FEB09

CSW update

NEWSLETTER OF THE UCLA CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN

REPORT BY VANGE HEILIGER

Ties That Double-Bind Us

AMY AGIGIAN SPEAKS ON FEMINISM AND THE FERTILITY INDUSTRY FOR THE ANNUAL ROE V. WADE LECTURE

On the 36th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, we are reminded that this decision not only protects women's health and reproductive freedom, but stands for a broader principle: that government should not intrude on our most private family matters. I remain committed to protecting a woman's right to choose.

– President Barack Obama, on the 36th anniversary of Roe v. Wade

AT THE SAME MOMENT President Obama affirmed that "government should not intrude on our most private family matters," Amy Agigian, this year's invited speaker for the CSW Annual Roe v. Wade lecture, brought to light for her audience the near-impossibility of either privacy or choice for women in an era of assistive reproductive technology. Government policies regulate women's fertility and their access to fertility through interlocking webs of social and biological factors, creating double-binds both for women who need fertility and for women who provide fertility. Agigian argued that structural inequalities linked to race, gender, class, and location exacerbate biological factors that negatively impact fertility, such as age and health, and that these combine to knit women together not by choice, but rather, through lack of choice. Commenting on President Obama's statement, Agigian observed that it is heartening to have a president who is capable of uttering the phrase "reproductive choice." Yet, as Agigian explicated upon in her talk, "Ties That Double-Bind Us: Feminism and the Fertility Industry," both "privacy" and "choice" are complicated matters for women who are or wish to become mothers in an era of assistive reproductive technology.

The concept of "choice" is highly relative to social positioning when describing reproductive health policies in the United States. As women of color activists have drawn attention to repeat-

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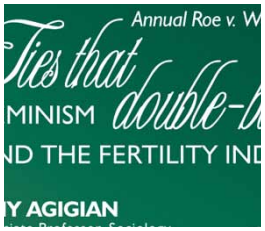


DEPARTMENTS

Travel Notes and Reflections from the Netherlands

by Jennifer Lynne Musto

IN THE FALL OF 2008, I visited Utrecht University, a research university situated in the small, albeit densely populated, country of the Netherlands. The express purpose of this trip was to engage in fieldwork activities and to collect interview data for my dissertation project entitled, "Institutionalizing Protection, Professionalizing Victim Management: Explorations of Multi-Professional Anti-Trafficking Work in the Netherlands." The project explores Dutch state and non-governmental efforts to protect persons trafficked into the Netherlands for the purposes of forced labor. This reflection piece comes on the heels of five months of data collection activities in which I engaged in archival research and conducted 16 semi-structured interviews with Dutch alien and vice police officers, police trainers and educators, social workers, care coordinators, embassy officials, and non-governmental advocates who work with persons identified as "trafficked," most of whom are women.

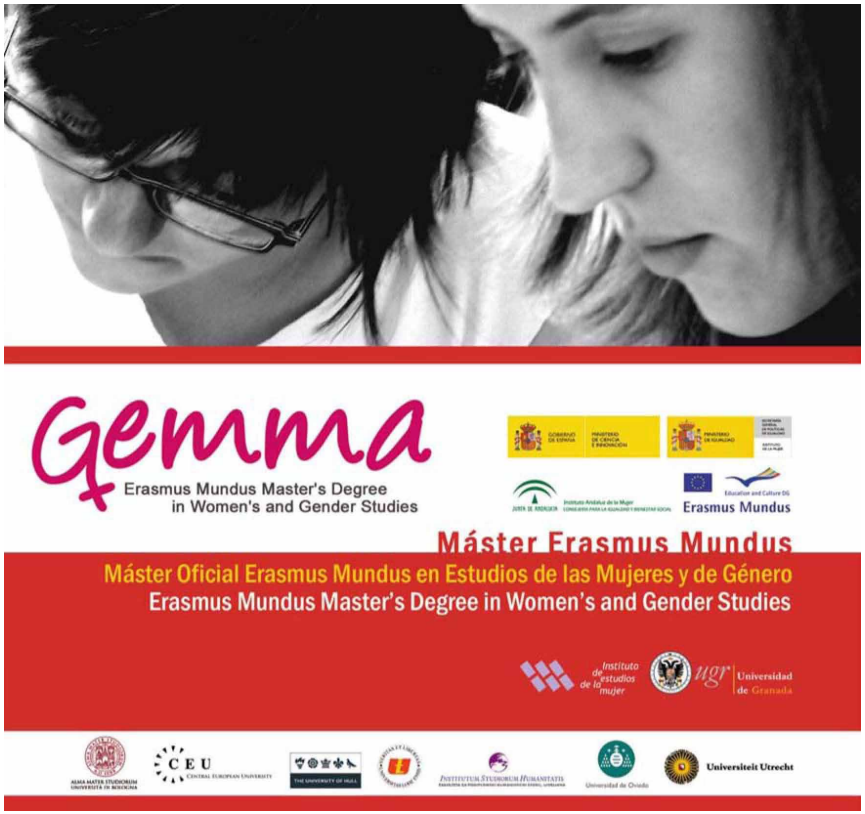
In addition to completing the first phase of data collection activities for my dissertation, the trip also proved to be a homecoming of sorts, as I returned to the very university where six years earlier I began my graduate studies as a Fulbright scholar at the Netherlands Research School of Women's Studies (NOV) at Utrecht University. While my research agenda has since shifted from investigating the legal effects of the Dutch government's legalization of prostitution to examining how state and NGO agents identify, manage, and protect trafficked persons, and although the NOV has been institutionally reconstituted into the Graduate Gender Programme (GGeP), the trip nevertheless provided me with the opportunity to reconnect and meet anew with feminist professors, colleagues, and students at Utrecht University. So too did my time abroad allow me to observe the exciting changes that are taking place in the field of Women's and Gender Studies, both within the Netherlands and throughout the European Union. In this piece, I seek to briefly reflect upon my own experiences as a nomadic doctoral candidate roving between the University of California, Los Angeles and Utrecht University and discuss what I hope may be the beginning of future discussions about how best to bring UCLA graduate students and

faculty working on gender into the dynamic fold of inter-university, interdisciplinary, international exchange programs and opportunities.

During my Fulbright year in the Netherlands, I applied and was accepted to UCLA's PhD Program in Women's Studies. When I discovered that UCLA had both a Dutch Studies Program and a formalized, bilateral agreement with Utrecht University's Research Institute for History and Culture (OGC), of which the GGeP is affiliated, I immediately decided to pursue my doctoral studies at UCLA. Since beginning my graduate training at UCLA in 2003, I have had the opportunity to travel to the Netherlands on three separate occasions for a total of twelve months, thanks to the flexibility proffered through the bilateral agreement and through support from UCLA's Department of Women's Studies, Dutch Studies Program, and the Center For European and Eurasian Studies (CEES). As a visiting PhD student/researcher at Utrecht University's GGeP, I have been able to conduct archival and predissertation research while also participating in numerous master classes and PhD seminars. I have likewise followed two intermediate Dutch language courses at the James Boswell Institute (JBI), and during my most recent trip in Fall 2008, I had the wonderful opportunity to co-teach the graduate seminar, "Feminist Toolbox: Feminist Theories & Methodologies," alongside GGeP Professor Gloria Wekker, who also happened to receive her PhD from UCLA in the Anthropology Department under the mentorship of Claudia Mitchell-Kernan. Professor Wekker's UCLA-Utrecht affiliations gave us the chance to discuss and compare our experiences and to assess the changes that have taken place at both institutions in regards to the development, institutionalization, and departmentalization of its respective women's and gender studies programs.

What became poignantly clear to me, through conversations with

Advanced Thematic Network of European Women's Studies, called ATHENA3, is a forum that brings together feminist and gender scholars from over 80 institutes located in Europe, and which strives to "integrate and consolidate curriculum development, engage in research on education, and foster collaboration between universities and civil societies" of its member institutions.



The GEMMA Erasmus Mundus Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies offers EU and non-EU students alike the opportunity to pursue a joint Master's Degree in at least two out of eight partner institutions, of which Utrecht University is a member.

Professor Wekker, GGeP colleagues, and students in my class, is that it is no longer theoretically sufficient to collapse or conjoin Euro-American feminist projects as one in the same, especially since countries throughout the European Union, particularly though not exclusively in the Netherlands, have developed feminist projects which are decidedly distinct from their U.S. counterparts. To my mind, the most poignant distinction between them rests in the primacy that European women's and gender studies programs have placed on mobility and the need to cultivate ongoing and active networks between and amongst European feminist scholars. Such efforts have been bolstered, for example, through the Advanced Thematic Network of European Women's Studies, hereafter referred to as ATHENA3, which is a forum that brings together feminist and gender scholars from over 80 institutes located in Europe, and which strives to "integrate and consolidate curriculum development, engage in research on education, and foster collaboration between universities and civil societies" of its member institutions.[1] In addition to providing resources and promoting inter-European networks of knowledge transfer and exchange, ATHENA3 has helped cultivate other bilateral agreements and European cooperative schemas. One such program is the GEMMA Erasmus Mundus Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies, which offers EU and non-EU students alike the opportunity to pursue a joint Master's Degree in at least two out of eight partner institutions, of which Utrecht University is a member.[2] The GEMMA Master's Degree program thus institutionalizes mobility and situates the movement of students between institutions and across borders as part and parcel of the

1. For more information about ATHENA3, see http://www.athena3.org/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

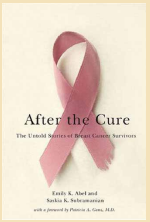
2. For me information, see: http://www.ugr.es/~gemma/index.php?section=programme&page=description

interdisciplinary training of Women's and Gender studies scholars in a European context.

My experiences moving across educational boundaries have indeed proven invaluable and yet as the aforementioned examples demonstrate, are hardly exceptional and more often the rule in a European academic environment in which feminist knowledge production and interdisciplinarity are intimately bound to and informed by border crossing and its corollary epistemic effects. In a U.S. context, wherein calls to develop transnational feminist alliances tend to denote collaborations between feminists and gender scholars located in the Global South and North, I think it productive to re-consider and map how feminism is indeed being done and theorized differently in a European context and how U.S. feminists might engage in transnational collaborative projects with European scholars and colleagues. One of the more formalized venues in which U.S.-based feminists and gender scholars can forge scholarly collaborations is through exigent bilateral agreements and exchange programs. Here undergraduate students seem to have more readily embraced international educational opportunities than graduate students and faculty. With the exception of faculty and graduate students traveling abroad for the purposes of field and archival research or conference presentations, there seems to be a dearth of attention paid to opportunities that exist for short or longer term inter-university exchanges, whether in Europe or elsewhere. In light of the recent departmentalization of UCLA Women's Studies Department and as a result of the marked success of the UCLA Center for the Study of Women in bringing scholars and students together from a broad swath of disciplinary, regional, and research locations, it seems like an opportune moment to consider how to institutionally and financially support future exchange opportunities for faculty, research scholars, graduate and undergraduate students and to examine the critical purchase of inter-university mobility and its role in shaping the future structure and content of women's and gender studies programs and research centers.

Jennifer Lynne Musto *is a doctoral candidate in the Women's Studies Department at UCLA. Her dissertation, "Institutionalizing Protection, Professionalizing Victim Management: Explorations of Multi-Professional Anti-Trafficking Work in the Netherlands," charts and takes theoretical stock of Dutch efforts to protect trafficked persons and investigates whether such protective interventions have helped to empower trafficked persons in genreal and irregual migrants in particular. Her other research interests include sex worker and immigrant rights, structural violence, social movements, transnational feminism(s), European feminism(s), carceral feminism(s), and human rights.*

SENIOR FACULTY FEMINIST SEMINAR SERIES



After the Cure The Untold Stories of Breast Cancer Survivors

TUESDAY, March 3
314 Royce, 4 pm

Emily Abel

Professor Emerita, School of Public Health, UCLA

Saskia Subramanian

Assistant Research Sociologist, Center for Culture and Health

RESPONDENT

Carole Pateman

Distinguished Professor, Political Science, UCLA

SWITCHPOINTS

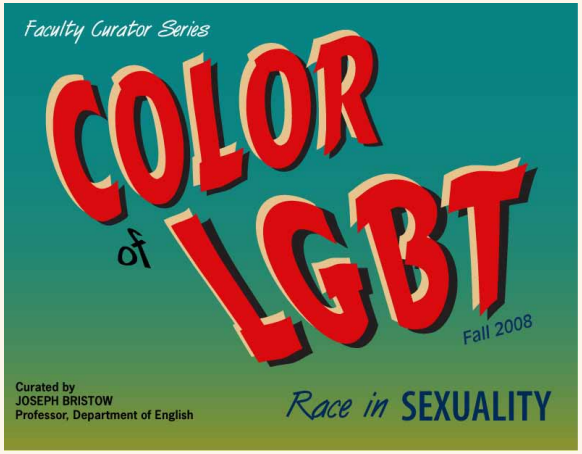
A REVIEW OF KATHRYN STOCKTON'S "OEDIPUS RACED, OR THE CHILD QUEERED BY COLOR"

by Robert Summers

This past December, as part of CSW's *Color of LGBT: Race in Sexuality* faculty curator series, Kathryn Bond Stockton gave a provocative and rich presentation titled "Oedipus Raced, or the Child Queered by Color." The talk bridged her earlier work in *Beautiful Bottom, Beautiful Shame: Where "Black" Meets "Queer"* (Duke University Press, 2006)—with its focus on adult shame and debasement[1]—with her new work on the "queer child" in twentieth-century literature and visual culture, where this particular child is found, given she is erased from history, proper. Stockton's presentation began by foregrounding one of the theoretical ideas crucial to her work: "switchpoints"— defined as "a point of connection between two signs… where something from one flows toward the other, *lending its connotative spread and signifying force to the other* … sometimes shifting it or adulterating it" (5). The switchpoint of Stockton's talk was not only where "Black" and "Queer" meet but also where "the ghostly gay child *lends meaning to* the child queered by color—who in some cases may also be gay."[2] Furthermore, she theorized what has been under-theorized in queer studies: the "gay" or "queer" child, which

1. Stockton, *Beautiful Bottom, Beautiful Shame* (Duke University Press, 2006), 2; all subsequent references will be in parentheses. Stockton's work on the "queer child" appears in *Curiouser* (University of Minnesota Press, 2004).

2. All quotes are from Stockton's presentation, http://www.csw.ucla.edu/videocasts/KS.mov—emphasis mine.



"Oedipus Raced, or the Child Queered by Color: "Gay" Child and "Black" Child in Liberal Race Films," a talk by Kathryn Stockton,on December 3, 2008, was part of the CSW "Race in Sexuality: The Color of LGBT" series, which was curated by Joseph Bristow, a professor in the Department of English at UCLA.

Kathryn Bond Stockton is Professor of English and Director of Gender Studies at the University of Utah. Her most recent book, *Beautiful Bottom, Beautiful Shame: Where "Black" Meets "Queer"* was a national finalist for the Lambda Literary Award, and last year she received the Crompton-Noll Prize, awarded by the Modern Language Association, for the best essay in gay and lesbian studies. She has also authored *God between Their Lips: Desire between Women in Irigaray, Bronte, and Eliot* (Stanford University Press, 1994), and her new book on the queer child is forthcoming from Duke University Press, Series Q.

dovetails with another highly original theoretical idea that Stockton explored, "the gay child's backward birth" —which comes from a "queer theorization" of the "ghosts in the nursery" in psychoanalytic theory. Indeed, Stockton's presentation was not only multilayered but also highly interdisciplinary.

Interestingly, this presentation on the "queer child" and/as the "child queer by color" was given after the election of Barack Obama, the first black presidential candidate—and now President—as well as the passage of proposition 8 in California and similar anti-gay marriage propositions in Arizona and Florida. The main argument deployed by supporters of proposition 8 was the need to "protect the children" and "their innocence" from learning about—if not turning toward—"homosexuality."[3] This type of "protection of children" or "the Child," as Lee Edelman has pointed out in *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*, is a fight for *the* traditional family and its corollary: "reproductive futurism."[4] It should come as no surprise that children and "the Child" are always white, given this color has historically connoted "innocence" and "purity." This is but one issue that Stockton brought to the fore in her presentation—which can be understood as a response to and extension of Edelman's text—namely, to think of "the Child" differently and to think theoretically of the "proto-gay child," the child who may always already be "queer." Further, she explores the switchpoint—one not connected by Edelman—that sexuality *and* race with regard to the child meet up in peculiar ways. Instead of focusing solely on Edelman's notion of "the Child," Stockton zeroes in on the "queer child" who illuminates "the problem of the child in general." Furthermore, she argues that the "queer child" always "haunts" the child as she is "known" by normative society. Moreover, the child as "queer" might very well be just beneath the surface of any child: "If you scratch a child you are going to find a 'queer'—if not 'gay'—then just plain strange."

In her talk, which deployed literature and visual culture, Stockton argued that there is always something temporally and spatially "odd" about the queer or proto-gay child—because "she only ever appears *after* retrospection and *after* a death." This is because the queer child has not been able to announce itself as "gay" or "homosexual"—categories applicable only to adults, given they are understood as sexual beings, which ostensibly isn't the case for

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3. See the pro-Proposition 8 website, http://www.protectmarriage.com, with its white, middle-class heterosexual couples with children and its banner, "Restoring Marriage & Protecting California Children," in which "restoring" refers to the California's Supreme Court ruling reversing Proposition 22 and allowing same-sex marriage.

4. Edelman, *No Future* (Duke University Press, 2004).

children. But as "we" all know, all children—even the "peculiar" ones—are always already assumed to be heterosexual—which still, ironically, announces children as sexual: the (il)logic of normative-heterosexuality.

It should be noted that Stockton, via her presentation, is not arguing for some "sentimental understanding of the child" or for "gay children rights," but rather she interrogates the switchpoints between race and queerness in order to think through the ways in which the "queer child" is born in reverse and what this does to conceptions of childhood. As Stockton puts it, the question is often asked, "When did you know you were gay?" and/or "Were you gay as a child?" These questions ask the "gay" or "queer" adult to account for this "past child"—a child that no longer exists. Is there a "gay child"? Yes and no. The gay child only ever comes about after the "death of the straight child": the "tombstone is the birthplace of the gay child." *Indeed, a specter haunts the child and childhood.*

Race entered the presentation more explicitly when Stockton read William Blake's "The Little Black Boy" (1789), a poem in which we learn that color encodes innocence as white and childlike and black as strength and experience. The "little black child," therefore, can never be a proper child, only ever a "queer" one: "the child queered by color." Indeed, the child is "queered by color" in that he is unable to be a child within normative society, which is to say a heterosexual and racist one. This is true today, even after the victory of Obama. The (painfully ironic) passage of Proposition 8, in which, according to Judith Butler, from the election "the emergence of the counter Bradley-effect [took place], when voters could and did explicitly own up to their own racism, but said they would vote for Obama anyway," and, in some states they could proclaim hetero-normativity, we had the passage of anti-gay marriage propositions to demonstrate the reign of a racist and normative-heterosexuality at work.[5] The exploration of race and sexuality are more pressing than ever.

As Stockton puts it, the question is often asked, "When did you know you were gay?" and/or "Were you gay as a child?" These questions ask the "gay" or "queer" adult to account for this "past child"—a child that no longer exists. Is there a "gay child"? Yes and no. The gay child only ever comes about after the "death of the straight child"...

Stockton also discussed race and the "queer child" in films such as *Guess Whose Coming to Dinner* (1967), the contemporary remake-as-reversal of *Guess Who* (2005), and the explicitly "queer" and racial play-*cum*-film *Six Degrees of Separation* (1993), in which Paul (Will Smith) is a "queer" kind of guest and kid, in which he disrupts the normative: inhabits it and undoes it.

Throughout, Stockton asks us to follow switchpoints and think of how the "queer child" and/or the "child queered by color" disrupts our notions of the child as such and can aid "us" in rethinking aspects of queer theory. Following the "queer child" and/or the "child queered by race" would serve queer studies well, and Stockton is taking us along these tracks.

Robert Summers *is a PhD candidate in the Department of Art History at UCLA. His essay titled "Vaginal Davis Does Art History" was recently published in the anthology Dead History, Live Art (Liverpool University Press, 2008). His dissertation, titled "Enacting a Queer Aesthetic Existence: The Art/Life of Vaginal Davis," from which the published essay comes, is built around the L.A.- and, now, Berlin-based conceptual, literary, video, and performance artist Vaginal Davis.*

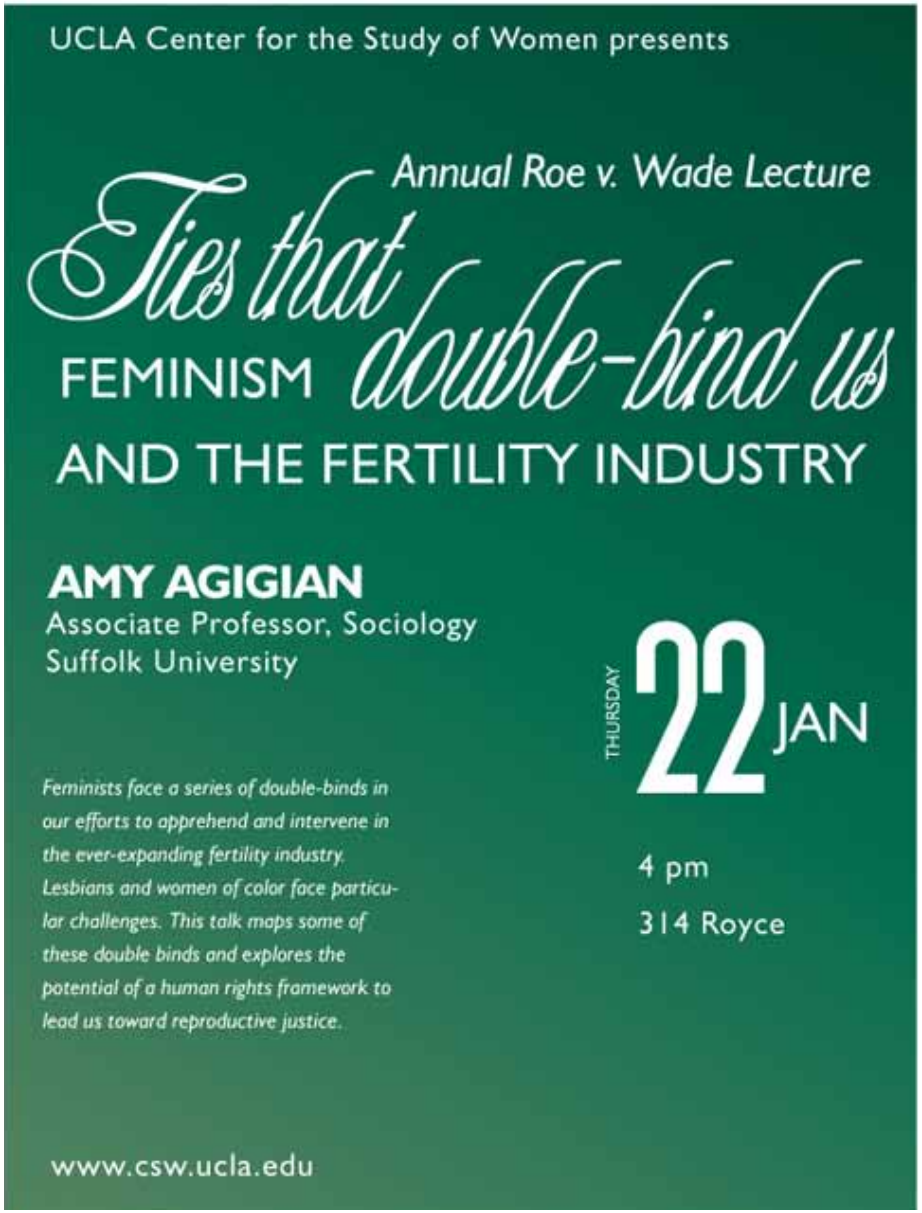
5. Butler discusses the contradictions at play in the recent election of the first black president while preserving other "traditional" ideals in the U.S.; see "Uncritical Exuberance," http://www.indybay.org

Roe v. Wade Lecture, *continued from page 1*

edly, "choice" means very different things for women of varying racial, ethnic, class and other backgrounds. "Reproductive justice" is a concept developed by women of color activists and theorists who wanted to move the conversation about reproduction away from birth control and abortion to a broader understanding of reproductive "choice" that included the right to have children, to care for one's children and provide them with basic needs such as food, clothing, education, shelter, health care and community. Reproductive justice is about building alliances across differences of race, class, sexuality, ability, and geographic location. Reproductive justice also draws attention to the United States' history that women of color of all class backgrounds have been subject to eugenicist policies that restricted their ability to bear and raise children, and which gave (and gives) them little choice as to whom they would bear children for. Remarking on the high level of stratification between women who use the fertility industry to become mothers and women who provide fertility services, Agigian called for utilizing theories of reproductive justice to lessen the burdens of double-binds for women connected to the fertility industry.

While government policies such as restrictions on egg research or limited maternity and paternity leave benefits have broad implications for policy, medical professionals, lesbians and even for understanding geographic boundaries, Agigian focused primarily on two groups of women not generally placed in conversation with one another: women who need fertility and women who provide fertility. While sexism impacts many women who are involved in the fertility industry, providers and users are highly stratified by race and class, exacerbating the extent to which "choice" can be applied to pregnancies facilitated by the fertility industry.

The Mommy Tax, or the loss of about $1 million in income over a lifetime, affects all women who become mothers, regardless of age, race, class or sexuality. This, along with other structural inequalities related to gender, place, class and race is often masked as a private matter, yet can



be understood as one of many catalysts for the double-binds Agigian addressed in her talk. For example, many professional track women learn that it is nearly impossible to have kids at "the right time." While most work cultures have times when it is, as Agigian put it, "definitely a bad time" to have kids, there's no corresponding "right" time to bear children. Having a child while young seriously disadvantages a woman's abilities to meet professional class aspirations, yet waiting might mean missing one's fertility window, effectively forcing professional class women into using the fertility industry if they want to have children. Although adoption is often offered as an alternative option to pregnancy, Agigian argues that adoption is not only expensive for adoptive parents, it is also often a difficult decision for the birth mother, making for a "choice" that is hardly ideal even when financially and socially possible.

On the flip side, Agigian offered statistics that indicate when working class and poor women give birth at younger ages, they pay costs in shorter life expectancy. However, if women from working class and poor backgrounds wait to have children, they experience the same risks of reduced fertility as their professional-class generational peers. Unlike professional-class women, though, working class and poor women are less likely to be able to afford the services of the fertility industry. These are all structural problems, but they are experienced as private dilemmas.

This combination of social and biological factors leads to pushing professional class women to have children past the time when it is biologically safest. Of the services offered by the fertility industry, all carry risk, including increased risk of birth defects from IVF and ICSI, as well as the possibility that IVF damages eggs. Additionally, IVF is very likely to cause twins or multiples, which puts both women and babies at a greater risk of health complications. However, the fertility industry grossly exaggerates their success rates and minimizes the risks, leading some professional-class women to wrongly believe they can fall back on the fertility industry if they wait to become pregnant.

In terms of the double binds for women who provide fertility, Agigian addressed those for women in the US as well as for women from outside the US. The most highly-sought-after egg donors tend to be college educated women with high IQs, athletic or musical abilities, and who are relatively young. Such women are often looking to help pay for school, and choose to donate eggs so they can further their own professional-class aspirations. It is unknown if the hormones involved in harvesting eggs are linked to a later risk of cancer; however, there are reports that women who donate eggs experience some difficulty getting pregnant after donating.

While there is eugenicist categorization of gametes by race, education, eye and hair color, and other physical and social features, surrogacy tends to be the realm of those women who would be considered "unsuitable" for egg donation. Surrogates generally come from poor or working class backgrounds, and if they are not highly educated, their earning potential in other fields is slim, leaving surrogacy as one of very few high-paying job options. While surrogacy is expensive for users, and thus cost-prohibitive for all but the wealthiest women and couples, a more affordable surrogacy option is available by using surrogates from overseas. Such services cost infertile couples one-fifth the rent of a healthy U.S. womb, making surrogacy possible for less wealthy women and couples. However, women who are surrogates overseas may, as in the case of one surrogacy compound in India that Agigian used as an example, be effectively coerced into providing their bodies to grow babies for those professional-class women who can afford to pay. Yet, as Agigian points out, banning egg donations or surrogacy simply limits options for women who want to have children, putting more money in the hands of doctors and the fertility industry, and limited earning potential for fertile women who may wish to work in this way.

Sexuality also creates particular double-binds

for lesbian and bisexual women with female partners, in that sperm is cheap but women must pay a lot to access it through formal channels. Lesbians may be forced to invent an infertile male partner in order to access affordable sperm or else pay prohibitive out-of-pocket costs for sperm. The "choice" here for lesbians who are not wealthy is to lie, to be incredibly creative in their attempts to procure sperm, or to not have children. Choosing an egg or sperm means inevitably choosing a relationship, and this choice has consequences, whether anonymous or known. Even anonymous donations may facilitate unintended relations, as can be seen in lesbian communities who stumbled across an unexpected biological possibility: that because lesbian communities are so small, the odds are high that multiple couples will use the same sperm donor, meaning that their children, while planned, have unanticipated biological relatives. The question then becomes, how do you deal with these relationships?

Returning to a reproductive justice model that attempts to build alliances across differences of race, class, sexuality, ability, and geographic location provides possibilities for unlocking these double-binds, argued Agigian, particularly when combined with a Human Rights Approach to reproductive justice. The human rights approach includes a wide range of positive human rights—basic rights that not only include the legal rights of citizenship or voting, but also rights categorized as civil, social, environmental and cultural. Examples of positive rights include universal free health care, equal pay for equal work, child care and maternity leave, universal free education, social safety nets, preventing sexually transmitted infections and infertility, and strong environmental and health safety laws. Further, these positive rights must be made available to all people, regardless of gender, race or ethnicity, social class, age, ability, sexuality, marital status or citizenship. This seems a tall order, and as noted by one audience member, many national governments actively work against these positive human rights, including that of the United States. Yet, as Agigian noted from her own activist work in Massachusetts, sub-national groups and activists are working to implement these rights at the state rather than national level. This is one way for community activists to subvert some of the poor national policies and practices around issues of Human Rights so that positive human rights aligned with the goals of reproductive justice can be made available to all.

Amy Agigian's talk highlighted many of the uncomfortable and sometimes dangerous double-binds that affect women who are currently bound to the fertility industry. Despite advertising and popular mythology that present

Amy Agigian's talk highlighted many of the uncomfortable and sometimes dangerous double-binds that affect women who are currently bound to the fertility industry. Despite advertising and popular mythology that present reproductive technology as an easy means to rescue infertile women from their barren state while supporting the professional-class aspirations of driven women, it has the potential to further complicate women's lives, even as it provides income for some women, and desired offspring for others. It is an unfortunate case, Agigian noted, where "capitalism trumped patriarchy with a little help from lesbian activists."

reproductive technology as an easy means to rescue infertile women from their barren state while supporting the professional-class aspirations of driven women, it has the potential to further complicate women's lives, even as it provides income for some women, and desired offspring for others. It is an unfortunate case, Agigian noted, where "capitalism trumped patriarchy with a little help from lesbian activists." Unlike Shulamith Firestone's pre-Roe v. Wade call for reproductive technologies and social services that would free women from the burdens of child-bearing and child-rearing, current assistive reproductive technology reinforces the nuclear family even as it complicates the ways we conceive our families, socially and biologically.

Ultimately calling for a Human Rights Approach to reproductive justice, Agigian argued for combining the brilliant work by women of color to bring about reproductive justice, with internationally known legal and policy approaches to broadly conceived human rights, in order to reduce some of the immobilizing double-binds impacting women involved in the fertility industry.

Vange Heiliger *is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Women's Studies at UCLA. Her dissertation research utilizes a feminist analysis of class, shopping, and branding to investigate how social marketing campaigns of ethical capitalisms deploy race, gender, poverty, and morality to bolster neoliberal narratives touting the redemptive power of transnational capitalist trade. Her research interests include media and cultural studies of economics and development in the Americas, discourses of sustainability, and the new political ecology, with an emphasis on the discursive and embodied intersections of poverty, sexuality, race, religion, gender, rurality, and the environment.*

Iska's Journey

FILM SCREENING & DISCUSSION
In Honor of International Women's Day

SUNDAY
March 8
1409 Melnitz Hall
3 pm

Iska's Journey tells the harrowing story of a twelve-year-old girl who shows courage in the face of harsh poverty, only to succumb eventually to its ravages. *Iska's Journey* is not an easy film to watch. It brutally exhibits the cruel conditions under which millions of women and children are exploited in the prostitution trade.

Tillie Olsen Research Grant Recipients

Each year CSW awards its Research Scholars with up to three Tillie Olsen Research Grants. These grants honor the memory of Tillie Lerner Olsen, a writer who documented the silences imposed on women by family and work responsibilities and financial need. These grants are to be used to support participation in scholarly conferences, travel to research sites, purchase of specialized research materials, or procurement of technical services. This year, CSW is pleased to recognize Karina Eileraas, Elline Lipkin, and Julie C. Nack Ngue.

Karina Eileraas

Eileraas's project, "Just Like You", But Not Like Us: Visualizing Multiracial Femininity and National Belonging in the American Girl Family, is inspired by broad aesthetic and political questions regarding multiracial identity and the politics of representation in twenty-first century popular culture. Since their introduction in 1985, American Girl dolls have evolved into a national phenomenon. American Girl initially distinguished itself by offering a line of historical "period dolls" in relation to specific historical moments and narratives. American Girl's latest product line, "Just Like You", consists of 24 dolls with "customized" skin tone, eye, and hair color. Identified not by name, but instead by a unique number and "inventory" of hair, skin, and eye color, their display disturbingly evokes the "racial types" and "comparative racial scales" that were popularized within colonial and eugenics discourse of the early twentieth century and used to justify a range of sociopolitical distinctions, anthropological hierarchies, and economic disparities.
Eileraas will ask how we might read American Girl's visual formulation of multiracial identity in relation to racial classification efforts that authorized the one-drop law and the American eugenics movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and with respect to historical fears about racial mixing, indeterminacy, and degeneration that have plagued the American legal, literary, scientific, and cultural imagination. She will also consider how American Girl formulates national identity and normative citizenship alongside specific (in)visibilities of race, femininity, and multiethnic identity. Ultimately, this project will attempt to show that we cannot sufficiently "read" American Girl's visual representations of multiracial identity without first engaging—in some fashion, however limited—with these "invisible" histories of racial classification and interracial prohibition in the United States. While American Girl's "Just Like You" dolls make a concerted effort to look "just like us"—i.e. to reflect the diverse "face" of America--they also betray profound anxieties about ethnic authenticity and ambiguity, interracial

mixing, and multi-ethnic identity that are symptomatic of the post-9/11 era.

Elline Lipkin

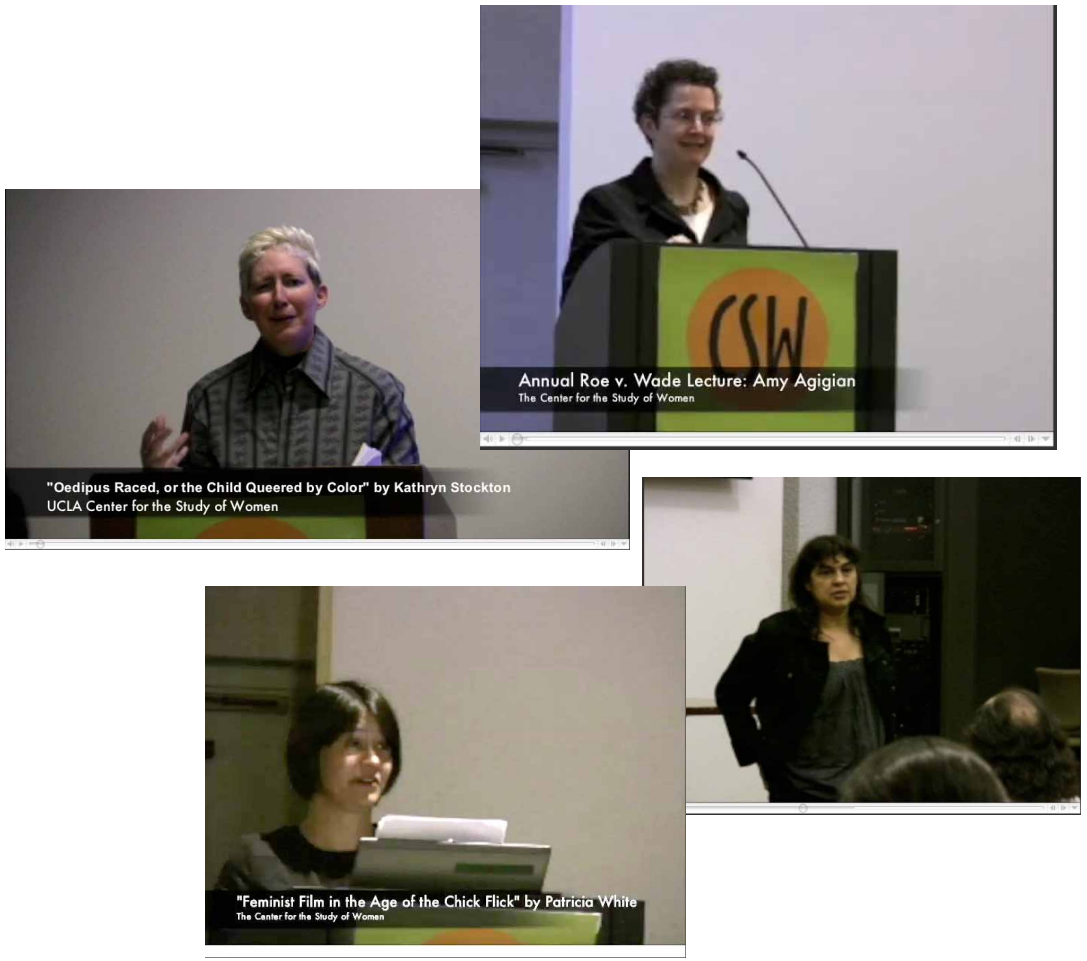
Elline Lipkin will attend the Associated Writing Program conference in Chicago in February of 2009. Her academic interests come together at the juncture of women's studies and creative writing and attending the conference offers her the opportunity to deepen her connections to these fields. Additionally, Lipkin will be promoting her book *Girls & Feminism*, forthcoming from Seal Press. She will also contribute a chapter on the poet Alice Notley to *American Women Poets in the 21st Century*, a volume forthcoming from Wesleyan Press. Finally, Lipkins is also fast at work on a second poetry manuscript, tentatively entitled *Cast*. The readings and panels of the Associated Writing Program conference will, she expects. further bolster the development of these projects.

Julie C. Nack Ngue

In her project, Disability in Contemporary Senegalese Women's Writing: Towards a New Aesthetics of the Global, examines the work of writers such as Ken Bugul's novel *La Folie et la Mort* (2000), which presents a chilling portrait of a contemporary African nation under the rule of a brutal tyrant as well as the disjunctive forces of globalization. Bugul's novel poses a crucial question: What becomes of those women whose bodies, psyches, and speech do not satisfy the requirements of national health and economic order? Health and the body, Bugul reveals, are subject to myriad cultural, national, and global imperatives which marginalize or quite literally efface from view those bodies deemed unruly or grotesque. Ultimately, the novel implores readers to recognize a more inclusive portrait of postcoloniality; or rather, a new aesthetic of postcoloniality—one that does not idealize healing, whole bodies, and conclusive, happy endings to the detriment of a dedicated, concerned examination of the historical circumstances and the material realities of postcolonial life.

More videocasts available for viewing!

Videocasts of the CSW Annual Roe V Wade Lecture, "Ties that Double-Bind Us: Feminism and the Fertility Industry" by Amy Agigian; Ela Troyano's talk at the screening of *La Lupe,* The Color of LGBT: Race in Sexuality faculty curator series lecture, "Oedipus Raced, or the Child Queered by Color: 'Gay' Child and 'Black' Child in Liberal Race Films, by Kathryn Stockton; Changing the Object faculty curator series lecture, "Feminist Film in the Age of the Chick Flick," by Patricia White; and some of the Thinking Gender 2009 panels are now available for viewing on the CSW website: http://www.csw.ucla.edu/podcasts.html. In addition, an audiocast of "Edward Carpenter: A "Weather Vane" of His Times' by Sheila Rowbotham is also available for listening.



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