

CSWupdate
MARCH 2012

A PREVIEW OF THE UPCOMING SYMPOSIUM

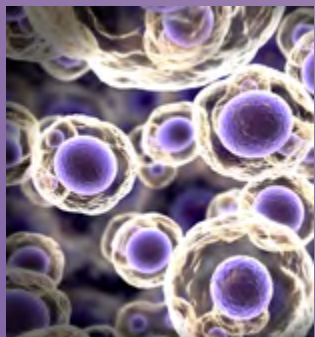
life (un)ltd

**Feminism, Race,
and Biopolitics**

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march 2012

CSWupdate



Life (Un)Ltd

A Symposium on Feminism, Race, and Biopolitics

MAY 11, 2012, IN THE PRESENTATION ROOM OF THE CHARLES E. YOUNG RESEARCH LIBRARY AT UCLA

How do biotechnologies both ameliorate and produce new health disparities and augment the production of “expendable populations”? What effects have blood transfusion, tissue engineering, transplantation, IVF/gestational surrogacy, ES cell therapy, population genotyping, and experiments in nutritive milieu had on feminist studies, especially those theorizing the circulation of biomaterials in relation to race and (neo)colonialism? How have non-normatively gendered bodies, poor women’s bodies, as well as gestational body parts served as opportune sites and sources for medical experimentation and the speculative contouring of life unlimited? What methods (historical materialist, psychoanalytic, ethnographically realist, deconstructive, cybernetic/systems theory) lend themselves to this feminist bioscientific critique? To what extent have feminist approaches to reproductive labor and childrearing

(the emotional labor of cultivating human life) made connections with bioscientific research, practicalities, and ethics? And finally, how have literature and the arts shaped and reflected upon the biomedical imagination?

On May, 11 2012, scholars will gather to address some of these questions at “Life (Un)Ltd: A Symposium on Feminism, Race, and Biopolitics,” which is presented by the UCLA Center for the Study of Women, with support from the UCLA Office of Faculty Diversity and Development; Deans of the Humanities and Social Sciences at UCLA; the Partner University Fund project on 21st Century Cuisine, Nutrition and Genetics in France and the United States; and the UCLA Institute for Society and Genetics.

Rachel C. Lee, CSW Associate Director, organized this symposium and invited scholars from diverse fields to present their works related to feminism, race, and biopolitics.

These speakers include Khiara Bridges, As-

sociate Professor, Anthropology, and Associate Professor, Law at Boston University; Melinda Cooper, ARC Future Fellow, Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney; Hannah Landecker, Associate Professor in Sociology and Institute for Society and Genetics at UCLA; Michelle Murphy, Associate Professor of History at University of Toronto; Diane Nelson, Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology at Duke University; Renee Tajima-Peña, Professor of Social Documentation and Film and Digital Media at UC Santa Cruz; Mei Zhan, Associate Professor of Anthropology at UC Irvine; Allison Carruth, Assistant Professor of English, University of Oregon and Susan M. Squier, Brill Professor of Women’s Studies and English at Pennsylvania State University.

The symposium is free and open to the public. For updated info, visit the CSW website: www.csw.ucla.edu

Rachel C. Lee

CSW Associate Director and Associate Professor of English and Women's Studies at UCLA

SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZER Rachel C. Lee will also serve as a respondent. She is Principal Investigator for CSW's Life (Un)Ltd research colloquium and the organizer of the symposium. She teaches courses in critical theory, ethnic literature, and medical humanities. She is the author of The Americas of Asian American Literature: Gendered Fictions of Nation and Transnation; lead editor of Asian America.Net: Ethnicity, Nationalism, Cyberspace (Routledge, 2005), and editor of A Companion to Asian American and Pacific Islander Literature and Culture (Routledge, forthcoming 2014). Her current book project, "The Exquisite Corpse of Asian America," examines how the specific subset of historical practices we associate with U.S. orientalism—for example, the legal and literary rendering of Asian Americans as perpetual "aliens," the classifying of Asian culture, diet, and styles of government as the quintessential other of their respective American practices, and more recently, the anxiety toward East Asian nations as ascendant economic competitors and harborers of deadly viruses—act as crucial psychic and social mechanisms by which Western societies manage and make sense of biotech's destabilization of the human. The monograph explores within a variety of genres such as stand-up comedy, literature, and new media, the thematic and formal (narratological) corollaries to technoscience's capacity to alter the temporal sequence of biological growth and development, to cross species boundaries on the cellular level, and to alienate and regard as superordinately valuable entities, the organ, tissue, or body part that has been disentangled from the self.



Khiara M. Bridges

Associate Professor, Anthropology, and Associate Professor, Law, Boston University

Writing an Ethnography of “Life”

An analysis of “life” during the event of pregnancy. The central preoccupation that motivates this study is the irony that the concept of “life” has such incredible power precisely because it has no definition. For example, when a person asserts that abortion is wrong because the fetus is “a life,” the “life” referenced need not be defined: Upon hearing the signifier, the hearer knows that what is being signified is distinct from biological life—the capacity possessed by all living organisms—and, accordingly, dutifully conjures up notions of a precious, sacred entity that must be revered, respected, and protected. Yet, “life” acquires its power precisely because it is not defined. It means everything that those who invoke it desire because it denotes nothing with precision. Its power lies not in its ambiguity, but rather its vacuity. This exploration will investigate the stakes of “life” for those who are charged to care for it.

Special attention will be paid to providers of obstetric and gynecological services; the objective is to note the contradictions that erupt when the sciences, understood as the quintessence of rationality, are engaged to care for “life”—an entity that exceeds rationalism. The paradox is that the quasi-ideal, quasi-divine, quasi-unearthly phenomenon of “life” is thought to be neglected, and tragically so, unless it is nurtured with the most vigorous of biotechnical (i.e., material, human, earthly) attention. This paper explores the ambiguous position occupied by the actual caretakers of “life.” Ethnography of these caretakers is an important corollary to ethnography of pregnant women, as healthcare providers share with women the social responsibility for the future of the “life” that many—including, at times, the healthcare workers themselves—believe women to carry.



KHIARA M. BRIDGES has written many articles concerning, race, class, reproductive rights, and the intersection of the three. Her scholarship has appeared in Columbia Law Review, California Law Review, Washington & Lee Law Review, Harvard Journal of Law and Gender, among others. She is the author of Reproducing Race: An Ethnography of Pregnancy as a Site of Racialization (University of California Press, 2011).

She received her J.D. from Columbia Law School and her Ph.D., with distinction, from Columbia University’s Department of Anthropology. She was a member of the Columbia Law Review and a Kent Scholar. While in college, she was a counselor at the Feminist Women’s Health Center in Atlanta, gaining experience with policies affecting the availability of abortion services in Georgia. She teaches Critical Race Theory, Criminal Law, and a course on the Fourteenth Amendment at BU Law.

Melinda Cooper

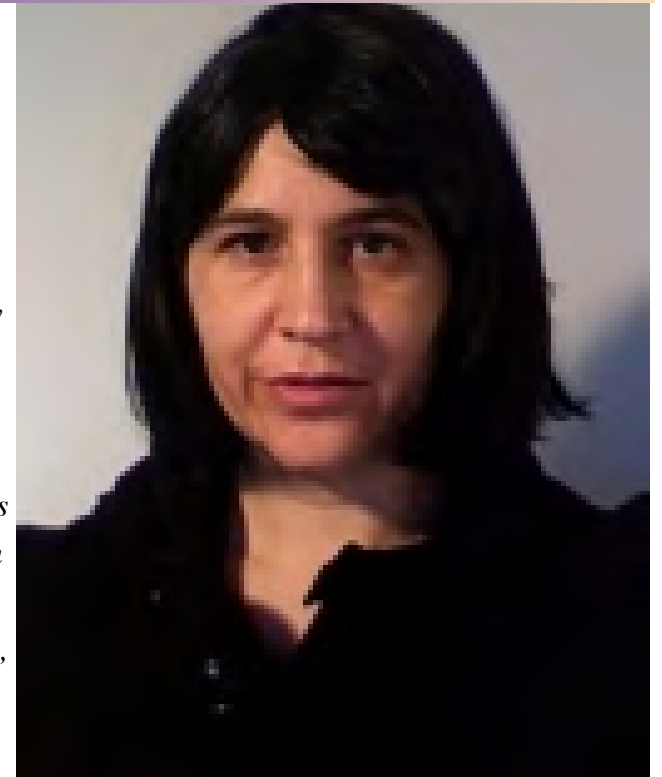
ARC Future Fellow, Department of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Sydney

Experimental Economies and the Contingencies of Labour:

CLINICAL TRIAL WORK BETWEEN CHINA, INDIA AND THE UNITED STATES

This project examines the evolving institutional and legal contexts of clinical trial work in the global pharmaceutical economy, with a particular focus on Beijing/Shanghai, Ahmedabad (Gujarat, India) and the United States. While mid-twentieth century tort law defined clinical trial work in diametric opposition to the norms of Fordist labour, the rise of the independent contractor and the generalization of labor contingency now places clinical trial work on a continuum with other forms of uninsured, risk-bearing labour in the post Fordist economy. Clinical trial work is contingent labour par excellence in the sense that it devolves uninsurable economic and metabolic risk onto the body of the individual worker. This paper argues that the human research subject should be understood as the bio-innovation economy's risk-bearer of last resort.

MELINDA COOPER is an ARC Research Fellow in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Sydney, Australia. Her research is focused on the expansion of multinational clinical trials in China and India, with a special focus on Beijing/Shanghai and Ahmedabad. She is the author of *Life as Surplus* (Washington University Press, 2008) and coauthor, with Catherine Waldby, of *Clinical Labor: Human Research Subjects and Tissue Donors in the Global Bioeconomy* (Duke University Press, 2013). She is also coeditor of *The Journal of Cultural Economy*.



Hannah Landecker

Associate Professor, Sociology, and Institute for Society and Genetics, UCLA

On Eating Information:

A SHORT HISTORY OF METABOLISM AND INCORPORATION

Epigenetics has turned food and its metabolism into a problem that is not just about how the body turns food its basic components—carbohydrates, fat, protein—but how food acts as a signal of the environment—both biological and political. Hannah Landecker will explore what this transformation of metabolism and epigenetics reveals about food, environmental politics, and the increased salience of metabolism as a sight for biological understanding and political and moral contestation.



HANNAH LANDECKER is the author of *Culturing Life: How Cells Became Technologies* (Harvard University Press, 2007), and numerous other engagements with cell biology, biotechnology, and the role of the moving image in life science. More recently, her research interests have centered on the historical and social study of metabolism. Her current study, *American Metabolism*, looks at what metabolism was and is becoming, in science, philosophy, political theory, and culture.



Michelle Murphy

Associate Professor, History, University of Toronto

Reproduction, Time, Latency

Where does reproduction begin and end? This paper offers the notion of “distributed reproduction” to rethink reproduction as a aggregate process distributed in time and space that connects and moves through bodies, ecologies, and political economies. To do this, the paper theorizes distributed reproduction through a geopolitical site of intensive petrochemical refining.

MICHELLE MURPHY is a feminist science studies scholar and historian of the recent past. Her work focuses on environmental politics, reproduction, biopolitics, and economic rationalities through transnational and postcolonial lenses. She is the author of Sick Building Syndrome and the Politics of Uncertainty (Duke University Press, 2006) and Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Health, Feminism, and Technoscience (Duke University Press, forthcoming 2012). She is also co-organizer of the Technoscience Salon.



Diane Nelson

Associate Professor, Cultural Anthropology, Duke University

“Yes to Life = No to Mining”: TECHNOLOGIES OF DEATH AND LIVELINESS IN POST-GENOCIDE GUATEMALA

This paper will address two sites in which Mayan indigenous people are deploying transnational “life” technologies in struggles against death. The first is through the newly opened DNA lab of the forensic anthropology organization, which is working to catalog and identify the tens of thousands of human remains of victims of (primarily) state violence during the civil war (1961–1996), one phase of which (from 1978–1983) has been recognized as genocide by the United Nations. Collecting bones from clandestine cemeteries is an on-going struggle, physically demanding, legally complex, and often entails roiling families and confronting death threats from those implicated. It is both a deeply embodied and also completely bureaucratized project—as is DNA “Identification.” The second is the efforts to close a gold mine operating through mountaintop removal, and to foreclose opening any more throughout the national territory. In these struggles technologies of health, development, risk assessment, and toxin monitoring are conjoined with legal, calculating, and political organizing techniques to safeguard human lives and life more generally, enunciated as “Madre Tierra,” Mother Earth. Women have been the energizing motors in both these sites, drawing strategically on their roles in cultivating life and their identifications as poor and racially excluded peoples. In a time and place when continuing exhumations insist that the last war over the resources necessary for life is far from over they are risking private, corporate, and state-backed violence in defense of a vision of Life that is more than the neoliberal struggle for survival: for Life Unlimited.

DIANE NELSON is a cultural anthropologist and has worked in Guatemala since 1985. Her research addresses war and genocide, indigenous identity (including Maya-Hackers, Omniflife saleswomen, Ponzi-scheme victims and anti-mining activists), and political movements, and her theoretical interests

lie in subject formation, political economy, gender and sexuality, popular culture, and science and technology studies. Her means and ends are to somehow look this crazy mixed up world in the eye without falling victim to shock and awe. Her books include Aftermath: War by Other Means in Post-Genocide Guatemala (co-edited with Carlota McAllister, forthcoming), Reckoning: The Ends of War in Guatemala (Duke University Press, 2009), and A Finger in the Wound: Body Politics in Quincentennial Guatemala (UC Press, 1999). She also writes for Science Fiction Studies. She is thankful to the students at Duke University for paying her salary.



Rene Tajima-Peña

Professor, Social Documentation, Film and Digital Media, UC Santa Cruz

Mas Bebés?

This project's foundation is an investigation of the coercive sterilization of Mexican American women at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center during the 1960s and 1970s. The transmedia project will consist of a theatrical documentary, television broadcast, and web interactive project that connects the LAC+USC story to the growing movement for reproductive justice.

RENEE TAJIMA-PEÑA is an Academy Award-nominated documentary filmmaker whose work focuses on Asian American and immigrant communities. Her film credits include Who Killed Vincent Chin? My America...or Honk if You Love Buddha,

Labor Women, Skate Manzanar and The New Americans, and Calavera Highway. She recently launched two web interactive projects, "Heart Mountain 3.0" and "Mas Bebés? Interactive." Her films have been screened at the Cannes, London, Sundance, South by Southwest, and Toronto film festivals, and broadcast around the world. Her previous honors include the Broad Fellowship from United States Artists, the Alpert Award in the Arts, a Peabody Award, a Dupont-Columbia Award, the International Documentary Association Achievement Award, and fellowships in media arts from the Rockefeller Foundation. She was a 2011 Guggenheim Fellow. At UC Santa Cruz, Tajima-Peña is also co-graduate director of Social Documentation, a program that she helped to launch in 2005.



Mei Zhan

Associate Professor, Anthropology, UC Irvine

Undivided: reimagining the human and the world through transdisciplinary engagements with an experiential medicine

In the 1950s, through a process of modernization and scientization which saw the bifurcation of the empirical and the conceptual, and the human and the world, traditional Chinese medicine solidified its professional identity as an experiential medicine in need of “uplifting” by scientific experimentation and theorization. Yet, from within the modernist regime of knowledge and mode of knowing, Chinese medicine’s commitments to its own worldliness have engendered reimaginings of the oneness of the human and the world, thinking and being. This paper explores metaphorical and analogous thinking at the center of everyday pedagogical and clinical discourse and practice, especially concerning the body, illness, and “environments” of various natures and scales. Rather than relying on deductive or inductive thinking, metaphors and analogies are central to the quotidian practice of Chinese medicine. They work sideways and in the specific, requiring and encouraging practitioners to think relationally and creatively while confronted with particular clinical situations, all the while insisting on the dynamic, multiplicitous, and even disharmonious oneness of the human and the world.

Transdisciplinary engagements with STS, feminist methodology, and Chinese medicine thus allow us to unsettle the relations between the empirical and the conceptual, the concrete and the abstract, and the analytical and the analyzed. It pushes STS and feminist scholars to look at phenomena that are too often consigned to the other side of the Modern

Constitution, and habitually taken as objects of inquiry rather than analyses (of a different mode) in their own right. The goal of these transdisciplinary engagements goes well beyond the

reversal of asymmetrical binary categories and relations. The articulation of the dynamic oneness of the human and the world, and the empirical and the conceptual forces a rupture from within the Modern; in due process, it engenders a (possibly) nonmodern and feminist analytic—an alternative mode of thinking, doing and being—that resists masculine aspirations for universality and transcendence.

MEI ZHAN conducts research in the areas of medical anthropology, science and technology studies, globalization and transnationalism, and China studies. She conducted field research on the “worlding” of traditional Chinese medicine in Shanghai and the San Francisco Bay Area over a ten-year period (1995–2005). This multi-sited research focuses on the processes of interaction, rupture, and displacement in the translocal formation of knowledges, identities, and communities. Her writings have appeared in *Social Text*; *East Asian Science, Technology, and Society: An International Journal*; *Medical Anthropology*; *American Anthropologist*; and *Cultural Anthropology*.



Susan Squier

Brill Professor of Women's Studies and English, Pennsylvania State University

Unsettling, even perhaps a bit sinister: the implications of Waddington's "World Egg" for feminist thought

This essay—really an initial foray into a very new project—takes CH Waddington's discussion of "the world egg" as a provocation for feminist biomedical and environmental thinking. The "world egg" notion appears in Waddington's 1969 contribution to the IUBS symposium, *Towards a Theoretical Biology*: "The Practical consequences of metaphysical beliefs on a biologist's work: an autobiographical note." Waddington, the celebrated twentieth-century embryologist/biologist who coined the term "epigenetics," explored in that essay some of the philosophical commitments that explained his own embryological and biological research. While Waddington's embryological research provided the foundation for my discussion of twentieth century biomedicine in *Babies in Bottles* and *Liminal Lives*, this symposium gives me the opportunity to focus specifically on questions raised by this brief essay. I write mindful of Sarah Ahmed's challenge, in "Imaginary Prohibitions," that dead white male scholars receive the close attention that is denied living feminist writers. And I take Waddington's work as a jumping off point for thinking about the constitutive exclusions in biology and biomedicine that are foundational to the practices that have produced our current state of Life (Un) Ltd: exclusions of gender, species, and affect.

SUSAN MERRILL SQUIER is Julia Gregg Brill Professor of Women's Studies, English, and until June 2012, of STS (Science, Technology, and Society) at The Pennsylvania State University. She is the au-



thor or editor of eight books, including *Babies in Bottles: Twentieth Century Visions of Reproductive Technology* (1994), *Playing Dolly: Technocultural Formations, Fantasies, and Fictions of Assisted Reproduction* (1999), and *Liminal Lives: Imagining the Human at the Frontiers of Biomedicine* (2004). Her most recent book, *Poultry Science, Chicken Culture: A Partial Alphabet* (2011) was recipient of the Michelle Kendrick Prize of the SLSA. In 2002, she co-directed (with Anne Hunsaker Hawkins) a National Endowment for the Humanities Sumner Institute on "Medicine, Literature and Culture" at the Penn State College of Medicine, Hershey Medical Center. A member of the advisory board (2010-2011) and member of the jury (2011-2012) of the Lynd Ward Graphic Novel Prize, she is part of the Graphic Medicine Collective which has organized two international conferences on Comics and Medicine, "Graphic Medicine" (London June 2010), and "Comics and Medicine: Sequential Art and Illness" (Chicago June 2011), with the third conference to follow in Toronto, Canada, in July 2012.

Allison Carruth

Assistant Professor of English and affiliated faculty member in Environmental Studies, International Studies, and the Center for the Study of Women & Society, University of Oregon

*ALLISON CARRUTH is Assistant Professor of English and affiliated faculty member in Environmental Studies, International Studies, and the Center for the Study of Women & Society at the University of Oregon. She has also held a postdoctoral fellowship at UC Santa Barbara and an academic research and program officer appointment at Stanford University in the Science, Technology and Society (STS) Program. Her major fields are twentieth-century American literature, contemporary fiction, science and technology studies, food studies, and environmental criticism. In her scholarship, she focuses on two developments that have shaped American literature and visual culture in the period since the Second World War: the industrialization of food systems and the commercialization of biotechnologies. Her first book is *Global Appetites, American Power and the Literature of Food* (Cambridge University Press, 2013). She has started a second project, entitled “The Transgenic Age,” which compares forms of contemporary fiction, poetry, and bioart that explore the consequences and horizons of life science research (particularly in the area of genetic engineering). Carruth argues that this emergent cultural field questions the historical investments of U.S. environmentalism in conservation and remediation while positing alternative principles of generation, re-creation, and repurposing. She is also the coorganizer of the Food Justice Conference and the Book Review Editor for *Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture*. Recent publications include essays in *Modern Drama*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, *Modernism/Modernity*, and *Postmodern Culture* and in book collections from Oxford University Press and Routledge. A forthcoming article will be published in *Parallax*.*





Jill Cherneff, CSW Research Scholar

We are sad to report that Jill Cherneff, a longtime CSW research scholar, has passed away. Jill received an Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) diagnosis in 2006 and fought mightily against the disease. It was most important to her to stay active in her life and her scholarship. Indeed she renewed her research scholarship status in July of 2011 and her husband wrote that “although Jill cannot speak, she is totally intellectually present and uses a computer to speak and write.” Her final research project concerned gender differences and similarities in the experience of receiving a diagnosis of ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease. As an ALS patient and a member of the community of ALS patients, she conducted interviews, distributed and collected

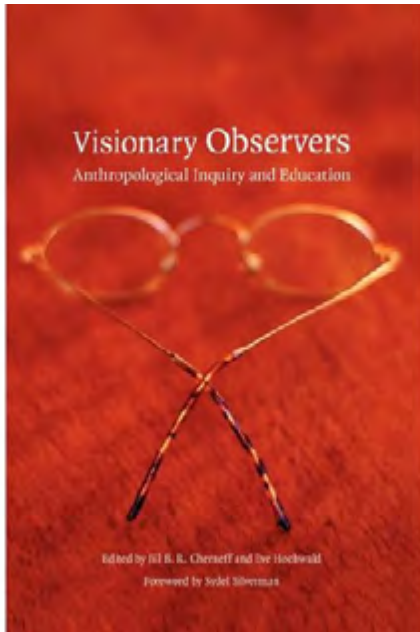
questionnaires, and used Internet resources to gather ALS illness narratives including stories of patients’ participation in ALS advocacy and activism.

—Kathleen McHugh

JILL BETH ROSENBAUM CHERNEFF LAVERTY died March 13 at her home in Manhattan Beach, after a long battle with ALS. She is survived by her husband, Rocky Laverty; her daughter, Molly; her stepson, Rory; and her granddaughter, Lila, as well as her brother, Ric, and sister, Merle.

Jill was born March 11, 1948, in St. Louis, to the late Leonard and Elaine Rosenbaum. She earned a doctor-

ate and master’s in anthropology at the New School for Social Research, and a bachelor’s degree from Barnard College in New York. Her research interests spanned the globe, from the Philippines and Southeast Asia to the Hollywood film industry. She worked as a lecturer and affiliated scholar at USC, and as an assistant professor at CSU-Northridge. She curated major museum exhibits in Los Angeles on the people and art of the Philippines, where she spent five years doing anthropological field work in the 1970s. She published scholarly articles and delivered conference talks on the life and work of pioneering filmmaker and anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker. And she edited the book *Visionary Observers:*



***Visionary Observers: Anthropological Inquiry and Education*, edited by Jill B.R. Cheneff and Eve Hochwald, was published in 2006 by University of Nebraska Press.**

Anthropological Inquiry and Education, published in 2006 by University of Nebraska Press.

Near the end of her life, Jill was a research scholar at the UCLA Center for the Study of Women and a research associate in anthropology at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. She was a member of the American Anthropology Association, the Society of Women Geographers, the Association for Feminist Anthropology, the American Ethnological Society, and the Southern California Applied Anthropology Network.

Jill and Rocky were married Oct. 12, 1982, in Malibu, and they lived in Manhattan Beach for 32 years. She was a member of the Congregation Tikvat Jacob in Manhattan Beach, and she deeply enjoyed flyfishing, cycling, book clubs, guitar, Scrabble, and collecting art and jewelry. The

greatest tragedy of Jill's life was the loss of her 16-year-old son Geoffrey, who died in a car accident in 2000. She contracted ALS in 2006 and fought it fiercely for more than five years, participating all the while in experimental treatments and clinical trials.

A memorial service was held at 1 p.m. Friday, March 16, at Hillside Memorial Park in Los Angeles. In lieu of flowers, Jill's family asks that donations be made in her name to ALS Association Golden West Chapter or ALS Worldwide.

Andrea Ghez Receives Crafoord Prize

PROFESSOR IN DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY AT UCLA
IS FIRST FEMALE RECIPIENT OF THE PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

THE ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES has selected Andrea Ghez, a professor of physics and astronomy at UCLA, to receive the 2012 Crafoord Prize in Astronomy. She is being honored by the Academy for “observations of stars orbiting the Galactic center, indicating the presence of a supermassive black hole.” The Crafoord Prize, which includes an accompanying award of 4 million Swedish krona, is considered one of the world’s largest scientific prizes. Ghez is the first woman to win the award since its establishment in 1982.

For the last few decades, astronomers have argued for the possibility of a black hole at the center of our galaxy. However, until recently, the limitations of technology have made it impossible

to prove their hypotheses. Professor Ghez has been able to produce extraordinarily clear, detailed images of a variety of astronomical objects. In doing this, Ghez drew upon her expertise in high-resolution imaging and University of California’s impressive resources. In particular, Ghez utilized the two largest telescopes in the world, located at The Keck Observatory in Hawaii.

“This research was possible thanks to the W.M. Keck Observatory...they have enabled us to achieve the tremendous progress that we have made in correcting the distorting effects of the Earth’s atmosphere with high-angular resolution imaging,” Ghez stated in an article for UCLANews, published on January 19, 2012. “The most recent technology of adaptive optics is now



Andrea Ghez

opening up new horizons and allowing us to learn even more about this black hole at the center of our galaxy—how it was formed, how it grows, and how to correctly describe the properties of space and time in the vicinity of such an exotic object.”

Ghez described black holes as collapsed stars so dense that nothing can escape their gravitational pull, including light. They cannot be seen directly, but their influence on nearby stars is visible and provides a signature. The black hole at the center of our galaxy, residing approximately 26,000 light-years away from the earth, has a mass more than 3 million times that of the sun. In a recent phone interview with the CSW, Ghez emphasized the importance of her discovery to our current understanding of the universe’s makeup. She also quelled any science-fiction movie induced anxieties raised by the terms “black hole.”

“In terms of are we in danger from a black hole—we’re fine. We’re not going to get sucked in. It’s going to effect our understanding of the universe,” says Ghez. “We now know that these objects that [have been thought of as] really exotic, these black holes, basically represent the breakdown of our physical understanding of the universe... These black holes seem to exist at the center of our galaxy, and our galaxy is fairly garden variety, so this seems to suggest that they exist in all galaxies. By learning about the formation and the black holes, we’re really learning about the formation and evolution of our galaxy, which

is the basic building block of our universe.”

In an interview with *The Daily Bruin* published on January 13, 2012, Ghez pointed out that the black hole demonstrates to astronomers that the current physical description of the universe needs to be revised, because current physics laws do not make sense of how black holes can exist. Ghez and her colleagues are currently continuing their exploration of the black hole and its surroundings. This research has yielded several surprising discoveries.

“Not only have we been able to prove that there’s a black hole by taking these very high resolution pictures at the center of the galaxy, but what we’ve seen there is very unlike our predictions of what we would see there,” says Ghez. “We originally predicted that, around a black hole, we wouldn’t see young stars—because a black hole would make it hard for young stars to form. [We also predicted] that there would be lots of old stars. Yet what we see observed is the exact opposite: we see tons of young stars and fewer old stars.” These findings are leading researchers to re-think their understanding of how black holes interact with their surroundings, and how the black holes and their host galaxies grow over time.

Ghez is thrilled and honored that her work, and the work of her colleagues, has been recognized with this prestigious award. “The award is really a gift. The award recognizes the work that’s

been done, and of course there’s a lot of work that we’re hoping to do in the future, so we’re in no way done with our research,” says Ghez. “Hopefully it will allow us to take the next step. I’m really thrilled, I’m so happy that the work that’s been done here at UCLA, and of course this is work that I’ve done in collaboration with a lot of people here, has been recognized. That’s really exciting, and of course it’s sort of hard to believe, but I’m thrilled.”

Ghez, who came to UCLA in 1994, has received many awards and honors during her tenure here, including being selected as a 2008 MacArthur Fellow and becoming one of the youngest people to be elected to the National Academy of Science. Ghez takes special pleasure and pride from the fact that she is the first woman to receive the Crafoord prize. According to the UCLA Newsroom website, she is “delighted to be the first woman to be awarded this prize” and that she especially enjoys “being a role model to women science students.”

Ben Sher is graduate student in Cinema and Media Studies at UCLA and a writer for CSW Update.

Abortion Performance and Politics

by Rosemary Candelario

Performance happens at the level of the body and at the level of the live experience, yet it also exerts itself through the performativity of the documentation or language in which it is repeated. In the performativity of performance, I saw the opportunity to participate in the discursivity that is pedagogy—to not only repeat, but repeat with difference, to create a difference in bodily valuation that could be repeated.

—Aliza Shvarts,

"Figuration and failure, pedagogy and performance: reflections three years later"¹

The point is, as soon as performativity comes to rest on a performance, questions of embodiment, of social relations, of ideological interpellations, of emotional and political effects, all become discussable.

—Elin Diamond,

*Performance and Cultural Politics*²

31 were arrested in women's rights demonstration in Richmond, Virginia, on March 3, 2012.

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Daily Kos
Photo Cooperative



TWO THINGS are clear at this point in the 2012 presidential campaign.

First, despite the fact that Americans consistently identify the economy and unemployment as the most important problems currently facing the country,³ Republican lawmakers continue to prioritize making abortion—and even contraception—financially and logistically inaccessible, if not outright illegal.⁴ Second, thanks to the Wisconsin Winter, the Arab Spring, and the Occupy Fall, there is a renewed belief in the efficacy of bodies engaged in political acts. The confluence of these two—the persistent obsession with restricting women's control of their own bodies 39 years after abortion was legalized in the United States and a surge of bodies performing their political demands—points to an important fault line in American politics as well as an area of great potential: the performance of abortion.

“Performing abortion” typically refers to what health care providers do in clinics, private offices, and (rarely) hospitals 1.21 million times per year,

every year, in the United States.⁵ At the same time, the phrase indicates what performance artists, choreographers, and activists have been doing on stages, in galleries, and on the streets for decades. I am intrigued by this double meaning that invites us to take seriously what abortion means at this political and historical moment, but also what performance, activism, and the concerted actions of bodies can do. This article offers some introductory thoughts on these intertwined issues, and represents the beginning of a larger project I am conducting. “Performing Abortion: Feminist Cultural Production after *Roe v. Wade*” was conceived with the premise that the examination of performances of and about abortion by feminist artists and activists may reveal productive strategies for reframing the abortion debate in the United States.

I have no illusions that this will be an easy task. The arson attack that gutted the American Family Planning clinic in Pensacola, Florida, early on New Year’s Day 2012 was a sober reminder of the ongoing campaign of extralegal harassment and violence faced by abortion providers.⁶ Beginning in early 2011, unrelenting attacks on the legality and accessibility of abortion also characterized the Republican-run House of Representatives,⁷ which produced and inspired an unprecedented number of proposed federal and state anti-abortion bills and ballot initiatives.⁸ Legislators capitalized on urgent debates on health care reform and the bud-

get, cynically turning those issues into new rationales to restrict abortion. Reform meant to expand access to health insurance was used instead as an opportunity to reduce coverage for abortion through onerous payment procedures and outright bans. Budget debates ostensibly meant to increase jobs and help the working and middle classes survive the economic recession turned into vitriolic calls to defund Planned Parenthood⁹ and end “taxpayer funding” for abortion. The suggestion was even made to remove statutory rape and incest from the exceptions to the Hyde Amendment to ensure that federal funds would neither pay for abortion nor benefit any institution that might enable abortion in any way.

What is missing from the current focus on abortion in Congress and in media coverage thereof is the notion of women as corporeal beings and any sense of the efficacy of abortion. Whereas the legalization of abortion in 1973 stopped women from dying of needless infections and injuries caused by illegal procedures, it is seen today as effecting nothing but gridlock—in Congress, on television talk shows, and in front of women’s health clinics.

It is easy to see how women’s bodies disappeared from the “pro-life” discourse. All of the restrictions and attacks I just described are designed to protect the life of the fetus. This conceptual and visual focus on the fetus—in legislative language, “pro-life” propaganda, and increasingly

required ultrasounds—erases the woman’s body from view. Jennifer Doyle, in analyzing a billboard depicting a full-term fetus with the slogan, “It’s not a choice; it’s a child,” observed how “the personification of the fetus in the womb as a visible subject, distinct in its identity from the body that contains it,” causes “the pregnant woman [to disappear] into an amorphous and undefined background.”¹⁰ In this view, the female body is nothing but a vessel. The recent uproar over a Virginia bill that would have required women seeking abortion in that state to undergo a transvaginal ultrasound is but the latest iteration, in which a woman is reduced to a passageway to be penetrated by technology that enables a fetus to be seen.¹¹

Although the “pro-life” and “pro-choice” discourses are based in radically different world-views, Carol Mason points out that, “Life is the common ground upon which two formidable foes battle over abortion, whether we call that battle an opposition between the life of the child and the life of the mother or between the life of the fetus and the life of the woman.”¹² Indeed, images and slogans that drove the early pro-choice movement forcibly called attention to the stakes for women. The gruesome photograph of a naked and bloody Gerri Santoro lying alone on the floor of a hotel room, dead from an illegal abortion, was a potent representation of the fact that legal abortion saves women’s lives.¹³ In the late 1980s and early 1990s, three mass mobilizations “For Women’s Lives”



Gerri Santoro died from an attempt at self-induced abortion in 1964.
Source: Wikimedia

drew between 300,000 and 750,000 people to the nation's capital.

Over time, the sense that “choice” signaled a concern with women’s lives was supplanted by a consumerist discourse that, perhaps not coincidentally, also governs the larger discussion of health care. Certainly the dimming of the consequences of illegal abortion in the collective memory is one factor in the disappearance of women’s bodies from pro-choice rhetoric. But I suspect that the pro-choice movement’s almost exclusive focus on legislative and electoral politics is another. Pro-life rhetoric has come to control the terms of the debate so thoroughly in the political arena that the pro-choice side has been compelled to take a largely defensive position, constantly fighting against bills and initiatives that chip away

at the parameters for legal abortion as established by the Supreme Court in 1973.

I want to be clear that when I refer to women’s bodies missing from the debate or the necessity of reintroducing them, I am not referring to an essentialized female body defined solely by her biological ability to procreate. Instead I am searching for signs of the particular, the complex, and perhaps most of all the material women who can disrupt the assumptions, stereotypes, and ideologies that have come to dominate the abortion issue.¹⁴ In many ways, my concerns match those of the movement for reproductive justice, which works to ensure that all women have access to the information and resources to control if and when they become pregnant, the support and resources to end or continue a pregnancy, and the support

and resources to care for any children they may have. Led by women of color, this vital movement draws attention to the lives of women largely ignored by the pro-choice movement, including incarcerated women, disabled women, women living with HIV, and many more.

At this early stage of my research, I have been inspired by the Occupy movement’s resolute refusal to participate in a political process that has been utterly unresponsive to their concerns. While politicians and the media sputtered about Occupy’s lack of a unified agenda, masses of bodies in local parks and squares across the country declared their dissent from business—and politics—as usual, and demonstrated that their lives and needs are not reducible to a bill in Congress. These actions forced issues of eco-

conomic inequality into the national discourse in a relatively short amount of time and made open questions of activist tactics and targets.

I am not suggesting that the reproductive justice movement should refashion itself like the Occupy movement. But I am saying that this historical moment invites us to take seriously the role of public performance and the materiality of the body in effecting change in a seemingly intractable debate. In particular, I suggest we need to pay close attention to the way performing bodies are being deployed to disrupt established discourses and reconfigure possibilities. This leads me to search for examples of performing abortion that offer the potential to shift the current national discourse away from a moralistic discourse of murder on the one hand and a consumerist discourse of choice on the other, toward one of corporeal agency and reproductive justice.

Of course, public performances or mass gatherings of bodies in themselves are not necessarily effective at changing national discourse. Mass marches served the pro-choice movement well in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when hundreds of thousands of women and men poured into the streets in protest of the *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* Supreme Court case. *Webster* made possible a new standard of review for abortion legislation, and opened the door for the *Casey v. Planned Parenthood* decision in 1992, in which a host of new restrictions on abortion were

found constitutional. According to the National Organization for Women, which initiated two national mobilizations in 1989 and one in 1992, “These mass marches forced the issue of abortion rights into the forefront of political debate going into the 1992 elections and provided strong, new networks of activists and contributors.”¹⁵

The problem was that when the groundswell of public opinion embodied in those marches led to electoral success in 1992, the movement seemed to hand over its agency to elected officials. In 2004, pro-choice organizations again organized a March for Women’s Lives. This time they were sufficiently challenged by the reproductive justice movement to be compelled to expand the roster of planning organizations. The result was largest protest in American history, bringing 1.15 million women, men, and young people to Washington, D.C. Paradoxically, this successful mass gathering was also a political failure, asserting little influence on the presidential race it was ostensibly designed to impact.¹⁶ Perhaps one of the reasons the march was not effective at impacting the national discourse is that it was organized on the basis of mobilizing people to ask others to do something, rather than mobilizing them to take a stand, to say, “Hey, you’re not listening to us, so we’re going to make you pay attention.” But even the latter approach is not always successful. The arrest of 31 women by police in riot gear at a protest at the Virginia state Capitol in early March against



2004 March for Women’s Lives. Source: National Organization of Women

What kinds of performances, then, do hold the potential to disrupt the status quo abortion discourse?

the proposed transvaginal ultrasound law certainly captured national attention, but ultimately did not prevent a revised law requiring abdominal ultrasounds from being signed into law five days later.

What kinds of performances, then, do hold the potential to disrupt the status quo abortion discourse? One example is the 2008 senior thesis project by then-Yale art major Aliza Shvarts. Over a number of months, Shvarts repeatedly artificially inseminated herself and took unnamed abortifacient drugs to stimulate her menses. Her thesis project comprised this time-based performance, a textual narrative about the process, and an installation. When the *Drudge Report* publicized the news of what it called “abortion art,” Shvarts’s work became a national controversy. Yale ultimately barred the installation from exhibition; it remains unseen to this day.

In the midst of the controversy, it seemed that everyone was siding together against Shvarts. Campus and national pro- and anti-choice organizations decried both art and artist, citing everything from ethical considerations to what they saw as a trivialization of “real” issues. The executive boards of two Yale pro-choice groups, for example, wrote that they were “shocked by the content of the art piece in question and the manner in which very serious aspects of reproductive rights have been treated. We seek to protect the rights of real women and real families who deal

with real issues of health, safety, and access.”¹⁷ Ironically, this wording suggests that Shvarts herself is not a “real woman” dealing with “real issues of health.”

Shvarts performed insemination and miscarriage while at the same time drawing attention to the constructed and multivalent nature of her performance. This move allowed her to lay bare the ideologies and policies that construct and constrain women’s sexualities in the United States, and which in fact also enmesh the “real” people and issues that the groups criticizing Shvarts claimed to represent. The tension and discomfort caused by the gap between “real issues” and a spectacular version of reality enacted on and through the (her) body prompted a public discourse far in excess of what Shvarts likely imagined when she labored to create her senior thesis. The vehemence of the widespread criticism elicited by Shvarts is an indication of the productiveness of her intervention, despite the fact that the installation was never even seen.

The 1 in 3 Campaign, a new joint project of Advocates for Youth, Choice USA, and Spiritual Youth for Reproductive Freedom, is an abortion speakout for the age of social media.¹⁸ Whereas Shvarts’s performance drew on art lineages in order to probe the boundaries of pro-life and pro-choice discourses, the 1 in 3 Campaign draws on feminist lineages of personal storytelling to expose abortion as a common secret. Women are

invited to tell their personal stories and upload them to the campaign's website. The videos are then available for anyone to share via social media as a way to broach conversations. The project was inspired by the LGBT movement's use of storytelling as a movement builder and by recent polling on abortion that shows a pro-choice position correlates to knowing someone who has had an abortion.¹⁹

In the videos, women including Debra, Joy, Angela, Nici, Yamani, and Elle sit facing a camera in their offices or bedrooms and tell their largely unremarkable stories. In calm and thoughtful voices, the women share their experiences of deciding to have an abortion and receiving the support of their partner, family, or friends. They explain how they located a clinic fairly easily, got the money together with help from personal networks, and dealt with professional and caring abortion providers with little anti-abortion interference. Although she was not writing about 1 in 3, Jeanie Ludlow articulates why these common—and largely untold—stories are so important. We must, she writes, “adjust our public discourse to claim the rightness of women’s mundane reasons for terminating pregnancies,”²⁰ rather than continuing to focus on exceptional cases that have come to define safe moral and political ground. Efforts like 1 in 3 disrupt the national discourse on abortion by emphasizing its very pervasiveness. And yet telling these commonplace stories on

the internet is still full of personal and social risk for the women who upload videos, as evidenced by the fact that there are still only a handful of videos on the campaign's website. That number has continued to grow, though, as attacks on basic women's health care, including contraception and cancer screening, have escalated over the past few months.

The Body Ecology Performance Ensemble's 2012 “RingShout for Reproductive Justice: Free-birth” is yet another example of a performance that attempts to intervene in mainstream discourse about women's bodies. According to press materials, the RingShout for Reproductive Justice was launched in response to a 2011 billboard in New York City that featured a young African American girl with the tagline, “The most dangerous place for a black child is in the womb.”²¹ The billboard was posted during Black History Month by a group called Life Always, and was widely criticized by African American leaders before being removed in response to public pressure. While images of that billboard and others like it are projected during the two-hour interweaving of ritual, song, dance, and storytelling, they do not form the centerpiece of the RingShout event. Instead, the five women performers draw inspiration from religious rituals practiced by enslaved Africans in order to embody the complexities and contradictions of the sexual and reproductive lives of women of the African diaspora. Together

they suggest that the anti-abortion billboards cannot be addressed without grappling with larger issues of African American women's sexuality and sexualization; the full spectrum of reproductive choices including giving birth; stereotypes perpetuated by popular culture and local communities; individual and cultural images of women and mothers; and what it means to give birth to oneself as a whole being in relationship to others.

After the performance, Body Ecology's Artistic Director led an hour-long feedback session and discussion, asking the audience to reflect on how the piece can be used to create change in their own communities. This explicit community-organizing component distinguishes RingShout from 1 in 3's implicit goal of individual storytelling leading to more people taking a stand politically and Shvarts's unintended national controversy. At this preliminary stage of my research, I speculate that all three approaches will be necessary for a significant shift in abortion politics to take place. As I move forward with this project, I will continue to seek out and analyze risk-taking performances of and about abortion like the ones described above. Many questions remain: When feminist artists and activists perform abortion, what do they produce? What are the implications of reintroducing women's creative bodies to the debate? Can these performances and public reactions to them lay bare the stakes of the issue? Do they reveal hidden cruces or closely guarded sore points that could

lead to vital breakthroughs? The performances that ask—and answer—these questions are the ones that can, I contend, mobilize the potential to intervene in a discourse that otherwise feels impossible to crack.

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in Culture and Performance from UCLA. She thanks

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NOTES

1. Aliza Shvarts. "Figuration and failure, pedagogy and performance: reflections three years later," *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory* 21, no. 1 (2011): 160.
2. Elin Diamond. "Introduction." In *Performance and Cultural Politics*, ed. Elin Diamond. (New York: Routledge, 1996), 5.
3. "U.S. Satisfaction in 2011 Ranks as Second Lowest Since 1979," Gallup Poll, December 22, 2011, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/151700/Satisfaction-2011-Ranks-Second-Lowest-1979.aspx>, accessed December 26, 2011.
4. Steinhauer, Jennifer. Under Banner of Fiscal Restraint, Republicans Plan New Abortion Bills, *New York Times*, February 8, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/09/us/politics/09congress.html?_r=2
5. "Facts on Induced Abortion in the United States," Guttmacher Institute, August 2011, http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html, accessed January 6, 2012.
6. The same clinic, under the name Ladies Center, was the site of two bombings in 1984. In 1994 Paul Hill murdered Dr. John Britton and clinic escort James Barrett as they pulled up to the clinic in Barrett's truck. For the most recent National Abortion Federation Violence and Disruption Statistics, see http://www.prochoice.org/pubs_research/publications/downloads/about_abortion/stats_table2010.pdf
7. In Fall of 2010, before their takeover of the House was certain, Republicans in Congress released "A Pledge to America." While

the table of contents refers primarily to jobs, the economy, Congressional reform, and security, the text itself contains numerous references to conservative catchwords (family, traditional marriage, and life) and outlines a plan to eliminate private insurance coverage for abortion. The full document is available for download at <http://www.gop.gov/indepth/pledge/downloads>.

8. According to the Alan Guttmacher Institute, 2011 saw an unprecedented number of attempts to legislate reproductive health in the 50 states. By the end of the year, 92 provisions restricting abortion were passed in 24 states, almost triple the number for 2010. ("Laws Affecting Reproductive Health and Rights: 2011 State Policy Review," <http://www.guttmacher.org/state-center/updates/2011/statetrends42011.html>). For the latest information on federal and state anti-abortion legislation, see the Guttmacher Institute's "An Overview of Abortion Laws," updated monthly at http://www.guttmacher.org/state-center/spibs/spib_OAL.pdf; the Center for Reproductive Rights' "2011 at the Midpoint: The State of Reproductive Rights," available at <http://reproductiverights.org/en/feature/2011-at-the-midpoint-the-state-of-reproductive-rights>; and NARAL Pro-Choice America's annual "Who Decides? The Status of Women's Reproductive Rights in The United States" at <http://www.prochoiceamerica.org/government-and-you/who-decides/>.
9. The proposal to deny Title X funding to Planned Parenthood's network of local clinics across the country became the symbolic and emotional crux of the Republican campaign. Republican House leaders were so desperate to "defund" Planned Parenthood that they even proposed removing the entire budget for Title X, sending the message that they would rather deny *all* low-income women access to federally funded contraception and preventive health care than allow Planned Parenthood to receive any of those funds. This trend even extended to private funding when the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation announced January 31 that they were halting funding to Planned Parenthood for breast cancer exams, an evidently political decision they reversed days later amidst enormous public pressure.
10. Jennifer Doyle. "Blind Spots and Failed Performance: Abortion, Feminism, and Queer Theory." *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences*, 18, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2009), p. 32.
11. Coverage of the bill, particularly the oft-repeated line that requiring transvaginal ultrasound via vaginal probe was akin to state-mandated rape, deserves a dedicated analysis that I do not have the space to provide here.

12. Carol Mason. *Killing for Life: The Apocalyptic Narrative of Pro-Life Politics*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 197.
13. The famous picture, taken in 1964, appeared in *Ms. Magazine* in April 1973 just a few months after the *Roe v. Wade* decision made abortion legal. It subsequently became a ubiquitous, albeit anonymous, symbol of the pro-choice movement. The 1995 documentary *Leona's Sister Gerri* tells the story of Gerri Santoro through the eyes of her surviving family members.
14. Histories of eugenics and forced sterilization targeting women of color and low-income women, and more recent campaigns advocating coercive contraception for women receiving welfare and incarcerated women demonstrate the extent to which racism determines who is allowed to reproduce and who is not. See for example Dorothy Roberts (1997, 1998), Andrea Smith (1999, 2002), and SisterSong's *Collective Voices* (Summer 2011). For an excellent introduction to reproductive justice, see Silliman, Fried, Ross, and Gutiérrez (2004).
15. National Organization for Women, "History of Marches and Mass Actions," <http://www.now.org/history/protests.html>, accessed December 29, 2011.
16. This is of course not to say that there were no organizational or movement gains from the march.
17. Executive Boards of the Reproductive Rights Action League at Yale (RALY) and the Yale Law Students for Reproductive Justice. "Shvarts within her rights, but wrong." *Yale Daily News*. April 21, 2008.
18. Read more about the campaign and watch videos at <http://www.1in3campaign.org/>.
19. Public Religion Research Institute. "Committed to Availability, Conflicted about Morality: What the Millennial Generation Tells Us about the Future of the Abortion Debate and the Culture Wars," June 9, 2011, <http://publicreligion.org/research/2011/06/committed-to-availability-conflicted-about-morality-what-the-millennial-generation-tells-us-about-the-future-of-the-abortion-debate-and-the-culture-wars/>, accessed December 12, 2011.
20. Jeannie Ludlow. "The Things We Cannot Say: Witnessing the Traumatization of Abortion in the United States." *Women Studies Quarterly* 36: 1 & 2 (Spring/Summer 2008), 28-41. See also Dr. Susan Wicklund's *This Common Secret* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007) and the documentary *The Abortion Diaries* (2005).
21. <http://rs4rjfreebirth.eventbrite.com/>. The 2011 billboard later appeared in St. Louis. Other so-called "black genocide" billboards have appeared in Atlanta and Chicago.

NOMONDE NYEMBE AND CHERITH SANGER

FIRST FELLOWS IN UCLA LAW-SONKE HEALTH & HUMAN
RIGHTS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Created to train lawyers from top South African law schools for careers in public interest, the new UCLA Law-Sonke Health & Human Rights Fellowship program selected Nomonde Nyembe and Cherith Sanger as the first two fellows. The two lawyers from South Africa arrived at UCLA in Fall.

The fellowship's focus on health, HIV prevention, gender equality, and human rights is timely, as in 2007 South Africa had the highest number of people living with HIV in the world, as well as one of the highest levels of domestic violence and rape. Both Nyembe and Sanger are committed to pursuing social change in their home country: upon completing their UCLA degrees, they are required by the program to work with the Sonke Gender Justice Network in South Africa for at least one year.



Nyembe received her LL.B. from the University of Witwatersrand in 2007, and completed her articles of clerkship in 2009. She took a clerkship at the Constitutional Court of South Africa in 2010, af-

ter which she became a Research and Teaching Associate at the University of Witwatersrand in the Oliver Schreiner School of Law. Her work there included developing her teaching skills and researching constitutional rights issues. Nyembe's long-term goal is to lecture on human rights and constitutional law at a South African university, specializing in public interest litigation on gender and health.

Sanger brings six years of legal experience to the UCLA fellowship, including work on domestic



violence and hate crimes against lesbians and bisexual women. She earned her LL.B. from the University of the Western Cape in 2004. She completed her articles of clerkship in 2006, practicing in litigation and

becoming involved in public interest legal work. Sanger joined the Women's Legal Centre in 2007, specializing in litigation and advocacy for gender-based violence. She has worked with clients in sexual and domestic violence, hate crimes, and unfair discrimination.

As part of the fellowship, UCLA provides a full-tuition grant to enroll in its Law's Master of Laws program. The Ford Foundation also contributes, covering the fellows' living and traveling expenses while they are in the program.

A NEW LOST WOMAN PHILOSOPHER

Amalie John Hathaway

IN THE DECADES since feminist scholars first turned our eyes to the past in search of women philosophers unmentioned in history, it has become clear that not all women philosophers get missed by history for the same reason. Some women philosophers, like Julia Ward Howe, one of whose many philosophical lecture manuscripts was only recently discussed in a philosophical journal for the first time, were missed because, among other reasons, they were remembered too well for some other accomplishment—in Howe’s case, writing the lyrics to “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.” Or they

were passed by because their other activities or opinions, such as Catharine Esther Beecher’s, were anathema to the pro-suffragism and/or the secularism that seemed integral to the beliefs that drove the recovery movement. This kind of exclusion has been corrected. It is hard to believe that now, in 2012, any women philosophers are still being missed because of practical reasons due to lack or failure of research. Such does, however, seem to be the case with Amalia Hathaway.

Amalie Hathaway, to give her her legal first name, was a far more conventional philosopher than any of her more studied age cohort,

Eliza Sunderland and Marietta Kies. With one exception, her corpus consists of six papers all consistently, specifically concerned with nineteenth-century German idealist philosophy, the exception being in psychology, at a time when psychology had not quite fully separated from philosophy. These papers were seemingly all given before cultural societies in the Midwest, including primarily the Chicago Philosophical Society. Her one publication is one of those papers that she also gave before the Concord (Massachusetts) Summer School of Philosophy and Literature founded by Bronson Alcott and

Ralph Waldo Emerson, a paper which by means unknown, ended up published in the second volume of a bimonthly periodical called *Education: An International Magazine* in Boston, in another volume of which Howe was also represented.

So, why doesn't anyone know about Amalie Hathaway? Why hasn't anyone cared about Amalie Hathaway? As was said, she was far more conventional, that is, far easier for a historian of philosophy to recognize at face value. A paper called "Schopenhauer" is obviously about philosophy.

The truth seems to be that in the recovery movement, unconventional women philosophers took priority. Frances Wright, the radical communitarian who travelled from Scotland to the United States where she became the first woman to give speeches to the public, for example, was one of the first American women philosophers to be recovered. The movement was not so much interested in in-house-type philosophical subjects as historical philosophers as in feminist politics such as written by Judith Sargent Murray or feminist theory like that written by Margaret Fuller (although Fuller was strangely excluded by retrievers of American philosophers until Jane Duran wrote an article in 2005 in *The Pluralist*). Hathaway's list of papers "Immanuel Kant," "The Hegelian Philosophy," "Hartmann," "Pessimism and the Hegelian Philosophy," "Mental Automatism," and "Schopenhauer" (alternatively referenced as "Schopenhauer and His Philosophy," and "Scho-

penhauer and Pessimism") sounded too conservative. As well, Hathaway seemed too successful to need feminist rescue. Her Concord talk was reported on in the *New York Times*. Surely someone so mainstream must have gotten taken care of by the mainstream. Proving that sexism was still active, however, Hathaway was not so taken care of, and because she was not taken care of by nineteenth-century feminists either, I conjecture, the twentieth-century-begun recovery movement missed her.

At present I am working on gleaning from Hathaway's 18-page Schopenhauer paper published in *Education* and its contemporary reviews why Hathaway was both the "idol" of the Chicago Philosophical Society and a figure of so little interest to the feminist philosophical recovery movement that in its work to date in, for example, *Women in the American Philosophical Tradition: 1800-1930*, a 2004 special issue of *Hypatia*, a journal of feminist philosophy, edited by Dorothy Rogers and Therese B. Dykeman, she appears in a footnote only.

Carol Marie Bensick is a CSW Research Scholar. She received her Ph.D. in English and American Literature from Cornell University in 1982 after completing a dissertation titled "La Nouvelle Beatrice: Renaissance Medicine and New England Theology." She has taught at University of Denver, Cornell University, UCLA, University

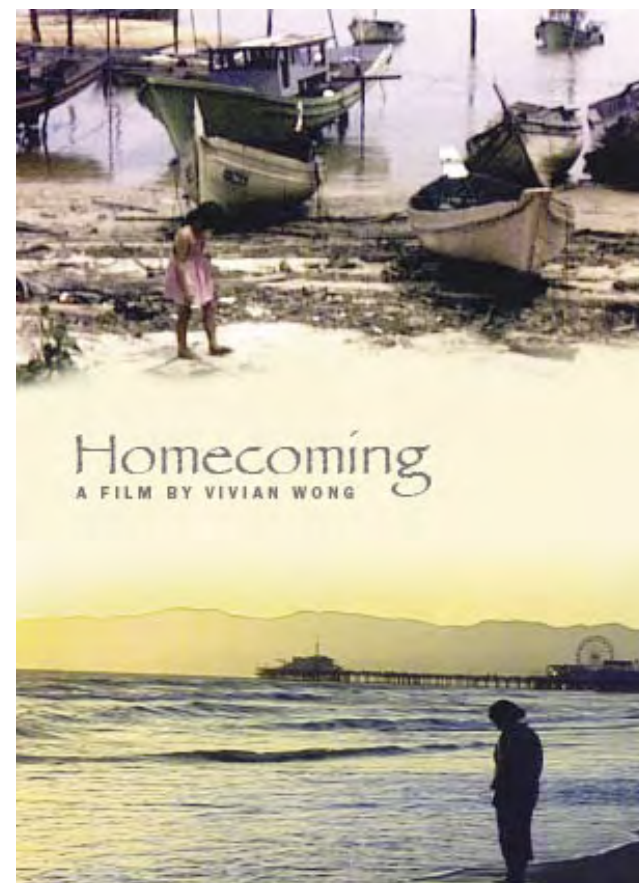
of Oregon, and UC Riverside. Her book, *La Nouvelle Beatrice: Renaissance and Romance in "Rappaccini's Daughter,"* was published in 1984. Her most recently published articles include "Esther Edwards Burr" in *American National Biography* (1999) and "Partly Sympathy, Partly Rebellion: May Ward, Hawthorne, and The Scarlet Letter," in *Hawthorne and Women* (1999). Her current research project, titled "The Rise and Stall of Feminist Women's History of Philosophy: Help from the Archives of Julia Ward Howe," concerns a female philosopher. Detailed primary and secondary texts pertaining to Julia Ward Howe prove that the work of women who read, taught, discussed, and even published on great texts of philosophy with elite university faculty could vanish with their deaths not because their philosophy itself had been discredited or refuted but for no other apparent reason than that their gender caused discomfort, displeasure, or disapproval in their contemporaries—including their own children. This project will document Howe's work and legacy.

JOURNEYS TO AND FRO

Recalling and Writing "Home(s)" in Diasporic Imaginaries

The house is open to the public, and I took a tour one hot day in July 2008. The tour was conducted in English by a young Malay woman dressed in traditional Malaysian dress, fully covered in a long gown and headscarf, in keeping with the Muslim customs of modesty. The tour group consisted of three college-age women from Scotland who were on summer holiday and me, a second-generation Malaysian Chinese American woman visiting her Malaysian Chinese relatives.

The three-room house was a time capsule. Objects in it used to represent Malaysian home-life from a different era were like talismans that triggered memories from my childhood in America. The experience transported me to another time and place far in the past. I simultaneously recalled and relived my past associations with each item as the tour guide demonstrated and described them



to us in the living space. A simple wooden toy brought me back to the family room of my own home in Maryland, where I sat on the carpet playing a game similar to jacks with my grandmother, who migrated from Malaysia when I was eight years old.

I share this episode from my summer travels as a point of entry—the doorway—into the memories that flickered until they illuminated the outlines of my dissertation work. How I came to embody this moment and the memories it invoked is tied to journeys—ones simultaneously, and indivisibly, physical and immaterial, emotional and intellectual, personal and communal. These journeys join my family and I as they also link us to the diverse Asian, Chinese, and Malaysian immigrant communities nationally, internationally, and transnationally. They are the movements to locate “home(s)” in those diasporas through travel: migration and immigration. And they are the processes that displace and replace “home” in multiple spaces, where “home” is reimagined in the continuing dynamics of dislocation and location.

My dissertation project examines the kinds of personal archives produced by Asian immigrant and Asian American women, reconceiving them as itinerant acts that reproduce, represent, and reimagine “home” in Asian diasporas. The redistribution of the archive and remapping of record production onto “the migrant” (Asian immigrant and Asian American women) and her peregrina-

tions challenges traditional professional theories of “the archives” as administrative and national projects of governing bodies and bureaucratic and cultural institutions. Instead, personal record-making and -keeping become a purposefully individual practice, and in turn “the archive” is (re) made and (re)conceived as “a deliberate site for the production of anticipated memories by intentional communities.”³ “Home” is simultaneously a physical place, as well as imagined and actualized spaces of collective identities, sentimental belongings, and communities of solidarities.

Asian American historian Gary Okihiro writes that “geographies are neither predetermined nor fixed; spaces ... [they] are freighted with the significances that we ascribe to them” and there can be multiple homes.⁴ For the itinerant female figure, home is both a place and process: It is simultaneously fixed and always becoming. It is one’s homeland, but also an adopted country. It is tied to nationalism, but also remixed with naturalization and citizenship. Then there are the places one chooses to call home: self-selected, constructed spaces shaped by individual will—itinerant acts that bind us to home places, collecting “memories of ‘home’” to re/form the “archive of home.”

The personal archive (re)positioned in Asian diasporas and the imaginaries of diasporic in-

3. Arun Appadurai, “Archives as aspiration,” *Information is Alive*. Ed. Joke Brouwer and Arjen Mulder (Rotterdam: V2 Publishing/NAI Publishers, 2003), 34.

4. Gary Okihiro, *Common Ground: Reimagining American History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 6.

dividuals is an intimate space—simultaneously material and immaterial, imagined and created—for Asian im/migrants to form a different sense of belonging that is deliberate and enabling for themselves within their communities. The im/migrant women in these (diasporic) communities collect, create, maintain, preserve, and distribute their historical and cultural narratives in records that capture their hybrid transnational identities and multinational experiences as they want them remembered and transmitted to the successive generations of their descendants.

Seven years ago, I made a film that changed my life. I was getting my M.F.A. in Directing at UCLA when my grandmother passed away. It was not until then that I thought to make any kind of film about my family. I was caught up telling other kinds of stories, writing screenplays and raising money to make them into movies. But there is a saying in filmmaking: the story finds you, you don’t find the story. My grandmother’s story found me as I was in pre-production for a different film.

Making a film is very much a leap of faith—like so much in life—and where there is a will there is a way. One works from passion and through inspiration, trusting the process. So I jumped, diving into my grandmother’s things: old photos, family albums, and the personal effects she brought to America from Malaysia. I hoped these objects would “speak” to me, which they did, and

that a story would emerge, which one did. As I turned the pages of old photo albums, images leaped out at me: my grandmother as a young woman dressed in a *nyonya kebaya*⁵; my grandmother, older, wearing the same outfit in America; and longhouses built off the river where my grandmother lived as a girl that no longer exist.

I rediscovered the Super 8 footage of me as a child playing on the beach in Malaysia, which together with other personal materials became the creative inspiration as well as the visual anchor of the film. From those home movies and contemporary videos of myself, I wove my grandmother's story together with my own life and connected my family's immigrant experiences in Malaysia and America. I literally experienced firsthand the power of visual images to hold and transfer history and memory and make meaning out of life. Moreover, I came to believe more than ever in the value and significance of one's personal archives to validate one's identity and existence, as well as its importance as part of a larger "diasporic archive" to document and preserve the histories of individuals, groups, and communities usually absent in traditional, institutional archives. This notion of belonging via archives of our own creation unexpectedly brought me back to school later in life for an unanticipated intellectual journey. But personally, and probably more importantly, the film was a way for me to come "home," creating a narrative

5. Traditional Malaysian Chinese dress.



Vivian L. Wong is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Information Studies at UCLA. Her research interests include the documentation, collection, preservation, and dissemination of historical and cultural records in Asian American communities and archival formations in the Asian diaspora. She is also an award-winning filmmaker. Her work has screened internationally in film festivals, academic conferences, and on PBS.

DELEGATION OF WOMEN FROM THREE KEY POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTES IN NICARAGUA VISIT CSW



AS PART of the “Alliance Building and Best Practices in Resource Mobilization, Research and Advocacy: A Project for Nicaragua,” a delegation of women from three key policy research institutes visited CSW on February 8, 2012. The policy research institutes were Center for Communications Research (Centro de Investigación de la Comunicación – CINCO), Institute for Public Policy and Strategic Studies (Instituto de Estudios Estratégicos y Políticas Públicas – IEEPP), and Center for Constitutional Rights (Centro de Derechos Constitucionales – CDC). The visitors were Elvira Cuadra, Research Coordinator, CINCO; Claudia García Rocha, Research Coordinator, IEEPP; Ninoska Pérez, Executive Director’s Assistant, CINCO; Claudia Pineda Gadea, Executive Director, IEEPP; Amelia Silva Cabrera, member of General Assembly, CDC; and Ada Esperanza Silva Perez,

Founder, President and Executive Director of the General Assembly, CDC. They met with Julie Childers, CSW Assistant Director, and Brenda Johnson-Grau, CSW Managing Editor. The discussion focused on ways the groups could share information and expertise in their mission areas. It was a fruitful discussion and the participants will be in touch about partnership efforts.

Center for Communications Research

The Centro de Investigación de la Comunicación (CINCO, <http://www.cinco.org.ni>) is a civil society organization that specializes in the study of communication, culture, democracy and public opinion, with a special emphasis on the study of communications media and their social and political role in building democracy. CINCO was founded in 1990,

and has operated as a non-profit association since 1995. The focus of CINCO's research is the role of the media as a key political actor, intermediating between citizens, civil society, and the state. The staff is composed of professionals in communications and the social sciences, television and newspaper journalists, media directors and publicists, brought together in their commitment to social research and developing new communication strategies. CINCO is recognized nationally for its work providing political and social actors with new tools for analysis of the national context and promoting effective citizen participation in defense of freedom of expression and social justice.

Center for Constitutional Rights

Founded in 1990, the Centro de Derechos Constitucionales (CDC, <http://www.cdc.org.ni>) is a civil society organization that promotes the respect of constitutional rights. The mission of CDC is to promote the rule of law and respect for the constitutional rights of the Nicaraguan people. As such, CDC is active in promoting a suitable legal framework for

democratic governance and in developing the capacities of citizen and NGO partners to defend, demand, and exercise their constitutional rights. The CDC specializes in promoting women, adolescent and children's rights, and civic participation through advocating legislation in those areas. The objectives of CDC are to disseminate knowledge of how to effectively exercise citizen and civil society rights, to strengthen the capacity of the organization and leadership of Nicaraguan civil society, and to contribute to the creation, development and defense of democracy in Nicaragua.

Institute for Public Policy and Strategic Studies

Established in 2004, the Instituto de Estudios Estratégicos y Políticas Públicas (IEEPP, <http://www.ieepp.org>) is a non-profit, non-partisan think tank dedicated to improving citizen participation in public affairs and providing support for public policies that promote good governance, efficiency and transparency. IEEPP's primary focus has been upon analysis and monitoring of public policies in security and defense, prevention and control of organized crime, and

public administration of social policies. Since 2006, IEEPP has further dedicated its work to the analysis of public sector transparency, strategies for poverty reduction, and responsible management of public budgets. Today, IEEPP is recognized as the leading independent research center in the country, devoted to public policy and budgetary research and analysis. IEEPP participates in important international coalitions for research and analysis at the regional and global level of these phenomena.

RECYCLE MORE STUFF!

BY NOW, I know that we are all doing our part to recycle the plastics and paper that comes into our homes. But what about those odd items that you can't put in the blue bin? Almost anything can be recycled from computers, batteries, toothbrushes, old paint, even refrigerators! There are many websites that will direct you to the nearest recycling center for those hard, but not impossible, recyclable items. Two of our favorites are www.earth911.com and www.recyclingcenters.org. At these sites you can enter in your location and what you need to recycle and they will generate a list of the nearest recycling centers that take your items. no need to send those odd recyclable materials to the landfill anymore!

– Lindsey McLean



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