

BY CANDACE MOORE AND VIVIAN DAVIS

Q&A Felicity Nussbaum

HER UPCOMING CSW SENIOR FACULTY SEMINAR WILL CONSIDER “ACTRESSES AS RIVAL QUEENS”



CURRENTLY WORKING ON *Exceptional Virtue: Actresses and Performance in the British Theatre, 1700–1780*, and editing (with Professor Saree Makdisi, Department of English)

a volume that will provide historical context for *The Arabian Nights*, Professor Felicity A. Nussbaum, Department of English, will share new work on the subjectivities of Restoration-era female actresses as part of the CSW



“The Rival Queens of Covent Garden and Drury Lane Theatres, at a Gymnastic Rehearsal.”

OCT07

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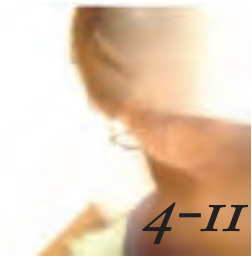
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DEPARTMENTS

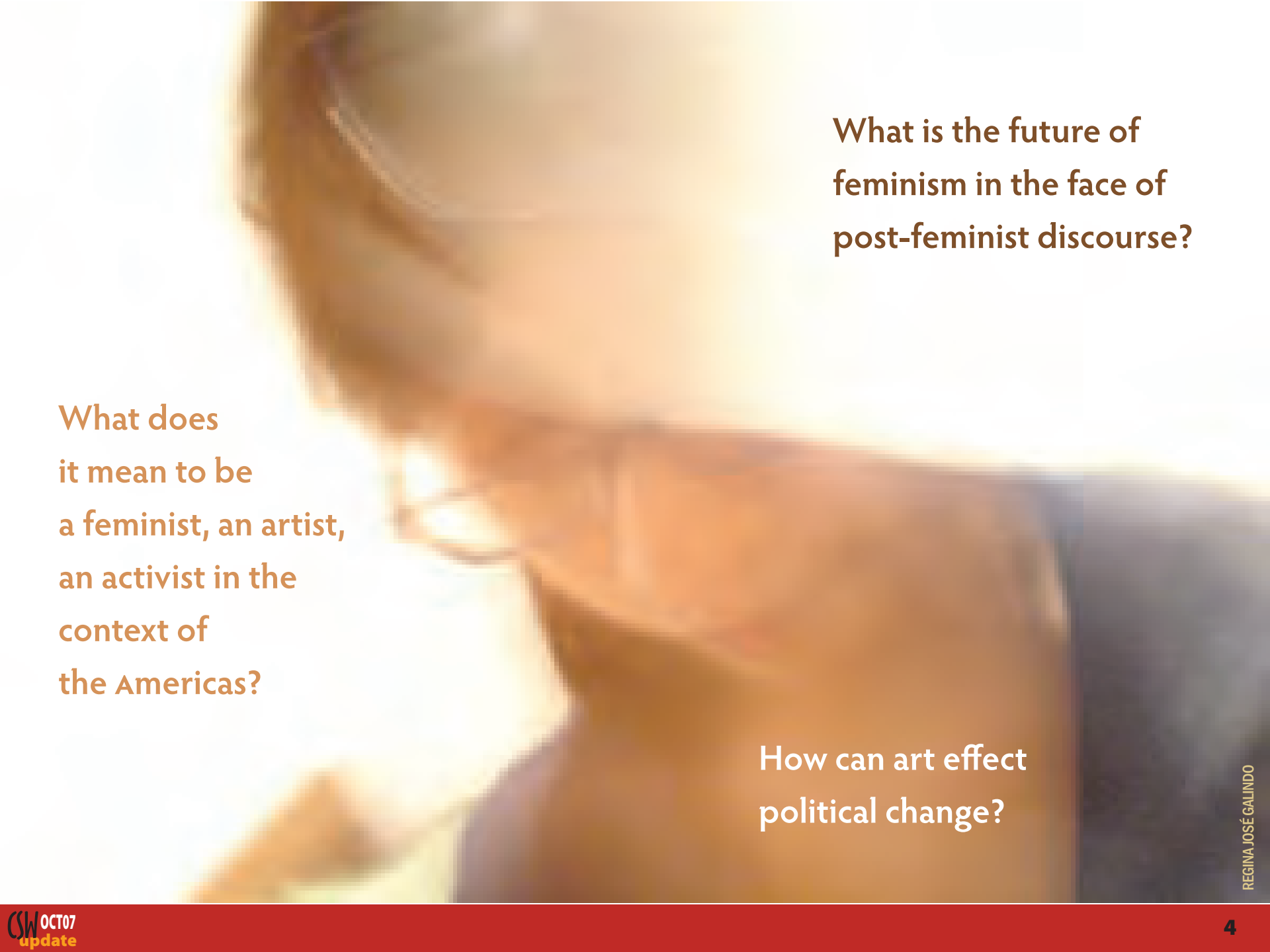


CSW in Space—

Since CSW moved out of Hershey Hall, it has been split between offices in Public Policy and in Rolfe Hall. The administrative offices are in Public Policy, while the publications unit is in Rolfe. This year, thanks to the untiring efforts of Assistant Dean Marc Mayerson and Facilities Planner Donald Simpson, who took countless calls from me and patiently pursued many different avenues and possibilities for rooms of CSW's own, CSW will become a unified rather than a split center with all of our offices located in Public Policy. At this writing, construction of new office space for CSW is proceeding in 1500 Public Policy in a space adjacent to our current offices. We expect to be able to move into these offices by Thanksgiving, at which time renovation will begin on 1400H. When completed, the entire space will have offices for the

CSW Director, Associate Director, all of the CSW administrative and publications staff (except for Van DoNguyen, who remains in Rolfe because of her position in Women's Studies), and work space for seven research assistants and work-study students. The whole process should be completed sometime in early spring. We'll have an Open House so that everyone can come and see our new Center. Meanwhile, we have many exciting programs this year. Fall quarter, our programming theme is **Women, Art, and Activism: Perspectives from the Americas**. Please come and join us for some of these events. We are looking forward to a very dynamic academic year!

– KATHLEEN MCHUGH



What is the future of
feminism in the face of
post-feminist discourse?

What does
it mean to be
a feminist, an artist,
an activist in the
context of
the Americas?

How can art effect
political change?

WOMEN, ART, AND ACTIVISM

Perspectives from the Americas

*Dedicated to the memory
of Yolanda Retter Vargas*

CURATORS

Charlene Villaseñor Black

Jennifer Flores Sternad

CSW is pleased to introduce our programming focus for Fall 07: “Women, Art, and Activism: Perspectives from the Americas.” The series of events will feature women activist-artists and cultural critics whose work focuses on feminist and other socially engaged art practices throughout the Americas. How can art effect political change? What is the future of feminism in the face of post-feminist discourse? What does it mean to be a feminist, an artist, an activist in the context of the Americas? In addition to lectures, speakers will engage in more intensive exchanges with students and faculty, plus artists, activists, and other members of the community in workshops, conversations, and video screenings. Events include presentations by artists Regina José Galindo and Jenny Jaramillo, a talk by poet/activist Gioconda Belli, and a panel discussion—featuring Vivian Gornick, Sharon Rudahl, Devra Weber, and moderated by Alice Wexler—about *Dangerous Woman*, a new graphic biography of Emma Goldman.

TUESDAY, November 13
UCLA FACULTY CENTER, 4 PM

WOMEN, ART, AND ACTIVISM
Perspectives from the Americas

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY MÓNICA MAYER

RECORRIDO REGINA JOSÉ GALINDO

IN SPANISH WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Guatemalan artist **Regina José Galindo** received the Golden Lion award for best young artist at the 51st Venice Biennial in 2005. Her award-winning work, *Himenoplastia*, was a video that documented the artist undergoing surgery to reconstruct her hymen. Galindo had the operation without anaesthetic and in the same precarious conditions in which many working-class women in Guatemala undergo this surgery. In her 2003 performance *Quien Puede Borrar Las Huellas? / Who Can Erase the Traces?* Galindo walked barefoot through the streets of Guatemala City, carrying a white basin filled with human blood. She repeatedly set the

basin down, stepped into it and then out again, and then continued walking, leaving a trail of bloody footprints behind her. Her footprints traced her path from the Constitutional Court building to the old National Palace, marking her protest of the decision to allow the former military dictator General Ríos Montt to run for president in 2003. *Regina José Galindo* was recently published by Vanilla Edizioni and Prometeo Gallery. Galindo's poetry appears in numerous poetry anthologies and journals, and she is the author of *Personal e Intransmisible*, a collection of poetry published in 1999 by Coloquia, Guatemala.

Mónica Mayer is a visual artist whose artistic practice aims to understand and affect systems—from the patriarchal to the artistic. Her work deals with memory and interaction. In 1989 Mayer and Victor Lerma founded the project Pinto mi Raya, whose principal component is an important periodical archive that currently includes over 180,000 articles. In addition to her extensive experience as a professor and guest lecturer, Mayer has also been the columnist for the culture section of *El Universal* since 1988. She is the author of four books, including *Rosa chillante: mujeres y performance en México*.



DANGEROUS WOMAN

PANEL ON THE NEW GRAPHIC BIOGRAPHY OF EMMA GOLDMAN, featuring Vivian Gornick, Sharon Rudahl, and Devra Weber, and moderated by Alice Wexler

CO-SPONSORED BY THE CHICANO STUDIES RESEARCH CENTER



Sharon Rudahl is an artist and illustrator. Her work has been widely published and exhibited in the U.S. and Europe, including the "Great Women Cartoonists" exhibit at the Secessionist Gallery in Vienna. She will discuss influences on her style and her appreciation of the visual storytelling devices of 1930s cinema.

Vivian Gornick is the author of eight books, among them *The Situation and the Story: The Art of Personal Narrative*, an acclaimed memoir, *Fierce Attachments*, and two influential collections of essays, *Approaching Eye Level* and *The End of the Novel of Love*

Devra Weber is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at UC Riverside. She has published two books: *Dark Sweat, White Gold: California Farmworkers, Cotton, and the New Deal*,

1919-1939 (UC Press, 1994) and edited *La Historia de Vida del Inmigrante Mexicano* by Manuel Gamio. (Editorial Porrúa, CIESAS/UC MEXUS joint publication, 2002).

Alice Wexler is a CSW Research Scholar and the author of *Emma Goldman: An Intimate Life* and *Mapping Fate: A Memoir of Family, Risk, and Genetic Research*.

FRIDAY, November 16
UCLA FACULTY CENTER, 4 PM

WOMEN, ART, AND ACTIVISM
Perspectives from the Americas

WORLDS OF WORDS

Through the Looking Glass

GIOCONDA BELLI

CO-SPONSORED BY SPANISH & PORTUGUESE DEPARTMENT

Gioconda Belli, a renowned and prolific woman writer and defender of human rights from Central America, will trace the development of her thinking through her work. Chosen as one of the most notable citizens of the twentieth century in Nicaragua and elected Member of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language, her life and literary career are closely intertwined with her country's history. Her memoir *The Country Under My Skin* (2002), her

book of poetry *Mi íntima multitud* (2003), and her novel *The Inhabited Woman* (1988) are only some of her many works that have received literary prizes and honors. Belli's recent historical novel inspired by Spain's Queen Juana of Castille—"Juana la loca"—and published simultaneously as *El pergamino de la seducción* and *The Scroll of Seduction* (2006) was a bestseller in Spain.



MONDAY, November 19
ROYCE 314, 4 PM

WOMEN, ART, AND ACTIVISM
Perspectives from the Americas

ALCANCES DEL ACTO PERFORMÁTICO

JENNY JARAMILLO

IN SPANISH WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATION



Jenny Jaramillo received a degree in fine arts from the Universidad Central in Quito, Ecuador. From 1998 to 2000 she

was the artist-in-residence at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam, with a fellowship she received in 1998 from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Relations (BUZA/DCO/IC). She has also participated as an artist in residence in the international program for RAIN PROJECT, “Open Circle,” in Mumbai, India (2000); in the Irish Modern Art Museum in Dublin (1997); and in “Fine Arts Work Center” in Provincetown (1994). She represented Ecuador in the 2004

Cuenca International Biennial; in the sixth Havana Biennial (1997); and in the Estandartes International Biennial, “ES 2000,” in Tijuana. She has also been invited to participate in the following exhibitions and collective projects: “Políticas de la diferencia: Arte Iberoamericano de fin de siglo, exposición itinerante por algunos países de América Latina”; “Salón de Arte Contemporáneo en Cochabamba-Bolivia”; “Primer encuentro internacional de Performance en Santiago de

Chile”; and “Space for Artist,” a public art project in Amsterdam. Her artistic production complements her work teaching art in several universities in Ecuador.

ABOUT THE CURATORS

Charlene Villaseñor Black is Associate Professor in UCLA's Department of Art History, where she teaches courses on visual culture in Latin America and Spain as well as theory and method. Her scholarship, focused both on the colonial and early modern periods as well as contemporary art, employs feminist and postcolonial theory. She has published widely, in such venues as *Encyclopedia Latina*, *Art Journal*, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, and others. Her recent book, *Creating the Cult of St. Joseph: Art and Gender in the Spanish Empire* (Princeton, 2006), won the College Art Association Millard Meiss Award. She has been the recipient of numerous grants, from the Woodrow

Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Fulbright Foundation. In 2006, she co-organized with her graduate students the working group *Visiones: Art and Activism in the Americas*, to foster dialogue between students, faculty, artists, activists, and members of the community.

Since 2001 **Jennifer Flores Sternad** has been doing research on militant art practice, focusing on the work of Latina/o artists in the U.S. and artists and media collectives in Latin America. She received a Bachelor's degree in Literature from Harvard University. Upon graduating, she spent a year in Argentina and Chile doing research on contemporary performance and interventionist art as a George Peabody Gardner fellow. While living in Argentina, Jennifer was the South American Coordinator for the School of Panamerican Unrest and a guest curator for the first DEFORMES Performance Biennial in Santiago, Chile. She has worked at the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center since 2003; in 2006, she began graduate studies

at UCLA in the Department of Art History. Jennifer is the organizer of the traveling conference and public event series Tránsito(ry) Público | PUBLICo TRANSIToRio. She is currently a lecturer in the MFA Public Practice Program at Otis College of Art and Design and co-curator of the 2008 Mexi-Cali Biennial. Her interviews and essays have been published in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, *Contemporary Theatre Review*, *Aztlán*, *interReview*, *Journal of American Drama and Theater*, and online at www.latinart.com.

YOLANDA RETTER VARGAS

Yolanda Retter Vargas passed away on August 18, 2007. An activist and scholar, Vargas was fiercely committed to advocating for lesbians of color. Her life-time commitment to women's issues centered on the importance of maintaining visibility and preserving *herstory*.

Born in Connecticut, Retter Vargas spent most of her childhood in El Salvador, where her father worked for a program of the State Department. She was named Yolanda for her Peruvian mother. To honor her mother, she added her mother's maiden name, Vargas, to her own in the early 1990s.

The racism that she experienced upon her return to Connecticut had a formative effect, as did her early efforts to shield her lesbian

identity, on her later commitment to activism. After graduation from high school, she enrolled at Pitzer College in Claremont, California, when it was still a women's college.

Coming out as a lesbian in 1969, the year of Stonewall, Retter Vargas spent much of the 1970s helping to organize the nascent lesbian liberation movement. She was a founding member of *Lesbianas LatinaAmericas* in 1974 and of *Lesbianas Latinas* in 1980 and was also involved in *Lesbianas Unidas*.

After graduating from Pitzer with a degree in sociology, Retter worked briefly as a prison guard at the California Institution for Women in Corona and managed a halfway house for displaced women in Los Angeles.

Combining her love of books with her interest in identity politics, she went on to earn a master's degree in library science at UCLA (1983) and a master's degree in social work at UCLA (1987). Her thesis focused on Latina lesbian identity development. In the early 1990s she moved to New Mexico, where she earned a doctorate in American studies with her dissertation, "On the Side of Angels: Lesbian Activism in Los Angeles, 1970-1990."

Through her volunteer involvement in Connexus Women's Center/Centro de Mujeres, she was part of a successful effort to bring an important archive—the June L. Mazer Lesbian Collections—from Oakland to Los Angeles.

She edited and contributed to many gay history books, including *Queers in Space: Communities, Public Places, Sites of Resistance* (1997). Her Lesbian History Project website is a highly respected archive, which documents and celebrates lesbian *herstory*.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Vargas ran the Los Angeles Public Library Chicano Resource Collection, where she created the first "Latino biography" database. From 2003, she served as Librarian and Archivist at the Chicano Studies Research Center at UCLA.

She is survived by her partner, Leslie Stampler.

Poking in the Wound *or* Reclaiming History?

DOCUMENTARY FILMS AS
GENDERED HISTORICAL MEMORY
IN POST-DICTATORSHIP CHILE
AND SPAIN

by Judy Branfman

ON DEC 10, 2006, General Augusto Pinochet, Chile's notorious dictator from 1974 to 1990 and commander of the military until 1998, died. On the streets of Santiago, two counterposing groups assembled: Pinochet supporters on the one side who cheered his memory as the savior of the Chilean economy, and on the other, those who celebrated the real possibility that Chile would finally break through its culture of silence, liberate buried memories of Pinochet's reign of violence and repression, and reinvent Chilean culture with human rights at its core.

The complex enterprise of retrieving the historical memory of the violent repression in Chile (as well as in Spain, Argentina, and many other countries struggling with the long process of "democratization" after decades of repressive dictatorships/regimes)



has become an increasingly public discussion, a process that has been variously described as "ahistorical," "poking in the wound," or "reclaiming history." These histories and issues were explored in the fall of 2006 in two presentations at UCLA that focused on the role of women documentary filmmakers in revealing traumatic memories and "giving language to state terrorism" in post-dictatorship Chile and Spain. Macarena Gómez-

La Cueca Sola (2003), Marilú Mallet, Les Films de l'Atalante | *Photo by Pablo Gomez*

Barris, Assistant Professor in the Departments of Sociology and American Studies and Ethnicity at USC, and Los Angeles filmmaker CM Hardt, each in their own way, discussed the challenges and possibilities of documentary films that present the project of remembering and denying historical events.

Coming to Terms with The Past

Invited to give a talk at the Center for the Study of Women, Macarena Gómez-Barris shared work from her forthcoming book, *Where Memory Dwells: Culture and Democracy in the Aftermath of Chile's Dictatorship* (forthcoming, University of California Press). Her book proposes that culture and the arts play an important role in the struggle over historic memory, particularly for those whose identities have been shaped by political activism, state violence, and the resulting

effects of social trauma. Her talk, “Enacting Traumatic Memory: Marilú Mallet’s ‘La Cueva Sola,’” explored how gender subjectivity is expressed in terms of both trauma and memory in the work of three Chilean documentary filmmakers: Marilú Mallet, Patricio Guzman, and Silvio Caiozzi.

Each of these filmmakers got their start in film during the Unidad Popular government of Socialist President Salvador Allende (1970-1973), which supported film production and documented the huge changes taking place in Chile under Allende’s leadership. The vibrant cultural movement that developed during that period laid the groundwork for dynamic cultural expression in the Chilean exile communities that formed after Pinochet’s violent coup in 1973.

Gómez-Barris defines trauma in her work as “the moment of rupture of state terrorism, where the practices

of torture, sexual torture, disappearance, and forced exile produce a breach,” and the work of victims and survivors as “finding ways to integrate rupture into the ongoing practice of everyday life.” In her talk, Gómez-Barris discussed the importance of documentaries that attempt to “interrupt, constitute, and imagine gendered subjectivities and possibilities,” even while they at times also reproduce static gender roles.

Chile, Obstinate Memory (1997) by Patricio Guzman was the first film Gómez-Barris discussed. In it, the filmmaker is seen returning to Chile from exile to screen his epic film of Allende’s Chile, *Battle of Chile*, to audiences of diverse ages and occupations, capturing on film their reactions—tears, shame, contempt, silence, rage, fear—to this still repressed history. The second film Gómez-Barris analyzed was Silvio Caiozzi’s *Fernando Ha Vuelto (Fernando Returns, 1998)*, which

documents the process of uncovering the skeleton of disappeared leftist Fernando Olivares and follows his family’s journey to identify his body and bury his bones.

These documentaries include the dramatic testimony of female former-prisoners and family members that had largely been ignored until the release of the films. For example, in an unforgettable scene Fernando’s almost-mute mother, who has been ill since his disappearance twenty years before, tells her heartbreaking story in sounds only her caregiver can understand. Gómez-Barris contends that “one of the central assumptions and pitfalls of these films is making female subjectivity synonymous with victimization,” and that Guzman’s subjects “narrativize for the camera their suffering without linking their stories to their social activism.... without giving them the power of enunciation about

what living with this violence looks like.”

Gómez-Barris argues that the military state’s efforts to enforce a code of silence and force women back into traditional roles was accomplished by stifling social movements where women were becoming leaders, policing women’s bodies, and by making Pinochet’s wife a spokesperson for the military state. “Power’s work here [was] to invoke the triangle of patriarchy, nation, and heterosexual family bonds and values within a regularized context of disappearance, torture, and political disappearance, especially targeted at male revolutionary subjects.”

Yet women were the first to take to the streets to resist Pinochet’s brutality and protest the disappearance of thousands of their family members, posing a highly visible contradiction to his role for women in “a country of brothers” (his favorite slogan). Gómez-Barris focuses on Marilú Mallet as a filmmaker who has taken

a more personal approach to reclaiming the past, particularly visible in *La Cueca Sola* (2004). The title itself is taken from an act of cultural resistance on the part of Chilean women, who transformed the nation’s traditional dance of courtship, *la cueca*, into a version women dance alone (*la cueca sola*), leaving the viewer to imagine the missing partner and by extension the thousands of disappeared. Throughout the film the five featured women move between their own memories of torture and/or loss, their diverse healing processes, and their current involvements in the rebuilding of Chile. While Gómez-Barris defined Mallet’s broader project as “thread[ing] the histories and ongoing organizing of a multiply defined, decentered revolution,” these words also seem to describe her own pursuit.

Illustrating the gendered approach to reclaiming personal experience that Gómez-Barris explores, schoolteacher Monique Hermosilla, who had



been imprisoned, recounts her story in *La Cueca Sola*. One day, six years after her release from prison into exile in Belgium, she “just fell down” and couldn’t get up. She had never told anyone about her experiences of torture, recognizing that many Chileans “didn’t believe the stories of abuse until Pinochet was arrested.” Therapy became central to her physical and emotional “rebuilding.” The very day of Pinochet’s arrest in 1998, she began to gather with other

La Cueca Sola (2003), Marilú Mallet, Les Films de l’Atalante | Photo by Pablo Gomez

female former-prisoners who together eventually filed a suit against the government for illegal captivity and torture.

As Gómez-Barris stated, the women in *La Cueva Sola* and others like them “attenuate the space between living/dead, visible/invisible, forgetting/remembering.... The gendered body of survivors of concentration camps and torture, and understanding their complex lives and personal and social struggles, is a route to a reconstructed present.”

Poking in the Wound

In the fall of 2006, UCLA’s Department of Spanish and Portuguese presented “Images Against Amnesia: A Window into Memory - Documentaries on the Historical Memory of Spain,” which included *Death In El Valle* by Los Angeles filmmaker CM Hardt. In 1992, almost twenty years after Spanish dictator Francisco Franco’s death and

the beginning of Spain’s transition to democracy, Hardt traveled to Spain to find out how her grandfather had died in the small mountain village of El Valle in 1949. As uneducated about the Spanish Civil War and Franco’s 36-year reign of terror as most of her Spanish cousins, she became one of the first documentary filmmakers to search out hidden stories of Franco’s Spain, and in the process expose the trauma, silences, and fear that still confront and at times take center stage in such efforts.

Soon after Hardt’s arrival in El Valle, her grandmother reveals that her grandfather was killed, not by the lung hemorrhage listed on his death certificate, but by Franco’s Civil Guard. He had been secretly housing militants who were active in the guerilla war against Franco, and Hardt’s promise to her grandmother that she will make a film that “tells the world what really happened

in Spain” drives the passionate search that is the core of her film.

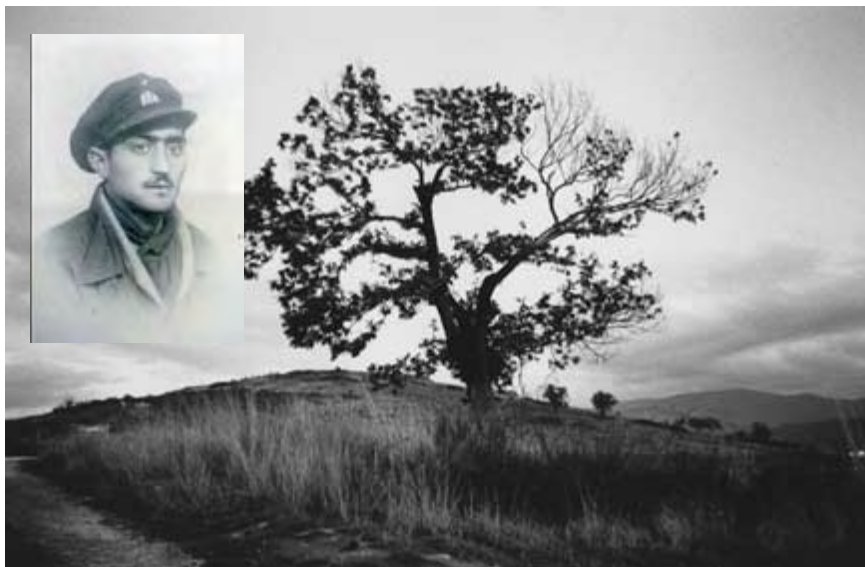
Stepping back, Hardt’s family can be seen as a metaphor for Spain, struggling mightily for twenty years to forgive and forget despite intensifying efforts, including Hardt’s, to reclaim its history of violent repression. Illustrating Gómez-Barris’s concept of “reversing the dissolution of the self that occurs in conditions of crises” is Hardt’s grandmother, the quiet but determined heroine, who gradually and painfully responds to her granddaughter’s search by talking about what happened in 1949 for the first time and standing behind Hardt despite growing opposition from the rest of the family. Hardt’s uncles become furious with her, and her 97 year-old great-grandmother asserts that her son’s death was a natural one, pleading, “Oh good God, leave me alone!” Later, however, Hardt’s great-



CM Hardt

grandmother admits that she was the one who identified her son’s tortured body. In additional footage not included in the film, Hardt’s young cousins (who, like Hardt, grew up in the United States) tell her, “It’s not going to change anything - it’s something very ugly,” and “This isn’t history!”

At times the film plays like a small-town drama. Villagers and family members refuse to talk with Hardt, or whisper long-held opinions about who turned her grandfather in to the Civil Guard. The story develops as she meets one of the guerillas



Francisco Redondo, who was shot and killed beside this chestnut tree in the town of Bembibre | from *Death in El Valle*, a film by CM Hardt, a CM Pictures Production for Channel Four Television, United Kingdom

who hid in her grandparents' home, and she eventually confronts the guard who oversaw the execution.

While the film tells a dramatic story, its focus on the search leaves out a clear sense of what propelled her grandparents to risk their own and their children's lives. Only the brief but illuminating interviews (shot several years after the film was completed) in the DVD's collection of special features reveal more. In one, Hardt's grandmother finally shares

the passion that drove her to participate in the clandestine war on Franco's regime: "The rich have everything. A poor person, a laborer, may be very intelligent but can't get ahead. I am with the workers and people of the pueblo. I am not with the rich." This and her husband's crime were enough to warrant two years of prison in Franco's Spain. While including these scenes would have strengthened the film's dynamics, the reality of her grandmother's gradual shift over the fifteen years since the filming began (according to Hardt, she is now speaking publicly about the film and her involvement in the resistance to Franco) demonstrates an entirely different promise that this kind of film holds out, a journey that continues long after the film itself has been completed.

It was not until the late 1990s that numbers of filmmakers began to investigate the suppressed history of Franco's dictatorship. A

collective of filmmakers formed to organize "Images Against Amnesia," a series which began touring throughout Spain in 2005 and more recently in Europe and North America with stops at venues like UCLA. Touring the films is itself an act of intervention in the 70-year suppression of Spain's traumatic memory and strengthens current efforts to reclaim and learn from the past. In 2001, five years after Hardt's film was completed, the Spanish government finally granted political recognition to the guerrillas who, like the men who hid in her grandparents' home, continued to resist Franco's regime long after the Civil War ended.

Pandora's Box

As I watched these films, the silences I have confronted in my own work came back to haunt me. In interviews for my film and writing projects

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and reminders of what
we lose when we allow
our fear to determine the
stories we tell.*

focusing on activist histories in the U.S., some involving family members, I have come face to face with silences, half stories, choices of words that deny specificity, and phone calls that end abruptly. I have even written so-called contracts saying that I wouldn't tell anyone, especially children, that we had talked about a radical past.

By now, these silences have become messages to me, reminders that the silences are about something very specific, ideas that have been almost disallowed, and reminders of what we lose when we allow our fear to determine the stories we tell. When I tell friends and others about the ongoing refusal of potential interviewees to speak about their pasts, they are as surprised as CM Hardt was in Spain that people are still afraid to talk about things now seemingly so far in the past. Rarely a matter of death in this country, the anti-radical sentiment and accompanying fear has become so deeply entrenched in our

culture and individual psyches that most of us can hardly recognize it.

I admire the determination of the filmmakers - Spanish, Chilean, and others - who are exposing the impact of repression and silence on individuals and cultures. We in the U.S. have told histories of activism and repression but have rarely explored the profound effect the long history of American anti-radicalism has had on generations of activist individuals and on our culture as a whole.

Our stories are not unconnected. The long reach of the various "red scares" of the twentieth-century U.S., including Joseph McCarthy's reign in the 1950s, are part of the backdrop to American involvement in the Pinochet coup that overthrew President Allende and started Chile on its reign of terror. The films examined give clues to possible methods of exploring the impacts of these complex stories and struggles, that might be, as Gómez-Barris puts it, "route[s] to a reconstructed present."

 **Judy Branfman** is a CSW Research Scholar whose work often takes place at the intersection of public history, grassroots activism, and the arts. She is writing, and working on a documentary film, about the Los Angeles 1920s free speech and labor movements and her great-aunt's precedent-setting free-speech case. She has received numerous awards from national and local foundations (including a CSW Tillie Olsen Travel Grant) and has taught at UCLA, Franconia College, and Leslie College.

Sources

Quotes are from Gómez-Barris's talk unless otherwise noted and are not necessarily quotes from her forthcoming book, *Where Memory Dwells: Culture and Democracy in the Aftermath of Chile's Dictatorship* (forthcoming, UC Press).

La Cueca Solo, <http://www.wmm.com/film-catalog/pages/c632.shtml>

Chile, Obstinate Memory, http://www.frif.com/new97/chile_ob.html

Fernando Ha Vuelto, <http://www.frif.com/new2000/fern.html>

Death In El Valle, www.deathinelvalle.com

Images Against Amnesia, <http://www.newsroom.ucla.edu/page.asp?RelNum=7367>

Imagenes Contra El Olvido, <http://www.imagenescontraelolvido.com/>

GODS, HEROES, AND DEMONS

The Importance of Symbols in Everyday Life

by Mari Womack

Tonight in this very city, someone will die for a symbol.

I begin my book *Symbols and Meaning: A Concise Introduction* with this bold statement. Symbols are powerful because they evoke emotion. They evoke emotion because they are multivocal and polysemic, speaking with many voices and conveying multiple levels of meaning. Many levels are understood unconsciously and so cannot be controlled by our conscious desires. The inability to control our responses to symbols is the source of their power to affect our attitudes and actions.

According to Sigmund Freud, dream symbols represent libidinous longings, the biological desires that must

be repressed to conform to social restrictions. Carl Jung took a more charitable approach to the unconscious, viewing it as the repository not only of repressed desires but of healing impulses.

Symbols and Meaning draws upon psychotherapeutical and philosophical traditions to explain why symbols play such an important role in the dynamics of human groups, as well as in the psychological processes and creative impulses of individuals. In my edited volume, *The Artful Body: Reflections on the Human Form* (in progress), I will compare the ways in which artistic representations of the human body define

and reflect gender relations. I am soliciting articles from experts on the artistic traditions of the various regions of the world as a means of determining whether there are commonalities in the way different groups represent femaleness and maleness, with respect to how these representations may be reflected in the relationships of women and men.

Based on her research in Japan, the anthropologist E. L. Cerroni-Long has produced an analysis of Japanese representational art in which she links depictions of females and males to the Japanese cultural concept of formal relationships.

Lysa Divine, a former CSW Research Scholar, is writing an essay on representations of the divine feminine in the African diaspora. Jean-Pol Franqueuil, a French artist, is analyzing differences in the portrayal of females and males in Western European art. He has suggested that portrayals of females often reflect abstract concepts, such as the Fates or Virtues. Even portraits of human females may portray them as representatives of classical themes. On the other hand, portrayals of males most often reflect social status. My article will discuss the Asian concept of balance in female and male energy, especially as expressed in Indian religious art.

I am still searching for experts to prepare articles on the art of Eastern Europe, China, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, traditional African art, art of the west coast of South America, Central

America, and Northwest Native American art. With respect to traditional African art, I am especially interested in the concept of twinship. In my book *Health and Healing: An Integrated Approach*, I analyze the Dogon concept that the ideal birth is that of twins. Since this is not always possible, Dogon believe that females and males are born with dual natures.

At this point, I am avoiding speculation about whether there are universals in concepts of femaleness and maleness. My eventual analysis awaits the data provided by scholars in the various traditions of art. However, I have already noted some commonalities and disparities. The cultures I have analyzed so far emphasize a balance between female and male roles, though the role of the mother is a universally powerful image.

In *Health and Healing*, I have noted that femininity is considered natural and integral to the human species, whereas the male role must be defined by culture. Maleness, for example, is defined through harsh puberty rites that strip away the “natural superiority” of women. I have compared this ritual to the birth process, in which males must be expelled from the female. Contrarily, they must re-enter the female body to produce offspring of their own. When this biological process is subjected to social control, it produces a metaphor (symbol) of cutting and tearing, which is often portrayed in male socialization as a cutting away of the feminine.

Though it is tempting to speculate that male rejection of the feminine is universal, such does not appear to be the case. In some groups, as among the matrilineal

Ashante of Africa, mothers and sons form powerful alliances. The same is also true of the Iroquois, who live in what is now the northeastern part of the United States and the southeastern part of Canada, as well as the Nayar, a matrilineal group of Southern India. According to the religious scholar Lex Hixon, the goddess tradition in religion is universal. He relates this universality to the biological processes of gestation and birth:

From the most simple, basic point of view, for several years during infancy and early childhood, both female and male children relate in essentially the same mode and with the same intensity to the mother love at the core of their daily existence. The one we call father is at first simply mother number two, with bearded or abrasive face. Every longing is for mother. All sustenance is mother. Even the infant's landscape, before and after birth, is simply mother. For nine months, her heart beat is our rhythm, our primal music. This is the original ground, prior to gender differentiation and sharp individuation, to

which Goddess tradition gives us access, not as an infantile regression but as the fruitful soil of reconciliation, harmony, tenderness without boundary, unitive wisdom, and totality. (1994:3)

According to French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1963), humans universally impose binary categories on their social and conceptual universe. As Hixon implies, imposing social categories onto femaleness and maleness results in an overly simplistic view of female and male gender, and as I have discovered, of female and male biological sex. In my research for *Health and Healing*, I learned that one in five hundred infants is born with indeterminate sexual characteristics. Traditionally, definitive sexual characteristics have been imposed on these infants by physicians' decisions to surgically define sexual differentiation—often without consulting the parents. Perhaps more importantly, these decisions

were made without consulting the child.

With the support of the UCLA Center for the Study of Women, I hope to collect more data on the biological potential inherent in the human body and relate this to the social categories of gender. As Lévi-Strauss has noted, social categories are organized into binary oppositions. Biological potential tends to be more variable. In anthropological terms, the biological adaptations of the human body are generalized, allowing us to survive in a variety of environments, including above the Arctic Circle, at the Equator, in the Himalayas, and at sea level. As a result, wherever we reside, we use only a small part of our biological capabilities. At the same time, all human groups bring the body under social control, whether by dressing it, piercing it, painting it, or tattooing it.



In *The Artful Body: Reflections on the Human Form*, I hope to explore the cultural categories that are imposed upon the human body. In the process, I expect to discover that there are more categories for gender and biological differentiation than we had previously assumed.



Mari Womack is a CSW Research Scholar.

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SHAME AND THE POROSITY OF THE SELF

by Karen Lindo

SHAME is a complex emotion of self-assessment that works as a hidden subtext in our ability to negotiate our identity in our relations with each other. Shame is the emotive state that most poignantly underscores the degree to which the conception of the self is a perceptual product. Forever in an interlocking relationship with the eyes of the other, shame unveils the fluidity of our identity as it vacillates dynamically between our inner (psychic) and outer worlds. It is this emotion in particular that exposes the porosity of our claim to a clearly defined and fixed self. Whether we read shame as an affect or an emotion, what becomes clear is that to read for shame is, to borrow the philosopher Martha Nussbaum's term, to create "upheavals of thought." Shame collapses the self/other binaries with which we are comfortable and exposes our neediness, helplessness, weaknesses, vulnerability, and mutual dependence on each other.

In my work, I am particularly interested in revealing the ways in which shame can effectively lead to more positive human experiences of selfhood rather than the debilitating and stigmatizing experience of shame from which we all seek to distance ourselves. To move in this direction, I focus on literary representations of women of color in the Black and Indian diaspora who are culturally scripted to bear shame in the private sphere. Interrogating the binary paradigm that "naturally" aligns women with emotions and the domestic sphere and men with the rational and public sphere is an essential first step toward exposing the way in which women's perceived absence from the public and more specifically political sphere is falsely constructed in the interest of a virile uniform national agenda. In other words, to build a national identity in regions like West Africa, the French Antilles, and the Indian Ocean, fixed conceptions of femininity, and invariably masculinity, are the unchecked



Looking closely at the discrete zones in which shame is said to exclusively live begins a productive process toward engaging with the emotional content that shapes the conjunctive internal-external value systems that allow us to flourish in distinct cultural climates.

formulas used to construct the concept of the nation. Women of color from the Ivory Coast, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Mauritius do their part for national identity by remaining invisible 'victims' of traditional cultural edicts. Their absence from the public sphere, in which the sociopolitical issues that concern their well-being are debated, is justified by feelings like shame. These emotions are claimed to impair women's ability to participate in those rational discourses which serve nation-building agendas.

My focus on literary representations of women of color from the Black and Indian diaspora is foregrounded by the position of the woman in History as much as in *herstory*. History has embedded the perception of women of color within the Western feminist framework and further complicated her status because of the colonial apparatus of oppression that has pressed her person out of being. Simone de Beauvoir's expression "absence of response," used to refer to articulations of the female experience, is triply charged for the woman of color. In common parlance we speak of her as twice cursed because of her complexion and because of her sex. This formula stops short, however, of the third index to her person that reveals the intensity of her dynamism: her desires. She is triply cursed because of her color, because of her sex, and because of her desires. Keeping

her desires muffled is in great part modulated through the stigma of shame with which she is constantly menaced and/or forced to bear in these distinct cultural regions. Each of these layers under which she has been buried regains presence and pronounced visibility, most notably in the works of Guadeloupean author Maryse Condé, Martinican Creole specialist Raphaël Confiant, and Mauritian authors Ananda Devi and Shenaz Patel. Because shame is equally concerned with image-making, the literary endeavors of these authors are able to depict those desires that disrupt fixed representations of the Ivoirian, Guadeloupean, Martinican, and Mauritian woman.

To illuminate the shame experience in all human relations and thus do away with the false binary that situates emotions unevenly within the province of the feminine, that is to say, the private sphere, authors like Condé, Confiant, Devi, and Patel help me to reveal how the malleability of emotions facilitates the diffusion of ideologies, in terms like culture and tradition, in the service of specifically male dominated socio-political and economic interests. Looking closely at the discrete zones in which shame is said to exclusively live begins a productive process toward engaging with the emotional content that shapes the conjunctive internal-external value systems

that allow us to flourish in distinct cultural climates. It is her representation that avows that shame works in a double movement as a site of social control and a site of social resistance, masking and revealing, shadowing /shading, and enlightening our mutually interdependent relationships with each other.

One of the ways in which I underscore the ubiquity of the shame experience in informing daily cultural practices is by looking at how this emotion modulates common expressions of identity through, for example, humor. In the final year of thesis writing, I was fortunate enough to receive the support of the Center for the Study of Women and the Department of French and Francophone studies to test the viability of this argument in a Caribbean conference in Lugano, Switzerland. In this forum, I presented a portion of my work on the topic titled "Slashing la logique et la raison in *Célanire cou-coupé* by Maryse Condé." On this occasion I was able to engage the audience in my thought process by demonstrating how the author uses humor to transform the culturally scripted shame experiences that were dictated across gender and color lines. Recasting the present day discourses on power, gender, race, and sexuality within the context of colonization on the Ivory Coast during the 1930s, Condé

deploys her Guadeloupean female protagonist to play on all expressions of identity that concurrently compete to define a singular identity. The dynamic play between shame and humor in the narrative eventually turns on the reader in the text who becomes challenged by the multiple layers that the principal character reveals. The reader is provoked in his or her convictions by the very desire for a fixed identity that would stabilize the narrative and assure coherence. Establishing an interdependent dynamic relation between the representation of the female protagonist and the reader, Condé reveals how shame is always at work as a subtext in expressions of identity, whether we attempt to situate our identity exclusively in terms of race, gender, sexual proclivities, and/or power relations. Shame keeps the boundaries between self and other fluid because these boundaries are in fact fluid. To attempt to do away with shame, particularly through stigmatization, is to simply mask what is in fact visible and palpable to us all: our fragility, our weaknesses, our fragmented states of being, and above all, our mutual dependence upon each other as men and women across diverse and enriching cultural regions.



Karen Lindo is presently a Visiting Assistant Professor of French at Bowdoin College. This past spring she completed her dissertation thesis, "States of Shame: Women, Affect, Transnationalisms,"

in the Department of French and Francophone Studies at UCLA. Her advisor was Françoise Lionnet. Beyond her immediate preoccupation with the sociocultural and political implications of the role of emotions in modulating questions of identity both at the personal and national levels, Karen is equally concerned for the position and function of women and children in speaking for the cultural specificities in West Africa, South Africa, Mauritius and the French Antilles. Her other research interests include the poetics of humor and irony, gender and feminist theory and the place of ethics in literary studies.

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Senior Faculty Feminist Seminar Series. The essay she will present, “Real, Beautiful Women’: Actresses as Rival Queens,” isn’t just about staged performance, it’s about bloodshed too. As Nussbaum puts it, the piece explores “theatrical rivalries in which female characters engaged in mortal combat and even shed real blood to keep heroic tragedies such as Nathaniel Lee’s *The Rival Queens*, and other plays resembling it, viable.” One of the exciting features of this seminar series is that top faculty doing work on gender and sexuality are matched with respondents from among their peer group. Professor Sue-Ellen Case, Chair of Critical Studies in the Department of Theater, and Professor Anne K. Mellor, Department of English, will join Nussbaum to engage with her work and open up a dialog with the audience. Professor Nussbaum recently shared these remarks about her work and the upcoming seminar.

Your career illustrates a long-term commitment to research in gender. How did that come about?

My grandmother was a suffragette, and my mother often spoke to me about women’s rights as she struggled with the conflicting

messages given to women in the 1950s. As an undergraduate I had only one women professor, a crotchety Shakespeare specialist who nearly turned me away from studying English literature because of her lack of pleasure in reading the plays. Not a single one of my professors in graduate school was a woman, and I recall having to persuade the well-known scholar who taught “History of Literary Studies” that Elizabeth Elstob, an eighteenth-century antiquarian, deserved study. The anti-Vietnam War and civil rights movements were yoked with the women’s movement in the late 1960s and 1970s. I took my inspiration for thinking about women’s literary history from fellow grad students and dedicated young professors at my first job who were beginning to think that gender was a discipline-changing category of analysis, and with whom I developed an interdisciplinary women’s studies course.

You recently published an article in *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature* entitled “Risky Business: Feminism Now and Then.” Are feminist critical frameworks just as risky in the twenty-first century as they were in the eighteenth?

Feminist critical frameworks were only beginning to be developed in the eighteenth century, and Mary Astell, Eliza Haywood, the Bluestockings, and Mary Wollstonecraft

were courageous thinkers in a way I strive to emulate. It’s still a risky business, but I think our foremothers found it more difficult than we do, partly because so many of them developed their ideas in relative isolation and without the women’s movement.

In your upcoming talk, you’ll be discussing the relationships and rivalries between prominent early English actresses. What first prompted you to investigate actresses in Restoration and eighteenth-century England? Why is the figure of the actress so important for studies in eighteenth-century culture?

*It is a curious fact, a fact I take to be more than coincidence, that the first woman on the legitimate British stage (most probably Margaret Hughes) after the theatres reopened almost certainly acted as Desdemona in *The Moor of Venice* in 1660, a role which would have emphasized the difference between the tragic heroine’s white skin and the painted blackface of Othello. Masking or veiling of any sort for women, including blacking up, was often taken to be the sign of the whore. The early actresses, who first came to the stage after the all-male Renaissance theatres, are often regarded as prostitutes because they earned an independent income and freely inhabited the public domain. I thought there had to be more to the story. In fact, their sexual behavior varied from the freest to the*


most chaste. Examining the economics of the theatre reveals that the most talented actresses made substantial sums of money and possessed real cultural authority. And the theatrical extended far beyond the stage. Most women in the eighteenth century, whether professional actresses or not, had to learn to be actresses in order to successfully perform the prescribed roles for “woman,” and they posed a challenge to the so-called proper lady.

As a Professor of English at UCLA, you live and work in the heart of the entertainment industry. Do you see any special connections between contemporary American celebrity culture and the Restoration actresses you investigate?

Obviously the pursuit of celebrity pervades world culture, and Stella Tillyard has claimed that eighteenth-century London theatre was “the crucible of celebrity.” Early actresses were among the first celebrities who cultivated “public intimacy” to enthrall audiences of men and women. But cultivating celebrity is also about making money for the industry, then and now, and the way that actresses and their bodies became sites of cultural struggle regarding virtue, conditions of employment, social class, and the nation are the issues that interest me in both periods.

Your talk on October 31 will feature Professors Sue-Ellen Case and Anne Mellor as respondents. How has the experience of working in a community of feminist scholars affected your own work?

I can't imagine pursuing my work without the inspiration and friendship of these two women, as well as the CSW community of feminist scholars and graduate students, and the larger national and international communities. Feminism has now expanded enough to encompass various conflicts and controversies, but we still share many common as-yet-unrealized goals.

 **Candace Moore** is a doctoral student in Critical Studies in the Department of Film, Television, and Digital Media. **Vivian Davis** is a doctoral student in the Department of English.

UCLA CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN

presents

“Real, Beautiful Women” Actresses as Rival Queens

Felicity A. Nussbaum

Professor in the Department of English

RESPONDENTS:

Sue-Ellen Case

Professor and Chair of Critical Studies,
Department of Theater

Anne K. Mellor

Professor, Department of English

Wednesday

October 31

4 pm

314 Royce

www.csw.ucla.edu

Access Mazer Project

Organizing and Digitizing the Lesbian Feminist Archive in Los Angeles

The UCLA Center for the Study of Women is pleased to announce that we have received a grant from the UCLA Center for Community Partnerships, which provides funding support for UCLA faculty and staff partnering with Los Angeles non-profit organizations. The grant supports a partnership with the West Hollywood-based June L. Mazer Lesbian Archives—the sole archival repository on the West Coast dedicated to preserving lesbian and feminist history. CSW will be working with the Archive to inventory, organize,

preserve, and digitize several key Los Angeles-themed collections.

Recent histories have painted Los Angeles as a central hub of gay rights organizing during the last century, equal in significance to New York City. Yet, much of the published material on LA's important homosexual figures, community groups, and organization focuses on gay men, largely neglecting LA's lesbian population.

This project will result in greater access for academics, independent scholars, and Angelenos to singular materials on

lesbians and lesbian-feminist organizations to better conceptualize and write women's and LGBTQ histories in Los Angeles. These materials will supplement an historical record primarily focused on gay men and give salience to an historical moment when lesbian rights and feminist movements were more closely integrated.

Two graduate students from Information Studies, T-Kay Sangwand and Janine Liebert, are working on the project under the supervision of Kathleen McHugh and April De Stefano.

CSW Archival Materials Now Available for Researchers

The Center for the Study of Women (CSW) at UCLA is pleased to announce that the first two decades of CSW's history will be available for researchers and the public to explore beginning in the Fall quarter of 2007. Over the summer, University Archivist Charlotte B. Brown and April De Stefano supervised graduate students Emily Carman and Candace Moore in the archiving of materials from 1984 to 2006. "UCLA has made an important contribution to Women's Studies and to research on women nationally. Making these materials available is a crucial first step in documenting the significant role of faculty, research scholars and graduate students at CSW and Women's Studies in the development of the field," said Kathleen McHugh.

The materials document the founding and early programs and activities of the first organized research unit dedicated to promoting scholarship on women, sexuality, and gender in the University of California system. Included are grant applications and funding information for extra and intramural grants; women's studies and ethnic studies course materials and resources, including syllabi, course planning documents, bibliographies, filmographies, and a wide assortment of reading materials; and assorted center documents, including correspondence, administrative files, event flyers, awards and publicity information, newsletters, conference planning materials, and an events guestbook dating from 1994 to 2003.

CSW Update is a monthly PDF/web publication of the UCLA Center for the Study of Women.

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