In Terms of Gender: Crosscultural and Interdisciplinary Perspectives

On Friday and Saturday, May 4 and 5, the Center welcomed an international group of scholars from a variety of fields to UWM for its major, two-day conference for 2006-07. The conference grew out of discussions among friends, colleagues, and former students of Joan W. Scott about how to honor her pioneering work in gender studies and feminist theory. Organized by Daniel J. Sherman (History, Center Director) and Mary Louise Roberts (History, UW-Madison) in close consultation with Professor Scott (Social Science, Institute for Advanced Study), the conference sought to be prospective rather than retrospective in spirit, a survey of the place of the term “gender” in a number of disciplinary settings with a view to the challenges it might continue to pose to scholarly inquiry in the future. The conference, which featured brief presentations on pre-circulated papers, as well as a keynote and closing round-table, generated consistently high turnout and lively discussion throughout.

The meetings kicked off early Friday afternoon with papers by Lynne Huffer (Women's Studies, Emory University) and Gayle Salamon (English, Princeton University). Huffer presented a paper entitled “Foucault and Feminism’s Prodigal Children.” Central to this project was Huffer’s exploration of the original French edition of Michel Foucault’s 1961 History of Madness. Translations of this work have long been based on an abridged version of the French original, Huffer reminded the audience, keeping readers from fully appreciating its arguments. Huffer proposes an ethical project that can speak to queers and feminists alike and may “expand Foucauldian conceptions of sexuality to encompass the problems of lived experience in relation to our historical and political present.” In her paper, “The Sexual Schema: Transposition and Transgenderism in the Phenomenology of Perception,” Salamon argued for a re-engagement with philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s 1945 work by the same name as a useful vehicle to understand trans-sexual embodiment. “In Merleau-Ponty’s work,” Salamon argued, “there is continued on page 4
From the Director

With a puckish humor typical of Wisconsin, the Madison-based public radio variety show “Whad’ ya know?” has a web site called “notmuch.com.” Although academics, and most human beings, are generally well advised to keep in mind how little we really know, the Center’s research theme for the next two years, Past Knowing, focuses more on how we know than on what we know, or don’t. “Past” can mean beyond or outside of as well as former, and our theme encompasses these multiple senses, notably in border zones where what one person knows clashes with what another considers outside the realm of knowledge.

As the Center approaches its fortieth anniversary in 2008, this topic builds on earlier themes pertaining to knowledge and its limits, such as “Structures of Feeling” in 2000-01. But it also offers an opportunity to reflect on matters very much of our moment, including the different forms of knowledge at stake in debates over cultural property, the subject of our first symposium in October, and the claims and counter-claims of religious fundamentalism and its critics, at an event organized by Vilas Professor Emeritus Ihab Hassan in November.

A recurring sub-theme over the next two years will be how different disciplines frame knowledge, how they view the knowledge they have produced in the past, and the relationship between the knowledges produced by neighboring and more distant scholarly fields. I had the opportunity to reflect on these relationships as the only historian among a group of fellows at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (CASVA), a research center at the National Gallery in Washington, in 2006-07. Few disciplines could be closer than my own field, history, and the history of art, the focus at CASVA, and after two decades working at the edges of both I thought I had a fairly good sense of their similarities and differences. But the year brought home to me the great diversity of practices, methods, and assumptions within art history, a range that does not map neatly onto the equally vast spectrum of geographical areas and periods covered. In both casual conversation and formal discussion, quite distinct notions of what constitutes “art history” emerged, albeit largely at the level of sub-text. At the Center this year, we will be attempting to bring some of these unspoken assumptions to the surface in a series called Disciplinary Dialogues. Consisting of a talk followed by commentary, by speakers in the same or related fields, these events, beginning with the anthropologists Keith Hart and Ralph Litzinger at our inaugural program on September 7, will attempt to take the pulse of current disciplinary practices and the relationships between them. Talks will focus on topics of wide interest across the humanities and social sciences, from Keith Hart’s examination of the question of human universals to the Victorian novels that Helena Michie will discuss in the second Disciplinary Dialogue in October. With plenty of time for questions from the audience, I hope these conversations provide the occasion for genuine interdisciplinary dialogue about the boundaries of our knowledge.

—Daniel J. Sherman
The Center welcomes the return of Graduate Project Assistant Scott Canevit (PhD student in Urban Studies) and two newly appointed Project Assistants Kevin Cullen (MS student in Anthropology with a certificate in Museum Studies) and Renee Pasciak (MA student in Public Administration).

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In Terms of Gender conference participants Jane Gallop (l) and Mrinalini Sinha (r) during discussion at the Heifer Conference Center, May 5, 2007
“When an intervention becomes a convention, it’s in trouble.” —Joan W. Scott
Political Science, Rice) also addressed contemporary issues, in a paper entitled “Gender at the ‘Grassroots’: Islamic Politics, NGOs, and Democracy in Bangladesh.” She explained how leaders of the Bangladeshi Jamaat-i-Islami (Society of Islam) employ a maternalist discourse strategically, to counter claims made by Western NGOs that Islam has harmed women, rather than to confine women to domestic roles. Specific to a country with a thriving democratic tradition, Jamaat-i-Islami makes clear the value of gender analysis to dispelling simplistic Western notions of a “clash of civilizations.”

The next panel, “Subversive Strategies,” featured papers by Jeff Nunokawa (English, Princeton) and Mary Louise Roberts. Nunokawa’s paper, “Feminizing Reification: The Case of Dickens,” took up “the presentation of the self in reified form” in the work of Charles Dickens, especially in female characters. Nunokawa noted that signifiers of femininity—or female subjects—are almost always part of what he labeled “moments of awayness,” or symbols of failed agency. Roberts’s presentation featured two late 19th-century French artists and celebrities, Sarah Bernhardt and Rosa Bonheur. Eccentricity for these two women, Roberts concluded, “eccentricity was its own worst enemy.”

The last session of pre-distributed paper presentations examined the work of gender in visual studies, broadly construed. Daniel Sherman began by summarizing the paper by Mary Sheriff (Art History, North Carolina-Chapel Hill), who could not attend in person. Sheriff’s paper traced the role and impact of feminist analysis in art history, noting its long preoccupation with the role of women artists, and their exclusion from the canon, rather than with gender as such. Despite the lack of a decisive theoretical intervention in the field, Sheriff argued that feminist theory could have an impact on scholarship in art history, most productively by fusing critique with careful attention to historical context. Janice Bergman-Carton (Art History, Southern Methodist University) followed with a paper entitled “Convulsive Beauty: The Gendering of Print Technology in the French Fin-de-Siècle.” The paper examined the possible origins and functions of “unlikely couplings of printing presses and erotically charged women” in French advertising material and decorative arts of the Belle Epoque. In the final presentation, Mary Ann Doane (Modern Culture and Media, Brown) focused on the cultural force of representations of the (female) face in its role as a screen and as a medium between viewer and filmmaker. In particular, she raised questions about the relationship between aesthetics and politics in feminist film theory.

Joan W. Scott (center), Daniel J. Sherman and Janis Bergman-Carton (foreground)

The closing discussion featured commentary by Joan Scott, who also served as chair, Jane Gallop (English, UWM) and Wendy Brown (Political Science, UC-Berkeley). Brown expressed concern about the rise of ethics at the expense of politics (with its preoccupation with power and potential for change) in academic discourse, while Gallop wondered about the risks when gender becomes established within institutional academic hierarchies. In conclusion, Scott argued that gender remains a “useful category of analysis,” as long as it does not become a prescriptive list of questions scholars tick off in lieu of more probing, contextual inquiry. Participation from many of the conference speakers and from a diverse group of participants from the UWM and the wider Milwaukee community made this closing session an especially lively one. Work is now proceeding on an “In Terms of Gender” book manuscript for the Center’s book series, Twenty-First Century Studies, with Indiana University Press.
CHCI Annual Meeting

On March 9 and 10, the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI) held its annual meeting in San Marino, California. “Regional Logics” was hosted by the Huntington Library. The meeting consisted of lectures addressing the theme and workshops addressing the status of the humanities in global contexts. Deputy director Kate Kramer represented the Center, a long-time member of CHCI, at the meeting.

Especially productive programs included the workshops. Victor Bailey (University of Kansas) and Wiljan van den Akker (Netherlands Royal Academy of Science) chaired a lively session entitled “Measuring the Humanities: Metrics, Assessment, and Advocacy.” Bailey addressed the central importance for humanities centers, but also for provosts and deans, of questions of assessment and metrics. He set forth several possible indicators, including prestige of fellowships, creation of books, amount of private endowments, impact on curriculum, and outreach in the community. Humanities centers, Bailey summarized, will increasingly need to demonstrate, and illustrate specifically, their performance on a global and local level. Akker compared the “problem” of assessment in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Australia to what happens in the United States.

A large part of the subsequent discussion addressed the need to be able to articulate the stakes within and outside of academia. The arts, but also science, for instance, are well-recognized outside of academia, but the public continues to associate the humanities primarily with higher education. A compelling tool to demonstrate the value of humanities scholarship could help the humanities maintain and even enhance its standing.

Another workshop, “Situating the Humanities: Spaces, Places, and Adjacencies” was chaired by Susan Manning (University of Edinburgh) and Michael Steinberg (Brown University) and addressed how the physical space, geographical location, and interior of a humanities center fosters intellectual community or culture, facilitating intellectual endeavor and civic engagement. Comments from the audience during discussion addressed the pros and cons of locating humanities centers in central campus locations versus marginal areas, of sharing cookies in the afternoon to foster community, and the trials and tribulations of renovations and new construction. Audience members discussed the importance of collaboration and flexibility in their considerations of offices, general gathering areas, and multidisciplinary humanities labs and how these spaces foster both intellectual community and diverse concrete intellectual endeavors.

Congratulations

The Center would like to congratulate the following former fellows who were promoted to Associate Professor with tenure during the 2006-07 academic year:

Sukanya Banerjee (English, 2003-04)
Andrew Kincaid (English, 2003-04)
Aims McGuinness (History, 2003-04)
Lisa Moline (Visual Art, 2003-04)
Peter Paik (French, Italian, and Comparative Literature, 2002-03)
Jian Xu (French, Italian, and Comparative Literature, 2004-05)

We also extend congratulations to Advisory Committee member Carol Stabile (Journalism and Mass Communication), who has been promoted to Full Professor.
Center Launches Advancement Effort

New for the 2007-08 academic year, the Center for 21st Century Studies provides UWM faculty a central venue for the pursuit of externally funded, interdisciplinary research projects involving the humanities.

Spearheading this venture is John C. Blum, the Center’s newly appointed Associate Director for Advancement and Planning (ADAP). In this position, John is charged with overseeing external grant activities, with an emphasis on seeking funding for collaborative projects that can be housed at the Center. Additionally, he can assist individual humanities faculty members who are in search of external funding for their research, as well as faculty in the sciences, engineering, and professional schools who are interested in partnering with humanities faculty on collaborative projects.

Beyond these activities, John is also working with other advancement partners across the university to increase outside funding for the Center’s programming, including the search for major endowment gifts. The Center is one of the priorities for the College of Letters and Science in the university’s current comprehensive fundraising campaign.

The ADAP position is supported through an award from the Research Growth Initiative (RGI), UWM’s flagship campaign to increase external funding for research. The RGI award represents a ringing endorsement of the humanities as the crossroads of interdisciplinary exchange, an idea at the heart of the Center’s mission since its founding. We are very excited about expanding the Center’s core activities—the fellowship program, public programming, and publications—to include advancement and planning, all in the spirit of promoting interdisciplinary work on the UWM campus and beyond.

Current Center Staff


**Center Faculty Advisory Committee for 2006-07**

- Anees Aneesh (Sociology)
- Christopher Burns (Music)
- Jane Gallop (English)
- Lane Hall (English)
- Anne Hansen (History)
- Raymond Isaacs (Architecture)
- John Koethe (Philosophy)
- Tasha Oren (English/Film Studies)
- Peter Paik (French, Italian, and Comparative Literature)
- Carol Stabile (Journalism and Mass Communication)
- Tanya Tiffany (Art History)
- William Washabaugh (Anthropology)

Ex officio members: Center Director Daniel J. Sherman, L&S Associate Director Charles Schuster, and Masters of Liberal Studies Director Jeffrey Hayes.

The Center would like to thank members who are cycling off the committee for their service: Joe Austin (History), Derek Counts (Art History), Kristie Hamilton (English), Jennifer Jordan (Sociology), and Caroline Seymour-Jorn (French, Italian, and Comparative Literature).

Former Center Visitors

Paula Sanders, who visited the Center in 2004, has been appointed Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies at Rice University, where she remains a member of the History department. Her new book, *Creating Medieval Cairo: Empire, Religion and Architectural Preservation in 19th Century Egypt*, which incorporates material she presented at the Center’s symposium on “Colonial Cities,” will be published in the fall by the American University in Cairo Press.
Michelle Bolduc is Assistant Professor of French, Italian & Comparative Literature at UWM and also serves as the director of the Comparative Literature Program. Her articles have been published in journals such as *Medievalia et Humanistica*, *Rhetorica*, and *Arthuriana*. Her research at the Center, the foundation of an upcoming book project, will focus on the “globalization” of authority in late-medieval culture by examining the uses of past knowledge from non-Christian sources in the Middle Ages.

Diane Canfield Bywaters, Professor of Art & Design at UW–Stevens Point, has exhibited her work in galleries and arts centers throughout the United States and is represented in Milwaukee by the Tory Folliard Gallery. During her fellowship at the Center, she will create a new series of aerial perspectives of the city of Milwaukee entitled “The Past, Present, and Future Imaged within the City.”

Barrett Kalter, Assistant Professor of English at UWM, has published articles in *ELH* and *Modern Philology*. As a Center fellow he will be completing his book manuscript, *Modern Antiquities: Imagination, Scholarship, and the Material Past*, which examines the formation of a distinctively modern historical consciousness in the literary and material cultures of eighteenth-century England.

Christina Maranci is Associate Professor of Art History at UWM. In addition to her books, *A Survival Guide for Art History* (2004) and *Medieval Armenian Architecture: Constructions of Race and Nation* (2001), she has published numerous articles in such journals as *Art Bulletin*, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* and *Journal of the Society of Armenian Studies*. Her project explores the technologies of memory embedded in stone-carved texts, sculpture, performance, and architectural forms of the early medieval Transcaucus.
Bernard C. Perley is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at UWM. His project, “Exploring Intertextualities of American Indian ‘Past Knowing,’” draws on religious studies and history in exploring the cosmogonies, ethnogenesis, and experiential crises of American Indians from multiple perspectives. His project will also consider the intertextualities of the Maliseet language, oral tradition, landscape, and cosmogony. He expects the project to result in graphic representations as well as publications.

Arijit H. Sen, Assistant Professor of Architecture at UWM, will complete a book manuscript for his project “Mobile Bodies, Transgressing Selves: Politics of Place and South Asian Ethnic Identity, 1900-2000” during his fellowship. His project will analyze the cultural landscape of South Asian immigrants in the San Francisco Bay area during the twentieth century and examine how immigrants creatively reproduced their ethnic identity in the urban built environment.

Caroline Seymour-Jorn is Assistant Professor of French, Italian & Comparative Literature at UWM. Her articles have appeared in Critique, Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies, and Journal of Muslim Affairs. Her project, “Beyond Ethnography: Considering the Present through the Past,” examines how Egyptian women writers draw upon past historical eras to explore contemporary ramifications of political and economic policies, gender ideologies, and religious fundamentalisms.

FRI OCT 19
OPEN FORUM: Opportunities at the Center
1:00 pm; CRT 939

FRI NOV 9
OPEN FORUM: Collaborative Research at the Center
1:00 pm; CRT 939
Fall 2007 Calendar of Events

FRI SEPT 7
Disciplinary Dialogues
3:00 pm; CRT 118

FRI SEPT 28
2006-07 Center Fellows Presentations
with presentations by Barbara Ley (Journalism & Mass Communication, UWM), Jon McKenzie (English, UW-Madison), Gillian Rodger (Music, UWM), Tanya Tiffany (Art History, UWM), Robert Wolensky (Sociology, UW-Stevens Point)
2 pm; CRT 118
Center Open House
4 pm; CRT 939

FRI OCT 12
Past Knowing/Future Knowledge: Archaeology and Museums in the 21st Century
a symposium organized by Daniel J. Sherman (History, Center director) and Jane Waldbaun (Art History, UWM) including Carla Antonaccio (Classics, Duke University), Susanne Ebbinghaus (Harvard University Art Museums), Geoff Emberling (Oriental Institute Museum, University of Chicago), Virginia Fields (Los Angeles County Museum of Art), and Patty Gerstenblith (Law, DePaul University) co-sponsored by Archaeological Institute of America-Milwaukee Society
1:30 pm; CRT 175

FRI OCT 26
Disciplinary Dialogues
with a lecture by Helena Michie (English, Rice University) and commentaries by David Hoeweler (History, UWM) and Jason Puskar (English, UWM)
3:00 pm; CRT 118

FRI NOV 2
Center coordinates Fundamentalism, Violence, and Vision, a symposium organized by Ihab Hassan (Vilas Professor Emeritus, UWM) and Peter Y. Paik (French, Italian & Comparative Literature, UWM) with presentations by Alan Jacobs (Wheaton) and Klaus Stierstorfer (Muenster) and commentaries by the following UWM faculty: Anne Hansen (History), Caroline Seymour-Jom (French, Italian & Comparative Literature), and Merry Wiesner-Hanks (History)

New Working Papers on the Center Web Site
The Center has added two papers to its online Working Paper series: Twenty-First Century Papers. Edward S. Hinchman (Philosophy, Fellow 2005-06), “Judging as Inviting Self-Trust,” and Julius Sensat (Philosophy, Fellow 2005-06), “Rawlsian Justice and Estrangement: Insights from Hegel and Marx.” To read this new work, please go to the publications section of the Center web site. Works-in-progress, these working papers have a hyperlink to their author’s e-mail address on the title page to give readers a quick and easy way to engage the author with comments, questions, and suggestions.
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co-sponsored by UWM Comparative Study of Religion Program; Department of English; Department of French, Italian & Comparative Literature; College of Letters & Science; and UWM Foundation
10:00 am; CRT 175

THU NOV 8
Center co-sponsors a lecture by Sandra Gunning (English, University of Michigan) entitled “Samuel Ajayi Crowther and the Meaning of African Return,” UWM English Department Visiting Scholars Series sponsored by the William F. Vilas Trust
2:00 pm; CRT 238

FRI NOV 16
4:30 pm; AUP 170

FRI DEC 7
The Historical Arc of the Commons: Past and Residual Commons in Contemporary Commons Activism
a symposium organized by Rachel Ida Buff (History, UWM) and Kathryn Milun (Fellow, Tomales Bay Institute) including David Bollier (Fellow, Tomales Bay Institute), Peter Linebaugh (History, University of Toledo), Bernard Perley (Anthropology, UWM), and Carol M. Rose (Law, University of Arizona) co-sponsored by Tomales Bay Institute
Time and place to be announced

2007 Tenennesen Graduate Research Fellow
This past summer, the Center hosted its third Tenennesen Graduate Research Fellow, a UWM dissertator within one or two semesters of finishing. Ada Hyso (Political Science) intensively used her Center office well into the summer to work on her project “Ethnicity and Interstate War” before travelling to newly independent Montenegro in August to interview key participants in the events of the 1990s.
   The Center also provided office space to another UWM dissertator, David Kosalka (English and Modern Studies), who used it for his work on: “Re-Writing History out of the Crisis of Modernity.”
center for 21st century studies

Joan W. Scott during closing remarks, In Terms of Gender conference, May 5, 2007