BCRW
BARNARD CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON WOMEN

NEWSLETTER
Fall 2012

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Last year, with our 40th anniversary, the Barnard Center for Research on Women had the invigorating opportunity to reflect on our history, our future, and our place within movements for justice. It is an exciting and exhausting process, but if there is one thing that became clear through the whirlwind of events and projects, it is that there is abundance of ideas, energy, and commitment to our mission of "struggling, dignifying, autonomy, and equality" for all women. It is a tireless mission, and looking out at all our discussions over this year, I can see the reason for that breadth — there is no single way to pursue the political project of feminism. Pacing too much emphasis on any one practice can set the stage not just for exclusion, but also for losing sight of what is possible. We live in a moment when the focus on scarce resources is used as an excuse to veer away from truly big dreams, yet the difficult times are exactly when we need to activate all avenues of creativity and resources, to be curious and open to new ways of being.

It is in this spirit that we present this semester a slate of events and collaborations that highlight the abundance and diversity of feminist thought and action. A number of events delve into strategies for communal action, including a benefit highlighting the latest issue of S&F Online, "A New Queer Agenda" (read more about the issue on page 41), a lecture by legal anthropologist Ziba Mir-Hosseini on the promise of Islamic feminism, and a panel of young activists working to secure the rights of Dominicans of Haitian descent in the legacy of the Center for African Studies at Rutgers, will lead a panel looking at how women in different Muslim contexts are using new media technologies to navigate culture and identity.

As an extension of our own digital practices, we have launched the BCRW Blog—a space for ongoing updates on our projects and collaborations, reflections and responses to events, and discussions on our core issues of concern. We look forward to engaging with you there — http://bcrw.barnard.edu/blog/.

Finally, I want to offer my personal thanks to Elizabeth Castell for her excellent work as Acting Director of BCRW over the last year. Despite a number of other duties at Barnard (including serving as Chair of the Religion Department), Elizabeth led BCRW through a series of high-profile events, including the 40th anniversary conference, an inspiring Social Feminist Conference, and a visit from Oprah Winfrey and Gloria Steinem, while she guided the development of BCRW projects, like our blog and the establishment of the faculty and alumna fellows programs. Her wonderful leadership of the Center enabled me to focus on new books, "Lahu Lives: An Ethnography of Possibility," and I am deeply grateful. If you see Elizabeth around campus, please, say "thank you," on behalf of BCRW, and I hope to see all of you at BCRW events this fall.

Sincerely,

Janet R. Jakobsen
In the first year of our Transnational Feminisms Initiative, BCRW formed what we hope will be ongoing relationships with scholars and activists from around the world, including South Africa, Mexico, and India. BCRW Faculty Fellows Yvette Christiansë and Kim Hall worked with Barnard’s Africana Studies Program to bring Jane Bennett, Director of the African Gender Institute in Cape Town, South Africa to Barnard for a month in the spring. Jane gave guest lectures in Professor Christiansë’s classes, spoke with students at a BCRW open house, and is now developing plans with Professor Christiansë and BCRW to co-teach an intensive two-week seminar on “The Politics of Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary African Contexts” at Barnard in the spring, and at the African Gender Institute in Cape Town, South Africa, in June 2013. BCRW Associate Director, Catherine Sameh, travelled to Mumbai, India with a Barnard contingent of faculty, students and administrators for the 4th annual Barnard College Global Symposium. Sameh and Professor Yvette Christiansë met with scholars, artists and activists from all over Mumbai, including those from The Institute for Social Sciences (TISS), Sophia College, and Partners for Urban Knowledge, Action and Research (PUKAR). Sameh then traveled to Delhi to meet with scholars, artists, and activists, including those from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). Sameh and Professor Christiansë are now working with Barnard faculty and Sophia College to develop a possible two-week winter seminar in Mumbai in January 2013.

BCRW hosted three international delegations of scholars and activists (one from India, one from Turkey, and one multi-country delegation) who participated in the State Department’s International Visitors Program. In each two-hour roundtable, we discussed the possibilities for collaborations around feminist research and activism. This year, BCRW welcomes back Professor Christiansë as a continuing Faculty Fellow and welcomes Professor Shayoni Mitra as a new Faculty Fellow. Professor Mitra attended the Global Symposium in Mumbai. In addition, she took Sameh and six students to Sangli, a rural community in Southern India, to meet with VAMP, a group of sex workers who do political organizing through street theater. This year, Professor Mitra will work with the BCRW to bring the story of their organizing efforts to the Barnard campus.

We are thrilled to enter the second year of our Alumnae Fellowship program with Ebonie Smith, whose project will focus on developing the Gender Amplified Festival for female music producers. This project advances the work of the 2007 conference “Women and Technological Innovation in Hip-Hop,” which Ebonie coordinated with BCRW, the Africana Studies Program, and Femmixx.com. Ebonie views promoting women in music technology as not just an end in itself, but an excellent pathway for women into the wider world of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) subjects, in which women are traditionally underrepresented.

We said a fond farewell this spring to Lucy Trainor ’07, who had worked her way from BCRW Research Assistant to Administrative Assistant to Program Manager over the years. Lucy has moved to Amherst, MA with her partner and is beginning new adventures as the Assistant Director of the Annual Fund at Amherst College. We will miss her careful planning, broad knowledge base, and deep passion, and wish her the best of luck in her endeavors. Our new Program Manager, Anne Jonas, comes to us from the non-profit world with a background in communications, social media, and project management. She has managed to hit the ground running, and we’re delighted to have her join us.

This past year, BCRW deepened our ongoing collaboration with community groups in New York City. “A New Queer Agenda,” the latest issue of The Scholar & Feminist Online (http://sfonline.barnard.edu/a-new-queer-agenda/), and “Desiring Change” (http://bcrw.barnard.edu/publications/sf-report/), the most recent of our New Feminist Solutions reports, are two publications and projects designed to engage activists, academics and organizers around a vision and practice of cross-issue organizing. A partnership with Queers for Economic Justice, “A New Queer Agenda” and “Desiring Change” see gender and sex as central to issues like immigration, poverty, homelessness, gentrization, and drug use. “A New Queer Agenda” and “Desiring Change” do not just assert that sex and gender are connected to a range of social issues, but show how we can work together to build larger and more effective movements for justice around such connections. These projects push beyond the vision of security and belonging offered through gay marriage to a broader politics of economic, political and sexual justice for all. As we roll out “A New Queer Agenda” and “Desiring Change,” stay tuned to our website for announcements of public gatherings and events that engage the analysis offered in these publications with different audiences throughout New York and nation-wide.

TRANSNATIONAL FEMINISMS INITIATIVE

INTRDUCING ALUMNA FELLOW EBOINE SMITH ’07

GOODBYE LUCY TRAINOR, HELLO ANNE JONAS

A NEW QUEER AGENDA AND DESIRRING CHANGE

GOOOOOOOOOGOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO...
Academics and writers alike have long worked within established processes for peer review and editing. But both are now confronted with a rapidly shifting landscape in which online channels provide new opportunities for feedback, networking, and collaborative knowledge production. In this roundtable discussion, panelists will speak on how digital media changes their work by looking at modes of fostering productive dialogue online, the political and ethical impact of letting ideas develop in the public eye, and the general guidelines of blog style and content by deconstructing the details of an effective post, discussing the importance of personal tone, and outlining methods for quoting, linking and connecting to current events. The workshop will also touch on the platforms, outlets and online resources available to student bloggers, encouraging blogging as an avenue for feminist writing, online activism and social change.

Jonathan Beller (moderator) is Professor of Humanities and Media Studies at Pratt Institute. He is the author of several books, including The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle at Pratt Institute. He is the author of several books, including The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle at Pratt Institute. He is the author of several books, including The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle at Pratt Institute. He is the author of several books, including The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle at Pratt Institute. He is the author of several books, including The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle at Pratt Institute. He is the author of several books, including The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle at Pratt Institute. He is the author of several books, including The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle at Pratt Institute. He is the author of several books, including The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle at Pratt Institute. He is the author of several books, including The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle at Pratt Institute. He is the author of several books, including The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle at Pratt Institute.
A NEW QUEER AGENDA
A journal launch and celebration with Lisa Duggan, Kenyon Farrow, Amber Hollibaugh, and Richard Kim
Wednesday, September 19  6 PM
Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, NYU
20 Cooper Square, 4th Floor
Join contributors to the recently launched “A New Queer Agenda,” (see page 4) for an evening of politics, discussion, and celebration.
Lisa Duggan is a journalist, activist, and Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis at New York University. She is author of Twilight of Equality: Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics and the Attack on Democracy, and Sapphic Slashers: Sex, Violence and American Modernity.
Kenyon Farrow is a Black gay activist and writer based in New York City. He is the former Executive Director of Queers for Economic Justice (QEJ), a longtime HIV/AIDS activist, and a prolific writer. Kenyon blogs at KenyonFarrow.com and is the co-editor of Letters From Young Activists: Today’s Rebels Speak Out.
Amber Hollibaugh is the Co-Director of QEJ, and has worked at Howard Brown Health Center, the National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce, Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders, Gay Men’s Health Crisis, and the NYC Commission on Human Rights. A well-known activist, artist, public intellectual, and community organizer, she is the author of My Dangerous Desires: A Queer Girl Dreaming Her Way Home, and the director and co-producer of The Heart of the Matter, a documentary focusing on women’s sexuality, denial, and risk for HIV/AIDS.
Some writers have celebrated a new biological citizenship arising from individuals’ unprecedented ability to manage their health at the molecular level. In this year’s Helen Pond McIntyre ‘48 lecture, Dorothy Roberts examines the role of race and gender in the construction of this new biocitizen in light of the current expansion of race-based, reproductive, and genetic biotechnologies along with neoliberal reliance on private resources for people’s welfare. Roberts argues that science, big business, and politics are converging to support a molecularized understanding of race, health, and citizenship that ultimately preserves and furthers social inequality.

Dorothy Roberts is the Penn Integrates Knowledge/George A. Weiss University Professor, the Raymond Pace and Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander Professor of Civil Rights, and Professor of Sociology at University of Pennsylvania. An internationally recognized scholar, public intellectual, and social justice advocate, she has written and lectured extensively on the interplay of gender, race, and class in legal issues and has been a leader in transforming public thinking and policy on reproductive health, child welfare, and bioethics. Professor Roberts is the author of the award-winning books Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty (Random House/Pantheon, 1997) and Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare (Basic Books/Civitas, 2002), as well as co-editor of six books on constitutional law and gender. She has also published more than eighty articles and essays in books and scholarly journals, including Harvard Law Review, Yale Law Journal, and Stanford Law Review. Her latest book, Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-First Century, was published by the New Press in July 2011.
Women Poets

ANNE CARSON & ALICE OSWALD

Thursday, November 1  7:00 PM
Sulzberger Parlor, 3rd Floor Barnard Hall

Celebrated poets Anne Carson (left) and Alice Oswald read from their recent works, followed by a reception.

Anne Carson is a poet and classics scholar. Her books of poetry include Glass, Irony and God; Plainwater; Autobiography of Red; The Beauty of the Husband; winner of the T.S. Eliot Prize for Poetry in 2001; and NOX. She is also the author of the studies Eros the Bittersweet and Economy of the Unlost. Her classical translations include If Not, Winter: Fragments of Sappho and the recent Antigone.

Alice Oswald is the author of The Thing in the Gap-Stone Stile; Dart, winner of the T. S. Eliot Prize for Poetry in 2002; Winds Etc.; Weeds and Flowers; and A Sleepwalk on the Severn, a poem for several voices. Oswald trained as a classicist, and her most recent book is Memorial: An Excavation of the Iliad, which focuses by turns on Homer’s extended similes and on the brief images of the minor war-dead. Cosponsored with Women Poets at Barnard and the Barnard Humanities Initiative.

Emerging Research

A GLOBAL HISTORY OF THE PATERNITY TEST
A lunchtime lecture by Nara Milanich
Thursday, September 27  12 PM
BCRW, 101 Barnard Hall

For millennia, Western legal tradition relied on the assumption “pater semper incertus est” (“the father is always uncertain”). But beginning in the early twentieth century, scientists began a concerted quest for a biological marker of paternity that could unambiguously link a child to his or her progenitor. Prior to the advent of DNA testing, scientists from around the world experimented with fingerprints, dental evidence, war shape, and blood typing. This study by Nara Milanich, Associate Professor of History at Barnard College, examines the link between the history of the paternity test and the history of gender, family, and changing ideas about kinship. Although today paternity can be determined with over 99% accuracy, biological certainty by no means displaces legal and social constructions of family, and in the age of modern biomedicine, the definition of parentage is arguably as “uncertain” as ever.

STIGMA, PRECARITY & THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF OUTCASTE LABOR
A lunchtime lecture by Anupama Rao
Monday, November 12  12 PM
BCRW, 101 Barnard Hall

What forms of critical thought and cultural production are enabled by intersections between stigmatized life and the social experience of labor in twentieth-century Bombay? In her latest project, Barnard College Associate Professor of History Anupama Rao critically engages traditional approaches to labor, examining how the practices of precarious workers, such as India’s Dalits, impact the ways in which citizenship and emancipation are constituted outside recognizable domains of “the political.” Rao’s research and teaching interests include the history of anti-colonialism, gender and sexuality studies, caste and race, historical anthropology, social theory, and colonial genealogies of human rights and humanitarianism. Her previous book, The Caste Question, focuses on the role of anti-caste thought in producing alternative genealogies of political subject-formation.
BEGINNING YOUR JOURNALISM CAREER
with Nora Connor
Tuesdays: 10/2, 10/16, 10/30, 11/13, 11/27, 12/4, 12/11
12:00-2:30 PM
location: BCRW, 101 Barnard Hall
Fee: $400
This course is designed for early- to mid-career nonfiction writers, reporters, filmmakers and ‘digital journalists’, or anyone looking to expand their work into new formats. For women journalists, changes in the ‘big media’ landscape and the proliferation of new digital platforms present exciting new opportunities. Yet many of the old challenges remain: how to get career momentum behind the ideas that are most important to you, how to make space for journalism centered on ‘women’s issues’, how to find time and funding for bigger projects, how to advance a career in competitive markets, and how to stay aware of ideas that are most important to you, how to create more space for journalism centered on “women’s issues.”

WOMEN’S CULTURES / WOMEN’S LIVES
with Leslie Calman
Tuesdays: 3/15, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 5/3, 5/10, 5/17, 5/24
2:30-5:00 PM
Location: BCRW, 101 Barnard Hall
Fee: $350
This class explores memoirs and works of narrative non-fiction by writers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Personal narratives are profoundly shaped by 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.

SEEKING YOUR VOICE: POETRY WORKSHOP
with Patricia Brody and Eva Miodownik Oppenheim
Wednesdays: 10/10, 11/14, 12/12, 1/23, 2/27, 3/12, 4/27, 5/4
location: BCRW, 101 Barnard Hall
Time: 7:00-9:00 PM
Fee: $400
This workshop offers both passion for the observation and writing of poetry, as well as support for each student’s journey in each new poem. We seek new ways to open up the voice, bring breath and space to your poems. We encourage risk taking and careful listening. We’ll also explore the works of three contemporary poets and suggest exercises/assignments for inspiration and challenge. Today we are seeing a rise in the number of “multi-genre” poets (e.g. flash fiction, short prose). Depending on class interest, we’ll begin to experiment with these forms. We welcome writers of all levels and backgrounds.

WOMEN’S CULTURES / WOMEN’S LIVES ($350)
 Building Your Journalism Career ($400)
 Women’s Cultures/Women’s Lives ($310)
 Seeking Your Voice ($400)
 Personal Histories ($315)

Register for Center Courses
Please fill in the information below and mail registration fee to:
Barnard Center for Research on Women, 3009 Broadway, New York, NY 10027
Check should be made to Barnard College.

Join BCRW’s Online Community!
Help BCRW cultivate a feminist space for connecting scholarship and activism online by participating in the BCRW blog. Get in touch about submitting posts and being part of the outreach team by emailing ajonas@barnard.edu.
Show the world you support the Center!
With your donation of $100 or more, you'll receive a signature BCRW t-shirt or totebag. 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:

☐ $500  ☐ $250  ☐ $100  
Please send me my DARE TO USE THE F-WORD
☐ T-shirt (circle size): XS  S  M  L  XL  XXL  ☐ Tote-bag

☐ $50  ☐ $25  ☐ OTHER AMOUNT $ _____________

NAME
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CITY
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STATE   ZIP
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Barnard College, 3009 Broadway New York, NY 10027

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