

BCRW Newsletter
Fall 2008
September
Volume 17, No. 1

BCRW

BARNARD CENTER FOR
RESEARCH ON WOMEN

Gender on Ice

With keynote presentations by
Isaac Julien, Sherrill Grace,
and Gabrielle Walker

Abolition Democracy and Global Politics

Angela Davis

Women for Afghan Women

Fahima Vorgetts, Manizha Naderi,
and Mary Lu Christie '67



Think Globally. Think Feminism.

The one thing that is not being debated this fall as we enter the presidential election season is that whatever the results, they will be momentous. The issues raised at this past spring's Scholar and Feminist Conference, "Gender and Political Participation," including encouraging wider political participation and more gender and racial diversity among our elected officials, remain critically important. Political discussions around science are also crucially relevant and issues such as climate change, environmental conservation, and alternative energy have been brought to the table. Each of these issues is not just about advances in scientific knowledge, but also about social relations. How do social choices or international conflicts affect the environment, for example?

This semester we take a closer look at these issues through a number of different events, all of which are sure to raise important questions about science and its impact on our world. This year's Virginia C. Gildersleeve conference, "Gender on Ice," will bring artists, scholars, scientists, and writers into conversation about how to better understand the impact of human activity at the Poles, and how this region, a vital part of the world's ecosystems, has been represented. We take up this topic at a moment when the Poles have once again become a subject of both general interest and international conflict.

Our Lunchtime Lecture series will also address the interaction between science and society. Assistant Professor of Women's Studies Rebecca Young will present her research reviewing how scientists have correlated so-called "masculine" and "feminine" interests with hormone exposure *in utero*, and how those correlations create a cultural imagination about gender differences that contribute to inequality in occupation, education, and family life. Associate Professor of Anthropology Nadia Abu El-Haj will discuss her new research into how race and gender figure into the field of genetic anthropology and the construction of different cultures.

Our other high profile events share the sense that gender is deeply embedded in issues of international concern and even conflict. This year's Helen Pond McIntyre '48 Lecture will be delivered by scholar and activist Angela Davis, who will ask us to consider the issues of imprisonment and militarism as crucial parts of the feminist struggle for global democracy. We will also look at the status of women in Afghanistan seven years after the beginning of the US invasion with two events – a panel discussion with Women for Afghan Women, including Barnard alumna Mary Lu Christie '67, as well as a screening of the acclaimed documentary film *Postcards from Tora Bora*.

From the South Pole to Afghanistan, from science to anthropology to foreign policy, this semester's events span an enormous range of highly relevant topics and locations. We hope you will join us for what is sure to be an exciting and provocative semester.

I want to thank Acting Director Neferti Tadiar for the work that she did in leading the Center while I was on leave at Harvard. This fall's excellent line-up is due to her vision and leadership for which all of us at the Center are extremely grateful.

Sincerely,


Janet R. Jakobsen

BCRW

BARNARD CENTER FOR
RESEARCH ON WOMEN

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An interdisciplinary conference featuring a film by Isaac Julien



BCRW Projects



Scholar & Feminist Online

Issue 6.3/Summer 2008

Borders on Belonging: Gender and Immigration

Guest Edited by Neferti Tadiar

This issue emerged from last year's Scholar and Feminist Conference, "Fashioning Citizenship: Gender and Immigration," and includes conference footage as well as new contributions from scholars, artists and activists who ask such questions as: Why do immigrant populations across different national contexts become scapegoats for all of the world's social ills, from widespread unemployment to rampant crime? What roles do gender, race and sexuality play in maintaining and policing the borders placed on national belonging? *SFO* takes up a range of issues – from economic factors to collective anxieties and feelings, from concerns of "security" to the cultural and symbolic import of what it means to "belong" in an increasingly transnational world.

This issue was made possible in part by support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

www.barnard.edu/sfonline

New Feminist Solutions

Volume 4

Towards a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice

The latest report in our New Feminist Solutions series is based on the 2007 colloquium, "Towards a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice," which featured a public lecture by Taiwanese scholar and sexuality activist Josephine Ho and writer and anti-globalization activist Naomi Klein. The report, like the colloquium, outlines the ways in which sexual justice and economic justice are inextricably linked, even though movements for global economic justice tend to shy away from sexuality issues and campaigns for sexual rights rarely foreground economic concerns. The report not only outlines these linkages, but it promotes a re-imagining of the way current movements and frameworks function.

This report was made possible in part by the generous support of the Ford Foundation and the Overbrook Foundation.

Free Electronic Copies

Download PDF versions of all three reports by visiting www.barnard.edu/bcrw and clicking on New Feminist Solutions.

Free Printed Copies

To request printed copies email us at bcrw@barnard.edu

From the Collection

Women in the Workforce

Curated by Suzanna Denison '09

Women have always contributed to the workforce in formal and informal ways, but their labor has not always been recognized. Karl Marx stated that "[women's] labor appears to be a personal service outside of capital." From the social issues concerning sexual harassment to the policy reforms surrounding the wage gap, this exhibit depicts the variety of women in the workforce-related materials from the BCRW collection. These documents chronologically span three decades, starting in the early 1970s with documents from MIT's significant conference "Women in Science and Technology," which sparked a discussion of women in higher education and skilled professions, to materials that showcase 1990s women-run, women-owned businesses, which not only placed women in the center of the capitalistic market but shifted the terrain through their self-identified presence.

www.barnard.edu/bcrw

BCRW Calendar

09/

Friday–Saturday, 09/19–09/20
8:30 AM–6:00 PM

What Is Feminist Politics Now? Local and Global

A conference sponsored by the Columbia Institute for Research on Women and Gender
Jerome Greene Hall, Columbia Law School



Wednesday, 09/24 Noon
**Sex-Typed Interests:
Do Early Hormones Create
“Empathizers” and
“Systemizers”?**

A lecture with Rebecca Young
BCRW, 101 Barnard Hall



10/

Thursday, 10/02 5:30 PM

Women for Afghan Women: Two Models for Successful Grassroots Work in Afghanistan

A panel discussion with Fahima Vorgetts,
Manizha Naderi, and Mary Lu Christie '67
Sulzberger Parlor,
3rd Floor Barnard Hall



Wednesday, 10/15 6:00 PM

Postcards from Tora Bora

A film screening and discussion with
directors Wazmah Osman and Kelly Dolak
202 Altschul, Altschul Hall

Wednesday, 10/29 Noon

The Descent of Men

A lecture with Nadia Abu El-Haj
BCRW, 101 Barnard Hall

Thursday, 10/30 7:00 PM

Abolition Democracy and Global Politics

A lecture with Angela Davis
The Great Hall, The Cooper Union

11/

Thursday, 11/13 6:30 PM

Margaret Mead: American Icon

A tribute to Margaret Mead sponsored by
the American Museum of Natural History
Kaufmann Theatre,
American Museum of Natural History



Thursday, 11/20 6:00 PM

True North

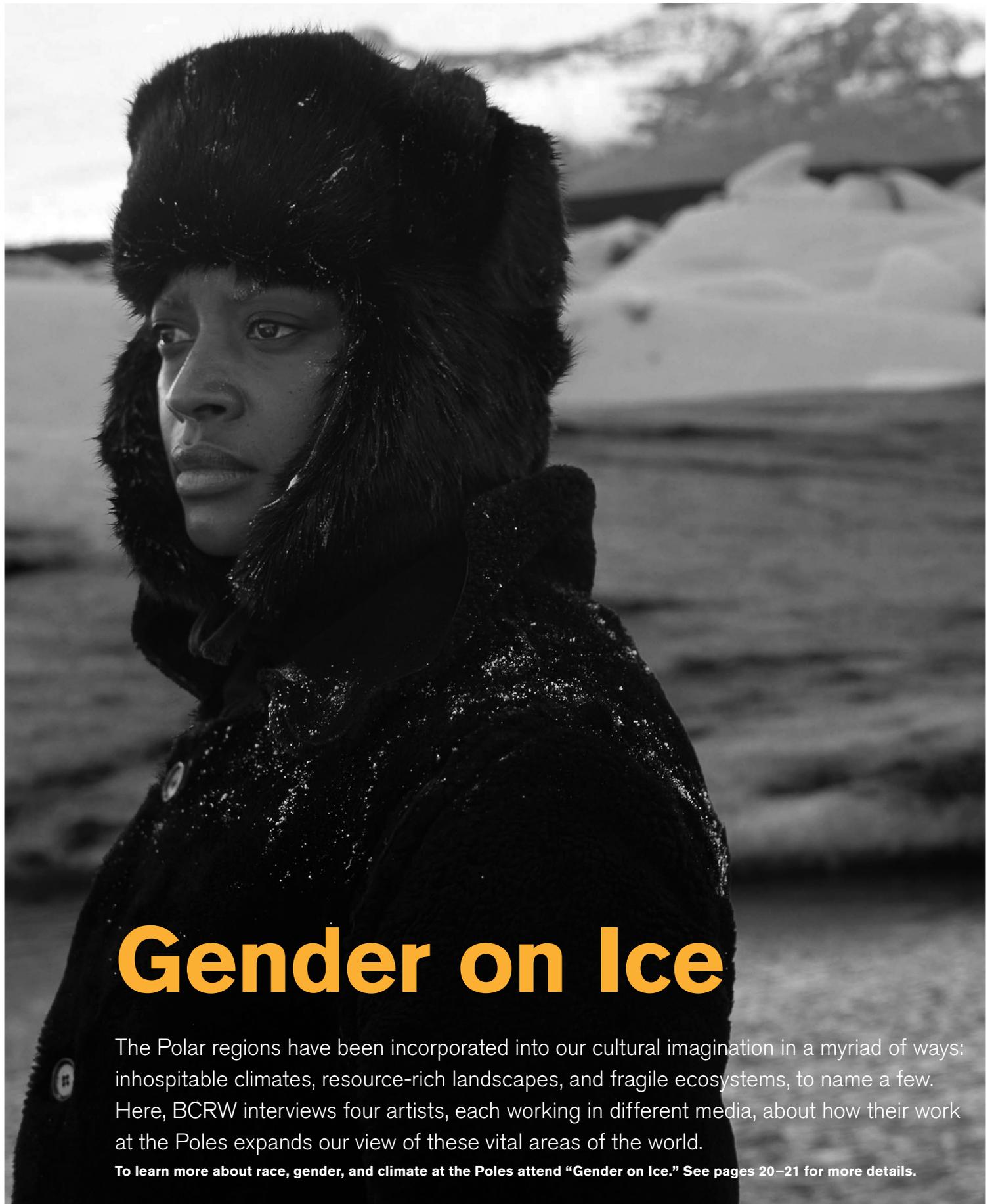
A film screening and discussion with Isaac
Julien, Lisa Bloom, and Monica Miller
202 Altschul Hall



Friday, 11/21 9:30 AM–5:00 PM

Gender on Ice

An interdisciplinary conference featuring
the Roslyn Silver '27 Science Fellowship
Lecture by Gabrielle Walker
Sulzberger Parlor, 3rd Floor Barnard Hall



Gender on Ice

The Polar regions have been incorporated into our cultural imagination in a myriad of ways: inhospitable climates, resource-rich landscapes, and fragile ecosystems, to name a few. Here, BCRW interviews four artists, each working in different media, about how their work at the Poles expands our view of these vital areas of the world.

To learn more about race, gender, and climate at the Poles attend “Gender on Ice.” See pages 20–21 for more details.



Subhankar Banerjee

Photographer and Arctic activist

There has been increasing public awareness about the potentially catastrophic environmental changes in the Polar regions. How do these environmental factors, and their effects on the indigenous people of these regions, influence your work?

For the past eight years I have spent all my creative energy on the Arctic – its land and animals, its people and their issues. Both cultural and natural ecologies of the Arctic have been seriously threatened in recent years by climate change, migrations of toxins, and resource wars. My knowledge of these issues that inform my aesthetic strategies come from two sources – observations and experiences of my indigenous friends of the North; and conversations with scientists who are working in the Arctic regions. Instead of documenting each of these changes individually, I have been attempting to develop an aesthetic vision of ecology, land-as-home, that supports communities of our species and many other species with whom we share this planet. The Arctic regions support many indigenous communities, as well as an incredible biological diversity of ecosystems that connect the Arctic to every land and all the oceans of our planet. We know so little about this whole part of our planet and its inhabitants and yet we are wasting no time getting there and exploiting its resources.

From the very beginning of my project I have collaborated closely with my Gwich'in and Inupiat friends of the Alaskan Arctic, and our collaboration continues to be instrumental in bringing the voices of the indigenous people of the North and stories of their human rights struggles to the forefront of public discussion, something that has been ignored for far too long by the dominant culture and its institutions. The American conservation movement from its inception separated human from nature, which has proven to be cruel to the Native Americans. My dear friend and Gwich'in activist Sarah James wrote in 2001, "I learned by living out in the wilderness." When we contrast this statement with the one made by Howard Zahniser in The Wilderness Act of 1964, "... man himself is a visitor who does not remain [in a wilderness]," we realize we have much work to do to unlearn these intolerances, and that is what informs my work.



Joyce Campbell

Interdisciplinary artist

Visitors to the Poles face some of the harshest climates on earth. What were some of the challenges you faced in working in that type of environment? How did these physical challenges influence your work and your goals as an artist, and what effect did this environment have on your choice of medium?

“Last Light: Antarctica” is a series of photographic works shot in early spring of 2006 when I traveled to the Ross Sea region of Antarctica for two weeks with the Artists to Antarctica program sponsored by Creative New Zealand and Antarctica New Zealand. The series is driven by my burgeoning horror at the effects of climate change on the earth’s polar ice caps.

Because of my interest in physicality and anachronism, I chose to work with very primitive photographic means. I worked with a wooden field camera, silver plates and large format films. This was of course very difficult and risky, but the artifacts that I produced wear that physicality on their surface and I believe that informs the meaning they carry.

“Last Light” employs older techniques to chart contemporary phenomena, including climate change and glacial melting, which will have enormous and uncharted effects on our future. The daguerreotype is a photographic technique that was essentially outmoded by the mid-nineteenth century invention of silver halide emulsion. I used this technique to document signs in the ice: fissures, flaws, pressure ridges and a screaming ice ghoul, a harbinger that confronted me high in an icefall as I descended through a white out. Because the daguerreotype’s decline preceded Antarctic exploration, it is a mode of representation that has never been practiced on that continent. I therefore hope to draw my audience into a conversation about modernity and obsolescence, the relationship of individual action to collective conditions and the evidentiary role of photography.

Like the daguerreotype before it, large format silver halide photography is quickly being replaced by digital photography. Because digital photography can more easily be manipulated than silver-based photography, the photograph’s role as evidence is also fast approaching obsolescence. Evidence has a particular value in a warming world in which climate change skeptics continue to treat overwhelmingly ominous data as if it were as malleable as a Photoshop file. One of my responses to the digital revolution has been to reconnect to the evidentiary impulse in photography by working with large format cameras to produce platinum and cyanotype contact prints. These processes produce images of far greater veracity than an enlarged print and allow me to play more intimately with the real.

Through their massive, physically immersive scale, anachronistic technique and material weight, the “Last Light” photographs are formulated to be objects as historically and physically compelling as the subjects they represent. Through them I am inviting my audience to invest physically in Antarctica, a place of unrivalled importance and unfathomable strangeness that most of us will never visit but which all of us continuously undermine.



Isaac Julien

Filmmaker and contemporary artist

The history of North Pole exploration has been one dominated by images of white European male explorers who have had very problematic relationships with their Inuit collaborators. How has this history of sexual and racial exploitation influenced your work?

At Harvard where I taught “The Poetic Documentary,” we studied *Nanook of the North*, the 1922 film by Robert J. Flaherty, which documented the struggles of an Inuit named Nanook who was living in the Canadian Arctic. The film is considered a cornerstone of cinema studies, and often thought of as the first feature-length documentary ever made. We also looked at its critique, *Nanook Revisited*, made by a Canadian film collective. The class discussion called into question the film’s ‘classic’ categorization in the domain of cinema studies—as film historian Clyde Taylor terms it, ‘passive racism’ that neglects the meaning of national allegory and the role of racism in it. But to say that *Nanook of the North* is racist would be based on the premise that most other early “classic” films were free from stereotyping and racial fetishism. It was clear to me that the history of sexual and racial exploitation would have to be a subtext of *True North*.

I always wanted to make a piece of work about snow and ice as representations of ambivalence and ‘whiteness’. For me, the image of a lone black figure against this backdrop reaches beyond identity, to existential questions – think of Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, or some of Frantz Fanon’s writing in *Black Skin, White Mask*. I was inspired by a wax-work of Matthew Henson, the first African-American who traveled to the North Pole, in the Great Blacks in Wax Museum in Baltimore. My re-articulation of Matthew Henson’s story, encouraged by the work of Lisa Bloom’s book *Gender on Ice*, enabled me to perform this critique by translating it into another idiom - namely that of video art. During my research I discovered an interview by Matthew Henson and this became the film narration. The important issue for me, however, was the interracial dependency between the ‘races’ – Robert Peary, who led the 1909 expedition, Matthew Henson, who accompanied him, and the Inuit collaborators.



Connie Samaras

Photographer and video artist

Public attention to Antarctica has recently increased due to discussions about global warming and other environmental issues. How do the images you present seek to provide another narrative, an alternative to the way in which many people see the regions as another “frontier” to be conquered or colonized for land and resources?

My approach to constructing a narrative counterpoint to both the heroic photographic tradition of polar exploration as well as the seemingly neutral conquering story structures of Discovery-type channels was to juxtapose two differing components. The first is a set of large-scale, highly produced immersive photographic images shot of various structures at the South Pole. These images are composed to create a sense of dislocation and to appear at once both realistic and abstract. By formally structuring the photographs for both a documentary and fantastical reading, my intent is for viewers to search for the ways in which they understand both the real and the imaginary. The photographs are stark, devoid of people, and shot with close-up lenses in contrast to the all-encompassing, all “knowing” tourist expectations of the panoramic “natural” landscape. Juxtaposed with the photographs of the South Pole are videos where “life” is in evidence. One is of a worker sleeping in the cargo bay of a transport plane on his way back to Christchurch. Shot up close, the worker is dressed in full gear, slowly breathing in deep sleep. The tape is framed and edited in the style of space horror films. The second tape is of a Weddell seal popping up through an ice hole to oxygenate. This video, antithetical to the usual structure of nature films, is unedited and its duration is that of the time it takes the seal to complete its breathing cycle. The result is that the colonizing, mediated gaze is disrupted and the viewer starts to become aware of her/his own breathing and immediate environment thus, as Matias Viegner recently wrote about this work (*artUs* 2008), “the extraordinary nature of the place is downplayed by conveying it through the most ordinary of functions, the need of living creatures to breathe.”

My project, both video (*Ross Ice Shelf*) and photographic (“South Pole”), was to depict the liminal space between life support architecture and extreme environment. Although I was on the ice only four years ago (late 2004), the level of public awareness was nowhere near where it is now (e.g. conservative dismissals of global warming were still then being discussed on cable news as though these too were plausible arguments). Although my approach was not directly about environmental changes and potential catastrophes, I was interested in revealing the necessity of technology as a prosthetic device for on-going human survival in the extreme polar climate. I was also interested in depicting the steady and indifferent movement of geological time as it literally ices over all attempts, no matter how great the engineering feats, of colonizing the Pole. The project’s title, V.A.L.I.S. -- vast active living intelligence system (borrowed from P.K. Dick) was selected to infer ideas of multiple simultaneous realities, multiple psychological and political geographies, and human intelligence as a product of interdependency.

Global Justice & Global Democracy

IMPRISONMENT IS ONE OF THE ISSUES THAT CHALLENGES US TO THINK ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS FOR ALL WOMEN TO LIVE AND WORK IN EQUALITY, DIGNITY AND AUTONOMY. GIVEN THAT EIGHTY PERCENT OF WOMEN CURRENTLY IN PRISON REPORTED INCOMES OF LESS THAN \$2,000 PER YEAR BEFORE THEIR ARREST, AND 92 PERCENT REPORT INCOMES UNDER \$10,000 , IT IS CLEAR THAT NONE OF THESE WOMEN LIVED AND WORKED UNDER CONDITIONS OF EQUALITY, OR EVEN DIGNITY, BEFORE THEIR IMPRISONMENT.

BCRW's "Women Seeking Justice" series has focused on the question of women and imprisonment since it was inaugurated in Fall 2001 with a lecture by anti-death penalty activist and author of *Dead Man Walking*, Sister Helen Prejean. The record rates of imprisonment in the United States has made a widespread conversation about the causes and implications of incarceration all the more imperative. Specifically, we have asked what contribution to our understanding of incarceration can be made by addressing these issues from a feminist perspective? And what does thinking about imprisonment teach us about the broader project of feminism, instituted in BCRW's mission statement as a commitment that "all women should live and work with equality, dignity and autonomy"?

Imprisonment is one of the issues that challenges us to think about what it means for all women to live and work in equality, dignity and autonomy. Given that eighty percent of women currently in prison reported incomes of less than \$2,000 per year before their arrest, and 92 percent report incomes under \$10,000¹, it is clear that none of these women lived and worked under conditions of equality, or even dignity, before their imprisonment. Similarly, given that during the last twenty years the number of incarcerated women of color has grown eightfold²—twice the rate for white women—we must ask questions about the societal conditions that have led to these record rates of incarceration.

Over the past few decades, feminists like this fall's McIntyre Lecturer Angela Davis, have dedicated themselves to thinking through what it would mean to make the study of women adequate to the diversity and complexity of all women. The question of imprisonment and its implications for gender, race and class have been part of her work since her days as a young activist. In her book, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, Davis argues that ideas about gender, specifically gender and discipline, are central to what makes prison seem the obvious answer to violence in our society. Indeed, prison is so taken for granted in the U.S. that it is virtually impossible to think of a world without prisons. We define many of the problems in our society in terms of individual crime and the obvious answer to those problems is imprisonment.

And yet, the autonomous individuals who are thought to make up modern society are not simply people, but are gendered individuals. Davis documents how the structure of imprisonment tends to reflect this gendering, even as gender, race, and class are deeply interwoven in our imagination of both crime and punishment. The stereotypical narratives of violent men, particularly violent men of color, and vulnerable women, particularly vulnerable white women, have long histories in the United States, and are invoked repeatedly in contemporary popular culture. Not surprisingly, these same narratives are extremely powerful in how crimes are conceptualized and pursued (think of the national media obsession with the disappearance of young white women while the disappearance of women of color is ignored), as well as in how crimes are prosecuted. Studies have shown

continued on page 23

1. Prison Activist Resource Center. "Women and Prison-Eleven Things You Should Know About Women in Prison." 27 April 2004. <http://prisonactivist.org/women/women-in-prison.html>

2. Nancy Karshan. Women and Prison Today-"Women and Imprisonment in the U.S. — History and Current Reality." 27 April 2004. Prison Activist Resource Center. <http://www.prisonactivist.org/women/women-and-imprisonment.html>

Abolition Democracy and Global Politics

Angela Davis

Helen Pond McIntyre '48 Lecture

Thursday, 10/30

7:00 PM

The Great Hall, The Cooper Union

Since well before the publication of the feminist classic, *Women, Race, and Class* in 1981, this year's Helen Pond McIntyre '48 lecturer Angela Y. Davis has been concerned about the interconnections among issues, as well as about connections among peoples around the world. In "Abolition Democracy and Global Politics," Davis will present a new and wide-ranging vision for making connections among both issues and peoples. She develops the term "Abolition Democracy" from W.E.B. DuBois's influential text, *Black Reconstruction in America*, connecting the abolition of slavery, of the death penalty and of prisons themselves to the possibility of substantive democracy in the United States and globally. As Davis stated in a recent interview, "DuBois...argues that a host of democratic institutions are needed to fully achieve abolition—thus abolition democracy.... In thinking specifically about the abolition of prisons, [for example], using the approach of abolition democracy, we would propose the creation of an array of social institutions that would begin to solve the problems that set people on the track to prison, thereby helping to render the prison obsolete." In her lecture, Davis will link this concept of abolition democracy to questions of global politics. What does it mean that the prison-industrial-complex, often led by U.S. corporations, is expanding globally? What are the connections between the rapid expansion of prison industries and the military-industrial-complex? What global forces contribute to the exploitation of peoples in different parts of the world? How can feminists and other advocates for democracy connect their movements around the world? On October 30, we will learn what visions of another possible world—one of freedom, justice and democracy—are offered by these movements and by Davis's long experience as both an activist and a scholar.

Professor Davis's teaching career has taken her to San Francisco State University, Mills College, and UC Berkeley. She has also taught at UCLA, Vassar, the Claremont Colleges, and Stanford University. She has spent the last fifteen years at the University of California Santa Cruz where she is Professor of History of Consciousness, an interdisciplinary Ph.D program, and Professor of Feminist Studies. Angela Davis is the author of eight books and has lectured throughout the United States as well as in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and South America. In recent years a persistent theme of her work has been the range of social problems associated with incarceration and the generalized criminalization of those communities that are most affected by poverty and racial discrimination. She draws upon her own experiences in the early seventies as a person who spent eighteen months in jail and on trial, after being placed on the FBI's "Ten Most Wanted List." She has also conducted extensive research on numerous issues related to race, gender and imprisonment. Her most recent books are *Abolition Democracy: Beyond Empire, Prisons and Torture* and *Are Prisons Obsolete?* She is now completing a book on prisons and American history.

Co-sponsored by The Cooper Union, The Center for the Humanities at CUNY, The College and Community Fellowship Program at CUNY, and Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality at NYU.





Sex-Typed Interests: Do Early Hormones Create “Empathizers” and “Systemizers”?

Rebecca Young

Lunchtime Lecture Series

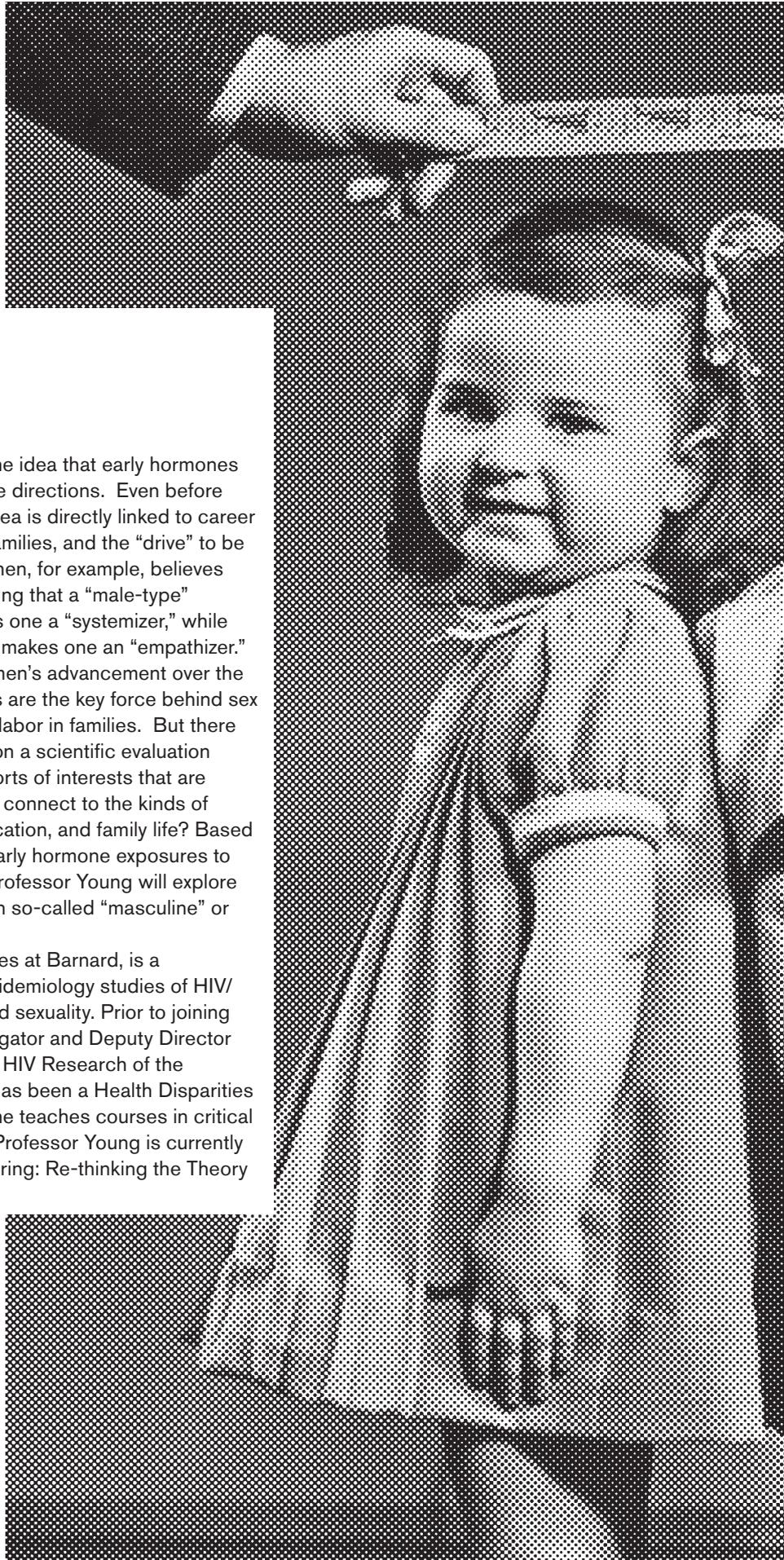
Wednesday, 09/24

12:00 PM

101 Barnard Hall

There is currently widespread scientific endorsement of the idea that early hormones channel our fundamental interests in masculine or feminine directions. Even before the research leaves the pages of scientific journals, this idea is directly linked to career choices and chances, education, the division of labor in families, and the “drive” to be a leader versus a nurturer. Psychologist Simon Baron-Cohen, for example, believes it explains the sex disparity among top scientists, suggesting that a “male-type” pattern of fundamental interest in inanimate objects makes one a “systemizer,” while fundamental interest in people (the “female-type” pattern) makes one an “empathizer.” For historically minded skeptics, it’s hard to reconcile women’s advancement over the past few decades with the idea that innate sex differences are the key force behind sex distribution in education, occupations, and the division of labor in families. But there are even stronger reasons to question this theory, based on a scientific evaluation of the studies themselves. In particular, how well do the sorts of interests that are studied in relation to prenatal hormone exposures actually connect to the kinds of differences they are meant to explain in occupations, education, and family life? Based on a systematic review of more than 300 studies linking early hormone exposures to sex-typed patterns of sexuality, cognition, and interests, Professor Young will explore what is actually known about the influence of hormones on so-called “masculine” or “feminine” interests.

Rebecca Young, Assistant Professor of Women’s Studies at Barnard, is a sociomedical scientist whose research includes social epidemiology studies of HIV/AIDS, and evaluation of biological work on sex, gender and sexuality. Prior to joining the faculty at Barnard College, she was a Principal Investigator and Deputy Director of the Social Theory Core at the Center for Drug Use and HIV Research of the National Development and Research Institutes, Inc., and has been a Health Disparities Scholar sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. She teaches courses in critical science studies, sexuality, gender theory, and HIV/AIDS. Professor Young is currently preparing a manuscript titled “Sex, Hormones and Hardwiring: Re-thinking the Theory of Brain Organization.”



The Descent of Men

Nadia Abu El-Haj

Lunchtime Lecture Series

Wednesday, 10/29

12:00 PM

101 Barnard Hall

How is race configured in the practices of genetic anthropology? What, more specifically, are the continuities and discontinuities between the practices of genetic anthropologists today and those of race scientists of old? Professor Nadia Abu El-Haj will analyze the evidentiary logic of research into male-Jewish origins within the broader context of genetic anthropological research into population genealogies, specifically considering the relationships among history, nature and culture established in this work. If, as many philosophers and cultural critics have argued, conceptions of nature have long grounded our modern senses of self, what exactly have the characters of “nature” as it relates to history (or descent) and of “culture” produced within this field of research?

Nadia Abu El-Haj, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Barnard, joined the department in Fall 2002. Previously, she held fellowships at Harvard University's Academy for International and Area Studies, the University of Pennsylvania Mellon Program, and the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. Her work examines the relationship between scientific knowledge and the making of social imaginations and political orders. She is a former Fulbright Fellow and a recipient of awards from the SSRC-McArthur Grant in International Peace and Security, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, among others. Prior to her arrival at Barnard she served on the faculty of the Anthropology Department at the University of Chicago. She is the author of *Facts on the Ground: Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society*, now in its second printing. In 2002 this book won the Middle East Studies Association's Albert Hourani Annual Book Award for the best book published on the Middle East that year.

Women for Afghan Women: Two Models for Successful Grassroots Work in Afghanistan

Fahima Vorgetts, Manizha Naderi,
and Mary Lu Christie '67

A panel discussion

Thursday, 10/02

5:30 PM

Sulzberger Parlor, 3rd Floor Barnard Hall

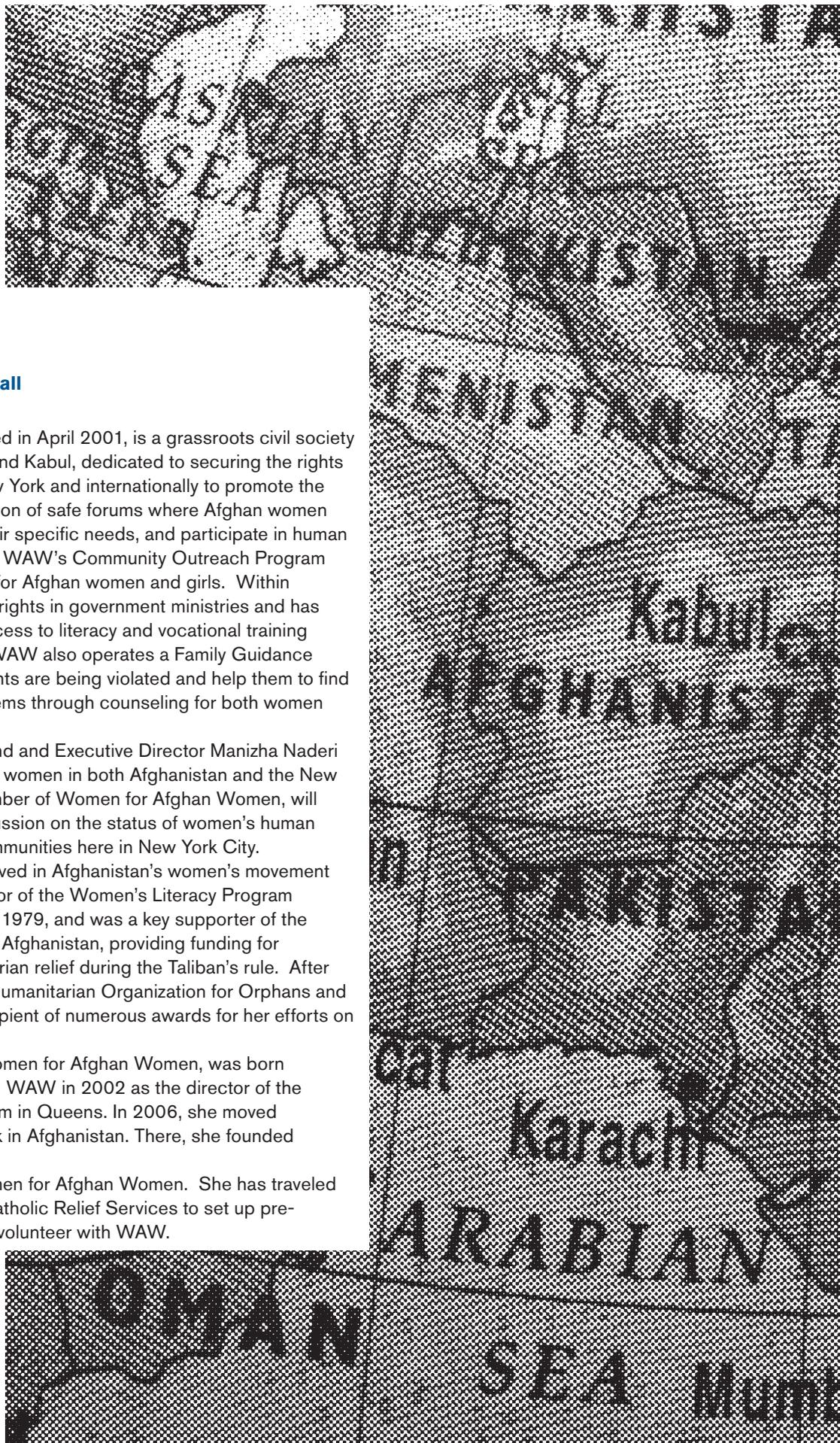
Women for Afghan Women (WAW), founded in April 2001, is a grassroots civil society organization with offices in New York City and Kabul, dedicated to securing the rights of Afghan women. WAW works both in New York and internationally to promote the agency of Afghan women through the creation of safe forums where Afghan women can network, develop programs to meet their specific needs, and participate in human rights advocacy in the international sphere. WAW's Community Outreach Program in Queens, NY provides essential services for Afghan women and girls. Within Afghanistan, WAW advocates for women's rights in government ministries and has worked to provide women and girls with access to literacy and vocational training classes and income-generating projects. WAW also operates a Family Guidance Center in Kabul to assist women whose rights are being violated and help them to find practical, attainable solutions to their problems through counseling for both women and men.

WAW Board Member Fahima Vorgetts and Executive Director Manizha Naderi will discuss their work providing services to women in both Afghanistan and the New York City area. Mary Lu Christie '67, a member of Women for Afghan Women, will introduce the speakers and frame this discussion on the status of women's human rights within Afghanistan and in Afghan communities here in New York City.

Fahima Vorgetts has been intimately involved in Afghanistan's women's movement since the mid-1960s. She served as director of the Women's Literacy Program in Afghanistan before leaving the country in 1979, and was a key supporter of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan, providing funding for underground schools for girls and humanitarian relief during the Taliban's rule. After the fall of the Taliban, she co-founded the Humanitarian Organization for Orphans and Widows of Afghanistan. Vorgetts is the recipient of numerous awards for her efforts on behalf of the women of Afghanistan.

Manizha Naderi, Executive Director of Women for Afghan Women, was born in Kabul and raised in New York. She joined WAW in 2002 as the director of the organization's Community Outreach Program in Queens. In 2006, she moved permanently to Kabul to direct WAW's work in Afghanistan. There, she founded WAW's Family Guidance Center.

Mary Lu Christie '67 is a member of Women for Afghan Women. She has traveled to Afghanistan several times, working for Catholic Relief Services to set up pre-schools in villages north of Kabul, and as a volunteer with WAW.



Postcards from Tora Bora

Wazmah Osman and Kelly Dolak

A film screening and discussion

Wednesday, 10/15

6:30 PM

202 Altschul Hall

In the summer of 2004, filmmakers Wazmah Osman and Kelly Dolak set out to make an independent film that explored whether Afghan women's lives had actually improved as a result of the US military campaign. The documentary that came out of this question, *Postcards from Tora Bora*, became far more than an exploration of women's rights in Afghanistan. The film also follows Wazmah Osman's journey as she returns to her childhood home, from which her family fled at the height of the Cold War. Armed only with rapidly fading memories, she recruits some unlikely and reluctant guides to put together the pieces of her past. As Osman desperately searches for any tangible evidence of her former life, the journey leads her to many unexpected places. On the road, Osman frequently finds herself at a strange intersection where cultures clash, identities are mistaken, and the past violently collides with the present. *Postcards from Tora Bora* has been screened at many international film festivals including the Tribeca Film Festival, the Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival, the Global Peace Film Festival, the Mill Valley Film Festival, and the Second Take / Splice In Film Festival, and has received numerous awards.

Wazmah Osman is a New York City based documentary filmmaker. She has a Masters degree in Middle Eastern Studies from New York University and currently is a PhD candidate in Culture and Communication at NYU. She is also completing the Culture and Media Program in Anthropology. Before going back to school she worked for six years at Millennium Film Workshops and Cooper Union School of the Arts as a film technician, film instructor, and curator.

Kelly Dolak is a filmmaker currently teaching digital filmmaking at Ramapo College. Her short films have been screened at film festivals both nationally and internationally. Her short, *Purse*, was showcased on PBS's "Reel New York" and screened at more than 10 film festivals. She began her producing career working for the Emmy-award winning show "Behind the Screen" for five years at AMC and now is an independent documentary film producer.



What Is Feminist Politics Now? Local and Global

Radhika Balakrishnan, keynote speaker

**A conference sponsored by Columbia University's
Institute for Research on Women and Gender
Friday–Saturday, 09/19–09/20
8:30 AM–6:00 PM
Columbia Law School, Jerome Greene Hall**

This two-day conference will explore the changing meanings of feminism and its intellectual, social, and political goals in a global context, examining how these meanings can be contained within the rubric of common social agendas. Can women within the post-industrial West effectively relate to, and remain engaged with, issues that arise from diverse locations and affect differently situated women in different ways? Is the subject of feminism women? How can the feminist “we” be de-centered or re-centered? And what emerging social movements within the United States and beyond are working to foster the collective interests of women across national, class, religious, and racial borders? The conference will feature a keynote address by Radhika Balakrishnan, Professor of Economics and International Studies at Marymount Manhattan College, and over a dozen other scholars, activists, and writers.

For more information about the conference, and a list of the many other panelists, please visit the Columbia Institute for Research on Women and Gender website at www.columbia.edu/cu/irwag or call 212. 854.3277.



Margaret Mead: American Icon

A tribute sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History

Thursday, 11/13

6:30 PM

Kaufmann Theater, 1st floor

American Museum of Natural History

Join the American Museum of Natural History for a riveting evening featuring memories and images of Margaret Mead '23, the best-known, and most controversial, anthropologist in 20th century America. Speakers will include Nancy Lutkehaus, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Southern California, who participated in BCRW's 2001 tribute to Mead and authored the just-released *Margaret Mead: American Icon*; Mead's daughter and grand-daughter, Mary Catherine Bateson and Sevanne Kassarian; and others. The event will be introduced by Laurel Kendall, Curator of the Division of Anthropology at AMNH. A book signing will follow. For a complete list of guests and for more information about the event, please visit www.amnh.org/mead.

Cost: \$15 (\$13.50 for Museum members, students, and seniors)



Gender on Ice

The Virginia C. Gildersleeve Conference

Conference kick-off: film screening and discussion

Thursday, 11/20

7:00 PM

202 Altschul Hall

The conference opens Thursday, November 20 with a presentation by award-winning filmmaker Isaac Julien of his short film *True North*, based on the story of Matthew Henson, the first African-American to explore the Arctic with Robert Peary in 1909. The film screening will be followed by a panel discussion with Isaac Julien, Lisa Bloom, and Monica Miller.

Workshop

With Roslyn Silver '27 Science Fellowship Lecture by Gabrielle Walker

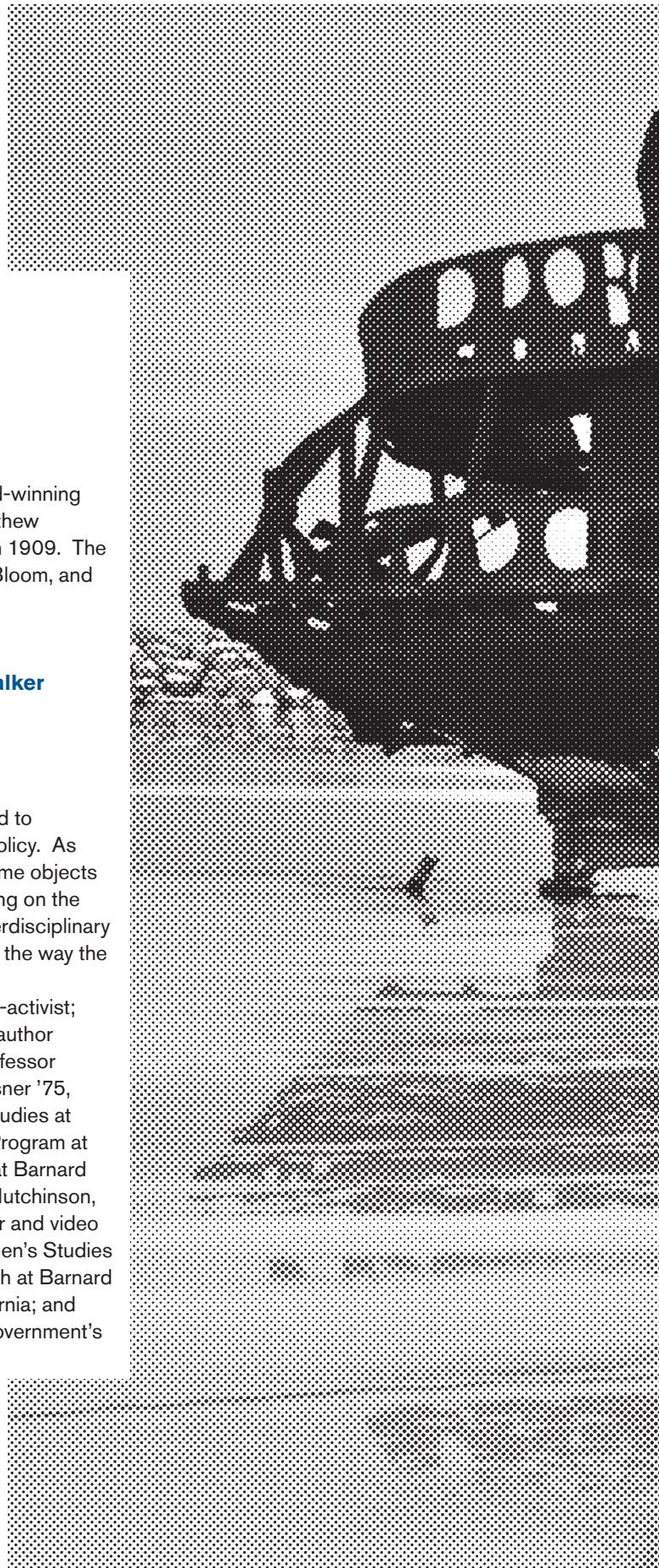
Friday, 11/21

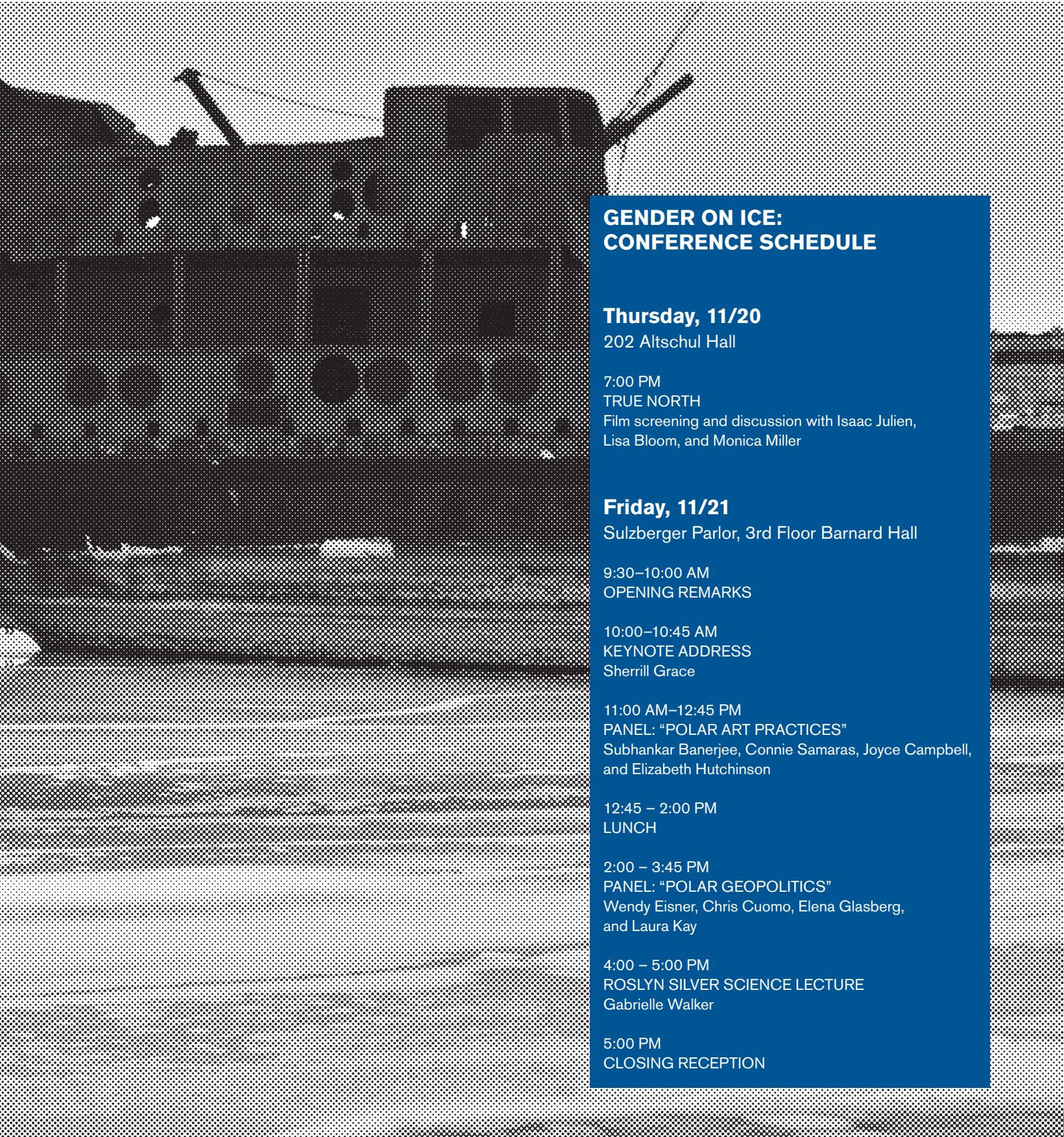
9:30 AM–5:00 PM

Registration in Barnard Hall Lobby

Stunning shifts in the ice of Polar environments underscore the growing need to understand the relations between the environment and human activity and policy. As the ice melts in both regions, the Arctic and Antarctic have once again become objects of international competition as well as sites of research and concern. Drawing on the natural sciences, the social sciences, history, literature, and the arts, this interdisciplinary workshop focuses on the intersection of science, policy, race, and gender in the way the Arctic and Antarctic are studied, represented, inhabited, and imagined.

Panelists include: Subhankar Banerjee, photographer and Arctic educator-activist; Lisa Bloom, Visiting Professor at the University of California San Diego and author of *Gender on Ice*; Joyce Campbell, interdisciplinary artist; Chris Cuomo, Professor of Women's Studies and Philosophy at the University of Georgia; Wendy Eisner '75, Associate Professor of Geography, Environmental Studies, and Women's Studies at the University of Cincinnati; Elena Glasberg, faculty member in the Writing Program at Princeton University and Adjunct Associate Professor of Women's Studies at Barnard College; Sherrill Grace, author of *Canada and the Idea of North*; Elizabeth Hutchinson, Assistant Professor of Art History at Barnard College; Isaac Julien, filmmaker and video artist; Laura Kay, Professor of Physics and Astronomy and Chair of the Women's Studies Department at Barnard College; Monica Miller, Assistant Professor of English at Barnard College; Connie Samaras, Professor of Studio Art at the University of California; and Gabrielle Walker, award-winning science writer and consultant to the UK Government's Office of Science.





GENDER ON ICE: CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Thursday, 11/20

202 Altschul Hall

7:00 PM

TRUE NORTH

Film screening and discussion with Isaac Julien,
Lisa Bloom, and Monica Miller

Friday, 11/21

Sulzberger Parlor, 3rd Floor Barnard Hall

9:30–10:00 AM

OPENING REMARKS

10:00–10:45 AM

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Sherrill Grace

11:00 AM–12:45 PM

PANEL: “POLAR ART PRACTICES”

Subhankar Banerjee, Connie Samaras, Joyce Campbell,
and Elizabeth Hutchinson

12:45 – 2:00 PM

LUNCH

2:00 – 3:45 PM

PANEL: “POLAR GEOPOLITICS”

Wendy Eisner, Chris Cuomo, Elena Glasberg,
and Laura Kay

4:00 – 5:00 PM

ROSLYN SILVER SCIENCE LECTURE

Gabrielle Walker

5:00 PM

CLOSING RECEPTION

BCRW Courses:

2008 Fall

Translating Silences: An Expanded Poetry Workshop With Charlotte Mandel

Dates: Wednesdays: 10/01, 10/15, 10/29, 11/12, 12/03, 12/17

Time: 6:15–8:15 PM

Location: BCRW, 101 Barnard Hall

Fee: \$ 200

To begin a poem is to connect with feeling, idea, and the joy of language. Poet Charlotte Mandel invites both new and previous participants to this supportive workshop, which aims to explore sources of poetry within the self while refining techniques of the craft. Whether published or a "closet" poet, you are welcome.

Thanks to enthusiastic response, the poetry workshop "Translating Silences" will continue to open each session with an additional half hour to focus upon the work of a well-known contemporary "poet of the month." This semester's reading list is as follows:

The Country Between Us by Carolyn Forché; Harper Perennial, 1982.

Lunch Poems by Frank O'Hara; City Lights Publishers, 1964.

The Branch Will Not Break by James Wright; Wesleyan, 1963.

A book (or selected texts) by the "poet of the month" will be assigned to be read in advance, and discussed during the first half hour. The hour and a half "Translating Silences" workshop will follow with exchanges of creative work by participants. Optional assignments and imaginative exercises will be offered.

Charlotte Mandel's seventh book of poetry, *ROCK VEIN SKY* is being published this year by Midmarch Arts Press. Her previous books include *Sight Lines*, *The Life of Mary* and *The Marriages of Jacob*. She edited *Saturday's Women*, an award-winning anthology of women poets. Her poems, short fiction and critical essays have been published in many journals nationwide.

Family Ties: Heartache and Humor in Women's Memoirs with Lori Rotskoff

Dates: Wednesdays: 09/17, 10/22, 12/03, 01/07, 02/11, 03/11, 04/15, 05/13, 06/03

Time: 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Location: BCRW, 101 Barnard Hall

Fee: \$315

"Memoir, for better or worse, is the genre of our time."

This class explores recent memoirs by American women, all focusing on the vast, essential subject of family. How do writers recapture the range of emotions that animate their lives from youth to adulthood? How do they reconstruct relationships with their mothers, fathers, siblings, and other relatives in order to shed light on their own self-awareness? How do they reconcile their identities and ambitions with the values—and, often, the failures or limitations—of the families who raised them?

Participants of all ages and backgrounds are welcome to join our monthly discussion group. The mood is informal, yet informative. Come share your thoughts, ideas, and opinions with other open-minded, passionate readers.

This is not a writing workshop, but participants working on their own memoirs will benefit from the attention we pay to voice, narrative structure, and thematic language in works by noted authors.

Lori Rotskoff is a cultural historian of American family life. She holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from Yale University, and has written articles and reviews for the *Chicago Tribune*, *Reviews in American History*, and *The Women's Review of Books*. This is her fourth year teaching the Barnard Center for Research on Women.

Tentative Reading List:

Jennifer Finney Boylan, *She's Not There*
Edwidge Danticat, *Brother, I'm Dying*

Lillian Faderman, *Naked in the Promised Land*
Leslie Garis, *House of Happy Endings*
Haven Kimmel, *A Girl Named Zippy*
Mary Karr, *The Liar's Club*
Lucette Lagnado, *The Man in the White Sharkskin Suit*
Emily Rapp, *Poster Child*
Helene Stapinski, *Five-Finger Discount*

Women's Cultures/ Women's Lives with Leslie Calman

Dates: Tuesdays: 09/23, 10/21, 11/18, 12/16, 01/13, 2/10, 03/10, 04/7, 05/05, 06/02

Time: 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Location: BCRW, 101 Barnard Hall

Fee: \$350

Now in its 18th year, Women's Cultures/ Women's Lives is a reading group that explores contemporary fiction and memoir by women of many cultures – with the inclusion of a classic or two and, to round things out, an occasional male author writing about women. Be prepared for spirited and insightful discussion, laughter and lively debate. Led by Leslie Calman, former Director of the Barnard Center for Research on Women, and current executive director of the Mautner Project: The National Lesbian Health Organization

Reading List:

Kate Christensen, *The Great Man*
Jeanette Winterson, *Oranges are Not the Only Fruit*
Natsuo Kirino, *Grotesque*
Maggie O'Farrell, *The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox*
Edith Wharton, *The Children*
Dahlia Sofer, *The September of Shiraz*
Jane Harris, *The Observations*
J.M. Coetzee, *Elizabeth Costello*
Kate Grenville, *Secret River*
Susan Choi, *A Person of Interest*

continued from page 23

that the race of your victim is a crucial determinant in the imposition of the death penalty, while women convicted of capital crimes are much more likely to be sentenced to death if they can be portrayed as gender or sexual deviants. Prison is, thus, also part of the apparatus that contributes to a society in which gendered violence becomes seen as natural and normal, perhaps even inevitable.

Gender is not just an issue for how imprisonment has become so central in U.S. society, nor just for the experience of those who are imprisoned. Gender is also implicated in how we, as a society imagine responding to social problems. The centrality of imprisonment in our conceptualization of policy can mean that when an issue is brought to the fore, like that of violence against women, state resources can go to enforcement agencies rather than to women's groups. One of the most important debates within feminist movements currently is whether the movement for violence against women can find means of responding to violence that do not involve calling upon the state's use of violence and the prison system. If prison is one of the institutions through which specifically gendered violence predominates, can dependence upon incarceration actually stop the gendered violence that permeates so much of our society?

Now Davis is working on a project that looks at imprisonment in its global proportions. With increasing globalization, the rate of incarceration in the U.S. looks all the more disproportionate, but it is also the case that the U.S. carries its dependence on incarceration throughout the world, often as part of its military operations. As the title of her most recent book, a collection of interviews called *Abolition Democracy: Beyond Empire, Prisons, and Torture*, makes clear, if we are to take women, race, and class seriously in feminist analyses and activism within the U.S., we must also look at U.S. actions in the world.

Interested in learning more? Join us for the Helen Pond McIntyre '48 Lecture with Angela Davis. See page 12. To learn more about feminism and U.S. actions around the world join us for two events on women in Afghanistan, details on pages 16-17.

Center Friends

BCRW thanks all of our friends whose financial support helps us speak out.

Daphne Fodor Philipson '69
 Linda Reid '81
 Patricia Ballou
 Carol Herman Cohen '59

Show the world you support the Center!

with your donation of \$100 or more, you'll receive one of BCRW's signature tee-shirts. It's a great way to show your support of the Center and its mission—while spreading the word that Feminism matters.

Enclosed, please find my check made payable to Barnard College for:

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Barnard College, 3009 Broadway New York, NY 10027

Register for Center Courses

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 Check should be made to Barnard College.

- Translating Silences: An Expanded Poetry Workshop (\$200)**
- Family Ties: Heartache and Humor in Women's Memoirs (\$315)**
- Women's Cultures / Women's Lives (\$350)**

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 DAYTIME PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

**SAVE
THE
DATE
02/28
2009**

Saturday, 02/28/2009

9:00 AM–6:00 PM

The Scholar & Feminist Conference XXXIV

The Politics of Reproduction: New Technologies of Life

Keynote address by

Sarah Franklin, Lancaster University

Panelists include

Lori Andrews, J.D., Chicago-Kent State

Laura Briggs, University of Arizona

Claudia Castañeda, Breindeis University

Dana-Ain Davis, State University of New York, Purchase

Faye Ginsburg '75, New York University

Michele Goodwin, University of Minnesota Schools of Law, Medicine, and Public Health

Leith Mullings, City University of New York

Rayna Rapp, New York University

Loretta Ross, SisterSong

Lesley Sharp, Barnard College

Debora Spar, Barnard College

Kalindi Vora, University of California at Berkeley

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