

WOMEN'S DUKE STUDIES

Spring 2006 Newsletter

Dating Violence & the "Hookup Culture"

By Angela Jarman

As part of Duke's second annual Dating Violence Awareness Week, faculty and students participated in a panel on "Dating and Domestic Violence: Victimization, Representation, and the Potential for Conversation." The panel was designed to create a critical dialogue about the way we conceptualize and talk about the subject of violence and the way those discourses translate into our writing,

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Director's Column

Dear Friends,

This issue of our newsletter features a tribute to the Founding Director of Women's Studies at Duke, Jean Fox O'Barr, whose contributions are described in an interview conducted by Duke Divinity School and Women's Studies faculty member, Mary McClintock Fulkerson. On behalf of the Program, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jean for her inspired work in establishing Women's Studies at Duke and wish her all the best in her ongoing endeavors.

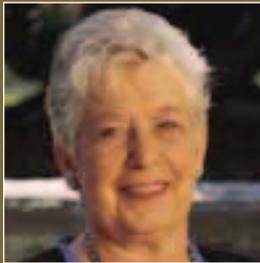
After a year of preparation and much work on the part of our faculty, staff and the distinguished scholars of the visiting review team, we are delighted to report that the results of our program's external review were excellent. The Program's faculty is now preparing its responses. While we are eager to meet the reviewers' call for a larger core faculty, it is gratifying to see new applications each year from faculty across the university interested in holding secondary appointments in Women's Studies. We are currently in the final stages of our search for the Director of Sexualities Studies, which will be housed in Women's Studies as of fall 2006. Next fall, we intend to renew our search for the Jean O'Barr chair in Women's Studies which will take us closer to our goal of eight core faculty members.

This spring we are pleased to welcome two visiting professors to Women's Studies. This semester, Clare Hemmings, a leading theorist of sexuality studies is in residence in our Program. While on leave from her position at the Gender Institute of the London School of Economics, Clare is teaching our senior seminar in Globalizing Sexualities and the graduate course, "Foundations in Feminist Theory." Jonna Eagle (Brown University) is teaching "Gender and Everyday Life" for the undergraduate program. Next semester we will host two visiting professors. Kevin Haynes (on leave from UNC Law School) will teach our graduate interdisciplinary debates course, "Legal Fictions," together with our own Karla F.C. Holloway (English, Duke). In addition, our first year seminar, "Imagining Extinctions" will be taught by Tyler Curtain (English, UNC-Chapel Hill), a visiting professor in Women's Studies in 2006-07.

As many of you know, it has been my temporary privilege to lead the Program as Director this year while Robyn Wiegman is on sabbatical working on two new book projects. I am happy to report that Robyn will return to lead the program in fall 2006. This year, in addition to teaching and doing my own research, I have had the pleasure of leading research initiatives, coordinating seminars, and working on a three-year project on the African Diaspora and transnational feminism. Out of this project emerged a November 2005 symposium entitled "Gendering the Diaspora and Race-ing the Transnational," which Deborah Thomas (Assistant

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Focus On



JEAN O'BARR

Founder of Women's Studies
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**FALL 2006
SYMPOSIUM**

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Professor, Cultural Anthropology, Duke) and I coordinated. This issue of the newsletter contains two student reports on the symposium one by Tami Navarro (PhD candidate, Cultural Anthropology) and another by Alexis Gumbs (PhD candidate, English). I have also led the Graduate Scholars Colloquium, which has successfully transitioned into an important nexus for sharing and discussing student research and promoting our graduate students' professional development. Our newsletter article about the Graduate Colloquium describes the group's recent presentations.

As always, there is never enough space to fully describe the recent and upcoming outreach events Women's Studies has hosted or co-sponsored, but I cannot resist providing at least a thumbnail sketch. The Program supported a number of conferences and symposia this fall. In addition to "Gendering the Diaspora and Race-ing the Transnational," Women's Studies co-sponsored several academic symposia, including the first "Duke University Podcasting Symposium," organized by Information Science and Information Studies at Duke; "Cycles of Struggle: Genealogies of the Local Left," a conference organized by students in the Program in Literature, and the Sallie Bingham Center's Symposium, "Sisterhood, Riot Grrrl, and the Next Wave: Feminist Generations Generating Feminisms," with keynote speaker Eleanor Smeal (Feminist Majority Foundation). We were also pleased to support a series on "20th Century Black Artists" organized by the Center for International Studies, as well as a conference organized in collaboration with the Program in Sexualities Studies entitled "Sexual Citizens or Transnational Queer Subjects: Sexualities Studies and the Emergency of Empire."

Also of note, is the fact that this year's Dating Violence Awareness Week at Duke was led by Women's Studies major Angela Jarman whose article, included here, describes dating violence and the "hook-up" culture at Duke. You will also find an open letter from Women's Studies Majors and Minors entitled, "The F Word" which discusses how Women's Studies and feminism in general are influencing their social activism.

We are very excited about several upcoming campus events. Key among these is "Conjuring Bearden," an exhibition and national symposium on the work of the renowned artist and North Carolina native Romare Bearden at the new Nasher Museum at Duke. As part of the Bearden Symposium, Women's Studies is sponsoring the opening keynote panel on the topic of Bearden's "Conjur Women" on Friday, March 24. The panel will feature three distinguished feminist scholars, Farah Griffin (Columbia University), Deborah Willis (New York University), and Karla F.C. Holloway (English and Women's Studies at Duke). As part of this commemorative

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celebration, we will be hosting a series of activities for friends and Women's Studies alums, including a tour of the Nasher Museum on Saturday, March 25 and a brunch with Women's Studies undergraduates and graduates on Sunday, March 26. We hope this event will give our alumnae/i and friends a chance to see the new Nasher Museum, network with old friends, and help Program graduates and current students connect with one another.

Women's Studies will also host talks this spring by Jyoti Puri (Associate Professor, Sociology and Women's Studies, Simmons College) and Don Kulick (Professor, Anthropology, NYU), as well as co-sponsoring with Jewish and Religious Studies a visit by acclaimed author, Grace Paley. In addition, we are pleased to co-sponsor the March Women's History Month keynote speech by Antoinette Burton (Bastian Professor of Transnational and Global Studies in the History Department at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign). These events bring to a close a year full of exciting co-sponsored lectures which have included a speech by Maxine Hong Kingston at North Carolina Central University; a talk by Spike Peterson (Professor, Political Science, University of Arizona); a lecture by Rebecca Plant (Assistant Professor, History, UC- San Diego) and a talk by post-structuralist feminist Mimi Nguyen (Assistant Professor, Women's Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor).

The program will also sponsor a lecture series co-sponsored with the Literature Program, a multi-media event about Nepali women, the 5th Annual Ms. Films Festival, and a student-organized conference in the Department of Cultural Anthropology entitled, "Risk and Breakdown: Shifting the Study of Culture."

One of the Program's most exciting upcoming events is the May celebration of the achievements of our graduating Majors, Minors and Graduate Certificate students. I would like to extend my warm and most enthusiastic congratulations to all of them on their hard work. We encourage our students to keep in touch with the Program. Let me close by once again expressing our heartfelt gratitude to our alumnae/i and friends for their on-going support of the Program and for the mentoring they provide Women's Studies students on their way to furthering their education and establishing careers. If you are an alumna/us of the Program and would like to stay connected with Women's Studies and its students, we would welcome your involvement.

Best Regards,
Tina Camp
Interim Director of Women's Studies at Duke

"Let me close by once again expressing our heartfelt gratitude to our alumnae/i and friends for their on-going support of the Program and for the mentoring they provide Women's Studies students on their way to furthering their education and establishing careers."

Report

FALL 2006 SYMPOSIUM

Gendering the Diaspora, Race-ing the Transnational

By Tami Navarro

In Spring 2005, Tina Campt (Interim Director and Associate Professor, Women's Studies at Duke) and Deborah Thomas (Assistant Professor, Cultural Anthropology, Duke) team-taught a seminar entitled "Diasporic Hegemonies," a course whose central projects included a close examination of diaspora as an analytic category, as well as an unpacking of the assumptions which frequently accompany its use. That seminar raised the idea for a conference that was diasporic in both structure and content: a meeting of scholars from around the world discussing the ways they understood and deployed the notion of diaspora in their work. That conference, co-organized by Campt and Thomas, was recently realized as a Women's Studies Symposium entitled "Gendering Diaspora and Race-ing the Transnational." As suggested by its title, the conference sought to draw attention to the ways in which categories such as gender, race, and nation shape the notion of diaspora.



Deborah Thomas (L) and Tina Campt (R)

CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS



Charles Piot, Paulla Ebron, Saidiya Hartman, Jemima Pierre, Bayo Holsey

Theorizing against scholars such as Arjun Appadurai, who has famously depicted transnationalism as a series of fluid scapes, participants argued the importance of recognizing unequal power dynamics within and between spaces frequently understood as diasporic. Accordingly, the first panel of this meeting focused on and critiqued representations of Africa as an essentialized and primordial homeland. Panelists included Paulla Ebron (Associate Professor, Cultural and Social Anthropology, Stanford), Saidiya Hartman

(Associate Professor, English, UC-Berkeley), and Jemima Pierre (Assistant Professor, Anthropology and African American Studies, UT-Austin); the chair and moderator was Charles Piot (Creed Black Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology and African and African American Studies, Duke University); and the respondent was Bayo Holsey (Assistant Professor of Cultural Anthropology and African and African American

Studies, Duke University). The panel, entitled "Africa Diasporic" featured papers that sought to challenge the use of 'Africa' as a trope in much diaspora literature. In her presentation, Jemima Pierre detailed the use of "body white" (i.e. skin bleaching) creams in Ghana to complicate the notion that continental Africa and Africans are somehow exempt from the skin-color privilege that is commonly recognized as existing in other 'diasporic' locations, particularly the Caribbean. Placing Africa squarely within, rather than before, diasporic conversations, Pierre argued that, "diaspora studies can not grapple with race and racial identities without a discussion of complex constructions of race in contemporary Africa."

The second session of this conference was a more informal roundtable during which panelists and audience members were encouraged to exchange ideas across this divide. Panelists included chair and moderator, Tyler Curtain (Assistant Professor of English and Cultural Studies, UNC-CH), and discussants Mark Anthony Neal (Associate Professor of Black Popular Culture in the Program in African and African-American Studies, Duke University), Ben Carrington (Assistant Professor, Sociology, UT-Austin), Maureen Mahon (Assistant Professor, Anthropology, UCLA) and Harvey Neptune (Assistant Professor, History, Temple University). The topic of this roundtable, "Diasporic Masculinities," invited many questions, comments, and suggestions from the audience. The goal of this conference was to foster academic engagement among scholars working in various diasporic locations. Members of this roundtable represented research in the U.S., the U.K., and the Caribbean. In response to the panel's question- "What forms of masculinity circulate transnationally in and through diaspora?"-panelists spoke on topics as varied as R&B, hip-hop and black masculinity in British cricket matches. In his work on the latter, Ben Carrington advocated for the ideological place of black British masculinity against what he suggests is the hegemony of black American masculinity, arguing that the current construction marks English men, and European men more generally, as doubly emasculated.

Following this conversation on masculinity in the diaspora, scholars on the "Transnational Sexualities" panel were charged with interrogating the possibility of plural diasporic sexualities. That is, in what ways do transnational processes allow for or prevent differing gender identities and sexualities? Scholars on this panel were: chair and moderator, Maurice Wallace (Associate Professor, English and African and African American Studies, Duke University); presenters Denise Noble (Lecturer, Goldsmiths College, University of London), Rinaldo Walcott (Associate Professor, Canada Research Chair of Social Justice and Cultural Studies, U Toronto), and Meg Wesling (Assistant Professor, Literature, UC-San Diego); and respondent Suki Ali (Senior Lecturer, Gender and Social Theory, Sociology, London School of Economics). Rinaldo Walcott offered a multi-media presentation during which he attempted to read the concept of diaspora through a film centering on the lives of six drag queens (Divas: Love Me Forever), arguing for an understanding of diaspora as "definitionally queer," that is, as an odd form of human life. Further, Walcott suggested that diaspora produces desire for community across and between national boundaries-a desire that might also be understood as

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Report



Rajana Rhanna

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queer. Denise Noble discussed the relationship between class identity and sexuality in relation to dancehall (reggae), arguing that dancehall generally, and 'rude boys' in particular, "represent a challenge to the power of middle-class patriarchy and respectability." However, Noble acknowledged the limits of this alterity, noting that they do not challenge male privilege more broadly.

The final panel, "Diasporic Ambiguity and Transnational Perplexity" concerned the notion of 'perplexity' put forth by Priti Ramamurthy (Associate Professor of Women's Studies, University of Washington), who was a presenter, along with Jayne Ifekwunigwe (Duke Cultural Anthropology Affiliate/ University of East London), and conference co-coordinator Deborah A. Thomas. Other participants were chair and moderator Ranjana Khanna (Assistant Professor, English and Women's Studies, Duke University) and respondent Avtar Brah (Professor, Sociology, Birkbeck, University of London). This session asked scholars to grapple with the ambivalent positioning of women in much of the literature concerning transnational processes

and the various ways these circulations affect the creation of new subjectivities. Ramamurthy discussed her work on Indian saris, and the ways in which these garments now complicate class/caste identities in India, as the introduction of inexpensive polyester saris allows lower-class women to obtain patterns that have, until recently, been prohibitively expensive, and thus used as class markers. Throughout her presentation, Ramamurthy focused on the role that consumption plays in the creation of these new and potentially transgressive subjectivities. Conference co-organizer Deborah Thomas discussed her work with Jamaican women currently working in the U.S. service industry through a government-sponsored hospitality program. Thomas discussed structure and agency in relation to diasporic formations, noting the Jamaican women's persistent understanding of an American meritocracy, despite the fact that their everyday experiences in the U.S. did not shore up this belief. She compared this reading to African-American understandings of economic mobility, which more easily recognize structural limitations in the U.S. Citing the notion of *decalage* (that which cannot be translated) put forth by Brent Edwards, Thomas' talk points to the "differences among and between diasporics in light of power relations."

The final day of this conference featured one last panel and roundtable. Chair and Moderator of the final panel "The Status of Race in the Diaspora," was Carlton Wilson (Professor, History, North Carolina Central University). Panelists included Kesha Fikes (Assistant Professor, Anthropology and Social Sciences, University of Chicago), Lena Sawyer (Assistant Professor, Dept of Social Work, Mid-Sweden University), and Michelle Wright (Associate Professor of English, University of Minnesota). The respondent was Michaeline Crichlow (Associate Professor in African and African American Studies, Duke University). This panel concerned the ways racial formations differ among diasporic communities, while the roundtable entitled "Translation and the Place of African-America in the Diaspora," attempted to articulate, and potentially destabilize, the hegemonic positioning of African-America in theorizations of diaspora. During her presentation on race and diaspora, Kesha Fikes noted a "shifting racial positionality" in Cape Verde, and argued that the "loose equation of race with diaspora undermines the multiple ways people conceive of subjectivity." Also on this panel, Lena Sawyer argued the necessity of complicating a racially essentialized notion of diaspora and noted the dangers of assuming a direct relationship between blackness and diaspora, stating, "We need to look closely at how race is being employed by those with diasporic agendas, as they often overlook other power relations such as generation, gender, class, etc."

Chair and Moderator of the final roundtable was conference co-organizer Tina Campt. Discussants included: Jacqueline Nassy Brown (Assistant Professor, Anthropology, Hunter-CUNY), Barnor Hesse (Associate Professor of African American Studies, Sociology and Political Science, Northwestern University), Karla F.C. Holloway (William R. Kenan Professor of English, Duke University), John L. Jackson, Jr. (Assistant Professor, Cultural Anthropology, Duke University) and Anne-Maria Makhulu (Assistant Professor of African and African American Studies, Duke University.) This roundtable, entitled "Translation and the Place of African-America in Diaspora," provided a space for participants to speak to their understanding of the relationship between national and diasporic identity. Barnor Hesse, for instance, argued that the "availability of U.S. cultural productions are, in part, enabled by U.S. imperialism." Anne-Maria Makhulu, however, pointed to local agency by noting the frequent indigenization of American cultural productions that often takes place in "Other" places. Creating a space for both readings, conference co-organizer Tina Campt advocated an understanding of diaspora based in difference, rather than similarity, framing this as a complication of a "happy family" reading of diaspora. Finally, roundtable discussant John Jackson suggested that this conference as a whole "shows that there is no such thing as diasporic hegemonies, as hegemony is always-already partial and incomplete."

"Gendering the Diaspora and Race-ing the Transnational" provided a valuable space for interrogating theories and understandings of diaspora. In addition to the possible publication of some of the proceedings from this conference, the organizers and participants are planning another symposium, tentatively scheduled for next year in Toronto.

Tami Navarro is a PhD candidate in Cultural Anthropology at Duke



Jacqueline Nassy Brown

JEAN FOX O'BARR *Founder of Women's Studies at Duke*

FACULTY FOCUS

An interview with Jean Fox O'Barr

By Mary Fulkerson

MMF: Jean, let me start off by asking how you got interested in women's issues.

JO: My scholarly interests, my teaching interests, and my administrative interests all kind of came together in my first years at Duke with a focus on women who had been denied opportunities. I moved to Durham in 1969. The man that I was married to then had an appointment in cultural anthropology; I did not have a position. I had been told by the chair of political science that they did not hire women. But, in the fall, they had lost several faculty members due to the student unrest, and the new director of undergraduate studies asked me if I would teach. So a week or two after arriving here with no plans to teach, I taught. I was finishing up my dissertation which was about women activists in Tanzania and so I put a lot of that material into my class. At that time the Woman's College was merging with Trinity College--that process went from '68 until '72 and I was aware of that. The year after I taught, Josefina Tiryakian asked me to substitute for her as the head of a new program for re-entry women--women who were trying to complete bachelor's degrees. So I took an administrative post and that allowed me to learn a lot about women's education, as well as to participate in the conversations the Women's College was having about the nature of women's needs in higher education. I had gone straight through college and graduate school on fellowship and had rarely been stopped in terms of my own aspirations. And so here I was helping people who had been stopped, although I had no experience and was half the age of most of the people that I was seeing.

MMF: So you were an administrator but you also got to teach. What next?

JO: There were a number of courses by the 70s that laid the ground work for feminist scholarship in the disciplines. It's interesting how that came about. In the late 1960s, when the Woman's College was merging with Trinity, a board of visitors did an external evaluation. And that board told them that they needed to be teaching something about the new scholarship on women--that's what we called it then. So a group of faculty members, Richard Kramer in psychology, Anne Scott in history, and Juanita Kreps in economics put together a pass/fail half credit course called, "The American Woman: History and Prospects." Its 350-seat classroom filled up all the time. I helped organize it with my research assistant,

Laura Ellen Muglia. (Laura, by the way, has recently given a large gift for a symposium to the Baldwin Scholars, and she's interested in us continuing to do the kind of symposium that was part of her undergraduate experience.) Anyway, we had a lecture series on contemporary women's issues (IDC 156) and collected people from town, activists, and faculty who were doing a little bit of work on women. Since it was overload, none of us got paid for it but it was quite exciting and we did it for a number of years. At the same time, I was beginning to read a lot of the scholarship that was coming out across the disciplines, particularly in history. Around 1975 I decided that I wanted to teach my own course on "African Women." I had papers from conferences and knowledge about what my colleagues at other universities were doing so I went to the chair of the political science department and said 'I'd like to teach a course on African women.' And he looked at me over his glasses (he shall remain nameless) and said 'Well, is there any extensive research literature on this field?' And I thought about all the things that I knew and my friends knew, and the total absence of anything in the library and I said, 'Of course!' Now (laughing) there wasn't; 1975 was the first year of the UN Decade for Women and the research that they tried to collect about women in the Third World fit into one volume. Of course he had his standards, but he didn't know that, so I just said 'yes' and I began teaching my own course on African women, as well as this interdisciplinary course. By that time other people were joining the faculty; Bill Chafe, Carol Meyers, Ida Simpson had long taught such courses. Fairly slowly a number of us came to know one another largely through the faculty women's network, rather than academically. For several years I taught a course called "Dual Careers for Women" with a woman named Jeanne Baldigo, a sociologist, which investigated the work-life balance, as we call it now, and all the issues associated with the change in women's status. The IDC class, as well as our dual career's class, really laid the ground work for an interdisciplinary course that would later become Women's Studies.

MMF: Jean, you mentioned the faculty women's network, tell me about that and how it contributed to developing issues for women.

JO: I don't remember the exact year that we began, but by the mid-70s, at the time we were teaching the IDC course, a few women were getting concerned about women's issues, which was then a national conversation. So a



Laura Muglia (L) and Jean Fox O'Barr (R)

group of faculty women began meeting to look at the status of women, the numbers being recruited, salary, benefits, hiring policies, etc., the same issues that we're dealing with now, only this was the very beginning of a consciousness. We met regularly, wrote letters, protested policies, tried to help women who were going through the tenure process write good tenure briefs, gave political advice, lobbied for the hiring of women in various departments. Many women still tell me that they remember the help that the Faculty Women's Network gave them, and of course, there's now a current reincarnation of that under Teresa Berger from the Divinity School. The network was very important in the 1970s in locating and connecting people. It was that connecting through university policies that helped us to see the academic possibilities. We didn't come together as scholars on feminist topics, but we came together politically and then began to share our academic or research interests.

MMF: This is fascinating. Now can you talk about how Women's Studies got started?

JO: I think the origins of women's studies were two-fold. They came from Ernie's [Ernestine Friedl's] vision and leadership in saying, 'Let's get with it.' And the fact that the feminist journal *Signs* came so quickly; it legitimized us in an important way. As I've said, through the 1970s, there were enough courses at Duke on women that students couldn't say, 'we have nothing on women.' It was almost like it siphoned off any kind of protest or pressure to create women's studies. When Ernestine Friedl was appointed Dean of Arts & Sciences in 1980, however, things changed. She had come to Duke's cultural anthropology from Queens College-- and of course the New York universities had all established women's studies programs in the 1970's-- so she was sort of surprised, both because of her own scholarship and because of her background in other schools that Duke didn't have a women's studies program. So she appointed a committee. Ida

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Jean O'Barr from page 5

Simpson, Bill Chafe and Virginia Dominguez were to study the feasibility of Duke having a women's studies program (that was in 1982-83) and she gave them a little bit of money to hire a woman named Carolyn Stephanco, who later became the director of Women's Studies at San Luis Obispo. The committee recommended that a women's studies program be established and in February of 1983, Ernie asked me if I would like to be the first director. In those days you didn't do outside hires, (laughing) you just asked somebody to do something. I was quite thrilled because I had been the director of Continuing Education for eleven years and thought this was interesting and exciting. So our first year was 1983-84. I developed the introductory course by looking at other people's introductory courses and set up the certificate requirements. The thing that really got women's studies here, especially in the eyes of the faculty, however, was not my appointment or the establishment of the program. We had a Ford Foundation sponsored joint program with Duke and UNC, a research center, which brought faculty attention to feminist research. And at that time the journal *Signs* was in rotation. UNC's Jackie Hall, Anne Scott and Naomi Quinn, and I wrote a proposal to have *Signs* come here in 1985, thinking that we would try once and get it in 1990 when we were better established. Well, we got it for 1985. So here's this women's program not but a year old with *Signs*! So, from 1985-'90 we, at Duke and UNC, were the editorial offices for *Signs*. That was the intellectually energizing activity that really brought people together and that brought attention from faculty who weren't involved in feminism. And I think that there I did some of the things that people say are characteristic of my leadership style. When we got an article on a feminist topic we would send it to feminist scholars in the field. But I'd also often send it to a local scholar who didn't know very much about feminist scholarship but who I thought could get intrigued by the reading. There was a third stage in the legitimization of Women's Studies that came from my understanding that because we started a decade after so many oth-

ers, at peer institutions, we did not have any hope of federal funding sources, which were drying up by then. I thought that we could get alumni to support Women's Studies, both through their ideas and political support, but also through their financial resources. We began a serious fundraising effort through the alumni and that brought us to the attention of the administration. I think about this in tiers, if the certificate program and the courses got students interested in feminist issues and if *Signs* got the faculty interested in feminist scholarship, then our alumni council and all the symposia we ran in the 1980's and 1990's were ways to legitimize us in the larger university and with the alumni communities. Each one of them is a scholarly and intellectual endeavor, but appropriate to the constituency that it's being directed toward.

MMF: Jean, tell me about the themes that run through your professional life.

JO: Well, first, I sincerely believe that the best knowledge is created in a social context. By that I mean that while individuals do their own work and research and think and puzzle out things, it's only when it's tested with others and tried, in terms of its implications and its antecedents and all those other things that knowledge really progresses. I think about teaching as a social enterprise. It's important that students know each other in the classroom and trust each other so that they'll take intellectual risks. Faculty do best when they know each other's work, as well each other's personalities and politics, and share that work and exchange it and trust it and learn new things and are pushed by each other. I think that it's wonderful to go to conferences and have visitors to campus, but ultimately the community of scholars, whether it's in the classroom or with your peers, is how knowledge is fostered and created. So this notion of the social basis for knowledge creation is very important to me. I also (and this comes from my early continuing education days) have thought a lot about the question of 'who can create knowledge?' not just where it's created socially, but who creates it. Knowledge is created by all of us in a variety of different ways. You can do research in primary documents, in secondary sources. You can do participant observation. You can do quantitative work. You try to generalize from your experience, so when we started doing alumni programs, one of the things that I think was exciting was the fact that these are alumni or graduates of a school where they had done intellectual work, and they continue to be intellectuals. They might not be generating the same



Jean Fox O'Barr and Barbara Washburn (WS '64 and member of the Council on Women's Studies)

kinds of knowledge that we are, but they are generating knowledge on their own and they're wonderful at exchanging it and talking about it. So I got very excited when I saw people of all different ages wrestling with the same problems. And I think it meant a lot to the women faculty, because the women faculty were always a minority on campus. It was really empowering for them to meet women alumni in other domains--business, the non-profit sector, higher education, community activities, and see those women and the struggles that they were engaged in. Some of us were academics, others were lawyers or business people, or corporate people, whatever, so I think that the exchange for the faculty on a personal level was great and the role model aspects were terrific for the undergraduates.

MMF: Jean, a lot of the Women's Studies faculty really appreciated your capacity to bring people together. Can you talk some more about that?

JO: I believe in bringing people together. I think you can anticipate some things and then some unanticipated things happen when you bring people together. In order to do anything, you need the strengths of a variety of different people. Everybody has something to bring to the table. I guess that's what I want to say. That actually comes from my childhood, from my grandparents, who had an amazing ability. Both of my grandfathers and one of my grandmothers were really skilled at bringing people together. I had a grandmother who could bring the entire neighborhood together, I had a grandfather who was a corporate person who did miraculous things during WWII, and I had another grandfather who worked as an artist and all of them in one way or another emphasized this business about the idea that everybody has a special gift, that's also a Quaker idea and it's only when everybody puts their gifts out- it isn't my way or the highway-it's everybody bringing something together that seems so strong.



Jean O'Barr advising a first year student

Response

FALL 2006 SYMPOSIUM

Gendering the Diaspora, Race-ing the Transnational The Risk of Response

By Alexis Gumbs

On the last day of the Gendering the Diaspora Race-ing the Transnational conference after a panel about "The Status of Race in Diaspora", Professor Ranjana Khanna asked a set of questions that asked everyone to think about what might happen to diaspora if we were to switch oceans and look at processes of movement around the Indian Ocean, or the Mediterranean Sea, and whether or not the movements of occupying military forces around the world constitute diasporic flows. After this set of questions, something strange and familiar happened.

The next set of audience respondents read (I would say misread) Dr. Khanna's set of questions as a request for conference participants to "include" "South Asian Diasporas" in the discussion and went on to defend the need for a space in which to examine the world-breaking particularity of the diaspora set in motion by the trans-Atlantic slave trade. I found this a strange response to what I read as a move to reveal the ways in which the uses of diaspora at the conference were shaped by "common sense" assumptions that may have been arbitrary, if not hegemonic. This impulse to defend the study of the African diaspora, however, is come by honestly. Since the academy at large has been hostile and repressive towards this type of study, many scholars have had to defend the utility of their work ad nauseum. Here we see exemplified the way in which a larger structure (insert either the global north-centered patriarchal traditions of the university or colonialism itself), constricts what would seem to be a

creative south-focused feminist discourse of diaspora, into an oppositional and narrow frame. After arguing that their important and vital work is indeed important and vital, many academics have become better at responding to silencing attacks than at framing shifting questions. In this moment, and others at this conference, some scholars responded to what could have been a set of productive questions as if they were challenges meant to undermine their work.

Alas, self-defense and rigorous inquiry cannot easily inhabit the same space. However, both instances reveal ways in which the economy of ideas set up in the academy produces the impulse to fortify and defend ideas as capital that will enable the production of scholarly credibility. This economic structure (of course) flies in the face of the stated ideals of the university as a place of rigorous questioning, of infinite opening up, of the free flow of ideas in much the way that (for example) neo-liberal economic structures undercut the (wrong minded to begin with) missions of progress and well-being that they sell to the global south. All of this is to say that response is indeed risky, in every place. Here, through two responses to brave presentations at this conference, I hope to suggest that as people interested in disrupting the longstanding dehumanizing logic of neo-liberal labor imperatives through feminist diasporic discourses, we can afford to respond to each other in ways that reveal and disperse our assumptions own work. We are truly broke otherwise.

"This impulse to defend the study of the African diaspora, however, is come by honestly."

MMF: Tell me what you're teaching now and what you plan to teach.

JO: For the past couple of years I've been teaching two primary courses. I teach in the focus program and I teach a course there on social movements, which is really a course in how to do research into social phenomena. Students choose their social movements and it is great fun. I've learned lots and lots of things from all of their papers. The other course I've been teaching for quite a while is called 'Gender and Higher Education.' We have an education program here at Duke of which now I'm a member, and I've been teaching that course on the history of higher education and women's access to higher education. I've enjoyed that very much and I will continue to teach them. The course I'm particularly excited about will be offered in the fall of 2006 for the first time. I'm doing it in conjunction with Donna Lisker, the Director of the Women's Center and Co-director of the Baldwin Scholars Program and Tom Harkins, the Associate University

Archivist. It's called Education 146, "Gender at Duke." What we're going to do is select primary documents all the way from the late 19th century about women's issues at Duke, in University Archives, and teach the course through primary documents about Duke. Of course, students will do secondary reading and additional writing about these issues, but I'm excited to have a chance to look, comprehensively and historically, at a variety of gender issues at Duke.

MMF: This has been so fascinating. Duke's Women's Studies would not exist without your work, your commitment, your wisdom and creativity. Jean, I speak for countless people when I say "thank you."

Mary McClintock Fulkerson (M.Div. '77) is Associate Professor of Theology in Duke's Divinity School and a member of the associate faculty in Women's Studies at Duke.

Hazel Carby Reproduces the Modern Subject

Dr. Carby should stick with the tentative title to her upcoming book,



Child of Empire, if only to give the reader a chance to notice that her argument is quietly, deftly and *naturally* one of heterosexual reproduction. I do not want to assert that Hazel Carby's infinitely useful figure of war-time miscegenation is the only thing that makes her argument convincing. This is not the case. I am thoroughly convinced by Carby's readings of Olaudah Equiano, Maryse Conde and Austin Clarke, each of which make a case that black and white modern subjects constitute themselves through their formative encounters with each other. I do want to assert, however, that heterosexual reproduction, figured in the rape that produced Conde's Tituba and in the wartime conception that produced Professor Carby herself, is the most

continued on page 8

Response



Carby as a child in England

continued from page 7

recognizable metonymic representation of what happened to the modern racialized subject. She was born.

Representation is never without excess. The example exceeds its exemplarity. Such is the case with the inter-racial heterosexual reproduction that Carby allows quietly to stand in for the creation of the modern subject. This move by Carby is instructive for me, especially

inasmuch as it is reflected in diaspora studies as a whole. The moments when diaspora is taken for granted, in our casual uses of "in the diaspora" are the exact places where we are assuming that the term diaspora is reproductively related to its own etymology; that is that it signifies the dispersal of procreative seed through time and space. So diaspora is the twin of the modern subject, born at the same instant.

I wonder what would happen if Carby's brief mention that these "half-caste" British-born babies were adopted by African-American couples was the focus of the analysis instead of an underplayed bi-product. At that moment Carby's presentation justifies, without foregrounding, a queer reading of inter-racial sex. She outlines the ways in which the British state by effectively forbidding inter-racial interaction between the sexes and British society by refusing to claim of these bi-racial children, insisted that these unions were not the means through which the state would be reproduced. Carby's presentation depends on a naturalized relationship between sexual reproduction and the production of subjectivity, but the information that she provides reveals the possibility of troubling these connections in a way that would queer diaspora and disrupt the concept of place-based heritage completely, displacing histories and scholarly paradigms alike.



Afrotopia-Saidiya Hartman

I have only ever heard Saidiya Hartman read this way. Her voice hits you again and again, monotone, continual, eerily like the grey waves I swore were haunted on my real-life trip to Ghana. This time, like last time, at the American Studies Colloquium at Columbia University, she uses a first person account of her encounter with the Gold Coast as an attempt to represent oblivion.

She wants me to know what is not, happening, what is not, remembered, what does not, shape(s) the ways that we move, what she cannot say. She wants me to know that what she cannot say is the only thing to say. This time, like last time, she is concerned with racialization as the "social distribution of death", in the process through which human life becomes capitalist waste. She seems fixated on the word itself, "shit." This time, like last time, I am hypnotized. This is why I want to talk about this presentation in the present tense.

Hartman's presentation, not the only, but certainly the most sustained moment of poetry in the three-day symposium, introduces a temporality designed to undermine itself, to reveal narratives of space and time, to leak its impossibility onto the factors that constructed it. In what I would argue is the temporality of trauma, Hartman represents the failure of the prototypical African anti-colonial project by taunting the proposed narrative of temporal progress that the official historical record would present. Reflecting on the superficially successful independence movement in Ghana, Hartman insists that "the new days were too much like the old ones" and that "independence was a short century", convincing us that new and old have failed to signify themselves and that time has failed to fill itself up. We are wandering timelessly. before. now in her use of tense. She talks about a past that can't have stopped yet, noting that "no taxi driver could find his way to African Liberation Square". And if time is skipping, like a record with an unplanned groove then what about the space of your consciousness? If the complicated dynamics of African-American migration to Ghana tell me that I am not this taxi driver how am I to know that I have not always been doomed to be in the back of this taxi? Hartman doesn't mention this, but all of the black Americans that I met who were living in Ghana called what they had done "repatriation". What does it mean that the lost ancestral home is always imagined as already a nation?

If, as Hartman suggests in reference to the independence movement in Ghana that, "every revolution promises to stop all the clocks," what time is it? What does it mean when Charles Piot, the moderator, passes her a note that I imagine says "5 minutes left"? Doesn't he know that minutes got up and left before the talk started? Every new moment is a revolution, breaking its promise by continuing to go around. Hartman knows this. This is why she repeats, "If you look long enough..." we will see what she is saying. If we listen long enough we will see that she is stalling us, playing unwitting decoy to a crime occurring everywhere.

What does this impossibility through time do to the mutability of space? What does Hartman mean when she replaces the official cartography of Accra with "a map patterned out of contempt,"? Where is she leading me when she says that "desire was as accurate as any map when you were looking for the promised land,"? If time is a promise and space is a promise, then Hartman gives nothing. The transatlantic "rupture (that) was the whole story" for her takes place here and now as a deep scratch in the record, a crack in the CD, playing back.

Responses are not conclusions, and they scorn the idea of finishing by always asking for something more. Nevertheless at some point my turn has to end and the discussion has to move into your next step. The "Gendering the Transnational, Race-ing the Diaspora" conference certainly left a community of scholars exposed, emphasizing how dangerous and potentially transformative it is for us to be in touch with each other. Hopefully these responses will become part of a process that uses the unpredictable and often disturbing revelation of the assumptions underneath our attraction to the discourse of diaspora to recreate the term as something that does more than reproduce itself.

Alexis Gumbs is a PhD candidate in English at Duke. She is pursuing a Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies and is a member of the Graduate Scholars Colloquium

CAMPUS COLLABORATIONS

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The theme of Women's History Month at Duke this year is "Women and Empire." The keynote speaker is Professor Antoinette Burton (Bastian Professor of Transnational and Global Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) who will speak on "The East as Postcolonial Career: Cold War Cosmopolitanism and the Work of Anglo-American Empire". This public lecture is scheduled for Thursday March 23 in the Nelson Music Room, East Duke Building.



Burton is the author of *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915* (1994); *At the Heart of the Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in Late-Victorian Britain* (1998); and *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home and History in Late Colonial India* (2003). Her forthcoming book, "The Postcolonial Careers of Santha Rama Rau," investigates the phenomenon of Cold War cosmopolitanism.

ROMARE BEARDEN, "CONJURING WOMEN"



Romare Bearden, *The Conjuring Woman*, ca. 1979. Collage on board, 23 x 15 inches. Lent by Evelyn N. Boulwère and Russell J. Goings.

Romare Bearden's fascination with painting women, and particularly with a woman-engineered authority over the occult and spirituality, is the topic of a March 24-26, 2005 symposium at Duke's Nasher Museum. This event gathers twenty scholars from around the country, representing the fields of Art History, English, American History, Women's Studies, Music, Psychology, African American studies, Film Studies and Cultural Anthropology.

Events begin on Friday, March 24, at 6:45 PM with a keynote conversation on the central theme of the "Conjur Woman." Three distinguished scholars, Karla F.C. Holloway (William R. Kenan Professor of English, and Women's Studies, Duke), Farrah Griffin (Professor of English and Comparative Literature; Director of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies, Columbia University) and photographer Deborah Willis (New York University Professor of Photography and historian of African American photography) will participate on a panel moderated by Tina Campt (Associate Professor and Interim Director of Women's Studies at Duke). Women's Studies will co-sponsor this event with the North Carolina Arts Council and the Duke University Provost's Common Fund, Department of Art and Art History and African and African American Studies Program. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, please contact Wendy Hower Livingston at 684-3314 or wendy.hower@duke.edu.

Associated with the exhibit of Romare Bearden's paintings, on display at the Nasher through July 2006, is a free film series entitled, "Conjuring Bearden." Richard J. Powell (John Spencer Bassett Professor of Art History, Duke) and Jane Gaines (Professor, Literature, Duke) selected nine rarely screened films, from meditations on life's inexplicable mysteries to meta-physical re-imaginings of space and time, inadvertently tracing Bearden's artistic interest in African American/ Caribbean folk knowledge and spiritual efficacy. The film series is co-sponsored by Duke's Program in Film/ Video/Digital and Duke's African and African American Studies Program. All of these free screenings are at 7 p.m. Thursdays in the Museum Auditorium.

NEPALI WOMEN

In April, Women's Studies will co-sponsor a multimedia event focused on Nepali. Nepali citizen and performance artist, Ashmina Ranjit, will perform her piece "Tamas: The Darkness," screen several of her short films that relate to women's identity and sexuality, and lead a participatory discussion on art, state, identity, conflict, gender and sexuality. Her works are designed to increase awareness of crucial ongoing social and political issues of marginalized communities. Ashmina Ranjit is currently a Fulbright fellow at Columbia University Graduate School of Art.



Manjushree Thapa, renowned writer on women's rights and social justice in Nepal and elsewhere, will lead a number of events relating to conflict, rights, gender, and literature, including a public reading, a reception, and participation on a panel with other guests. Her most recent book, *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy for Democracy* (Penguin Books, 2005), is considered by "The Economist" to be "probably the best, and certainly the most readable, attempt to address ... what has gone so desperately wrong with her country."

Also part of this project is a feature-length documentary, *The Sari Soldiers: Women on the Frontline in Nepal* (dir. Julie Bridgman) examining the experience of six different women risking their lives in their pursuits of justice in Nepal's civil war.

In addition to Women's Studies, other sponsors include: Asian/Pacific Studies Institute, Cultural Anthropology, Duke Center for International Studies, Duke Human Rights Consortium, Duke Human Rights Initiative, Duke Performances, Ethnomusicology, Human Rights Working Group, N.C. South Asia Center, and Women's Colloquium. For the schedule and more information about this series of events, contact Dawn Peebles (dawn.peebles@duke.edu)

BEAUTY WITHOUT BORDERS: MIMI NGUYEN



On February 2, Mimi Thi Nguyen (Women's Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor) gave a public lecture at Duke sponsored by Women's Studies, Cultural Anthropology, ICUSS, and Interdisciplinary Studies. The talk was entitled "Beauty Without Borders: Fashions, Neo-liberalisms, Feminisms." Nguyen is a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at the Rackham School of Graduate Studies and Assistant Professor in Women's Studies. Her book (forthcoming from Duke University Press) examines the historical production and mobilization of "refugeeness" for varied political and cultural projects (such as commemoration, humanitarianism, consumption and multicultural nationalism) in particular within the transnational configuration "Vietnamese America." She continues to situate her work within transnational feminist cultural studies with her following project, which will focus on fashion, citizenship and transnationality. She is co-editor with Thuy Linh Tu of *Alien Encounters: Pop Culture in Asian America* (forthcoming from Duke University Press) and author of multiple essays on Asian American, queer, and punk subcultures, digital technologies, and Vietnamese diasporic culture, published in academic collections, on-line publications and popular magazines.

Women's Studies

Campus Highlights



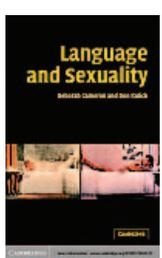
Rebecca Jo Plant
(Assistant Professor, History, University of California, San Diego) gave a

talk in February on "War Mothers: Patriotic Maternalism and American Culture." Plant explores the diminishing status of the all-American mother as a patriotic icon from 1918 to 1945. Her book, "The Repeal of Mother Love: Momism and the Reconstruction of Philip Wylie's America," will be published by University of Chicago Press in 2007. Women's Studies, the Department of History, and the Institute for Critical U.S. Studies at Duke co-sponsored this event.



On March 7, 2006 **Jyoti Puri** (Associate Professor, Sociology and Women's Studies, Simmons College) will give a public lecture

entitled, "Transgender/ Transnational: Photographs from New Delhi." The talk focuses on an exhibit of photographs taken by and of Kinnars (Hijras/ Transgenders), which was held in New Delhi in May 2005. The presentation will explore the interplay between the sexed body, gender, and (hetero) sexuality that are projected in the photographs, calling for nuanced critiques of heteronormativity.



Women's Studies will host a talk by **Don Kulick** (Professor, Anthropology, NYU) this spring. Kulick's publications deal with language socialization, language death, lan-

guage and gender, ethnographic field-work and epistemology, transgenderism, queer theory, and prostitution.

FRIENDS OF WOMEN'S STUDIES:

Giving Back



Joanne Mazurki

Joanne Mazurki (T'74), Kimberly Jenkins (BS '76, PhD '80) and Kelly Sanchez (T'06), have all been students at Duke, but their relationship developed in 2002, because of their membership in the Council on Women's Studies, a group of alumnae and friends of the Women's Studies Program at Duke. Kelly Sanchez, who will graduate in 2006 with a Psychology major, Spanish minor, and a certificate in Markets and Management Studies, was a freshman when she became a student representative to the Council, bringing a youthful perspective to the group's work. Joanne Mazurki, former Chair of the Council on Women's Studies, worked as Avon's director of global public affairs heading up its cause-related marketing efforts. Kimberly Jenkins, a Duke

trustee and former Microsoft executive, endowed a special professorship at Duke to promote the study of the effect of technology on society. Now, the three women are working together on a joint project.

The project is intended to bring undergraduate women and entrepreneurship together at Duke through research and focus groups that could result in seminars, classes, lecture series, mentoring programs, internships, among other projects recommended by the focus groups. Duke Student Affairs, Markets and Management, Public Policy and the Engineering School are all providing support and collaboration on the project. Kimberly and Joanne developed an independent study course on women and entrepreneurship and invited three hundred students to consider taking it. To everyone's surprise, that process yielded former Council on Women's Studies student representative Kelly Sanchez. In addition to providing a happy reunion for these friends of Women's Studies, in one semester Kelly and her former Council mentors investigated academic environments and the study of best practices and developed a tool for focus groups, including students, faculty and administrators. This semester they will work on the focus groups. Broadly defining entrepreneurship, the project extends the notion of social entrepreneurship and aims to show ways to apply entrepreneurship in many nontraditional settings, for instance, in seeking office, running non-profits, and other career options. This project is one of the many ways students benefit from the ideas, work and support of friends and alumnae of Women's Studies.



Kelly Sanchez



Kimberly Jenkins

We want to know what you think! Send your comments on past issues of the newsletter and ideas for upcoming issues to: Women's Studies, Duke University, Box 90760, Durham, NC 27708 or email your comments to phoffman@duke.edu.

MORE CAMPUS COLLABORATIONS

September 2005, Shanti Parikh

(Assistant Professor, Sociocultural and African/Afro-American Studies, Yale) spoke on "The Sexual Economy of Marriage, Love and Infidelity in Uganda's Age of AIDS," presented by the Cultural Anthropology Department at Duke with support from Women's Studies.

October 2005

Dating Violence Awareness Week at Duke included a documentary movie screening of "Searching for Angela Shelton; a panel Discussion on Dating and Domestic Violence: Victimization, Representation, and the Potential of Conversation" with panelists: Professors Mark Anthony Neal (AAAS), Diane Nelson (Cultural Anthropology), and Kathy Rudy (Women's Studies), representatives from Men Acting for Change and Voices magazine; senior undergraduates from the department of Women's Studies; and a Brown Bag Discussion of Kevin Powell's "Confessions of a Recovering Misogynist."

"**A Workshop for Womyn of Color**" with Casa Atabex Ache, supporting women of color in the south Bronx.

Patricia White (Film and Media Studies, Swarthmore College) spoke on "Women's Cinema as Art Cinema: Transnational Feminism and Niche Exhibition" sponsored by Duke University Program in Film/Video/Digital with support from Women's Studies

November 2005:

"**Cycles of Struggle: Genealogies of the Local Left**," which brought together academics, students, and local organizers to talk about the history of civil rights, the student anti-war movement at Duke, and labor organizing in the Durham community. Among the scholars who were welcomed back to campus were Karen Saks Brodtkin, now at UCLA, author of an important book on labor organizing at Duke Hospital, and Christina Greene, now at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, whose recent book is on African-American women's contribution to the local civil rights struggle. The conference was organized by graduate students of Jane Gaines, Professor of Literature and English and Director of Perspectives on Marxism and Society Program and the Program in Film/Video/Digital at Duke.



Paul Kramer (Associate Professor, History, Johns Hopkins University) presented a lecture entitled "The Darkness that Enters the Home: the Politics of Prostitution during the Philippine-American War." Kramer is the author of numerous articles and "The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines (UNC Press, forthcoming, 2006). The event was sponsored by the Department of History, Women's Studies Program, Asia/Pacific Studies Institute, and the Institute for Critical US Studies.

January 19, 2006: Women's Networking Dinner, preceding the Duke Women's Basketball game, co-sponsored by Duke Women's Studies, Engineering School, Arts & Sciences, Student Affairs, Dining Services, Graduate Student Affairs, and the Women's Center. Organized by The Graduate and Professional Women's Network, Women in Science and Engineering, and the Graduate and Professional Student Council.



January 2006:

Maxine Hong Kingston, writer and peace activist, delivered a talk in honor of Martin Luther King Day at the North Carolina Central University, sponsored by the English Department at NCCU with support from Women's Studies at Duke.

Spike Peterson (Political Science and Women's Studies, University of Arizona) gave a lecture entitled "From Nannies to Nanoseconds: Rethinking Global Political Economy," and was part of the University Seminar on Globalization, Equity and Democratic Governance sponsored by Duke University Center for International Studies and Women's Studies.

February 2006:

February 20: **Celebrating Our Bodies Week**, an annual event organized through the Student Health Center by the student group, ESTEEM (Educating Students to Eliminate Eating Misconceptions). Events include a keynote speech by writer Leora Tanenbaum, and a student panel immediately following her talk to discuss social conditions at Duke.

February 23-26: **The 5th Annual Ms. Films Festival**. In its fifth year, this nationally recognized event will include a 10-day West Coast tour. This year the festival expands its focus, introducing the theme "Activism Through Media." Events include: a screening of the new documentary "Living Room: Space and Place in Infoshop Culture" followed by a panel discussion; a workshop on telling your own story through zinemaking, led by Philadelphia zine author and small press distributor Sage Adderly; video pod casting; a workshop on recycled media- recycled film, video, slides, etc.; craftivism; a panel from the Southern Documentary Fund; and Latina Community Engagement. The festival also includes a feature-length documentary called "Ladyfest" about Philadelphia Ladyfest.



March 2006:

Michael Ann Holly (chair of the Department of Art and Art History and professor of Art History/ Visual and Cultural Studies, University of Rochester) sponsored by Art and Art History and co-sponsored by Women's Studies at Duke. Among Holly's publications are: *Panofsky and the Foundations of Art History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), *Iconography and Iconology* (Milan: Jaca Publications, 1992), and *Past Looking: Historical Imagination and the Rhetoric of the Image* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

Mar 21-22 lectures by **Renita Weems** at Duke Divinity School. Events include a Faculty luncheon followed by a graduate seminar on Tuesday afternoon and a public lecture Tuesday evening. Dr. Weems will speak in the Duke Chapel Wednesday (a tradition of Divinity Women's Week), followed by a luncheon and question/answer session open to all students and faculty.

March 31 Cultural Anthropology Graduate Student conference, "**Risk and Breakdown: Shifting the Study of Culture**." Additional information can be found at <http://culturalanthropology.duke.edu/news/Riskandbreakdown.html>

For times and locations for these and other lectures and film series hosted or co-sponsored by Women's Studies, please see the calendar at: <http://www.duke.edu/womstud/calendar>

FACULTY UPDATES



Congratulations to *Robyn Wiegman* who was promoted to full Professor this past November. She is on a

one-year sabbatical working on two book projects and participating in the Women's Studies Research Forum in Seattle, among other activities. Wiegman will return to Duke to resume the Directorship of the Women's Studies Program in fall 2006.

Kathy Rudy

(Associate Professor, Women's Studies) was



honored in fall 2005 with the Duke Human Rights Initiative Award for her work on animal rights. She also received a Course Development Award for a course on Animals and Ethics from New Beginnings, a Duke program forging new pedagogical and research bridges across disciplines. This spring, Rudy will give a talk on Animals and Ethics at Indiana University.



Karla F. C. Holloway

(Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, William R. Kenan Professor of English and Women's Studies, Duke) spent

a month at the Villa Serbelloni in Bellagio, Italy last semester as a Rockefeller Foundation Fellow where she completed her manuscript, *BookMarks: Reading in Black and White—A Memoir*, which will be published this fall by Rutgers University Press.

Dating Violence and the "Hookup Culture" continued from page 1 speaking, and organizing. Students and professors spoke to the issue from a variety of perspectives and disciplines, painting a productively complex picture of dating violence.

Always a hot topic over the past few years, the "hookup culture" became the focal point of my interrogation of violence on campus. How and where do "hookup culture" and dating violence intersect? Does the "hookup culture" encourage dating violence? With regard to the focus of the panel, how do the discourses surrounding violence reinforce or discourage it? My approach to the topic involved investigating violence through the lens of sexuality.

Upon closer examination of the "hookup culture" it became clear that the model relies on traditionally gendered behavior that implies a passive female sexuality. Social control necessitates that sexually active women must not be admittedly so; a woman who publicly declares her sexual subjectivity is immediately labeled a deviant using one of several inherently gendered derogative terms.

Although some may not view it as such, the passive model of female sexuality that may seem "natural" becomes problematic in the light of violence. This model of sexuality necessarily denies women the right to comfortably say "yes" in sexual encounters. With "no" as the only available term to define a range of desires, the term becomes necessarily complicated, making "consent" increasingly difficult to obtain. If "no" must somehow mean "no," "yes," "maybe," and any other sentiment a woman wishes to express, then precisely and accurately interpreting the term becomes exponentially more difficult. As mentioned by Katie Roiphe (*The Morning After*), this "denial of female sexual agency threatens to propel us backward."

Discursively, it is important to note that while our campus houses a vibrant discourse of victimization and danger, it does not host a corresponding discourse of empowerment and subjectivity. If, as several sexuality scholars have suggested, pleasure and danger must necessarily co-exist, then should not pleasure be housed in an equally important public discourse?

Instead of painting a rather dire picture of women's sexuality as does the danger discourse, I would suggest a competing discourse of empowerment, responsibility, entitlement, subjectivity, and pleasure. In order to end sexual violence, violence against women, and dating violence, we must eliminate any ambiguity in the concept of consent. Women must have a safe space in which to express their desires, either affirmative or negative. They must be empowered to transform themselves from reticent objects to entitled subjects. While raising awareness is an important step in fighting violence, I suggest taking it a step further by creating a discourse of empowerment that will not only help women to deal with violence, but also to help prevent it.

"My approach to the topic involved investigating violence through the lens of sexuality."



Angela Jarman is a Pre-Med student. She is majoring in Women's Studies, where she is a candidate for graduation with distinction, and has a minor in Biology. She will take some time off after her 2006 graduation. In addition to medical school, Angela is interested in earning a graduate degree, teaching and non-profit work.

THE "F" WORD

AN OPEN LETTER FROM WOMEN'S STUDIES UNDERGRADUATES

Many Duke students often complain about the lack of activism on campus. However, when a brave soul plans a protest, a panel, a teach-in, or any event to raise awareness at Duke, the excuses pour in. "I would come, but I have a huge paper due this week." "Oh, Tuesday is bad for me. I have a midterm." "I wish I could, but this week is hell for me." Enough is enough; it is time to make a change and stand up for something we believe in.

As students in Professor Caroline Light's Women's Studies 160 "Feminism in a Historical Context" class, we have been studying the history of women's activism and liberation from the Suffragists through the Radical Cheerleaders of the 1990s. Earlier this semester, the *Chronicle* ran a column on feminism that most of our class found absurd and semi-offensive. We read the *New York Times* article about Yale women who seemingly aspire only to become mothers. We attended the Sallie Bingham's symposium on Generational Feminism, and viewed Therese Shechter's *I Was a Teenage Feminist*. We read Maureen Dowd's column of October 30, 2005. We felt the spark.

Catalyzed by recent events and discussion over the newest Supreme Court nominee and the possible overruling of *Roe v. Wade*, we decided to stop only learning about activism and start doing some. Soon, we realized that learning about feminists of generations past could provide us with useful tools for our own organization.

Junior Christy James says that she became involved because she wanted to be able to address all the different labels associated with her identity: woman, Indian, Christian, writer, etc. Feminism has allowed her to explore all of these aspects of her life and how they interconnect and support each other in the struggle for justice for women everywhere, whatever their identity.

As a group, our first goal is to reclaim the word feminism. In our generation, it has become a dirty word, associated with unshaven, man-hating, bra-burning extremists. Those who do believe in equality of the sexes convince themselves that progress has been made and feminism is dead or unnecessary. We disagree. Women earn only seventy-six cents for every dollar men earn. The future of reproductive rights seems grim. Half of our population is female, yet, not nearly half of our elected officials are. People still laugh at the idea of a female President in the United States. Socially and economically, women have yet to receive the full equality we deserve.

To reclaim the word feminism we have started with a simple flier campaign. The fliers, as you may have seen around campus, give the literal definition of feminism and question readers, "What is so radical about that?" or "Are you still afraid of the 'F' word?" In response to these fliers, we invited the student body, faculty and staff to join us for a "teach-in," where we discussed our goals and provided an open forum for honest and open discussion about the future of feminism. We hope these actions will lead to renewed activism about the future of feminism. We hope these actions will lead to renewed activism on behalf of women and equality for all humanity. The time is now. For more information, or to get involved please email asl13@duke.edu

Sincerely,

Amy Levenberg
 Women's Studies and History Double Major
 Secretary of the Duke Political Union
 Class of 2007

Christine James
 Women's Studies Major
 Chemistry Minor
 Member of Executive Board of Peer Educators,
 Class of 2007

Emmanuela Delince
 Women's Studies Major
 Class of 2009

Erin Winland
 Women's Studies Major
 Class of 2006

Sumati Gupta
 Women's Studies and Psychology Double Major
 Member of Executive Board of KIRAN, South-Asian
 Domestic Violence Crisis Hotline
 Class of 2006

Elisabeth Hahn
 Women's Studies and English Double Major
 Managing Editor of Saturday Night
 Class of 2006

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GRADUATE SCHOLARS COLLOQUIUM

In the past year, the Women's Studies Graduate Scholars Colloquium has doubled its membership. The colloquium offers its participants a forum for interdisciplinary discussion and the chance to present research to peers and to hear a faculty response. Typically, members have been graduate students in English, Literature, Cultural Anthropology and History, but there are now additional representatives from Asian and African Languages and Literature, Religious Studies, and Sociology, including some from neighboring universities. Discussions have taken a transnational and interdisciplinary approach to feminist studies. Women's Studies core and affiliated faculty participate in the colloquium. The group hopes to attract additional graduate students in the professional schools.

Colloquium coordinators this year are Ka Man Calvin Hui (PhD candidate in Literature at Duke) and Cindy Current (PhD candidate in English at UNC), both of whom are pursuing the Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies at Duke. They organized the first fall 2005 meeting in September to welcome new members and to provide an informal forum for the Women's Studies external review. The colloquium reported that they were very pleased with the transformation of the program over the past several years, describing it as "interdisciplinary, flexible and dynamic," and noted that the faculty and staff are highly supportive of their intellectual pursuits.

In October, the Colloquium held the second of its three fall meetings, with a presentation by Jini Kim Watson (PhD candidate in Literature and Graduate Certificate holder), on her work "A Room in the City: Woman, Interiority and Private Space in the New Asian City," which brought together architectural and literary theory to revisit Asian Pacific literature. Professor Guo-Juin Hong (Assistant Professor, Asian and African Languages and Literature, Duke) was the respondent. Watson is completing her dissertation on "The New Asian City: Literature, Urban Form and Postcolonial Development in South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore." She works on colonial and postcolonial Asia-Pacific literature, through an interdisciplinary focus on the way spatial and architectural transformations inform literature. In "A Room in the City: Woman, Interiority and Private Space," Watson addressed the persistence of patriarchal social forms in modernizing postcolonial societies, a topic much studied, but rarely analyzed in terms of material changes in the built environment. Her talk examined feminist literature produced during the shift to urbanized society in South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore. Exploring how both women's participation in the workforce and new Western-style domestic planning alter gender roles, Watson demonstrated how fictional narratives echo this anxiety over women's re-positioning in both public and private space. Her paper revealed, most notably in Kang Seok-kyeong's 1985 novella "A Room in the Woods," how private domestic space is both the matrix for the production of an individual, psychologized interior, and the mechanism for policing and controlling women's sexuality. The resulting narrative device, also evident in fiction by Su Weizhen and Catherine Lim, is the detective-like search for woman's appropriate location. Unease over the demarcation between inside and outside manifests itself in the textual obsession over women's interiority and exteriority, her presence and absence, traces and clues.

The November meeting featured Alvaro Jarrin (PhD candidate in Cultural Anthropology and Women's Studies Certificate, Duke) who presented his paper on "Hyper-visible Bodies: The New Erotics of Plastic Surgery," about the cosmetic surgery industry in Brazil, with a response by Priscilla Wald (Professor, English and Women's Studies, Duke). Jarrin's paper appears as an article in the fall 2005 Women's Studies newsletter. In it, Jarrin discussed the Brazilian state's increasing subsidy of cosmetic surgeries in public hospitals for middle and working-class consumers who would otherwise not be able to afford it. Through cosmetic surgery, these patients imagine themselves to be actively participating in a national project that epitomizes medical modernity and thus to be assimilating into the nation as modern citizens. Jarrin suggested that this lauded expansion of the "right to beauty" to all strata of society conceals the ways in which plastic surgeons and the state depend on these lower-income patients and their bodies to market Brazil as a global player in the industry, tying physical beauty to the nationalist and global imaginary about Brazil, and creating what Jarrin calls "cosmetic citizenship." He claims this form of citizenship conceals the structural inequalities that make Brazil an exceedingly stratified society. Jarrin's research thus questions whether the cosmetic industry markets democratic ideals of equal access and equal opportunity at the same time that its very development depends on

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unequal access to health care, at a local, national and global level. This paper was based on preliminary research Jarrin performed in the summer of 2005 in public hospitals in Rio de Janeiro and Belo Horizonte, with the support of fellowships from Women’s Studies, Cultural Anthropology and the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. In response to Alvaro’s presentation, Priscilla Wald commented on how stories put forward by science and the state are themselves technologies that reproduce structures of inequality. Through these narratives, the scale of the nation-state gets naturalized, as well as the relationship between science and belonging, producing a biologization of citizenship.”

The spring colloquium began with a talk by Paul Lai (PhD candidate in English, UNC-CH), “On Accent Discrimination, Comedy, and Linguistic Vulnerability in Critical Race Theory.” Lai studies and teaches Asian American literatures, cultural studies, and feminist theories. Professor Adrienne Davis, Reef C. Ivey II Research Distinguished Professor of Law at UNC, was the respondent. Davis’s scholarship examines the interplay of property and contract doctrine with race, gender, and sexuality in the nineteenth-century.

In “Voices of America,” a law review article from 1991, legal theorist Mari Matsuda asks where accent-bias fit within legal conceptions of discrimination and equal protection. This question foregrounds how the sounds and senses of accents create social difference and forces us to consider the extent to which workplaces and other publics will accommodate difference under a rubric of pluralism. Matsuda’s attention to accents as a mode of social meaning is particularly important for Asian Americans who constantly face the surprise of (unaccented) English competence. While Asian Americans and Asians in America speak English with a variety of accents, the moment of surprise when others hear an Asian body speaking without a noticeable foreign accent signals a foundational moment of Asian Americanist critique. From a need to claim belonging in the US through English competence, though, this critique has come to face the challenge of re-valuing Asian accents as well, not simply claiming a nativism for some Asian Americans.

Lai’s paper noted that legal and politically-minded critiques of accent-bias, in their seriousness about rights and discrimination, sit at odds with Asian American comedic appropriation of Asian accents. Yet, the prevalence of Asian American comedians’ use of Asian accents as an important aspect of their performances suggests the possibility that these accents can signify culturally transformative projects. Listening for comedienne Margaret Cho’s embodiment of accented English, Lai argued that widespread play with accents can serve the anti-subordination aims of Matsuda’s radical legal critique. In her response, Professor Adrienne Davis offered a useful critique that provided valuable approaches to strengthening Lai’s legal arguments.

The Colloquium offered its services to the Program as participants in a faculty search for the new Director of the Program in Sexualities Studies, which beginning in fall 2006, will be housed in Women’s Studies. The March meeting brings together members of the Colloquium and an inter-institutional group of Sociology faculty and students, including Rebecca Bach (Visiting Professor, Sociology, Duke) and Michael Schwalbe (Associate Professor, Sociology, North Carolina State University). An April presentation is planned by Women’s Studies Fellow, Arnal D. Dayaratna (Literature, Duke), who will speak on Indian colonial historiography. The fall 2006 schedule includes a September talk by returning Director of Women’s Studies, Robyn Wiegman, and an October talk by Kinohi Nishikawa, who is pursuing a PhD in Literature and a Women’s Studies Certificate.

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES

Women’s Studies Commencement Celebration will be held on Friday May 12, 2006 in the Nelson Music Room at 7:00 pm. A reception for graduates will be held in the Women’s Studies parlors following the ceremony. First Majors in Women’s Studies are also invited with their families to receive their degrees and attend a luncheon in their honor in the Parlors on May 14.

December 2006 graduates: Emilie Dahod and Tiameka Rankin, first Majors, and Sumati Gupta, Ryan Drescher, and Christina Lozada, second Majors.

May 2006: First Majors are Laura Bower, Elizabeth Hahn, Angela Jarman, Mistie Williams, and Erin Winland. Second Majors are: Jennifer Gurevich and Venis Wilder. Minors are: Carly Baker, William Durrah, Kathryn Fortunato, Dana Kaufman, Suzette Meade, Michelle Robinson and Jennika Suero.

May 2006 Women’s Studies Graduate Certificates will be awarded to: Ana Corbalan (MA, Public Policy), Sarah Anne Emory (MA in Humanities), Catherine Harnois, Jennifer Barry Lenger (Divinity), Laura Rhodes (MALS), and Jini Watson (PhD Literature).

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