



CSW update

SPECIAL ISSUE 07

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Thinking Gender 2007

17TH ANNUAL GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH
CONFERENCE IS GREAT SUCCESS

HELD ON February 2, this year's Thinking Gender, an annual conference presented by the UCLA Center for the Study of Women in conjunction with USC's Center for Feminist Research, provided a wonderful opportunity for graduate students and faculty to meet and discuss a range of fascinating and innovative work in gender research and women's studies. With 22 panels and 84 presenters, the conference was the largest to date. Panels ranged from "Experimental Body Films" to "Labor and Sweat," from "Adolescent Sexuality: Girls, Girls, Girls!" to "Memory, the Archive, and the Museum" and "Reproductive Dilemmas."

The plenary session, Chickens, Wolves, Warriors, and Zoos:

Feminist Science Studies Meets Animal Studies and Law, was organized by Laura Foster and moderated by Sandra Harding, Professor in the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at UCLA, and presented perspectives on the human/nonhuman in public discourse and the law.

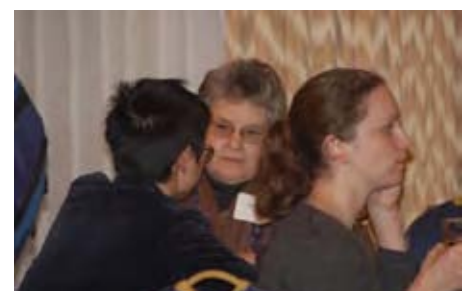
The luncheon provided a chance for Kathleen McHugh, Director of the UCLA Center for the Study of Women, to welcome the participants and to acknowledge the efforts of the staff and faculty at UCLA and USC in organizing the conference.

Always engaging and perceptive, Wendy Belcher, Lecturer and Editor, Chicano Studies Research Center Press gave the keynote address on "Writing Gender: Recent Research on Power, Productivity, and



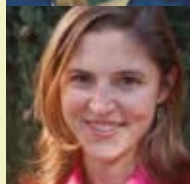
Publication," detailing recent research on publication, tenure, and gender in higher education. The results for female faculty are mixed, but she outlined some useful strategies for achieving career advancement.

The evening reception provided another opportunity for presenters, moderators, and audience members to share ideas and perspectives on the day's presentations as well as to celebrate the success of the event.

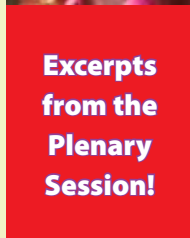




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From the Coordinator

Emily S. Carman



THINKING GENDER 2007 brought together graduate students from all disciplines across North America to share their current feminist research, and as the conference coordinator, I felt the event was an astounding success with a lively intellectual and scholarly exchange of ideas. The 2007 conference was the largest in Thinking Gender's seventeen-year history with 84 participants. The panels covered a range of topics across both the humanities (including comparative literature, film and television, art history, and English) and social sciences (such as history, geography, sociology, and women's studies). It was particularly satisfying to see such a large public turnout for the conference. The morning panel "Queer Bodies and Nations," moderated by USC English Professor Judith Halberstam, had forty audience members. And as a student in the Department of Film, Television, and Digital Media, I was very pleased to attend the four panels devoted to gender and media, including "Women as Cultural Producers," "Making Film," "Experimental Women's Body Films," and "Television and Gendered Dis-Articulations."

Yet the most rewarding aspect of the conference for me was finally meeting all the panelists and faculty moderators after so many months of email and telephone correspondence. I enjoyed the professional and scholarly exchange. Working with CSW director Kathleen McHugh, the assistant director April de Stefano, and the amazing CSW staff so closely helped me achieve one of my graduate school goals of doing public service for the UCLA and Los Angeles community. Moreover, it was a tremendous pleasure to plan the conference with the USC Center for Feminist Research staff and formulate

the conference panels with USC Professor Susan McCabe and USC graduate student Kristen Barber. My only regret is that the conference reception was too short, as I would have enjoyed to meet and talk with more of the participants and moderators. In sum, I'd like to thank all who participated in making Thinking Gender 2007 an outstanding day and for giving me one of the most gratifying professional experiences of my academic career thus far.

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. In the October issue of CSW Update, she wrote "Female Agency in 1930s Hollywood: Uncovering Independent Stardoms at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center." She served as coordinator for this year's conference and did a wonderful job.



THE COMMODIFICATION OF A CACTUS

Patents and Benefit-Sharing Agreements

by Laura Foster

PATENT LAW IS BASED UPON MYTHS OF ORIGIN that operate through compressions of time and space in order to construct indigenous people and their knowledge as both visible and invisible....*Hoodia gordonii* is a cactus, or more accurately a succulent plant, that is grown in the Kalahari Desert in the southern region of Africa. For generations, the plant has been gathered and used by the indigenous San people to suppress appetite during times of famine or low food supplies. In 1963, South Africa's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, otherwise known as CSIR, identified the chemical compound, known as P57, that is responsible for the plant's appetite-suppressant qualities. In 1996, CSIR was awarded patent rights to Hoodia's P57 compound and then in 1998 it granted an exclusive license to Phytopharm, a British biotechnology firm, to develop Hoodia for global commercialization as an anti-obesity product. Phytopharm in cooperation with Unilever now expects to have Hoodia ready for global production and sale by the year 2008 and estimates close to \$600 million in sales.

The story of Hoodia took an interesting turn in 2003 when scientists were asked how the knowledge of the San peoples contributed to their research on the plant. Scientists responded that the San peoples were extinct. This statement sent off a firestorm of criticism and the South African San Council initiated a lawsuit against CSIR and its licensees. The parties eventually settled the lawsuit and entered into a benefit-sharing agreement that required CSIR to give 6 to 8% of their profits to the San communities. The agreement is now the subject of intense debates among indigenous rights activists.

These conflicts make a discussion of patent law and benefit sharing extremely difficult. Rosemary Coombe offers some guidance and urges an "ethics of contingency" that respects the decision and sovereign right of indigenous communities to enter into such agreements and turns the attention more towards a critique of law. Thus, the central inquiry is not whether or not the San were correct in entering into such an agreement, but on the limits of patent law itself. Examining the patenting of Hoodia reveals how the notion of invention within patent law is constructed through compressions of time and space, which simultaneously make the histories and contributions of indigenous peoples visible and invisible.

In order to investigate these sites of visibility and concealment, I would like to briefly introduce the elements of patent law. A patent is awarded by the patent office of a

given country if an applicant can show that the information is novel, inventive, and has an industrial application. The first requirement of “novelty” means that it *cannot* be described in the public domain either in written or oral form. In other words, it must be new and original information. The second requirement is that information must contain an “inventive step,” which is often interpreted as “not obvious.” Finally, the third requirement is that the knowledge must have an “industrial application.” The information must have a proven application that has “utility” and is “useful.” In the case of Hoodia, CSIR was able to show that the identification of the P57 compound within the plant was both novel and inventive and that its use to fight obesity was an industrial application.

Investigating the patenting of this plant offers a site to think through how law constructs the visibility and invisibility of indigenous peoples’ knowledge and how it enables narratives of progress within modernity. The Hoodia example concerns the chemical compound of P57, but the discussion applies broadly to the patenting of biological and genetic material from indigenous communities because similar processes of fragmentation and decontextualization are at work. To begin, patent law chooses the identification of the P57 compound as the significant moment in time of invention. Patent law creates a myth of origin through compressions of time and space that work together to value scientific method and the practices of so-called experts. Patentable knowledge operates upon an origin story that designates the chemical compound as the privileged site of novelty and inventiveness. The birth of invention happens in the lab by expert scientists. Authorship is assigned to the scientists who investigate the plant for its exact appetite-suppressing properties and the subject of patent ownership becomes the decontextualized compound. Compressions of time and space enable patent law to mark this moment as the spark of invention and designate the scientist as author. For patent law to recognize these particular temporal and spatial moments it must conceal and delegitimize others.

What is made invisible is the work and knowledge of the San peoples and most likely San women. Social scientists have noted that it is San women who are highly skilled at distinguishing useful plants for their communities. The San have spent considerable time and expertise over generations to develop uses for the plant as an appetite-suppressant as well as a way to treat what we now refer to as abdominal cramps, indigestion, hypertension, and diabetes. Colonial accounts of the uses of Hoodia are precisely based upon the

Commercialization of the plant depends upon the visibility of discourses around western women’s bodies as thin, while at the same time the labor of San women is made invisible. Western women as consumers are placed in relation to San women and global transnational systems of oppression become reinforced.

labor and experimentation of the San peoples around the plant. Patent law chooses to recognize and legitimate one origin story – the tale of the expert scientist and his moment of invention. Alternative origin stories generated from the lives of the San people are made invisible and devalued. The San peoples historically traveled back and forth across the Kalahari Desert region and many live a nomadic lifestyle still today. They most likely began to use the Hoodia plant to sustain themselves during these long journeys. The local knowledge that the San developed, however, is left unacknowledged by patent law in order to construct the work of CSIR as novel and grant them ownership rights. The invisibility of the San peoples and their knowledge enables patent law to recognize the discovery of the P57 compound as the origin of invention and to maintain and reinforce assumptions of western science.

The logics of patent law also construct and strengthen neoliberal capitalist assumptions of industrial application. Patentability depends upon demonstrating the usefulness of an invention. In this case, it is the application of Hoodia for treating obesity that becomes the industrial use. In other words, what is patentable usually means what is profitable. By linking invention to industrial application in this way patent law further legitimates masculinized modes of production. In this case, patenting of Hoodia singles out the production of a weight-loss product as industrial. Commercialization of the plant depends upon the visibility of discourses around western women's bodies as thin, while at the same time the labor of San women is made invisible. Western women as consumers are placed in relation to San women and global transnational systems of oppression become reinforced.

These masculinized notions of industrial application also raise questions around incentives and alternative frameworks for knowledge production. Patent law is often justified as an incentive for invention because its monopoly structure provides for the possibility of profit to recoup development costs. Incentives for invention, however, are not always motivated by law or profit. In fact, creation of knowledge and objects often does not depend upon incentives at all. In this instance, the San developed knowledge around Hoodia for purposes of sustainability and San women have been known to give the plant to their children during times of low food supplies. Patent law chooses to recognize the treatment of obesity as the industrial application and in the process works to conceal the practices of San women around the plant for purposes of sustainability and care.

Examining the signing of a benefit-sharing agreement also complicates these sites of invisibility and visibility and reveals contradictions. The parties to the agreement are the South African San Council and CSIR. The Agreement provides for a Trust fund that distributes royalties to the large diasporic San community across southern Africa. The difficult question then becomes who is a member of the various clans that comprise the San peoples? The problem is that in order to determine who will receive benefits, the San are forced to make themselves visible through categories of identity and belonging that are based upon western legal models. The limits of this legal framework also create a situation in which the San become stakeholders in their own visibility as premodern and exotic, which works to support western culture as modern. Commercialized success of the product to western consumers depends upon recent advertising that plays up Hoodia as “authentically South African” with large red African suns and Safari animals. Higher sales of Hoodia mean larger royalty checks; therefore, the San have an financial interest in the commodification of the plant and their culture. On the other hand, the example of the San peoples shows that for many indigenous communities a benefit-sharing agreement serves as a potential source of much-needed revenue. Benefit-sharing agreements can operate as a significant tool for indigenous communities to gain control over their own futures and plans for protecting the health and well-being of their own community.

In returning to Coombe's notion of an “ethics of contingency,” what becomes important in this discussion is a critique of the limits of patent law itself. It also involves imagining possibilities for more socially just benefit-sharing agreements so that indigenous communities have additional alternatives to consider while making their own decisions around controlling their biodiverse resources in the face of patent law regimes. Feminist theories become a useful tool in conducting such an analysis and understanding how patent law constructs and reinforces western modes of science and capitalism.

Laura Foster is a Ph.D. student in Women's Studies and a graduate research fellow with the UCLA Center for Society and Genetics. Her research interests broadly focus on feminist questions within the intersections of law, science, and empire. She was the coordinator of the 2006 Thinking Gender conference and the organizer of this year's plenary session, which was entitled “Chickens, Wolves, Warriors, and Zoos: Feminist Science Studies meets Animal Studies and Law.” This article is based in part on her presentation.

Chinese Chickens, Ducks, Pigs, and Humans, and Technoscientific Orientalism

by *Gwen D'Arcangelis*

CHINA is a recent object of increased media attention, especially in its portrayal as a threat to the U.S.—economically, militarily, diseases like SARS and flu. It is this last I focus on, looking specifically at U.S. news media coverage of China with respect to the SARS outbreak in 2003. This news media coverage was characterized by depictions of animals, waste, consumption, disease and other forms of hygienic discourse. I argue that through narratives of Chinese hygiene, the U.S. news media participated in new forms of Orientalism and race. In this talk, I examine processes of racialization and Othering promoted by the U.S. news media during the SARS incident, reading them specifically through representations of Chinese as unhygienic. Representative quotes are listed at right.

As demonstrated by the first two quotes, the close relationship of Chinese people with a variety of nonhuman animals is portrayed as unhygienic and “traditional.” The scrutiny directed at this relationship between Chinese people and nonhuman animals with respect to disease emergence in the SARS incident can be framed in debates taking place in public health regarding whether animals were vectors, which animals were vectors, and what kinds of contact were actually contagious. Despite lack of consensus amongst public health institutions, the general claim that SARS arose in

Outside the city limits, farmers eat, sleep and work in teeming and cramped quarters with ducks, chickens and pigs in traditional and often squalid conditions, creating a toxic brew that can easily spread to the modern China, and to the rest of the world.

– CNN, 2005

Some virologists believe traditional farming practices in China help spread new viruses. Chinese farmers raise ducks, pigs, and fish in one integrated system, and the animals may exchange viruses through their feces.

– *National Geographic* 2003

The casual attitude toward health isn't unusual in China. This remains a country where men and women enthusiastically spit in public, even in affluent cities such as Beijing or Shanghai. People eat from common plates and male drivers urinate in plain view by the side of almost any road.

– *USA Today*, 2003

China because of a high density and proximity of animals (especially “wild” ones) and humans became widespread in the U.S. The U.S. news media played a large role in the dissemination of these public health claims regarding SARS to the larger public, in the U.S. and beyond. While it cannot be assumed that the U.S. public health establishment is unmarred by discourses of racialization and Othering, it was the U.S. news media that acted as a primary filter selecting how and what public health claims to cover, both amplifying and reworking these claims in the process.

In addition to criticizing Chinese violation of the proper policing of borders between human and nonhuman, between tradition and modernity, all three quotes problematize the lack of separation between public and private, between waste and consumption. These portrayals of China can be read against Edward Said’s notion of “Orientalism,” wherein the constitution of a homogenized Western identity occurs through the over-characterization of an equally homogenized Eastern Other as fundamentally different from and opposite to it. Examining the tradition/modernity dichotomy more closely, we see that Chinese are constructed as traditional, and the traditional is constructed as a health threat. Specifically, the quotes characterize Chinese farming practices as “traditional,” “squalid,” “teeming and cramped,” and productive of a “a toxic brew that can easily spread to the modern China, and to the rest of the world.” In this linear narrative of progress from tradition to modernity, the U.S., as most powerful country in the globe, is constructed as the ideal modern country, and the model of progress for all (in this case China) to follow to achieve similar wealth. Despite the varying historical and geographical contexts of different countries, their varying positions on the global hierarchy of power, and their respective relationships with the powerful U.S.—some may even be actively exploited by the U.S.—all countries are to follow this idealistic narrative of modernist development. In this way, the myriad ways of farming in a country as large as China, with as many ethnic minorities as it has, all get lumped together into the singular inferior

category named “traditional.” The problematization of traditional farming practices in China as helping to spread new disease to modern and hygienic countries also serves to construct the flow of disease from “traditional” to “modern” countries with “modern” countries considered necessarily hygienic.



Gwen D’Arcangelis is a Ph.D. student in Women’s Studies at UCLA. She received her B.A. with a major in Biological Basis of Behavior (Physiology of Neural Systems) with a minor in Philosophy from the University of Pennsylvania, in May 1997. Her dissertation research focuses on the discourse of “biological threats,” which has emerged over the past two decades in the post-Cold War context of U.S. Empire and particularly since the post-2001 global war on terror, to denote microbes embodied as either terrorist weapons or as emerging infectious diseases. Her research explores the ways in which this national security-inflected concept of the microbe is conceived of in a variety of institutional domains—both scientific and not—and mapped onto gendered and racialized bodies.

Wolf Children and the Discourse of Animality

by Dipika Nath

Discursive animality, serving to desubjectivate certain humans by attributing to them animal characteristics, emerges precisely in relation to ideologies and practices of race, gender, and sexuality and situates human persons specifically as raced and gendered subjects. That is, a charge of animality is also always a raced and gendered charge specific to time-place coordinates.

I trace the interimplication of ideologies and practices of race, gender, sexuality, and animality in colonial representations of feral children. The feral child had long challenged the identity of the human in western philosophy, natural history, and literature before it entered “the mythology of science” with Linnaeus’s taxonomy in the eighteenth century. This creature appeared human in gross form but was nothing like human in behaviour or cognitive abilities. Rationality marked the human for Linnaeus; of course, this solution to the problem of defining the human only served to delimit subjectivity along lines of class, gender, race, and, notably, species. The anxiety produced by feral children, however, was not simply repressive in its effects; this was a productive anxiety, one that spurred projects in comparative anatomy, evolution theory, and, later, anthropology and psychoanalysis.

In November 1892, Rudyard Kipling wrote a letter to the editor of a children’s magazine informing her of Mowgli’s existence. There is little doubt that Kipling was familiar with tales of real wolf children in India; Mowgli, however, is not only unlike real feral children but also an exemplary imperial subject. Ann McClintock uses Bhabha’s notion of mimicry as a strategy of colonial knowledge and power – where natives take on a “flawed identity” that attempts to mirror the coloniser’s identity only to thus reveal their imperfection – to ask whether the ambivalence that accompanies colonial mimicry is necessarily subversive. Arguing that the ambivalence, mimicry, and hybridity of Kipling’s other young hero, Kim, are not necessarily or inherently subversive and oppositional, McClintock says, “The transvestite Kim blurs the distinction between colonizer and colonized but only in order to suggest a reformed colonial control. ... He is the Indianized sahib: Indian but not quite. Kim’s passing is the privilege of whiteness.”

Similarly, Mowgli blurs the distinction between animal and human only to suggest a reformed, romantic colonial humanism. Mowgli’s animality, like Kim’s nativeness, is a privilege of his humanity, which is established, importantly, by his treatment of animals in conjunction with his self-identification as human. We first meet him in Kipling’s 1892 “In the Rukh,” a short story for adults. This story

Mowgli's animality not only does not disrupt the animal-human hierarchy it also serves precisely to reinforce it.

presents a full-grown young man who rules over the forest with all the nonchalance of a beautiful “pagan” god. This is how Gisborne, a British forest officer in the Department of Woods and Forests with the Indian Government, first encounters him.

The forest officer must “know the people and the polity of the jungle; meeting tiger, bear, leopard, wild-dog, and all the deer.” He is “the friend of newly-planted trees, the associate of uncouth rangers and hairy trackers.” These few sentences establish the breadth of British control of Indian forests, and this includes control over various indigenous creatures, including tigers, wild-dogs, and hairy trackers. Gisborne needs to know the habits and habitation of the animals as well as the people, if he is to exercise control over them. The Baconian aphorism, “Human knowledge and human power meet in one,” is distinctly at work in this story. Mowgli, too, uses his intimate knowledge of local animal populations, who collectively raised him from infancy, as a form of power and eventually in the service of the government.

Gisborne had been in the forest for four years before he met Mowgli. By then, after he had “first loved the forest without comprehension” and then hated it fervently, “The forests took him back again, and he was content to serve them, to deepen and widen his fire-lines....On some still day that grass would be burned off, and a hundred beasts that had their homes there would rush out before the pale flames at high noon. Later, the forest would creep forward...in orderly lines of saplings, and Gisborne, watching, would be well pleased.” Bringing order to the unruly jungles and profit to the government is the duty of the forest officer. And it is equally Gisborne’s duty to bring order to Mowgli’s unruliness and put it to colonial service. In this work, there is room for both utilitarian treatment of and Romantic attitudes towards the forests and its

denizens. Most importantly, “a hundred beasts” will be driven from their homes; the material extermination and management of animals is critical to the efficient extraction of resources from the forests, and the extermination and control of animality is critical to the project of fashioning appropriate humanity.

Although Kipling was familiar with accounts of real feral children, Mowgli is modelled after the mythical heroic wild children of Europe; unlike feral children in India and elsewhere, Mowgli has language, walks on two legs, and knows not only that he is human and superior to animals but also that Gisborne is British and superior to him. His distance from the native human in conjunction with his romanticised animality serves to establish him in Gisborne’s eyes as properly and desirably human. Mowgli’s animality not only does not disrupt the animal-human hierarchy it also serves precisely to reinforce it.

Moreover, like Gisborne’s power over the region as a whole, Mowgli’s power over the forest comes from his intimate knowledge of the ways of its inhabitants, knowledge that both characters use unself-consciously in colonial service. Mowgli, unlike feral children, knows human ways but prefers his jungle way. Like Kim who chooses when to be native and when sahib and to what end, Mowgli, too, chooses the extent and effect of his animality and his humanity. This ability to know and control both his animality and his humanity establishes Mowgli as preeminently human.



Dipika Nath is a graduate student in Women's Studies at the University of Washington.

Categories and the Legal Human

by Kris Weller

A 1978 decision of the high court of New York in a case called *Jones versus Beame* involved the consolidation of two lower court cases, one concerning the inadequate care and living conditions of animals housed in New York City zoos, the other concerning the inadequate care and living conditions of humans recently discharged from state mental hospitals and placed in hotels and apartments in the city of Long Beach, New York. The court disregarded the framing of the disputes as they were presented on appeal, reframed them in terms of justiciability, and ruled that the animals and the humans in these cases did not have recourse to the courts to address their grievances. To dismiss the cases, the court characterized the neglect of the zoo animals and of the discharged mental patients as the result of legitimate spending decisions made by the executive and administrative branches of the state and found that such spending decisions were unreviewable by the court. The Court's express purpose in consolidating these cases and deciding them as it did was to clarify a prior ruling on justiciability.

I use this court decision to illustrate two main arguments. One, which I will mention only briefly, is that our current rights discourse does an injustice to individuals and groups seeking rights by analogizing the identities and the circumstances of dissimilar groups. This results in dissimilar harms being analogized, which prevents them from being adequately conceptualized or redressed by the law.

In *Jones*, the semiotic effect of placing next to each other cases involving zoo animals and humans diagnosed with mental illness is to force an analogy of these two groups, which begs and produces the identification of a similarity to justify their similar legal treatment.

Our legal rights discourse, based around the notion of discrimination, has this same effect more generally, so that discriminations against women, against members of racialized and minoritized groups, against people with disabilities, and against nonhuman animals become the same thing, obscuring the very different histories, details, and effects of these oppressions, which prevents the possibility of contemplating appropriately different legal and social remedies. This analogizing of oppressions has the additional effect of distracting attention from what the groups really have in common, which is that they have shared the same oppressor. All of these groups were captured under different circumstances by different physical, legal, and semantic means and for different uses, but by the same captor. And despite legal changes that have given some of us certain freedoms and protections, we remain to various extents capturable. Diverting attention from this reality undermines political coalition by keeping members of oppressed groups focused on defining our differences from one another and our similarities to the oppressor in order to claim legal subjecthood. But the law does not have a language in which our differences make sense, and our similarities

Each classification of difference condemns the creature, species, or group to the status of capturable, those who may by right be captured, controlled, used, and often killed by the unmarked human legal subject.

will never be enough because of what I argue is an unarticulated right to capture that inheres in our conception of the legal human. This argument is the second aspect of my analysis.

In making this second argument in relation to *Jones versus Beame*, I am taking up the challenges posed by two scholars, Kay Anderson, a cultural geographer working at the University of Western Sydney in Australia, and Taimie Bryant, here at UCLA on the faculty of law. In a short article from 2002 called “The Racialization of Difference: Enlarging the Story Field,” Anderson suggests that to truly understand how and why racialization functions so effectively as a technology of oppression, we need to look past the categories created to distinguish between and among groups of humans to the species divide that we use to separate humans from all other animals. In a paper from last year, “Animals Unmodified: Defining Animals/Defining Human Obligations to Animals,” Bryant suggests that rights advocates must change the focus of debates about rights by “turning the spotlight directly on exploiters and exploitative practices.”

Anderson argues that ideas about what it means to be human are formed at what she calls the “borderland space of culture-nature” and that racialization relies on drawing meaning from the animal side of the animal-human divide. On the animal side of that division lie instinct and biologically determined behavior. On the human side lie

rationality and moral function. Anderson notes that even to the extent that our Western knowledge tradition accepts Darwin’s elaboration of humans as just one branch of the animal family tree, we continue to think of the human mind as being split between a base level of animal instinct and emotion and a more, rather than differently, evolved level of self-directed, rational thought. Racialization works by characterizing those who are racialized as more animal, less rational, more ruled by instinct and emotion, and it turns out that these characteristics justify abuse regardless of whether they are attributed to biology or to culture.

The uncomfortable paradox created by Anderson’s argument is that our idea of what it is to be human is inextricably linked to white privilege. In other words, unmarked whiteness is the face of an unmarked human, so that challenging white privilege necessarily means unmasking the human as we know him and challenging the privilege conferred by human status. I argue that this privilege is the right to capture, control, and use others, regardless of species, and that admission to the club of the fully human requires both the individual ability and a willingness to exercise this right, or at least to ally with those who do.

Anderson’s claim that the meaning of race is borrowed from the animal side of the animal-human divide applies to gender and to other hierarchical categorizations of humans as well, with legal and material consequences such as those apparent in *Jones versus Beame*. Each classification of difference condemns the creature, species, or group to the status of capturable, those who may by right be captured, controlled, used, and often killed by the unmarked human legal subject.



Kris Weller is a graduate student in the History of Consciousness Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Before enrolling at UCSC, Kris received a J.D. and M.A. from the joint degree program in Law and Women’s Studies at the University of Cincinnati. During law school, Kris served on Law Review and was a fellow of the Weaver Institute of Law & Psychiatry. Between graduating with a BA in Psychology from Johns Hopkins University and entering law school, Kris worked in direct care and administrative positions for a variety of not-for-profit organizations serving people with psychiatric diagnoses and members of other socially disadvantaged groups, whose experiences inspire and inform her scholarship.



TELEVISION AND GENDERED DIS-ARTICULATIONS

Panel Summary and Review by Jennifer Porst

The panel “Television and Gendered Dis-Articulations,” was one of the last of the day and was moderated by Ellen Seiter, Professor of Cinema Arts at the USC. Seiter teaches courses on media history, theory, criticism and audience analysis and has published extensively on such topics as the Internet, computers and education, children’s media, women in the media, religion and audience response, television’s presence on the Internet, and racial and ethnic stereotypes, and her shorts and documentaries on film and video have been shown at over 50 universities and film festivals. The panelists were Sylvie Young, a French and Francophone Studies student from UCLA, and Allison de Fren, Julia Himberg, and Daniel Chamberlain, all Critical Studies students from the Department of Cinematic Arts at USC.

Allison de Fren began the panel discussion with a presentation entitled “The Exquisite Corpse: Representations of the Artificial Female.” Her discussion

of the representation of artificial female bodies provided an overview of the group A.S.F.R. (alt.sex.fetish.robots), which is composed largely of men who fetishize female robots and eroticize dolls, mannequins, and robots. She played a fascinating documentary she produced and directed (which is available on YouTube and iTunes by searching for “ASFR”), which more fully explores the fact that the fantasies of the men in A.S.F.R. revolve less around robotic women, per se, than in moments of robotic transformation: those in which a human is being transformed into a robot or in which a robot is being booted up or shut down, programmed, disassembled, and those in which she is malfunctioning. De Fren argued that the A.S.F.R.ian interest in the marriage of the human and the mechanical, as well as in the disassembly of the mechanical female body, has a great deal in common with exquisite corpse, which was a game popularized by the Surrealists the 1920s. To play, one person would draw the image of a body on a

sheet of paper, fold it to conceal part of the drawing, and then pass it to the next player for a further contribution.

Sylvie Young continued the panel discussion with her presentation of “Science at Work: Improving on the Venus de Milo, from Villier’s *Tomorrow’s Eve* to FX’s *Nip/Tuck*.” Young began her presentation with a photo from a recent trailer for the fourth season of Fox’s hit show *Nip/Tuck* that depicted the main protagonists of the series, two plastic surgeons, in a fusion of museum and operating room, reattaching the arms of the Venus de Milo. Since her discovery in 1820, the Venus has symbolized ideal feminine beauty, and Young juxtaposed the image of Venus as the ancient paragon of beauty and modern ideals of women by considering Comte de Villiers de l’Isle-Adam’s novel *Tomorrow’s Eve* (1886). In it, a fictionalized Thomas Edison creates a female robot who resembles the Venus de Milo but speaks wise and lofty words by means of recordings from famous books placed within her chest. Over a hundred years later, the two surgeons of *Nip/Tuck* are portrayed as being able, with their surgical virtuosity, to create perfection that goes beyond the paragon of beauty that is the Venus de Milo. Young’s interesting observation showed how, one century apart, artistic representations – one literary, the other filmic – have depicted how science has been used to express men’s will to dominate and subject women to their vision of “female perfection.”

The third presentation, given by Julia Himberg, titled “*The Girls Next Door*: Television and *Playboy*’s New Woman,” analyzed the E! Network’s reality show about Hugh Hefner’s three current live-in girlfriends Holly Madison, Bridget Marquardt, and Kendra Wilkinson. Himberg argued *The Girls Next Door* challenges the idea of sexuality on television by using traditional narrative devices to naturalize its sensational subject matter. The depiction of the three girls at home in the Playboy Mansion resembles a polygamist’s enclave, and queers patriarchy’s tendencies to suppress the material, economic basis of marriage and its exploitation of women; here, lip service is paid to ideal romantic relationships based on love and affection, but the show clearly depicts an economic arrangement. Himberg points to the fact that the program provides a familiar structure for its predominantly female audience by depicting the girls not as girlfriends but as girl friends. Like such other fictional archetypes as *Sex and the City*, it features collective female protagonists, centers on female friendship, and plays with feminine identity rather than on each girl’s sexual relationship with Hefner.



Actors from *Nip/Tuck*, an FX-network drama set in a south Florida plastic surgery center



The Girls Next Door is a television series that focuses on the lives of *Playboy* founder Hugh Hefner’s three girlfriends who live with him at the *Playboy Mansion*: Holly Madison, Bridget Marquardt, and Kendra Wilkinson.

The dynamic among the three women is consistent with polygamy; marriage scholar Stephanie Coontz says that “polygamy is not so much about sex as it is about hoarding the productive and reproductive labor of women...in a society where gender roles are very rigid...some women like having a co-wife.” According to Himberg, *The Girls Next Door* employs traditional polygamy – set in the most modern, cosmopolitan and hedonistic of environments – to destabilize familial norms and the role of women in conventional, heterosexual American society.

In the final presentation, “Television Interfaces and the Gendering of Media Spaces,” Daniel Chamberlain examined how the introduction of “smart” cable and satellite boxes, the stored-access features of digital video recorders and personal portable video players, and the surge in viewing television programs on DVD have been accompanied by an increased role for intermediaries between viewers and content and how such changes have affected gender discourse of television. Effectively naturalized as part of the “evolution” of television, these

interfaces present themselves as neutral information providers and finding aids – *un-texts* or *televisual non-places* – designed to assist the viewer confronted with an expanding array of programming choices. These interfaces displace the liveness and flow of the traditional television experience and give audiences a sense of control, but, in actuality, viewers are submitting to the control of the technology that tracks what they watch and how. Even as these interfaces introduce new aesthetics, alter individuals' relationships to media, and foreground new ontologies of user customization, personalization, and control, they also threaten to screen out their own discursive context, their integration into the gendered spaces of everyday use, and the application of insights from television studies into “new media” contexts. Moreover, as these televisual interfaces, and indeed television itself, move both within and outside of the home, across laptops, mobile phones, and portable media players, they work to reconfigure the private/public dialectic in favor of a new paradigm of spatiality – the media space. Chamberlain argued that as televisual interfaces become the familiar touchstone working to reorient viewers in these newly colonized media spaces, they also refract and redefine our understanding of the gendered nature of television viewing.

Seiter opened the discussion to questions from the audience, which produced insightful comments on connections between the four papers and raised points for further investigation, such as the way shows like *Nip/Tuck* seem to explore new territories but carefully set up male doctors to mediate female desires and judge what is acceptable or not. The question was also posed as to whether or not new media technologies are changing and expanding access to sexual practices and fetishes by democratizing access, creating energy in terms of production and sharing of videos, and allowing subcultures to find each other. In closing, Seiter observed that all four presentations touched on the issue of control over technology and the media environment and that the circulation of representation and economies of fantasy are structured in a different way in new media environments.

Jennifer Porst earned an undergraduate degree in *Communications and Theatre* from the University of Notre Dame, and an M.S.Ed from Northwestern University. She spent a few years working in film production for such filmmakers as Ted Hope and Spike Jonze and is now a graduate student in the Cinema and Media Studies program at UCLA.

Review of Julia Himberg's "The Girls Next Door: Television and Playboy's New Woman" by Kelly Agpawa



Out of all the presentations that I witnessed at Thinking Gender, I found the most interesting and endearing presentation to be Julia Himberg's discussion of "*The Girls Next Door: Television and Playboy's New Woman*." In her presentation, she discussed how the television show, *The Girls Next Door*, places erotic and provocative characters in a seemingly familiar and normal environment. In doing so, the producers of the show (as well as *Playboy* itself) are challenging typical social norms and, consequently, bringing the show (as well as the business) unprecedented public attention. One of their main reasons for doing so, Himberg suggests, is that *Playboy* – through the show – is trying to recreate their image and market their “new woman.” Before I explain what *Playboy's* “new woman” is, I will first describe the three main characters of the show. First there is Holly, Hef's “true” girlfriend, and the ultimate portrayal of grace and femininity. Platinum blond and perfectly proportioned, Holly loves traditionally feminine activities such as baking, decorating eggs, and arranging gift baskets. Next is Bridget, who's a little more down to earth, somewhat ditsy, but still ultra-feminine. She loves her pets, especially her puppy, and (like Holly) embraces anything that's traditionally labeled as “girly.” Both Holly and Bridget have the look of 1950s pinup models and adhere to society's guidelines about what's appropriate for the female gender. Kendra, on the other hand, is quite a different character. Nineteen and full of spunk, Kendra is always the life of the party. She loves sports, competitions, and attention, and she steers clear of the others whenever they do anything too feminine for her taste. Kendra is also the main focus of Himberg's presentation. Like the other girls, Kendra is platinum blond and stunningly beautiful. She has the ultimate (in terms of society's expectations) physique and enough sex appeal for a whole room full of women. However, Kendra is still the target of controversy, mainly because she resists traditional gender roles and refuses to be typical. Her masculine behavior, obsession with other females and their “hot bodies,” and apparent distaste for most men (except for Hef, whom she occasionally kisses politely on the cheek) leads Himberg to the conclusion that her character is implicitly queer. Lesbianism/queerness is often defined as a rejection of femininity and “normal”

heterosexual standards, which is just what Kendra exhibits in her behavior. It is this that sets her apart from the other two women, as well as what makes Himberg believe that she is the image of *Playboy's* "new woman." *Playboy*, she believes, is trying to move away from their traditional way of marketing their product – that is, looking at women through a man's eyes – to a newer and more provocative perspective, mainly looking at women through another woman's eyes. Kendra presents this perspective repeatedly, often commenting on how hot the other girls look or how posing with other hot girls is everyone's fantasy. Ultimately, she commands the audience to look at the other women through her perspective, as a woman recognizing and appreciating the beauty of other women, a transition that *Playboy* hopes will break the heterosexual norms of society and therefore appeal to both female and male audiences across the country. This topic is significant because it shows how a very prominent business attempts to break down the typical, gendered roles that exist in society today and to move past gender stereotypes that have hindered us. It is also useful because Himberg demonstrates how one can take a seemingly "normal" character and read her from a queer perspective, thus illustrating how and what defines presupposed gender roles. Such a perspective will be appealing to straight and queer audiences, because it shows a desire to be more open about one's sexuality and encourages people to embrace the idea of a queer perspective/queer reading as well. I found this subject interesting because I am interested in analyzing how dominant female characters, in movies and on television, challenge heterosexual norms and yet still maintain their elite status and social standing – as Kendra does.



Kelly Agpawa is a second-year undergraduate student at UCLA, majoring in Sociology and Psychology. She is in the Alpha Delta Pi sorority and is currently the Director of Social Enrichment. Kelly is looking forward to pursuing a career in Public Relations or Communications within the media/entertainment industry.

Review of Allison de Fren's "The Exquisite Corpse: Representations of the Artificial Female" by Sarah Weismuller

At the "Television and Gendered Dis-Articulations" panel, Allison de Fren presented her paper entitled "The Exquisite Corpse: Representations of the Artificial Female," which takes on the subject of male fetish subcultures that exist around the fantasy of women as robots, dolls, immobilized, frozen, and so forth. In her presentation, de Fren links this fetish, often known as "A.S.F.R." (alt.sex.fetish. robots., after a now-defunct online newsgroup), to Surrealist aesthetics and mythical histories – most importantly, the story of Pygmalion. She also makes a distinction between a.s.f.r.ians and owners of lifelike sex dolls called Real Dolls, stating that the fantasy of A.S.F.R. is necessarily dependent upon the impossibility of the actual experience. De Fren also presented the first few minutes of a documentary she made on the fetish, (it was cut off, unfortunately, because of technical problems) along with images of doll sculptures by Hans Bellmer, who intended them as a protest against fascism and its fetishization of impossible human ideals.

De Fren's analysis of the a.s.f.r. fetish/subculture utilizes Sigmund Freud's theories of "the uncanny" (especially in relation to E.T.A Hoffman's *The Sandman*) as well as Terry Castle's more recent materialist and feminist theorizations on the fantastical in eighteenth-century literature and culture. Although de Fren admits to an initial confusion at and distaste for a.s.f.r., she now understands it as the result of men growing up in the wake of second-wave feminism. In her eyes, the artificial woman represents a fantasy of excess and of complete control for men whose adolescences were constrained by sexually conservative feminist ideologies. As one talking head puts it at the end of *a.s.f.r.*, the fantasy is more about "feminizing objects rather than objectifying women."

De Fren's presentation was insightful in terms of her conceptualization of fetish subcultures as culturally and temporally specific phenomenon, current products of digital media and virtual realities. Her analysis of the appeal of a.s.f.r. and the fetishization of the artificial body neglects to examine the phenomenon beyond the scope of male fetishization of female bodies. A complete consideration of the topic must take into account variable gender dynamics, even if male fetishizer and female object characterize the visible majority of the subculture.

Sarah Weismuller is an undergraduate student at UCLA, majoring in Linguistics and German, with minors in LGBT Studies and Anthropology.

Negotiating Masculinity and Sex

PERFORMING GENDER is a complex process, and importantly, many feminists suggest, vital to the perpetuation of gender inequality. Nonetheless, gendered performances are full of complexities and contradiction, often simultaneously blurring and reinforcing the line between what is understood as feminine and masculine. The body serves as a major vehicle through which the performance of gender is negotiated and shapes both meanings and relationships. This was exactly the topic of the three papers presented at the “Negotiating Masculinity and Sex” panel. Christina Coleman-Rosa of UCLA, David Benin of UCSD, and I presented current research that examines performances of masculinity and the role such performances play in shaping meanings of masculinity, sexuality, space and culture.

In “The ‘Ginga’ of ‘Machos,’ ‘Machistas,’ and ‘Malandros’: Performing Masculinity Within Capoeira,” Coleman-Rosa considered the way men negotiate gender as a strategy within *capoeira*, a Brazilian martial art that combines dance and fighting, often taking the form of a game. According to Coleman-Rosa, the players take the position of either “little black men” or “big black men,” and perform either femininity or hypermasculinity strategically to seduce and dominate the opponent. She describes the performance of gender within this game as fluid, and a process of race deference—though importantly race is never denied. For Coleman-Rosa, the performance of gender is intimately tied to meanings of race within a game that praises and reinforces culturally relative meanings of masculinity.

Benin’s presentation, “Queer Dissonance: The Gendered Performativity of Sound in Derek Jarman’s *Blue*,” focused on an analysis of Derek Jarman’s movie *Blue*, which features

an entirely blue screen with actor voice-overs narrating the story about HIV/AIDS and a man who is losing his vision because of the illness. Benin’s analysis of the movie explores the importance of voice as a gendered performance and also confronts feminist silence around HIV/AIDS. He grapples with the notion that the body is presented through voice, a voice that is representative of a marginalized queer male body with HIV/AIDS and a body that is fetishized within society as a representation of difference.

In “Appearance, Products and Practices: The Male Body Project and Its Relationship to Male Dominance,” I presented research on men’s participation in the Body Project, looking at the way men relate to images of male bodies in advertisements, the way these men talked about their desires to look like these men/models, their daily appearance routines and beauty product consumption. Such aesthetic-oriented practices have long been understood as feminine and important to the perpetuation of women’s oppression. The complexities of men’s body projects suggest that despite men’s aesthetic desires, they continue to draw very substantial boundaries between what beauty practices are feminine and masculine, and thus appropriate for men.

All three of these papers grappled with the notion of masculinity – masculinity as raced, sexualized, stigmatized, and fetishized—as a complex field of doing that is talked about and performed through body and voice. Such talk and performance situate the subjects as vehicles through which the performance of masculinity tells us something about expectations of gender. As Coleman-Rosa and I suggest, men do play with performances of femininity. Ultimately, however, these men draw a distinction between what is feminine and masculine, upholding hegemonic notions of appropriate masculinity. In addition, Benin’s work reminds us to take seriously the meaning of the body as sexualized, and that one’s simultaneously gendered and sexed body situates a person within the rungs of multiple hierarchies.



Kristen Barber is a doctoral student in Sociology at USC. Her research interests include sex and gender, sexuality, the sociology of the body and popular culture. She is author of “Sex and Power” in the *Handbook of the New Sexuality Studies* (2006) and is co-author of “The Dyadic Imaginary: Troubling

the Perception of Love as Dyadic” published in the *Journal of Bisexuality* (in press).

Movies, Mohawks, and What to Wear

by Maya Montañez Smukler

This year's Thinking Gender conference hosted over eighty presentations made by graduate students representing academic institutions all over the globe. Feminist and gender studies provide a myriad of interdisciplinary research and dialogue, from immigration to pornography, McCarthyism to romance novels. The thrill of a conference such as this one is to hear firsthand the wealth of scholarship being produced and to witness the meeting of so many sharp and creative minds. I had the great pleasure to be part of such a moment as a member of the "Making Film: The Good, the Bad, the Obscene and Unseen" panel. Moderated by Janet Bergstrom, a professor in UCLA's Critical Studies program in the Department of Film, Television and Digital Media, the presentations offered a well-rounded cinematic experience: the romantic heroine, the anti-heroine, transgressive gender and sexuality, and the politics of film production.

Traveling from Atlanta, Marla Renee Stewart, who is studying in the M.A./Ph.D. program at Georgia State University's Department of Sociology, Gender and Sexuality, presented her paper "Transgressive Gender & Sexuality Expression in Black Communities." In recent film history there has been a resurgence of Black American queer films detailing the lives of a population that has existed amidst, but largely misunderstood by, the larger Black community. By focusing on four films, two documentaries *The Butch Mystique* (Debra A. Wilson, 2003) and *The Aggressives* (Daniel Peddle, 2005), and two features *The Watermelon Woman*



(Cheryl Dunye, 1996) and *Stranger Inside* (Cheryl Dunye, 2001), Stewart's discussion tackled the topic of transgressive gender and sexuality. The presentation highlighted several of these issues such as performance of gender (particularly their female masculinity), their relations to femmes (queer feminine women), interactions in prisons, and transgender identities. As she carefully laid out, the implications of this study was to expose a previously marginalized identity and in doing so open perspectives regarding injustices or intolerances with people who transgress gender and/or sexuality norms.

Similarly, my presentation, "Working Girls: American Women Directors in the 1970s," focused on another marginalized group: women directors working in Hollywood who battled creative injustice during an era known for bold cinematic revolution and unprecedented sexual and civil rights turmoil and adjustment. In his book *Easy Riders Raging Bulls*, Peter Biskind declares that "[b]y the late '60's and early '70's, if you were young, ambitious, and talented, there was no better place on earth to be than Hollywood...[It] was the directors' decade if ever there was one." According to the Director's Guild of America between 1949 and 1979, 7,332 feature films were made with 14 directed by women. My paper considered what statistically appears to be a miracle – the few feature films directed by these women that reached a mainstream audience. Most importantly, I wanted to fill in the gaps for one of the most romanticized eras in American history and, in doing so, properly secure the legacy of its women filmmakers alongside their canonized male peers.

Shifting the discussion from behind to in front of the camera, were panelists Victoria Hueining Meng and Valerie Stulman. Meng, a student in Critical Studies here at UCLA, looked closely at how Hollywood has used the trope of romance to perform and displace its racial fears and fantasies. Her presentation, "The Martial Master's Mistresses: For-

bidden Desires and Futile Nationalism in Jet Li's Kung-Fu Films," dissected the kung-fu film icon's repeated portrayal of the conventional Chinese martial master. Too preoccupied by his fights and flights, Li's characters seem unable to give much thought to the women who love him. Victoria argues that these heroines, each of whom bears a mixed cultural heritage, personify the impossibility of imagining a unified modern Chinese identity, because the films cannot imagine these heroines as fit candidates to raise "culturally pure" children. Li's steadfast reincarnation as the martial master, then, represents the contemporary Chinese need to elegize a common cultural past as a compensation for the loss of a common cultural future. Jet Li's kung-fu films mobilize a different set of gendered iconographies to explore different historical issues, but their discursive strategies and political implications remain the same.

Also concerned with the subtext of female characters on the screen, Valerie Stulman, who is completing her M.F.A. in Creative Writing at UC Riverside's Department of Playwriting and Screenwriting, delved into Hollywood's film-noir era with "Femme/s, Film/s, Noir/e Revision/s." By looking at the movies *Laura* (1944) and *Mildred Pierce* (1945), Stulman honed in on the role of career woman; *Laura* because she wants to be one, and *Mildred Pierce* because she has to. Both characters are viewed as deviant, even as femme fatales, and are only legitimized by the filmmakers after they veer back towards traditional paths. On the other hand, *Out of the Past* (1947) presents a femme fatale who wants sexual and financial freedom at any price, even murder. This character becomes interesting to feminists precisely because she controverts the classical notion of womanhood as passive. As Stulman aptly pointed out, these roles offer glimpses of what is to come for women in our society, as people with professional lives, battling to have it all, often facing the disappointment of not being able to get

it, and consistently dealing with the limitations and inaccuracies imposed by gender stereotypes.

The topic of traditional gender expectations prompted a discussion concerning conformity: is it better for women to conform – at a job interview at a law firm, for example – by wearing business attire or run the risk of unemployment by expressing their true self? The consensus in the room was undecided. Perhaps a bit of strategic compromise would be in order: wear the traditional suit for the interview and show your tattoos once hired and the HR paperwork is signed. Stewart, a scholar with a blue-tinted mohawk, offered much inspiration.

A final inquiry from the audience touched on the timeless question almost unavoidable at such an energized gathering of feminist and gender thinkers: are we – all types of women – making any progress? The good news is that Harvard University recently elected its first woman president, an especially resonate event considering just a year ago the outgoing president questioned whether women are innately prepared to succeed in the fields of science and math. The bad news is that the university, founded in 1636, took 371 years to hire one. Whether you choose to see the glass half full or half empty, the variety of discourse it offers supplies so many of us with our livelihoods – as activists, professors, professionals, students, and even moviegoers. Whether you dress in a business suit or sport a punk-rock hairstyle, what becomes clear is that the conversation relies on the encouragement of many minds, something that the Thinking Gender conference provided in spades.



Maya Montañez Smukler has been a fan of women directors her entire life. She is currently working on a M.A. in Critical Studies at UCLA's Department of Film, Television and Digital Media.

ISSUES OF TRANSNATIONALISM AND GENDER

Panel review by Rana Sharif

Not knowing what to expect I walked in, sat down, and listened. The four panelists eloquently presented their papers: “(Re)Presenting Trauma: Interrogating Universalism in *Hiroshima Mon Amour*,” Lisa Felipe, Comparative Literature/UCLA; “Reading Silence as Resistance against a Cohesive ‘Subaltern Consciousness’ in Nawal al-Sādawi’s *Woman at Point Zero*,” Marian Gabra, Comparative Literature/UCLA; “Exiled Identity: Women Writers Renegotiating Iranian and American Identities,” Leila Pazargadi, Comparative Literature/UCLA; and “Reading Funny Foreign Lipsticks through Jihad: Understanding the Politics of Feminism in Iranian-American Women’s Autobiography,” Amy Tahani-Bidmeshki, Comparative Literature/UCLA. A story evolved with each presentation. The panelists offered compelling criticisms of monolithic interpretations of literature and of film. Convoluting any discreet understanding of gender representations in their respective works, the panelists challenged paradigms of universalism and essentialism. Their assertions forced us, the listeners, to engage as active participants with their texts. The presenters addressed issues of globalization and the limitations of transnationalism vis-à-vis the subjects of their papers. Lisa Felipe, the first presenter, mentioned something that resonates with me to this day: She stressed the necessity of “multiple differences” as sites where histories can be re-worked, re-interpreted, and re-conceptualized. Each of the panelists engaged with this same concept and, in so doing, complicated any totalizing representations of history, literature, film, and theory.

Rana Sharif is a first-year graduate student in the Women’s Studies Ph.D. program at UCLA. Her research interests include ethnic nationalisms, women of color organizing, women and Islam, and law. Her areas of interest include occupied Palestine and the greater geopolitical region of the Middle East.

Hilary Pfeifer

OREGON ARTIST KINDLY ALLOWS US TO USE HER ARTWORK, *THINKING CAP*, IN OUR PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS FOR THIS YEAR'S THINKING GENDER



Above: Some of Hilary's artwork is displayed on her website: <http://www.hilarypfeifer.com> and at the website of the Velvet Da Vinci Gallery (<http://www.velvetavinci.com/>)

Hilary Pfeifer was born in 1967 in Eugene, Oregon. Her parents ran a craft gallery for more than 25 years. It is not surprising that Hilary turned to art and began making her living as an artist in her early 20s. She has had formal arts training at the Maude Kerns Arts Center, Penland School, Haystack Mountain School of Craft, Colby College, the University of Oregon, and Oregon College of Art and Craft (B.F.A. Metals, 1999.) She is represented year-round by the Velvet da Vinci Gallery in San Francisco (<http://www.velvetavinci.com/>). She lives and maintains a studio in Portland, Oregon.

Her artwork has been shown in solo and group exhibitions, including PDX Contemporary Gallery, Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Contemporary Crafts Museum and Gallery, Center on Contemporary Art in Seattle, the Indianapolis Art Center, Velvet da Vinci Gallery, the Fuller Craft Museum, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. She has also won several awards and scholarships, including an honorable mention in the Northwest Biennial at the Tacoma Art Museum, a professional development grant from the Regional Arts and Culture Council, the Lilla Jewel Award, and an artist's residency at the Wood Turning Center in Philadelphia.

We are exceedingly grateful to Hilary for allowing us to use her *Thinking Cap* sculpture on this year's Thinking Gender posters (left), postcards, and tote bags.