analysis, Theory, and History, Leeds University, England in July and at the Inaugural Cultural Studies Association Meeting in June. She also delivered a paper on Lawrence Chua's *Gold by the Inch* at Northwestern University School of Law in April and on Nalo Hopkinson at the MCA in March.

Christine Froula (English) is spending this spring as a Visiting Fellow at Cambridge University. She gave a talk titled "Freedom of Body, Freedom of Mind in *A Room of One's Own*" at Cambridge and a lecture, "Orlando and *The Oak Tree*: A Fantasia of Freedom," at the University of London.

Carolyn DeSwarte Gifford (Visiting Scholar) edited a collection of essays, *Gender and the Social Gospel* (University of Illinois Press) that came out at the end of April in hardback and paperback editions.

Phyllis Lassner (Writing Program) was a plenary speaker at the inaugural conference on American and British Jewish Women Writers at Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, Germany, at the end of January. She published two articles in the new *Holocaust Literature* volumes, on *Aimee and Jaguar* and on Ann Karpf's *The War after: Living with the Holocaust*. She has been elected to the Executive Committee on Twentieth Century English Literature of the Modern Language Association. She just gave a paper on "Feminist Fear and Loathing of Antisemitism: The 1930s and Today" at the conference on "Rethinking Antisemitism: The Holocaust and the Contemporary World" at University of California Santa Cruz, in May.

Micaela di Leonardo (Gender Studies, Anthropology, Performance Studies) has recently written "Gender, Race and Class Politics; for *The Anthropology of Politics*, eds David Nugent and Joan Vincent (forthcoming); "Margaret Mead and the Culture of Forgetting in Anthropology," for the *American Anthropologist* (forthcoming); and an account of the development of feminist anthropology for the

Association of Feminist Anthropologists column in the *American Anthropological Association Newsletter*.

Susan Manning (English and Theatre) finished a new book titled *Modern Dance, Negro Dance: Race in Motion*, and it will be published in spring 2004 by the University of Minnesota Press. She also gave a talk at Links Hall Chicago on "Asian Dance in/and the Diaspora." She gave a lecture at the Skirball Museum in L.A. on "Dancing Under the Swastika."

Dwight McBride (African-American Studies and English) was awarded the Paul Monette/Roger Horwitz Trust Achievement Award for 2003 and his book, *Black Like Us: A Century of Lesbian, Gay, AND Bisexual African American Fiction*, won the Lambda Literary Award for best fiction anthology.

Fran Paden (Gender Studies and Writing Program) delivered a paper entitled "Boys, Boats, and Stallions: Gender and the Travel Narratives of Adeline Moffat (1862-1956)" at a conference on travel literature organized by the College English Association at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez, on February 28-March 1. On May 16-17, she played Virginia Smith in *Nevah Had a Cross Word*, a script conceived and directed by Patrick Johnson about the life of Mary Adams, his grandmother.

Mary Weismantel (Anthropology) was the first runner-up for the Victor Turner prize for Ethnographic Writing, given by the Society for Humanistic Anthropology for her book *Cholas and Pishtacos: Tales of Race and Sex in the Andes*. She organized a session on "Masculinities of the Northern Andes" with Jason Pribilsky, at which she presented a paper on her new research on sexual imagery in ancient Moche art; more recently, she presented an expanded version of that paper at the Workshop on the Anthropology of Latin America at the University of Chicago.

Sandi Wisenberg (Visiting Scholar) published a short play in the Spring 2003 issue of *TriQuarterly*. In April, Sandi read two short essays on WBEZ-FM. One of them was a piece responding to the war in Iraq, called "Why I'm Reading Brecht Now." In late Feb/early March she participated in two panels at the Associated Writing Programs conference. At the MLA in December she presented a paper on the National Endowment for the Humanities and creative writers.

Graduate Students

Tatiana Andronova (Anthropology) has received an NU Research Fellowship to do PhD fieldwork in the Ukraine on re-peasantization and gender.

Katy Chiles (English) published a book review in the fall 2002 issue of *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*. She delivered a paper on Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* at the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association National Conference. She delivered another paper on Martin Delany's *Blake* at the U of Chicago Minority Graduate Student Conference.

Nancy Deutsch (Human Development and Social Policy) received a DYF for next year for the writing of her dissertation entitled "Resistance, reconstruction, and recreation: Gender, relationships and context in urban adolescents' self-construction."

Natalie Edwards (French and Italian) presented two papers on women's autobiography during spring break - one at the Cambridge French Graduate Conference, UK, the other in the African Literature Association annual conference in Cairo, Egypt. She has also been given a place on Northwestern's Paris Program in Critical Theory for next year.

Leah Guenther (English) won Northwestern's Presidential Fellowship.

Amal Hassan Fadlalla (Anthropology, GS Cert) has accepted a position in Women's Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Graduate Student and Alum News

Jana Measells (History) has been accepted to participate in the 2003 Summer Seminar Program in Germany, June 1 to June 14. She has also accepted The German Marshall Fund Dissertation Research Fellowship, the Northwestern University Graduate School Research Fellowship, and the Social Science Research Council Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies Fellowship. She'll be in Germany on these fellowships from July 2003 through March 2005.

Lauren McConnell (Theatre and Drama) was awarded a DYF for next year, and she just finished participating in the Dissertation Forum sponsored by the Center for the Humanities.

Fran Hutchins (French & Italian) will be participating in the Dartmouth College European Studies Institute Summer Institute on "The Law and Social Justice."

Stephen Motika (Liberal Studies) delivered "Walker Evans and the Photography of Early Signs and Late Alphabets" at a graduate conference at Harvard University in April.

Gender Studies Alum News

Nina Billone (2000) will start UC Berkeley's MA/PhD program in Performance Studies this fall and plans to work for a designated emphasis in women, gender and sexuality. She was honored to receive the Jacob Javits Fellowship, the Berkeley Fellowship, and the Townsend Discovery Fellowship in the Humanities.

Megan Chawansky (1999) will be creating and teaching a course entitled, "Gender and the Environment" at Green Mountain College next fall.

Lisa Flores Dumke (2000) was married on April 12, 2003 in Los Angeles. She received her master's degree in Psychology in 2002 and is currently working toward licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist. Working with Latino families in East LA, she writes occasionally for *Muscle & Fitness Hers* magazine. This summer her graduate school, Phillips Graduate Institute in Encino, California, will publish her master's thesis, "The Efficacy of Postmodern Theories of Psychotherapy with College Students in College Counseling Centers," in their annual journal, *Progress*.

Amy FitzGerald (1999) finished her law degree at the University of Oregon in December. This past month she was admitted to the Washington State Bar Association. She's currently working in nonprofit management in Seattle for Hickman House, a domestic violence intervention program for women and children.

Gina Pérez (PhD, Anthropology, '00) has accepted a position in American Studies at Oberlin. Her *Near Northwest Side Story* is in production with The University of California Press.

Christina Saenz (2002) accepted a research position in educational policy at the American Institute for Research in Washington DC.

Michelle VanNatta (PhD, Sociology) received her Ph.D. and a postdoctoral fellowship from the Social Science Research Council (with northwestern university sociology department as her host) for her study "Sexual Assault of Incarcerated Women."

Margaret Werry (PhD, Performance Studies) has accepted a position in the Theater Dept at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

Judith Halberstam, continued from page 1
generational splits, and instead encourages learning from and interacting with each other. With a more cohesive subculture, queerness will pervade traditional notions of "parent citizenship." Without reproducing, there are other ways to build community. Allowing for alternative life narratives queers society in all sorts of ways besides just sexuality; it also forces an economic and political shift to occur.

Graduate students also had the opportunity to meet with Halberstam and discuss her articles on the Transgender Gaze. Gender flexibility must be looked at through a suspicious lens according to Halberstam. Capitalism depends on people thinking they are infinitely flexible and at the same moment uniquely individual. Bodies fit into capitalism through "stretch fabric" and "one size fits all." The transgender body gives information on flexibility and the relationship to how we live in our flesh.

This talk was also a chance for Halberstam to hear about the graduate students' own dissertation work. Her

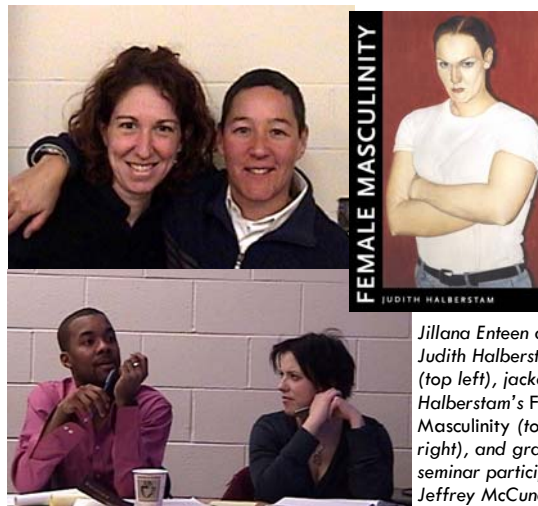
genuine interest in the students shows her passion for teaching and expansion of her own knowledge base.

Merely being in the presence of Halberstam gives us inspiration and confidence.

Halberstam charts a course for queer theory through reality. Even if drag kings and queens do a "bad reading" of Judith Butler's gender performativity theory, in reality, Halberstam proposes that this reading has had the greatest effect on society at large and

suggest that we use that positive outcome rather than criticize. The feeling of being radical and innovative, even if it is not unique in actuality, can be good for people. Halberstam commits to rethinking and redefining the from a queer viewpoint,

world which encompasses several ways of thinking. No one is left behind when normative categories are destroyed. In order to change the world, Halberstam suggests we think smaller, work collectively, and have modesty with our goals. Bit by bit queering society seems all the more feasible and inevitable.



Jiliana Enteen and Judith Halberstam (top left), jacket of Halberstam's *Female Masculinity* (top right), and graduate seminar participants Jeffrey McCune and Coya Paz (bottom)

Gender Studies Year-End Dinner



Megan Shaunnassy, Anna Dupont, and Claire Arctander



Lindsey Gilroy, David Nyweide, and Emma Caywood



Blaine Bookey, Naureen Shah, and Anneeth Hundle



Jeff Masten, Fran Paden, and Elizabeth Moody



*Emily Hagenmaier and
Sherri Berger*



Lauren Gutterman, Andrea Norstad, and Tony Rella



Sarah Warner, Kristina Hughes, and Dominique Licops



NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY

Gender Studies Program
124 Kresge Hall, 1880 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208-2211