

DEC08

NEWSLETTER OF THE
UCLA CENTER FOR THE
STUDY OF WOMEN

CSW

*The Art of Failure and the
Unwritten Rules in Life*

update





DEPARTMENTS



Just Say No

Recently I was talking to a friend (I'll call her Gail), an academic who teaches in a university on the East Coast. She recounted a story that was all too familiar. A couple of months ago, her department chair had approached her about being on a hiring committee for a gender and sexuality search. Even though Gail had already done extensive service in her department and had a medical condition whose debilitating effects excused her officially from further academic service, her chair was insistent. This position was incredibly important. Everyone else who might legitimately serve was on leave, serving on another committee, or otherwise unavailable. Those one or two people who could serve would surely sabotage the mission and intent of the search. Her chair begged her, and Gail very reluctantly agreed to serve. Now, she is physically suffering as a consequence.

Though Gail's particular version of this story was extreme, in its general outlines, it is a very familiar story. I have certainly experienced such situations and have also heard similar versions of this story from many female and minority colleagues. In addition to the regular service demands that we all face, certain faculty are vulnerable to requests for extensive service based on community and ethical "imperatives" that sometimes, as in Gail's case, greatly exceed the boundaries of self-interest. When I (and several other people) told Gail she needed to resign this committee immediately, she spent a considerable amount of time dwelling on the problems such a decision would raise for the committee. Though she ultimately saw the wisdom in the advice she was universally receiving, Gail felt guilty withdrawing from a situation that was causing her debilitating pain. In each instance, she was seeing the situation not from

her own perspective, but from that of the committee and its aims. Though I do not think there are any hard and fast rules about how to decide between our own self interests and the interests of causes and structures we believe in and need to support, I do think some people, maybe women especially, are more inclined to read and make ethical decisions about their responsibilities from a position that does not take their own interests sufficiently into account. To make effective judgments about our commitments, we have to keep ourselves in the picture. We do not always have to begin and end at that point, but our own interests do need to be part of the equation. If saying "yes" means physical pain, detrimental consequences to our own work, serious incursions on home or personal life, sometimes we just have to say no.

— Kathleen McHugh



The Art of Failure and the Unwritten Rules in Life

AN INTERVIEW WITH ELLEN HARVEY

by Jonathan Cohn

Over the past 12 years, Ellen Harvey (www.ellenharvey.info/) has exhibited her art pieces around the world, from Berlin, Germany to Lahore, Pakistan. In the process, she has garnered an impressive reputation for both her intriguing uses of materials, from Polaroid™ film to etched mirrors, and her playfully devastating institutional critiques. She is an artist, though she has never felt comfortable with the term, and seems at times to question the term's relevance in a society where everyone seems to be creative. As someone who has taught and lectured in a number of prestigious universities, such as Yale and the University of Michigan, she is also currently concentrating on a number of exhibitions and her one-and-a-half-year-old son, who delightfully interrupted the interview on a number of occasions to discuss his impressive collection of hats.

JC: It seems that your life has taken some interesting turns. For example, in 1993 you graduated from Yale Law School. How did that translate into a career as an artist?

EH: At the time I was an art school dropout and went to law school in part to cheer up my parents. After I graduated, I worked for almost three years for a large international corporate law firm in Manhattan until I'd saved enough to live for a year without a job, at which point I quit to be an artist. If it didn't work out, I figured I would just get another job, like everyone else. I was very lucky and ended up showing almost immediately. I took part in the Whitney Independent Study Program, instead of doing an MFA, in part because it was so much cheaper and didn't take so much time—I was in a big hurry to get started

after having spent so much time and energy doing something else.

It's interesting, for a long time I thought that my law degree had nothing to do with my artwork. I also felt it was somehow embarrassing, so I didn't tell anyone. But after a while I realized that the questions that interest me the most about art are also those that interest me the most about the law: How do people decide on what the rules are, either in art or the law? How do people decide what constitutes art, who is an artist? How do people come to such a consensus? My interests have always been centered on these larger social structures—the unwritten rules in life. So the two fields are connected for me, after all.

JC: Many of your art pieces seem to point to these “unwritten rules” specifically by pointing to the inabilities and failures of art and museums—the ways in which these institutions, and art in general, often seem to be inherently designed to fail at what they say they set out to do. Specifically, *The Inevitable Failure of Restoration* (2008) (see page 5), a video performance of you trying to restore/recreate the wallpaper in a room by painting the original design over the paint that is covering the wallpaper—to no avail.

EH: Yes, as part of the 2008 Whitney Biennial, I asked to make a work in a beautiful paneled room in the Park Avenue Armory. In 1992, Paul Haydon had peeled back some of the horrible institutional paint in one part of the room in order to reveal the beautiful hand-painted wallpaper that was hidden beneath. It would have been impossible for me to restore the whole room of course, but I felt a strong urge to try. So this video was about my symbolic attempt at a restoration. The video shows me trying to paint the design freehand (which is inevitably not as good as the original) and then, because I’m such a drama queen, the paper bursts into flames. The video was installed in the room so that the viewer could compare my “painting” to the original.

JC: Do you think of this kind of failure as being

an inherent part of the art-making process? Is there always a large gap in your work between what you intended to create and the finished project?

EH: Failure is inevitable, in some sense. But I think of failure as a good thing, as part of the human condition. Humans never quite accomplish what they want, and in art this disconnect is particularly poignant. Every piece you make is haunted by the dream of the piece you would have made if you had more time or more resources or were just a better artist. That’s why the main work I made for the Whitney Biennial (see page 9) was titled *The Museum of Failure*—I thought it would be best to address my insecurities head on.

JC: How do you think this high potential for failure makes art a unique practice in society, as opposed to other professions, like the law?

EH: The most important thing about art for me is the way it affects people and connects them. Most of the voices we hear are essentially those of large powerful entities, like corporations and governments and their representatives. We seldom get to hear nonexperts speak. I feel that ideally the artist stands in for the individual who perhaps doesn’t really know what they’re

talking about but who has something to say. Artists, like amateurs, never have the resources to really accomplish our goals. No artwork that I make will ever be able to compete with the titans of our media culture. In some ways, failure is my only option. Fortunately, I love failure. Everything interesting that happens in the world happens because someone failed or was trying to do something else. The only people who never fail, or think they never fail, are the megalomaniacs.

JC: So success is unhealthy, or a pathology?

EH: Success is just fine, but it’s important not to be complacent, to recognize that there’s room for improvement or that perhaps that a piece’s failure is the most interesting thing about it. Maybe succeeding too much is ultimately unhealthy. Everything in moderation. Although I’m not sure how success and failure should be measured. I certainly don’t believe in the market as the ultimate arbiter of value.

JC: Much of your work seems particularly interested in the failures of self-representation in art, especially through self-portraiture. This is particularly relevant to *Twins* (2001) (see page 7), a work in which you recorded both your face while drawing a self-portrait and the self-portrait



Twins, 2001

itself being created. Did you find that you were adequately represented by the finished self-portrait?

EH: I think I did that recording five times, and in my opinion none of the finished sketches were particularly good. Since I needed to keep my face and drawing within the frame, I was very uncomfortable. Part of the point of the recording is to show how much better the video is if you want to know what I look like. Video is just a much better technology of representation than pencil.

JC: Was it your intention to make an accurate self-representation?

EH: I was trying but that wasn't the primary motivation behind the work. It's very much about the fact that we live in a world of instant image gratification. Few people have any idea of the time and effort it takes to make a handmade image. Since the recording is in real-time, it actually gives a good sense of how long it takes to make a drawing, and it also gives the viewer a glimpse into the process that takes place in that highly romanticized place, the artist's studio. People often think the art process looks like Jackson Pollack having a really intense and fabulous time, but actually it's more often than



Invisible Self-Portraits (Polaroids), 2006



2008 Whitney Biennial

not rather dull. I'm always mystified by the fetishization of process. When I first showed *Twins*, I was deeply surprised that people were watching the whole thing. I didn't think anyone would want to sit and watch it for the entire half an hour.

JC: Is there anything about the process of making a self-portrait that makes it impossible to really represent yourself the way you think you look?

EH: Well, artists generally look quite serious in their self-portraits. I think it's because it's hard to hold a smile for that long. Also, staring at yourself in a mirror tends to make for an intense and slightly cross-eyed expression, no matter the general demeanor of the artist. You can be really happy and still end up looking like you just lost your cat.

JC: If the self-portrait ultimately fails to capture how the artist appears, in what ways do you think it succeeds?

EH: Self-portraiture traditionally was primarily an advertisement for the artist as an artist that showcased their skills and presented their artistic persona. For me, that means that self-portraiture is ideally situated if you're interested in exploring what it means to be an artist,

which is a fascinating profession in that way. Historically, anyone can declare themselves to be an artist. Of course, you'll need to generate some consensus if you want to actually live from your work. So these self-representations were often highly artificial constructs that are geared towards creating that consensus. They're a cliché. But clichés are clichés for a reason, and I love taking them to logical conclusions and seeing what happens. One example is *Invisible Self-Portraits (Polaroids)* (2006), where I took Polaroids of myself in mirrors with the flash on and then painted my obscured face onto wood panels. They're self-portraits in which my face is hidden and all you can see of me is my context and a big piece of expressive white paint. It's a piece that's also about painting as a technology of representation that has been superseded by photography. You'd never send someone a painting of yourself if they wanted to know what you look like. I used Polaroids, because like paintings they're unique singular objects that are also the product of a technology that's past its prime. However, unlike paintings which are subjective, frequently valuable, and take quite a bit of time to make, Polaroids are objective (especially compared to easily manipulated digital photography), disposable, and all about instant gratification. It makes for an interesting counterpoint. I made another series also called

Invisible Self-Portrait (2007) (see page 1) where I just used regular photographs and then found frames so that it would look as though you were actually looking in a mirror. As you can tell, I really like to paint flashes – they're a little bit of abstract joy in the middle of all that trying representation.

JC: What about in your portraits of others? At the 2008 Whitney Biennial, you sketched one hundred people and asked them to comment on how well they thought you had portrayed them (see page 9). Were you surprised by any of their responses?

EH: In 2001, I had done the same kind of portrait series, except I was drawing for free on the street. I'm pretty sure that my skills as a portraitist remained stable (if they didn't actually decline), but perhaps not surprisingly people were much more complimentary about their portraits when I was doing the project in the Whitney. They also wrote a lot about how much they enjoyed meeting me. On the street, people mainly complained that I hadn't made them good-looking enough.

JC: In fifteen minutes what attributes are you able to display in a portrait sketch?

EH: When things are going well, you can get the shape of the face, the general placement of the features. It really depends on how well the person is able to sit still. Some people insisted on smiling through the whole process, which was awful since the smile inevitably waxes and wanes, and I'd spend the whole 15 minutes erasing and redoing the mouth and teeth. The biggest problem is that in fifteen minutes it's impossible to do justice to people with exciting hair. Also everyone looks somewhat blonde because you don't have time to get the hair dark.

JC: Perhaps not surprisingly, you often use etched mirrors in your work, which is a more direct way of making people aware of their physical bodies and the space around them.

EH: I've always been fascinated by the cliché, "art holds a mirror up to nature," and I thought it would be fun make art that was an actual mirror. After some experimentation I discovered that if you engrave a mirror and illuminate it from behind you get a really beautiful kind of drawing in light. The first major piece I made using this technique was in 2005 for a solo show at the Pennsylvania Academy of Art celebrating their 200th anniversary. The Academy has such a beautiful building that I was worried than any installation I made would simply be

overshadowed; so, I thought I'd just recreate their incredible entrance hall. I ended up engraving a 360 degree drawing of the hall as if it had been abandoned in some dystopian future. It was a bit of a comment on the dwindling place that the academy has within contemporary society. I loved that viewers could see themselves in the piece and thereby in this sad future where art had no place.

JC: Even as you continue to make art that is on some level representational in nature, many of your pieces seem to suggest that this pursuit is ultimately impossible. What can you accomplish through such a project?

EH: This question is perhaps central to my work *The Irreplaceable Cannot be Replaced* (2008), a project which is all about the value of symbolic action. Dan Cameron had asked artists to come to New Orleans and make artwork out of debris for an exhibition at the Contemporary Art Center titled "Something from Nothing," and I just kept on thinking how I would feel if an artist were to make a work from the wreckage of my life. In the end, I decided that I'd rather have the artist replace some of my lost things, especially those that were irreplaceable. So that's what I tried to do. With the help of the *Times-Picayune*, I asked people to submit images and

descriptions of things that they'd lost to Katrina that were irreplaceable and offered to make seven paintings of those things that I would give to the participants at the end of the show. I got thirty responses eventually and decided to make thirteen paintings in all, choosing the recipients at random. It wasn't possible for me to make thirty paintings although I would have liked to. The stories were all incredibly moving and I ended up exhibiting them as well.

JC: How did the people respond to the paintings?

EH: The recipients all seemed very touched by the paintings and happy to have them. What was more interesting to me was that the narratives seemed to be as important to people as the paintings. Everyone wanted to get their framed narrative once the show came down. People seemed to feel very validated by having their stories exhibited in a museum context. They may just have been being polite. The truly impressive thing was that almost every participant wrote me a thank-you note. A culture of gentility still exists in New Orleans; they must have all have had very strict parents.

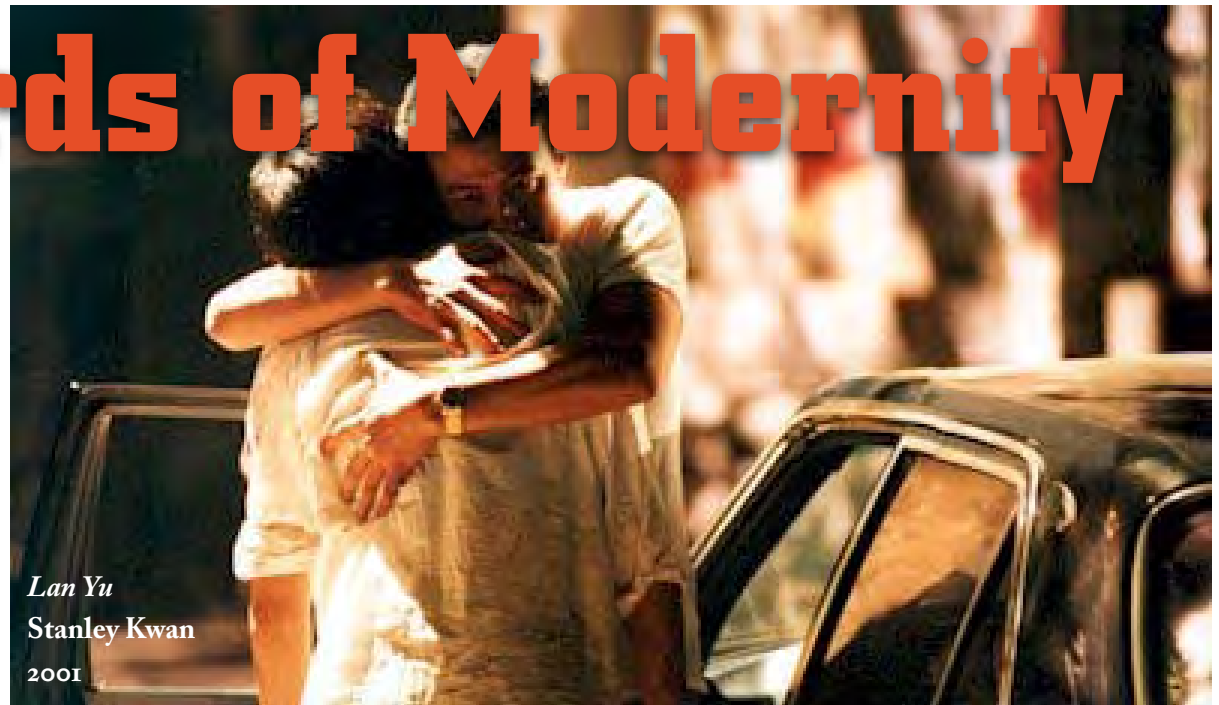
Jonathan Cohn is a doctoral student in the Department of Cinema and Media Studies at UCLA. He is currently interested in issues pertaining to auto-spectatorship and he has published papers on podcasting and video games.

Vanguards of Modernity

David Eng Considers the Queer Space of Stanley Kwan's *Lan Yu*

by Tara Fickle

On November 5, David L. Eng, Professor of English, Comparative Literature and Asian American Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, gave his audience a glimpse of his fascinating new project entitled “The Queer Space of China” in the Center for the Study of Women’s Faculty Curator Series on “The Color of LGBT: Race in Sexuality.” The timing of the talk was doubly relevant, arriving on the eve of postmodern China’s emergent status as nascent world power and coming just after the passing of California’s hotly debated Proposition 8, a ballot measure that eliminated gay marriage in



the state. Exploring the stakes underlying our so-called “colorblind moment,” Eng argued for a (re)consideration of gay and lesbian identity in Chinese society as a uniquely modern, and potentially reparative, confrontation with the totalitarian nation-state.

Drawing on some of his previous work on Chinese film and queerness, such as “Queer Diasporas/Psychic Diasporas: Space and the World of Wong Kar-Wai” (2002), Eng reframed questions of queer identity on a global scale, considering the “discourse of development” underwriting much of modern Chinese society,

seen most saliently in the recent Beijing Olympics. Suggesting that homosexuality had the opportunity to create a “set of discrepant modernities,” not simply identities, Eng brought his work in conversation with Lisa Rofel’s recent monograph, *Desiring China: Experiments in Neoliberalism, Sexuality, and Public Culture* (Duke, 2007), in which Rofel considers the role of sexual, material, and affective desires out of which neoliberal Chinese subjectivities have been borne. Eng expanded this consideration in his talk by focusing on the intertwinement of public and private space in China since the



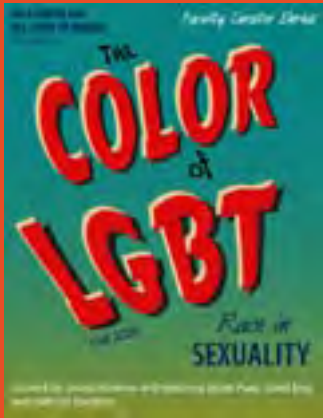
Pointing to a number of recent studies on the role of affect and subject

formation in China, Eng noted that Chinese citizens seem to engage in material desire—in the form of consumerism—as a way to demonstrate their cosmopolitan and (trans)national savvy. Transitioning from material to sexual desire, according to Eng, makes gay and lesbian identity in China an exemplary subject of capitalism, in which forms of desire, consumption, and ownership are considered uniquely modern and Western.

Cultural Revolution, noting that a flurry of recent neoliberal reforms have struggled to reinstitute the boundaries between public and private space, thus creating the opportunity for individual desire on the intimate level of “home life,” strongly divided from the space of labor.

Such questions led Eng to his primary object of study, *Lan Yu*, the 2001 film by Hong Kong director Stanley Kwan. A dark and tortured study of the tumultuous relationship between two gay Chinese men around the time of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre, Eng used the provocative film to ask, “How are gay and lesbian Chinese specifically able to express individual desire,” and in doing so, become unique “vanguards of modernity”? Pointing to a number of recent studies on the role of affect and subject formation in China, Eng noted that Chinese citizens seem to engage in material desire—in the form of consumerism—as a way to demonstrate their cosmopolitan and (trans)national savvy. Transitioning from material to sexual desire, according to Eng, makes gay and lesbian identity in China an exemplary subject of capitalism, in which forms of desire, consumption, and ownership are considered uniquely modern and Western. The translation of this “new language” of sexuality, which mediates between the public and private Chinese spheres, was Eng’s purpose in considering the role of space in *Lan Yu*.

Contextualizing Kwan among a number of Hong Kong filmmakers in the 1980s and 1990s who considered the role of sexual and national subjects and struggled with the trauma of colonization and the recent British handover of Hong Kong back to the Chinese, Eng suggested that Kwan’s film offered the opportunity to understand expressive desire, which “speaks as much as it is spoken.” Showcasing several clips in which Lan Yu, a student in architecture, and Chen Handong, a capitalist businessman in Beijing, are reunited after long absences, Eng revealed the power of public and private space in determining appropriate forms of gay desire. One scene demonstrated the bringing together of “impossible spaces,” that of the domestic and the capitalistic, through the use of mirrors, windows, and camera angles. Such scenes, suggested Eng, allow for the presentation of a *discrepant* modernity in space and time, a critical tool for evaluating non-normative sexual identities while still keeping historical continuities and irruptions in tension. This impossible, paradoxical space of reunion between the two men captures the disappearance of public space, relocated and displaced onto the private space of affect. The emotionally explosive scenes between Lan Yu and Handong suggest the multiplicity of agonies and desires which ultimately forge the modern Chinese



CSW's Faculty Curator Series in Fall 08, entitled "The Color of LGBT: Race in Sexuality," was curated by Joseph Bristow, Professor, Department of English at UCLA. In addition to David Eng's presentation, it also featured talks by Jasbir Puar, Rutgers University, and Kathryn Bond Stockton, University of Utah.

subjectivity; the film's moral, Eng suggested, was a type of "parable of renewed enlightenment," for which the centering of gay desire, rather than its marginalization, is crucial.

Eng was quick to point out that the purpose of such films is not, however, a defense of homosexuality. It is a rethinking of the symbolic positioning of gay men, who "rather than representing perversion...are leading the way" for modern China; rather than an "affirmation or recognition of sexual identities, love, legal rights," Chinese society has understood gay identity as part of the much larger movement of the unfolding of what Eng called "the political horizon of becoming" which has characterized Chinese development in the last few decades. By situating Chinese progress in terms of liberal notions of individuality, Chinese gay subjects seemed to be the final breakdown of the trauma of the "subject-in-waiting" that Western imperialism had rendered all Chinese; instead, they became the "harbinger of a new [type of] humanity."

The competing socialist and capitalist models of modernity which Eng sees as converging on the site of the neoliberal subject are not without their difficulties, however. Citing the "overdetermined" character of Lan Yu as "the elusive political form to which expressive desire points"—the country bumpkin who refuses the circulation of all commodities, including his own sexualized body

—Eng expressed the need for a new vocabulary which extends beyond "old/modern" and "rural/urban," binaries which fail to adequately capture the nuances of this desire. Lan Yu's eventual death was, for Eng, the revelation of the self-destructive drive emerging from the tension between affect and space, between the emotional excess that simultaneously represents modernity and homosexual identity. Rather than simply hailing queer identity as the harbinger of progress, Eng concluded his provocative presentation by suggesting that the formal problem of space and time needed to be considered alongside political economies in China before we can truly understand the complexity of its project of development.

Tara Fickle is a second-year doctoral student in the Department of English at UCLA. Her focus is contemporary American and Asian American literature.

Country Music and the Expression of Loss

THE RECIPIENT OF CSW'S
2008 CONSTANCE COINER
GRADUATE AWARD
TALKS ABOUT HIS
CURRENT RESEARCH
ON GRIEF, LOSS, AND
MOURNING IN THE MUSIC
OF EMMYLOU HARRIS

by Marcus Desmond Harmon

As a doctoral candidate in the Department of Musicology at UCLA, I have had the opportunity to work with a variety of scholars studying the intersection between music and cultural practice. In my research and my classroom teaching, I work to bring a class-aware, feminist perspective

Since the meaning of musical gestures is so often the result of individual experience interacting with broader social and cultural norms, I've taken a psychoanalytic approach to interpretation—looking not just at what artists and audiences say about the music they listen to, but also the ways in which that music evokes (or resists) other artifacts and institutions. For example, it would be hard to discuss the age-worn last albums of Johnny Cash without understanding the particular beliefs about sin, punishment, and redemption that stem from his Southern Baptist cosmology.

to popular music studies, one that is rooted in both my personal experiences and my beliefs about what studying the music around us can do to help us understand the culture that we simultaneously make and participate in every day.

My research currently focuses on American country music, a genre that even popular-music scholars often deride as commodified and devoid of serious cultural import, a neo-conservative bastion of jingoistic politics, religious hysteria, and casual racism. Having lived in a country-music culture for most of my life, I often found it difficult to find the music or its listeners as I experienced them

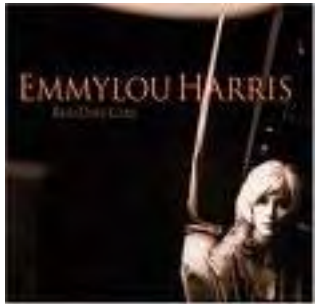
in the academic research I read! In my work, I look at country music as a set of relationships that creators, listeners, and the songs themselves are always renegotiating. Neither country artists, nor country fans, nor the white working-class in general is an isolated monolith—they move in diverse and often surprising directions in response to all sorts of cultural needs and anxieties. In fact, the “conservative” voice of country music, while often the loudest, is hardly the only political discourse—country music’s relationship to contemporary politics is multivalent enough to displease either the Republican campaign strategist or the academic apologist. Few country

artists of any ideological affiliation eschew the religious and patriotic signifiers that make many secular critics uncomfortable, but artists deploy them in a number of complex ways. In any case, working-class concerns have rarely been of great interest to the neoconservative movement of the last three decades (outside of a few flashpoint issues).

If country music isn’t an expression of right-wing ideology or the product of a homogenous “white working-class culture,” then what is it and what does it do? While that question must necessarily have many answers, I have tried to show how country music can articulate loss, grief, and nostalgia in ways that help country fans incorporate these feelings into everyday cultural practices. My dissertation, “In a Melancholic Country: Identity, Loss, and Mourning at the Borders of Country Music,” looks at four case studies in country-music expression of melancholy—Emmylou Harris, Gillian Welch, Dar Williams, and Johnny Cash—to see what the songs are saying

and how they contribute to the larger American discourse about trauma, grief, and memory. Since the meaning of musical gestures is so often the result of individual experience interacting with broader social and cultural norms, I’ve taken a psychoanalytic approach to interpretation—looking not just at what artists and audiences say about the music they listen to, but also the ways in which that music evokes (or resists) other artifacts and institutions. For example, it would be hard to discuss the age-worn last albums of Johnny Cash without understanding the particular beliefs about sin, punishment, and redemption that stem from his Southern Baptist cosmology.

A feminist consciousness informs all of my work, both within and beyond my dissertation project. I firmly believe that feminism is best served by taking a holistic view of gender—men as well as women must negotiate difficult and contradictory gendered terrain, and no gender expressions (including the so-called “normative”) are homogenous, simplistic, or otherwise “easy.” Since



On these albums, Emmylou Harris explores the feelings related to loss, grief, and mourning

gendered experience is so often the site of trauma and anxiety in much of American culture, it naturally finds a place in my dissertation. My chapter, “Still with Every Turn the World Becomes a Sadder Place: Emmylou Harris and Regret,” discusses the ways that Harris, long considered one of Nashville’s most sensitive and eclectic vocalists, uses the longstanding cultural trope of the permanently lovelorn woman to explore ways of moving (or not moving) beyond irreplaceable losses. Harris first rose to fame as the duet partner of country-rock pioneer Gram Parsons. As with other country duet acts (like Dolly Parton/Porter Waggoner and Loretta Lynn/Conway Twitty), speculation about romantic involvement between Harris and Parsons flourished, but Parsons’s sudden death from drug overdose in 1973 ended that possibility. In 1975, Harris released “Boulder to Birmingham,” an elegy for Parsons that made her (now-impossible) love for him explicit. Its success cemented her image as a grief-stricken survivor

poised at the edge of a Miss Havisham-esque obsession with tragedy and abandonment.

My work on Harris begins more than twenty years later, when Harris revisited the ideas of grief, loss, and regret in the “crossover” album *Wrecking Ball* (Asylum, 1995) created with rock producer Daniel Lanois. In this album and the two others that follow it (*Red Dirt Girl* [Nonesuch, 2000] and *Stumble into Grace* [Nonesuch, 2003]), Harris’s songs are striking in their abject portrayal of mourning. Her first-person characters are often the friends, lovers, or near-strangers left behind after disaster, unable to really mourn their losses and even less able to put those losses firmly into the past. Rather than allowing these damaged creatures to sit mired in what they have lost, however, Harris emphasizes the fact that despite crushing grief and intense self-castigation, these survivors continue their lives one way or another—even if they often would rather not.

To examine Emmylou Harris’s portrayals of grief more closely, I

turn to the work of Melanie Klein (1882–1960), a leading figure of post-Freudian psychoanalysis. Like Freud, Klein was puzzled by melancholia, the then-current term for complicated grief and depression with no obvious cause. Freud imagined that melancholia was a strange, rare disease that affected people with weak or vulnerable characters. Klein, on the other hand (perhaps because she herself suffered from melancholia) saw melancholy as the basis not just for depression and illness, but also for love, guilt, and the desire to repair wrongs. By folding long-term grief into the realm of “normal” emotional development, Klein made the melancholic experience (which, like modern clinical depression, primarily affected women) a valuable one.

Changing the Object

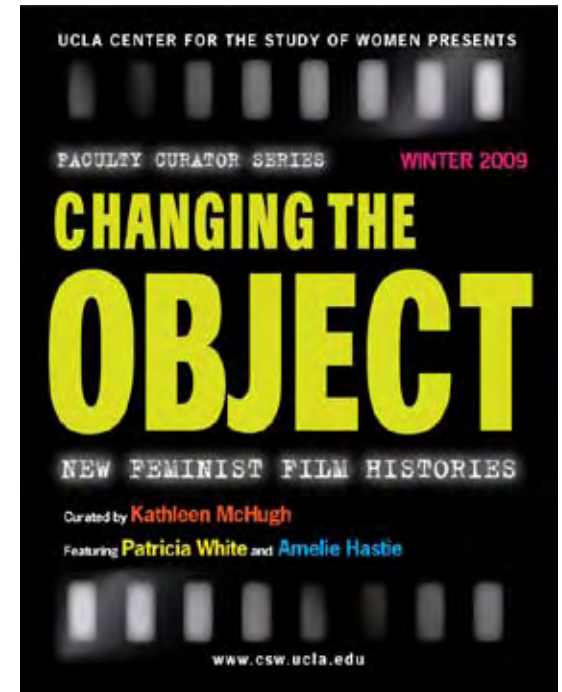
NEW FEMINIST FILM HISTORIES

FACULTY CURATOR SERIES FOR WINTER 2009 WILL FEATURE TALKS BY PATRICIA WHITE AND AMELIE HASTIE

THE FACULTY CURATOR SERIES for Winter 2009 is “Changing the Object: New Feminist Film Histories.” Feminist film scholars are changing the way film history is done. Film histories, whether focused on Hollywood, national, world, or alternative cinemas, often relegate women’s contributions to footnotes, last chapters, anomalous honorable mentions, or special case studies. According to Kathleen McHugh, Director of the Center for the Study of Women and a Professor in English and Cinema and Media Studies and curator for the series, “Feminist film historians are changing that. Incorporating the insights of feminist film theory, their focus has shifted from the portrayal of women on screen to women as producers. Often to access the latter and write new histories, feminist scholars change or invent new objects of study to chronicle the expressive dimension of women’s participation in Hollywood and other modes of filmmaking. The

scholars in this series write new film histories by considering women’s production of ephemera, memoirs, and non-industrial film projects. They consider the star as producer and engage the history of feminism within film studies.” Two events are scheduled: “Feminist Film in the Age of the Chick Flick,” a lecture by Patricia White, on Tuesday, February 10, 5 PM, 314 Royce, and “Ida Lupino and Historical Legibility,” a lecture by Amelie Hastie, on Tuesday, February 24, 5 PM, 314 Royce.

Patricia White is chair of Swarthmore's Film and Media Studies program. She has published *Uninvited: Classical Hollywood Cinema and Lesbian Representability* (Indiana University Press, 1999). With Timothy Corrigan, she is the coauthor of *The Film Experience* (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2nd ed, 2008) and co-editor of the forthcoming *Critical Visions: Classical and Contemporary Film Theory*. She is a member of the editorial collective of *Camera Obscura* and



the chair of the board of the feminist media arts organization Women Make Movies.

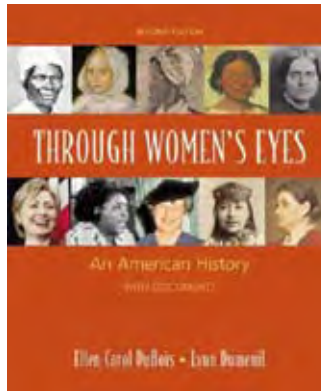
Amelie Hastie is Associate Professor of Film and Digital Media at UC Santa Cruz. Her research and teaching interests include: Critical studies in film theory and history; feminist film and television studies; Chinese cinemas; issues of authorship; and interdisciplinary approaches.

Meet the Authors Celebrates New Publications by Faculty and CSW Research Scholars!

On Tuesday December 9, 2008, at 4 pm in 314 Royce, CSW hosted "Meet the Authors," an annual celebration of new publications by UCLA faculty and CSW research scholars.



Kathleen McHugh introduced **Emily Abel's** new book on *Tuberculosis and the Politics of Exclusion: A History of Public Health and Migration to Los Angeles* (Rutgers University Press, 2007). Abel, who is a Professor in the School of Public Health, Department of Health Services, could not attend.



Ellen DuBois is a Professor in the Department of History. *Through Women's Eyes: An American History* (Bedford St Martin's, 2008) was the first textbook in U.S. women's history to present an inclusive narrative within the context of the central developments of U.S. history and to integrate written and visual primary sources into each chapter. The enormous success of the first edition confirms that the field of U.S. women's history was ready for a groundbreaking textbook that focuses on women

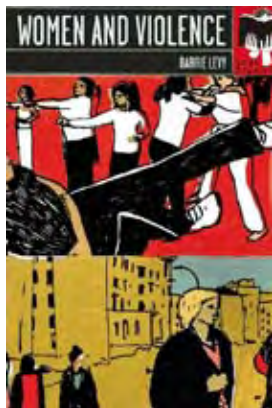
from a broad range of ethnicities, classes, religions, and regions and that helps students understand how women and women's history are an integral part of U.S. history.

Sandra Harding is a Professor in Education. In *Sciences From Below: Feminisms, Postcolonialities, and Modernities* (Duke University Press, 2008) she synthesizes modernity studies with progressive tendencies in science and technology studies to suggest how scientific and technological pursuits might be more productively linked to social justice projects around the



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world. Harding illuminates the idea of multiple modernities as well as the major contributions of post-Kuhnian Western, feminist, and postcolonial science studies. As she has done before, Harding points the way forward in *Sciences from Below*.



Barrie Levy is a Lecturer in the Women's Studies program. His book *Women and Violence* (Perseus/Seal Press, 2008) is a comprehensive look at the issue of violence against women and its many appearances, causes, costs, and

consequences. Understanding that personal values, beliefs, and environment affect an individual's response to—and acknowledgment of—violence against women, this book addresses topics such as global perspectives on violence, controversies and debates, and social change strategies and activism.



Saskia Subramanian is an Assistant Researcher in Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Science. Her book, which she coauthored with Emily Abel, *After the Cure* (NYU Press, 2008) is a compelling read filled with fascinating

portraits of more than seventy women who are living with the aftermath of breast cancer. Here, at last, survivors step out of the shadows and speak compellingly about their real stories, giving voice to the complicated, often painful realities of life after the cure.

Penny L. Richards is a CSW Research Scholar. Her "Knitting the Transatlantic Bond: One Woman's Letters to America, 1860-1910" Penny L. Richards, which appears in Jeanne Kay Guelke and Dallen Timothy, eds., *Geography and Genealogy: Locating Personal Pasts* (Ashgate, 2008), is a study in two parts. The first highlights tools and information sources used by geographers and their applications

to family history research. The second section examines family history as a socio-cultural practice, including the activities of tourism, archival research, and DNA testing. This unique book is the first ever to address the geographical and more general scholarly aspects of this increasingly popular social phenomenon.



Felicity Nussbaum is a Professor in the Department of English. *The Arabian Nights in Historical Context: Between East and West* (Oxford University Press, 2009) begins with a thorough introduction situating *The Arabian Nights* in its

historical and cultural contexts, offering a fresh examination of the text's multiple locations in the long history of modern Orientalism. This collection of essays by noted scholars from "East," "West," and in-between reassesses the influence of the *Nights* in Enlightenment and Romantic literature, as well as the text's vigorous afterlife in the contemporary Arabic novel.



Frances Olsen is a Professor in the School of Law. *Translation Issues in Language and Law* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) offers contributions from world-class specialists in Europe and the USA provide an overview of the major linguistic and legal

issues arising in legal translation. She also has an article, "The Shifting Discourse on Domestic Violence," in *Law and Language: Theory and Society* (Düsseldorf University Press, 2008).



Chris Tilly is the Director of IRLE and a Professor in the Department of Urban Planning. *The Gloves-Off Economy: Workplace Standards at the Bottom of America's Labor* (Market Cornell University Press, 2008)

is a collection of essays that examines a range of gloves-off practices, the workers who are

affected by them, and strategies for enforcing workplace standards. The editors, four respected labor scholars, have brought together economists, sociologists, labor attorneys, union strategists, and other experts to offer perspectives on both the problem and the creative solutions currently being explored in a wide range of communities and industries.



Carole Pateman is a Professor in Political Science. In *Contract and Domination* (Polity Press, 2007), Carole Pateman and Charles W. Mills discuss their differences about contract theory and whether it

has a useful future, excavate the (white) settler contract that created new civil societies in North America and Australia, argue via a non-ideal contract for reparations to black Americans, confront the evasions of contemporary contract theorists, explore the intersections of gender and race and the global sexual-racial contract, and reply to their critics.



Alice Wexler is a CSW Research Scholar. *The Woman who Walked into the Sea: Huntington's and the Making of a Genetic Disease* (Yale University Press, 2008) is the first history of Huntington's disease in America. Starting

with the life of Phebe Hedges, Wexler uses Huntington's as a lens to explore the changing meanings of heredity, disability, stigma, and medical knowledge among ordinary people as well as scientists and physicians. She addresses these themes through three overlapping stories: the lives of a nineteenth-century family once said to "belong to the disease"; the emergence of Huntington's chorea as a clinical entity; and the early-twentieth-century transformation of this disorder into a cautionary eugenics tale.

Patricia Greenfield on Social Networking

The social networking sites Myspace and Facebook have reached a zenith of popularity. With tens of millions of subscribers (Facebook alone claims to provide service to 120 million unique users), everyone from high school students to their grey-haired grandmothers is busy posting status updates, leaving wall comments, and creating photo-sets of their weekend outings. But how do social networking sites change the way we build connections with the people around us? How do social networking sites change the very way we view ourselves? A new article by UCLA psychology graduate student Adriana Manago and Professor Patricia Greenfield, UCLA Department of Psychology, takes up these questions in an effort to sort out issues of identity formation in the era of the Myspace Generation. Appearing in the November-December issue of *The Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, Manago and Greenfield consider the ways in which

social networking sites prompt users, especially emerging adults, to renegotiate the boundaries between public and private, the virtual and the real. "Just at the age where peers are so important, that's where social networking — which is all about peers — is very attractive," Greenfield said in a recent interview with the UCLA newsroom (November 18, 2008). "These sites are perfectly suited for the expanded identity exploration characteristic of emerging adults." Lead author Adriana Manago, who is also a researcher with the Children's Digital Media Center, Los Angeles, notes the impact such sites, which are designed around an ever-growing list of "friends" made up of a hodgepodge of classmates, family, colleagues, and passing acquaintances, have on the ways users maintain relationships. "Instead of connecting with friends with whom you have close ties for the sake of the exchange itself, people interact with their 'friends' as a performance, as if on

a stage before an audience of people on the network," she said in an interview with the UCLA newsroom (November 18, 2008). With many users' lists of "friends" totaling in the hundreds, sometimes thousands, the door of possibility is wide open for new models of social development and interaction. "People can use these sites to explore who they are by posting particular images, pictures or text," said Manago in the same interview. "You can manifest your ideal self. You can manifest who you want to be and then try to grow into that."

CSW is on Facebook!

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CSW Update is published monthly during the academic year. UCLA faculty, staff, and students are welcome to submit articles for inclusion. If you have questions, please email the publications staff at cswwpubs@women.ucla.edu

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