



spring 2015



ucla center for the study of women

research that rethinks

UCLA CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN PRESENTS

THINKING GENDER

25TH ANNUAL GRADUATE STUDENT
RESEARCH CONFERENCE



APRIL 23/24, 2015

UCLA COVEL COMMONS • CSW.UCLA.EDU • OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

THINKING GENDER 2015

The 25th edition of CSW's Annual Graduate Research Conference will take place over two days, April 23 & 24, and will feature a keynote address, reception, networking luncheon, workshops, and a poster session.

BY CHIEN-LING LIU

THINKING GENDER 2015, CSW's 25th Annual Graduate Student Research Conference, promises to strengthen scholarly networks and inspire lively conversation. To help make this landmark anniversary a memorable success, we have expanded the conference to a two-day schedule at UCLA's Covel Commons and added a keynote address, poster exhibition, awards for papers and posters, student travel grants, workshops, and more.

We will open the conference with a keynote address, "Body Modifications: Violence, Labor, and the Subject of Feminism," by Rebecca M. Herzig, the Christian A. Johnson Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies and Chair of the Program in Women and Gender Studies at Bates College (<http://www.bates.edu/gender/faculty/rebecca-m-herzig/>), from 2 to 3:15 pm. The keynote address is cosponsored by the UCLA Colloquium in History of Science, Technology, and

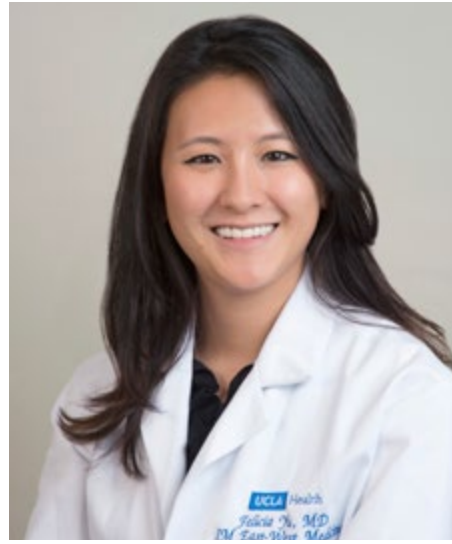
Medicine. On this first day, we will also introduce Professor Herzig's new book, *Plucked: A History of Hair Removal*, will available for purchase. In *Plucked*, Professor Herzig describes the surprising histories of race, science, industry, and medicine behind hair-removal practices and norms.

This year, scholars from near and far will present exciting and innovative work on the tangled relationships between knowledge and the gendered body. Presentations, including 12 illustrated posters and 43 research papers in 12 fascinating panels, will cover a wide array of topics, including issues of biomedical body and knowledge production, sexuality in Asian media, feminist inquiry and practices, queer body and sexuality in performance, gendered militarism and social protests, and of gendered roles and professionalism. Also featured are discussions on exploring identity and culture

of movement, contesting anthropocentrism, claiming public visibility and power, challenging stereotype of body in the arts, locating agency in politics of the body, and contesting marginality.

These presentations span the topics that are interdisciplinary, transnational, cross-regional, and both contemporary and historical. Representing 33 colleges and universities from around the world, our presenters come from disciplines in humanities and sciences at UCLA, from other UC campuses and other states, and from Australia, Poland, Canada, France, Germany, and China. We envision that the conference will interest a broad audience, from north and south campus of UCLA, as well as from local academic and lay communities.

The poster exhibition will take place on the first day, following the keynote address. After the poster exhibition, we will award the



Those who pay the \$35 registration fee for the conference will have the option of attending one of these workshops: “Fight Like a Woman” with Marcus Kowal (far left) and “Acupressure: Massaging Your Way to Optimal Health” (left) with Dr. Felicia Yu.

student travel grant, best posters, and best papers. These awardees will receive certificates and financial awards. All awardees have an opportunity to publish in a special Spring 2015 issue of *InterActions* or *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience*.

The panel presentations are scheduled for the second day, Friday, April 24, from 9 am to 12:15 pm, and from 2:45 to 6 pm. For a complete schedule, please visit CSW website (<http://www.csw.ucla.edu/conferences-1/thinking-gender>).

Also on Friday will be a networking lunch and two workshops, “Fight Like a Woman” with Marcus Kowal and “Acupressure: Massaging Your Way to Optimal Health” with Dr. Felicia Yu.

Fight Like a Woman will discuss the practicality and thinking behind Krav Maga and the mental game when in a situation where self-defense is necessary. Marcus Kowal (above), the lead instructor and owner of System Training Center, is a professional kickboxer and

MMA fighter and 2nd degree Krav Maga Black Belt. This workshop is cosponsored by Marcus Kowal and Systems Training Center (<http://systemstrainingcenter.com>).

In *Massaging Your Way to Optimal Health*, Dr. Felicia Yu (above) will show participants how to stimulate their own acupressure points to alleviate such symptoms as pain, headache, nausea, menstrual cramps, abdominal pain, and insomnia. Dr. Yu is an East-West Primary Care Fellow at the UCLA Center for East-West Medicine.

Thinking Gender 2015 welcomes you to join us for two days of inspiring scholarship, energetic conversation, and lively networking.

Chien-Ling Liu is the conference coordinator of Thinking Gender 2015. She is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of History at UCLA. Her dissertation is on the microbiological studies and public health work by the Pasteur Institutes in China between 1899 and 1950, particularly concerning prophylaxes of smallpox and

rabies. She is interested in power dynamics of scientific knowledge production and practices in cross-cultural contexts, relating to the issues of modernity. When not writing her dissertation, she enjoys going to movies and playing badminton.

Thinking Gender is open to the public and all are welcome. Attendance at conference panels and the keynote address is free. A registration fee of \$35 provides access to the conference workshops, networking lunch, and keynote cocktail reception; you’ll also get a Thinking Gender tote bag and CSW ceramic mug. Select PRIME when you visit the registration website: <https://uclacsw.submittable.com>

Location of Covell Commons on the campus of UCLA: <http://maps.ucla.edu/campus/?locid=329>

For more information on the program, visit <http://www.csw.ucla.edu/conferences-1/thinking-gender/>



Body Modifications: Violence, Labor, and the Subject of Feminism

Keynote by Rebecca M. Herzig

Rebecca M. Herzig is the Christian A. Johnson Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies and Chair of the Program in Women and Gender Studies at Bates College. Her teaching, research, and activist work all seek to engage broad audiences in reflection on the social dimensions of science, technology, and medicine. Recent publications include a special issue of the *Lancet* on "Medicalisation in the 21st century," co-edited with Jonathan Metzl, and *The Nature of Difference: Sciences of Race in the United States from Jefferson to Genomics*, co-edited with Evelyn Hammonds. Her latest book, *Plucked: A History of Hair Removal*, is now available from NYU Press.



From 3 to 4:15 pm, copies of *Plucked* will be available for purchase. Price is \$29.95 plus sales tax.

COSPONSOR of keynote: UCLA Colloquium in History of Science, Technology, and Medicine

A composite image featuring a microscopic view of various cells in shades of red and orange. Overlaid on the bottom half of the image is a dark silhouette of a city skyline, likely representing Los Angeles. The text is overlaid on the top and middle sections of the image.

life (un)ltd

ucla
center for
the study
of women
presents

Kath Weston University of Virginia

OLD MACDONALD HAD A DATABASE
Lessons from the National Animal
Identification System

FRIDAY

Feb 27, 2015

12 to 2 pm

Haines 352

COSPONSORED BY
Department
of Anthropology

Kath Weston

A single body cannot bridge that mythical divide between insider and outsider, researcher and research. I am neither, in any simple way, and yet I am both.

– Kath Weston, *Longslowburn*

BY RADHIKA MEHLOTRA

HAVING PUBLISHED widely on issues related kinship, gender, and sexuality, as well as poverty in the U.S., Kath Weston, a professor in the department of anthropology at the University of Virginia, has recently turned her attention to surveillance technologies and the body. In an upcoming talk in the Life (Un)Ltd lecture series organized by CSW Associate Director Rachel Lee, Weston will discuss one of the case studies from her forthcoming book, *Animate Planet: Making Visceral Sense of Living in a High-Tech Ecologically Damaged World*: “In the United States, the National Animal Identification System is a state-sponsored

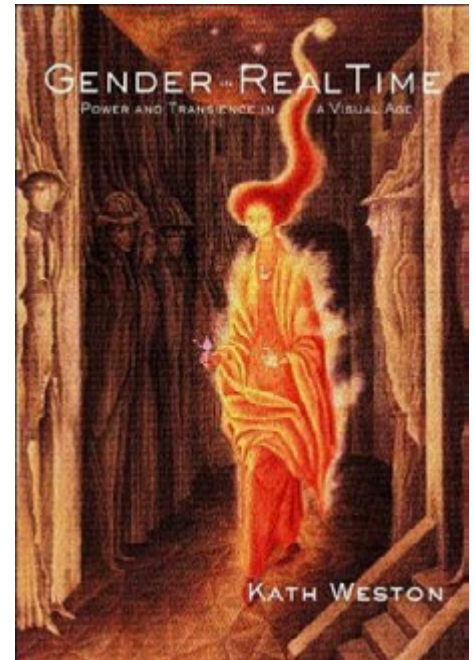
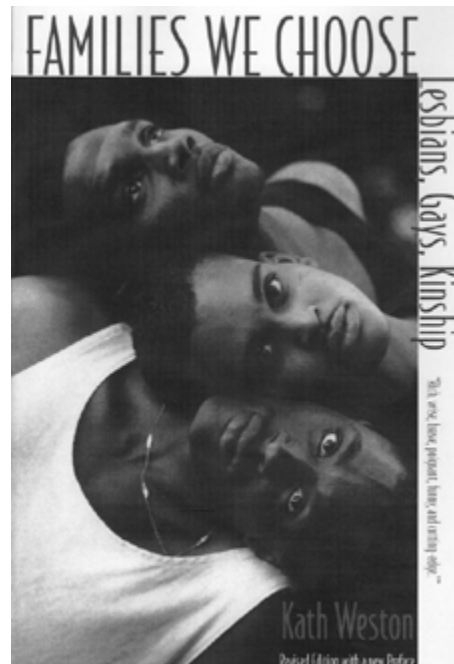
Big Data scheme that proposes to render each animal destined for the dinner table capable of being tracked and traced, in whole or in part, throughout its material existence, in the name of protecting public health and facilitating international trade. The NAIS represents a historical shift away from prevention and inspection of food production facilities, toward an investment in trace-back operations that attempt to secure the nation’s food supply by securing the animal body. Under the scheme, each pig, sheep, and cow receives a ‘unique individual identifier’ sutured to its body using a range of surveillance devices and mapped onto a prem-

ises registry. What is at stake in the struggles over animal citizenship, bio-intimacy, and techno-intimacy that have ensued in the wake of implementation of the NAIS?”

Weston has interests in political economy; political ecology and environmental issues; historical anthropology; science studies; and kinship, gender, and sexuality. Weston was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship in 2011, for “demonstrating exceptional capacity for productive scholarship or exceptional creative ability in the arts.”¹ Her fieldwork and research pursuits have taken her to India, Japan, the United Kingdom, and

1. <http://www.gf.org/about-the-foundation/the-fellowship/>

Weston's books seek to communicate the lived experience of the communities she studies.



the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Her work has long challenged the preoccupations and predilections of the academic social sciences. In *Longslowburn: Sexuality and Social Science* (1998), she “argues that despite the recent growth in gay and lesbian studies departments, sexuality is not a new topic for social science. She also suggests that sexuality should not be a ghettoized area of study but rather should be considered in relation to work, migration, family, and all the other core topics that concern social scientists.”² According to Stefan Helmreich, Weston’s book, *Gender in Real Time: Power and Transience in a Visual Age* (2003) “is a provocative intervention into how critical cultural theory might engage the formulations of science and mathematics in order to think anew about how temporality

2. <http://www.amazon.com/Long-Slow-Burn-Sexuality-Science/dp/0415920442>

contributes to the formation of gender, race, and sexuality, and other genres of social experience. Weston...argues that an accounting of time and its contingency is crucially missing from, or merely left implicit in, such work.”³

Her interest in the lived experiences of lesbians and gays animated two of her books, *Render Me, Gender Me* (1998) and *Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship* (1997). *Render Me, Gender Me* “challenges comfortable assumptions about gender by weaving... [her] own thought-provoking commentary together with the voices of lesbians from a variety of race and class backgrounds.”⁴ The *Library Journal* hailed the books, noting that “Weston’s witty, lyrical writing style coupled with the voices of the interviewees makes

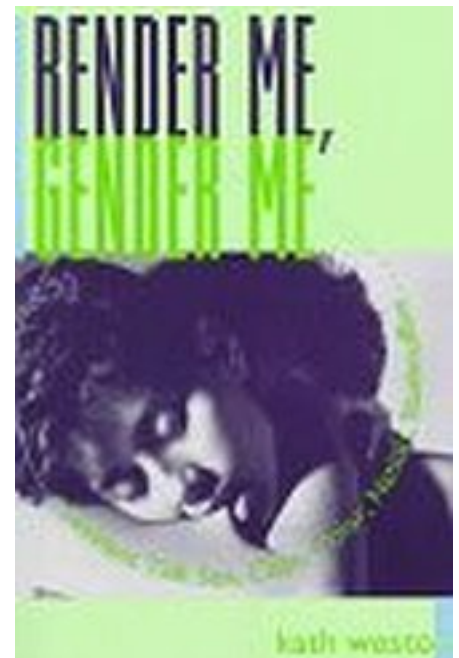
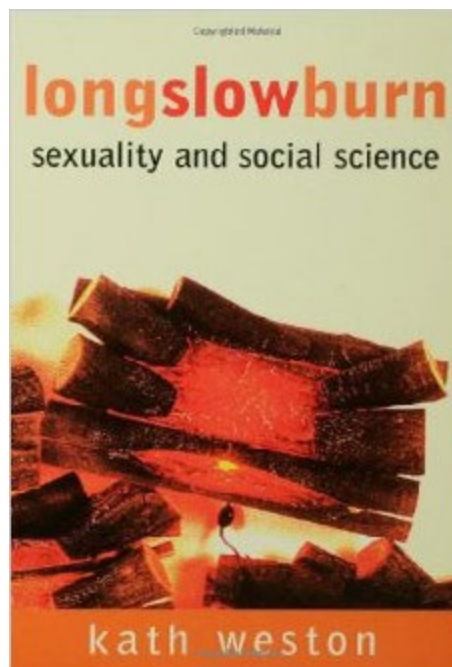
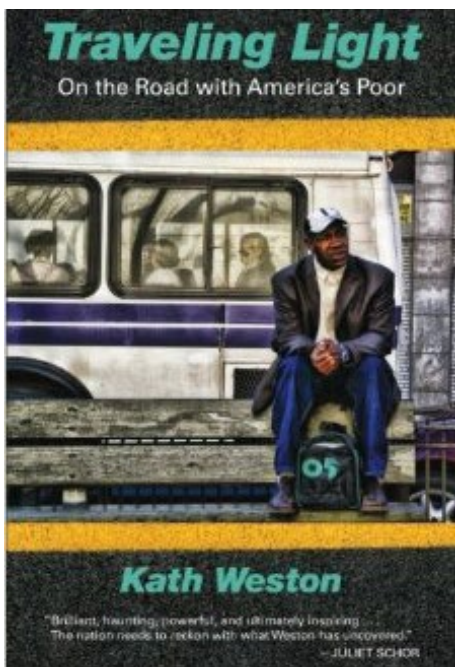
3. http://web.mit.edu/anthropology/pdf/articles/helmreich/helmreich_weston_interview.pdf

4. <http://cup.columbia.edu/book/render-me-gender-me/9780231096423>

this enjoyable for the lay reader.”⁵ In a review of *Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship* (1997) in *Library Journal*, Eric Bryant wrote “this book demands—and deserves—thorough and careful reading. With weighty prose, Weston, an anthropology professor, writes that gays and lesbians, long seen as exiles from kinship ties, are choosing to create their own families. Arguing that these “chosen” families cannot be understood apart from the “straight” families in which gays and lesbians grew up, she draws on interviews to describe gays’ relationships with their straight families. Weston places her interpretation in perspective with historical and legal background information and extended quotations from interviewees.”

In a recent book, *Traveling Light: On the Road with America’s Poor*

5. <http://cup.columbia.edu/book/render-me-gender-me/9780231096423>



(2009), she rode the bus for five years to document what it's like to be poor in America. As a review in *Publisher's Weekly* described the book, "In this accessible gem of a narrative, Weston makes a special contribution to the conversation (and glut of ethnographies) that seek to describe how the other half lives. Raised in the working-class outskirts of Chicago and trained as an anthropologist, the author is devoid of condescension or naïve astonishment as she zigzags across the country by bus—one of the last quasi-public spaces—swapping advice, snacks, favors, worldviews and nuggets of profound wisdom with her fellow travelers. Within these shared stories, Weston interweaves her own experiences in traveling on a limited budget with acute anthropological analysis. Attuned to the hardships of bus travel (no guaranteed seats

after long waits to board, bad food at rest stops, hiked up prices for the poorest travelers), Weston is also refreshingly self-reflective on her own relative privilege (being white and a citizen, having a credit card). Although her writing occasionally reads like choppy journal entries, her simple observations are marked by a spare grace: Arrival is not all. Often the road is the thing. This book is a piece of 21st-century Americana in motion, and its characters and cities will resonate and linger with readers."

In her career as author, scholar, and activist, Weston has always been in motion, reimagining her research and her role in it. Her new book will surely be another landmark book in the fields of anthropology, feminist studies, and science and technology studies. "Political Ecologies of the Precarious," an essay from the book is

available at academia.edu: https://www.academia.edu/2314386/Political_Ecologies_of_the_Precarious

Radhika Mehlotra is a graduate student researcher at CSW

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For more info on Life (Un)Ltd, visit <http://www.csw.ucla.edu/research/projects/life-un-ltd/life-un-ltd>

Little Prairie Ronde, Cass County, Michigan, where Amalie Hathaway lived and wrote her philosophy papers in the 1870s and 1880s.



Women Philosophers at the American Philosophical Association

A Personal Account of the 111th Meeting of the Eastern Division by Carol Bensick

AS A MEMBER of the Society for the Study of Women Philosophers and a new member of the American Philosophical Association, I recently travelled to Philadelphia to present a paper on nineteenth-century American Amalie Hathaway's lecture on famous German pessimist philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer.

Mine was to be the middle presentation of three on the society's theme of women philosophers. Each was strikingly different. The first was a paper on contemporary theorist of material culture and University of Georgia Professor Beth Preston by Hector MacIntyre, a doctoral student from the University of Ottawa, Canada. The third was a performance by Sabrina Misir-Hiralall, an adjunct professor from the Montclair State University, New Jersey, of a Hindu dance about a princess who after alienating her husband (really the god Krishna) attracts him back by showing she admits and repents her unspiritual behav-

ior. My paper was on a lecture on Schopenhauer by an immigrant woman at the 1881 session of the nineteenth-century Massachusetts phenomenon, the Concord Summer School of Philosophy and Literature. The program thus showed the great variety among women philosophers, as well as the range of genre characteristically accepted and advocated for by scholars of women's philosophy.

I arrived early, finding a business meeting of the Society wrapping up. Three members of the board of directors were present and one of the presenters. As the start time drew closer, the other presenter arrived. Unless I misremember, there were no other attendees. The chair of the panel had written to us that our panel was scheduled against at least one other panel of interest to the society's members, including at least one in which one of the directors was presenting. It is hard to imagine and impossible to know how different if at all the session would have been had it had a typi-

cal-sized audience.

In the hours since arriving for the convention, I had been trying to broaden my paper in order the better to bring out the great importance I had come to attribute to Hathaway. As I see it, Amalie Hathaway is important in two respects. Intrinsically, her existence challenges the existing record of nineteenth century American philosophy. It shows that German-American women as well as well-known German American men like Henry Brockmeyer educated their communities in German philosophy not only on the East coast but in the American Midwest in the middle of the 19th century. As well, I wanted to show that not all women philosophers before Pragmatism were either quasi-Kantian admirers of Ralph Waldo Emerson, neoPlatonist adherents of Bronson Alcott, Platonist followers of Hiram Jones, Hegelian proteges of William Torrey Harris, Aristotelian followers of Thomas Davidson, or personalist adherents

of George Holmes Howison. In addition, Hathaway adds to the number of nineteenth-century women who studied philosophy at the university level: before Caroline Miles, Mary Sophia Case, or the better-known Eliza Sunderland and Marietta Kies, there was already a woman student in the Philosophy Department at the University of Michigan. Hathaway's career also brings to light the virtually unknown because virtually undocumented existence of the Chicago Philosophical Society. Finally, Hathaway's existence reveals that there could exist in the nineteenth century a woman learned in Greek, Continental, and British historical and contemporary philosophy; talented and skilled in writing English expository, interpretative, and critical prose; and who based on nothing but her personal studies at the University of Michigan and her membership in a Chicago self-described philosophy club, had the confidence to publicly call into question the Harvard, "official" interpretation of a hotly controversial European philosopher.

To accomplish this, I had hoped to add to my paper a mention, for example, of the Chicago Philosophical Society where Hathaway lectured: of Rev. Benjamin Franklin Cocker, her part-time teacher at the University of Michigan in 1871-76; of the various journalists and later authors, mainly women, who mentioned or discussed her and her paper in newspapers and magazines across the eastern half of the United States in the 1880s and 1890s. I had also hoped to call

attention to other nineteenth-century German immigrant women, such as Olga Plumacher (a Hartmann specialist), who published and corresponded about German philosophers; to spark interest in other nineteenth-century American women—such as Anne Lynch Botta—whom the history of philosophy has not yet claimed but whom it should, whom evidence shows read, wrote on, listened to, lectured on, or seriously thought about canonical and/or contemporary philosophy. Finally, I had hoped to elicit feedback, from specialists on American philosophy, particularly on how Hathaway compares with German-American male philosophers such as Brokmeyer; from specialists in Schopenhauer, regarding Hathaway's interpretation in contrast with current views; and from specialists on women philosophers regarding possible connections with women from other eras and cultures and/or resonances with classic and contemporary feminist philosophy, a field in which I wasn't well versed.

This turned out to be asking too much of myself. Announcing for a new title "Rediscovering an Early German-American philosopher," I had to settle for my paper as written, publicizing the striking uniqueness of the second paper on Schopenhauer in English by a woman and the surprising career of a prolific, educated, historically unknown woman philosopher in the 1870s.

In a brief discussion after the papers I was led to reveal the shocking fact that Hathaway's manu-

scripts were not preserved by her husband after she suddenly died at the age of 40. This incited one of the directors (Professor Dorothy Rogers) to remark that the same thing was true as far as her manuscripts were concerned in the case of Marietta Kies, a woman philosopher of her own rediscovery who actually became a college professor. Otherwise, questions notably bypassed Hathaway's philosophical claims about Schopenhauer (and Harvard Professor Francis Bowen), but gravitated to the Concord School of Philosophy. I attributed this primarily to my failure to provide a handout of Hathaway's text and to the detailed, advanced, and technical nature of much of Hathaway's presentation. But I was struck by a rough similarity with the situation when Hathaway gave her lecture in 1881: the audience looked to the (male, senior) faculty of the School (Hathaway's was a special lecture) for comments on the philosopher Arthur, avoiding Hathaway's argument about his philosophy. But again, this could be explained by the lack of any samples of the writing of Schopenhauer and the highly detailed nature of her presentation.

In retrospect, certain things stand out about the panel from the point of view of the Center of the Study of Women. In regard to the dance, the fact is that the source tradition is *about* a woman, but not apparently by one. It does represent a woman expressing herself, however, and being capable of high spirituality, being a bride of Krishna. And it was presented by

a woman. So it was to this extent feminist. In regard to the paper on Preston, it took for granted the worthiness and importance of her thought—treated her, so to speak, like a man. Insofar it represented the acceptance of women philosophers as unproblematically equal to men. If I remember correctly, there was no particular or no strong attempt to tie Preston's ideas to her gender or to gender. In my own case, I had also declined to make gender the point of my reading, although I stated, and believe, that this can and should be done. Nor did audience questions take an especial feminist tack. But then they had not been encouraged to.

To be sure, the Society for the Study of Women Philosophers has not historically always stressed scholarly politics, being primarily historical and empirical. Other groups in Philosophy, including the worldwide Societies for Women in Philosophy, and the APA Committee for the Status of Women, do this. But I wondered, did this lack of a feminist slant have anything to do with our lack of an audience? Without this, the panel's appeal was to scholars of material culture, pessimism (or the Concord School of Philosophy), or Hinduism. (That there would be a dance wasn't on the program.) It made perfect sense that the main question about my paper was about the Concord School, because and as I had forgotten, I had made the Concord School a leading part of my submission title. In fact, I was shocked to belatedly discover, the program

had actually left out Amalia Hathaway's name.

Admittedly, my submission title was long and cumbersome: something had to be omitted. I expected it to be The Concord School, but in fact I had to admit it was more plausible to omit Hathaway, because her name is, after all, not known and that of the Concord School is. And so the sequel showed.

This suggests several thoughts. Why did I put the Concord School in the title? Because I thought I had better include something that scholars would recognize. The same reason the chair evidently foregrounded it in the program. We didn't trust the name of Hathaway to attract an audience.

If this means anything, perhaps it is that in presenting forgotten women philosophers, or women anything, it is critical to insist on them by name and to be explicit and forceful about their importance. This translates to belief in them. If we don't believe in the importance of our foundlings, we might almost as well leave the manuscripts uncollected.

In retrospect, it's apparent that I tried to present Hathaway as a Schopenhauerian. But if that was my goal, I should have tried to get on a panel about Schopenhauer or at least German philosophy. For the Society for the Study of Women Philosophers, I should have foregrounded gender. Why didn't I? Because I was anxious to show (off) how brilliant in her interpretations Hathaway was. And why was that? Evidently I did not trust

any audience to believe that this was possible. Unaware, I was still defensive about women's philosophical powers.

To see Hathaway's brilliance needs knowledge of Schopenhauer—and Kant, Plato, Hegel, Comte, Spencer, if not Bowen. But the gender question (I take it) is why did Hathaway—in Illinois, in the 1870s—choose to cultivate brilliance in Philosophy? And it does not require philosophical knowledge to pursue that.

Carol Bensick has been a CSW Research Scholar since 2010. 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). She gave papers at the Summer Institute for American Philosophy in 2012 and 2013 on John Dewey and Jane Addams and on William James and Women.

Author's note: At the conference, an editor from Lexington Press made an appointment with me to discuss a possible book. Thanks to CSW, I am now in touch with their consulting editor of *American Philosophy* to discuss doing a book on Julia Ward Howe.



Writing to Connect

CAN CREATING A PERSONAL WEBSITE IMPROVE ADJUSTMENT TO BREAST CANCER?

BY LAUREN HARRIS

APPROXIMATELY one in eight women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some point during her life (Howlader et al., 2012). In 2014 alone, more than 232,000 American women were diagnosed with the disease (DeSantis et al., 2014). Diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer, which can include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, and/or endocrine therapy, can profoundly impact a woman's physical, psychological, and social functioning.

Although most women diagnosed with breast cancer adjust well over time, breast cancer patients do have elevated rates of depression and anxiety disorders compared with the general population (Mitchell et al., 2011; Fann et al., 2008). Depression in cancer patients is associated with lower participation in medical care, longer hospital stays, and, perhaps, lower survival (Colleoni et al., 2000; Prieto et al., 2002; Fann et al., 2008; Pinguart & Duberstein, 2010a). Breast cancer patients are

also faced with social concerns, including managing communication with loved ones about their health and having less energy to engage in valued social activities.

Many studies demonstrate that traditional types of therapy, such as cognitive behavioral therapy and supportive-expressive therapy, can improve emotional distress and quality of life in cancer patients (Faller et al., 2013; Naaman et al., 2009). However, some breast cancer patients may be unable to participate in therapy in a traditional, face-to-face setting due to side effects of treatment (for example, fatigue and pain), intensive medical treatment schedules, and unavailability of therapy services in their communities. Therefore, it is crucial to identify resources that are both effective and accessible to address the difficulties women face following a breast cancer diagnosis.

A large body of research demonstrates that strong social ties can improve both psychological and physical health during the cancer

experience (Nosarti et al., 2002; Pinguart & Duberstein, 2010b) and that social isolation is associated with poor health outcomes (Widows et al., 2000; Lutgendorf & Sood, 2011). Despite the importance of social support, fostering communication between women with breast cancer and their social network can be challenging. Women may be hesitant to ask others for help, lack the energy to seek support, or feel burdened by having to repeat the same information over and over. Family and friends may want to offer support, but may not know what to say or do.

Personal websites provide a central space for women to share their cancer experience and communicate their needs, bridging the potential gap in communication between the patient and her support system. Online journaling may help women to create a story of their experience with breast cancer, express emotions, and boost confidence in their ability to cope with the cancer experience, factors

that can promote positive adjustment in women with breast cancer (Howsepian & Merluzzi, 2009; Stanton et al., 2000). However, very little research has examined whether using a personal website can improve breast cancer patients' psychological health and bolster social support. Our research group at UCLA developed and tested a program called Project Connect Online (PCO) to evaluate whether women with breast cancer could benefit from creating and maintaining a personal website to share their experience and communicate with family and friends (Stanton et al., 2013; Cleary & Stanton, 2014).

The Project Connect Online Study

In the randomized controlled trial of PCO, 88 women diagnosed with breast cancer were assigned to create a personal website or to a waiting-list control condition. Women assigned to create a personal website attended a three-hour workshop for hands-on creation of the website, whereas the waitlisted group was invited to attend the workshop and create a website after the study's conclusion. Both groups completed questionnaires about their psychological and social functioning when they enrolled in the study and six months later.

The primary feature of each woman's personal website was a journal; websites also included a "How You Can Help" feature, where women could post their wishes for specific kinds of support. During the workshop, mem-

bers of the research team led a discussion about potential uses for personal websites (for example, communicating with friends and family), proactively addressed common concerns about personal website use (such as pressure to post frequently), and helped women create their websites and initiate their first journal post. Women were encouraged to invite family and friends to visit their website; website visitors could subscribe for automatic email notifications whenever the woman posted a journal entry on her website.

Women randomly assigned to create personal websites benefitted significantly on measures of depressive symptoms, positive mood, and life appreciation at six-month follow-up compared with control participants (Stanton et al., 2013). PCO promoted these adaptive changes through increased perceived social support from friends, decreased loneliness, and increased confidence in the ability to cope with the cancer experience (Cleary & Stanton, 2014). These results demonstrate that personal website use can improve psychological well-being among women with breast cancer. Interestingly, the websites were most helpful for women who were currently undergoing treatment for their breast cancer (for example, chemotherapy and/or radiation) compared with women who had already completed treatment. The researchers suggested that women in current treatment may have more need to process their cancer experience and garner social support from

friends and family.

Given the promising results of the PCO study, we were interested in characterizing women's experiences of using their personal websites and identifying elements of online journaling that were particularly helpful in improving psychosocial well-being (Harris et al., 2014). Women reported on their website use one and six months after attending the workshop. We also asked family and friends who visited the websites for feedback about their experience viewing the women's websites. Identifying effective components of personal website use for women with breast cancer will help researchers refine future studies to be maximally effective, efficient, and tailored to women's needs.

Most women's website content described the story of their diagnosis and treatment and discussed their emotional experience. A few women wrote about disappointment when others failed to provide effective support. More often, however, women expressed gratitude for guidance from their medical team and for support from family, friends, colleagues, and other breast cancer survivors. Reflecting a mixed experience with receipt of social support, one woman wrote, "people you know and love can disappoint you when you need them the most... and it is equally astonishing the people who [step] up to help."

Many women also wrote about spirituality and finding benefit in the cancer experience. For instance, some women wrote that

cancer had given them a better understanding of what was truly important in their lives, had helped them treasure family and friends, and had prompted engagement in meaningful activities.

Overall, women who created personal websites as part of the PCO study reported that their experience using the websites was positive. Women found the websites most useful in terms of giving them a place to express emotions and tell the story of their experience. As one woman wrote, “I am alive and I have a story to tell.” Despite their positive experiences using their personal website, women noted some barriers to website use. The most common barrier was lacking time to contribute to their website due to other obligations and stressors (for example, work and illness).

We collected data from 66 visitors to the websites, most of whom were female friends of the breast cancer patients. Visitors found the websites most helpful for providing updates on the patient’s health and emotional state and for helping the visitor feel close to the patient.

When we asked about actions that website visitors intended to take as a result of reading the website, they reported that they planned to visit the website again, contact the patient, and offer help. One visitor wrote, “I did not see [the patient] often, and did not know that my friend had experienced this journey with cancer... I have already written her an email and will continue to check on her.” Our findings suggest that website

visitors can provide a valuable source of information about the ways in which personal websites can bolster communication and support between breast cancer patients and their loved ones.

In order to identify subgroups of women who were highly engaged in contributing to their websites, we examined predictors of website use. We found that women with more advanced breast cancer (stages 3 and 4) were more likely to post to their websites than women with earlier-stage cancer, suggesting that women with advanced cancer may have perceived more need for a platform to share their experience and garner support from others.

We were also interested in identifying specific components of women’s writing as “active ingredients” of online journaling that could help explain the improved depressive symptoms, positive mood, and life appreciation observed in the PCO study. Previous research has demonstrated that use of positive emotion words (for example, “joy”), negative emotion words (for example, “angry”) and words that reflect cognitive processing (for example, “realize”) in written emotional disclosure tasks predicts improvement in psychological functioning (Pennebaker & Chung, 2007).

We used Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC; Pennebaker et al., 2007), a computer program designed to analyze the content of text files, to examine whether women’s use of positive emotion words, negative emotion words,

and cognitive processing words in their journal posts was associated with improved psychological functioning. Consistent with findings from previous studies, we found that higher use of positive emotion words was significantly associated with an increase in positive mood over the study period, and higher use of negative emotion words was significantly associated with a decrease in depressive symptoms over the study period. These results suggest that emotional expression was an important aspect of journaling that may have led to psychological benefit.

Conclusions and Future Directions

Personal website use may help women with breast cancer create a narrative of their experience, express emotions, bolster support from friends and family, and improve psychological well-being. Our findings suggest that personal websites may be particularly useful for women with advanced breast cancer and/or women currently undergoing breast cancer treatment. The next iteration of PCO will recruit women with metastatic (stage 4) breast cancer in order to address the needs of this group of women who often experience profound impact on physical, psychological, and social functioning as a consequence of the disease.

Future research should also explore the potential for personal websites to improve adjustment to other types of cancer as well as other illnesses and stressors. With Internet access expanding rapidly

in the United States and around the world, online journaling is a potentially low-cost, accessible way for individuals to chronicle stressful experiences and garner effective social support.

Lauren Harris is a Ph.D. candidate in Clinical Psychology at UCLA. She received the Elizabeth Blackwell, M.D. award in 2014 in support of her research. Her research interests include stress, coping, and adjustment to illness. Lauren's dissertation evaluates Project Connect Online, an Internet-based intervention designed to improve psychosocial and physical adjustment to breast cancer. Lauren is also a trainee at the Simms/Mann UCLA Center for Integrative Oncology, where she provides individual and group therapy for individuals diagnosed with cancer and their loved ones. Contact Lauren at lhanover@ucla.edu.

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Interrogating Japanese American Knowledge Production and Narratives of “Success”

BY WENDI YAMASHITA

At the Japanese American National Museum’s 2011 annual gala dinner, before the late Senator Daniel Inouye comes to stage, he is introduced by his wife, Irene Hirano, a past president of the Museum. Introducing him means that she must list all of his accomplishments and his continued investment in the museum that forces us to honor him as well. And of course she cannot help but include how Inouye is third in line for the presidency as she proudly jokes that this is reason why there are secret service agents running around. And after Inouye narrates his life story that should never be forgotten he begins discussing “how far Japanese Americans have come” by relating statistical information to the audience about our law abiding nature, our low crime rates, our high intellectual rates, and that we are among the “three ethnic groups with the highest per capita income.” He then goes on to incorporate his own life into this “success” narrative saying, “today I stand before you, when I was first declared an enemy alien on December the 7th and today I am president pro-tempore, third in line for the presidency.” And then he looks affectionately at the crowd and states, “that’s not too bad” to which the audience enthusiastically applauds him.

WANTED TO BEGIN with this moment that troubled me then and has continued to haunt me even now.¹ It is this moment that has propelled my dissertation project—one that is interested in the way Japanese Americans choose to narrate themselves and their World War II experiences in opposition to other groups of color. By incorporating us into this logic of “success” Inouye situates Japanese Americans as exceptional citizens who are worthy of state recognition and thus affirmation. “Success” is only measurable in relation to the “failures” of these other groups and is in fact predicated on that. This logic of celebratory success institutionalizes affects within the Japanese American community that allow for and teaches us to abandon people. This success narrative as a strategy for survival allows Japanese Americans to hold on to the very things that protect us from state violence but allows for the death of others. This is the way in which the state can mobi-

1. This moment is not an isolated incident but instead is one that happens over and over again.

lize Japanese Americanness to do “its repressive work and its policing of civil society” and ourselves.²

For my proposed dissertation research, I am interested in looking at how Japanese American knowledge production and modes of memory inevitably reproduce forms of surveillance and carcerality operating during Japanese American incarceration that are predicated on even more brutal forms of death and destruction of “deviant” populations. I want to think about the way in which Japanese Americans are legitimated with “value” because they perform masculinity and femininity in “proper and respectable ways that redeem, reform, or counter their racialized “deviancy” in a post Redress era.³ Other groups are positioned in opposition to Japanese Americans and are marked as “deviant, illegal and criminal” and are unable to “circumvent the devaluing process of race and gender by citing other readily recognizable signs and signifiers of value, such as legality, heteronormativity, American citizenship, higher education, affluence, morality, or respectability.”⁴ I am interested in how this devaluation occurs in conjunction with the valuation of Japanese Americans as “productive, worthy, and responsible citizen[s].”⁵ By turning to Japanese American modes of memory and knowledge production, I hope to show the complexities of racial-

ization where Japanese Americans, particularly after Redress, illuminate the way contemporary power relations no longer simply operates through exclusionary measures but now also relies upon the affirmation and recognition of certain differences. Below, I briefly outline two different historical moments where this disidentification begins to take root via Japanese Americans’ racialization by the state.

Japanese American incarceration is simultaneously a site where technologies of carcerality work to demonize and dehumanize Japanese Americans in ways that legitimize punishment and imprisonment but it also happens to be a site of rehabilitation and normativization. As Jodi Kim argues in *Ends of Empire*, incarceration is articulated as a space where Japanese Americans “could learn to be productive subjects without ‘damaging’ the environment, becoming hyper-competitive in any field, or contributing to California’s ‘maladjustments.’”⁶ In this way, I want to think about Japanese American incarceration as a racialized spatial-social enclosure to see the links between the past (Japanese American incarceration) and the present (mass incarceration). However, I also want to pay close attention to the differences that exist between these enclosures, including how Japanese American incarceration is spatially and temporally different from mass incarceration. One of these differences is the way that Japanese Americans take on notions of rehabilitation and how they have

attempted to assimilate to “prove their ‘Americanness’” so that “a similar fate of being singled out as a racial group and incarcerated would not befall them again.”⁷ As Inouye’s speech shows, Japanese Americans’ rehabilitation not only becomes an integral part of their identity but also how this very particular racialization of Japanese Americans provides the building blocks for the way the current prison regime looks. Expanding upon Kim’s analysis of rehabilitation, I want to think about the ways in which the notion of rehabilitation is tied up with the way Japanese Americans were and continue to be racialized as “successful.” This discourse of “success” that stems from Japanese Americans rehabilitativeness ultimately produces feelings of innocence/guilt and criminal/non-criminal that sustain carceral logics. This disidentification is constituted by claims to whiteness in opposition to blackness that allows for one to become free/mobile because one is not a “true” criminal. Rehabilitation allows for Japanese Americans to obtain this mobility.

Furthermore, in my research I think about how the demise of the social wage has allowed for the proliferation of prisons as a form of racial subordination and class rule, where the state strategically utilizes Japanese Americans, incarceration and redress as a moment of national redemption that not only rights a past wrong but justifies the demise of the social wage. However, exactly at this moment of dismantling, the Civil Liberties

2. Wahneema Lubiano, “Black Feminism and Black Common Sense” from *The House that Race Built* (New York: Pantheon, 1997), 235.

3. Lisa Marie Cacho, *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected* (New York: NYU Press, 2012), 148.

4. *Social Death*, 148.

5. *Social Death*, 148.

6. Jodi Kim, *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 119.

7. *Ends of Empire*, 120.

Act of 1988 passed, where the state not only acknowledged that internment did happen but that the U.S. was wrong for incarcerating Japanese Americans and that it would compensate former incarcerated with \$20,000. I examine the ways in which Japanese Americans' particular racialization and knowledge production about its own incarceration history inadvertently supports this neoliberal logic wherein prisons are the geographic solution to political and economic crisis.⁸ Despite being incarcerated Japanese Americans are articulated as having achieved "success" and are "deserving" of redress, which allows for the state to "celebrate diversity and achievement often at the cost of the vast population of unemployed, underemployed, or highly exploited people of color."⁹ In other words, Japanese Americans are given redress and reparations because they were wrongfully incarcerated that ultimately means that others are "deserving" of it. In this way, Japanese Americans are not only acknowledged and compensated for their rehabilitated status but they also function to rehabilitate the state from its racist and violent past by narrating racism as officially over.

In these moments we are able to see how Japanese Americans create distance from blackness that inherently legitimize the state's simultaneous defunding of the social wage and the proliferation of prisons. And yet, on February 18, 2015, the 2015 Day of Remem-

brance (DOR) event titled, "EO 9066 and the [In]justice System" was held at the Japanese American National Museum and highlighted the urgency of recognizing that the U.S. "justice system continues to imperil communities of color with police violence, profiling, and mass incarceration."¹⁰ Recognizing police brutality, anti-black racism, and mass incarceration as contemporary forms of state violence, DOR 2015 sought to place the deaths of black men by police within the context of Japanese American history. In other words, speaking to "the importance of remembering the Japanese American struggle during World War II" means that "we seize today's opportunity to begin a conversation in our community about the interrelated yet distinct injustices other communities face."¹¹ In this presentation, Japanese American history was re-narrated to highlight black and Japanese American interaction, coexistence, and shared spaces (neighborhoods and work places) to prove that we should care about black lives. However, drawing from a discourse of multiculturalism, this dominant imaginary for imagining interracial solidarity nostalgically remembers moments of connection as only being fruitful ones. While this re-narration is powerful, it is ultimately the moments of disconnect that highlight exactly where our histories diverge and our connections are missed or broken that reveal much more about state

violence and the possibility for solidarity. Even as this program made important strides in thinking about other groups of color it ultimately fell short in conflating black and Japanese American experiences.

My work seeks to expose the ways in which disidentification with blackness occurs and the logics it produces as well as to consider how identification problematically neglects the very different ways the state racializes us. As I continue working on this project, I ask: how does acknowledging our contradictory location (as former incarcerated and subjects of redress) inform our relationships to other communities? What does it mean to make Japanese American privilege visible when narrating our experiences of incarceration and racialized violence? I believe that by tracing our genealogy to something other than these moments where we position ourselves as "ideal" citizens and acknowledge our contradictory location, then we can imagine a future that is ethical to all and not just some Japanese Americans.

Wendi Yamashita is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Gender Studies. Her proposed dissertation interrogates Japanese American modes of memory and knowledge production for reproducing forms of surveillance and carcerality operating during internment that are predicated on even more brutal forms of death and destruction of "deviant" populations. She received CSW's Paula Stone Dissertation Research Fellowship in 2014.

8. Ruth Wilson Gilmore. *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007, 26.

9. Vijay Prashad, "Second Hand Dreams," *Social Analysis* 49:2 (Summer 2005): 196.

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11. EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System. Program. 1. Helen Ota. EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System. Multimedia Presentation.

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