

# The Center for Gender Studies at the University of Chicago

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## A Note from the Director



**Deborah Nelson**

Associate Professor, English Department  
Director of the Center for Gender Studies

Welcome back and a special welcome to new students, faculty, visitors, and fellows. I want to remind everyone that three new faculty join us this fall: **Kirsten Schilt** in Sociology; **Linda Zerilli** in Gender Studies and Political Science; and **Don Kulick** in Human Development (though Don for the fall quarter only until next year). We also welcome **Ramón Gutiérrez** both as the new director of the Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture (CSRPC) and director of the Lesbian and Gay Studies Project (LGSP). Two conferences are being planned jointly this year by the CGS, LGSP, and CSRPC, one on Asian American Sexualities in late winter quarter and an Islamic Sexualities conference in spring.

Please mark your calendars with the two fall events we hold annually with the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture. The first is the **Welcome Reception on October 8** at 4:30 at the Centers; the second is the **Faculty Dinner on October 21** to be held at the Smart Museum Gallery (affiliated faculty will receive invitations).

The Center will host a lecture on **Thursday, October 30**, "The Disappearing of Hannah Kudjoe: Nationalism, Feminism, and the Tyrannies of History," by **Jean Allman**, Professor of African History and Gender and Colonialism at Washington University in Saint Louis. Professor Allman's visit represents a joint effort between CGS and the Africanists from History, Anthropology, and Human Development. A special thanks to **Rachel Jean-Baptiste** for her efforts to organize the event and to coordinate the input of the various participants.

Gender Studies is collaborating with the

Film Studies Center to bring filmmaker **Cheryl Dunye** on **Friday, November 21**. Dunye is well known for creating a unique form of cinema using a mixture of narrative and documentary techniques to challenge social and cultural norms through a sharply funny and reflexive lens. The documentary on making her HBO film **Stanger Inside** will be screened along with some of her earlier works which have just been re-released. The screening, talk and reception will be held at the Film Studies Center.

Gender Studies will continue to host the long-running **Friday Lunch Series** (formerly known as the Brown Bag Lunch Series), including talks on the 10th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women held this year in Madrid and a speaker from the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, and the **Feminist Lives and Queer Trajectories Series**. Please consult the events calendar on our website for details on all of these events.

As it does every year, the Center sponsors numerous events, working with students and faculty to bring diverse and timely programming to our constituency. On October 10-11, the Center is a co-sponsor of the annual graduate student conference in the Department of English. This year's topic: "Strange Reading: Practice, Audience, Theory." We are also happy to be collaborating with various units to bring three documentaries to campus. On Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>, CGS, LGSP, and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies bring **A Jihad for Love**, the first documentary on gay, lesbian, and transgender Muslims, which will be followed by a conversation with director Parvez Sharma. CGS and the South Asia Language and Area Center will screen **Punches and Ponytails**, a documentary on women boxers in India, directed by Pankaj Rishi Kumar. Rockefeller Chapel, LGSP, and CGS will host a screening of **The Bible Tells Me So**, a documentary narrating coming out stories in communities of faith. Some of the families featured in the documentary will attend the screening and answer questions afterward (dates and times to be announced).

CGS is also looking for an advanced gradu-

ate student to create a CD from the oral histories we collected from women at the university between 1930s and the present to accompany the exhibit in Special Collections at the Regenstein that opens this spring. Please contact Stuart Michaels (stuartm@uchicago.edu) if you are interested.

## Meet our New Faculty

**Linda M. G. Zerilli** is Professor of Gender Studies and the Charles E. Merriam Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science and the College. She works in the area of political theory and feminist theory. She is the author of *Signifying Woman: Culture and Chaos in Rousseau, Burke, and Mill* (Cornell UP, 1994) and *Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom* (University of Chicago Press, 2005). Zerilli's current book project, *Toward a Democratic Theory of Judgment*, examines the problem of political judgment in the context of the wide-spread value pluralism that defines modernity. The book examines the question of what the standards of judgment can possibly be in the context of multiethnic and multiracial societies like the United States and, increasingly, Western Europe. Zerilli will discuss one chapter of the project, "Towards a Feminist Theory of Judgment," in the Gender Studies Workshop on October 21.

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## Collegiate Affairs

The Center for Gender Studies has an enormous amount to offer students interested in gender and/or sexuality as topics of study and approaches to understanding a variety of phenomena from social life to cultural and intellectual production. We offer and cross-list courses from across the university's departments. We also have a rich panorama of programming to supplement course work: from our Friday Brown Bag series to special lectures and programs. For the fourth year in a row, we will continue our twice quarterly **Feminist Lives, Queer Trajectories** series intended to help provide answers to the perennial question: *What do you do with a major (or minor) in Gender Studies?* This series brings in speakers who have pursued or constructed standard and non-standard careers dedicated to feminist and queer ideas and values. We have heard from lawyers, judges, and doctors, community leaders and activists, women scientists, and music festival promoters.

**Majoring or Minor in Gender Studies.** A major in Gender Studies has existed at the University of Chicago 1996. In 2006, a minor in Gender Studies also became an option. Majoring in Gender Studies (which includes sexuality/LGBT studies) requires our two core courses GNDR 10100 & GNDR 10200 (introductions to the study of gender and sexuality, respectively) plus 9 additional courses at least 5 of which are specifically focus on gender and/or sexuality. Majors also write a B.A. paper/project, a two and one half quarter process which includes a B.A. seminar. Our relatively small number of majors, 6 to 8 students per year, means that our majors receive intensive collective and personal support from their fellow majors and from the Gender Studies preceptor. About one third to one half our major are double majors. Past projects have ranged from literary studies, social science research, biological sciences to creative work focused on some aspect of gender and/or sexuality.

Students may also **minor** in Gender Studies. A

minor involves the two core courses and at least four additional courses in gender and/or sexuality. However, these courses cannot be double counted toward the student's major(s) or his/her general education requirements. **The deadline for declaring a minor in Gender Studies is Spring Quarter of Third Year.** This can be done by obtaining a form from the student's college advisor and meeting with Stuart Michaels, Undergraduate Program Chair.

Students interested in learning more about majoring or minoring in Gender/Sexuality Studies should contact, **Stuart Michaels, Undergraduate Program Chair of CGS** at [stuartm@uchicago.edu](mailto:stuartm@uchicago.edu). A full description of both options can also be found in the College Catalog under Gender Studies or on the CGS website.

**Student Caucus.** The Center for Gender Studies has a student caucus made up of both undergraduate and graduate students. The student caucus plans activities of specific interest to students and provides a voice in the direction of the Center for Gender Studies. For example members of the student caucus co-organize the Feminist Lives/Queer Trajectories series. In addition, representatives from the Student Caucus serve on the CGS Board of Directors. If you are interested in finding out more about or joining the Student Caucus, you can contact Stuart Michaels.

**Lunch for Undergraduate (Interested/Potential) Majors/Minors – Monday, October 13 at Noon.** All undergraduates are invited to a lunch meeting for potential and current majors/minors. All interested students are welcome to attend. Come meet with Debbie Nelson, Director of CGS and Stuart Michaels, Undergraduate Program Chair and other Center staff and students to discuss Gender and Sexuality Studies opportunities and this year's program. Find out about the major/minor, the student caucus, and other activities of CGS &

the Lesbian and Gay Studies Project.

**Highlights of Fall Offerings in Gender Studies**  
See the Time Schedule for a full listing of Gender/Sexuality Studies courses. This Fall, there are sections of both GNDR 10100 & 10200, our introductory courses open to all interested students and required of majors and minors. These courses can be taken in any order. The popular **The Biology of Gender** is also offered this Fall. We welcome, Don Kulick, one of the leading anthropologists in gender and sexuality studies, will teach his first courses at UofC this Fall, including **The Anthropology of Gender and Sexuality**. From English, Raul Coronado is offering **Latino/a Intellectual Thought** and Lisa Ruddick is offering her popular course, **Virginia Woolf**. Arnold Davidson (Philosophy) will once again be teaching his course on **Foucault's History Of Sexuality**. James Madigan (Law School) is offering a course on Sexual Orientation and the Law. Former CGS director, Rebecca West (Romance Languages) is offering a course, **Outsiders I: Elsa Morante**. Monica Mercado and Katie Turk of History will be offering a special course, **Alma Mater: History of Women at University of Chicago, 1892-2008**. Using secondary sources as well as primary research in the university archives and special collections, students will help contribute to the major exhibition on the history of women at the UofC that will open this Spring at the Regenstein and at CGS.

There are also several cross listed courses open only to **graduate students** being offered by Aden Kumler & Daisy Delogu (Art History & French), Lucy Pick (Divinity School), and Martha Nussbaum (Philosophy and the Law School). The director of the Lesbian and Gay Studies Project as well as the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture Ramon Gutierrez (History) will be offering a seminar on **Immigration & Assimilation in American Life**.

## Gender and Sexuality Studies Workshop

The Gender and Sexuality Studies Workshop (GSSW) promotes studies of the ways in which gender and sexuality shape human experiences and are embedded in other social practices. It provides student and faculty participants with an interdisciplinary forum for the development of critical perspectives on gender and sexuality.

The GSSW meets Tuesday afternoons in even weeks of the quarter to discuss pre-circulated papers written by graduate students, faculty, and visiting scholars in the field. Attendees are expected to read the paper—made available at the CGS website or on our email list—in advance of the workshop meeting.

To maintain the workshop's interdisciplinary focus, we have already scheduled presenters from a

number of disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences. We also look forward to welcoming new University of Chicago faculty, including **Linda Zerilli** (Gender Studies and Political Science) and **Kristen Schilt** (Sociology) who will present new work to the group during the year. Additionally, the GSSW plans to invite at least two outside faculty to speak this year, in collaboration with other workshops. On May 13, 2009, along with the 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Cultures Workshop, we will co-host Professor **Ruth Solie** from the Department of Music, Smith College, whose most recent work examines gender and class in the Victorian period. Professor Solie will meet with us before participating in the Center for British

Studies Lecture Series the following day.

Our first workshop of the academic year will be held on **Tuesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 to 6:00pm** in the first floor conference room of the Center for Gender Studies. In addition to introducing ourselves and discussing the first paper, there will be time set aside to discuss workshop plans for the rest of the year.

The workshop has a limited number of openings for presenters this coming academic year. If you have a project you are interested in sharing with our group, please email workshop co-coordinators Monica Mercado ([mmercado@uchicago.edu](mailto:mmercado@uchicago.edu)) and Anthony Todd ([artodd@uchicago.edu](mailto:artodd@uchicago.edu)) for available dates.

## Meet the New Graduate Students



**Joan Blakey** (Dissertation Writing Fellow, Center for Gender Studies) is a doctoral candidate in the School of Social Service Administration. She has spent most of her career in the field of child welfare. She worked at the State of Minnesota, as a policy advocate and then at Hennepin County as a child protection worker. She returned to school because she was not satisfied with the myriad explanations for the disproportionate representation of poor African American families in the child protection system. Her dissertation research seeks to understand the confluence of factors that contribute to African American mothers who are addicted to drugs and alcohol retaining, regaining, or permanently losing custody of children who are involved with the child protection system.

She uses a multiple embedded case study approach. The project recruited mothers from an established substance-abuse treatment center that specializes in serving women and their children in Chicago, Illinois. Within the substance abuse treatment center, she recruited a purposive sample of 26 African American mothers who were participating in substance-abuse treatment and had current child protection involvement with at least one of their children. In addition, she recruited each mother's child welfare caseworker, treatment counselor, and parenting worker. She used three methods of data collection: (a) observation of the treatment setting (14 months); (b) in-depth interviews with the mothers, substance-abuse treatment providers (counselors and parenting professionals), and child welfare caseworkers; and (c) file review.

She hopes that her dissertation will lead to practice and policy changes that will increase retention and reunification among African American mothers. Originally from Minnesota, she received her Bachelor of Science and MSW degrees from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. This year, she is excited about delving into her data and writing up her findings. In her spare time, she loves to read, write poetry, and go to the movies.

**Gerard Cohen-Vrignaud** (Hormel Fellow, Lesbian and Gay Studies Project) is a PhD candidate in Comparative Literature, specializing in English, French and Arabic literatures. His dissertation examines the rise of liberal politics and its relationship with Romantic exoticism in the 19th century. He argues that Romantic enthusiasm for particular historical/ethnic styles and sexual/racial typologies contributed to the emergence of universalist liberal abstractions such as rational governance, equal juridical rights and free-market agency.



He is a graduate of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He has been a lecturer in French at the U of C since 2004, as well as teaching his own literature course in the College this past spring, entitled "Empire and Intimacy." He was one of the organizers for last year's Middle East History and Theory Conference (May 2008). He will spend this year in residence at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris while conducting research for his dissertation at the French national library.



**Melissa Howe** (Gender Studies B.A. Preceptor) is an advanced doctoral student in Sociology at The University of Chicago. Originally from California, she received her B.A. in Sociology and History from the University of California, San Diego, and her M.Phil. degree in

Social and Political Sciences from Cambridge University. Her substantive areas of interest include gender, family, immigration, assimilation theory, and Muslims in the West. Her dissertation research focuses on inter-generational transmission of gender norms in Muslim families in Chicago and is based on a combination of ethnography, in-depth interviews, and survey analysis. The survey data for her dissertation emerged from an ongoing collaborative research project, *The Qur'an and the Constitution: Islamic Adaptations in the United States*, led by Dr. Richard A. Shweder (P.I.) at The University of Chicago and funded by the Russell Sage Foundation. She is delighted to return to the Center for Gender Studies this year as the BA seminar preceptor.

**Sarah Imhoff** (Resident Fellow, Center for Gender Studies) is a doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago Divinity School, whose work broadly considers gender and Judaism. She received a BAS in religious studies and mathematics from Stanford University in 2002 and an MA from the University of Chicago Divinity School in 2005.



She is currently writing her dissertation on the role of gender, sexuality, and race in the construction of images of Jewish men and women in early twentieth-century America. In a time when American culture wrestled with both masculinity and femininity, these became powerful tools in drawing social boundaries and creating ideals. The dissertation will argue that many Americans thought that Jews enacted gender and sexuality strangely, and it was no accident that non-Jews used the language of gender, sexuality, and race to "other" Jews in the early twentieth century. In other projects, Sarah also looks at the images of women and gender in rabbinic literature.



**Helen Li** (Resident Fellow, Center for Gender Studies) is a doctoral candidate in the Sociology department at the University of Chicago. Her research focuses on the politics of gender and prostitution in late 20<sup>th</sup> century Taiwan. Her dissertation entitled "Why does a Taiwanese State Regulate Prostitution?" analyzes the liminal period following the death of an authoritarian leader to show how in the absence of a strong party system, alliances between feminist groups and emerging political parties were made and how their collaboration gave way to the latter's political prominence. She also uses records of public debate over policies on women and prostitution during this period and takes account of the transpacific borrowing of gendered ideas rendered in the discussion to present a case of nationalistic discourse in the making of Taiwanese democracy.

Helen returned to Chicago in July, after spending nine and half months in Taiwan doing archival research and conducting interviews. She is originally from Taiwan, receiving her B.A. in Sociology from Tunghai University. Before attending the University of Chicago, she did ethnographic fieldwork in Taiwan's sex/entertainment business, the karaoke bars. Helen is a long time Hyde Park resident and she has two little boys.

**Alison Lefkowitz** (Hormel Fellow, Lesbian and Gay Studies Project) is an advanced doctoral candidate in the history department whose research focuses on 20th century United States gender, sexuality, and political



history. Her dissertation "The Politics of Marriage in the Era of Liberation, 1963-1982" explores political challenges to marriage from 1963 until the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment. Her dissertation examines how feminists, under the banner of equality, assaulted the cultural, legal, and economic practice of marriage, working to nullify a traditional regime rooted in sex difference. In crucial respects, they succeeded. Yet similar challenges to the pre-existing order by queer families became central to this still incomplete revolution. Her dissertation will show how queer marriage became a flashpoint in the battle over marriage, a locus of anxiety from left to right, as Americans grappled with the passing of an old gender order and the radical possibilities of a new one. She will analyze how these broad fears of marriage without gender eventually helped bring forth the political triumph of the right. Alison has a BA from Indiana University. She has been a part of the Center for Gender Studies for several years, serving as the Gender Studies preceptor and coordinating the History of Women at the University of Chicago project.

**Monica Mercado** (Gender and Sexuality Studies workshop co-coordinator and co-curator--Experience of Women at the University of Chicago) is a Ph.D. student in the History Department focusing on American religion, gender, and social history. Her dissertation will examine Protestant-Catholic relations and the ways in which religion and religious practice were central to understandings of womanhood in the nineteenth-century United States.



Monica received her B.A. in History at Barnard College and spent three years working at the Museum of the City of New York before coming to the University of Chicago to begin her graduate studies. At Chicago, Monica has been involved with the Uncovering New Chicago Archives Project at the Chicago Defender Newspaper and the DuSable Museum of African-American History. She is currently co-teaching the undergraduate research seminar "Alma Mater: History of Women at the University of Chicago, 1892-2008" and putting the finishing touches on the related exhibition, scheduled to open at the Regenstein Library in March 2009.



**Anthony Todd** (Gender and Sexuality Studies workshop co-coordinator) is a Ph.D. student in the History Department focusing on American History, Law and Gender. His dissertation will focus on the origins of the Progressive Movement in Chicago. Originally from Iowa City,

Anthony is a graduate of Macalester College. Anthony will be co-teaching "Problems in Sexuality" with Stuart Michaels this fall. His course on the history of masculinity will be offered in Spring Quarter, 2009.

**Katherine Turk** (co-curator--Experience of Women at the University of Chicago) is a PhD student in the History Department specializing in gender and labor history. She received a B.A. in History and Political Science from Northwestern University in 2004, a graduate certificate in Women and Public Policy from American University in Washington in 2005, and an MA in History from University of Chicago in 2007. Her dissertation examines working women's rights consciousness and the evolution of sex discrimination policy in postwar America. Katherine has also held professional positions at Women Employed Institute, the American Association of University Women, and Wider Opportunities for Women. She is a native of Western Springs, Illinois.





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## Fall 2008 Calendar of Events

*All events take place at 5733 S. University Avenue, unless noted otherwise.*

### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 4:30 – 6:00 PM

Gender & Sexuality Studies Workshop

**Adam T. Jernigan**, English, Univ. of Chicago  
*Intimate Economies: Sex, Care, and Kin Work*

### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 4:30 – 6:00 PM

Center for Gender Studies and Center for the Study of Race, Politics & Culture Open House **Welcome Reception**

Open to everyone, Light fare and drinks will be served.

### MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, NOON

Lunch for Interested and Potential Undergraduate Majors/Minors

### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 4:30 – 6:00 PM

Gender & Sexuality Studies Workshop

**Prof. Linda Zerilli**, Gender Studies and Political Science, Univ. of Chicago  
*Toward a Feminist Theory of Judgment*

### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 6:30 PM

Faculty Dinner, contact CGS for details

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 12:15–1:30 PM

Friday Lunch Series Talk

**Amanda Loos**, Asst Prof., Humanities at Harold Washington College

**Shayna Plaut**, Instructor (Human Rights), Columbia College; Asst Dir of Employer Relations at CAPS, University of Chicago  
On the 10th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, *Mundos de Mujeres*  
"We Ain't Misbehavin: Radical Pedogogy in Higher Education"

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30, 4:30 PM

Special Lecture

**Prof. Jean Allman**, History Dept., Washington University in St. Louis  
*The Disappearing of Hannah Kudjoe: Nationalism, Feminism, and the Tyrannies of History*

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 12:15–1:30 PM

Friday Lunch Series Talk

**Vivian Barrett**, Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health

### TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 4:30 – 6:00 PM

Gender & Sexuality Studies Workshop

**Prof. Lisa Ruddick**, English Dept., Univ. of Chicago  
*Academic Brutality: The Pedophilia Vogue*

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 7 PM

Screening, Talk and Reception

**Cheryl Dunye**, Filmmaker  
At the Film Studies Center

Please visit the Center for Gender Studies website <http://genderstudies.uchicago.edu> for updates on additional events throughout the year.