DIRECTOR'S NOTE

As though we had known in advance the state of emergency that marks our collective present, this past fall the CGS public sphere was saturated by presentations about violence and redemption: violence intended to redeem a fallen world; justified as a rescue mission on behalf of oppressed peoples; organized by states toward other states or particular populations; enacted by individuals toward each other. Saba Mahmood of the Divinity School gave the CGS Distinguished Lecture, "Feminism, the Taliban, and Politics of Counter-Insurgency," and talked about the first world feminist tendency to equate a desire to rescue Afghani women from subordination to the Taliban with a desire to rescue Islamic women from their own piety. Mahmood pointed out that the celebrity-powered feminist rescue mission had an uncanny echo in official U.S. rhetoric equating the entire Afghani population with the women subordinated there. But how do we fold in the complex history of global capitalist impoverishment and CIA involvement in the area? For many in the audience, Mahmood's talk reopened questions about the politics of violence on behalf of freedom that they thought had been closed.

Earlier, the Late Liberalism project of CGS had sponsored a long-planned conference on Violence and Redemption, which could not avoid the pressure of responding to 9-11 but which also visited other scenes and sites of inquiry, in Turkey, Africa, South America, Spain, Egypt, and elsewhere. Ordinary vs. extraordinary violence, structural subordination vs. catastrophic trauma: it seemed important to investigate the relation of casualties of war to the slower, more taken for granted deaths—say, from economic inequality, industrial poisons, sexual violence, political exclusion, pandemics, and other dangerous scenes.

Meanwhile, after 9-11, the U.S. press pointed out that Americans en masse were turning to writing and reading poetry. W. H. Auden's "September 1, 1939," in particular was cited as the most read and resonant piece: "I sit in one of the dives/On Fifty-Second Street/Uncertain and afraid/As the clever ones expire/Of a low dishonest decade." Other lyrics emerged as well as ways of expressing what's inexpressible about trauma, confronting with surprising negation. Poems were placed all over the landscape near Ground Zero; websites listed other poems written by the famous and the anonymous but overwhelmed. Almost immediately thereafter, galleries in New York opened exhibitions of professional and amateur photographs witnessing the numbered events—9-11, Ground Zero—and the responses radiating from them, like circles of water around a dropped stone.

ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE

This quarter the Center continues the series "Art and Social Change" which we began in the autumn with an exciting film series featuring short works by independent filmmakers. The winter's events are performance/discussions by collaborative artists and curators. With this series, we lay the groundwork for future art events and projects to be sponsored by the Center, in collaboration with other groups within (and outside of) the University.

The question of social change, and art's relation to it, seems especially pressing at the present moment, when we have cause to interrogate our own political participation and freedom of expression. Can art make political and social arguments that can't be made in other venues? Does art's status as privileged expression become vulnerable when its politics are very explicit? How do we evaluate, enjoy, and learn from the oblique, passionate, controversial, humorous, playful, ironic and mournful interventions made into the public sphere by visual and performing artists?

On Thursday, January 24 at 7pm, Tina Takemoto performs and discusses collaborative work done with her partner Angela Ellsworth, considering what it means to identify and perform across bodies marked by illness, gender, and race. Wednesday, February 13 at 7pm we are visited by Law Office, a Chicago curating collective whose events and exhibitions have included "Beer Garden II," "Bastard," "Sex Party," and "Ten White Male Painters Paint the Same Painting." On Thursday, March 7 at 7pm we welcome SPIR: Conceptual Photography, a queer feminist partnership that explores (in words and images) issues of identity, fantasy and politics; how people make the present meaningful; and the material and philosophical implications of photographic media and practices.

These are artists who are also intellectuals in the obvious sense that alongside their creative practice, they are committed to working as academics and curators. This is to say that they—and they are not unique in this—are skilled at translating their work into different discourses. But it is not to say that artists need to be academics in order to have something important to say. The goal of social change necessitates new and unexpected "languages of art." With the University of Chicago (happily) increasing its commitment to the arts, how can we take the opportunity to learn such languages, to find new venues and structures for hearing and seeing the work of creative practitioners?

- Rebecca Zorach

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Seminars and Workshops (See Calendar for event details.)

Gender and Sexuality Studies
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. The workshop meets every other Wednesday at 3:30.

Gender and Sexualities in Asia
The Gender & Sexualities in Asia Workshop is pleased to announce its schedule for Winter Quarter 2002. Workshop meetings are held biweekly on Mondays from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm unless announced otherwise. To join the workshop mailing list or to inquire about meeting locations, please contact Pham Chêa Tsai at ptsai@uchicago.edu or Jonathan M. Hall at jmhall@uchicago.edu. The workshop provides a forum for diverse disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to gender and sexualities and employs a broadly defined concept of “Asia.”

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 (politically and socially) 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

January

7  Monday, 4:30 p.m.
   GENDER AND SEXUALITIES IN ASIA WORKSHOP:
   Kevin Lawrence, Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations of
   University of Chicago, leads a discussion, "Out of the Ghetto or Out in the
   Gaytto? Reading Wong Kar-wai's Happy Together"

9  Wednesday, 3:30 p.m.
   GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES WORKSHOP:
   Marta Lois, Dept of Political Science, "What is the value of multiculturalism
   for women? Gender equality and some cultural practices in the European
   context." Judd 422.

11 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.
   BROWN BAG: DWIGHT McBRIEDE, "African American Studies and Baldwin's
   Prophetic Call for a Black Queer Studies" Judd 110.

18 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.
   BROWN BAG: TBA Judd 110.

21 Monday, 4:30 p.m.
   GENDER AND SEXUALITIES IN ASIA WORKSHOP:
   Janet Arafy, associate professor of History and Women's Studies at Purdue
   University, presents on "Foucault, Feminism and the Ethics of Love in the
   Mediterranean/Muslim World"

23 Wednesday, 3:30 p.m.
   GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES WORKSHOP:
   Suzanne Pelka, Committee on Human Development
   "Lesbian Couples Using In-Vitro-Fertilization (IVF) to Co-Mother" Judd 422.

24 Thursday, 7 p.m.
   ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE SERIES
   TINA TAKEMOTO, OPEN WOUNDS: THE MELANCHOLIA OF ILLNESS AND RACE
   Tina Takemoto is a performance artist whose work, in collaboration with her
   partner, Angela Ellsworth, includes "Squeaky Clean" and "Her/She Senses
   Imag(in)ed Malady." Her work as a critic considers what it means to identify
   and perform across bodies marked by illness, gender and race.
   Co-sponsored by the Lesbian and Gay Studies Project and the Center for
   the Study of Race, Politics and Culture.
   FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, call 702-9936 for location.

24 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.
   BROWN BAG: TINA TAKEMOTO. Judd 110.
February
1 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.  
BROWN BAG: CARRIE GOLUS & PATRICK WELCH, "Politics and pictures: comic strips and illustrated journalism by Team Alternator"  
Judd 110.

4 Monday, 4:30 p.m.  
GENDER AND SEXUALITIES IN ASIA WORKSHOP: TBA

5 Tuesday, 4:30 p.m.  
GENDER STUDIES FACULTY MEETING. Franke Institute.

8 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.  
BROWN BAG: DORIAN WARREN, "The American Labor Movement's 'Identity Politics': Contemporary Organizing Around Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Sexuality."  
Judd 110.

13 Wednesday, 7 p.m.  
ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE SERIES  
LAW OFFICE: BASTARD, SON OF HOT SAUCE  
Law Office is a Chicago curating collective and "one of the most interesting developments in the Chicago art scene for quite a while" (ArtNet.com) Law Office's events and exhibitions have included "Hot Sauce," "Sex Party" and "Ten White Male Painters Paint the Same Painting." FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, call 702-9936 for location.

15 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.  
BROWN BAG: RUMA NIYOGI, "Methodologies for Studying Gender in the Middle Ages"  
Judd 110.

18 Monday, 4:30 p.m.  
GENDER AND SEXUALITIES IN ASIA WORKSHOP:  
Chris Berry, Film Studies and the Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies of University of California Berkeley, presents on "Queer Asia and New Media." Co-sponsored with the Mass Culture Workshop and China's Long Twentieth Century Workshop.

21 Thursday, 4:30 p.m.  
LECTURE: SUSIE ORBACH. See website for details.

22 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.  
BROWN BAG:  
SILVIA MALARINZO, "BURNT ORANGES" Argentinean-born filmmaker shows and discusses her work-in-progress reflecting on the 'Dirty War' and contemporary Argentina.  
Judd 110.

27 Wednesday, 3:30 p.m.  
GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES WORKSHOP:  

March
1-2 OBESITY AND POVERTY CONFERENCE (see page 4)

7 Thursday, 7 p.m.  
ART AND SOCIAL CHANGE SERIES  
SPIR CONCEPTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY  
SPIR, a queer feminist partnership, creates phototext that explores (in words and images) issues of identity, fantasy, and politics; how people make the present meaningful; and the materials and philosophical implications of photographic media and practices.  
Co-sponsored by the Lesbian and Gay Studies Project. FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, call 702-9936 for location.

8 Friday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.  
BROWN BAG: SPIR.  
Judd 110.

For more info: http://humanities.uchicago.edu/cgs
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What does it mean that these responses took the form of art rather than, say, opinion—a letter to the editor, a public protest? What kinds of experience does the aesthetic provide for a public overwhelmed by news genres? How does it matter that the news and the artwork may have similar aims, to change people and the world by changing emotions about the world?

This quarter coming continues the CGS ART and SOCIAL CHANGE series with a series of performances and artist commentaries. See Rebecca Zorach’s article (page 1) for more about what this series, and the larger project of fomenting the connections among aesthetics, theoretics, and politics in the present moment.

-Lauren Berlant

WELCOME NEW FACULTY

We are pleased to introduce two additions to the CGS faculty—both of whom, coincidentally, augment our offerings in the relations of gender, sexuality, and health in really exciting ways.

C. Cybele Raver teaches at the Harris School of Public Policy, but is also interested in genuinely interdisciplinary work in gender studies. She thinks about the ways economic processes and policies influence mental health and everyday life practices in the U.S., especially in families. How does poverty affect parenting, and how does low income affect the emotional scenarios and practices of children and parents, at work and at home? Professor Raver’s recent essay on low-income mothers, workforce participation, and emotion management is available at http://www.jcpr.org/povsem/raver.pdf.

Alison Winter teaches in the History department, where she teaches British history, and in particular the social history of psychology as a professional and non-professional practice. Her first book, Mesmerized, details the craze for mesmeric trances that attracted both men and women across Victorian Britain, raising questions about science v. suggestion, agency and intention, and the ways ordinary people can be transformed by fascination with a phenomenon. Currently she is interested in the institutions and practices that sought out truth, and she is working on the idea and dissemination of the truth serums in the 20th century.

OBESITY AND POVERTY CONFERENCE

The Center is hosting a conference March 1-2, 2002 to address what is becoming a growing public health concern—the relationship between obesity and poverty. For the first time in global history, poor people in post-industrial nations—especially in the U.S.—are more likely to be seriously and unhealthily overweight than people from more affluent communities.

The gap between the rich and poor in the U.S. and globally is expanding, and at the same time so are waistlines—at an alarming rate. Americans especially are fatter than ever before, and public health officials have declared obesity an epidemic. Of greatest concern is the impact of socioeconomic discrepancy on differential health outcomes. Increasingly, the diseases of obesity, such as diabetes and hypertension, are concentrated in economically distressed populations and in particular, in their youth. As a result, the prospects of long-term good health for members of this growing community are grim. For these reasons, it is imperative that we begin to rethink the fundamental problems of obesity as they relate to health, public policy, and bodily practices.

While the study of eating disorders has traditionally emerged from research related to gender and feminism, the complex dynamics of this phenomenon require a comprehensive and multidisciplinary problem-solving approach. The Obesity and Poverty Conference will bring together scholars and specialists from a variety of disciplines to address the medical, policy, and theoretical consequences of this health crisis in the United States and how it relates to similar trends around the world. Representing biology, political theory, world history, law, feminist/queer studies, public policy, neurology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis, these investigators will work to clarify the problem of diagnosing, treating, and stemming the obesity so prevalent in poor communities.

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