From the Director

The foundational principle of an interdisciplinary program such as the Institute for Research on Women and Gender is a commitment to continual translation across scholarly disciplines and traditions and to the equally complex conversations and transfigurations that crisscross geographical and temporal horizons.

The Fall 2009 semester has focused on both of these aspects of translation and transfiguration, exemplified perhaps in the workshop “Embodiments of Science” (below) held on November 5th and 6th and cosponsored with the Barnard Provost Office, Barnard Women’s Studies Department and Barnard Center for Research on Women; and the Feminist Interventions Lecture presented by Professor Carol Sanger, Barbara Aronstein Black Professor of Law at Columbia Law School and her respondent Barnard Professor Anne Higonnet of Art History (see page 4). “Embodiments of Science” was designed to examine the history of present scientific approaches to bodies, identities, and destinies including neurological, eugenic, and epigenetic interventions.

The first day was comprised of two panels that presented papers ranging in topics from human genome variation and liberalism to sickle cell anemia in Senegal and colonialism. Professor Evan Balaban from the Department of Psychology at the University of Montreal, captivated the audience with the latest studies of neuroscience. Duana Fullwiley, Assistant Professor, continued the session with her presentation on “Embodiments of Science,” an interdisciplinary approach to understanding biological sex difference.

Embodiments of Science

By Mashinka Firunts and Nikolas Oscar Sparks

Over the course of two days, the Institute for Research on Women and Gender (IRWaG), in collaboration with the Barnard Center for Research on Women and the Barnard Provost Office, brought together scholars from across the country to participate in the Embodiments of Science Workshop. The workshop gave individuals the opportunity to receive feedback on a variety of works in progress that “examine[d] the history of present scientific approaches to bodies, identities, and destinies including neurological, eugenic, and epigenetic interventions.”

A quarter of a century after Ann Fausto-Sterling troubled the essentialist scientific assumptions governing approaches to biological sex difference in Myths of Gender, these assumptions continue to circulate unquestioned in much contemporary scientific scholarship and legislation. This issue, among many others, loomed large throughout the discussions that took place at the Embodiments of Science Workshop. The first day was comprised of two panels that presented papers ranging in topics from human genome variation and liberalism to sickle cell anemia in Senegal and colonialism. Professor Evan Balaban from the Department of Psychology at the University of Montreal, captivated the audience with the latest studies of neuroscience. Duana Fullwiley, Assistant Professor, continued the session with her presentation on “Embodiments of Science,” an interdisciplinary approach to understanding biological sex difference.
Spotlight: Katherine Biers

By Nikolas Oscar Sparks

Katherine L. Biers is Assistant Professor of English-Comparative Literature and acting Director of Undergraduate Studies at the Institute for Research on Women and Gender, specializing in 19th- and 20th-century American literature, culture and media studies. Professor Biers is currently in her second year at Columbia after completing her Ph.D. at Cornell University and a post-doc at the University of Chicago. She teaches courses for Columbia College’s core curriculum and is finishing up her first full book project, which she expects to be out around this time next year.

Professor Biers’s book, The Promise of the Virtual: Writing and Media in the Progressive Era argues that our contemporary ideas of the “virtual,” and “virtual media” actually emerge around the turn of the 20th century. Her sources range widely in philosophy, literature, journalism, and popular culture circa 1900. Biers shows philosophers such as William James, Henry Bergson, and Charles Sanders Pierce bring together a broad range of disciplines, including philosophy and psychology, to develop the idea of a “virtual experience,” in which media technologies such as the newspaper or the moving picture are understood as extensions of mind rather than representations of concepts. Professor Biers explains, “To explore this idea of the virtual, you need an interdisciplinary approach. Philosophers were using concepts from psychology to describe what it meant to go to the movies, for instance…because philosophy and psychology were not yet separate disciplines.” By examining authors such as Henry James, James Weldon Johnson, Gertrude Stein, Stephen Crane, and Djuna Barnes, Professor Biers hopes to also explore how literature and journalism, in addition to philosophy, expand on the idea of virtual experience in a time when culture was becoming more and more complex in the United States.

In addition to her own research, Professor Biers’s role as the undergraduate director in IRWaG and professor in Columbia College’s core curriculum this past Fall have also taken up quite a bit of time. When I asked her how she understood the relationship between her own work and her other responsibilities at Columbia, she elaborated on what she considered to be “mutually enriching,” yet sometimes “underground” connections, such as those between teaching Core texts like the Gospel of John, and her current research on early twentieth century American notions of spiritual covenant or hearing about the variety of projects being produced around the university, and her own ideas for future research. Professor Biers says of her time at IRWaG, “It has been very helpful to get to know people outside of the English department, and to get a sense of how the university works on a larger scale. I have been sitting in on the executive committee as well, and really getting a sense of how departments relate to each other…The chance to discuss a specifically feminist pedagogy is also great. That is a part of my teaching anyway, but it has been enriching to be a part of a work group with that as a specific focus.” While her experiences in administration have not overtaken her desire for research and teaching, her relationship to IRWaG has produced opportunities for collaborations that will bear fruit both in the form of seminars and future work.

Professor Biers plans to collaborate with Law School Professor Katherine Franke in the Fall of 2010 on a class that will examine the current debates around gay marriage, and the history of marriage as an institution. She is hopeful that this seminar will not only examine the political project of gay marriage, but also how other movements within the broader queer community might contribute to this project. This serves as one example for Professor Biers of the value of the collaborative space of Columbia University. Next semester, Professor Biers will no longer be serving as Director of Undergraduate studies, but she will be teaching a course in Literature and Theater on modern drama titled “Media Theory,” that explores the concept of theater as a medium, and the spaces it occupies in an age of mass culture.
Embodiments, Continued from Page 1

Professor in Anthropology and African American Studies at Harvard, explored the construction of sickle cell anemia in the transatlantic dialogue on race and disease, a discussion in deep dialogue with Professor Marianne Sommer, Chair for Science Studies at Federal Institute of Technology-Zurich, on the scientific construction of the human origins of Swiss people and Miriam Tictin, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the New School University on the complex circuits of science-based epistemologies of violence and humanitarianism of border control. The conversations generated around them offered a unique opportunity to dialogue with some of the brightest minds working in what might broadly be considered new criticisms of scientific practice.

Keynote speaker Professor Catherine Waldby, International Research Fellow in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy, Sydney University, ended the first day with her paper entitled, “Citizenship, Labor and the Biopolitics of the Bioeconomy: Recruiting Female Tissue Donors for Stem Cell Research.” Professor Waldby’s paper discussed a developing market in reproductive labor and its relationship to human medical subjects. She explored, among other market innovations, the growing offshore market in surrogacy—for instance, the traffic of white middle class heterosexual couples to India where the legal and capital requirements are less stringent than in the US. Intertwined are larger questions of the obligations of citizenship, the nation-state, bioethics, and the “biovalue” of different populations. Attempting to consider the biopolitical conditions of this relationship, Waldby explored new relations of production with...

Catherine Waldby, answering students’ questions after her keynote lecture on “Citizenship, Labor and the Biopolitics of the Bioeconomy: Recruiting Female Tissue Donors for Stem Cell Research”

...larger questions of the obligations of citizenship, the nation-state, bioethics, and the “biovalue” of different populations.
Feminist Interventions: Carol Sanger’s Abortion and the Visual Construction of Loss

By Mashinka Firunts

A throng of students and faculty lined the seats and, when these were no longer available, the floors of Jerome Greene Hall to witness Carol Sanger’s lecture entitled Abortion and the Visual Construction of Loss. Co-sponsored by the Columbia Center for Gender and Sexuality Law, Sanger joined the IRWaG’s Feminist Interventions series, which has previously featured the work of Professors Marianne Hirsch, Rosalind Morris, Sharon Marcus, Carole Vance, Thomas DiPrete, and Michael Warner. Following an introduction from Katherine Franke, Columbia Professor of Law and Director of the Center for the Study of Law, Professor Sanger presented a 50-minute lecture followed by a 20-minute response from Barnard Professor of Art History, Anne Higonnet. At the conclusion of this portion of the evening, the floor was opened to questions and comments.

Opening remarks by Elizabeth Povinelli, Director of IRWaG and Columbia Professor of Anthropology, contextualized both the specific lecture to follow and the broader aims of the series itself. Feminist Interventions, Professor Povinelli elucidated, seeks to “publicly circulate and celebrate the work being done by members of the IRWaG faculty and its local constituencies, and to model and encourage a form of race, gender, and psychoanalysis entitled The Feminist Difference. Professor Davidson produced a syllabus Johnson had drafted for a course at Harvard whose singular use of imaginative pairings and “the magic of the everyday” led her to preserve the document for over a decade. Professor Spivak paraphrased missives Johnson continued to write to her advisees even in the face of hospitalization and degenerative illness.

In recounting Johnson’s lecturing style, Professor Hirsch recalled that she often entered the classroom with a towering pile of books in tow and proceeded to search their pages for specific passages while alternating between multiple, seemingly dissimilar texts. “By the time she put it together,” Professor Hirsch observed, “it fit beautifully” in an intricate pattern of interlocking grid work. In a similar vein, the disparate texts and personal reflections articulated throughout the memorial gathering comprised the mosaic of a complex figure for whom, as Professor Ronell remarked, “we put ourselves in a pose of gratitude.”

Theory Mondays: Barbara Johnson Memorial Gathering

By Mashinka Firunts

On September 22nd, an intimate assortment of students, faculty, and visiting professors from across the nation assembled to pay homage to the life and prolific scholarly production of the late literary theorist and Harvard University Frederic Wertham Professor, Barbara Johnson.

Hosted by Marianne Hirsch, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Patricia Williams; the event drew a widely eclectic array of attendees including such colleagues of Johnson as Avital Ronell of New York University, and Yale classmate and Sarah Lawrence Professor of Comparative Literature, Angela Moger. Among the former students in attendance were Shelley Salamensky of UCLA and Columbia Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Jenny Davidson.

Attendees were encouraged to prepare passages for recitation from Johnson’s work, and the heterogeneity of the selected texts reflected the rich diversity of her practice. Professor Hirsch shared excerpts from Muteness Envy, published in Johnson’s seminal examination of the intersections of
Graduate Colloquium Roundup
By Christine Varnardo

Graduates had an eventful Fall at the Institute, beginning in September with a Graduate Student Welcome and Cocktail Hour, where a spirited crowd of students representing a diverse array of Columbia schools and departments socialized, networked, exchanged ideas, and got information about IRWaG’s graduate resources and programming.

This Fall saw the debut of IRWaG’s newest forum for graduate-level intellectual exchange—Research Fridays, a lunchtime discussion meeting which took place twice this semester and will continue in the Spring. Our first presenter was Julie Golia, a Ph.D. candidate in the History Department—and the recipient of an American Association of University Women dissertation fellowship. Her paper, “Queen of Heartaches: The Newspaper Advice Columnist as Icon and Journalist,” traced the history of several wildly popular and flamboyantly self-styling female advice columnists in US newspapers during the first half of the 20th century. English professor Rachel Adams offered the comment to Golia’s chapter, focusing the discussion on the remarkable blend of fiction and reality in the writing of these path-breaking newspaper-women and about public discourses of female celebrity more

Translated Feminisms: China and Elsewhere
By Mashinka Firunts

While conducting research in the areas of gender studies, global feminisms, and the social revolutions of modern China, a group of scholars repeatedly observed a dearth of translations of the seminal texts of Chinese feminists who wrote in the period preceding World War I. In response to their inaccessibility to non-Chinese speakers and the consequent omission of these texts from the feminist canon; Lydia Liu (Columbia University), Dorothy Ko (Barnard College), Rebecca Karl (New York University), and Michael Hill (University of South Carolina) set themselves to the task of translation and the orchestration of a workshop through which they might assemble like-minded colleagues to discuss the future of such an endeavor. “Translated Feminisms: China and Elsewhere” was the product of this collaborative effort.

The aims of the event were two-fold. “Translated Feminisms” sought to serve as both an opportunity for scholars to present their work on related topics of translation, omission, and circulation of crucial global feminisms, as well as to explore the ways in which these long neglected early

Lydia Liu and Elizabeth Weed

The Institute for Research on Women and Gender seeks applications for two 2010/11 graduate fellowships. IRWaG Graduate Fellowships are limited to students who have completed or are about to complete the IRWaG graduate certificate.

For more information and application instructions, please visit: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/irwag/programs/main/graduate/Fellowships.html
This semester, Professor Saidiya Hartman of IRWaG and English-Comparative Literature taught a joint seminar with Duke Professor Tina Campt called, “Haunted Visualities: the Sights and Senses of Race.” The seminar focused on developing a vocabulary of key terms around such topics as photography, the sonic, and the archive, to name a few. The Columbia seminar “linked up” through the internet several times over the course of the semester for joint discussions with special guest speakers such as Fred Moten, Krista Thompson, Anne Cheng, and Anne Cvetkovich. This photo is from the last joint seminar in which Professor Campt and her Duke students flew up for a face-to-face meeting.

Toward an Intellectual History of Black Women

Toward an Intellectual History of Black Women is a collaborative research project designed to move the study of black thought, culture, and leadership beyond the “Great Men” paradigm that characterizes most accounts of black intellectual activity. This project was developed by an interdisciplinary, cross-institutional working group of approximately 25 scholars from 10 different universities, including Farah Jasmine Griffin, Project Director and former Director of Columbia’s Institute for Research in African American Studies. The project’s recent working group meeting at the University of Michigan featured critical work on the activist politics of Florynce “Flo” Kennedy in New York; Anne Hart Gilbert and Elizabeth Hart Thwaites of Antigua; Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti; and the Abeokuta Women’s Union (AWU) in Nigeria. The meeting also featured innovative studies of the life and work of Henrietta Vinton Davis, Ann Petry, Frances E. W. Harper, and Maryse Conde.

CCASD, Continued on Page 11
**A Blog of Her Own: Scholarly Women on the Web**

*By Mashinka Firunts*

The definitional boundaries of scholarly discourse and its modalities of articulation have long been sites of contestation. Throughout recent years, the meteoric rise of digital communication and electronic self-publishing has further complicated attempts at concrete disciplinary demarcations. Moreover, it has fueled the fire of ongoing debates on what rightly falls under the purview of academic inquiry and broader questions of the public/private dichotomy.

In response to this phenomenon, IRWaG, the Scholarly Communication Program, and Women in Science at Columbia co-sponsored a roundtable discussion entitled *A Blog of Her Own: Scholarly Women on the Web*, staged on September 21st in Alfred Lerner Hall. Discussion participants included Eva Amsen of the blog Easternblot.net, Tedra Osell of Bitch PhD, Claire Potter of Tenured Radical, and Alexandra Vazquez of Oh! Industry. Each panelist delivered a presentation on the factors leading up to her decision to publish electronically and the subsequent personal and public experiences that followed.

**The Program in Hellenic Studies Welcomes Greek Poet Katerina Anghelaki-Rooke**

*By Nikolas Oscar Sparks*

On Tuesday October 13th, students, professors, professional translators, community members, and a documentary film crew came together to hear Greek poet Katerina Anghelaki-Rooke read from her collection, *The Scattered Papers of Penelope: New and Selected Poems*. Translated, in part, by Columbia Literature Professor Karen Van Dyck, this career-spanning collection brought together a variety of poems from a body of work that spans more than 50 years.

Alternating between languages and each other Anghelaki-Rooke and Van Dyck read poems such as “Penelope Says”, “The Trials of Constant Love”, and “The Squirrel Replies to the Woman”. Both offered wonderfully lyrical and passionate readings, and in the lively discussions that followed explored the boundaries of each poem. Known primarily as a poet who deals in an erotic rewriting of classical Greek myths, Anghelaki-Rooke demonstrated the tremendous breadth that the sensuous and erotic can encompass. Her poems not only operate in the realism of the erotic, but also take at their core a deep concern for love, language, and redress for the feminine body.

As a conclusion to the question and answer portion, and much to the delight of the crowded room, a very thankful Anghelaki-Rooke expanded upon what she understood her role as both poet and translator to be. While translation might sometimes produce an entirely new poetic experience, the task, as Anghelaki-Rooke explained, must be to find a divine balance between the translated poem and the original. They must speak to each other in a way that keeps them whole, but connected, much in the same way Anghelaki-Rooke and Van Dyck spoke to one another throughout the course of their readings.

This event was organized by the Program in Hellenic Studies at Columbia University, which is in the first year of a four year Mellon Foundation Grant and sponsored by the Institute for Research on Women and Gender. The reading may be accessed through the iTunes store under “Barnard Center for Research on Women”. See also IRWaG’s online multi-media newsletter.

Jenny Davidson, Eva Amsen, Tedra Osell, Claire Potter, Alexandra Vazquez
Professor Terry argued that object-sexuality could be seen as a potentially disruptive strategy for destabilizing dominant paradigms of sexual practice and conceptualizing posthuman sexualities.

and legislation under the veil of objective truth. His claim focused on the difficult conceptual, and often counterintuitive, nature of statistics as a conceptual science and on the structured nature of its misunderstanding. Interestingly, Professor Liberman controversially commented that the indigenous Pirahã tribe of the Amazon region has actively eschewed the development of an exact numerical system in favor of approximate arithmetic, and in so doing has perhaps deliberately fostered a system of thought privileging indeterminacy over absolutism. These assertions engendered a rich dialogue that roamed among the topics of agnotology and the possibility of power in willful ignorance, the correlation versus causality dichotomy, and statistics as an instrument for the management of populations.

Following this discussion, Professor Terry offered remarks on her text entitled “Loving Objects,” a theorization of the phenomenon of the sexual attraction to objects known as objectum-sexuality, examples of which included the Eiffel Tower. Noting that sexual desire for objects is commonly subsumed under the classificatory blanket of pathological perversion, Professor Terry argued that object-sexuality could be seen as a potentially disruptive strategy for restructuring of subject/object relations. Indeed, participants became so embroiled in the discussion as to continue dialoging well past its estimated end time.

This workshop, which is one of several that IRWaG participates in throughout the course of the academic year, provided an enriching opportunity for a variety of scholars to engage in questions considered most pertinent to our particular moment. While these workshops remain behind closed doors for now, it is the hope of IRWaG that they will open up more opportunities for a wider audience to engage with these questions in the future.
interdisciplinary thought and debate.” In keeping with this objective, the evening’s presentations approached identical subject matter—that of abortion legislation—from the disparate disciplinary vantage points of legal and art historical discourse.

Situating the subsequent talk within the wider scope of the presenter’s scholarly work, Professor Franke introduced Carol Sanger, Barbara Aronstein Black Professor of Law at Columbia University, as a specialist in contract law and a co-author of what is among the most frequently circulated textbooks on the topic. “Abortion and the Visual Construction of Loss” marks the second iteration of a text originally published in the UCLA Law Review called “Seeing and Believing: Mandatory Ultrasound and the Path to a Protected Choice.”

Upon taking the podium, Professor Sanger offered a comprehensive overview of the legislation that serves as the primary focal point of her project. This legislation, which differs from state to state, mandates that women view ultrasounds of their fetuses prior to obtaining an abortion. Sanger described the legislation as transforming ultrasound into a guided tour or an instance of “assisted seeing,” during which the medical professional must perform a script that translates an often indiscernible image into a “child”. Under certain forms of this legislation, the doctor is forced to describe the location of specific body parts even if these are not obvious in the image. Professor Sanger observed that the legislation, and its function as “assisted seeing,” transitions the ultrasound into a coercive narrative: the image of a fetus as the reality of a child and the woman as a mother. She then turned to two 19th-century phenomena also marked by the conflation of visual simulacra and truth: postmortem photography and spirit photography. Recalling Susan Sontag’s statement that photography is “a way of knowing something for sure,” Professor Sanger posited that it is this assumed authenticity and purely denotative quality of photographic imagery that allows it to function with such efficacy in the service of legislative coercion.

Professor Higonnet responded by noting that the legislation’s assumption that pictures don’t lie violated three fundamental principles of art history. First, that “every picture is a representational construction,” secondly that “the meaning of every picture is structured by the practices and assumptions surrounding [it],” and thirdly, that a set of incommensurate social agendas underlie the creation of every image. Agreeing with Sanger’s legal and cultural assessment of the legal use of ultrasound, Higonnet proceeded to elaborate how the strategies of art historical discourse might assist in unpacking the coerciveness of “assisted readings.” These counterpoints included the assertion that the ultrasound represents the construction rather than the truth of “baby,” that it is the discursive production of meaning rather than “meaning-as-such” at play in ultrasound imagery, and finally that what one witnesses in these visuals can be classified as the fiction of an autonomous being.

These presentations served as departure points for the dynamic and extended conversation that followed with the audience, whose heterogeneous discussion questions and participants themselves reflected the interdisciplinary nature of Feminist Interventions.
generally. The second Research Fridays speaker was Barnard Professor of Sociology Elizabeth Bernstein, who presented a paper analyzing current anti-sex-trafficking rhetoric on the feminist left and the Christian right, entitled “Militarized Humanitarianism Meets Carceral Feminism: the Politics of Sex, Rights, and Freedom in Contemporary Anti-Trafficking Campaigns.” Professor Bernstein’s paper and the response to it, given by Roxana Galusca, a visiting scholar in English from the University of Michigan, sparked a lively, sophisticated discussion of the recent rise of international sex trafficking as a major activist cause in evangelical Christian pop culture, and the complicated political alliances among law and criminal justice advocates, social movements, capitalism, and the nation-state raised by the phenomenon. Any graduate student or junior faculty member who would like a forum in which to present a paper, or comment on someone else’s paper, for lively feminist lunchtime discussion in the Spring should contact the new IRWaG Graduate Fellow for the Spring 2010 semester, Emily Cersonsky, at efc2106@columbia.edu.

Under the aegis of Theory Mondays, we hosted a memorial gathering in honor of Barbara Johnson in September (see “Johnson”). In October, we held a Theory Mondays discussion at which Catherine Driscoll, a visiting scholar at IRWaG who is an Associate Professor of Gender and Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney, introduced a diverse group of students and faculty to the work of Meaghan Morris, an influential Australian feminist cultural studies scholar. Professor Driscoll used Morris’s 1988 essay, “Banality in Cultural Studies,” to illustrate how Morris’s critique of cultural studies via a focus on the ‘everyday’ is still centrally at issue in the discipline twenty years later. We are planning more Theory Mondays for the Spring semester, and are currently seeking input—both for theorists to read and for professors to lead a Theory Mondays discussion (volunteer yourself or someone else!) Contact Christine Varnando at cmv2104@columbia.edu with ideas.

The Spring semester is shaping up to be even busier with graduate student activities at the Institute—we will host a party in January to kick off the new semester and hear about the interesting gender-related projects that members of our community are doing. The Graduate Director, Lila Abu-Lughod, will offer a graduate seminar in Feminist Pedagogy that meets four times over the course of the semester (contact her at la310@columbia.edu for details). Stay tuned for specifics on the Research Friday and Theory Mondays meetings to take place in February, March, and April. Please email our Graduate Fellows, Christine Varnando (cmv2104@columbia.edu) and Emily Cersonsky (efc2106@columbia.edu), for information or to offer suggestions or ideas about any of these events.
Engendering the Archive

By Marianne Hirsch

Discussions in the Center’s Engendering the Archive project, directed by Saidiya Hartman, Marianne Hirsch and Jean Howard, have inspired several recent graduate and undergraduate courses, “Haunted Visualities,” offered in Fall 2009 by Saidiya Hartman and Tina Camp at Columbia and Duke; “Feminism and Diaspora: Rights and Rites or Return,” offered by Marianne Hirsch in Fall 2009; and “Trauma, Terror and Performance,” offered by Marianne Hirsch and Diana Taylor at Columbia and NYU in Spring 2010. Engendering the archive is planning an international conference, Injured Cities, to be held in October 2011 and to coincide with the tenth anniversary of 9/11.

Liberalism and Its Others

By Anupama Rao

“Liberalism and Its Others” is a collaborative research project designed to understand new forms of social critique and political connectivity that have emerged in the wake of liberal political reform and neoliberal economic reform in the contemporary world. This project was developed by a core interdisciplinary group of faculty members based at Barnard College and Columbia University, including: Lila Abu-Lughod, Katherine Franke, Elizabeth Pavinelli, Anupama Rao, and Neferti Tadiar.

In this, its first year of incubation, the group hosted a talk and discussion by international scholar, Mary John, Director of the Center for Women and Development Studies (New Delhi, India), and three intensive closed-door workshops, including: a discussion between Lila Abu Lughod and Saba Mahmood (UC-Berkeley) on Secular Liberalism and Islamic Reform; a discussion on genomics and the reconstruction of race by Nadia Abu El-Haj; and a conversation on stigma, sexuality, and the politics of everyday life between Saidiya Hartman, Anupama Rao, and Neferti Tadiar.

Each of the workshops this term instantiates specific areas of inquiry the group hopes to develop across the next three years:

1) “Religion, Gender Rights, and US Foreign Policy,” explores the relationship between human rights, foreign policy, and religious reform around women’s and sexual rights

2) “Liberalism, Neoliberalism, and the Politics of Life,” takes up the ideology and social practices of genomic science, especially the construction of identity categories such as race, culture, and sex

3) “Reform and the Forms of Life,” inquires into efforts to rethink humanity and ‘the human,’ in the wake of improving interventions, and asks if reform projects directed at marginal groups might not also erase or devalue forms of life, creativity, and politics.

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20th-century Chinese texts might be introductorily framed and subsequently readied for publication. Specifically, the Workshop concerned itself with the texts of Zin Yi’s Women’s Bell and He Zhen’s On the Question of Women’s Liberation.

Co-sponsored by IRWaG, the Middle East Institute, and the Weatherhead East Asian Institute; the Workshop transpired over the course of two days on October 16th and 17th, gathering together nearly 20 international and interdisciplinary participants traveling from Edinburgh, Taiway, and Ottawa. These scholars came from disciplines that included history, Islamic Studies, anthropology, women’s studies, and East Asian studies. Among them were Professors Lydia Liu, Columbia University, Rebecca Karl, New York University, Dorothy Ko, Columbia University, Michael Hill, University of South Carolina, Neferti Tadiar, Barnard College, Lila Abu-Lughod, Columbia University, Mae Ngai, Columbia University, Yukiko Hanawa, New York University, Swapna Banerjee, Brooklyn College, Amy Dooling, Connecticut College, Gail Hershatter, University of California, Santa Cruz, Tze-Lan Deborah Sang, University of Oregon, Viren Murthy, University of Ottawa, Joyce Liu, National Chiao Tung University, Taiwan, Marilyn Booth, Edinburgh University, Marilyn Young, New York University, Nancy Rose Hunt, University of Michigan, Elizabeth Weed, Brown University, and Janet Jakobsen, Barnard College. The Workshop was divided into two discrete components. The first day comprised of a series of panel discussions. The second day was devoted to working sessions involving the simultaneous participation of all invitees.

translated, continued from page 5

As the four event organizers concluded their opening remarks regarding the project’s objectives, additional seating had to be brought in from neighboring rooms to accommodate the growing crowd of students assembled to witness the upcoming panels in 754 Schermerhorn Extension. The discussions that ensued moved seamlessly between such diverse topics as: the intersectionality of colonialism and women’s bodies as instruments of labor; the first known translation of “human rights” into Chinese in 1864; and the transnational histories of female slavery. Albeit on a micro-level, these discussion panels themselves succeeded in executing the Workshop’s ambitious aim of ultimately reinserting a hitherto excluded component into the globally circulating narratives of feminist scholarly discourse. IN

...the intersectionality of colonialism and women’s bodies as instruments of labor; the first known translation of “human rights” into Chinese in 1864; and the transnational histories of female slavery.
Blog, Continued from Page 7

professional repercussions of this endeavor. Upon the conclusion of this segment, the floor was opened to a public discussion moderated by Columbia University Professor of English, Jenny Davidson.

Eva Amsen, a Ph.D. in Biochemistry at the University of Toronto, recalled that her earliest blogging efforts were compelled by a desire to articulate scientific theory “to a general public.” Initially, she refrained from including her surname in the work she published electronically to eschew being discredited through association with what was then widely dismissed as an exercise in frivolity. As blogs began to gain cultural currency and to be cited by established scientific publications, Amsen was among the many authors who consequently disclosed their full names.

Like Amsen, Tedra Osell of Ventura College also resisted full exposure in the space of her blog. For Professor Osell, however, this decision stemmed from the complexities engendered by her blog’s inclusion of stigmatized subject matter spanning her practice of polyamory, her lived experience of motherhood, and “the difficulties of academia.” Specifically, she was acutely aware of the potential implications of her exposure for her livelihood as a professor in a tenure-track position. Despite the ultimate unveiling of her identity, Professor Osell remarked that she remains in support of anonymous posting, as it is among the few devices available to those in academia for carving out spaces of unregulated expression.

Claire Potter’s presentation echoed certain of these sentiments and conjectured that the reason for the academy’s skepticism toward online publishing may lie in the fact that no officials rules or guidelines for blogging exist, which threatens a “university world…obsessed with rules and the respect that comes with them.” Such tensions are, in part, what attracted Professor Potter to blogging in that they allow for engagement with formal structures privileging play over regimentation. The title of her blog, chosen for its comedic value, is “a contradiction in terms.” She continued, “This is also how I think of my position in academia.”

Concluding the series was Princeton Professor of African American Studies, Alexandra Vazquez. Discussing her collaborative blog Oh! Industry, Professor Vazquez poignantly theorized collective blogging as a radical strategy allowing authors to “think aloud hair-salon style” and to reclaim those subjects (and subject positions) not commonly regarded as proper to the field of academic inquiry, be they pop cultural television programs or the hyper-personal. Professor Vazquez prefaced this presentation with a citation from University and the Undercommons, “The only possible relationship to the university today is a criminal one.” The notion of criminally negotiating the terrain of academic discourse presented a fitting framework from within which to discuss the respective panelists’ illicit literary acts.

Claire Potter
Tedra Osell
Alexandra Vazquez
The Third Annual

**Women’s and Gender Studies Prize**

$250

All Columbia, General Studies, and Barnard College undergraduates are invited to submit their best papers for consideration. Papers from every discipline, on any topic within “women’s and gender studies”—broadly defined—will be judged anonymously by an interdisciplinary committee of Columbia and Barnard faculty and graduate students.

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS:**
NOON, APRIL 26, 2010

The Institute for Research on Women and Gender at Columbia University is proud to present the Women’s and Gender Studies Award. This prize is meant to honor an undergraduate student for his or her excellence in research and writing in the fields of women and gender studies. (There is another prize for Queer Studies; students may submit their essay for consideration for only one prize.) Its purpose is twofold: to recognize undergraduate students—who often have few opportunities for such recognition—for their superb intellectual achievement, and to provide students interested in women’s and gender studies with institutional support for their work.

### Spring 2010 IRWaG Events

For updated event information, please visit our website at: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/irwag/events/main/one

#### JANUARY

28

**Felicity Nussbaum**, Professor of English, University of California, Los Angeles, speaking on “Actresses and Patrons: A Jury of Women”

#### FEBRUARY

11

**Tani Barlow**, Ting Tsung and Wei Fong Chao Professor of Asian Studies and Director of the Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University, speaking on, “Girls in Society: ‘Asia’, Colonial Modernity, and the Place of Vernacular Sociology in Consumer Culture”

11

**Hijabi Monologues**

26

IRWaG Graduate Colloquium: Research Fridays with **Rachel Van**

#### MARCH

3

**Embodyments of Science Lecture Series**: **Jonathan M. Metzl**, Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Women’s Studies, University of Michigan, speaking on “The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease”

9

**FEMINIST Interventions Lecture Series**: **Rachel Adams**, Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature

26

IRWaG Graduate Colloquium: Research Fridays with **Lisa Uperesa**

#### APRIL

8

“Harvest of Blossoms: Poems from a Life Cut Short by Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger” translated by **Irene Silverblatt**, Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Duke University, with **Marianne Hirsch** and **Leo Spitzer** (authors of Ghosts of Home: The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory)
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Name: __________________________________________________________________________________

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Phone: __________________________________________________________________________________

Email: _________________________________________________________________________________

Connection to IRWaG: ______________________________________________________________________
## Spring 2010 Undergraduate Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Call#</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Instructor(s)</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>V3111</td>
<td>Feminist Texts I</td>
<td>03365</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>L. Ciolkowski</td>
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<td>V3112</td>
<td>Feminist Texts II</td>
<td>01545</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>E. Bernstein</td>
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<td>BC3117</td>
<td>Women and Film</td>
<td>09389</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>J. Beller</td>
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<td>BC3134</td>
<td>Unheard Voices: African Women</td>
<td>03612</td>
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<td>BC3150</td>
<td>Gender &amp; Civil Rights Movement</td>
<td>07651</td>
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<td>L. Collins</td>
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<tr>
<td>BC3514</td>
<td>Women in Israel: An Introduction</td>
<td>08742</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>I. Klepfisz</td>
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<td>BC3518</td>
<td>Studies in U.S Imperialism</td>
<td>02095</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>N. Tadiar</td>
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<tr>
<td>V3311</td>
<td>Colloquium in Feminist Theory</td>
<td>10900</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>S. Hartman</td>
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<td>V3522</td>
<td>Senior Seminar II</td>
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<td>Sec. 001</td>
<td>91296</td>
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<td>J. Crawford</td>
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<td>Sec. 002</td>
<td>01088</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>T. Szell</td>
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### Spring 2010 Crosslisted Courses

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<tr>
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<td>82110</td>
<td>Philosophy and Feminism</td>
<td>86746</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>C. Mercer</td>
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<td>83225</td>
<td>Virginia Woolf and Modernism</td>
<td>81596</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>S. Cole</td>
<td>MW</td>
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<tr>
<td>83465</td>
<td>Women and Gender in the Muslim World</td>
<td>22047</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>L. Abu-Lughod</td>
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<tr>
<td>83900</td>
<td>Introduction to Comparative Literature and</td>
<td>60998</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>K. Van Dyck</td>
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<td>83950</td>
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<td>77447</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>J. Howard</td>
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<td>84631</td>
<td>Brazilian Feminism, National</td>
<td>62853</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>L. Machado</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>11am–12:50pm</td>
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<td>Politics and International Propositions</td>
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<td>Trauma, Terror, Performance</td>
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<td>88011</td>
<td>Gender, Feminism and Cultural Diversity</td>
<td>88052</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>L. Machado</td>
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### Spring 2010 Graduate Courses

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<td>Genealogies of Feminism</td>
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<td>M. Dobie</td>
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<td>W4300</td>
<td>Advanced Topics</td>
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<td>W4311</td>
<td>Feminism &amp; Science Studies</td>
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<td>W4320</td>
<td>Thinking Sexuality</td>
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<td>G. Pfugfelder</td>
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