ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE
IN A TIME OF CRISIS

Unbelievable, unspeakable, beyond representation: yet it’s the job of critics to engage what threatens to be sublimate, to forbid comprehension. This thought comes in the face of the recent events—how to describe their location?—in NYC and DC, in Kabul and the Middle East, across the globe, in your face, in memory. The staff at CGS hopes that you and your loved ones are safe and well. Our thoughts are with all those affected by these events.

Before September 11, CGS had planned a series under the rubric Art and Social Change. The spark for it was another, quite different, response to structural inequality—Ladyfest Midwest, a remarkable and well-attended event that took place in Chicago in August. Ladyfest performed the ongoing vitality of what Mia Yagod calls Art Feminism, involving music, film, video, poetry, workshops, stand-up, and so on. It was quite a scene—actually, scenes. For all the irony and attitude floating around the various venues of Ladyfest, though, there was something so earnest about it.

In this era of global violence and exploitation, and of corporate control of the major media, does art have anything to do with social change? Does it matter whether the artwork is elite or popular, opera or rock, written or oral, avant-garde or not? How can some aesthetic encounters distinguish themselves from others in a way that actually changes the way we know things, not just the things we know?

The series on Art and Social Change takes place during Fall and Winter Quarters. The performers and makers identify themselves with Asian American, South Asian, Queer, Feminist, African-American, Multicultural, and Cosmopolitan world-building (and world-stopping) movements. They make comics and videos, they run unions, they do performance art, they make and curate films and scenes; they also talk about what they’re doing, and the talk is part of the event.

Why do they bother? There is so much counter-talk, so much insurgent art: but it’s never clear what obstacle it provides to the machinery of violence and inequality. Walter Benjamin writes that when a photograph represents a thing, the capacity to caption the photograph, to comment on it, is the basis of taking power, of grasping and transforming the object’s destiny as a site of meaning. Artists and theorists, commentators all, create scenes that redistort the received world. The desire to create an event or to make a scene manifests (a sometimes sad or angry) optimism toward transformed possibilities for the life-world: in this way criticism and the arts cross push into consciousness and the unconscious, conceivably changing the destiny of what we take for granted as common sense. We look forward to seeing you at these events.

-Lauren Berlant

CGS NEWS

CGS is delighted to welcome Stuart Michaels to our staff. Stuart, an alum and previous contributor to the begin-

nings of CGS, will serve as Assistant Director for Development. Stuart comes to the University as co-author of The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States (1994, reissue 2000), with vast amount of experience in the empirical and interpretive social sciences. We hope to utilize his experience to develop our offerings in these areas. See his introduction on page 4.

Center’s Board Grows
CGS welcomes five new members to its Board. Iris Young (Political Science) was elected by CGS affiliated faculty as member-at-large. Melissa Oglesby (Gender Studies) joins us as undergraduate student representative. Rebecca Zorach will replace Neville Hoad to head the Public Sphere Committee. With the departure of Jackie Bhabha and leave of Martha Nussbaum, Saba Mahmood (Divinity School) and Mary Ann Case (Law School) are coming on board.

Fellows Named for 2001-02
2001 marks the first year of the Gender Studies Dissertation Writing Fellowship, offering a stipend. Beth Anne Buggenhagen, a doctoral candidate in Anthropology, was awarded the fellowship for her work on “Gendered and Generational Visions of Wealth and Value in Senegalese Muslim Households.”

Center Office fellowships were also awarded to: Ruma Niyogi (History), Revisiting the ‘Time of Troubles’: Gender and Political Legitimization in Byzantium 1025-1081 and Charles Clifton (History), “In the Life”: Race, Culture and the Boundaries of Afrohomosexualites in

Continued on page 4
Art and Social Change Series

How to Properly Portray an American Flag, a program of film shorts, kicks off this series on October 25. We will continue with programs curated by Women in the Director’s Chair (www.widc.org) Thursday evenings for four weeks. Each program follows a thought-provoking theme...brief descriptions are provided here, check the website for the full program.

Special Events

In October, we welcome Dr. Elizabeth Wilson (Oct 10) and Achille Mbembe (Oct 23) for talks. Saba Mahmood will be presenting the Distinguished Faculty Lecture, Feminism, the Taliban, and Politics of Counter-Insurgency on Nov 15. We will engage with many distinguished speakers from around the world for the Violence and Redemption Conference, Oct 19-21.

Seminars and Workshops

Gender and Sexuality Studies (GSS)

This workshop provides an interdisciplinary forum for the development of critical perspectives on gender and sexuality. Its primary purpose is to promote analyses of the ways in which these categories intersect with other practices, constructs, or systems of domination. At the beginning of the year, the workshop will bring together readings in queer and gender theory in order to build a vocabulary and analytical tools with which to evaluate subsequent presentations. Reading will include published articles and works by guest speakers. In addition, the workshop will serve as a forum for the presentation of graduate student papers. We welcome new and old members to the workshop. Contact workshop coordinator Kathleen Frederickson, ksfreder@midway.uchicago.edu.

Theory and Insurgency

The Late Liberalism Project of the Center For Gender Studies coordinates a graduate student workshop called Theory and Insurgency. We are an interdisciplinary group of students and faculty interested in exploring new constructions of belonging (political, social and intellectual) that depart from liberal conventions of personhood and focus on individuality, nationality and subnational “identities.” In doing so, our goal is to envision the insurgent possibilities of rethinking subjectivity, agency, and political form. To learn about future events, please join our mailing list by writing Jeremy Walton at jeremy@midway.uchicago.edu.

Gender and Sexualities in Asia

CGS is lending support to a new workshop this year, a multi-disciplinary discussion group devoted to the study of gender and sexualities in Asia. The term ‘Asia’ is used loosely here because we hope to engage not just studies of a particular geographic designation on the compass - North, East, South, South-east Asia - but also allow for transnational, inter- regional and diaspora interests. The group meets every other Monday, sometimes more frequently, on campus.

The first meeting of the group will be held on Monday, Sept 24. Contact Po-Chen Tsai at ptsai@uchicago.edu for details. The group’s email list functions as a forum for group participants to exchange opinions, call for papers, and other academic information. To join the list, please visit https://listhost.uchicago.edu/mailman/listinfo/gender-sexualities-in-asia.

October

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| 2    | Tuesday, 6 p.m.  
     | KEYWORDS OF THE CRISIS. THEORY AND INSURGENCY WORKSHOP, INTRODUCTORY MEETING. |
| 3    | Wednesday, 4:30 p.m.  
     | GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES WORKSHOP, INTRODUCTORY MEETING. Discussion of readings from Angela Davis, Gina Dent and others. |
| 5    | Friday.  
     | No brown bag. |
| 10   | Wednesday, 4:30 p.m.  
     | LECTURE, AFFECT AND EVOLUTION: A FEMINIST APPRAISAL OF THE REPTILIAN BRAIN  
     | Elizabeth Wilson, author of Neural Geographies: Feminism and the Microstructure of Cognition & Postdoctoral Fellow at the Research Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sydney. Classics 10. |

November

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| 1    | Thursday, 7 p.m.  
     | FILM SERIES, OUTMODELING THE CLOSET: NEW FILM AND VIDEO BY LES/BI/TRANS WOMEN. A vivid cross-section of queer identity from nationally and internationally emerging Les/Bi/Trans makers. Cobb 307. |
| 9    | Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.  
     | BROWN BAG, SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION WEEK. Sponsored by Gender Studies and Resources for Sexual Violence Prevention. |
| 14   | Wednesday.  
     | GSS WORKSHOP |
| 15   | Thursday, 4:30 p.m.  
| 8    | Thursday, 7 p.m.  
     | FILM SERIES, REFRACTED LIGHT: REFLECTIONS ON DESIRE. A superb collection of film and video that chronicle sublime and otherwise-transform Life's coordinates. |
| 14   | Wednesday.  
     | GSS WORKSHOP |
| 15   | Thursday, 4:30 p.m.  
September

27 Thursday, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
WELCOME RECEPTION FOR NEW AND RETURNING STUDENTS AND FACULTY

Co-sponsored with the Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture. Learn more about the study of race, gender and sexuality on campus. Meet the directors. Food and drinks will be served. All students, faculty, staff and friends welcome.

12 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.
BROWN BAG, JANIS BRECKENRIDGE, IN THE WAKE OF DICTATORSHIP: VISITING ARGENTINA TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER THE MILITARY COUP. Judd 422

17 Wednesday, 4:30 p.m.
GSS WORKSHOP: JACKIE ORR

19 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.
BROWN BAG: 'THE PRACTICE OF JOY BEFORE DEATH': RE-READING BATAILLE IN TIMES OF AIDS
Achille Mbembe, Senior Researcher at the Institute of Social and Economic Research of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. Judd 422.

BRIDGE

19-21 Friday-Sunday.
CONFERENCE: VIOLENCE AND REDEMPTION.

15 Thursday, 7 p.m.
FILM SERIES, ROOTS AND ROUTES: OF CREATION MYTHS AND 'OTHER' STORIES.
21st century intercultural media griots use heuristic memory to produce a feminist interplay between tradition and modernity. An absorbing deliberation on class struggle, colonialism, reproductive rights, and even the sweetly subversive fairy tale. Cobb 307.

16 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.
BROWN BAG, TBA.

22 Monday, (time TBA)
NOTES ON THE SENSUALITY OF VIOLENCE
Theory and Insurgency Workshop, Achille Mbembe.

23 Tuesday, 4:30 p.m.
LECTURE, 'POWERS OF THE FALSE'
Achille Mbembe. Location, TBA.

25 Thursday, 7 p.m.
Art and Social Change Series Kick-off!
FILM SERIES, HOW TO PROPERLY PORTRAY AN AMERICAN FLAG.
"Who is the face of America?" An astonishing cavalcade of radical cheerleaders, errant grandmothers, taciturn cabbies, and civilly disobedient Puerto Rican citizens with US naval officers in-tow give broader dimensions to previous delineations of US identity. Cobb 307.

26 Friday.
No brown bag.

For more info: http://humanities.uchicago.edu/cgs
Post-WWII Bronzeville. We look forward to collaborating with all of our new fellows.

LGSP Support for Graduate Research

The Lesbian and Gay Studies Project has awarded grants this year to five students from four departments who are writing dissertations or master’s theses bearing on lesbian, gay, and queer studies. Eduardo Contreras and Tara Vaughan Tremmel received James C. Hormel Dissertation Fellowships in Lesbian and Gay Studies, which are made possible by the generous support of James C. Hormel, the former Ambassador to Luxembourg and an alumnus and former Dean of Students of the University of Chicago Law School. Contreras, a doctoral candidate in History, is analyzing the politics of community renewal, development, and gentrification in San Francisco’s Mission District, a multinational Latino neighborhood abutting the Castro, a heavily gay neighborhood, and is paying particular attention to the role of the cultural politics of sexuality and respectability. Tremmel, also in History, is rethinking the sexual and political ethos of postwar American culture by investigating why Las Vegas—home to irrational games of chance, fantastic dreams, and even more fantastic gay entertainers—began to be a favorite vacation destination for working class Americans.

Three students received LGSP Graduate Research Grants. Anthony D’Andrea (Anthropology) is studying the development of queer-inflected Techno and New Age countercultures in Spain and India as a response to globalization. Allison Deschamps (Sociology) is conducting research on the division of labor, child socialization, and the quality of relationships in lesbian families. Suzanne Pelka (Human Development) is assessing the psychological motivations and ramifications of choices made by lesbian couples seeking to bear children together through in-vitro fertilization.

Supporting graduate research is central to the mission of the Lesbian and Gay Studies Project. The competition for the next cycle of grants will be announced in April 2002, and the Project will circulate information about other funding opportunities throughout the year. Students, faculty, and others who wish to receive such information and other LGSP notices should ask to be put on the LGSP email list by contacting LGSP@uchicago.edu.

NEW CGS STAFF

I arrive back in Chicago after four years of work in France in the epidemiology/public health research group that carried out the national survey of sexual behavior in France for the age of AIDS. My work there was an extension of the almost ten years of work that I had done in Chicago with the team led by Center associate Edward O. Laumann that did the University of Chicago study of sexual behavior in the U.S. My primary roles in the U.S. project was simultaneously methodological and substantive, the latter focused especially on the data on homosexuality from the U.S. survey. On the more methodological side, I had the extraordinary opportunity to see the project through from embryo to adult including the moment of it’s leaving home and facing an unbelievable barrage of media attention. Conceiving, constructing and executing an innovative large scale survey of sexual behavior and then co-authoring the landmark volume (The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States, UofC Press 1994) was an unique experience. In France, I was able to participate in carrying out the first ever extensive comparison of the results from the two very comparable surveys (national probability samples of adults, covering many of the same topics, carried out the same year, 1992). The first and most complicated set of analyses were on the role of coupling in the organization of heterosexual sexuality (published this year in the Journal of Sex Research) and the second on differences in findings on homosexual desire, behavior, and identity in the French and American surveys (also published this year in the Journal des Anthropologues).

I am very excited to return to the University of Chicago where I did my graduate work in sociology starting in 1977 and to be able to participate in the further development of the Center for Gender Studies. As a founding member of the Gay and Lesbian Studies Workshop, it’s wonderful to (re)join the Center in a more general capacity and to be able work with you all to make it grow and flourish.

-Stuart Michaels

Check us out on the Web! http://humanities.uchicago.edu/cgs