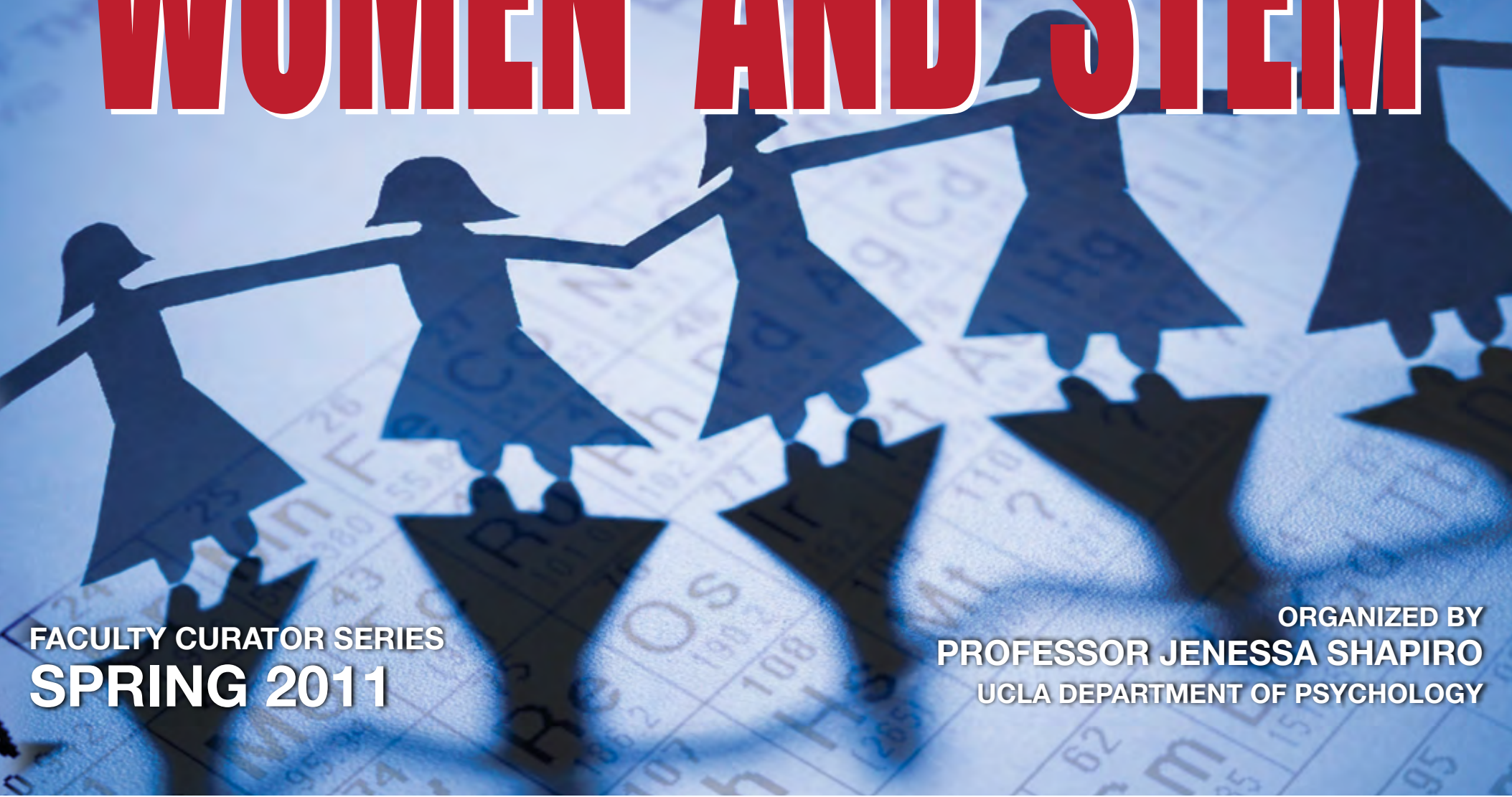


CSWupdate
MARCH 2011

How Stereotypes Undermine the Interest and
Success of Women in Science, Technology,
Engineering, and Math

WOMEN AND STEM



FACULTY CURATOR SERIES
SPRING 2011

ORGANIZED BY
PROFESSOR JENESSA SHAPIRO
UCLA DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

march 2011

CSWupdate

WOMEN and STEM
FACULTY CURATOR SERIES
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Keep it Green!

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WOMEN and STEM



Organized by Professor Jenessa Shapiro, this Faculty Curator Speaker Series addresses why women are underrepresented and underperforming in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math

Women earn only 25% of the Ph.D.s in the physical sciences and 15% in engineering. Furthermore, women make-up only 3-4% of engineering associate professors and 6% of physical sciences associate professors. In the workforce, although women constitute half of all employees, they only make-up one-fifth of the nation's scientific and technical workers. Why are women underrepresented and under-performing in science and technology fields? This spring's CSW Faculty Curator series titled, "Women and STEM: How

stereotypes undermine the interest and success of women in science, technology, engineering, and math," addresses this question from a perspective that is very different than what we traditionally hear in mainstream media. That is, previous explanations have focused on biological or socialization factors that may contribute to these disparities. In contrast, this curator series will focus on a phenomenon called *stereotype threat*.

Stereotype threat points to the causal role situational cues play in undermining women's

motivation and performance in STEM fields. Stereotype threat research has found that simple cues in STEM environments, such as identifying one's gender before taking a standardized test or being the only woman in a class, office, or department can highlight the negative stereotypes associated with women in these domains. As a result, women are at risk for distracting stereotype-relevant thoughts that interrupt concentration and undermines learning and performance on a range of activities, including standardized tests. This spring's curator series will bring to

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UCLA leaders in the field of stereotype threat. These speakers will present research demonstrating the emergence of stereotype threat in STEM domains, the mechanism that account for this phenomenon, and the ways in which we can intervene to prevent the deleterious influence of stereotype threat.

STEVEN SPENCER



Known for his essential work in identifying stereotype threat as a challenge to women's performance in STEM fields, Steven Spencer, Professor of Psychol-

ogy at the University of Waterloo, will speak on April 21th. His talk is titled "A Chilly Climate for Women in STEM: How It Develops and How It Can Be Overcome." His research focuses on motivation and the self, particularly on how these factors affect stereotyping and prejudice. He examines how implicit processes that are outside of people's awareness affect people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. In examining stereotyping and prejudice, he looks at how threats to the self-concept can lead to stereotyping and prejudice, and how this stereotyping and prejudice affects subsequent feelings about the self. Professor Spencer's publications include *Motivated Social Perception: the Ontario Sympo-*

sium, Vol. 9, co-edited with Steven Fein, Mark P. Zanna, and James M. Olson (Psychology Press, 2002); "Implicit Self-Esteem, Explicit Self-Esteem and Defensiveness" (co-authored C.H. Jordan) in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (2003); and "When Do Stereotypes Come to Mind and When Do They Color Judgment? A Goal-Based Theory of Stereotype Activation and Application" (co-authored with Z. Kunda) in *Psychological Bulletin* (2003).

TONI SCHMADER



Toni Schmader, Professor of Psychology at the University of British Columbia, will speak on "Stereotype Threat Deconstructed" on April 28th. Professor Schmader is known for groundbreaking

work uncovering the processes that account for reduced performance in stereotype threatening situations: taxed working memory. Her work has focused on the cognitive, affective, and motivational processes that are altered by stereotype threatening situations and the ways in which important working memory resources are hijacked by distracting stereotype relevant concerns. Her publications include "Gender Identification Moderates Stereotype Threat Effects

on Women's Math Performance" in the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* (2002); "A Meta-Cognitive Perspective on Cognitive Deficits Experienced in Intellectually Threatening Environments" (co-authored with C. E. Forbes, S. Zhang, and M.J. Johns) in *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 2009); and "Killing Begets Killing: Evidence from a Bug-Killing Paradigm that Initial Killing Fuels Subsequent Killing" (co-authored with Andy Martens, Spee Kosloff, Jeff Greenberg, and Mark J. Landau) in *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* (2007).

NILANJANA DASGUPTA



Nilanjana Dasgupta, Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, will speak on May 12. Her talk is titled "STEM-

ing the Tide: Female Experts and Peers Enhance Young Women's Interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics." At the forefront of research on implicit stereotypes, Dasgupta investigates experimentally how mental processes influence attitudes, beliefs, and behavior without people's awareness or control. Her recent projects focus on specifying factors that create and magnify stereotypes and prejudice without people's awareness or control, examining their influence

on behavior, and developing strategies aimed at undermining such biases. Her publications include "Implicit Measures of Social Cognition: Common Themes and Unresolved Questions" in the *Journal of Psychology* (2010); "Mechanisms Underlying Malleability of Implicit Prejudices and Stereotypes: The Role of Automacity Versus Cognitive Control" in *Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination* (Psychology Press, 2009); and "Color Lines in the Mind: Unconscious Prejudice, Discriminatory Behavior, and the Potential for change" in *Twenty-First Century Color Lines: Multiracial Change in Contemporary America* (Temple University Press, 2008).

JOSHUA ARONSON



Joshua Aronson, Professor of Applied Psychology at New York University, will speak on "Stereotypes and the Nurture of Intelligent Thought and Behavior" on May

19th. Professor Aronson, along with Claude Steele, first introduced the theory of stereotype threat in 1995. Since then, Professor Aronson has continued to explore the role of stereotype threat in undermining the performance of women in STEM fields in addition to developing and testing stereotype threat interventions

both in the lab and in the field. Professor Aronson's publications include "Stereotype Threat and the Intellectual Test Performance of African Americans" (co-authored with CM Steele), *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (1995); *Improving Academic Achievement: Impact of Psychological Factors on Education*, Academic Press (Academic Press, 2002); *Readings about the Social Animal*, co-edited with Elliot Aronson (Worth Publishers, 2007); and "Stereotypes and the Fragility of Human Competence, Motivation, and Self-Concept" (with co-author Claude M. Steele) in *Handbook of Competence & Motivation* (Guilford, 2005).

Jenessa Shapiro is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at UCLA. She received her Ph.D. from Arizona State University in 2008. Her article, "Different Groups, Different Threats: A Multi-Threat Approach to the Experience of Stereotype Threats," is scheduled to be published in *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. She received a CSW Faculty Curator Grant to organize this speaker series.



Casí Como Madres

BY KRISTIN ELIZABETH YARRIS

Casí Como Madres

GRANDMOTHER CAREGIVERS “MOTHERING AGAIN” IN NICARAGUAN FAMILIES OF TRANSNATIONAL MIGRANT MOTHERS

GRANDMOTHERS: A LINK IN GLOBAL CARE CHAINS

IN THE INTRODUCTION to their edited volume *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy*, Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild describe how the globalization of women’s work has led to the formation of global care chains, through which women from impoverished countries of the Global South migrate in order to occupy jobs caring for children, households, and families of women in wealthy nations of the industrialized, Global North (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2002:4). The analyses of Ehrenreich, Hochschild and other feminist scholars have illuminated how women’s migration is essential

to upholding transnational structures of social reproduction, which in turn support economic systems and reinforce global social inequalities (Yeates 2005). Around the globe, immigrant women engage in underpaid, labor-intensive work in the domestic or service sectors, and many experience the additional marginalization and vulnerability of their undocumented status. Migrant mothers engage in the particular sacrifices of leaving children behind and subsequently sending large proportions of their income back home over periods of potentially prolonged absence.

While making important contributions to our understanding of transnational social reproduction, the existing literature on mother migration has left largely unaddressed the question of

who cares for children “back home” in migrant-origin countries. My dissertation research aims to fill this gap through an exploration of the experiences of grandmother caregivers in Nicaraguan families of transnational mother migrants. Moving beyond merely structural or political-economic accounts of migration, I am interested in what anthropologist Caroline Brettell calls “the lived experiences of migration” (Brettell 2002:224); in other words, in the ways mother migration reconfigures family life and relations of care among families “left behind” in sending countries such as Nicaragua. Throughout my dissertation, I foreground the relational, interpersonal, and emotional dimensions of migration as evidenced through the lives of grandmothers and the children in their care.

NICARAGUAN (TRANSNATIONAL) MOTHER MIGRATION

MY DISSERTATION is based on eleven months of ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Managua, Nicaragua's capital city, and three rural departamentos.¹ All the families participating in my study were composed of a grandmother who had assumed primary caregiving responsibilities for one or more children after a mother (or father, for comparison purposes) had migrated. To give a brief background, contemporary migration from Nicaragua is motivated primarily by economic "push" factors: namely, chronic poverty, un- and underemployment, and low wages. Women currently make up over half of all Nicaraguan migrants, mirroring patterns prevalent throughout Latin America (Pessar 2005). Principal destinations for Nicaraguan migrants include: Costa Rica, Panamá, and other Central American nations, along with the United States and Spain. Like female migrants globally, Nicaraguan women usually find work as domésticas or in the service sector in destination countries. To give one example of the wage inequalities that "pull" Nicaraguans abroad: a woman working as a doméstica in San José, Costa Rica might make \$500/month; whereas for the same work in Managua, Nicaragua, she would be paid the minimum wage salary of approximately \$150/month. The reasons mothers leave children behind when they

While making important contributions to our understanding of transnational social reproduction, the existing literature on mother migration has left largely unaddressed the question of who cares for children "back home" in migrant-origin countries.

migrate are complex but include the risks of illicit border crossings and immigration policies that place documented (“legal”) migration out of reach for most migrants. When Nicaraguan mother migrants leave children behind, they usually depend on the caregiving support of extended female kin such as grandmothers. In fact, having a grandmother willing and able to assume caregiving responsibilities may facilitate a mother’s initial migration decision (Centeno Orozco and Gutiérrez Vega 2007).

GRANDMOTHER CAREGIVERS IN TRANSNATIONAL FAMILIES

IN THIS ARTICLE, I provide a necessarily brief overview of grandmother’s experiences of “mothering again” for another generation of (grand)children in Nicaraguan families of migrant mothers. Despite the fact that grandmothers assume caregiving for children over often-prolonged periods of mothers’ absence (the mean duration of migration for families in my study was 2.5 years, with a range of 6 months to 12 years), grandmothers’ roles as surrogate mothers are tenuous and precarious. In what follows, I illustrate this point using the example of Aurora, a grandmother who cared for two granddaughters “como si fueran su madre” (as if I were their mother) after their mother migrated to Spain.

Before going on, it’s important to clarify that, although my focus is on the lived experiences of families “left behind” by contemporary transnational migration, I in no way intend to fault Nicaraguan mothers who make the decision to migrate in order to support children and families “back home”. The economic necessity pushing mothers to migrate is recognized by all the grandmothers in my study (in addition to most of the children I interviewed). Furthermore, all the families in my study regularly received remittances sent by mother migrants, which average between \$100 and \$500 per month. Grandmothers receive, manage, and allocate these remittances on three main priorities related to children’s care: 1) food, 2) education, and 3) health care. This finding from my research reflects what other migration scholars have suggested, which is that mother migrants remit a larger portion of their income more regularly over time than fathers (Orozco, Paiewonsky, and Domínguez 2008).

MOTHERING AGAIN FOR CHILDREN OF MIGRANTS

GRANDMOTHERS VIEW their caregiving for children of migrant mothers as an extension of their roles as mothers across the generations. Further, grandmothers frame their reproductive responsibilities at home as a sacrifice

parallel to that made by mothers who migrate abroad in order to economically support households. Grandmothers experience caring for grandchildren as being “como una madre” (“like a mother”) because they engage in all the reproductive activities essential to sustaining children’s welfare in mothers’ absence. Evelyn Glenn has defined social reproduction as “the array of activities and relationships involved in maintaining people both on a daily basis and intergenerationally”, which involves activities such as purchasing and preparing food, maintaining household cleanliness, providing care and emotional support, and maintaining kin and community ties (Glenn 1992:1). The grandmothers in my study not only engage in all of these reproductive activities, but also form strong emotional ties with the (grand)children in their care as part of their “mothering again” for children of migrant mothers.

Grandmother caregiving in migrant mother families is evidence of the ways kinship relations reflect dynamic, historically-situated processes of “family making” (Leinaweaver and Seligmann 2009:1). Grandmothers’ surrogate motherhood can be understood as a cultural response to the political and economic insecurity that has resulted in the increasingly widespread migration of Nicaraguan mothers. Furthermore, I argue that grandmother caregiving in Nicaraguan transnational families offers an ethnographic

Because mother migration is assumed to be a temporary response to economic hardship, grandmothers negotiate their surrogate motherhood within the uncertainty of the future for transnational family life....For this reason, despite the investments grandmothers make in caring for (grand)children in migrant mothers' absence, their roles as surrogate mothers are precarious.

example of what anthropologists working in various cultural settings have referred to as “non-exclusive maternity” or “multiple childcare” (Seymour 2004). As grandmothers assume responsibilities for the daily reproductive activities culturally assigned to mothers, and (biological/ migrant) mothers work abroad to economically support children, the responsibilities of mothering are shared (albeit not necessarily equally) across national borders between these two generations of women.

PRECARIOUSNESS OF MOTHERING ROLES

Because mother migration is assumed to be a temporary response to economic hardship, grandmothers negotiate their surrogate motherhood within the uncertainty of the future for transnational family life; specifically, the possibility of mother return (to Nicaragua) or child reunification with mothers (in destination countries). For this reason, despite the investments grandmothers make in caring for (grand) children in migrant mothers' absence, their roles as surrogate mothers are precarious. During my fieldwork, after observing the close emotional ties between grandmothers and the children in their care, I was often surprised that grandmothers would insist “no hay como el amor de la madre” (there's nothing like a mother's love).

In making this claim, grandmothers are reflecting the ideological primacy of the mother-child tie in Nicaraguan culture, even while their own practices of loving care illustrate the importance of multiple mothering.

This apparent contradiction, between (grand) motherhood in practice and grandmothers' assertions about the irreplaceability of (biological/migrant) mothers, is one I continue to analyze in my research. Nonetheless, I have come to view grandmothers' claims about the importance of mothers' physical and emotional presence in children's lives as a broader lament about the ways that transnational migration is transfiguring Nicaraguan family relationships and undermining cultural expectations for family life. As grandmothers, the women participating in my study find themselves in a life stage when they would normally expect to receive support from their adult daughters. However, mother migration makes this cultural expectation impossible and, instead of receiving support, grandmothers find themselves responsible for raising another generation of children. Thus, grandmothers living with the consequences of mother migration inevitably experience a certain amount of disruption to their expectations for "unidad" (unity) and "solidaridad" (solidarity) in family life.

GRANDMOTHER SACRIFICE: AURORA'S CASE

THE TENUOUSNESS of grandmothers' roles as surrogate mothers is foregrounded in the face of children's potential "reunification" with mothers in destination countries, as illustrated in the case of Aurora. Aurora cared for her two granddaughters, aged 8 and 12, since their mother Elizabeth (Aurora's daughter) migrated to Spain two years prior. Elizabeth worked as a doméstica, and sent back nearly half her monthly earnings to Aurora to cover the costs of caring for her children. Like other women in my study, Aurora insisted that remittance money "casi no se ajusta" ("barely makes ends meet"), which I argue is a way for grandmothers to distance themselves from social stereotypes that claim they are motivated to care for grandchildren by money rather than love. Also like other grandmothers, Aurora feels a responsibility to maintain the emotional connection between herself, her daughter, and her granddaughters despite the distance and time that characterize transnational family life. Thus, during the two years of Elizabeth's absence, Aurora made sure her granddaughters regularly communicated with their mother via telephone and internet. Aurora herself became accustomed to the everyday routines involved with raising her granddaugh-

ters, which she told me gave her a renewed sense of energy and purpose in her life. Aurora described these routines this way:

I felt good because I had their affection and during the time that I had them, I had a routine of getting up in the morning to send them off to school every day. I felt good. In the morning one of the girls went to school, and I got up at four-thirty to make her breakfast, her lunchbox. She took her lunch, and I got her ready, bathed her, dressed her, and took her to the bus stop. Then I woke her sister up at nine or ten to give her a bath... and I dressed her, because they [her granddaughters] had gotten used to me and wanted me to do it.

While these everyday routines of care strengthened the emotional connection between Aurora and her granddaughters, and even though she felt she was "como una madre" (like a mother) to her granddaughters, Aurora was willing to relinquish her role as surrogate mother when Elizabeth told her she was going to "reunify" with her daughters. In fact, Aurora facilitated her granddaughters' migration to Spain, processing necessary paperwork for their Nicaraguan passports and obtaining permission to travel from their (reluctant and resistant) father.

I had occasion to interview Aurora within a week of her granddaughters' departure, and found her visibly grieving. Through tears, Aurora

told me she was “contando los días” (counting the days) since the girls had left, that she was crying after her granddaughters just like she cried after her daughter migrated, and that she was feeling the same “vacío” (emptiness) all over again. Still, Aurora viewed her emotional pain as a sacrifice necessary to facilitate her granddaughters’ reunification with their mother. Aurora was also receiving moral support from the girls, with whom she had already “chatted” using a webcam and internet connection, and who told her, “Don’t cry because we’re going to be happy.” In this moment, so soon after her granddaughters’ departure, Aurora’s grief spills over time such that her granddaughters’ recent departure encompasses the loss of her daughter two years prior, and with the same result: that Aurora is left to cope with the emotional consequences of two generations of migration.

I have come to understand the lived experiences of grandmothers like Aurora to exemplify the precariousness of grandmothers’ roles as surrogate mothers in transnational families. Grandmothers sacrifice their roles as being “como una madre” and their emotional connection to (grand)children when faced with the potential of children’s reunification with their (biological/migrant) mothers. Grandmothers make this sacrifice for the same reason that mothers engage in the sacrifice of migration: because Nicaraguan women across the generations are

willing to give of themselves for the sake of their children. Still, while scholars have focused on the sacrifices of migrant mothers, much more attention is needed on the roles of grandmothers in migrant-sending countries like Nicaragua who assume the responsibilities of child rearing, ensuring social reproduction and maintaining cultural continuity in spite of the disruptive potential of transnational migration.

Kristin Yarris is a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology. She received a B.A. in Sociology and Anthropology from Lewis & Clark College and then worked as a social worker, youth counselor, and community organizer for nonprofit, community-based organizations before returning to graduate school. She received MPH/MA in Community Health Sciences and Latin American Studies at UCLA. Her dissertation research project is titled “Left Behind: Understanding the Consequences of Mother Migration for Health and Well Being among Nicaraguan Families.”

Author’s note: My dissertation fieldwork was supported by a Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant from the National Science Foundation and by the Fulbright Institute for International Education. I also am grateful for the support of a CSW Jean Stone Dissertation Fellowship.

Photo credit: Photo by author, 2009.

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MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT AND THE POLITICS OF PREGNANCY

Childbirth and Confinement

When Mary Wollstonecraft developed puerperal fever after the birth of her second daughter in 1797, nothing could have been done to save her, given the state of both female midwifery and a professionalized male medical practice.¹ After an otherwise normal delivery under the care of Mrs. Blenkinsop, her midwife, a problem suddenly arose—Wollstonecraft’s womb had retained the placenta. Several hours went by, and when Wollstonecraft still hadn’t expelled the afterbirth, Mrs. Blenkinsop suggested calling in a male practitioner, standard practice at a time when female midwives were not permitted to wield forceps or other

1. Vivien Jones, “The Death of Mary Wollstonecraft,” *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 20, no. 2 (1997): 188.

gynecological tools or trusted during emergency situations. The first physician to arrive was Dr. Poignand, who, with unwashed hands, extracted the placenta in several pieces and then went away.² By the time a second physician, Dr. Clarke, arrived on the scene (sent for because Wollstonecraft had grown worse rather than better), the damage had already been done. Had he arrived earlier, he might have prevented Dr. Poignand’s forceful extraction of the placenta, which could have prevented the ensuing infection that killed Wollstonecraft; Dr. Clarke, after all, was a disciple of the greatest obstetricians of the age, Thomas Denman and William

2. William Godwin, *Memoirs of the Author of “A Vindication of the Rights of Woman”*, ed. Gina Luria (New York: Garland, 1974), 176.



Mary Wollstonecraft, by John Opie,
via Wikimedia Commons

Hunter, who both warned practitioners against manually removing the placenta. It was under this unfortunate set of circumstances that, as Paul Youngquist puts it, Wollstonecraft's body became the site of a losing battle between rival obstetric practices, a battle that pitted interventionist and non-interventionist male physicians against one another.³

Youngquist also points out, however, that this battle did not involve the voice of the midwife who had attended Wollstonecraft's labor from the very beginning,⁴ a silence that, while not surprising, is nevertheless troubling. Wollstonecraft's choice of a female birth attendant was a rather unusual one for a woman of middle-class status in 1797, since, according to Jean Donnison, the eighteenth century had witnessed the advance of the man midwife "from being merely an attendant on the emergencies of childbirth to gaining a hold on the greater part of the best-paid midwifery."⁵ Despite a fair amount of public backlash against the indecency of introducing men into the lying-in chamber, the male accoucheur had gained an unprecedented popularity in England by the end of the century, particularly amongst the nobility and upper classes. Given the hostile climate toward female practitioners in 1797,

3. Paul Youngquist, *Monstrosities: Bodies and British Romanticism* (Minneapolis: U of Minneapolis P, 2003), 157.

4. Youngquist, *Monstrosities*, 157.

5. Jean Donnison, *Midwives and Medical Men* (London: Heinemann, 1977), 42.

which was also the year in which the last midwifery manual penned by a woman was published, Wollstonecraft's preference for a female midwife can be read as a political statement, a refusal "to unthinkingly give [her] body up to man midwives and obstetrical medicine."⁶

I have provided a brief discussion of Wollstonecraft's untimely end because it sets the stage for British gynecological science at the close of the eighteenth century, illustrating in a graphic way the contending forces vying for control of the pregnant body. One physician reaches into Wollstonecraft's vagina and forcefully pulls the placenta, one piece at a time, from her womb with his bare hands; the other, if he had had his way, would have forced her to wait, passively, until Nature decided to yield it up to him. In either case, men had, by the time of Wollstonecraft's death, become the most trusted practitioners in the lying-in chamber, whether their methods were considered advisable (as Dr. Clarke's) or unadvisable (as Dr. Poignand's). Even though most competent female midwives, had they been consulted, would undoubtedly have adopted Dr. Clarke's watch-and-wait mentality in Wollstonecraft's case, their word alone was no longer enough—a male physician was now deemed necessary to interpret the female body. The increasingly long and complex male-authored midwifery manuals published during the latter half of the

6. Youngquist, *Monstrosities*, 156.



Eighteenth-century gynecological instruments. By the time of Wollstonecraft's death, men had become the most trusted practitioners in the lying-in chamber, and male physicians were deemed necessary to interpret the female body.

WRONGS
OF
WOMAN.

CHAP. I.

ABODES of horror have frequently been described, and castles, filled with spectres and chimeras, conjured up by the magic spell of genius to harrow the soul, and absorb the wondering mind. But, formed of such stuff as dreams are made of, what were they to the mansion of despair, in one corner of which Maria sat, endeavouring to recal her scattered thoughts!

Surprise, astonishment, that bordered on distraction, seemed to have suspended

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eighteenth century are addressed not to the female midwife or laywoman, but rather to other male midwives and physicians who failed to acknowledge that women should have access to the body of knowledge pertaining to their own bodies.

The decline of female midwifery near the end of the eighteenth century and the diminished agency of pregnant women in the increasingly male-authored medical and imaginative literature on childbirth coincided with a sharp rise in the number of women writing more publicly about the experiences of pregnancy and female-regulated childbirths after a rather protracted mid-century silence. In my dissertation, "Literary Gestations: Giving Birth to Writing, 1720-1830," I argue that women's increasing literary output on the subjects of pregnancy and childbirth was not simply due to the fact that more women were writing and publishing at the end of the eighteenth century; rather, many women writers at this time resisted their erasure in medicine, in narratives being published about pregnancy, and in the literary marketplace.⁷ Writing about pregnancy was a way for women writers to regain control over the narratives and metaphors of pregnancy and childbirth, even if they had lost a measure of control in the lying-in chamber.

7. Women writers were also being increasingly overshadowed near the end of the eighteenth century by male authors who were more frequently appropriating the metaphors of pregnancy and maternity for literary creation and publication.

Mary Wollstonecraft's unfinished, posthumously published novel, *The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria* (1798), is just one example of late-eighteenth-century women writers' critique of pregnant women's social powerlessness. Confinement (with its implied restriction of both physical and social movement) is a recurring reality in the novel for the four pregnant women who are abused by the men who impregnated them. The central plot involves Maria, whose cruel husband has unjustly imprisoned her in a madhouse after she gives birth to her daughter. As Maria reflects on her unhappy marriage and writes an account of her life, however, she realizes that her marriage—and her pregnancy, in particular—had restricted her freedom long before she was actually confined to the madhouse. Maria's first discussion of her pregnancy as she relates her life story is what leads to her discovery that marriage is akin to being incarcerated in a prison—according to Maria, "Marriage had bastilled me for life."⁸

Because of "the partial laws enacted by men"⁹ according to which a wife is "as much a man's property as his horse, or his ass"¹⁰ and children are the property of their father, Maria has no legal recourse to protect herself, her unborn child, and her money. She

8. Mary Wollstonecraft, *The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria*, in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman and The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria*, ed. Anne K. Mellor and Noelle Chao (New York: Longman, 2007), 316-7.

9. Wollstonecraft, *Maria*, 318.

10. Wollstonecraft, *Maria*, 320.

Unfinished, *The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria* (1798) was published after Mary Wollstonecraft's death.

thus attempts to escape from her husband by confining herself, first at home,¹¹ and then in apartments belonging to various acquaintances,¹² but in the end she is apprehended shortly after she gives birth and imprisoned. This long series of confinements is an ironic reminder of the euphemistic “confinement” that pregnant women routinely underwent in preparation for childbirth; unlike the confinement of the lying-in room, however, Maria’s pre- and post-birth confinements, which have been forced upon her by men, leave her isolated and without a supportive network of women to aid her. Wollstonecraft employs the language of the lying-in chamber in her novel to emphasize that pregnancy and birth—processes formerly regulated by women—had become embodied metaphors for the institutionalized oppression of women by England’s social, legal, and medical systems.

Wollstonecraft died before she could finish *Maria*, but her notes for possible conclusions to the novel indicate that pregnancy would also play an important role in the dénouement of the narrative. Four of her five brief outlines for the continuation of the novel include a second pregnancy for Maria; in the most developed of these scenarios, a pregnant Maria

Marriage had bastilled me for life.

– Maria, *The Wrongs of Woman*

attempts suicide by ingesting an overdose of laudanum but is rescued at the last minute by her friend Jemima, who restores Maria’s supposedly dead daughter. Unlike the other potential endings for the novel, this scenario excludes men entirely, and Maria, her daughter, and Jemima will ostensibly create their own gynocentric family. No mention is made of the fate of Maria’s unborn child, but Wollstonecraft hints that the deadly effects of the drug will be avoided for the fetus and the mother, as “Violent vomiting followed” Maria’s overdose.¹³ Given this possible outcome, it is to be expected that Maria will give birth to her second child in a supportive community of women—a far different “confinement” than those forced upon her earlier in the novel.

In this context, Wollstonecraft’s decision to have a female midwife for her own lying-in becomes even more comprehensible. Choosing to be attended by a woman rather than a man was an affirmation of women’s authority over their bodies, their children, and their lives. Wollstonecraft’s choice also implied that, in the patriarchal society in which she lived, such authority could only be realized in a community of women. As the tragedy that unfolded during her own postpartum illness suggests, she was correct.

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11. Wollstonecraft, *Maria*, 320.

12. Wollstonecraft, *Maria*, 331, 333.

13. Wollstonecraft, *Maria*, 356.



lata mani

Lata Mani

ESTEEMED POSTCOLONIAL FEMINIST HISTORIAN'S TALK, ENTITLED "ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE PRESENT," PROPOSES AN ALTERNATE ONTOLOGICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL ORIENTATION

BY NASIA ANAM

MOST ACADEMICS WILL KNOW HISTORIAN LATA MANI by her seminal postcolonial feminist work, *Contentious Traditions* (University of California Press, 1998). This work analyzes colonial documents surrounding the controversial and oft-rehearsed topic of sati, or Hindu widow-immolation. It reads British policy documents against the grain, finding a complex arrangement of religious, communal, familial, and situational factors that determined each case of sati. Yet Mani's talk at UCLA on February 10, entitled "Once Upon a Time in the Present," had a decidedly philosophical, not historical, flavor. The talk, cosponsored by the UCLA "Cultures in Transnational Perspective" Mellon Postdoctoral Program, the Postcolonial Literature and Theory Colloquium, and the Center for the Study of Women, was a grand-scale proposition for an alternate ontological and epistemological orientation with the world at large. Mani's presentation was drawn from elements of a work in progress where she "weaves together contemplative writing, critical essays, and poetry." Indeed, the form of the talk—and the forthcoming book—reflect the sort of interconnected mode of being in the world she asks us to inhabit.

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The abstract of Mani’s presentation promises a lofty rumination that dwells on such abstractions as “disaggregation” and “wholeness.” “It would not be considered radical” it begins, “to propose that the world is an interdependent singular whole, of which everything is an integral, albeit complexly related, part. Yet the ways of thinking and being we have come to privilege tend to disaggregate self and phenomena from the multiple dimensions with which they are inextricably bound.” Though much of the argument of her talk was a response to the rather vague and large issue of “everything” being denied of its “inextricability” from everything else, her thesis slowly and steadily became clear through the duration of the presentation. Mani did this by anchoring her talk at a few important moments both upon concrete historical events and, more importantly, events from her own life.

Indeed, what was perhaps most remarkable about Mani’s talk was its very personal nature. She referenced the events that have occurred in her own life several times, citing a central traumatic event and its aftermath as the inspiration for this new interdisciplinary and interconnected approach to the world. In 1993, Mani suffered a major head injury as a result of a violent Southern California car chase. The process of her recovery “changed her perception,” as she puts it, somehow giving her a “palpable sense of being whole” and a sense of “communing with the essence of everything around her.” This sense of wholeness directly

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corresponded to her inability to concentrate, which made speech and the entire process of making meaning through language a challenge. Thus, in a sense, Mani’s entire semiological orientation to the world shifted as a result of her injury, and this led her to see what she understands to be a “strange malady” of contemporary life on Earth: that is, “disarticulation, disequilibrium, and dis-ease” that results from “proposing autonomy between things that are connected.” Though Mani did not site the separation of disciplines in institutions of higher education directly, one could very easily surmise that her presentation carried an implicit critique of the fragmentation and segregated disciplinarity that is a systemic part of American university.

Mani organized her talk in a non-linear fashion, punctuating it with two poems, the first entitled, “For Althusser with Love,” and the second, “On Days Like This.” Other foci included deconstructive linguistic analyses of key terms in her argument such as “inspiration,” “aggregate,” and “conscience”—all terms rooted in Greco-Roman etymologies. One audience member, during the question and answer portion of the talk, inquired as to whether her presentation might not have a different texture if she were to give it in Hindi or another subcontinental language and her answer was consistent with her overall sentiment. She noted that her argument is received very differently in different parts of the world. In Bangalore, India, where she is currently

MANI ORGANIZED HER TALK IN A NON-LINEAR FASHION, PUNCTUATING IT WITH TWO POEMS, THE FIRST ENTITLED, “FOR ALTHUSSER WITH LOVE,” AND THE SECOND, “ON DAYS LIKE THIS.” OTHER FOCI INCLUDED DECONSTRUCTIVE LINGUISTIC ANALYSES OF KEY TERMS IN HER ARGUMENT SUCH AS “INSPIRATION,” “AGGREGATE,” AND “CONSCIENCE.”

based, her audiences respond with ecological queries that concern the rapid industrialization of Indian agricultural and forested space, whereas her American audiences tend to focus on issues of community formation and academic disciplinarity. It is ecological movements that she finds to be most exemplary of an interconnected approach, “a refreshing exception to this rule” of separation between “self, other, majority, minority, urban, rural.”

One of the more intriguing moments of her talk came in Mani’s use of a historical phenomenon to demonstrate what she calls the “disaggregation” of contemporary life. Mani spoke obliquely about what Karl Marx deemed the alienation of the laborer from commodity by referring to “Taylorism,” a nineteenth-century model of production that split a task into its component parts in a series of “micro-movements to optimize efficiency.” This “linear” model of treating the human body as a tool like any other on an assembly line results, according to Mani, in a “denial of autonomy” for the worker. This, Mani argued, “crucially undermined what makes an activity satisfying” and created a “division between sentient worker and labor.” Thus, “creativity was disarticulated from work” and “what began as a way to discipline the labor process gradually became a way of life itself.” What Mani finds most problematic in this “disarticulated” relationship between product and labor is that in the post-industrial age, creativity comes to be articu-

MANI CALLED FOR A RENEWED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LABOR AND PRODUCT, EXPRESSING A DESIRE TO “SLOW DOWN, NOTICE,” AND “SAVOR OUR EXPERIENCE,” GOING ON TO SAY THAT THE “NATURAL WORLD CAN BE A MENTOR” AND “ALLY IN THIS EXPERIENCE.” SHE POINTED TO ARTISANSHIP AND CRAFTSMANSHIP AS “PRACTICES THAT DO NOT DEplete OR DISAPPOINT” BUT RATHER “NOURISH AND SUSTAIN” THE WORKER.

lated with leisure and work with drudgery. In her talk, Mani called for a renewed relationship between labor and product, expressing a desire to “slow down, notice,” and “savor our experience,” going on to say that the “natural world can be a mentor” and “ally in this experience.” She pointed to artisanship and craftsmanship as “practices that do not deplete or disappoint” but rather “nourish and sustain” the worker.

Though Mani’s argument ultimately shares a great deal with twentieth century modernist and postmodernist thought, she sought to distinguish herself from both psychoanalysis and poststructuralism. Psychoanalysis, according to Mani, is not only a move away from a holistic understanding of the world it requires individuation and differentiation. She asserted that poststructuralism, on the other hand, concerned itself with the problems of fragmentary modern existence but does not propose an alternate ontological position. Mani’s talk was decidedly programmatic and her major point of distinction from previous modes of thought was her proposal of an alternative, concrete way of relating to the world and its inhabitants moving toward a full recognition of the interconnectedness of everything with everything else.

Nasia Anam is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Comparative Literature at UCLA.

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Lata Mani

BY DEVAKA GUNAWARDENA

AFTER HER TALK AT UCLA ON FEBRUARY 10, Professor Lata Mani graciously extended her time and critical thinking to this interview and helped frame it as a conversation, rather than a didactic exposition of her work. I am grateful for both. As a continuation of her talk, this interchange refers to the problems she raised in it, but I hope it will also be accessible to those who were not present. In her talk, she discussed varied topics, from Taylorism as an industrial process to the possibly productive relationship between secular academic discourse and sacred knowledge.

Throughout her discussion, she elaborated on the twinned poles of disaggregation and interdependency. The former covers social malaise and exploitation while the latter involves

a recognition that could enable us to build a positive ethics of interaction and activism. In addition to theoretical and aesthetic work, Professor Mani has done much practical work embedded in this conception of ethics. She co-founded an organization with Indira Chowdhury and Vivek Dhareshwar called “Street Scholars,” and she continues to be active in ecological struggles in Bangalore, India.

You mentioned that we currently naturalize constructions of hierarchy while claiming to be challenging them. Could you elaborate on this paradox and its possible relation to activist practice?

I am trying to bring attention to a curious dynamic in sociopolitical critique. We may claim

that the so-called differences which ground hierarchical systems are mere social constructions. However, our discourse frequently serves to reify those very differences. Part of the challenge stems from the fact that we are required to simultaneously demonstrate the fictive basis on which hierarchy, marginality and exclusion are legitimized and with equal vehemence to highlight their reality as lived experience. The African American lesbian poet Pat Parker put the problem in this way: “Forget I’m Black. Never forget I’m Black.” We are called upon to undertake a careful balancing act and we often lose our footing.

Additionally, we may have internalized some of the very ideas, preferences, or commitments that we claim to oppose. Such enmeshments

are, as we know, quite common. Our politics may also actively involve positively affirming that which has attracted contempt or been rejected, subordinated, or demonized. This stance (even when it is adopted as an ironic strategy) also serves to lend credence to normative notions. Inverting a binary does not by itself challenge the norm. A degree of dispassion towards prevailing norms is crucial if activism or scholarship is to retain its critical edge. However, antithetical critique is often deemed sufficiently radical. Conventionalism is as much a problem on the left as it is on the right.

While contemplating systems of infinity, you added the qualification later in your talk that we do not perceive from an Archimedean point. How then are we to grasp “interdependence” as a felt and/or intellectually comprehended moment in our lives? How can the finitude of our experience enable us to comprehend the whole?

Interdependence, like gravity, is a fact of life and like gravity we may observe its operation if we are open to doing so. We already possess an analytical vocabulary that enables us to understand many dimensions of our mutuality and relatedness whether within or across species. Even so, our human centeredness, the idea of independence as freedom from

constraint and the ideal of the individual as sovereign, autonomous, and self-governing occlude our capacity to fully grasp the a priori of interdependence. We routinely fail to take account of the fact that every aspect of our lives expresses a multiplicity of interdependencies and each is itself the effect (contingent and/or conditioned) of such relationships. I refer here not just to the human subdivision but to the entire phenomenal world. Everything is a dependent effect of a dependent cause and each in turn generates further causes and effects in a near infinite process. Any analytic effort can only trace some aspects of the concatenation of cause-effect interrelations that bear on the specific question that it has set out to examine. These facts extend and deepen the idea of knowledge as situated. We discover mutuality as intrinsic to being and to the very process of knowing not merely something existing out there for us to document. The researcher begins to recognize herself or himself as a subordinate clause among others in the grammar of the universe. We have a greater kinship with poets and philosophers than is generally believed to be the case.

You frequently pointed to temporalities that make manifest spaciousness for action as opposed to the “enervating kinds of repetition” inherent in processes of disaggregation, such as Taylorism. How should we think about “spaciousness”? Is it part of a phenomenology of enchantment as opposed to a phenomenology of boredom?

Spaciousness may be described as a relaxed awareness that can heighten our capacity to notice, sense, feel, intuit, examine, investigate, ponder, cogitate, all of which are crucial to investigative procedures but equally to being fully alive. It is to be distinguished from the kind of concentration that assures its potency by actively “managing” what is in its field of vision. Spaciousness is an attentiveness that is flexible, inclusive and explicitly open to perceptual frames being liquefied or recast by the observational and experiential process. It is integrative in impulse though the purview it affords is understood to be partial and provisional. It has both an interior and exterior dimension: it is as much an introspective practice as it is a research orientation. One may even go far as to say that genuine spaciousness toward that which appears as external to oneself depends on a similar generosity toward all aspects of one’s own self. It is a way of being in the world that makes one conscious of its mystery, richness, unpredictability and

1. Professor Mani’s phrase.

surprises. This is a necessary supplement to our comprehension of the regularities (assuring as well as dispiriting) that characterize the social world we inhabit and which we have set out to examine. In that sense it may be described as an epistemology that re-enchants the world. But this kind of spaciousness is predicated on embracing the temporalities authentic to a given phenomenon or process. When we speed up or short circuit processes (in the way we organize work or life activity, for example) we create conditions that facilitate dissatisfaction and boredom.

Drawing the previous question in another direction you mentioned the rise of technology and speed, and you said that social psychologists have done productive work studying the emotional and cognitive effects of these phenomena. What could be a related program of research for Cultural Studies?

The question of how technology is reshaping our lives is deeply intertwined with other aspects of contemporary culture. As an interdisciplinary field Cultural Studies is thus uniquely positioned to study the conceptual and empirical dimensions of its effects across a range of domains. This is crucial to ensuring that technology alone is not made to bear the burden and responsibility for broader socio-cultural developments. As we know technol-

ogy both reflects such trends and makes its own singular and defining contribution to them. Further, subjectivity has been a core concern of Cultural Studies. Subjectivity is a more supple and multidimensional concept than the mental health categories typically drawn upon by psychologists who have generated most of the research on the impact of technology on users.

Has disaggregation always existed, or is it embodied in a historical moment? If the latter, do you make a weak or strong correlation between disaggregation and industrialism? Or, on a different level, is disaggregation less a part of "history" than the permanent possibility?

Disaggregation names the failure to perceive the integral nature of the phenomenal world: the relationships between humans and the rest of the natural world, mind-body-heart-spirit, self and so-called other etc. Such interrelationships are complex, multiply mediated and often entangled in the normative structures and relations of power that characterize a given historical moment. When we ignore, forget, deny or in other ways fail to see and act on the basis of our foundational mutuality we act on a basis that disaggregates. In this sense disaggregation is as you put it "a permanent possibility." The industrial revolution and the

perceptual shifts that enabled it dramatically intensified disaggregation, deepened its scope and in some domains altered its character. But prior epistemologies were equally vulnerable. The long duree of gender and caste discrimination would be a case in point.

Does reflection on interdependency necessarily precede ethical action?

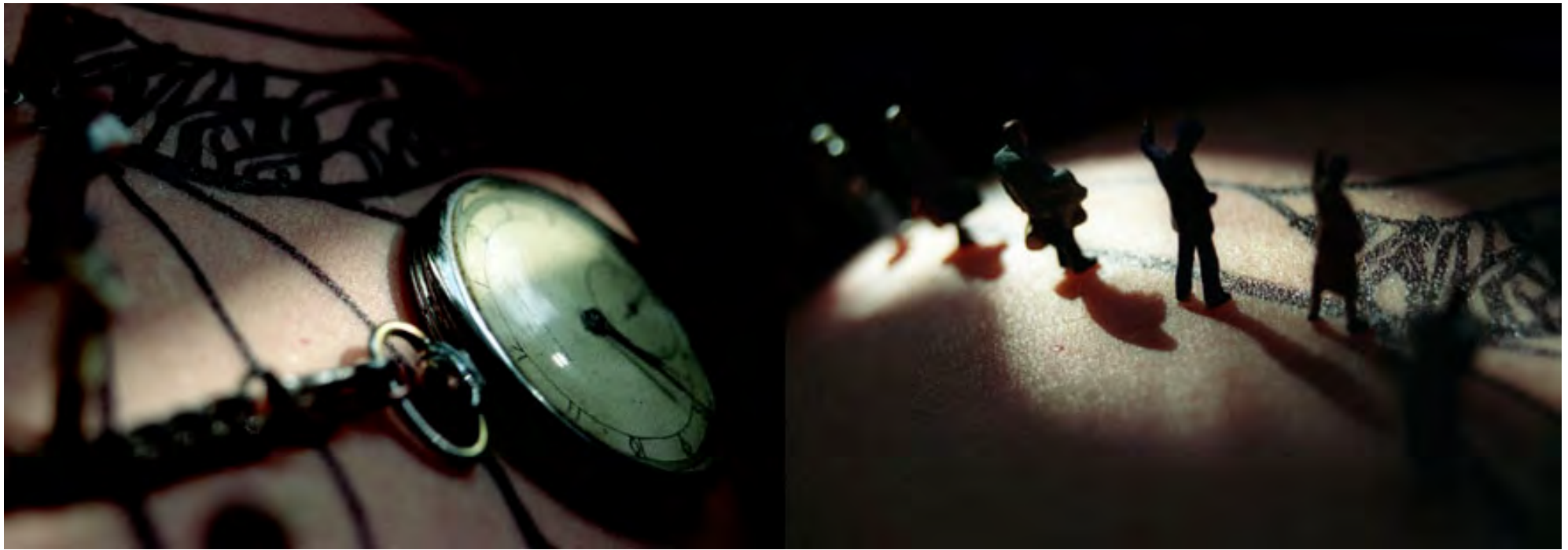
To the degree that ethical action is implicitly concerned with consequences it cannot evade the issue of interrelatedness. However it is the proposed and implied interrelationships that ground a given conception of ethics that tell us something about its politics.

Devaka Gunawardena is a graduate student in the Department of Comparative Literature at UCLA.

GENESIS PROJECT AS A MODEL OF GENDER STUDY RESEARCH

BY OKSANA CHEPELYK





AN ARTIST LECTURE AT THE FOWLER MUSEUM AND

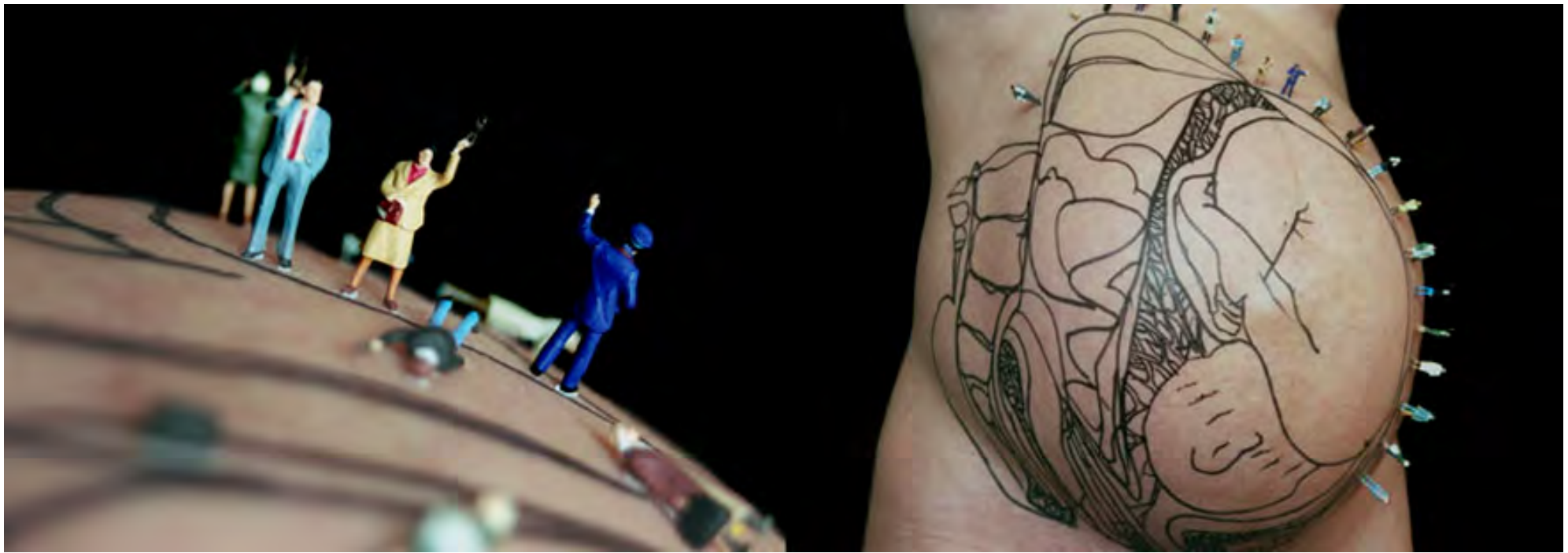
exhibition at UCLA Broad Art Center, “Genesis project as a model of gender study research” took place on February 10, with support from UCLA Design | Media Arts Department, Art | Sci Center at UCLA, and the UCLA Center for the Study of Women. “Genesis” is the continuation of the multimedia “Origin” ArtsLink Award winning project, which was shown in New York (2006), Santa Fe (2007), Yekaterinburg (2009), and Sarajevo (2010). The project is structured as a double helix with bases lying horizontally between them that incorporate gender, time, space, information flows, statistics, relational

aesthetics,¹ networking process,² science, reproductive techniques, commercialisation and the human being. It addresses issues of relations between migration and social development with economic, ecological, demographic and ethical problems. These units as the genes contain an open reading frame that can be transcribed, as well as *regulatory sequences* such as promoters and enhancers, which control the transcription of the open reading frame of social sphere.

The title of the project refers to the Book of Genesis—from Ancient Greek Γένεσις, meaning “birth, origin,”³ and from Hebrew תְּיִשְׁאָרֵב,

(B’reishit), meaning “in the beginning”⁴—which is the first book of the Hebrew Torah and of the Christian Old Testament.

“Genesis” is a multimedia installation that examines the genetic currency of the nation, through social sculpture. This project is about collaboration with volunteers (parents of babies) over a few years, thus linking social relations and art. Social sculpture lifts the aesthetic from its confines within a particular sphere or media, relocating it in a collective, imaginative work space in which we can see, rethink, and reshape our lives according to our creative potential. The term *social sculpture*



was coined by Joseph Beuys to refer to creative acts that would engage the community and affect the world around it.⁵ Collective creativity opens new opportunities, being a method of research and analysis of objective conditions where the push to work is a necessity, and not just imagination of the author.⁶ Social sculpture operates through projects having an explicit awareness of local place and time. Because of the demographic profile, economic status, and geographic factors of a community, the artworks deal with a variety of issues that take into account political, economic, and ecological aspects and features of urban development as

it relates to issues of displacement, economic stratification, and class division. This project presented a projection of a California birth rate monitor above a public space at UCLA on an inflatable balloon. A video image of a baby changed when a birth signal was received via Internet, approximately every minute. The images of newly born children of different origins create a collective image of a baby, transforming a "bio cell" into a "human planet." The invisible part of the project is the most important, because it is a network, established between the parents, who participated in the project, which is still ongoing. According to Giorgio

Agamben, "to show within a new planetary mankind some qualities which would guarantee its survival, to remove a thin barrier which separates false media advertising from a faultless external surface of the communications itself,—this is a task of our generation."⁷ This project refers to the concept of the "noosphere" from Volodymyr Vernadsky.⁸ Noosphere (derived from the Greek: noos, "mind," and sphaira, "sphere"), according to Vernadsky, denotes the "sphere of human thought." The noosphere is the third in a succession of phases of development of Earth. According to his theory, culture, which can accumulate energies and to prevent





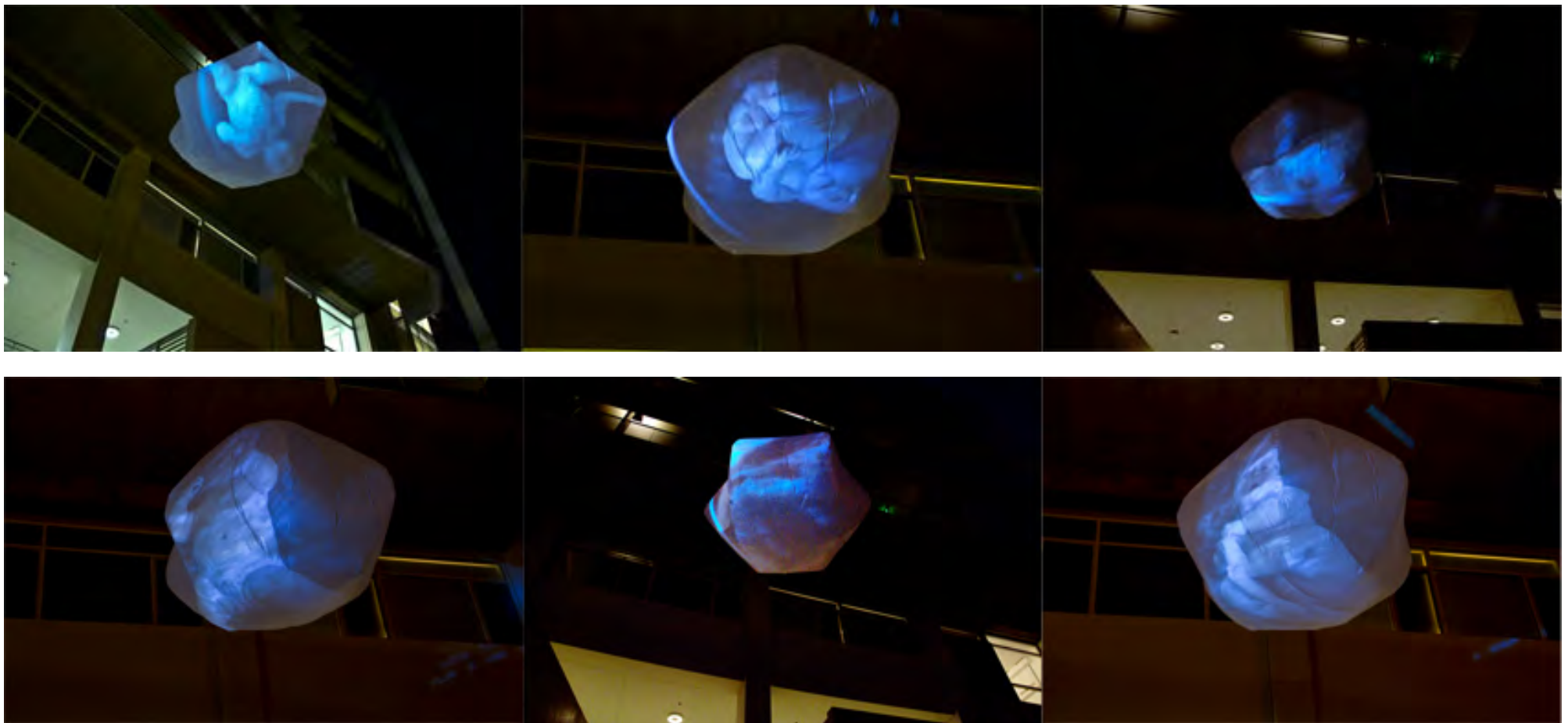
the entropy processes in the universe, is the original runback of energy that is accumulating on Earth and is carried out into space while the creative act of humans can “kindle” consciousness and concentrate intellectual and emotional energy and to create the individual power fields of space and time. Through a new method of communicative visual media, the Genesis project articulates the various readings that are modeled and refers to the conflict between power immorality and responsibility for the genetic fund of the country, to economic, ecological, demographic, and migration issues, and to the ethical problem of resource sharing.

The Genesis project uses a real-time data stream to monitor new births, which triggers changes in the projected video images. Images of babies are displayed from a data base that was compiled from families around the world.

The image changes every 2 minutes in New York, every 20 minutes in New Mexico, every 1.5 minutes in Ukraine, and, on average, every 1 minute in California. Thus the Genesis project produces unique installations in each region of the world where it has been installed. Every birth echoes with an audio splash obtained from an ultrasound scan of human arteries.

The documentation of the Genesis project is on display at Art | Sci Centre CNSI Gallery at UCLA from March 10 to 31. Presenting the project as a prototype without the real-time data stream allows it to reveal another layer that refers to the fact that the technologies being used in this project were developed to gather data and facilitate military targeting in war. It was not developed to stream data about life or births. So, the project can also articulate an anti-war message.

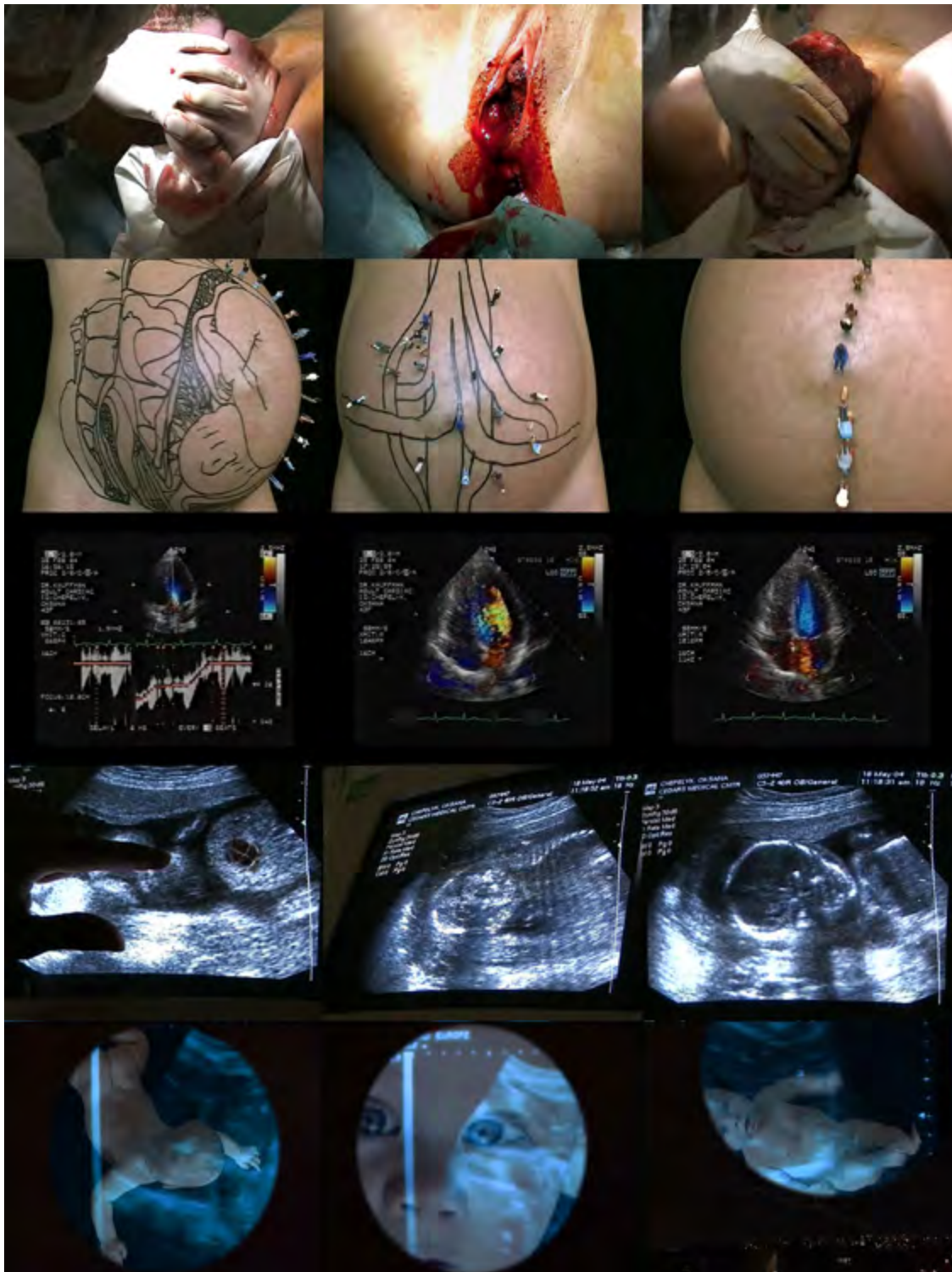
The project also examines the woman’s body in a multidimensional micro/macro reading. The curved lines of the body reveal its consonance with the Ukrainian *pysanka*, a philosophical symbol of “origin.” The photographs (shown here) feature contemporary ornaments, consisting of tattoos and mise-en-scène played out on the body of a pregnant woman. These allude to civilizational and existential catastrophes. The miniature people on the surface of the mother’s belly-sphere form an image of the field of civilization on planet Earth. My film “Chronicles of Fortinbras” film, which employs a feminist discourse, is based on the essay collection of the same title by Oksana Zabuzhko, author of the autobiographical prose work entitled *Field Research on Ukrainian Sex* (1996). The film interprets the writer’s view of national consciousness in a timeless cultural environ-



ment with an associative fabric of words and expressive images. The imaginary mythological space of the studied phenomenon is constructed from metaphorical actions and performances, assemblages of past events and excerpts from historical films. It depicts wide-ranging manipulations with the female body that consequentially loses its one-time attributes. Endeavoring to begin everything anew, the body, in the shape of a social fabric, moves beyond

the boundaries of its ontologically characteristic functions. It thus also evokes Shevchenko's approach to the female essence, represented by the female body (the body of culture), tormented and desecrated here by repugnant figures. In the words of Mary Kelly, "in the history of art Oedipus's dramas unfold between fathers and sons—on the body of mother."¹⁰ The latter symbolizes male totality—the source of the Ukraine's passive fate, both past and present.

And so the culmination of the Genesis project, which works from the micro/macro symbols of "origin," is a *pysanka* on a global scale. A *pysanka* is a Ukrainian Easter egg, decorated using a wax-resist method. The word comes from *pysaty*, "to write," as the designs are not painted on but written with beeswax. At the Israel Museum, there is Bereshit aleph, or the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, written on an egg.



This project also turns to the global problem of surrogate motherhood. Surrogacy is a reproductive technique in which a woman agrees to become pregnant and bear a child with the intention of ultimately giving it up to be raised by others who will legally be regarded as the child's parents. The implementation of such a method of reproduction is tied to many issues of ethical, medical, and legal character and has posed a dilemma for humanity—to solve the problem of infertility or to exploit women as paid incubators, which is illegal according to the Brussels Declaration of the World Medical Association (1985). Surrogate motherhood is illegal in Austria, Norway, Sweden, France, some states of the U.S., Italy, Switzerland, and Germany (in Germany this assistance to infertile parents is outlawed because of its “amorality”). Commercial surrogate motherhood is an emotionally charged topic that is described with such potentially offensive expressions as “wombs for rent” or “baby farms” and addresses such factors as market, rent of the body, payment for services, profits, and raw materials. On a commercial basis, it is allowed in most states of the U.S., South Africa, India, Russia, Georgia, and Ukraine. How should we regard the “baby on order” who is tied to its surrogate mother through its umbilical cord for nine months and through emotional ties that, once it comes time

to give the child to its new parents, are torn in a most cruel and painful way?

My three-screen video installation includes “Origin”, “Pulse_Life” (with 2D and 3D sonography), and “Birth” video works. Bill Viola’s well-known installation of a heart operation—where the artist slows down the beating of the heart until it stops and then restarts over and over—explores the relation between life and death. My “Birth” video deals with life through out the pain of birth. In it, the public sphere dissolves into private.¹¹ The video raises questions about the ownership of the placenta: is it the mother, who is pays for delivery, or the doctor or corporations, for which it is very valuable material for industry? So, in this way the project is an agent for developing a zone of resistance.

In these videos, real-time live 3D (4D) sonography provides a view of the fetus in motion. By removing the sonographic images from the zone of technology and, thus, of reproduction of image and returns it into zone of unic representation—and becomes a reminder of the uniqueness of each human being. Thus, the platonic forms are developed through linkage to diverse art communities. The process could lead towards exclusion—by going beyond the basic reflective/playful type of work affirmed by postmodernism—but, through systematic data visualisation, the project disseminates a disturbance and, according to Akile Bonito Oliva, starts to transmit impulses to



the atrophic center of the viewer's perception/sensitivity.¹²

Our time may be remembered in the history of humanity as the era of manipulation, which is gradually destroying the border between the artificial and the real, the natural and the constructed. The issue here is not only in the unlimited possibilities of contemporary technologies but in their seeming capability to uproot those basic existential grounds out of which human life has been growing for thousands of years, those which define its fundamental values.

This project is precisely about this: the value of a human being, "new forms of maternity" through which the female body in the condition of surrogate motherhood becomes a sort of "container for breeding human material," the danger of life without that most important love—that of a mother and child—without which the world could completely lose its sense of existence.¹³ State politics—in the words of Michel Foucault, distinguishes itself today through its ability to "force one to live and allow one to die"—is taking on the markings of the very "biopolitics"¹⁴ that ensure the survival of the human race—the masses—and doesn't see, notice, or hear the individual person. According to Foucault, "the authority does not simply exist, it functions as a matrix of transformations."¹⁵ Emphasizing this dangerous opposition is the conceptual element of the project expressed through a documentary video of actual delivery with blood, pain, physical suffering, and the first cry of newborn life. What

role remains for art nowadays: a mirror of the problem, an avenue for social therapy, a project for a new reality, or the personal response of the author whose live emotion is capable of being heard over the buzz of global information? This project does not give instructions or prescribe action but asks questions about social space, the social body, the code of existence and life of human beings. For me, science challenges the artist, the artist challenges science. The third culture will occur when together they challenge authority to turn toward humanity.¹⁶

Oksana Chepelyk is Fulbright Visiting Scholar in Design I Media Arts at the UCLA School of the Arts. Her work explores the relations between gender, space, information flows by combining migration and social issue with economic, ecological, and demographic problems.

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Rock n' Roll Camp for Girls!



INSPIRED by the Rock n' Roll Camp for Girls Portland, UCLA Alumni Mona Tavakoli and Becky Gebhart founded the Rock 'n' Roll Camp for Girls Los Angeles in 2010. Its mission is to empower, increase self esteem, encourage self expression, and build community through music education for young women.

The not-for-profit organization's founders met and formed a folk group called Raining Jane while at UCLA. While performing, Tavakoli and Gebhart were inspired by the community of female musicians that supported them and decided they wanted to create an opportunity to give back to the community. They decided to volunteer at the Rock n' Roll Camp for Girls in Portland. Finding it and its premise inspiring,

they decided to start a similar organization in Los Angeles. The camp's first session ended in July of 2010 with a sold-out showcase at the Troubadour with ten bands performing the songs they had spent the previous week perfecting. Many of the campers have re-enrolled for this summer's camp, and music companies such as Fender, Remo, and Guitar Center have shown interest in supporting the camp.

Each summer girls aged 8 to 17 can sign up for the week-long camp where they will get to choose and learn an instrument, start a band, write a song, and then perform it at a local music venue. All the instruments are provided. Additionally, the camp does workshops on self defense, screen printing, zine making, and

recording. During lunch breaks, local female musicians visit the camp to perform and participate in discussions. These efforts are intended to promote a non-competitive collaborative environment that boosts camper's self confidence.

Recently the organization also organized a Ladies Rock Camp for women 21 and over. On a three-day weekend, the women can learn an instrument, start a band, and perform a song at a local music venue. The Ladies Rock Camp is a fundraiser for a scholarship fund for Rock n' Roll Camp for Girls,

Rock n' Roll Camp for Girls Los Angeles is a member of the Girls Rock Camp Alliance, an organization that helps support over twenty-five Girls Rock Camp programs across the U.S. The organizations that belong to the Girls Rock Camp Alliance believe that the music industry and music culture does not support the diversity of female voices. The camps seek to make a space where girls can explore their own creativity and empower them to make noise in a judgment-free environment. They seek to "abolish all the obsolete traditions that restrict many girls' and women's free musical expression and obstruct their access to the world of music." Inspired by the riot grrrl movement and Ladyfest shows, female musicians wanted to collaborate, provide a safe space, and foster creativity for a new generation of female musicians. For more information, visit rockcampforgirlsla.com.

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