David Eng has just completed his second year of teaching as Assistant Professor of English and Comparative Literature. He came to Columbia following a post-doctoral fellowship year spent at Hong Kong University and at Berkeley, where he had taken his Ph.D. in comparative literature. Professor Eng teaches introductory and advanced courses on Asian American literature and culture, as well as classes focusing on queer studies, psychoanalytic theory, critical race studies, feminist film theory, and architecture/urban studies. Reflecting on Asian American studies and other interdisciplinary studies at Columbia, Professor Eng notes that “It is the obligation of the university to support this type of work, administratively and in faculty hiring. It’s crucial for students to understand that this is a major direction in which the academy has shifted historically and conceptually. The kind of intellectual model provided by Asian American, ethnic, and women’s studies needs to be recognized. It’s not that this kind of work doesn’t exist here. It’s that it must be taken seriously and encouraged.”

“I think it’s an extraordinary moment for Asian American studies on the East Coast, which is to say that my hire at Columbia is not at all singular. You witness the same type of hires going on from Maine to Washington, D.C. There have been no less than a dozen hires in the past several years in Asian American literary studies alone. This speaks to a remarkable moment—the institutionalization of Asian American studies.
in private East Coast universities. We’ve had a long history of Asian American activism on the East Coast, but until recently we haven’t had the pairing of this very strong Asian American movement with an equally strong Asian American studies movement within the academy. This is now happening."

Professor Eng notes that the field has had a different history on the West Coast, where Asian American political and academic movements have long been strong and united: "The extraordinary thing about an institution such as Berkeley is that Asian American studies is not tokenized insofar as there is a top-notch Asian American studies program there, housed within a Ph.D.-granting ethnic studies department. At the same time, there are Asian Americanists teaching in nearly every other humanities and social sciences department. As a result, race relations are not Manichean, not black and white. There is an understanding that Asian American intellectual issues—such as immigration—are integral to the study of American identity."

Professor Eng has several book projects that are either newly finished or in progress. The forthcoming Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America, which is based on his dissertation, considers whether psychoanalytic theory can be as useful for Asian American studies as it has been for women’s studies and queer studies: "For a long time psychoanalytic theory has been a field that has underwritten sexual and not racial identity. Women’s studies, for instance, took up Freud to rethink the ways in which sexuality is produced and naturalized, while the contribution of queer studies to this intellectual conversation was to think about sexual difference as heterosexual difference. It’s only recently that scholars have used psychoanalytic theory to talk about other types of social differences such as race.” Professor Eng challenges “the emphasis in psychoanalytic theory on sexual difference as the inaugural difference by which we are rendered coherent subjects. Sexual and racial difference are mutually constitutive categories—race is not additive.”

The very title of Professor Eng’s book, Racial Castration, alludes to this recognition. The title emerges from his reading of David Henry Hwang’s 1988 play M. Butterfly, in which a French diplomat has a twenty-year affair with an Asian male opera singer whom he believes to be a woman. The play provides an interesting test case for the ways that race intersects psychoanalysis. Here, the effect is what Professor Eng labels “reverse fetishism”: “In classic fetishism the man is traumatized by female difference, and so he covers that difference through projection. He sees at the site of the female body a penis that isn’t there to see. M. Butterfly follows this logic, but instead of having a man who sees a penis at the site of the female body that isn’t there to see, we have a man who refuses to see the penis at the site of the Asian male body that is there to see. M. Butterfly uses the logic of fetishism but ultimately reverses it.” The effect “is a psychic structure by which the white man racially castrates the Asian man."
In this manner, the trauma of racial difference is managed and contained for the white diplomat. This is also one way to think about how sexual and racial difference gain their discursive legibility only in relation to one another."

This psychic process parallels what Professor Eng sees happening historically in the production of Asian American subjects. He writes, for example, about the ways that Asian American men have long been associated with certain occupations—such as waiter or tailor—that have helped to generate stereotypes of Asian American masculinity. Professor Eng notes, moreover, that these stereotypes begin to shift with changes in historical and juridical circumstances. One conspicuous shift is from the “yellow peril” to the “model minority” stereotype after 1965, when a reformation of U. S. immigration laws helped to create a “brain drain” from Asia and a rising Asian American professional class in this country.

Among Professor Eng’s other research projects are two co-edited anthologies, both of which approach their topics by considering urgent questions within ethnic studies, poststructuralist theory, visual culture, and transnational studies. The first, Q & A: Queer in Asian America, co-edited with the historian Alice Hom, is a critical anthology of twenty-six essays “exploring the multiple ways in which ‘queer’ and ‘Asian American’ cross paths and are vitally defined by one another.” The other anthology, called Loss, which Professor Eng is editing with David Kazanjian of the English Department at Queens College, investigates theories of melancholia at the turn of this century. The collection explores “the general culture of depression and grief compelling many people’s psychic and material lives, occupying their political and social spaces.”

Through a senior seminar he taught this past spring, Professor Eng has developed ideas for a short book on queerness and diaspora in contemporary Asian American culture examining literature, film, video, photography, and art. Whereas Racial Castration demonstrates the centrality of race and ethnicity in an area that is typically thought of only through sexuality and gender, “this book thinks about a diaspora that is not centrally organized around racial, ethnic, or national debates but that is organized through sexuality. It’s so difficult for us to imagine a diaspora that has a sexual foundation rather

Eng, continued on page 10
International Women’s Day: Celebrating Joan of Arc

To celebrate International Women’s Day, the Institute for Research on Women and Gender and the Rare Book and Manuscript Library co-hosted, on March 12th, 1998, the opening of an exhibit entitled “Jeanne D’Arc through the Centuries: Seer, Soldier, Sinner, Saint.” IRWAG and the Rare Book Library also co-sponsored two lectures on Joan of Arc. On April 2nd, Professor Susan Crane of the Department of English at Rutgers University, gave a talk entitled “Why Did Joan of Arc Cross Dress?”; and on April 9th, Professor Maureen Quilligan, of the Department of English at the University of Pennsylvania, spoke on “Christine de Pizan’s Joan of Arc.”

The library exhibit, which ran from March 13th to June 13th, displayed books, manuscripts, and other artifacts from the fifteenth century to the present that chronicle the life and times of Joan of Arc, as well as the historical, scholarly, literary, and popular reception of Joan through the centuries. On display, for example, were sixteenth-century editions of French history books that include discussions of Joan. Also on view were books and manuscripts related exclusively to Joan, such as an early twentieth-century edition of Histoire de la Pucelle d’Orléans, a book on Joan written around 1600.

The woman born around 1412 in France who called herself Jehanne La Pucelle (“the maid”) heard divine “voices” that advised her to assist the Dauphin, who would later become King Charles VII, against the English in the Hundred Years War. Having convinced the Dauphin and a group of theologians of her divine inspiration, she was given troops whom she successfully commanded during the siege of Orléans and other military campaigns. She stood near the Dauphin at his coronation in July 1429. Later that year, Joan unsuccessfully besieged Paris, and the following year she was captured and imprisoned by the Burgundians, who handed her over to the English. The English, in turn, surrendered her to the ecclesiastical court at Rouen, where she was tried for heresy. Joan was eventually condemned to death in secular court as a relapsed heretic (she had briefly recanted her statement of divine inspiration), and, on May 30th, 1431, was burned at the stake. In 1456, Charles VII, who had failed to intervene on Joan’s behalf during her lifetime, belatedly took her part in a rehabilitation trial that annulled the verdict. Regarded as a martyr for God and country, she was beatified in 1909 and canonized in 1920, largely through the tireless efforts of two successive nineteenth-century bishops of Orléans, the first town Joan had liberated nearly five hundred years earlier.

In her lecture on Joan’s cross-dressing, Professor Susan Crane argued that the gender ambiguity reflected in Joan’s male garb both endangered her and gave her the particular power she held as a political agent. Joan of Arc, in

Joan of Arc, continued on page 11
Gender and Politics in East Asian Cultures

This spring, the Institute for Research on Women and Gender co-sponsored two events with the Department of Anthropology. The first, also sponsored by the East Asian Institute, was a screening on February 5th of the documentary film, *Through Chinese Women’s Eyes* (New York: Women Make Movies, 1997), and a talk by the filmmaker, Mayfair Yang, Professor of Anthropology at the University of California at Santa Barbara. The second event, on March 24th, featured Norma Field, Professor of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, who read from her most recently published book, *From My Grandmother’s Bedside: Sketches of Postwar Tokyo* (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1997).

Filmed in Shanghai and Beijing, Professor Mayfair Yang’s documentary examines the contrast between Maoist and post-Maoist China through the words and experiences of women whose employment ranges from factory work, to office work, to academia. The film focused on the dramatic effects on women’s lives—both economic and in terms of gender identity—caused by the recent shift, during the 1990s, from socialism toward a market economy and globalization. Under Mao, the principle of women’s equality meant an effort to erase gender difference, which was not, Professor Yang explains, an ideal of androgyny for women or men, but a state-prescribed move toward masculinizing women. After Mao, and especially in the 1990s, with the call for economic development, “gender erasure” has begun to yield to “gender difference.” Women have had mixed responses to the Maoist and post-Maoist attitudes toward gender. In recent years, the new attention to gender difference has accompanied a male gaze in advertising and commercial society that some women interviewed by Professor Yang find oppressive: women have become newly commodified in the new Chinese commodity culture. Furthermore, along with gender difference come new forms of gender discrimination in the work place, even though equality is, in principle, still government policy. In state-run factories, managers have begun to avoid hiring women, so as to avoid paying maternity leave costs. At the same time, urban women factory workers are being forced into retirement at age forty-five. The film also looked at Chinese feminism in the context of the United Nations women’s conference in Beijing. Like that of other Chinese feminists, Professor Yang’s goal is to correct Western feminist Orientalist representations of Chinese women, as well as to question the Chinese government’s optimistic portrait of the situation of women in China.

Professor Norma Field read from her most recent book, *From My Grandmother’s Bedside*, a generically innovative work whose combination of memoir and cultural criticism allows the author to move from personal recollections of Japanese family life, to reflections on post-war society in Tokyo, to philosophical meditations on life, illness, and death. Professor Field, the daughter of a Japanese woman and an American soldier, spent her childhood in Japan and her adult life in the United States. In 1995, she returned to Japan to tend her bedridden grandmother, who had been incapacitated and unable to speak following a series of strokes. Professor Field offers personal narration of the family life to which she returned in Japan, and of her efforts to communicate with her grandmother. Her immediate personal narrative allows her to reflect on her childhood with her grandmother, and through the connection to her grandmother, she begins to think back through twentieth-century Japanese history, lighting upon such topics as the atomic bomb, comfort women, and the post-War economy and its relation to postmodern Japanese culture. In the discussion of her work, Professor Field considered what it means to be writing with a dual Japanese and American cultural perspective, and she voiced concerns about her project. She worries about the dangers of nostalgia, and about the problems of writing from and about personal experiences. She worries, too, about feeling voyeuristic, as she looks into personal lives, but also about being the object of voyeurism.
New Voices at Columbia: An Interview with Gina Dent

Gina Dent joined the Columbia faculty this past year as Assistant Professor of English and Comparative Literature, and as a Research Fellow in African-American Studies. She returns to Columbia, where she had pursued her graduate studies, following a three-year faculty appointment at Princeton. Before Princeton, a Mellon Fellowship took her to the Irvine Humanities Institute for a year, where she was part of a policy research group on minority discourse. Professor Dent has offered courses ranging from Black Feminist Texts, to African Diaspora Literature, to Black Intellectuals, to Popular Culture, as well as introductory courses in African-American Studies. Her research and teaching interests are strongly interdisciplinary. Columbia, she feels, accommodates interdisciplinary research and teaching, yet she worries that it does so “by accident, and I would rather that we be a place that does this work on purpose.” It is also central to her work in and out of the classroom to question the boundaries between high art, or canonical literature, and popular culture: “You can’t analyze what’s going on in the canon if you don’t know what’s being ‘disappeared’ out of it. Respecting that boundary as if it exists naturally doesn’t help literary analysis.”

“High” and “low” art is a topic that has long been on Professor Dent’s mind. While still a graduate student, Professor Dent published her first book, an edited collection called Black Popular Culture (Bay Press, 1992), which developed from a 1991 conference that brought together artists and academics, and which was organized by New York’s Dia Center for the Arts and the Studio Museum in Harlem. This early project has led Professor Dent to follow interests outside academia, and she has lectured at museums and other cultural institutions on popular culture and art, and, at the New Museum, co-curated a 1993 exhibit on art and globalization called “Trade Routes.”

On the role of gender and feminism in her work, Professor Dent explains that “The kinds of cultural questions that I talk about are always profoundly gendered” and that “feminism is not something I add onto my work. It’s not just a category of my work, it’s that I’m always operating with non-essentialist understandings of race and gender and trying to think through class. I don’t explicitly say the mantra—race, class, and gender—yet I try to think through these terms, without expecting that my assumptions about them will always be fulfilled.”

Professor Dent is at present revising a book based on her dissertation, Flowers and Colored Bottles: The Anthropology of Culture in Twentieth-Century African-American Writing. The project investigates “how we get to a story of black culture, how we come to think of it, and how it comes to look the way it does in the novel.” Professor Dent examines a range of texts and broader cultural phenomena, including, for example, photographic representations of African-Americans in early magazines. The authors she works with begin with Anna Julia Cooper, and include W. E. B. Du Bois, Charles Chesnutt, James Weldon Johnson, Nella Larsen, Zora Neale Hurston, Ralph Ellison, and Toni Morrison. She strategically focuses on canonical sources, in order to “show that the way in which we’ve erected black tradition is also connected to the kinds of cultural narratives we hold.”

Professor Dent is especially interested in tracing the movement from the way writers in the nineteenth-century regard “race as an accident of color,” to the twentieth century, where blackness begins to have broader cultural resonances. In the literature of the nineteenth century, “you can have a character whom at first you think is white, but it turns out she’s secretly black; or she finds out she’s black, which she hadn’t known before. Race isn’t a cultural phenomenon.” But in the twentieth century, novel characters come to “stand in for other members of the community; they stand in for black culture in general.”

“People suppose that black writers write the way they do because they’re black, as opposed to assuming that there is a process of education that they have to submit themselves to in
order to understand how to write about black populations. I try to account for how they came into that knowledge. For example, famous writers like Du Bois will write about the moment when they first go to the South and experience what it’s like to be around numbers of black people. They always write about these experiences as if they’re quite astonishing.” In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), when Du Bois goes South, there is “a sense of finding something that he is and is not a part of. . . . He had never experienced this before, and it’s emotional partly because it’s something he’s longed for but hasn’t had, having been raised as a Massachusetts boy in a fairly integrated situation, having gone to Harvard.”

In order to understand this process of discovery, Professor Dent considers the relationship such narratives bear to those of ethnography and anthropology, as those academic disciplines—and their popular manifestations in magazines and elsewhere—develop from the nineteenth century onward. “I try to treat these writers as anthropologists, as people who have theories of culture. They are not representing black people in some arbitrary way, and they are contesting certain accepted versions of culture.” The process is a self-conscious one, conducted by black writers who were often affiliated with academic institutions, and who saw the importance of being recognized as “generators of culture, and not recipients of culture.” Professor Dent describes how black writers strategically re-appropriate black “low” cultural objects—such as the cake walk, a dance contest in which Southern blacks parody white gentility—and evaluate anew those “raw materials,” as Professor Dent calls them, as valuable “high” cultural artifacts. The process is that of coming to own one’s culture after a history of disenfranchisement: “there had to be a transition from black people being slaves who were commodities, who could not transfer their own value, to being writers who could transfer value.”

Professor Dent is planning to write her next book on cultural studies methodology, and she has already begun lecturing on the topic. Her thoughts on the subject are strongly influenced by the methodology of C.L.R. James in the cultural studies classic, *Beyond a Boundary* (1963). “Cultural studies means that you hold some different, and also quite specific, understandings of the relationship between culture and power,” she argues.

Cultural studies, moreover, “must test itself against social formations and against our understanding of those social formations, which doesn’t mean sociology proper.” She is concerned that “too much cultural studies takes popular cultural elements and treats them like other, more canonical materials. Students, for instance, will analyze the aesthetics of a television show, but they don’t think of it as a different kind of object that provides a unique opportunity to speculate on meaning-making.” As for format, Professor Dent is less concerned with the journalistic enterprise, which is the form taken by much contemporary cultural studies. Instead, she would like to see cultural studies generate an intellectual discussion that is both scholarly and political.
This article continues the series on the history of women at Columbia.

When Marjorie Hope Nicolson (1894-1981), one of the most renowned American educators and scholars of literature of the twentieth century, declined an offer to become the first woman president of Smith College in order to join the Columbia English Department in 1941, she became the first woman to hold a full professorship in Columbia's graduate faculty. In time, she became Chairman of the English Department, and, along with two colleagues from the faculties of science and history, formed a triumvir that, according to her reminiscences helped behind the scenes to administer the University during the last years of the reign of an aging President Nicholas Murray Butler (or "Miraculous Butler," or "the Old Man," as she called him behind his back), and during the Columbia presidency of Dwight David Eisenhower, who had bigger fish to fry and whose administrative attention to Columbia Nicolson held in disdain, as she told him to his face. (Eisenhower joined the University in 1948, but took a leave of absence in 1950 as his attentions turned back to national politics; for most of his Columbia presidency, he was, as Nicolson phrased it "put on ice"). Nicolson's appointment here was one in a series of remarkable professional achievements that included, in 1926, being among the first group of Guggenheim Fellows; in 1929, becoming the first woman elected to the Executive Council of the Modern Language Association, and its first woman vice-president in 1937 (she would serve as MLA President in 1962-1963); and, in 1940, becoming the first woman president of Phi Beta Kappa. She was the recipient of numerous awards and honorary degrees.

Nicolson's interdisciplinary scholarship on seventeenth-century English literature, philosophy, and science made a formidable contribution to the "history of ideas" best associated with her post-doctoral mentor of the 1920s, A. O. Lovejoy, with whom she edited the Journal of the History of Ideas. Her scholarship, in fact, ranged across three centuries of English literature and thought. Her earliest publications, in the mid-1920s, were editions of Shelley, Keats, and Tennyson. And in addition to the numerous books and articles she published on the seventeenth century, she also wrote about eighteenth-century poetry and prose. The books written during her most prolific and innovative period include The Microscope and the English Imagination (1935), A World in the Moon (1936), Newton Demands the Muse (1946), Voyages to the Moon (1948), The Breaking of the Circle (1950; rev. ed. 1960), Science and Imagination (1956); and Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory (1959). Collectively, they virtually reconstituted the relations among the disciplines in which she worked. In addition to her role as editor at the Journal of the History of Ideas, she served as an active editor of PMLA, Studies in Philology, and The American Scholar.

If you ask the men who were her students or junior colleagues to tell you about Nicolson, they first declare that she was not a feminist, perhaps because her work did not focus explicitly on women or gender and perhaps because she was, in some ways, quite at home with the "old boy" administrations during her years as Dean of Smith College and, later, as Professor at Columbia. But by many important actions, Nicolson was a gender pioneer who effectively broke many glass ceilings. She felt the difficulties of being an early woman scholar and published articles about it. She repeatedly complained that a chief problem for women scholars is that they “have no wives to look after social contacts and to perform the drudgery for them.” In an interview conducted in 1975, when she was already suffering the effects of Parkinson’s Disease, Nicolson returned repeatedly to the problem of gender inequality. Sometimes she discussed personal barriers, as when she at first found it difficult, as a woman, to obtain an academic post. And although she had profound respect for President William Neilson of Smith College, she was nevertheless distressed by the
way that women professors, other than herself, were habitually passed over for promotion at Smith, while men rose quickly through the ranks. She alone was promoted quickly, undoubtedly because she made it known that she was considering other possibilities, although she claimed not to have used the possibility of leaving Smith as a bargaining chip. She was dismayed by Columbia’s similar treatment of women faculty members, and she spoke, in particular, of another woman who preceded her on the graduate faculty, but who was not promoted to full professor until after her own appointment: “she was excellent, she had a great reputation, and she simply was not promoted because women were not promoted in the Graduate School” (OHC 484).

Nicolson’s personal and academic anecdotes also led her to the broader implications of gender discrimination. On women’s suffrage, for example, she wryly observed that “Although in early years women had no vote, I was to be given the vote in 1920, just one month after I took the Ph.D. from Yale University” (OHC 3).

Nicolson chronicled her difficulties as a woman doctoral student in the English Department at Yale, where she completed her degree in two years, which was, according to her recollection, an unprecedented achievement: she spent a year on course work, and another year writing a dissertation on the Cambridge Platonist Henry More. At Yale, professors often refused to accept women students, or accepted them under protest. One fairly characteristic occasion was her first encounter with the legendary eighteenth-century scholar Chauncey Brewster Tinker. Nicolson remembers seeking permission to take his course: “He said, ‘Professor Chauncey Tinker does not take women and is not going to take women,’ and he slammed the door in my face’” (OHC 95-96). Years later, Nicolson recalls, at a ceremonial occasion, after she had become famous, Chauncey Tinker “spoke in rapture of ‘that great woman Marjorie Hope Nicolson, whom I educated’” (OHC 95).

How did she manage to break the glass ceiling? It helped that she was brilliant and tenacious. Moreover, her extensive knowledge of Greek, which she studied for a dozen years, opened doors for her in the early part of the century, when Latin was still widely mastered by academics, but Greek was not. To declare proficiency in Greek was to flex one’s scholarly muscles. Her knowledge of other languages helped as well—she would eventually come to know Latin, French, Russian, German, Spanish, Italian, and Sanskrit. She had also studied philosophy for several years, which probably gave her clout in English Departments. In fact, she wanted to be a philosopher, but was told that “metaphysics . . . was never meant for women, and they have never so far been successful in it” (OHC 83).

She also appears to have been shrewd about steering a middle course between the Scylla and Charybdis of woman scholar stereotypes, what she called the “Marys” and the “Janets”—epithets she derived from the spate of 1920s academic novels. In her article “Scholars and Ladies” (The Yale Review, June 1930), she explains that the “Marys” are “grubbers, and pedants and plodders,” while the charming and intelligent “Janets” marry male professors and leave the profession. Both types, she notes, are considered employment risks by college administrators (pp. 789-791). She herself had the persistence of a Mary and the social

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Marjorie Hope Nicolson
than a racial, ethnic, or national foundation.” The book begins with the question: “Why is the most interesting work on queer Asian American sexuality being done elsewhere?” Professor Eng explains that “while there has been a recent spate of book publications, film releases, and art openings by queer Asian Americans, I realized that much of the best work is being written outside of the United States, yet is intimately connected to the political, economic, and cultural issues and conditions here.” Professor Eng hopes that this book will allow him “to think about diaspora in relation to, among other things, the issue of globalization in American studies.”

Another book project called Aggression, Sadness, Cities “is about the relationship between subjects and urban space, between subjects and cities.” Professor Eng recognizes that “there is a constitutive relation between the subject and the city. Subjects do not only create cities, cities create subjects.” In particular, he is interested by the ways in which urban subjects are structured and socialized through mechanisms of paranoia and melancholia. Professor Eng examines urban spaces that have large Asian and Asian American populations and offers case studies of such global cities as New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Beijing, Taipei, and Hong Kong. The book complements a graduate seminar Professor Eng recently taught called “Paranoia and the City,” which, in a truly interdisciplinary fashion, drew students from the law school, East Asian studies, comparative literature, the School of the Arts, and English.

Director, continued from page 1

Pietist Confessional Discourse.” Professor Caroline Bynum of History will respond. For a complete list of speakers and dates please consult the box on page twelve of this newsletter.

This year the Institute is focusing special curricular emphasis on the intersections between race and gender in both U.S. and global contexts. In the fall term, Professor Judith Weisenfeld from the Department of Religion at Barnard and Professor Zita Nunes from the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia will be offering a graduate course entitled “Feminist Approaches to the Study of Race and Gender in the Americas.” Any interested graduate student is invited to apply by coming to the first day of class and filling out a seminar application at that time. In the spring term, Heather Foust from the Departments of Political Science and Women’s Studies at Emory University, will be offering a new undergraduate course, “The Politics of Gender and Race,” co-sponsored by the Institute and the Department of Political Science. The syllabus for the course is on file at the Institute, 763 Schermerhorn Extension, and undergraduates are invited to consult the syllabus and to register for the course. In addition, the Institute will be convening a conference in the spring term on the interlocking and differing agendas of feminist and anti-racist scholarship and activism. Watch for further information on this event in our spring newsletter.

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aplomb of a Janet. Nicolson never married, and her private life is matter for speculation. On the one hand, she is said to have been infatuated with her mentors Lovejoy and Neilson. On the other hand, she was deeply attached to the Columbia English Department secretary and administrator, Adele Mendelssohn. The two women were inseparable. They worked together, they traveled together, and when Mendelssohn died suddenly in 1961, a doctor was dispatched to attend Nicolson: “that was the greatest shock—the greatest shock I ever had in my life, and that I would like to be my last word on this” (OHC 433-435).

Nicolson quickly mastered the forms of the elite, affluent university culture of the Northeast, into which she had not been born. The daughter of a journalist, she was raised in Nova Scotia with good intellectual breeding but little money, which is why she and her brother were sent to college at the University of Michigan. The most frequently told stories about Nicolson concern her teaching. She was famous for walking into class with a single three-by-five note card upon which were written a few key words, from which she would spin out dazzling lectures in perfect paragraphs. She was a legendary classroom presence, and is spoken of in tones of reverence by today’s generation of great Columbia teachers.

\* The Reminiscences of Marjorie Hope Nicolson. An interview conducted by John W. Wieler, 1975, pp. 421-422, in the Oral History Collection of Columbia University, hereafter abbreviated to OHC.
Graduate Courses ————

Fall 1998

W4300x (4 pts.) Advanced Topics in Women’s and Gender Studies: Mind-Body Dualism and Sexless Soul in Western Philosophy
C. Mercer, MW: 2:40-3:55

G6001x (3 pts.) Theoretical Paradigms in Feminist Scholarship
Z. Nunes and J. Weisenfeld, Tu: 11-1

G8010x (3 pts.) Advanced Topics: Gender and the Environment
R. Nixon, W: 11-1

Spring 1999

W4300y (4 pts.) Advanced Topics in Women’s and Gender Studies: Poetry at a Slant
K. Van Dyck, M: 12-1, Tu: 1-3:30

G4000y (3 pts.) Genealogies of Feminism
J. Cohen and D. von Mücke, TBA

G8010y (3 pts.) Advanced Topics: Gender and Late Capitalism
S. Ortner, M: 2-4

Undergraduate Courses ————

Fall 1998

V1001x (3 pts.) Introduction to Women and Gender Studies
E. Castelli and L. Green, MW: 10:35-11:50

W4300x (4 pts.) Advanced Topics in Women’s and Gender Studies: Mind-Body Dualism and Sexless Soul in Western Philosophy
C. Mercer, MW: 2:40-3:55

V3520x (4 pts.) Senior Seminar
K. Gravdal, Th: 11-1

Spring 1999

V3116y (4 pts.) Feminist Texts I
J. Howard, W: 11-1

V3117y (4 pts.) Feminist Texts II
K. Gravdal, Th: 11-1

V3813y (4 pts.) Colloquium on Feminist Inquiry
B. Simon, M: 2:10-4

W4300y (4 pts.) Advanced Topics in Women’s and Gender Studies: Poetry at a Slant
K. Van Dyck, M: 12-1, Tu: 1-3:30

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fact, was not the first divinely inspired Christian woman to carry out her mission in men's clothing. However, a number of other legendary transvestite religious women, such as the twelfth-century German saint Hildegund, were commended by the Church for their cross-dressing, the idea being that disguising one's feminine gender makes it possible to preserve one's chastity in conducting spiritual work. By contrast, the judges in Joan's trial, who were sympathetic to the English enemy, held Joan's transvestism against her, and implied that her masculinity was linked to a lack of sexual chastity.

In her talk and slide presentation, Professor Maureen Quilligan explained that Christine de Pizan (1364-1430), the author of La Cité des dames and other works, during Joan's lifetime wrote the earliest poem in tribute to her. She composed the poem, La Ditié de Jehanne D'Arc in 1429, after the coronation of Charles VII in celebration of Joan's victory at Orléans and in honor of the new king. Quilligan speculated that Christine, who travelled in court circles, through her early writings may have paved the way for the teenage peasant Joan to gain the approval of the Dauphin. It is possible that the Dauphin may have read Christine's work dedicated to Isabel of Bavaria, the Dauphin's mother, supporting women's active engagement in political life and their potential military authority. Christine's retelling of Amazon myths may also have helped to create the conditions for the French court's acceptance of a woman warrior.
Lecture Series

**Feminist Interventions: Works in Progress**

**October 5**–Dorothea von Mücke, Department of Germanic Languages: “The Self Before Psychology: Some Remarks on Pietist Confessional Discourse”

**November 9**–Rosalind Morris, Department of Anthropology: “Writing: Love, Letters, and Prostitution in Thailand”

**December 7**–Carol Sanger, School of Law: “Separating from Children”

**February 1**–Gayatri Spivak, Department of English and Comparative Literature: “Feminism without Frontiers”

**March 1**–Marcia Wright, Department of History: “Women of Higher Status and Political Authority: from African to World Historical Reflections”

**April 5**–Zita Nunes, Department of English and Comparative Literature: “Reparations”

Talks will be held at 8P.M. in Room 142 Uris.

For more information please call the Institute for Research on Women and Gender (854-3277).