Janet Halley: The Origins of Family Law & “Taking a Break from Feminism”
by Christine Wood (PhD Candidate, Sociology)

On March 3 and 4 Gender Studies welcomed Janet Halley, the Edith Kreeger Wolf Distinguished Visiting Professor of Gender Studies and the Royall Professor of Law at Harvard Law School. In the arena of gender and sexuality studies Halley is best known for her provocative and groundbreaking book *Split Decisions: How and Why to Take a Break from Feminism*, published in 2006 by Princeton University Press. During her days on campus Halley offered a lecture on “The Family and the Market Revisited: The Genealogy of Family Law” as well as a roundtable discussion with Gender Studies students and faculty. Halley’s visit provoked discussion of a range of topics at the heart of gender and sexuality studies, from the etiology of the bourgeois family as a legal and social unit to the utility of feminist frameworks in critical analyses of sexuality.

In the Edith Kreeger Wolf Lecture held on the evening of March 3, Halley examined the origins of family law in the modern West as a history of an ideological split between the family and the market. In the lecture Halley discussed the varied and fluctuating interpretations of marriage as a legal concept - as the sphere of private economical relations, as the forfeiture of a woman’s legal rights, and as a contractual relationship between willing parties. Halley considered changing understandings of the institution of marriage in terms of binaries like private and public personhood, status and contract, the domestic and economic spheres, the national and the global, and the particular and the universal.

Participants in Halley’s informal discussion on March 4 engaged in a vibrant discussion. During the roundtable, participants discussed various issues including Halley’s definition of feminism; the relationship of queer theory to feminist and identity politics; and the critiques of state power that are feasible while “taking a break from feminism.” In her important book *Split Decisions* Halley made a case for “theoretical incommensurability,” where a legal and social theory like feminism should exist alongside, and in conflict with, other theories of power. One of the most fruitful comments Halley offered during the roundtable is that feminism works like a paradigm, a way of constructing interpretations of the world, and that feminism should exist in relation to competing modes of criticism that are not based in gender analysis. The implications of such a claim are that in analyses of the social structures feminists have long claimed to be “gendered” - like the labor market or the state - competing interpretations of exchange, domination, and difference may be available that are not feminist.

An insightful exchange during the informal discussion concerned the question of whether to take a “break” from feminism or to work with “divergionist” perspectives within feminism. Should we consider queer theory as commensurate with or originating in feminism? Must queer theory and feminist theory be in dialogue in all discussions of sexuality or sexual identity? Is feminism always the right framework within which to think sex discrimination or sexual harassment? Given the diversity and breadth of interest among faculty and students in our program, which ranges from Marxist feminism to applied sexuality research, Halley’s visit provoked reflection at a critical juncture in the development of gender and sexuality studies in the US. During Halley’s visit the questions we asked and the topics we debated were those for the annals of gender and sexuality studies.

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It has been an exhilarating year for Gender Studies, and the wonderful people who make up our faculty, staff and student communities made it possible, and enjoyable. Let me thank on behalf of us all Emily Gilbert, Program Assistant; Amy Partridge, Director of Undergraduate Studies and Associate Director; Jody Savitz and Samantha Turner, coordinators of the Undergraduate Board; Catherine Clepper and Gina Di Salvo, coordinators of the Doctoral Colloquium; Gender Studies TAs Christine Wood and Darcy Heuring; Tessie Liu, Director of Graduate Studies; and the entire Gender Studies Advisory Board.

When Women’s Studies became Gender Studies on the recommendation of our faculty and then-Dean Eric Sundquist in 2000, we set ourselves several goals, including expanding our curriculum, research and programming in transnational and sexuality studies. Our programming for the past two years took up these themes, and we featured an exciting array of events linked to the theme of “Gender and Sexuality in Transition,” that coalesce around the “trans” in “transition”: transnational gender and sexuality (labor, tourism, migration); transgender and transsexual identities; and critical transactions among the methodologies and philosophies of feminism, queer theory, and gender studies. With the support of Kreeger Wolf funds, we brought to campus Professor Raewyn Connell of the University of Sydney and Professor Janet Halley of the Harvard Law School, both of whom gave inspiring public lectures, engaged with us in informal lunchtime workshops, and met with many of our students and faculty affiliates. Many of these events are described in the following pages. This year also marked the launch of The Sexualities Project (TSP), coordinated by Gender Studies and Sociology Professor Héctor Carrillo and Sociology and Humanities Professor Steven Epstein (see pages 4-7). The new resources TSP brings to Gender Studies build upon the programming and new courses (both undergrad and graduate) that take up issues of sexuality alongside gender. A highlight of the year was the winter quarter graduate-faculty reading group on Gender & Sexuality, led by Mary Weismantel (Anthropology), in which graduate students and faculty discussed a number of intellectual encounters between feminism, gender theory, queer theory and sexualities studies (see page 8).

Another of Gender Studies’ key goals over the past decade has been the expansion of our graduate program, and this has continued apace. Our programming, seminars and the ongoing doctoral colloquium have attracted many students from across the university. This is the first year of the Chicago-area graduate gender conference, “Engendering Change,” coordinated by Christine Wood (Sociology and GS doctoral student), and modeled on the example of UCLA’s graduate conference, in which colleagues from University of Chicago and University of Illinois at Chicago will also participate. This year student panels will be coupled with a feminist performance festival, co-sponsored by the Performance Studies Department. The performances by Lenelle Moise, Rhodessa Jones, and Holly Hughes (former Kreeger Wolf Distinguished Visiting Professor), also celebrate Gender Studies Advisory Board member Patrick Johnson’s final year as Performance Studies Department Chair.

This year Gender Studies took up a comprehensive assessment of our activities across a range of key areas, a “Curriculum and Personnel Review” Committee (CPR for short), co-chaired by me and Professor Mary Dietz (Political Science and Gender Studies). Three sub-committees -- an Undergraduate Curriculum Review; Graduate Program Review; and Faculty/Personnel Review -- worked diligently to evaluate our work, and to recommend changes, which are being phased in over the next two years. All committee members did a great deal of work for Gender Studies, on top of their home department assignments, and have succeeded in streamlining and enhancing the undergraduate major, more systematically incorporating sexuality and gender in the graduate curriculum, adopting comprehensive by-laws, and recalibrating the successful system of rotating appointments which fills out Gender Studies’ faculty roster. Thanks to Helen Thompson, Patrick Johnson, Alex Owen, Amy Partridge, Michelle Wright, Hector Carrillo, Tessie Liu and Jeff Masten.

This is my final year as Director and I am pleased to introduce Mary Weismantel as my successor. Mary brings to us her lifelong involvement with Women’s and Gender Studies, which began with her first job at Occidental College where she helped to inaugurate their program. At Northwestern, Mary is a Professor of Anthropology, and has been involved in Latin American and Caribbean Studies as well as Gender Studies. Mary’s research has focused on gender, and its intersection with other forms of structural inequality, especially racism and poverty, and, more recently, also on sexuality. As a cultural anthropologist who has written about both contemporary and ancient societies, her work is situated at the intersection of the humanities and the social sciences. We all wish Mary the best as she takes the helm of our engaging and collegial program!
RoPES from the South: Gender Theory on a World Scale
by Gregory Mitchell (PhD Candidate, Performance Studies)

Raewynn Connell, a sociologist from the University of Sydney best known for her pioneering work in masculinity studies beginning in the 1990s, delivered the program’s fall quarter Kreeger Wolf lecture to a packed house in November. Her talk was titled “Roses From the South: Rethinking Gender From the Global Periphery.” The talk stressed the importance of what Connell terms “Southern Theory,” the practice of incorporating voices, theories, and frameworks from the “periphery” (i.e., the “global south,” or “the developing world”). Drawing on the work from the huge tracts of the world that were colonized directly or indirectly subject to imperialism, Connell’s method is itself a critique of the theorizing typical to the “global metropole.” Her concern is as much with the question of whether “the metropole can hear” as it is with the question of whether “the subaltern can speak” and she calls attention to the ways in which dominant pedagogical and academic modes of understanding are shaped through the patterns and politics of citation, the mechanism of university presses and elite peer-reviewed journals, as well as through funding and hiring decisions. To emphasize this point, she cited the bibliography of Judith Butler’s *Gender Trouble* and its (almost) total reliance on Western European and American scholars (the one exception is Gayatri Spivak).

Connell devoted much of her lecture to highlighting examples of voices and practices from the periphery which, she says, should have wider recognition in the work of scholars based in the global metropole. One particularly compelling example was the practice of “dot painting” by Aboriginal people in the Central Desert of Australia, especially that of the Napaljarri sisters. Dot paintings tell the story of movement across a landscape and are used to convey important local scientific and social knowledge (e.g. when and where one can find a certain kind of berry or root, or local kinship rules). Incorporating these kinds of indigenous epistemological and material phenomena, Connell argues, is one way for the discipline of Gender Studies to work with and through the periphery in our effort to theorize gender.

Connell also called attention to important scholarship on gender being produced in the “global periphery” that is often ignored or not known by scholars in the “global metropole.” For instance, she cited Ashis Nandy, an Indian historian and intellectual, who argues that the process of refashioning masculinities is central to the colonial encounter, for both the colonized and colonizers. Similarly, she noted that African and Latin American scholars have challenged established notions of gender identity, suggesting that gender identity is itself a product of social movement mobilization, rather than its starting point.

Connell’s talk prompted a lengthy and engaged discussion. In particular, audience members discussed how to attend to the presence of the periphery within the metropole (and vice versa); whether Southern Theory is generalizable or whether we must re-theorize gender again and again as we engage with the multiple knowledge claims produced throughout the periphery; and how we (being firmly rooted in the privilege of the metropole) can try to put her ideas into practice institutionally in our own programs and departments.
A New Gender Studies Initiative: The Sexualities Project at Northwestern (TSP)

In the spring of 2010, Provost Dan Linzer issued a call for proposals in response to a new endowment at Northwestern intended to support research and education on “human sexual orientation and human sexuality.” Working together with a diverse group of Northwestern faculty members, Gender Studies faculty Héctor Carrillo and Steven Epstein proposed a new, multi-pronged initiative for social science research and education that has now become known as The Sexualities Project at Northwestern (TSP). TSP is conceived as a project within Gender Studies, but it also represents a collaboration with two other interdisciplinary units on campus: the Science in Human Culture Program and Cells to Society (C2S)—The Center on Social Disparities and Health at the Institute for Policy Research.

Epstein and Carrillo received funding from the Provost for a wide set of activities over three years (after which they intend to reapply). In laying out the rationale for the project, they proposed a broad-ranging effort to promote interdisciplinary research and education on sexual identities, sexuality, and health in social context. While anchored in social scientific frameworks (including scholarship on identity, rights, policy, and immigration), the initiative also incorporates perspectives from public health, medicine, and the life sciences. The initiative is focused on three core domains of study: sexual behavior and identity; social movements, rights, and policy; and immigration, globalization, and sexual behavior. The goal is to position Northwestern as a central contributor to the emerging research agenda in sexuality studies, particularly within the social sciences.

TSP officially began its work in September 2010. Over the course of the first year, the project has invigorated sexuality studies on campus in ways that support both faculty and students. TSP sponsored a Visiting Professor, historian Joanne Meyerowitz of Yale University; funded faculty research projects; provided graduate students with dissertation support and funding to present work at conferences; offered mentoring to graduate students working on topics related to sexuality studies; sponsored a faculty-graduate student reading group that engaged in productive conversation about the relation between gender studies and sexuality studies; organized a well-attended interdisciplinary workshop called “Epistemologies of Desire: Beyond Single-Discipline Approaches”; selected two postdoctoral fellows who will be in residence next year and the following; and held meetings of an Instructors’ Group that is working to enhance the sexuality studies curriculum within Gender Studies.

These activities are succeeding in positioning Northwestern as a national leader in critical studies of sexuality from social science perspectives. The postdoc search, which drew nearly 100 applicants, generated tremendous positive “buzz” about Northwestern around the country. At the same time, TSP’s work is bringing the critical study of sexuality to the center of scholarly work on campus. The “Epistemologies of Desire” workshop, for example, brought in eminent scholars from outside Northwestern in disciplines such as American Studies, Biomedical Ethics, English, Gender Studies, History, Psychology, Science Studies, and Sociology to engage with Northwestern faculty presenters and audience members, and it was attended by faculty and students from more than 14 departments and programs throughout the university.

For further details, look for the upcoming launch of TSP’s website at http://www.sexualities.northwestern.edu, or email sexualities@northwestern.edu.

TSP Funded Projects

Faculty Research Awards

Héctor Carrillo, Associate Professor of Sociology & Gender Studies (P.I.) & Amanda Hoffman, Project Coordinator – “Sexual Fluidity among Heterosexually-Identified Men: Bisexual Behaviors and Health Outcomes”

Steven Epstein, Professor of Sociology & John C. Shaffer Professor in the Humanities – “The Biopolitics of Sexual Health and the Sexualization of Cancer”

Marla Clayman, Assistant Professor, Division of General Internal Medicine, Department of Medicine, Feinberg School of Medicine – “An Examination of Cancer-Related Fertility Concerns among Gay, Lesbian, and Heterosexual Cancer Survivors”

Jillana Enteen, Senior Lecturer in Gender Studies – “Transnational Transitions: Medical Tourism to Thailand”

Wendy Espeland, Professor of Sociology and Charles Deering McCormick Professor of Teaching Excellence in Sociology – “The History of 10%: Social Science Measures and the Construction of Gay Identity”

Sarah B. Rodriguez, Senior Research Fellow in Medical Humanities, Department of Medical Humanities and Bioethics, Feinberg School of Medicine – “Female Genital Surgeries, the Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm, and the Medical Enforcement of Heteronormativity in the United States, 1905 to the Present”

Mary Weismantel, Professor of Anthropology – “The Modern Life of Ancient Things: The Moche Sex Pots”

(continued page 7)
David Serlin Revisits the History of Touch
by Andrew Brown (PhD Candidate, Performance Studies)

In mid-October, visiting scholar David Serlin, Associate Professor of Communication at the University of California San Diego, presented his most recent work in a TSP-sponsored talk titled: “Touching Histories: Personality and Disability in Sex Studies of the 1930’s.” Inspired by a New York Times article about the rise in and subsequent anxiety around consensual hugging amongst adolescents, Serlin revisited a series of sex studies that focused on perceptions (both their own and others’) of handicapped women’s bodies in order to interrogate the construction of handicapped sexualities more generally in this period.

In the 1930’s Columbia University scientists interviewed 100 institutionalized handicapped women, between the ages of 18 and 25, about their lives. However, because the handicapped body is often not considered to be sexual (or even capable of self-determination in this regard), the importance of touch (one’s own and others) and of bodily intimacy was often downplayed in these histories. Serlin reads these omissions and elisions as attempts to maintain control over narratives of female and handicapped people’s sexuality and pointed out that these (amended) case histories were used to construct a classification system of personality types which were, in turn, used to identify healthy and unhealthy behaviors. In doing so, Serlin reinvigorates the political nature of tactility and demonstrates the ways in which the role of touch in handicapped women’s sexual experiences threatened to separate the assumptive connection between heteronormative sex relations, dependency, and love.

The Curious Histories of Desire and Discipline
by Clare Forstie (PhD Candidate, Sociology)

This spring, The Sexualities Project was pleased to host renowned historian Joanne Meyerowitz, Professor of History and American Studies at Yale University, as keynote speaker and panelist at the “Epistemologies of Desire: Beyond Single Discipline Approaches” workshop. Meyerowitz’s research and teaching is attuned to the interplay of gender and sexuality in U.S. history, and she is the author of How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States (Harvard University Press, 2002) and editor of critical historical texts including History and September 11th (Temple University Press, 2003) and Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960 (Temple University Press, 1994). Across these and other analytic works, she explores the ways in which 20th-century constructs of gender, sexuality, and nationality are multiply constituted, highly contingent, and ultimately rooted in complex genealogies.

In her keynote address, titled “The Curious History of ‘Sexual Repression,’” Meyerowitz traced the shifting meanings of sexual repression as a culturally distinct yet uniquely plastic boundary-marking mechanism. Beginning with the ways in which cultural commentators have used sexual repression as a way to explain terrorism in the post-9/11 U.S., she highlighted the work that “sexual repression” performs in separating “us” from “others,” or “those who are free” from “those who are repressed.” Meyerowitz focused specifically on discourses around homosexuality as framed by scientists and public intellectuals beginning in the mid-20th century, deftly exploring how these social actors deployed sexual repression first to explain the pathology of homosexuality, then to point to the source of homophobia, and, finally, to mark the U.S. as the landscape of sexual freedom relative to a range of repressed inter- and intra-national others. Throughout her talk, Meyerowitz retained a focus on the function of sexual repression as a culturally distinct yet uniquely plastic boundary-marking mechanism. Beginning with the ways in which cultural commentators have used sexual repression as a way to explain terrorism in the post-9/11 U.S., she highlighted the work that “sexual repression” performs in separating “us” from “others,” or “those who are free” from “those who are repressed.” Meyerowitz traced the curious history of social constructionist thought in her talk at the workshop, “Sex, Race, and the Bio-politics of the Social,” which explored the ways sex and race were co-constituted in discourses of the Culture and Personality School (CPS), beginning in the early 20th century. She argued that initial (continued on page 6)
(continued from page 5) critiques of eugenics, which posited race and sexuality as socially constructed, were later eclipsed by CPS public intellectuals who used social construction as a disciplining concept, the goal of which was to produce normal (appropriately raced, gendered, and sexualized) children, adults, and, ultimately, culture. As the cultural relativism present in early social constructionist thought was eliminated by mid-century CPS theorists, Meyerowitz argued that “the biopolitics of child-rearing replaced the biopolitics of child-bearing."

In both of her talks, Meyerowitz reminded us that these kinds of critical genealogies make visible the hidden epistemologies of desire and the complex politics embedded therein, particularly as cultural constructs change to accommodate shifting and overlapping historical contexts. Her work prompts us to consider the concrete consequences of ignoring these histories, such as the frequently subtle, occasionally overt disciplinary practices made manifest in individual- and culturally-oriented violence. As identities, bodies, and practices continue to operate as sites of conflict, Meyerowitz’s “curious histories” offer an opportunity for reflection and a path toward answering a deceptively simple question: how did we arrive in this very strange place at this very strange time?

**David Halperin on “How to be Gay”**

by Jeffrey Kosbie (PhD Candidate, Sociology & Law)

David Halperin, who delivered the featured lecture at the “Epistemologies of Desire” workshop, is no stranger to controversy. Conservative legislators have long attacked his “How To Be Gay” class at the University of Michigan. Halperin’s lecture by the same name (all are part of a broader project examining the sexual politics of a cultural form) addressed the same fundamental question as does his class: how do sexual desires lead to culture? By examining this relationship between sexual desire and broader cultural patterns, Halperin pushed the conference discussion beyond the issues of the formation and regulation of individual desire.

Halperin, who is W.H. Auden Distinguished University Professor of the History and Theory of Sexuality, began his lecture with the dual observations that gay men are often described as having particular cultural preferences (musicals, clothing styles, and Mini Coopers) but that many resist the idea that there is a specific “gay culture.” Drawing on this observation, he asked what is the logic behind the association of certain cultural objects with gay men. Halperin described “gay culture” as consisting of certain genres of discourse, focusing particularly on camp as a type of performance. Following this definition, a performance might be part of gay culture whether or not the performer identified as gay. Halperin argued that subscribers to gay male culture first and foremost treat their own suffering as an object of parody. Gay male culture thus becomes a way to deal with political powerlessness. By making fun of gay male suffering, camp implies that no one deserves recognition at the cost of others’ shame. Camp attempts to create a world of horizontal rather than vertical relations. However, Halperin later identified a tension in gay male culture between beauty and egalitarianism. While camp seeks to legitimize all gay male desire by eliminating hierarchy, camp also depends on the continued existence of some idea of what defines beauty. Halperin concluded his lecture by suggesting that many gay men today reject “traditional” gay male culture, and that gay pride may be seen as a different solution to the challenge of political powerlessness than was camp.

In his prepared response, Gender Studies Professor Nick Davis complicated Halperin’s argument by questioning the definition of gay male culture. While the idea of camp as a utopian (gay) vision may be appealing, it also is not accurate to describe it as only gay. Davis questioned how Halperin’s argument would change if he recognized that the actors involved in camp may not think of themselves as producing gay culture. Questions from the audience similarly probed how much self-critique is exclusively gay and whether that claim is necessary for Halperin’s project.
Knowledge of Desire,
Desire of Knowledge
by Anna Terwiel (PhD Candidate, Political Science)

Foucault was there. The first talk of the “Epistemologies of Desire” workshop was a genealogy of the concept of “sexual repression” by Joanne Meyerowitz, much in the spirit of History of Sexuality, Volume 1. The concept of sexual repression, Meyerowitz explained, has been tremendously productive for the generation of all kinds of knowledge about society, both progressive and reactionary. Other investigations into the production of knowledge about sexuality followed. Tom Waidzunas and Steven Epstein traced the history of a technology, phallometric testing. This technology, they found, has been put to various uses, from the “treatment” of homosexuality to the prediction of sex offender recidivism, which can all be described as productions of “sexual truths” that strengthen the normalization of sexuality. Jennifer Fishman, in turn, looked at the use of similar technologies to measure female arousal by the pharmaceutical industry in their (failed) attempts to define and cure female “sexual arousal disorder.” And in her second appearance, Meyerowitz drew attention to the links between the “meta-narratives” of sex and race and the importance of studying the two together.

Other contributors, however, sought to generate new knowledge about sexuality in the present. Here, the variety of epistemologies was striking. While psychologist Allen Rosenthal described his experimental research into “sexual arousal patterns” of bisexual men, which relies on a phallometric device to quantify arousal, Philip Hammack advocated the analysis of narratives to investigate the meaning of desire for individuals in particular contexts. Lisa Diamond, meanwhile, appeared to situate her research on female “sexual fluidity” in between these two poles of biology and discourse, though closer to the latter. Her study relies largely on self-reported data: of women’s attraction levels to both genders on the one hand, and their sexual identity on the other. E. Patrick Johnson presented yet another epistemology, and spoke about the self-conscious play with gender performance of a genderqueer person from his southern home town known as Charles, Chaz and Chastity.

The conference, then, juxtaposed two types of inquiry: on the one hand, research about desire; on the other, research about our desire for knowledge about desire. That this is not a clear-cut distinction was made clear by the contribution of Héctor Carrillo and Amanda Hoffman, who stressed the importance of the framework of sexual identity categories for men’s self-understanding of their sexuality. Nevertheless, I think that this distinction has real implications that go beyond disciplinary boundaries and are ultimately political. The conference raised the question for all participants not only of how to study desire, but also of why.
TSP’s Reading Group on Sexuality & Gender
by Teri Chettiar (PhD Candidate, History)

During Winter Quarter, the Sexuality and Gender reading group met every two weeks to discuss texts that related in various ways to the intersection of sexuality studies and gender studies. A large and diverse group of graduate students and faculty members, participants represented a wide range of disciplines and research interests. Our moderator, Mary Weismantel (Anthropology; Latin American and Caribbean Studies; Gender Studies), chose readings for the first two meetings, getting us off to a very productive start with key pieces by Gayle Rubin, Monique Wittig, Teresa de Lauretis and Gloria Anzaldúa. Readings for the final three meetings were selected by smaller groups of participants—divided up according to disciplinary background—and helped to orient the larger group in discussions of sexuality and gender among sociologists, anthropologists, historians, and among political, literary, feminist and queer theorists.

Rubin’s provocation in “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality” (1984) helped to frame many of the central themes and questions that the group was to return to over the course of the quarter. Rubin’s urgent insistence in identifying crucial incompatibilities between (a specifically feminist inspired) gender studies and studies of sexuality continues to raise difficult questions about the precise nature of the relationship between gender studies and sexuality studies, and the extent to which the two share a common agenda and set of concerns. Each meeting considered the historical and theoretical reasons for the complex, and often uneasy, relationship between sexuality and gender, and worked to articulate and interrogate specific areas of compatibility and points of divergence. Working our way through a series of carefully chosen readings, the group considered the relationship between sexuality and gender by taking a range of scholarship as our point of departure—including work by Janet Halley, George Chauncey, David Halperin, Biddy Martin, Mignon Moore, Lee Edelman, Heather Love, Benjamin Noys, and Linda Zerilli. During our final meeting, we considered Edelman’s complicated (and potentially troubling) claim that an inclusive political approach to sexuality needs to involve a refusal to shape our political concerns about the future around the elusive figure of the Child (and its sexually reproducing parents), alongside Zerilli’s call to consider the political possibilities inherent to the project of radical thinking as it creates new relationships between seemingly dissimilar cultural concepts and practices. During this lively final discussion, it was once again made clear that an inability to wholly reconcile the aims of studies of gender and sexuality has by no means resulted in a closing off of productive cross-disciplinary inquiry. The reading group continually showed that there is still much important and fruitful conversation to be had. For those interested in reading any of the texts that we discussed, I provide a partial reading list below.

Monique Wittig, The Lesbian Body (translation of Le Corps Lesbien, 1973)
Gloria Anzaldúa, Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza (1987)
Linda Zerilli, “Feminists Know Not What They Do: Judith Butler’s Gender Trouble and the Limits of Epistemology,” in Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom (2005)
Benjamin Noys, “‘The End of the Monarchy of Sex’: Sexuality and Conclusions”
Faculty Updates

Héctor Carrillo has a new research project, “Sexual Fluidity among Heterosexually-Identified Men: Bisexual Behavior and Health Outcomes,” with funding from the American Institute of Bisexuality and the Sexualities Project at Northwestern. He is co-convener, with Professor Steven Epstein, of the Sexualities Project at Northwestern (TSP), with funding from the newly created Sexual Orientation and Sexuality Endowment. He is the recipient of the 2010 Carlos Monsiváis Award for best article from the Sexualities Section of the Latin American Studies Association. He is the author, with Jorge Fontdevila, of “Rethinking Sexual Initiation: Pathways to Identity Formation among Gay and Bisexual Mexican Male Youth” Archives of Sexual Behavior (2010), and gave presentations at the University of Illinois Chicago, Loyola University, San Francisco State University, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, and the Annual Meeting of the Society for Social Studies of Science.

Clare Cavanagh’s book Lyric Poetry and Modern Politics: Russia, Poland, and the West (Yale UP, 2010) received the 2010 National Book Critics Award in Criticism, awarded in New York in March. It was also selected as a Choice Outstanding Academic Title of 2010. She received an NEH for 2011-2012 to work on her current manuscript in progress, Czeslaw Milosz and His Age: A Critical Life (Farrar, Straus, Giroux).

Nicholas Davis recently served as an invited panelist at a national conference, “Expanding the Circle: Creating an Inclusive Environment in Higher Education for LGBT Students and Studies.” He presented strategies for teaching queer and feminist theories in productive, accessible ways in university courses. He is currently completing his manuscript The Desiring-Image, about recent queer cinema and Deleuzian film theory. He spoke at the “Teaching Gender Studies 101” panel and has been commissioned to write a chapter about the film “Y tu mamá también” for Reading the Bromance (Palgrave Macmillan).

Alice Eagly received the Berlin Prize from the American Academy in Berlin, an award that sponsors a stay in Berlin for the fall quarter, as well as the Raymond A. Katzell Award in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from the Society for Industrial and Organization Psychology, given for “showing to the general public the importance of work done by I-O psychology for addressing social issues.” Both awards recognize Alice’s work on the psychology of gender.

Jillana Enteen gave a keynote conference presentation on “TransNational Transitions: Thai Tourism Online,” at the “Digital/Media, Race, Affect and Labor Conference” (Bowling Green State University), as well as presenting “Transitioning Online: Cosmetic Surgery Tourism” at the UCLA Queer Studies Conference. She co-organized the first annual THATCamp Chicago, held at NU, a one-day conference for humanities scholars interested in digital environments. She was awarded a TSP faculty research award grant for her project “TransNational Transitions: Medical Tourism to Thailand.”

Steven Epstein, working together with Professor Héctor Carrillo, received funding from the Provost to launch The Sexualities Project at Northwestern (TSP), which is sponsoring faculty and graduate student research, a postdoctoral fellowship, reading groups, visiting lecturers, and workshops. His co-edited volume Three Shots at Prevention: The HPV Vaccine and the Politics of Medicine’s Simple Solutions (Johns Hopkins UP, 2010), includes two chapters by him on the gender and sexual politics of HPV. He also published a commentary in a special issue of GLQ marking the 25th anniversary of Gayle Rubin’s essay, “Thinking Sex.”

E. Patrick Johnson was inducted into the City of Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame. He received the Bert Williams Best Solo Performance Award from the Black Theater Alliance for his performance, “Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South” and the Randy Majors Memorial Award for Outstanding Contributions to LGBT Scholarship from the LGBT Caucus of the National Communication Association, and the Pride Esteem Award for Outstanding Service to the black LGBT community. His play, “Sweet Tea,” will open the fall season for Signature Theater in Arlington, Virginia, for a month-long run.


Ann Shola Orloff was elected President of the Social Science History Association for 2009-10, and organized the group’s annual conference in Chicago around the theme “Power and Politics.” Over 1100 scholars, including many from Northwestern, attended the conference, which included many panels addressing topics and controversies in gender and sexualities studies. Her Presidential address, “Rethinking Power and Politics,” will be published next year in Social Science History.
Doctoral Colloquium Update
by Gina Di Salvo (PhD Candidate, Interdisciplinary Program in Theatre & Drama)

The Gender Studies Doctoral Colloquium (GSDC) brings together Gender Studies-affiliated graduate students from across the university. In 2010-11, the GSDC was coordinated by Catherine Clepper (Screen Cultures) and Gina Di Salvo (Theatre & Drama) and advised by Professor Tessie Liu (History and Gender Studies). At GSDC monthly meetings participants circulate, present, and receive feedback on on-going student research. This year’s presenters included Andreana Prichard (History), Jeff Kosbie (Sociology and Law), Beth Corzo-Duchardt (Screen Cultures), and Clare Forstie (Sociology). The subjects and methods of these presentations and discussions were wide-ranging, from a set of love letters in 1960s Tanzania to a set of interviews regarding a defunct lesbian bar in Maine. During winter and spring quarters the GSDC also co-sponsored a second set of research meetings with The Sexualities Project. At these meetings, graduate student participants included Theo Green (Sociology), Angela Maione (Political Science), Greg Mitchell (Performance Studies), and Connor Doak (Slavic Studies).

The GSDC also sponsored two important events this year. In February, the GSDC and the Gender Studies Undergraduate Board co-sponsored a screening of HIV: Hey, It’s Viral!, a sex-positive HIV/AIDS prevention and activism video created by and for Chicago youth. Members of BeyondMedia Education and Howard Brown’s Broadway Youth Center, who produced the video, also presented on the process of developing the project, working with youth, and led a discussion of HIV/AIDS prevention.

Our most successful event of the year, “Teaching Gender Studies 101: An Interdisciplinary Panel on Pedagogy and Classroom Politics,” brought together professors from three Chicago-area universities to discuss issues related to teaching introductory GS courses in the social sciences and humanities. Christine Wood, a doctoral candidate in Sociology, moderated a panel of faculty speakers including Professors Ann Russo (DePaul), Bren Ortega Murphy (Loyola), and Héctor Carillo, Nick Davis, and Amy Partridge (all from Northwestern).

QPGSA Update
by Sarah Mann-O’Donnell (PhD Candidate, Comparative Literary Studies & French)

Northwestern’s Queer Pride Graduate Student Association (QPGSA) is an award-winning graduate student group committed to serving lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, trans and genderqueer graduate students and their allies. We foster queer communities on and off campus by providing academic, social, activist and networking spaces.

As new president this year, I focused on four goals: more programming for girl/woman-identified queer students and trans/genderqueer students, fostering community across orientations and identifications by focusing on sexual...
(continued from page 10) practices, and building liaisons with undergraduates. Our Discover Queer Chicago project, an extensive network of events throughout Evanston and Chicago, implements these goals, through endeavors such as our Trans 101 workshop, our Leather Archives and Museum tour followed by a community dinner and a Bollywood drag show, a night out for “queer women and those who love them,” and a guest lecture/film screening with the group Criminal Queers.

Our Queer Salon, a new reading group for both graduates and undergraduates, is a casual, “no theory required” community gathering. This year’s theme is “Contemporary Queer Fiction (2002-09).” The group has had a great turnout, attracting members ranging from freshmen to advanced doctoral studies, in disciplines from English Literature to Neuroscience.

New quarterly advocacy projects this year include the “Write Your Principal!” Northwestern letter-writing campaign to help stop bullying of LGBTQA youth, and collaboration with Genderqueer Chicago on the Trans-Friendly Bathroom Initiative.

Finally, the 4th annual Queertopia! graduate student conference took place May 27-29. This year’s theme was “Queer(ing) Poetics: Text, Method, Movement, Thought.” Notable programming included a keynote by Sue Golding, “Queergasm! A Cabaret,” and a film screening of Randall Jennings’ film 50 Faggots. “Queertopia!” is sponsored by TGS, Gender Studies, Performance Studies, History, Art History, Art Theory and Practice, English, Philosophy, French and Italian, Comparative Literary Studies, and The Sexualities Project at Northwestern.

Please email nuqggsa@gmail.com for more information.

Graduate Student Updates

Anndrea Ellison presented a paper titled, “Speaking Roles: How Conservative Churches Create Roles for Women” at the National Communication Association’s annual conference in San Francisco last November. The paper won the Top Student Paper for the Feminist and Women’s Studies Division.

Hayrunnisa Goksel is currently working on women’s peace activism in Turkey. Her research has been awarded by the Buffett Center Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Research Grant for summer 2010. She also attended the 2010 annual conference of the Eastern Sociological Society to present her previous work on honor crime and governmentality in Turkey.

Javon Johnson, who graduated in December 2010, accepted the first Annual Visions & Voices Provost’s Postdoctoral Fellowship, housed in the Department of American Studies & Ethnicity at the University of Southern California. He published “Manning Up: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Los Angeles Poetry Community” in Text & Performance Quarterly 30 (2010). He is currently transitioning the dissertation into a book, tentatively titled, Owning Blackness: Poetry Slams and the Making of Spoken Working Communities.


Sarah Mann-O’Donnell is the director of this year’s “Queertopia!” Graduate Student Conference, titled “Queer(ing) Poetics: Text, Method, Movement, Thought” (May 27-29). As a fellow at Jones Fine and Performing Arts Residential Hall, she gave a talk to students titled “How To Paint With Your Private Parts: A ’70s Body Art Primer.”

Gregory Mitchell received this year’s President’s Prize for Humanistic Anthropology at the annual AAA meeting. This fall, he was a keynote speaker at DePauw University’s ‘Midwest Stops Traffick” event and also delivered an invited lecture at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro entitled “Garotos do brasil: homens que vendem sexo e a ideologia anti-imigrante da Espanha,” about the conflation of trafficking and prostitution by anti-immigrant politicians. He is currently working with a group of female sex workers in Rio on a fashion line they have developed with the support of Northwestern’s Center for Interdisciplinary Research in the Arts.

Chris Shirley presented a paper titled “The Devonshire Manuscript: Reading Women in the Henrician Court” at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America. The panel on which he presented was sponsored by the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women.

Christine Wood is a Gender Studies Teaching Assistant this year. In Winter 2011 she taught “Gender, Sexuality, and Popular Culture: Social Science Perspectives.” In addition to her dissertation on the institutional development of gender studies in American universities, Christine is working as researcher with Project Teal, a research project exploring sexual fluidity among men. She was the primary organizer for “Engendering Change: Chicago Area Graduate Conference on Gender,” which had its first annual meeting on May 20 and 21 at Northwestern.
Undergraduate Board Update
by Jodi Savitz (’11)
The Gender Studies Undergraduate Board (GSUB) chose three themes around which to plan GSUB events this year: “Political/Sex” in Fall, “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” in Winter, and “The Modern Family” in Spring. Co-chairs Jodi Savitz (’11) and Samantha Turner (’11) made it their goal to plan events that would appeal both to other Gender Studies majors as well as to the Northwestern community at large. With this in mind, GSUB introduced the fall quarter theme with a film screening and discussion of Outrage: An Insider’s Guide to the Hypocrisy of Closeted Politicians. Highlights from winter quarter included presentations by several Chicago-area activist groups. Members of the Young Women’s Empowerment Project (YWEP) discussed their most recent participatory action research project and members of Beyondmedia and the Broadway Youth Center screened their documentary HIV: Hey Its Viral, and described their collaboration with high school youth on the production of the film and the (successful) struggle to get it approved as an AIDS prevention and sex education resource in the Chicago Public Schools. In Spring, GSUB sponsored a talk by nationally recognized lawyer and activist Kate Kendell the head of the National Center for Lesbian Rights, a national legal organization committed to advancing the civil and human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and their families through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education.

It Gets Better
by Jodi Savitz (’11)
In Summer 2010, a series of suicides among LGBT youth attracted extensive media coverage in the United States and drew national attention to the issue of teen bullying. Columnist Dan Savage responded by launching the “It Gets Better Project,” encouraging LGBT adults and allies to make and post videos addressed to LGBT youth with the hopeful message that things will improve as they get older. To date, the project has inspired nearly 10,000 video submissions from politicians, celebrities, performers, staff members at numerous high-profile companies, and even the President of the United States (see: http://www.itgetsbetter.org/).

On February 22nd, GSUB hosted an “It Gets Better” event at which we screened a selection of these submissions and discussed their implications and effects on the LGBTQ community. Professors Lane Fenrich and Nick Davis led a discussion with the over 100 students and faculty in attendance and posed a number of provocative questions including: “What aspects of the issues facing LGBT youth today do the project’s contributors address or fail to address? Is the project’s upbeat message compromised by the persisting realities of sexual and gender discrimination? And, most importantly, what can these videos help us understand about contemporary U.S. attitudes and beliefs surrounding LGBTQ issues?”
GSUB 2010-2011 Events

Fall 2010
- Screening of Outrage: An Insider’s Guide to The Hypocrisy of Closeted Politicians & Discussion with Lane Fenrich – October 27th, 2010
- Screening of Orgasm Inc & Discussion with Steven Epstein – November 16th, 2010

Winter 2011
- “Girls Do What They Have To Do To Survive” by the Young Women’s Empowerment Project – January 18th, 2011
- Screening of The Line: Sex. Consent. Power. Pleasure with Nancy Schwartzman (co-sponsored with SHAPE) - Feb 9th, 2011
- “It Gets Better” Screening & Discussion with Nick Davis & Lane Fenrich – Feb 22nd, 2011
- HIV: Hey It’s Viral (co-sponsored with the Gender Studies Doctoral Colloquium) – Feb 17th, 2011

Spring 2011
- Reality Bites Back: The Troubling Truth about Guilty Pleasure TV with Jennifer Pozner – March 31, 2011
- Sex Week co-sponsorship – April 11-16th, 2011
- Kate Kendall – May 5th, 2011

Reality Bites Back  
by Samantha Turner (’11)

The Gender Studies Undergraduate Board was delighted to kick off spring quarter by hosting a lecture and discussion with journalist and blogger Jennifer Pozner about her new book Reality Bites Back: The Troubling Truth about Guilty Pleasure TV. Pozner, the founder of Women In Media & News (WIMN) and the managing editor of WIMN’s popular group blog Voices, added Northwestern to a list of over 80 colleges she has visited to discuss women, media, politics, and pop culture. One of the goals of this year’s Gender Studies Undergraduate Board has been to host events that are accessible to all students and faculty. Pozner’s presentation fulfilled exactly this goal; Pozner exposed the commercial and political agendas behind reality television and discussed the negative impact of a variety of shows on women using numerous video clips. Audience members cringed and uncomfortable “oohs” and “ahhs” filled the room as people realized they would never look at The Bachelor the same way again.

2010-11 Senior Theses
Jodi Savitz (Theater and Gender Studies) 
“A ‘Haute’ Shade of Lipstick: Locating a Femme-Centric Community of Latina Lesbians in Miami, Florida”

Samantha Turner (History and Gender Studies) 
“Can’t Get No Satisfaction: Feminist Responses to the Biomedicalization of Female Sexual Dysfunction”

2009-10 Student Awards
Brittany Smith was awarded the George C. Casey Prize for her essay “Empowering Voices and Engendering Agendas: The Convergence of Feminist Ideologies Around Women’s Rights Activism in Iran.”

Margaret Pike was awarded the Betty Jo Tetter Dobbs Prize for her senior thesis: “Something To Get Off My Chest: Bras & Binders in the Construction of Genders”

Christine Stiehl & Margaret Pike were awarded the Rae Arlene Moses Leadership Award.

Feminism As Cultural Critique
by Cat Hammond (’12)

Professor Alex Owen’s popular class “Roots of Feminism” provides a survey of the many strands and phases of feminist thought, from its origins in the late eighteenth century through the present day concentrating on the so called “first wave” of feminism.

A new course by Professor Helen Thompson, offered for the first time in Winter 2011, takes a closer look at the “second wave” of feminism that swept the U.S. in the 1960s and 70s. This course, “Feminism as Cultural Critique: The Second Wave,” focused on second-wave feminist critiques of women’s positions within the dominant mid-century culture. We studied classic feminist texts from the period—works by Simone de Beauvoir, Betty Friedan, bell hooks, and many others—alongside contemporaneous cultural products from films, to installation and performance-based artworks, to romance novels. One of the most exciting assignments required students to search out and make sense of a document or artifact from amongst the extensive collection of second-wave ephemera housed in Special Collections at Northwestern. I choose to look at the collection of prints produced by the Chicago Women’s Graphics Collective, part of the Chicago Women’s Liberation Union (1969-1977).

Professor Thompson’s class introduced me to both classic second-wave feminist scholarship, much of which is it still relevant today, as well as to the vibrant graphics and bold political slogans that participants produced to disseminate information about the Women’s Liberation Movement and its goals.
The Gender Studies Program at Northwestern is an interdisciplinary program, with faculty affiliates drawn from more than 25 departments across four of the University’s schools.

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Kresge Hall 2-321
1880 Campus Drive
Evanston, IL 60208-2211.
Phone: 847.491.5871
Email: gender@northwestern.edu
Web: http://www.wcas.northwestern.edu/genderstudies/

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Michelle Wright (African American Studies)

Faculty-Graduate Colloquium Events
Secret Historian: The Life and Times of Samuel Steward, Professor, Tattoo Artist, and Sexual Renegade with Justin Spring, Author (co-sponsored by the Department of Performance Studies) – October 13, 2010

Gender Studies Reading Group: Beauty Bias: The Injustice of Appearance in Life and Law by Deborah Rhode – October 28th, 2010

Selected Readings by Raewyn Connell: A Gender Studies Discussion Group – November 4th, 2010

Performance: Passing Solo by Nancy Cheryll Davis, Performer (co-sponsored by the Department of Performance Studies as part of the solo/black/woman performance series) – October 29th & 30th, 2010

Roses from the South: Gender Theory on a World Scale by Raewyn Connell, University Chair, University of Sydney, Edith Kreeger Wolf Distinguished Visiting Professor of Gender Studies – November 11th, 2010

The Family and the Market Revisited: The Genealogy of Family Law with Janet Halley, Professor of Law, Harvard University & Edith Kreeger Wolf Distinguished Visiting Professor of Gender Studies – March 3, 2011

Politics and Pedagogy of Sex, Gender, and Sexuality: A Gender Studies Forum on the Bailey Media Event – March 10, 2011

Gender Studies Reading Group: Terroist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times by Jasbir Puar – April 14th, 2011

Festival of Feminist Performance (co-sponsored by the Department of Performance Studies) – May 19th - 21st, 2011

Engendering Change: The First Annual Chicago Area Graduate Gender Conference – May 20th-21st, 2011