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Women's Studies Program & The Alice Paul Center
249 South 36th Street
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The Women's Studies Program is an interdisciplinary program that provides exciting intellectual opportunities to explore the role of gender in human affairs. The Women's Studies Program offers over 50 courses each year, many cross-listed with other departments. Women's Studies offers a major, a minor, and a graduate certificate in "Gender, Culture, and Society."

The Alice Paul Center for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality fosters cutting-edge research on women, gender, and sexuality across the disciplines. The Center offers graduate and faculty fellowships, hosts a number of seminar series, and sponsors four named lectureships annually which bring prominent academic, literary, and public figures to campus.



FALL 2008
Newsletter

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Women's Studies Program and the Alice Paul Center Newsletter Fall 2008

Letter from the Directors

We are delighted to share some sense of our accomplishments during the 2007-2008 academic year with readers of this newsletter: the third one to be published since the Alice Paul Center's mission was changed to focus more on research and scholarship rather than policy issues.

Our most important event last year was the international conference on Gender, War and Militarism that we hosted in October 2007. This conference found its initial impetus in Associate Director Shannon Lundeen's seminar on the subject and Shannon also bore the brunt of the organization with characteristic energy. But the success of the event was also ensured by the collective input and energies of our associated faculty, and by their conviction—shared by the conference participants—of the compelling urgency of the topic. We were especially moved by Cynthia Enloe's keynote address on the impact of the militaristic ethos of the past eight years on contemporary American life and by the passionate reflections of the UK-based Iraqi-born scholar Nadjie Al-Ali, who shared with us an unforgettable multimedia presentation on the impact of the US invasion on Iraqi men and women.

We were also pleased to sponsor a spring conference on South Asian Feminisms, organized by Ania Loomba and Ritty Lukose. The lively discussions at this event, which brought together a stellar group of scholars from the subcontinent to Penn, took on such matters as feminist legal activism, human rights, gendered violence, and the effects of transnationalism and globalization on feminist movements within and outside the region. Our ongoing lecture series brought speakers of the caliber of Judith



(L-R) Shannon Lundeen, Rita Barnard, Luz Marin, and Demie Kurz
Photo by Lisa Godfrey

Halberstam, bell hooks, Michael Warner, and Susan Faludi to Penn, all of whom drew eager, attentive, and large audiences. There is nothing more pleasing to the Women's Studies and Alice Paul Center staff than to see our venues filled to the brim, as was the case when bell hooks spoke to an overflow audience in Bodek Lounge about her recent work on the intersections of race, gender, and class. Our schedule for 2008-2009 (provided on the last page of this newsletter) is no less exciting and we warmly invite all readers to join us at the lecture of the filmmaker Mira Nair, the graphic novelist Marjane Satrapi, the historian of science Londa Schiebinger, and the political commentator Katha Pollitt.

Though we still do not have an endowment of the size that will permit us to offer post-doctoral fellowships, our funding situation is improving, thanks to a few generous and unexpected donations and grants. We were able to support the research of our graduate students, not only through the Leboy-Davies Fellowship in Women's Studies (now in its third year), but through the newly instituted Phyllis Rackin Prize for Feminist Scholarship in the Humanities. We

Letter from the Directors, continued

will probably be able to offer two of each of these fellowships in future. Thanks to a generous grant from the Provost's Diversity Fund, we were able to begin organizational work on our forthcoming conference, "Rethinking Sex," organized in conjunction with the LGBT Center and spearheaded by Professor Heather Love. This event, to be held on March 4-6th, 2009 will be a major colloquy on the state of the field, and will bring together such important voices in the field as Gayle Rubin, Leo Bersani, Lisa Duggan, and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick.

During 2007-2008, Rita Barnard was on leave and the daily running of the Women's Studies Program and the Alice Paul Center fell to the full-time staff, Demie Kurz, Shannon Lundeen, and Luz Marin. A Weiler Faculty Fellowship allowed Rita to spend five months in South Africa, where she was able to begin work on "Verwoerd's Daughters," a collective memoir about apartheid education and its effects on women, as well as a new monograph on post-apartheid literature and culture. Demie Kurz continues to work on her sociological study of how parents and teens negotiate adolescence and also traveled to China where she was able to meet with Chinese students and academics. She was delighted to attend the inauguration of our beloved former colleague and director, Drew Faust, as the first woman president of Harvard University.

Along with editing two volumes and organizing a major international conference, superwoman Shannon Lundeen was elected to the Executive Committee of SPEP, the largest continental philoso-

phy society in North America, and, in February, gave birth to her first child, Paxton. Luz Marin continues to do important work serving on the advisory board of La Casa Latina, on The Executive Martin Luther King Planning Committee, on Penn Women of Color's annual luncheon committee, and on the advisory council of the LGBT Center.

Congratulations are due to several of our associated faculty and executive committee members including Kathy Brown, Marie Gottschalk, Yolanda Martinez-San Miguel, Lydie Moudileno, Carol Muller, and Christine Poggi who were promoted to full professor and to Karen Detlefsen, Emily Hannum, Katherine Sender, and Heather Sharkey who were promoted to associate professor with tenure.

As we enter an important fall in US history, with the possibility of the election of our first African-American president, it is our hope that the Women's Studies Program and the Alice Paul Center will continue to foster a connection between the personal and the political, commitment and academic excellence, individual achievement and collective good, local responsibility and global dreams of equality and justice—however utopian they may seem. We wish all of our readers a productive academic year, and hope to see you at our seminars, conferences, and lectures.

—Rita Barnard & Demie Kurz



Anika Kiehne Abbate

Note of Special Thanks

We would like to thank Anika Kiehne Abbate and Adriel Trott for their invaluable help with this newsletter and for attending all of our events. Both Anika and Adriel are to be congratulated as they successfully defended their dissertations this year: Anika received her Ph.D. in Germanic Languages and Literatures here at Penn and Adriel received her Ph.D. in Philosophy from Villanova University.

Anika will be working with us in her fourth year as our Alice Paul Center and Women's Studies Program Graduate Associate for 2008-2009 while she prepares for the job market. We are thrilled to have her continue working on our team!



Adriel Trott

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2008-2009

Fall 2008

Friday, September 19th

GASWorks Seminar

Professor David Kazanjian, Department of English
12pm, 436 Cohen Hall

Thursday, October 2nd

R. Jean Brownlee Lecture in Feminist Thought "GENDERED INNOVATIONS IN SCIENCE" PROFESSOR LONDA SCHIEBINGER

Barbara D. Finberg Director of The Michelle R. Clayman Institute for Gender Research and John L. Hinds Professor of History of Science
Stanford University
5:00 p.m., 200 College Hall

Thursday, October 16th

Alice Paul Lecture in Women's Studies "WOMEN, GENDER AND THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION" KATHA POLLITT

Award-winning columnist, *The Nation* magazine
5:00 p.m., Class of '49 Auditorium, Houston Hall

Thursday, November 6th

Judith R. Berkowitz Lecture in Women's Studies "BETWEEN TWO WORLDS" MIRA NAIR

Internationally acclaimed film director, writer, and producer
6:00 p.m. Ibrahim Theater, International House

This event is made possible by the Elliot and Roslyn Jaffe Fund in Cinema Studies and The Judith R. Berkowitz Lectureship in Women's Studies with generous support from the South Asia Studies Center, The South Asia Studies Department, and the Asian American Studies Program.

Friday, November 14th

Global Gender Faculty Seminar Iliana Pagán Teitelbaum, Romance Languages 12pm, 436 Cohen Hall

Friday, November 21st

Graduate Student Pedagogy Seminar 12pm, 436 Cohen Hall

Friday, December 5th

Works-in-Progress Faculty Seminar Professor Heather Love, Department of English 12pm, 436 Cohen Hall

Spring 2009

Friday, February 6th

Global Gender Faculty Seminar Professor Claudia Vallengia, Department of Anthropology 12pm, 436 Cohen Hall

Friday, February 27th

GASWorks Seminar for faculty and graduate students Details: TBA 12pm, 436 Cohen Hall

Wednesday - Friday, March 4-6 RETHINKING SEX CONFERENCE

Featuring distinguished scholars in gender and sexuality studies and queer theory including
GAYLE RUBIN

Professor of Anthropology and Women's Studies,
University of Michigan

who will be giving the R. Jean Brownlee Lecture in Sexuality Studies
This conference is generously co-sponsored by the LGBT Center and the Provost's Diversity Fund

Friday, March 27th

Works-in-Progress Faculty Seminar Professor Janice Madden, Department of Sociology 12pm, 436 Cohen Hall

Thursday, April 2nd

Jane S. Pollack Memorial Lecture in Women's Studies MARJANE SATRAPI

Internationally renowned graphic novelist, illustrator, and film director:
author of the bestselling graphic novel *Persepolis*, now a major motion picture
5:00 p.m., location TBA

TRUSTEES' COUNCIL OF PENN WOMEN JUNIOR FACULTY RESEARCH GRANTS

These summer research grants, which the Women's Studies Program awards, are funded by the Trustees' Council of Penn Women. The awards of \$5,000 each are given to female faculty, or faculty members whose research is centrally concerned with the role of women in society, science, or arts and letters. The grants assist in the promotion of standing faculty to the permanent rank of Associate Professor. A faculty committee from the Alice Paul Center and the Women's Studies Program reviews the proposals and makes the selections. The Council has been funding these awards since 1991. We are very grateful for the Council's generosity. Assistant professors have found these grants to be invaluable in accomplishing their research.

Congratulations to the 2008-2009 awardees of the TCPW Summer Faculty Research Stipends! The awardees are:

Jennifer Amyx, Political Science
"The Political Economy of Sovereign Wealth Funds"

Tulia G. Falleti, Political Science
"Decentralization and Subnational Politics in Latin America"

Barbara Mann Wall, Nursing
"Clash and Compromise: Women, gender, and reproductive services in Catholic hospitals, 1960-2000"

Nataliya Zelikovsky, Pediatrics, Division of Nephrology, CHOP
"Family Adaptation and Adherence in Adolescents with Renal Disease"

PHYLLIS RACKIN PRIZE FOR FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP IN THE HUMANITIES

The Rackin Prize was created in honor of Phyllis Rackin, a pioneering feminist scholar and former faculty member in the English Department here at Penn. The prize provides \$3,000 in summer research or travel funding to a graduate student in the School of Arts and Sciences whose research creates or promotes new scholarship on women, gender, and/or sexuality in the humanities.

The first recipient of the prize is a graduate student in Germanic Languages and Literatures, **Mara Taylor**. Mara used the prize money in the summer of 2008 to travel to Vienna and visit several German cities while studying important primary materials for her research on the impact of sexuality on lesbian self-understanding in early 20th-century Germany and Austria.

LEBOY-DAVIES FELLOWSHIP IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

The Leboy-Davies fellowship was created in 2006 to honor Phoebe Leboy and Helen Davies, two pioneers in the fight for women at Penn, both of them distinguished senior faculty members in the health sciences. The fellowship supports a graduate student whose research will foster women's health, well-being, and educational equality anywhere in the world.

The second recipient of the fellowship is a graduate student in Music, **Jennifer Kyker**. Jennifer used the award money to fund an arts and empowerment summer camp for young women in Zimbabwe for her non-profit organization, Tariro. Jennifer founded Tariro (meaning "hope" in the Shona language of Zimbabwe) to help educate young girls who have become orphans through the loss of one or more parents to HIV/AIDS.

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg Prize for Best Senior Thesis in Women's Studies

The Smith-Rosenberg Prize awards \$250 each year for a superior senior thesis paper in the field of Women's Studies. During their senior year, all Women's Studies majors write a thesis based on original research they carry out on a topic related to gender. The prize, which recognizes the student paper of the highest quality, is named in honor of the distinguished historian Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, a founder of the Women's Studies Program at Penn. The 2008 prize recipient was **Sonia Pascal** for her thesis entitled, "A Fate Worse Than Debt: Women, Bankruptcy and the 2005 Reform Act."

Lynda S. Hart Prize in LGBT Studies

The Hart Prize, established in the spring of 2006, awards \$250 each year for a senior thesis or seminar paper in the field of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender) Studies. This prize is awarded in memory of Lynda S. Hart, Professor of English at Penn and groundbreaking scholar in feminist performance studies and queer theory. The prize recognizes original, rigorous scholarship by an undergraduate in any field. The 2008 prize went to two recipients: **Jordan Greenwald** for his paper, "Picturing Desire: The Logics of Consumption and the Sexual/Textual Revisions of *Dorian Gray*" and **Robert Medina** for his paper, "In Search of Queer Spaces: Homoerotic Geographies and a Discourse of Power in Donoso's, 'Hell Has No Limit,' and Puig's, 'Kiss of the Spider Woman.'"

ENDOWED LECTURES

Susan Faludi, "The Terror Dream: Fear and Fantasy in Post-9/11 America"

—Judith R. Berkowitz Lecture in Women's Studies, September 27, 2007

Susan Faludi is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and best-selling author of *Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Man* and *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*, which won the 1992 National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction. *Backlash* disproved popular myths about the costs of women's independence and played a formative role in the revival of a national discussion on feminism. *Stiffed* focuses on the social pressures placed on men, analyzing the contemporary forces that warp men's lives and attitudes.

For the Berkowitz Lecture, Faludi discussed her new book, *The Terror Dream: Fear and Fantasy in Post-9/11 America*, before an audience of 150 people in College Hall 200. Faludi critiqued the media and pop culture's call for a return to traditional family life, "security mom" womanhood and "John Wayne masculinity" following the events of September 11th. With a wealth of documentation, Faludi traced the roots of this response to early American nationalist struggles moored in a "cowboy/damsel in distress" gender ideology.



Susan Faludi

Michael Warner, "Secular Sex"

—R. Jean Brownlee Lecture in Sexuality Studies, January 31, 2008



Michael Warner

For this year's R. Jean Brownlee Lecture in Sexuality Studies, we were proud to welcome Michael Warner, Professor of English and American Studies at Yale University. Warner's research focuses on colonial and 19th-century American literature; social theory and media studies; queer theory and sexuality studies; and secularism and religion.

Professor Warner is the author of *Publics and Counterpublics* (Zone Books, 2002); *The Trouble With Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life* (Harvard University Press, 2000); and *The Letters of the Republic* (Harvard University Press, 1992).

Warner is currently working on a book project on secularism that reflects on the dilemmas of secularism in the present but is framed by a study of secular culture in America in the period before it was called secularism (roughly from the early eighteenth century to the Civil War). In his talk, "Secular Sex," Warner discussed the effects of secularism on sexual minorities and how secularism influenced sexual minorities' rights movements at the end of the twentieth century. A lively questions and answer session followed the lecture.

ENDOWED LECTURES, continued

bell hooks, "Claiming One's Place: Race, Gender and Class"

—Jane S. Pollack Memorial Lecture in Women's Studies, March 20, 2008



bell hooks

On the night of March 20th, hooks delivered her lecture, "Claiming One's Place" to an audience of over 300 people in Bodek Lounge. The attendance was so high, security had to turn people away at the door! hooks' lecture, filled with references to black American men and women writers and thinkers, was both a celebration and a call to action. Quoting Alice

Walker, hooks explained that these are the best of times and the worst of times. It is the best of times for the richness of the work black women writers are doing and have done and the opportunities and excitement for action. It is the worst of times for the forgetfulness of these great new writers and the resistance to feminism along with the threat of a supposed post-feminism sentiment.

The contemporary political situation seeks gender without feminism, womanism against feminism. There is, therefore, no place in the existing structure where black women, especially poor black women are truly safe, individually or collectively. Hooks references Emerson, who, speaking of education, said, "We must be ourselves a declaration of independence." Certainly, speaking about sex, gender, sexuality and race requires risk and hooks charges us to be confident to take that risk, confident to handle conflict, and capable

of creating the safety required for such intimacy and risk with others, friends or strangers.

hooks ended by reading from her new book, *Belonging: The Culture of Place* in which she spoke of the connection between having a geographical and a spiritual center. A lively question and answer period followed with hooks offering stories from her youth, noting the number of famous writing women who are dying and the stress of dissension this suggests. Having spent the afternoon at the Philadelphia Museum of Art's Frida Kahlo exhibit before her lecture, it is clear that hooks recognizes both the importance of place and the need to celebrate the women of color who have come before her.

Cynthia Enloe, "Making Feminist Links Between the Militarizations of Iraqi and U.S.

Women: What They Reveal About the Gendered Politics of War"

—R. Jean Brownlee Lecture in Feminist Thought, October 25, 2007

As the keynote of our international conference on Gender, War, and Militarism, Cynthia Enloe delivered the R. Jean Brownlee Lecture in Feminist Thought, "Making Feminist Links Between the Militarizations of Iraqi and U.S. Women: What They Reveal About the Gendered Politics of War." As she does in her latest book, *Globalization and Militarism: Feminists Make the Link* (UC Press, 2007), Enloe spoke

of governments' narrow interpretation of national security in the U.S. and Iraq and of how such a conception differently affects men and women; of how post-war reconstruction efforts have marginalized Iraqi women and bolstered the privilege of Iraqi men in the political arena; and of how ideas about feminization were used both to humiliate male prisoners in Abu Ghraib and to determine who could

be "rescued" and who could be seen as a "hero" in the U.S. and in Iraq.

Enloe unraveled militarism's both blatant and subtle workings with regard to gender and sexuality. From the smaller picture of men's and women's everyday lives to the larger picture of international politics, Enloe challenged us to recognize militarism in all its various forms.



Cynthia Enloe

FACULTY PROFILES, continued

Katherine Sender



Katherine Sender is an Associate Professor at the Annenberg School for Communication. She is the author of the book *Business, not Politics: The Making of the Gay Market* (2004) and many other articles on GLBT media and marketing, including the article, "Queens for a Day: Queer Eye for the Straight Guy and the Neoliberal Project," in *Critical Studies in Media Communication* (2006). She is currently combining her interests in queer and gender studies

with popular television and consumer culture through a large audience research project focusing on makeover reality shows. Her new book, *The Big Reveal: Makeover Television, Audiences, and the Promise of Transformation*, will be published by New York University Press in 2009. She is also the producer, director, and editor of a number of documentaries, including "Off the Straight and Narrow: Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, and Television" (1998), and "Further Off the Straight and Narrow: New Gay Visibility on Television" (2006), which have appeared in numerous film festivals around the world.

Claudia Vaggia



Her work is primarily concerned with the interactions between human reproductive biology and the ecological and cultural context in which it develops. In 1997, she launched the Chaco Area Reproductive Ecology Program in the Gran Chaco of northern Argentina. This research program focuses on the study of the different biosocial variables that affect fertility in indigenous populations of the region. Some of the topics she has explored are the determinants of postpartum fecundity, the variation in reproductive hormonal levels within and between women in relation to environmental variables, growth patterns in breastfed infants, and the variation in male and

Dr. Claudia Vaggia is the Francis E. Johnston Term Assistant Professor of Anthropology in the Department of Anthropology. She is also a Research Associate in the Population Studies Center and in the Center for Native American Studies. She received her doctoral degree from the University of California, Davis in 1996.

female life history in populations experiencing drastic lifestyle changes.

Last year, Claudia joined Penn's Guatemala Health Initiative, an interdisciplinary research, education, and service program working with the Tz'utujil Maya population of Santiago Atitlán, in the highlands of Guatemala. This past summer she and her colleagues took a group of undergraduate and graduate students from different schools to study the culture and ecology of motherhood in this town. The long-term goal of this initiative is to develop community-initiated programs that promote better maternal health outcomes.

At a more local level, Claudia is collaborating with the Women's Care Center at Northeastern Hospital in a breastfeeding support research study in Northeastern Philadelphia. A better understanding of the attitudes and beliefs related to infant feeding practices in this mostly Hispanic population may help to increase the currently low prevalence of breastfeeding and improve the short- and long-term health of mothers and infants.

FACULTY PROFILES

Anne Norton



Anne Norton is Alfred Cass Term Chair Professor of Political Science and Comparative Literature. Norton has authored numerous books, chapters, and articles on American popular culture and political theory. Her most recent books are *Leo Strauss and the Politics of American Empire* (Yale University Press, 2004), *95 Theses on Politics, Culture, and Method* (Yale University Press, 2003), and *Bloodrites of the Post-Structuralists: Word Flesh and Revolution* (Routledge, 2002). Her research has included a study of American political culture; the role of time in political theory, ethics, and historical methods; and issues of authority and sexuality in the education, reign and deposition of Maharajah Jai Singh of Alwar.

Ann Farnsworth-Alvear



Ann Farnsworth-Alvear is Associate Professor of History and Director of the Latin American and Latino Studies program at Penn. She received her Ph.D. from Duke, with a thesis that she revised as a book, *Dulcinea in the Factory: Myth, Morals, Men, and Women in Colombia's Industrial Experiment, 1905-1960* (Duke University Press, 2000). *Dulcinea* won multiple prizes, including the Bolton-Johnson prize of the American Historical Association and the Sharlin prize of the Social Science History Association. Ann is currently a co-editor for *The Colombia Reader*, and is working on a new research project, tentatively entitled *Gold Remains: Andagoya's Global History*. This book-in-progress traces the history of the Chocó-Pacifico Mining Company, which was active in Colom-

bia for most of the twentieth century. It begins with that familiar contradiction – that a place from which huge profits were extracted is now a site of enormous poverty. The book takes up on-going debates about dependency theory and the political claims of reparations activists in a reframing of historians' understandings of our discipline.

Ann's methodological love is oral history, and she offers a methods course in interviewing practice at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Other courses include "Comparative approaches to global inequality"; "Feminism in the Americas"; and "The African presence in Latin America."

She serves as Faculty Master in Riepe College House, where she lives with her husband, Rui DaSilva, and three sweet-natured kids: Kiamesso, Jorge, and Matondo.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

GENDER, WAR, AND MILITARISM

The Alice Paul Center and the Women's Studies Program hosted the first international conference on "Gender, War and Militarism," on October 25-26, 2007. This conference was unique in its effort to bring together academics and activists in order that their work might mutually influence one another. As Associate Director of the Alice Paul Center, Dr. Shannon Lundeen, said in her welcome, the violence and war of the beginning of the twenty-first century continue to use traditional views of women and women's bodies to wage war and the victims of war are not only women and children but our conceptions of women and children. It is in light of this state of the world that this conference aimed to bring together academics and activists to think about the convergence of gender, war, and militarism.

Presenters attended from as far away as Canada, England, and Serbia. The participants included Nadjie Al-Ali, Victoria Bernal, Charlotte Bunch, Charli Carpenter, Deborah Cohler, Dasa Duhacek, Cynthia Enloe, Inderpal Grewal, Sondra Hale, Elizabeth Hillman, Tami Jacoby, Caren Kaplan, Liz Kelly, Gwyn Kirk, Dyan Mazurana, Julie Mostov, V. Spike Peterson, Raka Ray, Susan Shepler, Laura Sjoberg, Jennifer Terry, and Elisabeth Wood.

Papers on the first day considered intersecting issues of the conceptions of gender deployed in support of the continued militarization of society and the complex gendered position of women in combat in terms of the mutual increase of power and violence. The first panel on "Gender and the Militarization of Society" examined the multiple ways in which our lives have become militarized along gender-specific lines and the implications of this for a number of subjects from feminism to military medicine. A panel on "Ideologies of Gender in Times of Conflict" revealed the ways in which ideas of who can go to war, who is to be fought against, who is to be liberated, etc. often reproduce, shore up, or create anew the warring factions' conceptions of gender relations and gender roles. The final panel of the first day, "Gender and Sexuality in the Armed Forces," examined the



First day of GWM conference in 2007 College Hall

conflicts and struggles with regard to gender and sexuality within the U.S. military, Israeli military, as well as in the processes of reintegration into society of child soldiers in Sierra Leone.

The second day of the conference turned our attention to the conceptual apparatus that helps us make sense of the role of the gendered body in violence and war. The panel on "Rape, Violence, Torture" examined the various ways in which women's bodies often become a literal battleground on which ethnic conflicts and nationalist struggles are played out. A panel on "Reconstruction, Reconciliation, Peacemaking," considered post-conflict restoration of lives, families and countries. The panel on "Gender, War, Media" addressed the ways in which images of gender in war construct our relation to sovereignty, reproduction and desire. In the final plenary session of the conference, the presenters examined the politics of memory in a post-war land as well as the impact of war on our approaches to teaching in the academy and how activism might impact our teaching.

The conference was attended by over 350 people from the University community and the surrounding area. One of the conference participants, Laura Sjoberg, is currently editing a volume on the topic of gender and militarism, which will include the work of several of our conference presenters.

SOUTH ASIAN FEMINISMS: GENDER, CULTURE, AND POLITICS

The "South Asian Feminisms: Gender, Culture and Politics" conference took place here at Penn, March 28-29, 2008. The conference was organized by Professor of English, **Ania Loomba**, and Professor of Education, **Ritty Lukose**. This interdisciplinary international conference on South Asian Feminisms brought together distinguished scholars and activists both within and outside the academy, from the subcontinent (Nepal, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka) as well as the US, UK, and Canada. The conference focused on the contemporary dynamics of feminist activism and theorizing in the region, with particular emphasis on violence, human rights, and minorities.

The sessions of the conference ignited discussions about the promises and difficulties of feminist legal activism and of human rights discourse for feminist concerns, especially as they engage issues of caste, religion, eth-

nicity, sexuality and class; about the relationship between feminism and movements for democracy; about forms of gendered violence; and the impact of transnationalism and globalization on feminist movements within and outside the region. The conference paid sustained attention to the specificities of these issues within different contexts that constitute "South Asia," but also encouraged conversations across these contexts, reaching out to the shared, unequal, and overlapping histories of the region.

Distinguished participants included: Ratna Kapur, Malathi De Alwis, Flavia Agnes, Firdaus Azim, Nari Pokko, Angana Chatterjee, Amina Jamal, Anjali Arondekar, Dina Siddiqi, Priyamvada Gopal, and Annanya Bhattacharjee.

GLOBAL GENDER SEMINARS

The Global Gender Seminar is a seminar for Penn faculty who teach or do research in areas related to global gender issues. The seminar meets once per semester, on Fridays at noon. The seminars feature the work of Penn faculty as well as visiting scholars from outside the Penn community.

On October 5, 2007, **Dr. Ritty Lukose**, Assistant Professor of Education at the Graduate School of Education presented her work on, "**Ethnography in Public: Feminism, Gendered Violence, and the Everyday in Kerala, South India.**" Lukose examined and critiqued the work of ethnographers chronicling the life of young people in Kerala, the relatively independent, communist and forward-thinking province of India. The first respondent was Dr. Ayako Kano, Associate Professor of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, and the second was Dr. Ann Farnsworth-Alvear, Associate Professor of History and Director of the Latin American and Latino Studies Program.

Lukose considered the practice of tuning, which might be described along a continuum from flirtation and fun interaction between young men and women trying to maintain themselves in the face of new global pressures and renewed traditional roles of men and women, to comment and being "hit" by comments on the street and having to navigate responses and reaction, to eve-teasing, the term used by ethnographers to conjure the ways in which women "play" with men, to sexual harassment. Ethnographers and feminist anthropologists take very distinct approaches to considering this practice, and such distinct approaches bring to light more fundamental issues at work in the assumptions of these distinct disciplinary approaches.

On February 15, 2008, **Deborah Thomas**, Assistant Professor in Anthropology, presented her research on Jamaican migrant works in North Michigan and the "ideological tricks" that keep these workers returning and relatively satisfied with less than ideal working and living conditions. Dr. Thomas presented a chapter of her current book project entitled, "**Wal-Mart, 'Katrina,' and other Ideological Tricks: Jamaican Hotel Workers in Michigan.**"

Her first respondent, Sheetal Majithia, Postdoctoral Fellow in English and South Asian Studies, noted several tensions at work in the position of itinerant workers. For example, economic gain comes at the price of long-term racial discrimination that resituates the workers in a position of need. At the same time, these workers have an affective relation to the American Dream whereby they see labor as a necessary means to produce the affect and the dream. Interesting is the tension between the rationalistic approach of Thomas' critique and the obvious affectivity at work in her subjects' account of their situation.

The second respondent, Lisa Mitchell, Assistant Professor in South Asian Studies, inquired into the significance of the historical account of the American Dream from the Jamaican side in order to see how the "Dream" might be at work in encouraging workers to come to the United States and what the "Dream" stands in conflict to in Jamaica. Furthermore, she noted the significance of the shift in class status from the kinds of work done to the patterns of consumption made possible.

Through the study of this global phenomenon treated particularly in Kerala, Lukose considers the implications for feminists of the ethnographers' attempts to turn this phenomenon into a local, merely "cultural" practice. Through her consideration of ethnographers' use of the everyday, Lukose addressed the status of the personal and the private and the public and the political in feminist anthropology. On the one hand, the everyday suggests the unexceptional, a problem for feminists who want to challenge such practices and their status as merely "normal" or "everyday". Yet, on the other hand, the everyday suggests the private and the personal, a sphere of life feminists want very much to be the concern of ethnographers and anthropologists, and in fact want very much to work to transform. The term "everyday" itself appears to become the site of contention in this project.

In the discussion period, feminist scholars across the disciplines raised issues of the status of the relation between western feminism and nonwestern feminism, of transnational feminism, and of the law versus everyday solutions and approaches to these problems. Of particular interest was the significance of Kerala's peculiar progressive history and more traditional present that has included a shift from the matrilineal family to the conjugal patrilineal family and the effects such a shift has had on relations between young men and women.

The discussion that followed took up two general themes: the gendering of migratory work and the multiple factors involved in producing and understanding diasporic identification. This program is the only overseas employment program that draws mostly women. This is so in part because of the feminized labor involved but perhaps more significant is the different relation to consumerism that the women involved in migrant labor programs have. Where most of the men's money goes to entertainment and travel, the women's money is spent on the education of their children. In the end, it seems clear that the program is made possible by the networks of women kin who care for the children at home.

This network of women raises the question of diasporic identification, the issue that situates Thomas' larger work. While assumptions have been made about the solidarity of the diaspora, the case of migratory workers poses a real challenge to such assumptions of solidarity. Thomas notes the distinction between the racism that the diasporic migrant workers face and the racism that affects black Americans. Consumerism seems to have produced a commodification of Black America giving it cultural capital even though it is not as cosmopolitan as diasporic blacks. In this way, blacks in America with different histories stand in conflict rather than unified by their diasporic identity.

FACULTY WORKS-IN-PROGRESS SEMINARS



Eve Troutt Powell at her Faculty Works-in-Progress Seminar

The Faculty Works-in-Progress Seminar provides a forum for Penn Women's Studies faculty to present and receive feedback on their current work and research. Those who attend the seminar receive a copy of the "work-in-progress" ahead of time. At the session, the speaker discusses his or her work and two faculty respondents speak briefly, offering their feedback on the paper. The session is then opened up to general discussion.

In the Works-in-Progress seminar on November 30th, **Katherine Sender** of Penn's Annenberg School for Communication presented her research study on people's reception of makeover television shows: "**Inner Selves, Outer Selves: Makeover Television, Audiences, and the Problem of Gender.**" Sender showed clips from shows, such as "Biggest Loser" and "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" and discussed what exactly is at stake with regard to gender and sexuality in these makeover shows. The two respondents, Kathy Peiss of Penn's History and Felicity Paxton of Penn's Women's Center pointed to the American notion of self-improvement and the language of the shows' participants that reflected that idea.

The open discussion that followed touched on the importance of technology and photography in achieving the appearance of an outer self that matched the inner self.

In our final Works-in-Progress seminar on April 11th, **Eve Troutt Powell** of Penn's History Department presented her research on slavery in the Nile Valley: "**Translating Slavery: Memories of Forced Labor in the Nile Valley.**" Troutt Powell explored how the enslavement of Sudanese slaves in the 19th century has been remembered in Egypt and Sudan and examined the personal accounts of three very differently situated individuals in Egypt and Sudan, all of whom grew up at a time when slavery in the Nile Valley was a hotly contested issue. She asked how gender and class, along with nationality, played a role in shaping the experiences of slavery and abolition of these individuals. Respondents, Beth Barron of History at CUNY and Barbara Savage of Penn's History Department, encouraged Troutt Powell to consider the concepts of language, time, and place, as well as the importance of religion in these slave narratives.

Phyllis Rackin Lecture: Kim F. Hall

On March 26, 2008, the Women's Studies Program and the Alice Paul Center, along with Dean Rebecca Bushnell, the English Department, and the Medieval and Renaissance Studies Group, proudly co-hosted the fifth annual lecture in honor of Professor Phyllis Rackin's influential work on feminist studies of the English Renaissance. The speaker was **Kim F. Hall**, Lucyle Hook Professor of English and Director of Africana Studies at Barnard College. Her lecture, "Sweet Princes and Dainty Kates: Sugar and Status in Shakespeare," explored through Shakespeare the themes of her current book project, *Sweet Taste of Empire*, which examines women, labor and race in the Anglo-Caribbean sugar trade during the seventeenth century.



Judith Halberstam

Faculty-in-Residence in Gender and Sexuality Studies: Judith Halberstam

From Thursday, February 21st through Friday, February 22nd, Judith Halberstam, Professor of English and Gender Studies at University of Southern California, joined us for a Faculty-in-Residence in Gender and Sexuality Studies Event Series. This event series was jointly sponsored by The Alice Paul Center and the LGBT Center with support from the Provost's Diversity Fund, the Annenberg School for Communications, the Cinema Studies Program, and the Gender and Sexuality Reading Group in English. Besides visiting classes, Professor Halberstam gave a public lecture, "Queer Animation" in Bodek Lounge on Thursday evening and discussed some of her recent research, "Anti-social Queer Theory," in a faculty GASWorks (Gender and Sexuality Works-in-Progress) seminar on Friday afternoon.