

**NOV09**

**CSW**  
**update**

CELEBRATING  
25 YEARS!

*CSW "ACCESS MAZER" PROJECT LEADS TO PARTNERSHIP  
BETWEEN MAZER AND UCLA LIBRARY!*

# **JUNE L. MAZER LESBIAN ARCHIVE AT UCLA LAUNCHED**

**CELEBRATORY EVENT FEATURES SHEILA KUEHL, ABBE LAND,  
LILLIAN FADERMAN, AND GARY E. STRONG!**

ON NOVEMBER 5TH, a special event was held at the UCLA Library to celebrate the launch of the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archive at UCLA, a resource created through a partnership between the June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives and the UCLA Library. Special guests at the event included Sheila Kuehl, former California State Senator; Abbe Land, Mayor of West Hollywood; University Librarian Gary E. Strong; Kathleen McHugh, CSW Director, and Lillian Faderman, historian and author.

**NOV09**

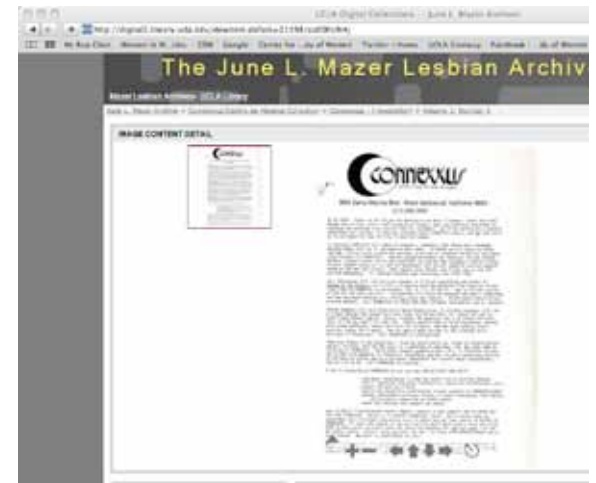


**IN THIS ISSUE**

The partnership is an outgrowth of CSW's "'Access Mazer' Project: Organizing and Digitizing the Lesbian-Feminist Archive in Los Angeles" project, the purpose of which was to inventory, organize, preserve, and digitize several Los Angeles-related collections held by the Mazer. The Mazer is the largest major archive on the West Coast dedicated to preserving and

promoting lesbian and feminist history and culture.

Kathleen McHugh, CSW Director, and April de Stefano, CSW Assistant Director, were principal investigators on the two-year project. Started in 2007, it was funded in part by a Competitive Support for Campus Partners grant from the UCLA Center for Community Partnerships. Out



of the Mazer's many holdings, five key collections were selected for processing:

- The *Connexus/Centro de Mujeres Collection* documents the organization's goals, strategies, and events. Connexus, a feminist resource in Los Angeles founded in 1984 and closed in 1990, organized support groups, conferences, and cultural events geared toward Latina lesbians. The collection is divided into the following series: Board of Directors, Administrative Files, Events, Financial Records, Fundraising, Programs, and Publicity and Publications.
- The *Lillian Faderman Papers* include the research notes and manuscript revisions from this preeminent lesbian historian's books up to but

not including her latest publication, *Gay L.A* (Basic Books, 2006), including *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (Morrow, 1980) and *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America* (Columbia University Press, 1991).

- The *Margaret Cruikshank Papers*. Margaret Cruikshank, a longtime lesbian activist and distinguished academic, has been teaching and writing about women's issues and lesbian issues since 1975. She has been a member of the University of Maine faculty since 1977, where she is also associated with the Center on Aging, and taught previously at City College of San Francisco.

- The *Southern California Women for Understanding (SCWU) Collection* includes original correspondence, organizational documents, meeting minutes, and published newsletters of SCWU, which was founded in 1976 as a "non-profit lesbian educational and social membership organization" and disbanded in 2006. In addition to paper documents, the collection contains audiocassettes of meetings, videos, photographs, slides, and a large amount of ephemera.
- The *Women Against Violence Against Women (WAWAW) Collection* documents its activities, meetings, and letter-writing campaigns from 1972 to 1985, providing insight into an early rape prevention and media watchdog association that involved many lesbian-feminist Angelenos.

The collection is a mixture of print materials, ephemera, and audiovisual materials. Notable ephemera include a large collection of t-shirts and buttons.

Finding aids were created for all of the collections and some materials were digitized.

The newly announced partnership between the Mazer and the UCLA Library means that researchers can access the physical collections by contacting Special Collections at UCLA Library or the Mazer and that any new collections acquired by the Mazer will be available at UCLA.

In addition, finding aids for the current collection and the digitized materials are available online from the Mazer website (<http://mazerlesbianarchives.org/>) and UCLA Library website (<http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/mazer/>). The finding aids are

also available from the Online Archive of California (<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/>) at the California Digital Library. Thumbnails as well as high-resolution images of materials that have been digitized are available for viewing on the Mazer and the UCLA Library websites.

Both the Mazer Archives and the UCLA Library benefit from the project. As Angela Brinskele, the Director of Communications at Mazer Archives explained, “We believe that it will add immeasurably to the protection, preservation and accessibility of the grass-roots lesbian and feminist history we have been collecting for three decades.” Researchers at UCLA in turn gain access to these valuable collections, and the collaboration helps to broaden and diversify the Library’s holdings.

CSW's “‘Access Mazer’ Project: Organizing and Digitizing the

Lesbian-Feminist Archive in Los Angeles” project will now have an even more significant impact on scholars and scholarship and on members of the Los Angeles, feminist, and LGBT communities. Future research on social activism, twentieth-century U.S. women, lesbians, feminism, and Los Angeles will all benefit from the enhanced access to these primary sources. Countless numbers of researchers and members of the general public will be able to gain insight from these publicly available archival resources.

If you have (or know of) a collection of materials on lesbian or feminist history that you believe would enhance this important archive, please contact the Mazer or Special Collections at UCLA for information on donating.

**Wednesday, January 20, Royce 314, 5 pm**

# **Fat and Identity Politics**

**Paul Campos**

PROFESSOR OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO



# INAPPROPRIATE BODIES

BY JAIMIE BARON

## Contemporary Filmmakers Challenging Gender Constructions through Appropriation

**F**OUND FOOTAGE filmmaking has long been a method that filmmakers have used to critique media images or to pay homage to them—or sometimes both simultaneously. Well-known filmmakers like Abigail Child, Su Friedrich, William E. Jones, Chick Strand, and Leslie Thornton, among others, have appropriated images in the service, at least in part, of challenging the audience to rethink the gender constructions posited by the mainstream media. While the use of found footage goes back almost to the beginning of film history, there is now a rising

generation of filmmakers using appropriated images to further deconstruct and reconstruct the gender roles established by Classical Hollywood films, television commercials, medical textbooks, pornography, and other institutions of power.

In January 2009, I founded the Festival of (In)appropriation, which is an experimental found footage festival that will likely be held annually from now on, due to the wealth of materials sent in response to the call and to the strong audience turnout for the first event, which was held in June 2009. The

only parameters in the call for entries were that works submitted had to have been made in the past four years, be twenty minutes or less, and include at least some appropriated material. My fellow curator Andrew Hall and I received over 120 entries from all over the world. While Andrew and I chose a group of about 25 films that we thought were particularly “good” or “original” based on our subjective sense of aesthetic judgment for the Festival of (In)appropriation, it occurred to me that it would be interesting to examine a different cross section of the films based on



a different set of parameters. As we watched these 120 films, we noticed that many of them raised questions about or adjacent to issues of gender and the body. In collaboration with the UCLA Center for the Study of Women and the program in Cinema and Media Studies in the UCLA Department of Film, Television, and Digital Media, I decided to create an entirely different program of films from the same entries, the screening of which will be held on December 7, 2009.

One theme that emerged from this new cross section of films is an ambivalent fascination with female stars of an earlier cinematic era. In Kate Raney's *I Love (Hate) You Gloria* (2007), brief black-and-white clips from the famous films of Classical Hollywood actress Gloria Grahame are cut out and pasted over a swirling, ethereal background of green and blue. Sometimes Grahame appears alone, beautiful but isolated against the background while at other times she appears with various male co-stars, including Humphrey Bogart in *In a Lonely Place* (Nicolas Ray, 1950), who alternates between caressing and attacking her. Kristy Norindr's *Nana Reedit* (2008) similarly exhibits a fascination with Anna



Scott Stark, *Speechless*, 2008

Karina, who seems to be dancing with joy in Jean-Luc Godard's *Vivre Sa Vie* (1962) but whose appearance of happiness is undercut by Norindr, who constantly interrupts her dance. Anthony Hays' *Anything for My Gal* (2008) produces an even more disturbing effect when he re-edits footage of Marilyn Monroe in *Bus Stop* (Joshua Logan, 1956), creating a field in which Monroe's body is violently stretched and distorted.

Another set of films productively "misuse" images of naked bodies—primarily female—derived from pornography and from medical sources. In Marnie Parrell's *About Town* (2007), Dinorah de Jesus Rodriguez's *XXX* (2007), and Scott Stark's *Speechless* (2008), such images are taken out of their accepted context so that they become

strange, shocking, and sometimes funny. In *About Town*, Parrell appropriates images from many different heterosexual pornographic films all shot in the same Los Angeles house and transforms it through voiceover into a fake real estate advertisement. hilariously, the narration completely ignores the sexual acts being performed onscreen. Rodriguez's *XXX* takes pornographic footage and manipulates it through hand-processing, painting over the footage, and creating a three-screen triptych of porn in which the images suddenly take on an artisanal quality that undermines their function as purely utilitarian sexual stimulants. And Stark's *Speechless* appropriates close-up stereoscopic Viewmaster images of female genitalia from a 1976 medical textbook called *The Clitoris*, "animating" the vulvae



by switching back and forth between the two stereoscopic images, and combining these images with patterns found in nature. Interestingly, none of these films engage in an overt critique of their original sources, but, rather, they all exhibit a desire to hyperbolize such images so that they transgress the “rules” of how images of nude bodies and genitals are “supposed” to be consumed.

Two other films focus a critical eye on heterosexual masculinity. Ann Steuernagel’s *Pledge* (2006) combines footage of young boys, smiling shyly or playing together, with footage of men doing “manly” things—for instance, building a house, marching in military formation, or shooting a missile—suggesting that a particular set of actions has already been prescribed for these boys. Stuernagel’s use of reverse motion, however, also suggests that this process of masculine indoctrination has the potential to be undone. In a similar vein, Elisa Kreisinger’s *I Am Man* (2008) uses footage from a Burger King commercial in which men sing a song about eating like men which means eating meat and not “chick food.” Kreisinger uses some of the original footage from the commercial



**Ann Steuernagel, *Pledge*, 2006**

but adds militaristic and phallic imagery that defamiliarizes the commercial so that it becomes an advertisement for violence rather than food. Rodriguez’s *Is It True Blondes Have More Fun?* (2006) similarly interrogates the way in which commercials address women, who apparently care less about eating meat and more about having beautiful hair.

Along with Parrell’s *About Town* (2006), Brandon Downing’s *The Ship* (2009) and Julie Perini’s *They have a name for girls like me* (2009) both exhibit a humorous approach toward language in relation to gendered images. In *The Ship*, Downing takes a song from a Bollywood film and lays it over images of a scuba diver, adding his own subtitles that sound like the Hindi words being



**Elisa Kreisinger, *I Am Man*, 2008**



**Nada Gordon, *The Garden of Life*, 2009**

sung, “interpreting” them to make them, and thereby the images that accompany them, seem pornographic. In order to construct her film, Perini appropriates materials from films in which a character named “Julie” appears, preserving only the clips in which someone



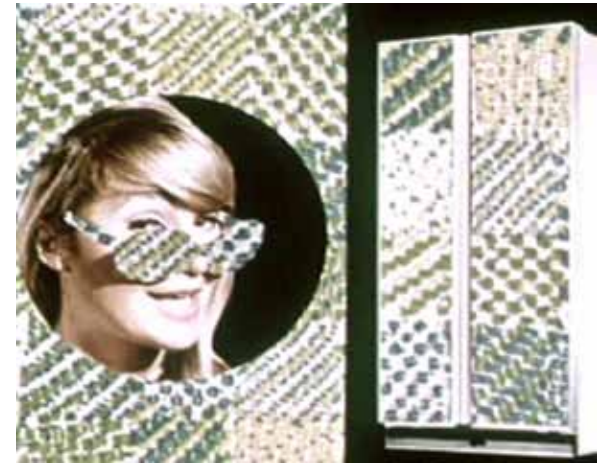
**Agnes Moon, *Dream of Me*, 2007**

says the word “Julie.” In each of these two films, the filmmaker “misinterprets” language in order to poke fun at the original sources, Perini’s in order to trace the life of a name and Downing’s in order to show how seemingly nonsexual sounds and images can be transformed by the written word. Nada Gordon’s *The Garden of Life* (2009) also uses subtitles (she and Downing are both part of the Flarf Collective) but focuses primarily on images of women from across the world dancing for the camera. She and Perini both make appropriation films through the method of “collecting” certain kinds of footage in order to reveal particular (gendered) tendencies.



**Sasha Waters Freyer, *Her Heart is Washed in Water and Then Weighed*, 2006**

Agnes Moon’s *Dream of Me* (2007) and Sasha Waters Freyer’s *Her Heart is Washed in Water and Then Weighed* (2006) meditate on what it means to be a mother, a wife, or a sister. In Moon’s film, images of newspapers scanning by on microfilm and footage of a girl ice skating are overlaid with voiceovers of different women talking about the film subject identified as “you” who was adopted. In this case, the bodies of “you” (who may or may not be the filmmaker) and her (lost) biological sister are absent from the film despite being its central subject. In Freyer’s film, a story about her mother’s lack of fulfillment as a housewife is intercut with images of an



**Akosua Adoma Owusu, *Intermittent Delight*, 2006**

autopsy, indirectly linking her mother’s feeling that her labors were taken for granted to the medical objectification and depersonalization of a dead body. Both films are grounded in the desire of others to know a woman, but, in each, a gap is opened between a female subject’s identity and the material manifestation of that identity, the body—suggesting that she is ultimately unknowable.

Like Freyer’s film, Akosua Adoma Owusu’s *Intermittent Delight* (2006) reflects on women’s labor, combining footage of African women weaving textiles with footage from 1950s American advertisements for printed patterns for decorating your refrigerator, aimed at (white)

housewives. Owusu's film traces the similarities and differences between patterned objects as they are made and used across space and time.

While these films constitute only a small sample of the approaches to gender and the body that are being employed by contemporary found footage filmmakers, they nevertheless reveal a certain set of concerns surrounding the gendered body. I suggest that the key trope is, in fact, ambivalence: toward the female stars of Classical Hollywood, toward pornographic and medical images of the body, toward militaristic and carnivorous constructions of masculinity, and so on. To appropriate is often to critique but, as is the case in many forms of ironic and parodic play, such appropriations also repeat and thereby risk reinforcing aspects of the dominant paradigm. Nevertheless, appropriation always has the potential to destabilize meaning itself and, at least in the case of the films discussed above, to encourage us to misread the gender cues that constantly tell us what it means to be a man or a woman.

# INTERMITTENT DELIGHT

## GENDER AND THE BODY IN CONTEMPORARY FOUND FOOTAGE FILMMAKING

Curated by Jaimie Baron  
and Andrew Hall

MONDAY  
**DECEMBER 7**

5 TO 8 PM  
DESIGN ROOM THEATER,  
2534 MELNITZ





BY ELIZABETH MORGAN

# THE VIRTUOUS VIRTUOSA



WHEN I ARRIVED AT UCLA IN THE FALL OF 2003 to begin graduate work in the Department of Musicology, I had no idea what I wanted to study. In fact, I was torn between two different historical areas. Both attracted me, but I wasn't convinced that either would hold my interest on its own. The first was music making among female amateur keyboardists of the middle and upper classes in late Georgian-era England. I loved turn-of-the-nineteenth-century England as a historical period, but I wasn't particularly drawn to the relevant repertoire—works by composers such as J. C. Bach and Ignaz

Pleyel, whose pieces seemed somewhat dainty to me. My heart was in the virtuosic piano music of the next generation, the powerhouse works by composers like Franz Liszt and Frederic Chopin. But I wasn't sure that I had anything new to say about their music.

Over the next three years, as I immersed myself in course work and independent research, I began to uncover connections between my two areas of interest. I had never imagined that amateur pianists had ties to virtuoso performance. Women keyboardists in Georgian-era England had

been discouraged from pursuing virtuosic status as performers. Conduct books and moralizing literature recommended that they undertake musical study as they did their other female accomplishments; women ought to be diligent in their study, but their end goal should be intermediate skill only. Because of these stipulations against female virtuosity, I had always assumed that the repertoire that women studied was demonstrably of the amateur sphere, both technically and musically simple, “such as ladies can execute with little trouble,” as composer W. T. Parke put it. Likewise, I’d assumed that women keyboardists, who were as ubiquitous in middle- and upper-class drawing rooms as cups of tea, did not excel beyond intermediate-level skill at the pianoforte.

My research told a different story. Despite the rules forbidding female virtuosity, many of the works that women amateur pianists studied were the same pieces performed by professionals on the concert stage. I uncovered one such example by examining a published catalogue of works in Jane Austen’s collection of sheet music. The author owned a copy of the “Storm

Rondo” by Daniel Steibelt, who was a touring virtuoso performer during Austen’s time. Steibelt performed his rondo in illustrious public venues, including at a victory concert for Napoleon after a decisive military battle. It was considered one of the formidable virtuoso works of the early nineteenth century, yet amateur parlor pianists played it too.

I decided that I wanted to study this period in detail, and so I declared my dissertation topic and set off to spend my fourth year of graduate school in London. Based in an apartment in the north of the city, I spent the next several months exploring the music collection at the British Library and taking frequent trips to archives all over England. My first research trip took me to Austen’s home, where I examined the author’s collection of musical works. Some of the pieces in her music notebooks were written in her own hand; Austen had borrowed sheet music from friends and relatives and copied out the works for future use. As I traveled to town halls and county collections around the country, reading diaries and letters of late Georgian-era women and looking at their collections of sheet music, I came to the conclusion

that many female amateurs had taken their activities as pianists seriously, undoubtedly achieving a high level of proficiency and artistry at the keyboard. In other words, women claimed control of their musical educations, determining for themselves what place music held in their lives.

Yet, all the while, they were subject to the watchful eyes of their governesses, family members, and friends, and aware of their culture’s notion of the accomplished woman. It would be a mistake to assume that by pursuing a high level of ability at the keyboard, women whole-heartedly turned their backs on their society’s ideals of feminine nature and propriety. In fact, while they studied pieces like Steibelt’s “Storm Rondo,” female amateurs also played works of a more traditionally feminine sensibility: character pieces, nocturnes, Scottish songs, and dance tunes among them. These works tended to embody the ideal woman in their musical affect; they are lyrical, gracious pieces, with beautiful melodies and simple accompaniments. Yet the more I focused on the act of playing these pieces, the more I realized that they, too, had ties to the virtuoso world.

For instance, one type of work common to the musical collections that I examined were Scottish folk songs, scored for voice and piano. These pieces did not seem particularly musically or technically complicated, until I considered that the woman singing often served as her own accompanist. It is not difficult to play the piano accompaniment to most of the Scottish song settings that I looked at, nor is it challenging to sing the tune, but doing both simultaneously demands a very specific and refined skill set. Even when an accompaniment partially doubles a melodic line, performing the independent left-hand material while paying attention to breath support and vocal delivery is no easy task.

In other words, performing these songs called for sophisticated musical abilities but didn't broadcast those abilities as such to the listener. In contrast to the "Storm Rondo," the end goal of performing a Scottish song was to make the piece sound easy. By choosing pieces like these songs to perform, young women did not fight their culture's rules about female music making overtly; instead, they subverted them, undermined them, challenged them from within. They

appeared to embrace the "feminine" repertoire allotted to women pianists, yet found ways of developing as serious musicians by studying those pieces.

Moreover, women infiltrated the public sphere with their musical values. The notion of disguising a piece's technical elements would flourish in virtuoso, public works of the next generation, particularly in pieces by Franz Liszt. Liszt made numerous solo-piano settings of Schubert songs, many of which are lyrical and serene in character. Like playing and singing simultaneously, these works demand that the pianist perform something of a juggling act; she has to play both hands of Schubert's piano accompaniment as well as the singer's line at the same time. These works are challenging, but their difficulty is at odds with their serene sensibility. Here again, the pianist strives to make these pieces sound effortless.

Liszt's Schubert transcriptions are at once virtuosic and a break from the explicit showmanship of many of his piano works. I came up with a term to characterize them; they are examples of the anti-bravura: a style of writing in which the performer is called upon to mask the difficulty of the

piece she is playing. Having identified the roots of the anti-bravura in drawing-room performances by women at the turn of the nineteenth century, I began to trace a host of connections between private musical culture in England and the virtuoso's place of prominence on public stages throughout Europe in subsequent decades. I shaped my dissertation around these connections, devoting three chapters to the musical activities of late Georgian-era women and a final chapter to the legacy of those women as embodied in the development of virtuosity. The relationship between amateur female keyboardists in late-Georgian England and the towering concert pianists of the mid-nineteenth century may seem like an unlikely alliance, but it was a tremendously fruitful one.

*Elizabeth Morgan is teaching in the Department of Music at UC Santa Cruz. She received CSW's Mary Wollstonecraft Dissertation Award earlier this year for her dissertation entitled "The Virtuous Virtuosa: Women at the Pianoforte in England, 1780–1820."*





# Bridging gaps and shaking hands with the Thai-Muslim world

UC STUDENTS FORM WOMEN'S INITIATIVE FOR LOCAL LIVELIHOODS TO EMPOWER SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

*by Amy Ta, Christina Hughes, Christine Nguyen, Elizabeth Lam, and Terri Chan with a preface by Michael Silverman*

## Preface by Michael Silverman

Since the tsunami in December of 2004, I have been involved in gender and community-based participatory research in communities in Southern Thailand as part of my research agenda with the Institute of the Environment at UCLA. I quickly learned that women vis-à-vis men had particular acumen as advocates for sustainability: creating public health awareness campaigns, initiating trash collection and recycling services, and organizing and managing profit-making, sustainable, micro-credit funds. Two women's organizations in Suksamran District, in Ranong Province, in particular, were able to transform tragedy into triumph. Women there may not have as equal roles as men in community or economic affairs, yet there is considerable gender equity in making decisions about how resources are used in both the home and the community. Since the tsunami, two Muslim women groups have organized, managed, and facilitated the only two successful micro-credit funds in the District (equivalent to a county in California). Through my summer Travel Study Thailand program, UCLA students have had the opportunity to share in the women's daily activities, delivering meals to women living with HIV/AIDS, designing and selling naturally tie-dyed bags and personal accessories, vending baked goods at the local market, and participating in environmental restoration activities. During the 2009 summer program, one group of UCLA students engaged with these women for their capstone community research project on sustainable livelihoods. One result is their development of a new collaborative called Women's Initiatives for Local Livelihoods (W.I.L.L.). The students share highlights from their experience in this article. Please feel welcome to contact the students at [locallivelihoods@gmail.com](mailto:locallivelihoods@gmail.com) or me at [silvermanmc@gmail.com](mailto:silvermanmc@gmail.com) for more information or to learn how to get involved in Summer 2010.

**A**n important component of our academic program was participating in ordinary community activities with Buddhist and Muslim villages in Southern Thailand. We planted rice, restored wetlands, cooked meals, wove nipa palm roofs, and created batiks, for example. During the final week, as part of our own research, we lived with two Thai-Muslim women's groups in Kamphuan City, located in the Suksamran District of Ranong Province bordering the North Andaman Sea to the west, with Myanmar just to the north. Many of the coastal villages in this region are Muslim, in an otherwise largely Buddhist country. While faiths are different, the King and the Royal Family are loved and respected by all Thais. The Royal Family and Government, faith, and

international organizations, we learned, all have contributed to social and economic development in this region and played roles in the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami relief and recovery.

Early on December 26th, 2004, 90-foot tsunami waves crashed across the shorelines of this area, destroying homes and business, and taking away many family members, mostly men working the sea. Local industries like fishing, which had previously employed many local women in the cleaning and marketing sectors, were completely destroyed. To get back on their feet, the Thai-Muslim women we met with had formed and developed small, grassroots organizations to provide their community with social and economic support. During our ethnographic research, the women were open in revealing their attitudes, concerns, and relationships with the natural environment, society, economy, and religion. For example, the women deeply weave religion into their lives. They explained how Islam cushions sudden misfortunes and motivates them to pursue various goals. Islam, they also elaborated,



teaches reciprocity, which is one reason why their 'Tie-dye Group' funds scholarships for disadvantaged youth and donates to support people, mostly women, living with HIV/AIDS. On the environmental side, though Kamphuan is rural and relatively unpolluted, the women expressed concern over their respective household's environmental impact. They have embarked upon creating sustainable

resource use by recycling and reusing local materials, properly disposing of solid wastes, and assisting other organizations' mangrove forest restoration projects. They undertook these efforts in spite of initial criticisms from community members, mostly men leaders, who said the women were too ambitious.

While making progress on social, environmental and economic issues, many



women stated they did not feel powerful enough, compared to men, to induce systemic changes within their community. One of their keys to creating change has been the success and sustainability of their micro-business activities, which ensures supplementary household income, and often provides economic clout to transform their role in the community from wage laborers or housewives to significant financial contributors to public health and educational initiatives. For example, they now have sufficient money to keep their children in school beyond the primary grades, and significantly, keep their girl-children in school to get an education they need to improve their opportunities. While the Royal Thai Government and the King's family support some economic and educational programs, and international organizations such as USAID funded credit programs immediately after the tsunami, these resources have little long term impact to change the community's dynamic of relying on natural resource extraction for economic well-being: an economic system that favors men's roles over women's. Many of the women we worked with feel that they need



KAMPHUAN WOMEN'S MICRO-CREDIT GROUP

additional education and work opportunities in more established fields like clothing design, restaurant management, and local government administration.

Inspired by these women's optimism, entrepreneurship, and persistence, our research team (Amy, Christina, Christine, Liz, and Terri) has formed the Women's Initiative

for Local Livelihoods (W.I.L.L.). We aim to do the following: (1) Spread knowledge about the women of Kamphuan's resilience and resourcefulness in sustaining their communities through social and environmental challenges like HIV/AIDS and tsunamis and typhoons; (2) Connect their micro-business of artisan and handmade clothing, batiks, and accessories with

customers from beyond Thailand's borders, starting with the UCLA community. This extends their market-reach, which they said was one of their primary concerns.

W.I.L.L. is fundamentally about willpower—a capacity held by all individuals, regardless of ethnicity, history, age, or gender, which can be strengthened by community and institutional support. Development requires not only collaboration, but also care and personal connection among all those involved: government institutions, the international community, the marketplace, and most importantly, local communities themselves. Ultimately, W.I.L.L. is not only a network for selling and distributing unique handicrafts, but moreover, an awareness-raising project that will strengthen community-based women's participatory development. W.I.L.L. plans to offer the Kamphuan women's customized products to UCLA through Net Impact Undergrad, a student organization that supports social entrepreneurship. All proceeds go directly to these artisans. For more information contact us at "Women's Initiative"([locallivelihoods@gmail.com](mailto:locallivelihoods@gmail.com)).



**KAMPHUAN TIE-DYE GROUP DIALOG**

*Michael Silverman, PhD received the 2006-2008 Postdoctoral Fellowship in Gender and the Environment, a fellowship created by the Institute of the Environment and in collaboration with the Women's Studies Program and the Center for the Study of Women. Silverman taught a course on "Gender and Sustainability" through Women's Studies and a public lecture, "Gender Matters: An Analysis of Disaster Relief and Re-development in Tsunami Affected Communities, Thailand," under the auspices of CSW. Silverman was also featured in November 2006 issue of CSW Update.*

*Amy Ta is an International Development and Communication Studies double major at UCLA. She reports for Daily Bruin Radio, organizes trail runs for Bruin Runners, and interns at the Burkle Center. Beyond campus, she has volunteered in New Zealand and studied in the Czech Republic. She plans to attend graduate school outside of California and eventually work with the U.S. State Department, a multilateral organization, or NGO to promote global diplomacy and capacity-building programs.*

*Christina Hughes is a Sociology major at UCLA. She aims to broaden her worldview and establish connections with other eco-*

*mind citizens through her experiences in East Africa and Southeast Asia. In her travels abroad, she has pursued social research focused on community empowerment and participatory development.*

*Christine Nguyen recently graduated from UCLA with a BS in Environmental Science with a Environmental Health Science concentration. She plans to apply the experiences and knowledge she gained through travel and study to her professional career and eventually attend graduate school.*

*Elizabeth Lam is an Environmental Policy and Analysis Planning major at UC Davis. She plans to pursue a career in Public Health, potentially with the California State Department. She hopes to gain more worldly experience through study abroad, as well as to attend graduate school.*

*Terri Chan is an Environmental Science major and Geography/Environmental Studies minor at UCLA. As the Community Impact Director for Net Impact Undergrad, she liaises with green organizations to promote socially responsible initiatives. She hopes to combine her love of travel and sustainability in her future career endeavors.*



CSW's birthday party will feature renowned historian

## Joan Scott

music and cake to follow

MONDAY, February 22, 2010  
4 pm, Sequoia Room, UCLA Faculty Center

RSVP by Jan 15 to Patricija Petrac  
ppetrac@women.ucla.edu/310 825 0590



# WOMEN

## and the L.A. Immigrant Rights Movement

### DO GENDER CONCERNS COMPETE WITH GROUP RIGHTS?

**WHILE** researching labor dynamics in the immigrant rights movement, Professor Ruth Milkman of the Department of Sociology at UCLA, noticed an intriguing paradox. Though Latina women are visible movers and shakers in leading the struggle for immigrant rights in Los Angeles, they are not articulating gender concerns in the discourse of their protest. In an effort to understand why, Milkman, in collaboration with Veronica Terriquez, an Assistant Professor of Sociology at USC, is examining how gender plays a role in the process. On November 4, 2009, UCLA students, faculty, and visiting scholars had the opportunity to learn more about Milkman's

scholarship at the Senior Faculty Feminist Seminar, hosted by the Center for the Study of Women.

In the early phases of the research, the two are already identifying distinct trends. To gauge Latina perspectives on gender dynamics within the immigrant community, Milkman and Terriquez have already interviewed fourteen prominent women in the movement. Though the circumstances of their experience vary with each individual, the research indicates that, in comparison with men, women attest to a marked improvement in gender status when they come to the United States. Challenging the machismo social

framework that many women say dictated life in their home countries, participation in the workforce empowers Latinas and substantiates their claims to equality. Despite the fact that many of the positions available to immigrant women are in the domestic sphere, employment enables the women to be recognized as financial contributors to their families. Rather than reinforcing traditional gender roles by focusing on the nature of their work, immigrant men are increasingly acknowledging their wives, mothers, and sisters as equals. Connected to this recognition, however, is a subsequent loss in gender status among male immigrants, who

tend to have greater difficulty and less interest in integrating into their new communities.

While men remain nostalgic for their homeland, women generally prefer conditions in Los Angeles, difficulties and all. As a result, many immigrant communities have formed hometown associations, made up of families from the same region of their native country. Though these neighborhood councils have become significant community builders among immigrants, they are often dominated by men. Although frustrated by the disconnect between their elevated status within the family and the perpetuation of patriarchy within the community, Latinas answered the call to organize for immigrant rights instead.

Examining the 2006 March for Immigrant Rights in Los Angeles as a case study, Milkman and Terriquez asked women who led the demonstration, the largest-ever protest of its kind, about how they framed their demands for human rights. When asked why women's issues were not an explicit part of the agenda, one leader responded that for many immigrants, the denial of basic human rights is a "life-or-death" situation; advocating for the universal needs of the community necessitates the subordination of gender-specific demands. Interestingly, the researchers also explained

that many women describe their leadership in the movement as an extension of motherhood, because they are focused on improving the welfare of their children. Ultimately, they also argue that Latina activists further the feminist mandate simply by participating in the movement as leaders. Although objections to the widespread sexual harassment of immigrant women by their employers has not, for example, entered the common discourse of the movement, the fact that Latinas are visible as organizers encourages gender equality.

Still, the absence of gender concerns in protest rhetoric is symbolic, said Professor Maylei Blackwell, Department of Chicana/o Studies at UCLA, who was the seminar's designated respondent. A gender consultant for the National Day Labor Organizing Network, Blackwell suggested that Latinas face a dual struggle between the "public agenda" of the immigrant rights movement and the "internalities of power" within their communities. Dissatisfied with the gender hierarchy of such community organizations as hometown associations, women are pressured to keep their protests quiet in order to promote group solidarity; they are told that voicing gender concerns would compromise a united front. Another critical perspective shared by

Blackwell was for the need to challenge the "culturally laden discourse" that women's status improves upon immigrating to the United States. Instead, she suggested, it becomes more complicated, as Latinas take on the roles of breadwinner and (in this case) activist, *in addition* to their roles as mothers and wives.

Although their research is still in progress, Milkman and Terriquez have already initiated an important dialogue: the challenge of reconciling *group* rights with *gender* rights. While some activists object to the inclusion of gender-specific demands in the protest for immigrant rights under the premise that it fractures the movement's unity, they ought to be reminded that feminist concerns are never exclusive to women. On the contrary, the championing of women's rights paves the way for the realization of universal human rights.

*Cailin Crockett is a UCLA student majoring in Spanish and Political Science, with a concentration in Political Theory. Earlier this year, she was awarded the CSW Constance Coiner Award, which is given to an outstanding student who demonstrates an active commitment to both working-class and feminist issues and involvement in community activities for social change.*

## JMEWS 2009 Graduate Student Essay Competition

The Journal of Middle East Women's Studies is pleased to announce the winning paper in its 2009 Graduate Student Essay Competition: "Young Women as Activists in Contemporary Egypt: Anxiety, Leadership, and the Next Generation," by Sunny Daly of New York and the American University in Cairo.

We are very pleased to have received 40 entries from students far and wide, not only at schools in the US, such as the Universities of Arizona, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Texas, Toronto, and Utah; Baylor, Boston, Columbia, Drew, Georgetown, Harvard, Indiana, New York, Northwestern, and Seton Hall Universities; Bard College and San Diego State University; but also from the American University in Cairo, Izmir Univer-

sity, the National Academy of Sciences in the Republic of Armenia, Radboud University in the Netherlands, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Italy, and the Universities of Edinburgh and Leeds. We thank all who took part in the competition.

JMEWS enters on its sixth year of publication in 2010, and with so many young scholars active in research and writing, all of those working to produce the journal, including the editors and the editorial advisors, the editorial board and the staff, the Association for Middle East Women's Studies (AMEWS) and its membership and board, as well as the student authors and their faculty mentors, can be confident in the ever-growing strength and fruitfulness of our field.

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