



TRAVEL GRANT REPORT BY EMILY CARMAN

# CSW update

OCTOBER 06

**CSW FACULTY CURATOR FOR 2006/2007**

## Rachel C. Lee is Curator for “Feminism, Embodiment, and Performance” Series



*“Body studies has been dominated by Foucauldian approaches emphasizing the regulation of the body by the modern state,” notes Lee. “We are thrilled to be hosting these nationally renowned scholars and creative artists who stress the queer performances and sensual kinetics of embodiment as avenues to enliven the discussion of feminism’s relation to body theory.”*

Rachel C. Lee (*shown above*), Professor of English and Women’s Studies, curates the “Feminism, Embodiment, and Performance” speaker series for the 2006/2007 academic year. Growing out of an interdisciplinary working group inaugurated last year, the series is sponsored by Rosina Becerra’s office. It brings together scholars whose research focuses on embodiment, how it is performed and represented in various media, and what issues are thereby made visible. These issues range from embodiment as a mode of social memory to its physical inscription of sites of injury, vulner-

ability, and disability. The public speaker series, under the auspices of CSW, will begin on October 24 with “Transbiology: Penguin Love, Doll Sex, and the Spectacle of the Non-Reproductive Body,” a talk by Judith Halberstam, Professor of English and Director of the Center for Feminist Research at the University of Southern California and author of *Female Masculinity*.

Choreographer, dancer, and writer Susan Foster, Professor in the Department of World Arts and Culture at UCLA and author of *Choreography and Narrative*, is scheduled for the Winter quarter. The renowned poet and critic

Susan Stewart, Professor of English at Princeton University and author of *Poetry and the Fate of the Senses*, will speak in the Spring quarter.

**CSW Faculty  
Curator  
2007/2008**

**DEADLINE for applications:  
December 15, 2006**

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
see page 4 or visit  
[http://www.csw.ucla.edu/faculty\\_funding.html](http://www.csw.ucla.edu/faculty_funding.html)



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# From the Director

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*Kathleen McHugh*



**W**elcome back everyone! We are looking forward to an exciting year at CSW. This fall, our programming emphasis will be on embodiment and performance. For that series, we will be bringing in Professor Judith Halberstam for a public lecture titled “Transbiology: Penguin Love, Doll Sex, and the Spectacle of the Non-reproductive body”; Professor Halberstam will also be participating in a faculty workshop during her visit to UCLA. CSW is also pleased to co-sponsor two events with the UCLA Center for Performance Studies. On October 16th, Rhodessa Jones, a performance artist/activist/dancer and sister of Bill T. Jones, will be presenting “Sharing Stories of Survival and Songs of Silence” on the topic of incarcerated women. On November 30th, Lois Weaver will present a performance/talk titled “Diary of a Domestic Terrorist.” The CSW Research Scholar Myrna Hant will address the embodiment of mature women on television on November 7th. On November 28th, we will welcome Professor Macarena Gómez-Barris from USC, who will be speaking on “Enacting Traumatic Memory” in Marilu Mallet’s film, *La Cueca Sola*. We look forward to seeing you at our events this Fall.

**I**t is with great pleasure that we welcome Dr. April de Stefano as the new Assistant Director. Before coming to CSW in August, April was a Visiting Assistant Professor at the Claremont McKenna College. Her research specialization is women’s labor in Los Angeles in the early 20th century. As a policy analyst at the HELP USA in New York, she addressed topics related to homelessness, gender, welfare reform, and poverty. She also developed and managed advocacy trainings and legislative visits for families and staff. Her extensive experience in administration, grants management, and policy research and her social science background complement my expertise in the humanities. We were very lucky to find someone whose areas of expertise were so well-suited to the position of Assistant Director.

**W**e also have added another administrative assistant to help with the phone, emails, and other office duties: Jessie Babiarz started work in September. Jessie just graduated from Ithaca College in upstate New York, with a bachelor’s in Sociology, concentrating in Gender Studies and Mathematics. Please welcome April and Jessie to the CSW community when you have the chance to meet them.

**CSW** is partnering with the Center for Feminist Research (CFR) at USC in a junior faculty exchange program this year. CSW will bring three junior USC professors to UCLA during the 2006-07 academic year to give talks and UCLA is sending three of junior faculty members to give talks at USC. Each faculty speaker will be paired with a senior faculty respondent at the opposite campus.

The talks at UCLA will take place at noon in the CSW Conference Room (2125 Rolfe) and lunch will be provided for the participants and the audience.

CSW Director Kathleen McHugh and CFR Directors David Roman (05-06) and Judith Halberstam (06-) developed this program to facilitate faculty community and intellectual exchange in the Los Angeles area. According to David Roman, the idea for the faculty exchange came out of a conversation he had with Kathleen McHugh: "I thought it would be important for the tenure-tracking faculty interested in gender and sexuality at USC and UCLA to meet the feminist communities on each campus. Kathleen agreed that this program would be enormously helpful to the new assistant professors at UCLA and felt that each campus would be enriched by the exchange." They then moved to the next step in planning what the exchange might entail, deciding that each year three tenure-tracking scholars would be selected to present lectures at the neighboring institution, and that the host institution would invite a senior scholar from its campus to respond to the junior faculty's work. This structure enables inter-generational exchange, builds intellectual community, and develops mentoring networks across the campuses. Kathleen and I are committed to providing professional opportunities for the tenure-tracking assistant professors so that they might advance in academia with a bit more ease. The exchange facilitates faculty development on both campuses through the sharing of intellectual resources and collegial goodwill. We are very excited about this program."

We hope people will attend, have some lunch, listen to and engage with these speakers, and make this exchange a success.

**CSW/CFR**

# FACULTY EXCHANGE PROGRAM

## USC Faculty at CSW

### FALL 2006: November 28

#### *Macarena Gómez-Barris*



Macarena Gómez-Barris will speak on "Enacting Traumatic Memory: Marilu Mallet's *La Cueca Solo*" with Kathleen McHugh as respondent. Gómez-Barris is Assistant Professor of Sociology and American Studies and Ethnicity at

USC. Her work is in the areas of Latin American and Latina/o Studies, representation, and power. Currently she is finishing her book *Where Memory Dwells: Representing Atrocity in Chile's Democracy* (forthcoming, UC Press), conducting research and writing on Latina/o urbanism in Los Angeles with Professor Clara Irazábal, and beginning work on Andean cultural production.

### WINTER 2007: January 17

#### *Emily Hodgson Anderson*



Emily Hodgson Anderson's talk is entitled "Mansfield Park and the 'Womanly Style' of Fiction" and Felicity Nussbaum will be the respondent. Hodgson Anderson is an Assistant Professor of English at the University of Southern California.

She is currently completing a book on eighteenth-century women writers who worked simultaneously as novelists and playwrights, entitled *Staging the Passions: Gender and Performance in the Eighteenth-Century Drama and Novel*.



## SPRING 2007: April 18

### USC: Gabriel Giorgi



In his talk, Gabriel Giorgi will speak on “Future Life: Queerness and Eugenics in Latin America.” He is currently Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature and Spanish & Portuguese at USC. He has written about diverse intersections between literature and cultural theory, addressing questions of sexuality and body politics, power, desire and language, and the status of fiction. His main field of interest is contemporary Latin American literature. In 2004 he published *Sueños de Exterminio: Homosexualidad y representación en la literatura argentina contemporánea* (Rosario, Spain: Beatriz Viterbo Editora, 2004), an analysis of the connections between inscriptions of homosexual desire and the imagination of extermination in Argentine literature. He is currently working on the discourse of eugenics and the cultural and political fictions about the reinvention of the population in Latin America.

### UCLA Faculty at CFR

Check with the Center for Feminist Research (213.740.1739, [cfr@usc.edu](mailto:cfr@usc.edu)) for updated information and the schedule for the talks by UCLA professors.

### Mignon R. Moore



Mignon R. Moore, who will speak at USC on “Household Decision-Making in Black Lesbian-Headed Families: The Power of the Biological Tie to Children,” received the Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Chicago. This fall she joined the faculty in sociology and African-American studies at UCLA. Her research interests are in family, gender, racial/ethnic identities, sexuality, urban poverty, and adolescence. Previously Professor Moore spent a year in-residence as a visiting scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation in New York, where she completed a three-year study of black and Latina lesbian communities in New

York. She is currently at work on a book-length manuscript currently titled “Invisible Families: Gay Identities, Relationships and Motherhood among Black and Latina Women.”

### Lucy Burns



Lucy Burns holds a joint position in UCLA’s Departments of Asian American Studies and World Arts and Cultures. Her research interests include Asian American theater, race and performativity, feminist performance theory, and Filipino Studies. Lucy has participated in several advocacy projects focusing on Asian American theater and performance. In November 2004, the Critical Filipina & Filipino Studies Collective, of which she is a member, published a report on the deportation of U.S. Filipino and Homeland Security (see <http://cffsc.focusnow.org/index.html>). Lucy is also a dramaturg committed to the development of community-based theater projects. She co-edited a collection on performance and race, *The Color of Theater*, with Roberta Uno. Her writings have appeared in the *Journal of Asian American Studies*, *Amerasia Journal*, *BlackTheatreNews Network*, and the *Asian Theatre Journal*. She is currently working on a manuscript on the Filipino performing body.

### Yogita Goyal



Yogita Goyal is Assistant Professor of English at the UCLA. Her talk will be “Impossible Memory: Writing Slavery and the Subaltern.” Goyal received her Ph.D. from Brown University in 2003 and was a Scholar-in-Residence at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (2003–2004). Author of “Theorizing Africa in Black Diaspora Studies: Caryl Phillips’ Crossing the River” (*Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, Spring 2003) and “The Gender of Diaspora in Toni Morrison’s *Tar Baby*” (*Modern Fiction Studies*, Summer 2006), she is currently completing a book manuscript that explores nationalism and literary form in Black Atlantic literature. She teaches courses on African-American, Black Atlantic, and Postcolonial Literature.



# Amrit & Rabindra Singh

by *Saloni Mathur*

**Daughters of a Sikh doctor who immigrated to North England from** the Punjab, the London-born artists Amrit and Rabindra Singh are identical twins: they have the same DNA, they look and sound exactly alike, they wear the same clothing, and they received their training in art together. Often referred to as “The Singh Twins,” the sisters have adopted the language of Indian and Persian miniature painting to depict the complex urban and domestic landscapes of the contemporary world. The twins have exhibited their work to international audiences in Britain, Europe, India, and North America: a recent show, titled “Past Modern: The Singh Twins,” featured more than sixty paintings, and was hosted by UC Riverside in 2003 and the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool in 2005. Significantly, Amrit and Rabindra’s collaborative practice is not simply an innocent expression of an affectionate bond between sisters, but rather a self-conscious engagement with the notion of singular authorship and the cult of the individual that has pervaded post-Enlightenment art historical tradition. Not since Diane Arbus’ 1967 black-and-white photograph of identical twin girls in New Jersey has such a memorable rendering of sameness and belonging, normativity and exclusion, and identity and difference, been sustained so provocatively within the contemporary art world.

*continued*

Struck by Amrit and Rabindra's performance as a single artist, I decided to write about the politics of "twinning" in their work, which I saw as a complex prism through which to view their art practice. My research was facilitated by a residential group titled "Cloning Cultures" at the Humanities Research Institute at UC Irvine, for which I received leave from UCLA during fall 2004. The idea of the residency was to use the concept of cloning as a broad interdisciplinary metaphor for questions of sameness, difference, and mimesis in culture. The stimulating discussions I had with other scholars in the group helped me to think about the figure of the twin, or the double, in the Singh sisters' art practices as a motif through which to map a range of dualities crucial to contemporary subjectivity in the South Asian diaspora. I felt that the sisters' success was not simply reducible to the currency of the figure of the twin within the cultural imaginary, or the long history of novelty that has attached itself to twins, even if these may well be elements of their recent international visibility. Far from being a gimmick, what is meaningful about the peculiar politics of identity practiced by the Singh Twins is that it re-organizes the hierarchies through which such pairings as modern/traditional, original/copy, high/low, and home/abroad have historically emerged to structure colonial and postcolonial subjectivities.

In interviews with the artists, I learned that the twins – who were raised in a conservative Sikh joint family in Liverpool – were instructed by their teachers at art college to "follow their own individuality" and to be as dissimilar in their art practices as possible. Their adoption of a singular persona – Amrit and Rabindra always exhibit and paint together, sign each other's work, and refer to themselves as a single artist using the pronoun "she" – is in this sense a playful and explicit rejection of the normative conventions of their disciplinary training. Their turn to the formal vocabulary of the Indo-Persian miniature is similarly a response to the Eurocentricism they encountered in their art school education in England. The twins are by no means the first contemporary artists to take up the miniature form, nor are they invested in probing its limits in the manner of the Pakistani-born New York artist, Shahzia Sikander, also known



Amrit & Rabindra Singh, *Nyrmla's Wedding*, 1995/96 ©The Singh Twins, [www.singhtwins.co.uk](http://www.singhtwins.co.uk)

for her experimentations with the genre. However, it is the twins' distinctive blending of the Indo-Persian miniature tradition with the more popular genres of twentieth century art practice in India – for instance, the mass produced phenomenon of photography, poster art, Hindu calendar art, and the urban kitsch of Bollywood cinema – that blurs the distinction between high and low in their acts of borrowing South Asian visual forms. In fact, the twins do not merely borrow from India; they raid the mythological menagerie of the subcontinent. The result is a compelling set of "twinning" at stake: between Britain and India, high and low, past and present, modernity and tradition, original and copy, home and diaspora, and collective identity vs. individual subjectivity, to name only a few of the coordinates that structure their work.

What I find fascinating about the Singh Twins' images is that the sisters frequently portray themselves, almost always together, in their own work. In these cameo appearances, they are presented in various states of likeness and difference, and the "shifty" portraiture that emerges reveals the role-playing and mimicry that is at stake in the construction of identity itself. At times, for example, as in *Nyrmla's Wedding II* (1995/96), they depict themselves as identical yet autonomous (one is painting *mendhi* on the bride's hand, while the other takes a photograph). But they remain deeply connected to one another, and through the physical touch of a hand, they are almost like an extension

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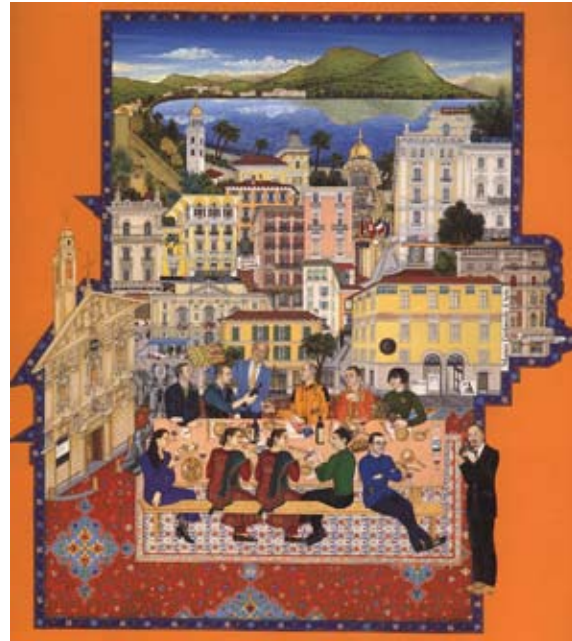


of one another (*see above*). At other times, as in *Les Girls* (1993/94), they are dressed the same, but clearly figured as different individuals, with different mannerisms and personalities, and separate postures in their relationships to others (*see right top*). Still elsewhere, as in the 1998 painting, *Follow the Leader*, they present us with the riddle of alterity (which one is which?) by showing themselves as exact copies, perfect replicas, precise reproductions of each other: here even the spoon the sisters are holding is cocked in exactly the same position (*see right bottom*). Finally, in one last picture, titled *Our Father* (1995), the twins show themselves as mirrored reflections positioned on either side of their father, clearly an affectionate tribute to the man, one that nevertheless triangulates their mother out of the scene (*see page 6*). And yet, the presence of the halo signals an exaggeration of sentiment, and reveals the title, *Our Father*, as an ironic ploy.

It is this sense of irony and play that makes one feel in the presence of the twins and their artwork that the sisters are winking at each other behind our backs, that they retain the power to control both the representation and performative articulations of their subjecthood and its unnerving dualities. It seems that, somewhat paradoxically, the full enactment of the Singh Twins' autonomy and agency as individuals – in particular, as young women and minorities in a dominant white society – emerges in the way they are able to manipulate a range of self-images as a unity, or as twins. In looking at this “doubleness,” I am reminded of the questions of originality in the work of art that Walter Benjamin and other cultural theorists explored at the beginning of the twentieth century: for these questions are also reflected in uncanny ways in the sisters' own doubleness, and the way they elude the viewer's attempts to discern original, copy, imposter, or fake. In this way, the twins come to physically enact some of the most troublesome tensions of the postmodern era and its discourses of cloning, reproduction, and mimesis. Rather mischievously, the sisters allow us to see that they know they remain enigmatic to everyone but themselves: in this there is something rather powerful at work, and it leaves its trace most compellingly in their art.



Amrit & Rabindra Singh,  
*Les Girls*. 1993/94 ©The Singh  
Twins, [www.singhtwins.co.uk](http://www.singhtwins.co.uk)



Amrit & Rabindra Singh, *Follow the Leader*. 1998 ©The Singh Twins, [www.singhtwins.co.uk](http://www.singhtwins.co.uk)

**Saloni Mathur** is Assistant Professor in the Department of Art History. Her research interests include modern South Asia and its diasporas, colonial history and ethnography, and postcolonial museology. She has recently completed a book titled *India by Design: Colonial History and Cultural Display*, forthcoming from the University of California Press in 2007. Her essay on the Singh Twins, from which this text is partially extracted, was recently published as “Diasporic Body Double: The Art of the Singh Twins,” *The Art Journal*, Summer, 2006, 35–56. She recently received a Getty Collaborative Grant for a project concerned with the history and theory of museums in India and Pakistan.



# Homelessness

## *How Did We Get Here and What Can We Do?*

by Myrna Hant



© Photographer: Jon Helgason | Agency: Dreamstime.com

**O**N MAY 25, 1999, a 54-year-old homeless woman, Margaret Mitchell, was wheeling a shopping cart in an affluent neighborhood in Los Angeles. When two police officers came over to find out if she had stolen the cart, the 5'1" woman, obviously deranged, rummaged through her belongings, pulled out a screwdriver and began threatening the officers. One of the officers fired his gun and killed Ms. Mitchell. The reaction to the death catapulted the incident into national news, some argued because what happened was a raced event whose players were African American, Asian American and Caucasian. Besides the tragedy of such misdirected violence, the questions have to be asked: How do we tolerate so many homeless people on our streets and how can we ever find creative solutions?

The statistics in Los Angeles County alone testify to a social crisis that can no longer be ignored. In 2005, LAHSA (Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority) conducted an extensive count of the homeless in the County. According to their findings, there are between 88,000 and 90,000 homeless people in Los Angeles County and 14,000 shelter beds are available on any given night. Of the homeless population, 25% are families, most typically headed by a woman, and somewhere between 25 to 30% are females. Of the chronically homeless, defined as “an unaccompanied

individual with a disabling condition who has been continually homeless for one year or more or has experienced four or more episodes of homelessness within the past 3 years,” about 32% are women. The largest growth in the homeless population is women with children. Of the population of homeless women, 24% reported experiencing domestic violence.

The assumption that most of the homeless suffer from drug and/or alcohol addiction or from mental illness is not confirmed by data from LAHSA. Causes for homelessness include loss of job (24%), alcohol or drug use (21%), conflicts with family members (11%), mental illness issues (7%), and other causes (13%).

### *How Did We Get Here?*

Frequently we hear about skid row in Los Angeles, an area that now houses up to 10,000 homeless people. (The term comes from Skid Road in Seattle, a street where logs were skidded into the water for delivery to a lumber mill. When the Depression came, the area declined and “skid row” became linked with bad neighborhoods.) Increasingly, though, neighborhoods, regardless of its affluency, are becoming saturated with the homeless.

The size of the current homeless population can be in part be attributed to low-wage jobs, working poor who cannot pay their bills, an egregious lack of afford-

*continued*

## Homelessness, *continued from page 9*

able housing, and increasing globalization in recent decades.

One of the most significant causes, though, is the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act, a California law enacted on July 1, 1972, which set a standard for mental-health assessment and treatment across the country. Essentially the law proclaimed that the mentally impaired people have the civil right to decide whether they should be placed in state-run mental hospitals for treatment—precluding involuntary commitment for those with developmental disabilities or suffering from chronic alcoholism. Its long-term results were that the mentally impaired and alcoholics essentially were dumped onto the streets without any care at all. Advancements in pharmaceutical treatments for mental illness also hastened the closing of many state-run facilities—leaving a highly vulnerable population to fend for themselves. Such individuals often ended up in local jails and prison. Today the Custody Division of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has become the largest mental health institute in the country, with a population of nearly 2,500 mentally ill inmates.

A dramatic occurrence in 2001, the death of a 19-year-old college student Laura Wilcox, recently precipitated some legislative action. During a winter break from Haverford College, Laura was volunteering in a mental-health clinic in Nevada City when a man, who had been unwilling to seek treatment or take psychotropic medications, shot and killed her and two others. A California statute that allows the courts to get involved in outpatient requirements for the mentally ill, called, Laura's Law, went into effective on January 1, 2003. Since the statute included provision for state funding, each county will decide whether to implement such a program.

### *Are There Any Creative Solutions?*

LA Police Chief William Bratton has long advocated a “broken windows” approach, based upon James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling's article, “Broken Windows: The police and neighborhood safety,” in *The Atlantic Monthly* (March, 1982, 29–38), where the authors argue for fixing problems while they're small: “Consider a building with a few broken windows, If the windows are not repaired, the tendency is for



*The PATHMall offers homeless people over 20 on-site social service providers, including case management, substance abuse counseling, a job center, mental health services, legal advocacy, healthcare, and a hair salon*

vandals to break a few more windows. Eventually, they may even break into the building and if it's unoccupied, perhaps become squatters or light fires inside." Bratton's "broken windows" approach, although quite successful in New York City, has been mired in legal battles in Los Angeles. In an effort to solve small problems, some homeless agencies in Los Angeles have banded together to reduce the number of homeless who get arrested for quality-of-life ordinances (jay-walking and not showing up in court, public nuisance, and so on) by establishing a Homeless Court. Rather than jail time, sentences may stipulate social services or substance-abuse programs.

The U.S. will be spending \$1.5 billion on the homeless this year with two basic funding strategies. The first focuses on getting people quickly into permanent housing and providing supportive services immediately. The second strategy is to encourage collaborations among non-profit service agencies. In Los Angeles at present, there are over 90 agencies that provide services for the homeless.

One of the most unique solutions is an organization called P.A.T.H., People Assisting the Homeless. It is a "mall" concept for the homeless. An individual can obtain all types of assistance—from hygiene (showers, hair salon, health clinic) to education (obtaining a GED) to a court appearance for minor offenses to rehabilitation programs (mental or substance abuse) to temporary housing—in one building. P.A.T.H. currently serves 10,000 homeless individuals a year. Of those, 1200 receive mental health assistance, 500 find permanent employment, 850 receive health care, and thousands obtain food and haircuts. P.A.T.H.'s model is based upon "continuum of care," a phrase popularized by Andrew Cuomo, who served as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 1997 to 2001: This continuum includes:

1. Street outreach caseworkers
2. Emergency housing program
3. Access to services
4. Transitional housing program; and ultimately, affordable housing.

Is homelessness a gendered issue? Yes, in the sense that a woman typically earns 74 cents to the dollar that a man earns. As a result, women are less likely to be

able to pay their bills, especially when they are also much more likely to be supporting children. Since women are still more likely than men to hold low-paying jobs, they can be more subject to the vicissitudes of the economy. A divorced woman can see her economic lifestyle shrink as much as 75% from what it was while married, a far more precipitous loss than for a divorced man. And domestic violence, which is the cause for homelessness among almost one-quarter of women who become homeless, affects women disproportionately. Because the fastest growing population of the homeless is families, and homeless families are mostly composed of women and children, more services will be needed that take into account pediatric care and schooling. Homelessness is a societal problem, however, that requires creative and enduring solutions, regardless of whether the recipients are women or men.



**Myrna Hant** (shown above left with 2006 Renaissance Award winner Sheretta Thomas) is a CSW Research Scholar and Chair of the Board of P.A.T.H., People Assisting the Homeless (<http://www.eath.org>). In 2006, she established the CSW Renaissance Award, an undergraduate scholarship that rewards the rebirth of academic aspirations among women whose college careers were interrupted or delayed by family and/or career obligations and that encourages achievement in the pursuit of a bachelor's degree at UCLA.



# Retelling NEOCLASSICISM



**I**N THE FALL OF 2000, I entered UCLA as a medievalist, eager to explore English and continental romance. But it wasn't long before my course of study changed, thanks to Felicity Nussbaum's seminar on a prominent network of

eighteenth-century women writers, the Bluestockings, which quickly won me to a later period. During that first quarter of graduate study, I discovered the work of Clara Reeve, whose *Progress of Romance* (1785) foregrounded, in a much more dramatic and exciting way, some of the same issues that had initially attracted me to medieval literature, such as the relationship between romance and women, as well as inclusive "feminine" romance and exclusive "masculine" epic, and the role of romance as a national literature.

My work on Reeve went on to become a cornerstone of my dissertation, "Retelling Neoclassicism: The Limits of the Classical Tradition in the Eighteenth Century," in which I argue that, throughout the century, authors revisited and revised the classical tradition in order to invent competing histories and mythologies, especially for women and the variety of others that tradition excluded. In recent years, many critics have explored the ways in which neoclassicism promoted the status quo, shoring up British values at a time of unrest and uncertainty. Some others have argued that eighteenth-century investment in the classics was not uncritical: a number of "Augustan" writers, including Swift and Pope, queried both the classical past and the British present. Whereas these authors tended to favor modes that arguably upheld "neoclassical" values, such as the mock-heroic and

burlesque, my dissertation considers the ways in which others radically contested prevailing generic distinctions, and the ideologies, often inherited from antiquity, associated with them; where satire and mock-epic were overtly critical, this complicated engagement with the past was subtle and deeply ambivalent. As eighteenth-century authors, particularly women and moralists such as Richard Steele, Charlotte Lennox, Henry and Sarah Fielding, and Clara Reeve, explored the limits of the classical tradition, they rewrote their heritage for the sake of a more general and diverse readership. I conclude that "neoclassicism" served, for these writers, as a set of tools for questioning generic boundaries and hierarchies, thus revealing the fallacy of cultural binaries—self/other, masculine/feminine, "East"/"West," fact/fiction—as authors sought alternative narratives, anchored in, but distinct from the classics, including the oriental tale and romance.

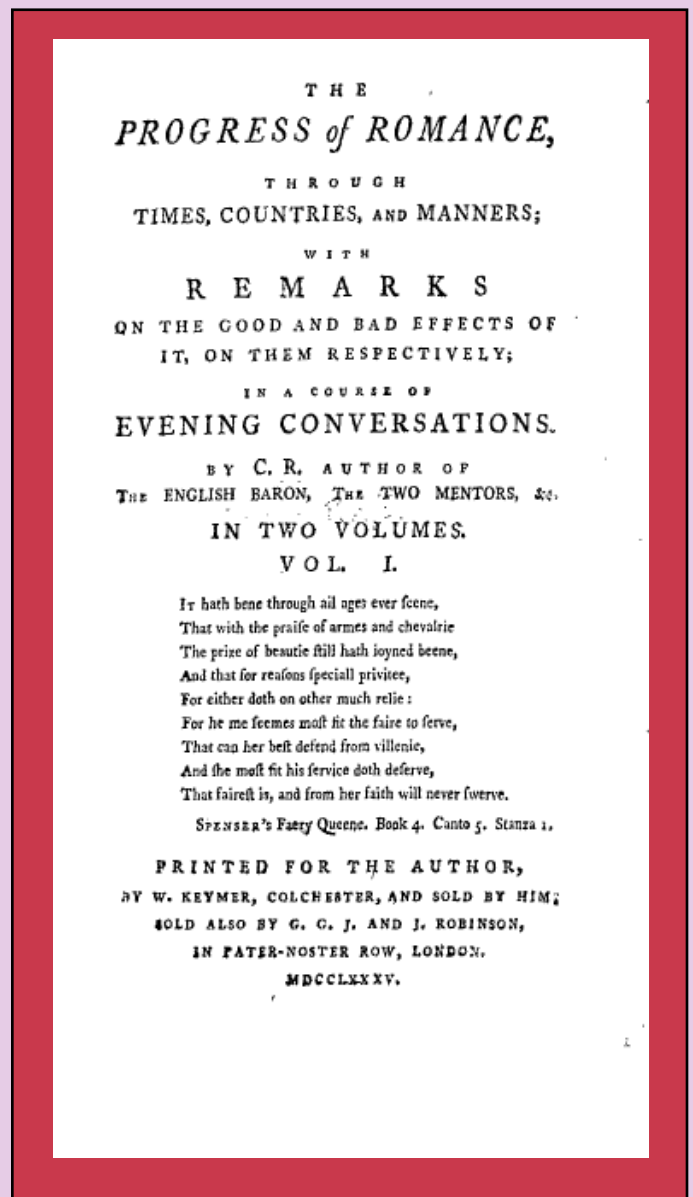
As I intuited during that seminar on the Bluestockings, this generic blending and transformation reaches its fullest extent in Reeve at the end of the century. Appending *The History of Charoba, Queen of Ægypt* to her literary-critical dialogue, *The Progress of Romance*, as a model of the romance tradition she champions against classical, masculine epic, Reeve depends on allusion to incorporate and rewrite epic within romance. In doing so, she aims to elevate a more inclusive genre, one which, as she has already argued in the *Progress*, has the potential to become a national literature capable of correcting epic's violent legacy. In doing so, she allusively recalls examples of wronged classical women, such as Cleopatra, in order to foreground the power of narrative control: Charoba, who commemorates her own history, represents a positive counterpoint to traditional history and epic, which writes "woman" and "other" for its own masculine ends. Anticipating Reeve's contribution at the end of the

*continued*



century, I begin chapter 1 by arguing for the importance of generic innovation in response to the classics in the works of Richard Steele. In *Spectator* 11, for example, Arietta presents the story of Inkle's New World courtship and betrayal of Yarico to rival Petronius' anecdote of the Ephesian Matron. Interweaving epic, satire, fable, and history, she rewrites the Matron's misogynist story in the geography of the New World in order to emphasize men's treachery, creating an opposing tradition in defense of women and colonial Others. Like Steele's heroine in *Spectator* 11, who invents, in the story of Inkle and Yarico, an unorthodox narrative still linked to England's classical heritage, Lennox's heroine, Arabella, attempts to lend authority to her romance vision of the world by seeking rival precedents in the "Eastern" tradition. Chapter 3 engages this romance legacy in order to consider an unanswered question: Why do the most frequently cited romances in Lennox's novel, *The Female Quixote* (1752), take place in the classical "East" and feature heroines besieged by international conflict, frequently at the crossroads of imperial domination? Lennox's interest in the romance illustrates an important trend among writers critical of (neo)classical culture: many take advantage of a renewed fascination with the "New World" and the "East"—both historical and imaginative—to turn away from England (and Rome) in their work.

In a text roughly contemporary with Lennox's, Henry Fielding also blends romance and epic with novelistic conventions even as he turns away, in his final novel, from the mock-epic and burlesque elements of earlier works, to revise classical epic in the much-maligned *Amelia* (1751). As Fielding transforms Vergil's Aeneas into the figure of Amelia Booth, Chapter 4 builds on feminist discussions of Fielding's work to explore this unprecedented shift in the gendered subject of national heroism. Like Lennox and Steele, Fielding questions the typical values associated with epic in favor of a more inclusive genre and, by challenging failed masculine models, looks forward to Clara Reeve: Amelia emerges as a feminine ideal to counter the Roman Aeneas. Chapter 5 argues that, in *The Lives of Cleopatra and Octavia* (1756), Henry's sister, Sarah, remains equally critical of classical epic and history. Blending romance, novel, (auto)biography, oriental tale, and ancient history, Fielding subtly rewrites and critiques the script of



Augustan propaganda. Although for S. Fielding, as for Lennox and Reeve, the discourses of fiction and history remain closely intertwined, so that romance bleeds seamlessly into sanctioned fact, the *Lives* express the difficulty of confronting authorized masculine fictions that rewrite the transgressive and virtuous woman alike: where Reeve's Charoba appears victorious because she records her own story for posterity, Cleopatra and Octavia often seem delusional because the known "facts" of Roman "history" already contradict them.

**Nicole Horejsi** received her Ph.D. in June 2006 and is currently a lecturer in the UCLA Department of English. Her dissertation, entitled "Retelling Neoclassicism: The Limits of Classical Tradition in the Eighteenth Century," received the 2006 CSW George Eliot Dissertation Award.



# Female Agency in 1930s Hollywood

*Uncovering  
Independent Stardoms  
at the Harry Ransom  
Humanities  
Research Center*

**ABOVE:** Detail from promotional poster for *Becky Sharp* (1935), directed by Rouben Mamoulian and starring Miriam Hopkins. Reprinted courtesy of the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin

**T**HIS PAST SPRING I received a CSW Travel Grant to examine the film collections of the Harry Ransom Humanities Center (HRC) housed at the University of Texas at Austin. This research pertains to my dissertation project, in which I argue that female film stars used their contractual labor to achieve creative and professional autonomy in the 1930s American film industry (often referred to by film historians as “the studio system”) by choosing to work independently as freelance artists. The HRC’s David O. Selznick, Mryon Selznick, and Jock Whitney collections all contain contracts and legal documents that are critical for my dissertation in that they illuminate the unique contractual provisions and terms negotiated by these women in their pursuit of professional autonomy in Hollywood during an era of presumed monolithic economic control.

The notion of 1930s female stars negotiating their own labor in the oligopolistic studio system raises important new questions for a feminist perspective on American film history in significant ways. The female film stars Constance Bennett, Claudette Colbert, Janet Gaynor, Dolores del Rio, Irene Dunne, Katharine Hepburn, Miriam Hopkins, Carole Lombard, and Barbara Stanwyck were all business-savvy women who used their contracts and their star commodity to challenge the patriarchal business structure of Hollywood. By doing so, they took a more active role in shaping their careers vis-à-vis their freelance labor practice, thereby calling into question the controlling contracts and oppressive labor policies of the male-run studio system. These women sought professional autonomy in Hollywood by working with independent producers and powerful talent agents, signing non-exclusive and non-option contracts for a limited number of films, or negotiating for a percentage of their films’ profits. What is particularly striking about these female stars, however, is that they worked independently during a time in the film industry when Hollywood moguls presumably controlled and manipulated stardom for their own economic gain. In this way, these women attained what I call independent stardom—an early, nuanced form of freelancing in the 1930s male-dominated, profit-driven studio system before it became a standard practice after World War II for a larger number of Hollywood stars.

*continued*

Since freelance female stars of the 1930s remain a neglected and compelling subject for further historical research, my research at the HRC underscores a new understanding of female labor and stardom in 1930s Hollywood, one that recognizes women as able to bargain for and gain professional independence in the American film industry. For example, the actresses Janet Gaynor, Carole Lombard, and Miriam Hopkins worked with the independent producers David O. Selznick and Jock Whitney to star in prestige productions at the apex of their careers. My archival findings highlighted how each of these women negotiated for an increased amount of creative and financial control in their contracts; most significantly, they all earned a percentage of their films' profits, which was an unorthodox practice for Hollywood stars in the 1930s. After leaving Paramount Studios, Hopkins starred in the first Technicolor® live-action feature film, *Becky Sharp*, also produced independently by Jock Whitney's company, Pioneer Productions, in 1935. Likewise, Janet Gaynor signed a landmark freelance deal with David Selznick after terminating her long-term contract with Fox Film Corporation to star in his first Technicolor feature *A Star Is Born* (1937). Curiously enough, Gaynor's costar, the freelance male star Fredric March, had neither a percentage deal nor as high a salary as Gaynor. Both of these women received star billing, approval of the screenplay, and a ten percent cut of the film's distribution profits (in addition to their flat rate salary for the film).

Additionally, Lombard's freelance deal to star in Selznick's acclaimed independent production, *Nothing Sacred*, crystallized her position in the industry as highest paid Hollywood star (male or female) in 1937, with a yearly income of approximately \$500,000. Scrutinizing these contracts and the numerous memos generated during their negotiations, my research underscores how Gaynor, Hopkins, and Lombard shrewdly used their star commodity to secure these high profile roles (and lucrative financial deals) in these esteemed productions as freelance artists. My examination of the Selznick and Whitney files further corroborates my dissertation thesis that these women were nascent freelance artists who paved the way for professional independence in Hollywood.

*What is particularly striking about these female stars, however, is that they worked independently during a time in the film industry when Hollywood moguls presumably controlled and manipulated stardom for its own economic gain.*

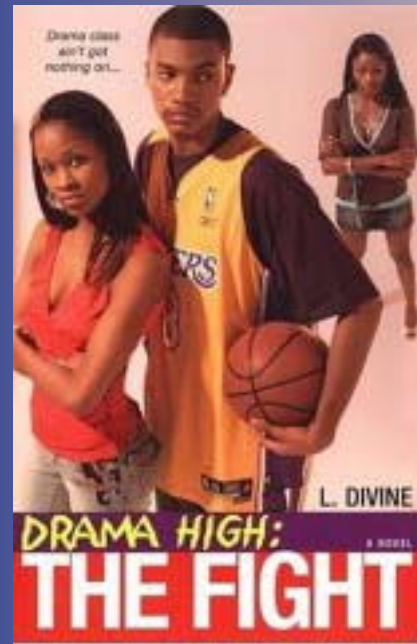
Furthermore, these women were represented by the quintessential Hollywood talent agent Myron Selznick, who assisted them in their contractual dealings with the studios in attaining professional autonomy. Reviewing Myron Selznick's client files reveal how this maverick agent assisted these women in their trend-setting freelance careers in the 1930s. Most film scholarship stresses the importance of talent agents in Hollywood as a post-World War II phenomenon, and they have attributed the first significant freelancing deal to male star James Stewart and his agent Lew Wasserman in 1951 for the film *Winchester '73*. However, the aforementioned female stars (aided by their agent Selznick) preceded Stewart and Wasserman by over a decade in their distribution deals with major Hollywood studios. After consulting Myron's client notebook, I also discovered that Katharine Hepburn, despite signing a long-term contract with RKO studios, also had a percentage deal with the studio similar to those of Gaynor, Hopkins, and Lombard. In sum, my review of Myron's files underscores how women made profes-

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sional strides in 1930s Hollywood through their freelance labor practice, and I intend to use my findings to challenge the existing film historical scholarship that has excluded their contributions thus far.

My analysis of the David and Myron Selznick and Jock Whitney collections reveal how 1930s female stars established their professional independence and set an early precedent for Hollywood artists to freelance long before it became standard practice. Although such achievements have been primarily attributed to male stars in post-World War II Hollywood, my research suggests that stars like Gaynor, Hepburn, Hopkins, and Lombard all accomplished independent stardom nearly a decade earlier. In sum, my HRC discoveries both ground and broaden the scope of my dissertation argument about female stars and their independent freelance labor, underscoring a new understanding of the industrial practices of the studio system in the 1930s in regard to female stardom, one in which women are recognized as active agents bargaining for their professional independence with giant film corporations. In this way, the primary sources at the HRC will serve as a crucial aspect to my dissertation research, as they provide archival evidence that challenge how certain histories of stardom and American film industry have been conceived and written.

**Emily S. Carman** is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Critical Studies program in the Department of Film, Television, and Digital Media. She is currently researching and writing her dissertation project about female stardom, Hollywood labor, and the American film industry in the 1930s. She earned her M.A. in Critical Studies of Film and Television at UCLA in 2003 and has a B.A. from the University of Florida in English, with a minor in Women's Studies. In addition to her research on gender, she has been selected as the coordinator for the 2007 Thinking Gender conference. A CSW Travel Grant helped support her research trip to the Harry Ransom Center in Austin.



## Just Published: *Drama High: The Fight*

Alysia Logan, a new CSW Research Scholar, is the author—under the pseudonym L. Divine—of a series of young adult novels called Drama High. In these books, Logan seeks to connect her knowledge of African American folklore and oral history and wisdom with contemporary high school experience. The books chronicle the life of Jayd Jackson, a young black girl from Compton, California, who attends a predominantly white high school in the south bay of Southern California. As a teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District, Logan noticed that many students had no interest in reading for pleasure. Her motivation for writing this series was to create material that would resonate with modern teenagers.



# CSW FACULTY CURATOR AWARDS AY 2007-2008

## AWARD

CSW seeks applications from faculty interested in proposing a programming concentration for the 2007-2008 academic year. Such a theme might be “Women and the Arts” or “Global Trafficking in Women” or “Women, Science, and Technology.” Ideally, the proposed concentration will represent the research concerns of a number of scholars at UCLA.

## CRITERIA

CSW welcomes proposals from formal or informal research groups and from faculty who wish to coordinate a lecture series or workshop with a department or other research center. These faculty or faculty groups will serve as guest curators for CSW’s primary programming for one quarter. One project will be funded per quarter.

## AMOUNT

CSW will award from \$3000 to \$5000 per quarter to fund up to three presentations by outside speakers whose work pertains to the proposed programming concentration. Award monies will be used for direct costs associated with bringing in outside speakers (honoraria, travel, lodging, receptions). While those awarded faculty curatorships will be responsible for selecting and inviting the selected speakers, all other logistics of the speaker’s campus visit will be arranged by CSW staff.

## APPLICATION

Please submit the following documents:

- Abstract (one page maximum) including the name(s) and department(s) of the faculty applying, description of faculty constituency and any affiliated groups involved, and the title and an explanation of the proposed programming concentration
- A list of names of at least three possible speakers (six maximum) in order of preference
- CV of the Faculty Curator

Email applications as attachments with "Faculty Curators" in the subject line to Jessie Babiarz, CSW Administrative Assistant, at [csw@women.ucla.edu](mailto:csw@women.ucla.edu).

Only email submissions will be accepted.

**DEADLINE: Friday, December 15, 2006**

# News & Announcements

## Moved...to Rolfe Hall

We have moved into our new space in 2225 Rolfe Hall and are very happy to be back in the heart of campus. TA and Lecturer office hours are held in 2216 Rolfe.



## Reception

The Center for the Study of Women and Women's Studies Programs Annual Reception was held in the Rolfe Courtyard on Tuesday, October 3rd. Women's Studies announced the arrival of new faculty and graduate students.

## New Faculty



**Grace Hong**  
Split-appointment  
in Women's Studies  
and Asian-American  
Studies



**Purnima Mankekar**  
Split-appointment  
in Women's Studies  
and Asian-American  
Studies



**Juliet Williams**  
Visiting Associate  
Professor in  
Women's Studies

## New Ph.D. Students

- ▶ **Rana Sharif**, BA in Women's Studies, UC Irvine
- ▶ **Annalisa Synnestvedt**, BA in Women's Studies, Temple University
- ▶ **Kimberly Twarog**, BA in English/Creative Writing, Minor in Music, Emory University

## Fellowships Awarded

We are pleased to announce fellowships awarded to Women's Studies graduate students who have advanced to candidacy and are currently conducting research in the field:

- ▶ **Azza Basarudin**: 2006-07 International Dissertation Field Research Fellowships, Social Science Research Council; 2006-07 Dissertation Fieldwork Grant, Wenner-Gren Foundation; and 2006-07 Cultural Anthropology and Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement, National Science Foundation
- ▶ **Gwen D'Arcangelis**: Grant from the Institute of American Cultures
- ▶ **Khanum Shaikh**: UCLA Asia Institute Graduate Fellowship

### LESBIAN SPEAKERS SERIES

## Linda D. Garnets

*Women's Sexualities:  
New Perspectives on Sexual  
Orientation and Gender*

Thursday, November 2nd  
UCLA School of Law, Rm. 1430

*Co-sponsored by Women's Studies  
and the Williams Institute*

## Myrna Hant

CSW Research Scholar Myrna Hant will be speaking at The UCLA Women's Conference. The conference is a biannual event that aims to provide a meaningful, informative, and inspirational experience for UCLA alumnae. Participants will have the chance to learn from one another, reconnect with UCLA and its community, and build new relationships, all in a relaxed, educational setting. This year's conference will be held at UCLA on Saturday, March 3, 2007, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. The theme is "The Art of Living Well." For information, visit <http://www.uclalumni.net/>

## CSW/WSP Fall Reception

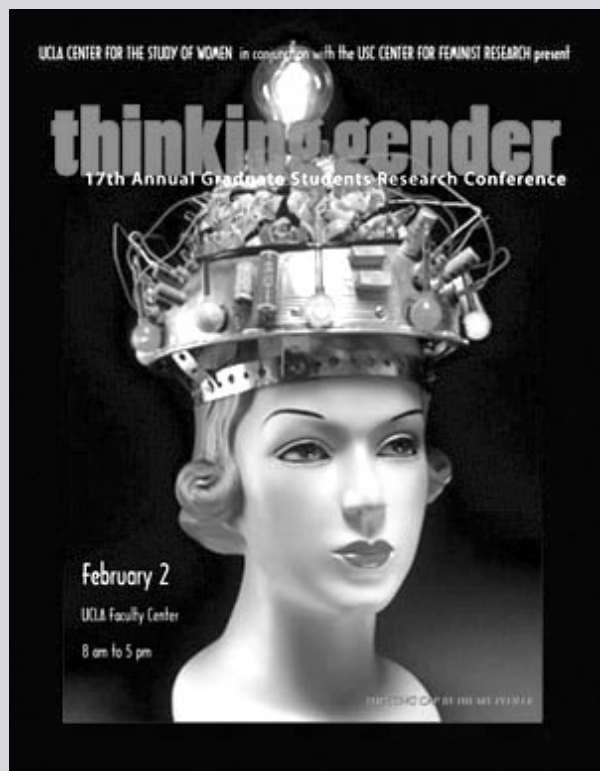


The annual reception hosted by CSW and WSP was a great festive occasion. New faculty and students were introduced and good food and drink were consumed. Pictures are available on the CSW website: [http://www.csw.ucla.edu/Fall06 Reception/](http://www.csw.ucla.edu/Fall06%20Reception/)



## Cookie Chats

The Publications Unit will be hosting a monthly open house for students and others interested in writing for the newsletter. Next one is tentatively scheduled for November 8th at 1 pm in Rolfe 2203.



UCLA CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN  
in conjunction with the  
USC CENTER FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH  
announce

# CALL for PAPERS

# thinking gender 2007

**17th ANNUAL GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE**

February 2 • UCLA FACULTY CENTER • 9 am to 5 pm

This public conference highlights feminist research by graduate students across all disciplines. We welcome individual papers or preconstituted panels. For individual papers, please email a 250-word abstract, a CV (2 pages maximum), and a brief bibliography. For panels, please submit a 250-word abstract describing its topic along with abstracts for each paper. Please see the submissions guidelines at <http://www.csw.ucla.edu/thinkinggender.html>

Deadline for submissions: **November 3, 2006**  
Email : **[thinkinggender@women.ucla.edu](mailto:thinkinggender@women.ucla.edu)**

UCLA CENTER  
FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN  
1400H Public Policy  
Los Angeles, CA 90095-7222  
<http://www.csw.ucla.edu>

USC CENTER  
FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH  
Mark Taper Hall of Humanities, 422  
Los Angeles, CA 90089-4352  
<http://www.usc.edu//dept/cfr/>