



CSW update

FEBRUARY 07

GENDER & SCIENCE CONFERENCE

LUNCHTIME PANEL will feature Rosina M. Becerra, Elma Gonzalez, and Arpi Siyahian



At the Gender and Science conference on February 23, a lunchtime panel will feature Rosina Becerra (*left top*), UCLA Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Diversity; Elma Gonzalez, UCLA Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (*left middle*); and Arpi Siyahian (*left bottom*), UCLA Doctoral Student, Biological Chemistry with a concentration in Women's Studies. They will provide an institutional perspective on the challenges and efforts to increase the number of women in the sciences at UCLA and perhaps in academia overall. In addition, Becerra will discuss the issues that universities face in developing a pipeline of talented girls and women who want an education or career in the sciences. What prevents girls from entering the sciences? What helps support the women in graduate science programs? Elma Gonzalez will speak about her personal and professional experience as a woman of color scientist at UCLA. Arpi Siyahian will discuss her experiences as a current female graduate student in the sciences.



STUDYING HUMAN MATING BEHAVIOR FROM AN EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

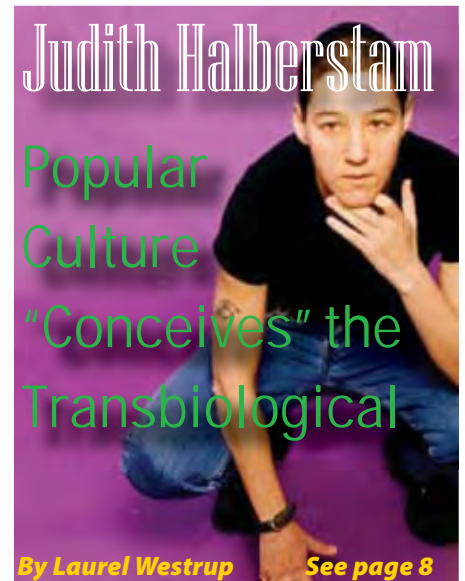
Martie Haselton



RECIPIENT OF CSW FACULTY DEVELOPMENT GRANT PRESENTS RESEARCH ON HOW OVULATORY CYCLES AFFECT BEHAVIOR

ON APRIL 10, Martie Haselton, Associate Professor in the Departments of Communications Studies and Psychology, will present her research on "The Hidden Side of Female Desire: What Ovulatory Cycle Research Reveals." Her research addresses communication, social inference, courtship, and human mating from an evolutionary perspective. Much of the work conducted at her Evolutionary Psychology Lab is dedicated to testing and refining error management theory: "natural selection will often design judgment and decision making adaptations that are systematically biased. These adaptations are not designed to be maximally accurate; rather, they are designed to err in the direction of lower survival or reproductive cost." Current areas of study at the lab include adaptive biases in social

judgment, ovulatory shifts in women's preferences, thoughts, and behaviors, evolved relationship defenses, and flirtation, sexual signaling, and cross-sex communication. Haselton's research has been featured on NPR and in magazines and newspapers around the world. Haselton is also Co-Editor-in-chief of the journal *Evolution and Human Behavior*.





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From the Director

Kathleen McHugh



Harvard University recently announced the appointment of its first female president in its 371 year history. Professor Drew Gilpin Faust, Dean of the Radcliffe Institute and a historian whose areas of expertise include the U.S. Civil War and the American South, will become Harvard's twenty-eighth president on the first of July. Faust's appointment comes in the wake of Lawrence H. Summers' resignation last year after the controversy over his assertion that innate gender differences explain women's inability to flourish in the sciences. Before he stepped down, Summers enlisted Faust's help in creating and overseeing two panels charged with investigating gender equity and diversity in leadership and the sciences at Harvard and coming up with solutions to these problems. Last year, Faust told *The Chronicle of Higher Education* that the Summers' controversy had created opportunities to "make important strides for women." Certainly, she will take office well informed about the challenges she faces in improving the situation for female faculty at Harvard.

Gender equity and diversity are elusive goals for many U.S. universities and colleges. In a report published by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in November 2006, researchers gathered data on the gender of doctoral students and assistant, associate, and full professors from more than 1400 U.S. colleges and universities for the academic year 2005-06. What they found was that though American women are earning more than half the Ph.D.s granted, they still make up a minority (39%) of the professoriate across all ranks. Further, they earn 81% of what their male peers earn. Clearly science is not the issue, math is, and higher education needs to improve its numbers....

A MAGGICAL HERSTORY

by Alysia Logan

***What's she looking for now,
and why can't she get it?***

– Maryse Conde, *Tree of Life*

Those were the questions asked when a great-granddaughter wanted to know about her family history. Why did she want to talk about the past, they wondered. She had every worldly possession one could dream of. But, the possession she craved most was of the spirit world. It was the knowledge of her ancestors' stories that she needed. And, possession of the spirit world is priceless.

Women are the primary storytellers and culture keepers for African families across the Diaspora. This is made apparent through the literature, food, music; it is all encompassing through religion. If it weren't for the women in the African Diaspora, many of our stories would never be told. If it weren't for the mothers in our communities, many of our traditions would have been forgotten. If it weren't for the sheroes in our collective lineage, our gods would have never been raised again and our powerful and strong sensual female deities like Osun, Yemoja and Oya would have been all but forgotten.

Our African heritage—West African, in particular—has been carried on by a single common thread from the Continent through the Caribbean and to the Americas: the woman's capacity for memory and her need to share. Whether that sharing is through childbirth, worshiping or storytelling, it is this courageous act that fortifies generations to carry on the traditions of a place most have only heard of and never experienced with their own



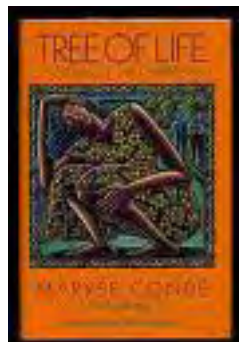
senses. It is through these magical herstories that our culture continues to thrive.

Maryse Conde (left) displays this very pattern within two of her novels in particular, *Tree of Life* and *I Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*. Even with the Salem Witch Trials

and slavery at her door, Tituba couldn't help but share her wisdom with the white and black population alike, "What is a witch... Isn't it the ability to communicate with the invisible world, to keep constant links with the dead, to care for others and heal, a superior gift of nature that inspires respect, admiration and gratitude?" (p. 17) What's even more fascinating is Tituba's relationship with her ancestors, also revolutionary spirits. Her main caretaker, Mama Yaya, a conjure woman, raises Tituba from a young age after both her mother and father are brutally killed at the slave master's hands.

Because of Mama Yaya's reputation as a witch, she was sent away from the plantation to live in the woods, which is where Tituba gains all of her mystical knowledge. It is here she learns to talk to the ancestors and help their descendants bear the weight of the physical world. It is also here where her powerful path is set on its course. It isn't until she meets her husband that she begins to desire the world outside of the ancestors, even after they warn her several times against the inevitable danger in taking up with her new man. Although her husband is her downfall, he is also the reason that Tituba leaves her life of solitude in the woods and voluntarily steps into the world of slavery, setting the stage for her story to be told.

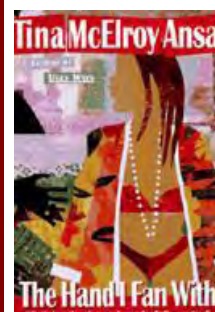
What the New World calls magic is actually memory intertwined between the spirit world and the world of the physical. Maryse Conde attacks the disappearance of worshipping one's ancestors through *Tree of Life*. Coco, the great-granddaughter of Albert and the narrator of the novel, takes up the challenge of retelling her family lineage to give her self-empowerment and identity. She takes into account everyone's individual stories, allowing them to unravel at their own pace. Since Coco is the storyteller, this is her version of



the facts. That is also the function of the oral: to recreate what is truth to fit the moral of the story.

Coco's role as the storyteller suggests that the Louis family is on its way to reparation with the spirit world. Through Coco's story, the living and dead ancestors are acknowledged and respected, therefore building a bridge for forgiveness to take place. The magic of the oral is the ability to weave together memory and fact to present the entire, balanced story of the storyteller. The wonderful thing about the oral is that it is not "written in stone" and can be refined at any point in time, and at the will of the storyteller. Magic is the glue that connects stories to reality, the living to the dead. The paths of the ancestors must be told and respected in order to keep the family lineage intact and remembered. Like the offerings to the gods, the ancestors must be valued in the same way.

Another author who conveys the female link to the ancestral world is Tina McElroy Ansa (right) through her novels *Baby of the Family* and *The Hand I Fan With*. Through her reoccurring main character, Lena, she explores the link between children born with a caul and the spirit world. When a child is



born with a caul on her face, it is considered a sign that this child has special talents, visions, the gift of second sight. These gifts are a blessing from the spirit world, which can at first be very haunting to a child if no one shares the lineage and proper care for these unique children. But once the powers are acknowledged and welcomed, these gifts are a blessing to the entire community.

The rich lineage of female culture keepers in African American heritage crosses over into the cinema as well. In the film *Eve's Bayou* (Kasi Lemmons, 1997), it is the Aunt of main character Eve, and Eve herself who carry the gift of sight. It is also the women within the community that believe in and patronize women with these talents. These gifts, however, never come without sacrifice. In *Eve's Bayou*, the aunt sacrifices her ability to have a lasting relationship with a man. Eve sacrifices the



innocence of childhood. Ansa's character Lena sacrifices true friendships and Tituba ultimately sacrifices her life and her babies.

The West African religions believe in the commune of the gods and the people. The ancestors are also now a part of the world of the spirits that watch over the living. Not only are they a part of daily life through altars, sacrifices, music, and food, they are also petitioned for their power and loved because they balance the world. This balance includes taking care of the living, as Albert's wives within the *Tree of Life* do for him after they have passed on to the spirit world. They also refuse to be forgotten, even it takes getting the attention of the living through pain and death.

Birth and death are both magical and painful processes. Through blood, a new life is born. Blood gives life and loss of it can take life. It is also one way of connecting with the ancestors. Tituba kills her own unborn child rather than having her to be born in the cruel world she knew. Lena has no children of her own, but she aids in a powerful birth that changes her life and reconnects her with herself. The ability to give life in and of itself and to aid in the birth of a new being asserts autonomy and faith in one's chosen path.

Reclaiming a voice is a rebirth of a new person and the death of an old self: "In earlier times, questioning me that way was tantamount to torturing me, since my answer revealed the dark and untented half of my origins...!, I was no longer ashamed" (p. 351). Coco sees her new-found knowledge as strength in her identity that she never before had. Is this not the same strength that her great-grandfather Albert is missing? Is it magic or tradition that he considers taboo? The negation of history leads to destruction of the spirit. To claim pride without acknowledging the oppressor is like asking for death. The communication is what is lacking in this family tree. Without sharing stories and claiming lineage, there will always be something missing.

Liza and Elaise are Albert's saving grace. They, together, are Albert's soul. After death, they both are Albert's sole companions. They are both dead because of Albert's lack

of respect for the healing powers of black people, "You niggers, still sticking to your leaves and roots...That's why the white man walks all over you" (p. 19). Albert sees sticking to tradition as a hindrance of black people. Staying connected to the original culture will allow white people to walk over the blacks, as Albert states. The irony of his statement is that he is the one in captivity to the white man's world. This captivity is what keeps him a slave for the remainder of his life.

It is hazardous to ignore the miraculous power of the spoken word. The authority of the word in black culture is never underestimated throughout *Tree of Life*. Words weave together the fabric of the community. The myths, beliefs, culture, and secrets are passed down via the spoken word. When communication is hindered, so is the retelling of history. Knowledge of one's past is empowering, as Coco declares at the end. She is no longer trapped in the ignorance of not knowing at least one side of her family lineage.

Sacrifice is a common theme in the lives of black women. Even when gifted with the sight, there is no way to avoid the inevitable drama within this path. These are the real queens, with their ability to prevail through seemingly impossible situations, to make a way when there was none, to create a meal out of scraps not fit for human consumption, to give babies to barren wombs: this is what makes herstory so magical, so unbelievable. Her story is the stories of generations past and generations to come. It gives balance to the community and identity to the descendants. However, when these stories are denied, there is magic to weave together the memories of the ancestors with the voices of the living. We continue to listen for her voice through our songs, our visions and our pens.



Alysia Logan is a CSW Research Scholar and the author (under the name L Divine) of the Drama High series of best-selling young adult novels. The third volume, *Jay's Legacy*, has just been published. In these books, Logan seeks to connect her knowledge of African American folklore and oral history and wisdom with contemporary high school experience.

Finding Positive Meaning in the Experience of Breast Cancer

by Jill Mitchell

*Millions long for immortality who do not know what to do with
themselves on a rainy Sunday afternoon.*

– Susan Ertz

*Nothing so concentrates experience and clarifies the central
conditions of living as serious illness.*

– Arthur Kleinman

Finding a strong sense of meaning or purpose in life is often neither an easy nor an automatic achievement. Sometimes it takes being faced with our own mortality for people to find greater meaning in life. Indeed several researchers have found that it is not uncommon for people dealing with trauma or serious, even terminal, illness to talk about finding positive meaning, positive growth, or benefits out of their experience (Cordova et al., 2001; Manne et al., 2004; Sears et al., 2003; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995; and Updegraff & Taylor, 2000). So for those who speak of finding such positive meaning, what is it that they find? To address this question, I spent the past few years conducting in-depth interviews with 23 women who were living with a life-threatening illness, metastatic breast cancer.

In the U.S., one in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer. Many of these women who are diagnosed with more localized disease will recover well and may even be cured with treatment. However for those women in whom the cancer metastasizes, or spreads to other areas of the body, the disease is no longer considered curable, and average life expectancy is only a few years. Along with

the threat of early mortality, women with metastatic breast cancer may also struggle with the pain and disfigurement of toxic treatments, the frustration over time sacrificed to doctors' appointments and treatment schedules, the anxiety of an endless barrage of scans and tests, and the fear of an increasing loss of control over their body and their life. In addition, the weight of financial concerns due to relentless medical bills, the stress of increased relationship turmoil, the loss of ability to work, and the threat to one's self-identity are other challenges that cancer sometimes imposes. Nonetheless, despite such suffering and loss, roughly half of the women in my study also talked about how they had found positive meaning, benefits, or growth out of their experiences with cancer across multiple domains of their lives.

One of the most common areas of benefit finding was that of a positive change in perspective, especially a keener awareness, clarity, and focus that accompanied an enhanced sense of appreciation of the little things, the everyday moments, in life. Some went as far as to call cancer a "gift," and a few even talked about how they were more joyful and happier than they had been before cancer. One

woman who had suffered multiple medical procedures and side-effects, and who spent most of her days confined to a friend's sofa, even made the following rather astounding statement:

I feel my perspective has changed on life generally in that . . . this is gonna sound really crazy. . . I feel like, for me, having the added blessing of getting cancer at the particular time that I did, has only enriched my life and deepened it and made it more manageable. . . . Yes, I feel like it's changed tremendously. . . Now I just feel like I've been set free . . . and I could die tomorrow, and I will have had a wonderful life . . . that's really how I feel. I feel like this has just been . . . Well, for me, it was a gift.

Despite numerous losses, most of the women I interviewed also claimed an improvement in their sense of self and their self-esteem as a result of their experience with cancer. These women stated that they had become stronger, more confident, more aware of their personal resources, less socially inhibited, and more likely to stand up for themselves. For some, this emerged out of the awareness of how alone they were in living with life-threatening illness and out of the necessity of becoming their own advocate in the arena of the medical world. For others, learning to ask for help, and seeing how people rallied around and supported them in their time of need, made them feel more loved, and acted to strengthen their self-esteem.

Although cancer sometimes brought out the worst in loved ones and friends, more than half of the women in the study also talked about overall improvements in their relationships. Some mentioned that their family members, especially their children, respected them more because of how they had dealt with the cancer. Others said that they had become closer to loved ones because they had more time to spend with them and because they shared more in their relationships. In the words of one woman:

[My husband] wasn't always a good guy. He made a big change when [I] was diagnosed In the blink of an eye, our whole lives were totally different. . . . He showed me that he was a safe place to be. . . . [My husband] and I have a

much better marriage. . . . When this all happened he showed me he was a person I could trust, and I let down my guard.

For some of the women, their experience with cancer also profoundly deepened their feeling of a spiritual connection, gave them a strong sense of a mission, and/or liberated them to focus on goals that enhanced their sense of purpose in life. Ironically, despite the suffering and anxiety of having a time-limiting illness, a majority of the women claimed they felt more patient, and especially more compassionate, toward people in general (not just others with cancer). First-hand experience with suffering strengthened these women's understanding of *how* to help others as it also stimulated a desire for them to share their experiences.

One somewhat surprising finding was that several of the women living with this terrible disease talked about how they felt *less* stressed and *less* worried since living with cancer. Little everyday annoyances bothered these women less, in part because they felt more justified in releasing themselves from negative people and events in their lives. Since the future of the disease was bleak and unpredictable, and time was too precious to waste on regrets about the past, women with metastases were often forced to focus on living in and savoring the present moment. In the words of one 52-year-old woman in active treatment (chemotherapy) for metastatic disease:

I'm less worried. I think I'm really truly less worried than I used to be. Less anxious. . . you know at work you're always worried about goals for the end of the year, and a presentation you have to make in two weeks, or something. And I don't live that way anymore. . . . I think that living very much in the present, it's, it's certainly taken a lot of stress off of my life. . . I've always been anxious and thinking about the future, and I do that less. It's been refreshing. I think it's made me a happier person.

In sum, although many of the women I interviewed acknowledged finding positive meaning, even "gifts", as a result of dealing with cancer, all of the women recognized these benefits had come at a tremendous cost. One woman who throughout our interviews had spoken about the

positive growth and benefits she had experienced also had the following to say about the price she had paid for these realizations:

It would be nice . . . if nature could find some other way to get you an appreciation of life without having this . . . My cousin once said to me—"It's the best thing that's happened." . . . I'm thinking, NO! It's not the best thing that's happened! I've been able to get some benefits from it, but NO! Are any of those benefits worth it? No! They are lessons I would have liked to have learned another way. . . This is a very hard way. . . I don't know if the value of life is worth that kind of terror to learn that lesson. . . Nothing in my life was as bad or as scary as "This is not a cyst."

Nothing is worth that, the terror of that day. But good things have come of it. It's wonderful to appreciate life. But it's not worth it!

As a final note, although for some women finding the positives out of a devastating illness is a crucial means of growth, coping, and maintenance of hope, not everyone finds solace in approaching suffering this way. Well-meaning friends and family members who are overly eager to encourage women with cancer to "think positively" may add to the frustration and isolation of women who have a healthy need to express their suffering and to have their losses validated. Hence, although it is encouraging to know that positive growth and benefits may be gained in response to great suffering, it is also important to be sensitive to the fact that the expectation that one should find positive meaning can impose an added burden upon people living with cancer.

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Jill Mitchell completed her doctorate in anthropology and concurrently completed her master's in social work last year. At present she is a postdoctoral fellow, in a program funded by the National Cancer Institute, in the Division for Cancer Prevention and Control Research, at UCLA. She would like to thank the California Breast Cancer

Research Program and The Foundation for Psychocultural Research for funding her research. In addition she thanks the Center for the Study of Women for helping to support her travel to present her work at the 2006 Society for Medical Anthropology meeting, in Vancouver, Canada.

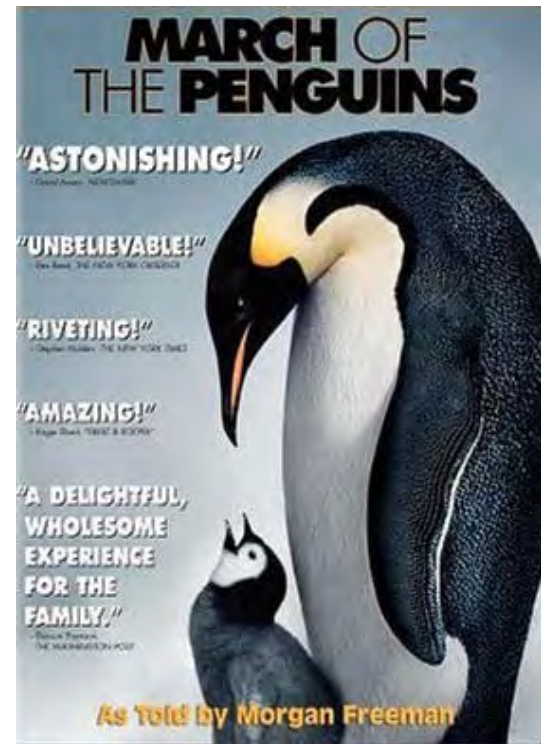
JUDITH HALBERSTAM Popular Culture "Conceives" the Transbiological

by Laurel Westrup

ON OCTOBER 24, 2006, the Center for the Study of Women presented Judith Halberstam's provocatively titled talk, "Transbiology: Penguin Love, Doll Sex, and the Spectacle of the Non-Reproductive Body" as part of a speaker series focusing on performance and embodiment. Effortlessly moving between references as diverse as Joan Roughgarden's influential book *Evolution's Rainbow* and horror films, Halberstam called into question our society's deepest assumptions about the nature of humanity, heterosexuality, reproduction, and the conflation of these terms. By examining the tenuous discourses of human reproduction in *March of the Penguins* and *Seed of Chucky*, she opened up a space in which to discuss what she terms "counter knowledges" in the realm of popular culture.

A Professor of English and Director of the Center for Feminist Research at USC, much of Halberstam's past work has challenged the artificial binarism of distinctions between masculinity and femininity, man and woman, and heterosexuality and homosexuality. Her most recent book, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*, examines transgendered possibilities and productions of space and time which provide alternatives to hetero-normative conceptions. In this book and throughout her career, one of Halberstam's central concerns has been the investigation of popular culture's representations of queer, transgender, and transsexual bodies and subjectivities.

In her talk Halberstam went beyond issues of gender and sexuality in order to look at pop cultural representations of transbiology, a term



Drawing on the examples of the anthropomorphized penguins in March of the Penguins and the transubstantiated human-dolls in Seed of Chucky, Halberstam convincingly demonstrated the way in which these films denaturalize discourses of human-ness.

which might best be understood as a blurring of the lines between human and non-human. Drawing on the examples of the anthropomorphized penguins in *March of the Penguins* and the transubstantiated human-dolls in *Seed of Chucky*, she convincingly demonstrated the way in which these films denaturalize discourses of human-ness. In the case of *March of the Penguins*, Halberstam argued that this denaturalization was unwitting. Even as the film, with its humanizing voiceover, attempts to naturalize heterosexual love and reproduction, it comes apart at the seams. While the voiceover neglects evidence of productively non-reproductive (and likely non-heterosexual) members of the penguin community, these members are highly visible and, as such, allow us to understand the effort that was necessarily involved in spinning the film into the tale of family values that it was perceived as by the Christian right. Instead of demonstrating that penguins-as-humans are naturally disposed to heterosexual family life, the film's subtext works as "counter knowledge" in relation to heteronormative assumptions which are rooted in the rhetoric of "nature."

On the other end of the spectrum, *Seed of Chucky*, in its connections to the horror and animation genres, allows (and even encourages) transbiological play. As Halberstam noted in the talk (as well as in her book *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters* [Duke University Press, 1995]), the horror genre has often served as a site for the working out of human versus its others. In the context of *Seed of Chucky*, she drew on horror's destabilization of inside/outside and gendered distinctions to call for a reevaluation of the animation lab which puts it into conversation with the biology lab. Both the reproductive technologies of the latter and the aesthetic technologies of the former serve to denaturalize what is considered "human." *Seed of Chucky* is an especially interesting text in which to explore this connection given the film's tale of a human criminal who is transubstantiated (the film's term) into the body of a doll by way of supernatural forces. Halberstam found it noncoincidental that the "seed of chucky" turns out to be a highly androgynous individual (*above*) whose gender is finally determined only by recourse to the traditional oedipal scenario.



...the horror genre has often served as a site for the working out of human versus its others...

The overall thrust of Halberstam's talk was to suggest that contemporary popular culture, despite its frequent efforts to toe the heteronormative line, is actually able to imagine new, interesting, and potentially liberating alternatives to bodies, subjectivities, and relationships dictated by the "natural" rhetoric of heterosexual reproduction. By suggesting the concept of "counter knowledge," which is produced by failures (i.e. that of the voiceover in *March of the Penguins*), and stupidity (i.e. horror films such as *Seed of Chucky*) Halberstam provided a productive framework by which we can examine not only popular culture, but the deeply held social beliefs and assumptions that inform it.



Laurel Westrup is a PhD candidate in the Critical Studies in Film, Television, and Digital Media program at UCLA. Her dissertation will explore what she terms the "political economy of death" in relation to the performance of rock music in film and television. In addition to her work on the relationship between music and the moving image media, her research interests include new approaches to feminist media theory, diasporic filmmaking and reception, and media convergence.

Managing Transpacific Femininities in *Bienvenido N. Santos's "Brown Coterie"*



By Denise A. Cruz

IN A CONTROVERSIAL 1956 essay, Filipina columnist Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil (*right*) wryly proclaims, “The greatest misfortune that has befallen Filipino women in the last one hundred years is Maria Clara.” Guerrero-Nakpil’s reference to the famous tragic



mestiza (mixed-race woman) in Jose Rizal’s (*left*) seminal nationalist novel *Noli Me Tangere* (1887) encapsulates a print war waged by Filipina and Filipino writers throughout the 1940s and 50s. During the first few decades of the twentieth century, Rizal’s Maria Clara—whose rape articulates the



evils of Spanish empire—becomes a beloved Filipina icon in an unfortunate process that elides her sexual violation and idealizes her white skin, demure virginity, and sacrificial loyalty. Writers like Guerrero-Nakpil later reject this repressive reification in favor of a figure they call the “New Filipino Woman,” who supposedly mixes Filipina and white U.S. femininities. Through archival research that examines the *Noli*, the New Filipina and other versions of transpacific femininity, my dissertation, “Transpacific Femininities: Unmapping the Narratives of Philippine-U.S. Contact” theorizes the fraught nexus of gender, nationalism, and Philippine-U.S. contact in English literature published by Filipina/o authors in both nations. From the 1920s to the 1950s, these transpacific writers traveled back and forth between the U.S. and the Philippines, were educated in U.S. graduate institutions, and produced novels, short fiction,

and essays. In the discussion that follows, I will encapsulate my project and then illustrate some of its concerns in a brief reading of Bienvenido N. Santos’s (*right*) short story, “Brown Coterie” (1955), which was published in the Philippines as part of the collection, *You Lovely People*.



Most U.S.-based literary criticism pinpoints the male national subject as the primary interest of early twentieth-century Asia/America. Yet persistent questions surrounding transpacific femininity are crucial to literary articulations of emergent Filipina/o national identities. According to the short fiction, novels, and essays that I analyze in the dissertation, the imperial intersection of the U.S. and the Philippines catalyzes pivotal changes in Filipina femininity. These texts counter literary representations of the Filipina as idealized embodiments of the nation and instead feature what I call “transpacific femininities”—women who are at odds with reified, iconic versions of femininity that recur in Philippine cultural discourse from the 1890s to the 1950s. The Filipinas in these works travel, attend universities, speak multiple languages, and wear Western fashions; become politically involved through independence campaigns or guerrilla wars; and criticize the repressive influences of Catholicism, have unsanctioned relationships with white American men, or question their roles as wives and mothers. Through these complex configurations of Filipinas, I pinpoint transpacific femininities as posing an essential challenge to the future viability of the Philippines and Filipina/o identity post-U.S. imperialism. In these works, controlling or recognizing the potential of the transpacific

Filipina necessarily redefines the racial, classed, sexualized, and gendered terms of national identity.

I contend that a period previously seen by scholars as the realm of the male Filipino exile or immigrant is one that is also dominated by transnational women. By comparing texts published in the Philippines and the United States, my project decentralizes the site from which literary scholarship has traditionally viewed Asian/America—the U.S. mainland—and questions the geographical restrictions surrounding our objects of critical study. Transpacific Filipina/o writers merge arenas previously conceived by literary critics as mutually exclusive categories: literary cultural nationalism, transnational feminism, and Asian/American literature of the pre-1965 period. The works cross explorations of transpacific identities and feminism with redefinitions of the Philippine nation, Filipina/o communities in the United States, and the identities of their members.

Bienvenido N. Santos's short story, "Brown Coterie" nicely illustrates some of central concerns of my project. Santos is perhaps best known in the U.S. as the author of "Scent of Apples," which has fueled much critical interest in his formation of Filipino exilic masculinity. But stories like "Brown Coterie" reveal Santos's interest in examining unstable and difficult-to-control transpacific femininities. Santos's group of elite Filipinas and Filipinos in "Brown Coterie" most importantly has three "Maria Claras" as members, all of whom are objects of the narrator's ridicule. The men and women of "Brown Coterie" are cultural hybrids, transpacific mixtures produced by education and travel in the United States. In the midst of WWII, the coterie gathers for a party in Washington, DC. They hope to console their friend Clarita, whose husband is a doctor and captain in the U.S. Army overseas. The good-natured banter of the coterie, however, is soon interrupted when their friend Eric arrives with his blonde, white girlfriend, Virginia. The Filipina's jealousy of Virginia fuels a heated debate about masculinity and femininity abroad.

My reading will examine Santos's attempt to identify what makes a viable community of Filipinas and Filipinos in the United States. For Santos, this community depends in part upon the difficult process of first, defining appropriate racial, gendered, classed, and sexualized models of transpacific identity—models of what is and what is not Filipino or Filipina—and second, creating affective and emotional ties among other Filipina/os in the U.S. In "Brown Coterie," Santos attempts to contain the dangerous, transpacific Filipinas because they relinquish their affiliation with the Philippines

and because their unmanageable heterosexuality disrupts male attempts to codify Filipina femininity.

Santos's narrative voice in "Brown Coterie" is biting and satirical, with little of the sympathy that is so important to stories such as "Scent of Apples." In the story's opening moments, the narrator spends two long paragraphs weaving together descriptions of each member of the coterie with narrative asides that expose their hypocrisies, inconsistencies, and faults. But the narrator's bemused criticism shifts to derision in representations of the coterie's transpacific women, in part because they actually succeed in concealing their racial and national affiliations. The opening passage centers on their perverse version of Filipina femininity:

All the girls reeked with gray matter and were now trying hard to make it quite obvious, except Clarita who was doing her best to be happy and succeeding only in being gay. There were two sisters from Ann Arbor, Pilar and Tecla, one with a Ph.D. in chemistry and the other seriously threatening to get one in a year. Both looked underfed and they certainly were short-sighted. Hilda, always heavily perfumed and primly accoutered, had graduated with honors, but she was the only one, aside from Clarita, who looked nice enough to make a man forget that she had brains. Rosa had obviously some Spanish blood and further accentuated it by shifting to Spanish with no provocation at all. She was light-skinned and had often been mistaken for a South American. That to her was most flattering as it must be to a group of Filipinos who haunted the International House in New York City, seeking game and passing themselves off as South Americans, and getting away with it, too. The rest of the girls at Clarita's had to be content with being mistaken for Chinese or Hindu or truly identified as Filipino. ... [T]he nation's capital contributed three Maria Claras. As a matter of fact, one of them was named Maria. She was short and wore loose dresses that seemed to long for the fashion of the day, but she was rich. Her family's wealth was safely out of the Philippines. She drove a huge Buick and rarely, not quite alone. Helen was tall but flat-breasted. Every time she opened her mouth, she said 'statistics.' Angela had a Phi Beta [sic] Kappa pin and a pair of the most immoral legs you ever stared at. (Bienvenido N. Santos, "Brown Coterie." You Lovely People [Manila: The Benipayo Press, 1955] 116-126; 118-119)

The Filipinas' crime is that they successfully get away with and enjoy relinquishing their identification as Filipina. Rosa's Spanish language abilities and light skin clearly make her the envy of the others. The narrator, while using the plural "Filipinos" later modifies this noun to identify that what he means is "the rest of the girls" who must "be content with being mistaken for" other Asians ("Chinese or Hindu") or worst of all, "truly identified as Filipino." Santos is quite careful about the choices for passing in this text,

especially in the post World War II, anti-Japanese moment. Only certain racial groups are acceptable, and there is also a hierarchy. Japanese is never an option, and Santos's Filipinas also distance themselves especially from racial groups associated with migrant labor on the West Coast (Filipino or Mexican).

The passage jumbles together the Filipinas' unconscious interest in the so-called "game" of racial passing with the ways in which their education and experience in the U.S. alters Filipina sexuality. With Clarita as the married exception that I will discuss later, in this passage, advanced degrees lead to women who are sexually unattractive to Filipinos: only one "looked nice enough to make a man forget that she had brains." The passage culminates in a series of equivocations centering on the "three Maria Claras." The allusion to the linked racial, sexualized, and gendered instability of Maria Clara illuminates the tensions surrounding the transpacific Filipinas. While in the passage, Santos's narrator is unclear as to whether or not the allusion refers to the women's elite class position in the Philippines or their mixed race heritage or both, by the 1950s, Maria Clara is a figure who is both an object of satire and an iconic version of Filipina femininity. These women's actions are unlike those of the virginal and chaste Maria Clara in Rizal's novel. Instead, the text emphasizes these women's aberrant sexualities in the last three sentences, which include a series of modifications that underscore these women's bodies as incongruous and out-of-place: Helen is "tall but flat-breasted," and Angela has "immoral" body parts. Clarita, appropriately named with a diminutive of Maria Clara, is the story's one exception; she is not only married but also models the dutiful wife in her mournful pining for her absent husband.

The passage also features narrative maneuvers that highlight uncertainties. The instability of Santos's productions of transpacific femininities is marked grammatically by the interplay between essential and nonessential clauses and the use of appositives to disrupt the order of a sentence. These modifications produce interruptions and rhetorical surprises. In the sentence, "Hilda, always heavily perfumed and primly accoutered, had graduated with honors, but she was the only one, aside from Clarita, who looked nice enough to make a man forget that she had brains," there is a tension between essentialized and non-essential aspects of femininity that is reflected by the grammar. Essential: Hilda graduated with honors but looks nice enough to make a man forget that she had brains. Non essential:

her primness and perfume. The interruptive moments in Santos, however, also mark his criticism of the Filipinas transgressive femininities, so that in the sentence, "That to her was most flattering as it must be to a group of Filipinos who haunted the International House in New York City, seeking game and passing themselves off as South Americans, and getting away with it, too," there are key moments that interrupt the flow of the sentence, such as "seeking game and passing" and "getting away with it, too." Overall there is a scale of disorder produced by the Filipina that corresponds to a grammatical disorder, beginning with the surprise of a smart but good-looking Filipina who puts on too much perfume yet is a bit too prim, moving to the Filipinas who get away with racial passing, and escalating with the sly insertion about disorder in terms of sexuality, a woman who drives a "huge Buick and rarely, not quite alone."

The instability associated with the transpacific Filipinas in the opening moments of "Brown Coterie" is the foundation for the rest of the story's critique of the transpacific Filipina. Ultimately, transpacific Filipinas disrupt the ties that bind Filipina/o communities in the U.S.

Santos's containment of the coterie Filipinas is just one response to the instabilities that Filipina/o writers associate with transpacific femininities. In the other chapters of my project, I examine texts that use transpacific femininities as a way of articulating, however tenuously, a new form of Philippine nationalism.



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FINDING A FORMULA FOR SUCCESS



A WOMAN EXECUTIVE'S SEARCH FOR FULFILLMENT

by Karon Jolna

LIZ HELLER experimented successfully with corporate life for the greater part of her career, rising from assistant at Epic Records to the executive suite of Capital Records, whose iconic disc-shaped old Hollywood offices are at the crossroads of Sunset and Vine.

But Liz Heller wanted more. As much as she appreciated the big title and perks and the opportunity to innovate new media and marketing initiatives at Capital Records, she found herself mired in the old “politics of windows.” Heller recalls less-than-fondly the day-to-day administration of the company: “So Costello is coming and he is going to be VP so he needs four windows because VP is a four-window job. This is not really interesting or meaningful.”

So Liz Heller left corporate America. In place of predictable, high flying corporate status came the unpredictable whirlwind of entrepreneurship... and the opportunity to make her own job, her own start-up company, her own story, her own future. The company would be called Buzztone, a pioneer of untraditional, viral, word of mouth, new media, new marketing “buzz” with its own software and services. She built a client roster that includes some of the top brands and companies in America: Coca Cola, Atlantic Records, Microsoft, AOL, Paramount Pictures, Discovery Networks, Warner Bros., Electronic Arts, and many more. But there were other clients she would reject—though they offered lots of money. And other clients she would embrace—though they may not have paid the bills as well. Clients that Liz Heller and her company could feel good about. Clients she could help because those companies were all about helping others across the planet.

Liz Heller had found a formula for success: professional accomplishment plus social responsibility equals personal fulfillment. She recently shared her “formula” at UCLA Extension’s “How Does She Do It? Top Executives Reveal Their Keys to Life and Work Success.” She is one of several accomplished women executives who are providing insight and inspiration for women students who are forging their own career path to success.

Heller began using her marketing acumen and her extensive experience in the music and film industry to focus on not just Fortune 500 firms but also “companies with a social conscious”. Liz Heller’s client roster now includes (Red), a company created to raise awareness and money for The Global Fund by teaming up with the world’s most recognizable brands to develop (Product)RED branded products. A percentage of each (Product)RED product sold is given to the Global Fund. The money helps women and children affected by HIV/Aids in Africa. Buzztone created the website for (RED) (www.joinred.com). It took off, receiving two million hits in one day when the buzz about the website landed on the front page of Google.

Buzztone also works with the Stop-GlobalWarming organization by encouraging people to join the virtual march at www.stopglobalwarming.org. Its mission is to use the strength in numbers to convince the U.S. government to join the rest of the world in addressing global warming and to persuade businesses to initiate a new “clean energy” industrial revolution that will reduce dependence on oil.

Liz Heller is an alumna of UCLA. More noteworthy is that Liz and her mother graduated the same year. Both are committed to advancing women’s and social causes. Interestingly, Liz’s mother, Billie Heller, who has been an activist for women’s rights since the beginning of the Women’s Movement, was a co-founder with poet Adrienne Rich, UCLA English Professor Karen Rowe, and other early feminist pioneers of UCLA’s own Center for the Study of Women in 1984. Billie Heller currently chairs the National Committee on The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of



Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Billie Heller notes that the CEDAW document has yet to be ratified by the United States.

Liz Heller’s activist mother was her influence and main mentor. Her father, an “old school” personal manager for artists such as Liberace, Lawrence Welk and Debbie Reynolds, was also a mentor. He loved his job and his clients, managing one act for 57 years. When he passed away five years ago, the Seymour Heller Awards were created in his honor by the Talent Managers Association. Liz Heller has made her biggest career decisions according to the personal value of loving your work.

Also shaping Liz Heller’s experience was her life and professional partner, husband and film producer John Manulis. Together they produced the feature film adaptation of Jim Carroll’s “The Basketball Diaries,” which starred Leonardo DiCaprio and Juliette Lewis in 1995.

Her extraordinary upbringing, her UCLA academic experience, her life and work partner, her many friends and mentors, and a phenomenal ca-

reer shaped this executive woman and her philosophy: Buzztone is translating the desire to do good work that is good for business into a business that does good. And that business formula is reaping fulfillment both professionally and personally.



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