

# The Center for Gender Studies at the University of Chicago

SPRING 2009 VOLUME 11, ISSUE 3

## A Note from the Director



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

After four years of collecting oral histories, building finding guides, and mining Special Collections at the Regenstein Library, the Center for Gender Studies has opened the multimedia exhibit: **“On Equal Terms” Educating Women at the University of Chicago.** We owe a great debt to our partners at Special Collections, in particular **Alice Schreyer, Julia Gardner, and Kerri Sancomb**, for their enthusiasm, creativity, and diligence in mounting the exhibit. Its curators **Monica Mercado** and **Katherine Turk**, PhD students in the Department of History, deserve all possible praise for their insightful and thorough work. As well-chronicled as the University’s history is, the story they have told simply is not a part of our collective memory. Having consulted some 68 separate archives in the library --from the papers of individual women to administration records to the full runs of publications like *Cap and Gown* -- they have brought a very different story of the university to light, one that is as surprising as it is important to this institution.

**Jennifer Vanore**, also a PhD student in History, merits our thanks for her careful and inventive curation of the oral histories. Each exhibit case is accompanied by a three-minute collection of excerpts, in which Jennifer

was able to blend the intensity, humor, and pathos of our alumnae’s stories.

Opening the first week of spring quarter is another exhibit, **“The Life of the Female Mind: Gender and Education at the University of Chicago,”** which will be mounted at the Center for Gender Studies. The Opening Party will be Thursday, **April 9** from 4:30-6 pm. This exhibit derives from an undergraduate class taught by Mercado and Turk this past fall quarter and features student cases on topics as diverse as sex education and the university’s first woman trustee, Katherine Graham. Our thanks to **Rachel Furnari**, PhD student in Art History for designing and hanging the exhibit. This exhibit complements “On Equal Terms” by developing some of its stories in greater detail and extending its reach in new directions. Taken together, these exhibits provide an excellent foundation on which to continue exploring the history of women at the university.

CGS and LGSP have several other important events this spring. CGS welcomes **Linda Williams**, Berkeley Professor of Film Studies and Rhetoric, on May 28 and 29. She will give a public lecture on Thursday at 4:30 pm at the Film Studies Center, entitled, **“Brokeback Mountain: Primal Scenes on American Screens”** and hold a more informal lunch discussion at the Center on Friday at 12:00. The Lesbian and Gay Studies Project in partnership with the Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture presents **“Islam and Sexuality”** on May 2, a full day presentation of papers that will become a special edition of *Social Identities, Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture* next year.

Congratulations to **Kristin Schilt**,

Assistant Professor of Sociology, and **Lucy Pick**, Senior Lecturer in Divinity and faculty affiliate of History, who have been awarded CGS’s last two faculty teaching grants. Schilt will be offering a methodology course in researching gender and sexuality aimed at advanced undergraduates and MAPSS students; Pick a course that explores the relationship between religion and gender in specific historical contexts. The Center is grateful to the Provost’s office for funding these grants, which have extended our offerings in English, Anthropology, South Asian Languages and Cultures, Divinity, History and Sociology.

Finally, this spring the Center for Gender Studies will begin new initiative, the **Women in the Sciences Project**, in partnership with **Mary Harvey** of the Provost’s office and a group of women scientists in the biological and physical sciences divisions. The first event will be a panel discussion including current faculty, exhibit curators, and alumnae, that investigates the history of women scientists at the university. It will be held May 21 at 5:00 at the Center and will be followed by dinner. Next year there will be a lecture series that brings women faculty in the sciences together to share their current research.



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## Collegiate Affairs

Spring Quarter is an important and exciting time for Gender Studies students. In June our majors and minors will graduate. We wish them all the best as they furiously finish up their B.A. essays. Spring is also when many students decide whether to major, double major, or minor in Gender Studies. 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 Brown Bag series to special lectures and programs as well as activities organized by our Student Caucus.

### Feminist Lives/Queer Trajectories

In its fourth year, 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? Our first speaker this Spring is **Leslie Fenton** (who graduated UofC with a major in Gender Studies in 2002), is Staff Attorney for **The Family Law Project of the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago**. She will speak from Noon to 1:30 PM on Wednesday, **April 8**. Lunch will be served.

**Majoring or Minor in Gender Studies** The Spring meeting of **current and potential majors/minors** in gender and sexuality studies will be **Monday of fourth week, April 20, at 4:30 PM**. It's a great opportunity to learn about the major/

minor, get answers to your questions, and meet other students in Gender Studies. **NB: Third years who wish to minor in Gender Studies must file a form to do so by the end of Spring quarter.**

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

**The 2009 Ruth Murray Essay Prize** will be awarded for the best essay written by a University of Chicago **undergraduate or graduate student** in the area of women's studies, feminist criticism or gender studies. The \$500 prize sponsored is in memory of Ruth Murray who died in 1991, having served as Bibliographer for the Education, Psychology, Sociology and Women's Studies Collections at the Regenstein Library for many years. **Submission deadline is Friday, April 24, 2009, 12:00 PM**. Details can be found on the website.

### Spring Course Offerings in Gender/Sexuality Studies

There are 14 undergraduate level courses in gender and sexuality offered this Spring, five of which are mixed undergrad/grad courses, plus an additional 3 graduate level courses (two of which are open to advanced undergraduates with permission of the instructor). Full descriptions of the undergraduate courses can be found on our website at <http://genderstudies.uchicago.edu/undergrad/courses.shtml>. It's wonderful to see the variety and richness of these offerings. Check them out!

## Spring Brown Bag Lunch Talks

Tuesday, March 31, 12:15-1:45 pm  
**The "On Equal Terms" Exhibition**  
 Join the Center for Gender Studies for a special edition of the Brown Bag Series being held at the Regenstein Library. Bring your lunch and discuss the new exhibition "On Equal Terms": Educating Women at the University of Chicago with curators Monica Mercado and Katherine Turk. A tour of the exhibition in the Special Collections Research Center will follow.  
 Regenstein Library, Room A-11

Friday, April 24, 12:15-1:30 pm  
 "Black Men, White Women: Problems and Possibilities in Categorizing Race and Gender in Eighteenth-Century France"  
**Jennifer Palmer**, Collegiate Assistant Professor, University of Chicago  
 This lecture examines how two individuals claimed positions for themselves in society based on their race and gender. Pierre Neptune, a former slave, and Mademoiselle de Clermont, a royal princess, both manipulated ideas about race and gender to their own benefit, albeit in very different ways.

Friday, May 8, 12:15-1:30 pm  
 "The Mask of Sexual Exuberance: Surrealism, Architecture, Film"  
**Jennifer Wild**, Assistant Professor, Committee on Cinema and Media Studies, The University of Chicago

Friday, May 22, 12:15-1:30 pm  
 "Parasyamaaya Rahasyam / The Public Secret: Figurations of Female Same-Sex Desire in Contemporary Kerala Culture"  
**Nisha Kommattam**, Lecturer, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, The University of Chicago

## Graduate Studies

**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 participants with an interdisciplinary forum for the development of critical perspectives on gender and sexuality. The workshop meets Tuesday afternoons in even weeks of the quarter to discuss pre-circulated papers written by University of Chicago graduate students, faculty, and visiting scholars.

This Spring the workshop will be sponsoring two guests in the field of U.S. women's and gender history. On Tuesday, April 7, **Rachel Devlin**, Associate Professor of History at Tulane University and the author of *Relative Intimacy: Fathers, Adolescent Daughters, and Postwar American Culture* (UNC Press, 2005) will present a work-in-progress on girlhood and the modern Civil Rights movement. One month later, on Thursday, May 7, **Kathleen Sprows Cummings**, Assistant Professor of American Studies at the University of Notre Dame, will take part in an workshop co-sponsored with the Divinity School's American Religious History Workshop. Cummings is the Associate Director of the Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism at Notre Dame. The workshops will be discussing her new book *New Women of the Old Faith: Gender and American Catholicism in the Progressive Era* (UNC Press, 2009).

In May, the Gender and Sexuality Studies workshop will also be partnering with the Reproduction of Race and Racial Ideologies Workshop to welcome visual artist **Kara Walker** to campus on Tuesday, May 12, one day before her University-wide lecture as part of the Artspeaks series.

Unless otherwise noted, all workshops are held on the first floor of the Center for Gender Studies, 5733 S. University Avenue, from 4:30 to 6:00 PM. Attendees are expected to read the workshop paper in advance of meeting (papers are made available on the CGS website). If you are interested in being included on the workshop email list or would like to present your work at a future date, please email the workshop co-coordinators, Monica Mercado (mmercado@uchicago.edu) or Anthony Todd (artodd@uchicago.edu).

### Spring 2009 Workshop Schedule

Tuesday, April 7

**Rachel Devlin**, Department of History,  
Tulane University

"Girls on the Front Line: Gender  
and the Battle to Desegregate  
Public Schools, 1940-1954."

Tuesday, April 21

**Raluca Maria Popa**, PhD Candidate,  
Department of Gender Studies, Central  
European University, Budapest

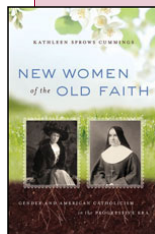
"Translating Equality between Women and  
Men across Cold War Divides: Women  
Activists from Hungary and Romania and the  
Creation of International Women's Year"

*\*\*note unusual date and location\*\**

Thursday, May 7 at 4:30 in Swift Hall

**Kathleen Sprows Cummings**,  
University of Notre Dame

"New Women of the Old Faith"  
*co-sponsored with the American  
Religious History Workshop*



*\*\*note unusual time\*\**

Tuesday, May 12 at 12:00pm  
Discussion with visual artist

**Kara Walker**

*co-sponsored with the  
Reproduction of Race and  
Racial Ideologies Workshop*



Tuesday, May 19

**Helen Li**, Sociology Department and CGS  
Resident Fellow

Tuesday, June 2

**Alison Lefkowitz**, History Department and  
LGSP Hormel Fellow

[http://genderstudies.uchicago.edu/  
events/workshops.shtml](http://genderstudies.uchicago.edu/events/workshops.shtml)

The Center for Gender Studies fosters many kinds of graduate participation in the Center. **Teaching opportunities** at the CGS include co-teaching in the core of the undergraduate concentration (Problems in Gender Studies I and II, a M.A.-level Theory course and B.A. Preceptorship) as well as free standing courses in the College. The core undergraduate courses for the program promote collaborative teaching among faculty and graduate students.

**Fellowships** are available for advanced graduate students, providing funding and/or residency at the Center. University of Chicago Ph.D. candidates from all disciplines are encouraged to apply. Application deadlines for teaching and fellowships are as follow.

Full guidelines can be found on the links from the Graduate Students Page of our Website:

<http://genderstudies.uchicago.edu/grad/>

### Noon, Wednesday, April 1

CGS Dissertation Fellowship

Hormel Dissertation Fellowship

Office Residence Fellowships

Free-Standing Course Proposals  
in all divisions

Co-Teaching Applications



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### Gender Studies Programs at a Glance, Spring 2009

Location: 5733 S. University unless otherwise noted

**Exhibition—March 11- July 14, 2009 (Special Collections, Regenstein Library)**

***"On Equal Terms": Educating Women at the University of Chicago.***

**Brown Bag Lunch—Tuesday, March 31, 2009 12:15 PM - 1:45 PM (Regenstein Library, Room A-11)**

Join the Center for Gender Studies for a special edition of the Brown Bag Series being held at the Regenstein Library. Bring your lunch and discuss the new exhibition "On Equal Terms": Educating Women at the University of Chicago with curators Monica Mercado and Katherine Turk. A tour of the exhibition in the Special Collections Research Center will follow.

**Feminist Lives and Queer Trajectories Series—Wednesday, April 8, 12-1:30 pm**

Leslie Fenton, AB '02, Gender Studies; Staff Attorney, The Family Law Project of the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago

**Exhibit Opening—Thursday, April 9, 4:30-6:00 PM**

*The Life of the Female Mind: Gender and Education at The University of Chicago.* An exhibit of student research on the history of women at the University of Chicago on display at the CGS from April 1 through June 13, 2009.

**Spring Meeting for GS Majors/Minors—Monday, April 20, 4:30 pm**

All current and potential majors/minors in gender and sexuality studies welcome.

**Brown Bag Lunch—Friday, April 24, 12:15-1:30 pm**

"Black Men, White Women: Problems and Possibilities in Categorizing Race and Gender in Eighteenth-Century France"  
Jennifer Palmer, Collegiate Assistant Professor, University of Chicago

**Islam and Sexualities Conference—Saturday, May 2 \*see website for details.\***

**Brown Bag Lunch—Friday, May 8, 12:15-1:30 pm**

"The Mask of Sexual Exuberance: Surrealism, Architecture, Film"

Jennifer Wild, Assistant Professor, Committee on Cinema and Media Studies, The University of Chicago

**Women in the Sciences Panel Discussion—Thursday, May 21, 5 p.m.**

**Brown Bag Lunch—Friday, May 22, 12:15-1:30 pm**

"Parasyamaaya Rahasyam / The Public Secret: Figurations of Female Same-Sex Desire in Contemporary Kerala Culture"  
Nisha Kommattam, Lecturer, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, The University of Chicago

**Special Lecture—Thursday, May 28, 4:30 pm**

Linda Williams, Professor in the Departments of Film Studies and Rhetoric, UC Berkeley

"Brokeback Mountain: Primal Scenes on American Screens"

Location: FSC, 5811 South Ellis Ave. Cobb Hall 307; Co-sponsored with the Film Studies Center

**Lunch for Undergraduates—Friday, May 29, 12:15-1:30 pm**

With Linda Williams, Professor in the Departments of Film Studies and Rhetoric, UC Berkeley