New Voices at Columbia: Introducing Susan Pedersen

Last Fall, historian Susan Pedersen joined the IRWaG community as Professor of History at Columbia. Specializing in modern Britain and the British empire, as well as comparative European history, Professor Pedersen’s work brings together gender analysis and European politics in order to understand how the lives of women both impact and are impacted by modern political and social change. Professor Pedersen’s books and teaching brought her numerous accolades while she was a professor at Harvard University (where she also completed her undergraduate and graduate education), and we in the Columbia and Barnard community look forward to similarly benefiting from her knowledge and insight.

Each of Professor Pedersen’s works examine not only how social policies encode and reinforce particular assumptions about gender, but also why these policies develop in specific ways. In other words: how and when is gender mobilized politically? For example, Professor Pedersen’s prize-winning first book, *Family, Dependence, and the Origins of the Welfare State: Britain and France, 1914–1945* (Cambridge UP, 1993) focuses upon the problem of family income distribution in the creation of the modern welfare state. While both British and French policymakers in the first half of the last century were eager to use welfare policy to promote particular visions of appropriate gender relations and family life, when it came to addressing how non-earning family members (usually children and their mothers) were entirely dependent upon wage-earners (usually men), they came up with two very different solutions. In Britain, the system was explicitly biased in favor of “male breadwinners”: its welfare and income support measures only gave women and children access to state benefits indirectly, and largely as dependents. On the other hand, French employers (and later, the state) disaggregated a portion of the man’s wages to redistribute directly to families in the form of family allowances.

What accounts for this sharp difference in policies with similar aims? One of Professor Pedersen’s “more depressing discoveries” was that the French state offered more practical help to mothers simply because this served a pronatalist and nationalist agenda. In Britain, on the other hand, where feminists advocated these programs as a means of emancipating women, the very link to feminism enabled opponents to consolidate forces against them.

“I guess if there is a ‘lesson’ in the book,” Professor Pedersen concludes, “it is that while advocates of particular reforms may have truly brilliant ideas and laudable goals, they can’t control how their ideas are used. And if they want to work politically, they need to try to pay great attention to context, and to envisage possible unintended consequences.” This study won the Social Science History Association’s 1994 Allan Sharlin Prize, and was followed by a co-edited volume, *After the Victorians: Private Conscience and Public Duty in Modern Britain* (Routledge, 1994).

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Professor of Germanic Languages

Professor of Modern Greek

Assistant to the Director

Professor of Anthropology

Professor of Germanic Languages

Graduate Director

Professor of Modern Greek

Undergraduate Director

Professor of Modern Greek

Assistant to the Director

Staff Writer

Design and Production

The Institute for Research on Women and Gender is the locus of interdisciplinary feminist scholarship and teaching at Columbia University. We administer the undergraduate Women’s Studies major and help develop courses for graduate students that supplement their own disciplinary studies on gender. In addition, we organize workshops, seminars, lectures, conferences, and research projects concerning various issues in feminist scholarship and teaching.

Director’s, continued from page 1

knowledge necessary for critical thought, and courses more directly devoted to timely issues. Our lecture series and activities—as well as collaborations with other Columbia University programs—ranged widely in response to the diversity of issues raised and concerns expressed by our students and colleagues.

2003 was also a year of losses. After mourning the death of our beloved administrator, Kathleen Savage in the spring, our autumn was saddened by the death of our founding director, Carolyn Heilbrun. The passing of Carolyn Heilbrun marks the end of an era, in many ways. For she was one of the first generation of feminist scholars to insist on the necessity for institutions like IRWaG—which she directed from 1987–1989.

Her own pioneering work in literary criticism made it possible for all of us to recognize the narratives by which women are negated in fiction. And her affection for Virginia Woolf, from whom she took much inspiration, extended the renown of the English writer and, through her teaching, gave many American students a feminist perspective on British modernism.

From the vantage point of the new millennium, much of what Heilbrun strove to introduce now seems like commonplace knowledge. Her demand for us to consider the perspective of otherwise opaque female characters in literature, such as Hamlet’s mother, allowed feminists to plumb the silences of texts as well as their loquacious textuality. That commitment allied her with others, including subaltern and critical race theorists with whom she was not always in agreement. Her landmark essay on androgyny, which described a mode of being female that was neither stereotypically feminine nor naïvely imitative of masculinity, has been surpassed in some regards by writings in Queer Theory, but her work made the latter explorations possible and, more importantly, speakable within academic contexts.

It is important to recall these accomplishments, and to honor them for what they were: courageous interventions born of a love of ideas and a relentless insistence upon the rights of women to participate in the world as they choose. Such achievements are sometimes overlooked, and recently, they have come under suspicion by a vocal few who have forgotten how recently the rights we now take for granted were secured for us by people like Carolyn Heilbrun. Thus, for example, a recent article in the New York Times magazine suggests that there is now a tendency among the wealthiest female beneficiaries of Heilbrun’s liberal feminism to disavow these hard-won opportunities on the grounds that liberal feminism did not succeed in transforming all aspects of the working world.

That article cites women who graduated from professional schools at Princeton and who found that life on Wall Street or in corporate law firms did not allow them to adequately pursue familial relations or socially oriented activities. Some of these women now blame feminism for asking them to achieve too much—to be successful as family figures (whether as mothers, lovers, daughters, or sisters), social activists, and career professionals. They do not recognize that their dissatisfaction emanate less from feminism’s failure than from their own misrecognition of liberalism for feminism. As a result, they do not see that it is less feminism’s failure than poor working conditions, a general culture of achievement that opposes work and social life, and a national obsession with productivity, that makes the balancing of work and other interests nearly impossible.

Carolyn Heilbrun received her undergraduate degree from Wellesley (1947) and came to Columbia for graduate work (she received her Ph.D. in 1959) before women were admitted to the College at Columbia. When she was named the Avalon Foundation Professor of the Humanities, she had traversed the full spectrum of the institution’s hierarchy, and like so many who have made that long and arduous journey upward, she could be severe in her...
Kant’s Kiss: Queerness and the Philosophy of Lifestyle

The purpose of biography, according to twentieth-century Kantian Ernst Cassirer, is to unite a man’s life and his thought. Indeed, Cassirer’s own 1918 work Kant’s Life and Thought narrates the German philosopher’s life as one that epitomized the philosophy outlined in his 1797 Metaphysics of Morals. Kant was well-known for his emotional reserve and lifelong celibacy; his contemporary, Charlotte von Schiller, went so far as to claim that Kant would have been “the greatest phenomena of mankind in general if he had been able to feel love.” Rather than view this “coolness” as a defect, however, Cassirer justifies it as fulfilling the very life of the mind Kant advocated. Kant’s apparent lack of interest in heterosexual relations was consistent with his own moral philosophy: a life that transcends animal desire in the pursuit of freedom and ethical law.

In a talk given on November 13 as part of IRWag’s Queer Futures series, Professor Eric Clarke of the Department of English, University of Pittsburgh, asked about the implications of one of the many details Cassirer chose to omit from Kant’s biography. During the last year of Kant’s life, at a time when he had already begun to lose his mental faculties, he was visited by his friend and private secretary, Pastor Wasianski. Wasianski asked whether Kant recognized him; unable to respond, Kant instead offered his mouth for a kiss.

Was Kant’s uncharacteristic affection merely a “true sign of friendship” from a man facing his last days, as Wasianski himself hesitantly suggested in his 1804 memoir, Immanuel Kant in His Last Years? Was it proof of Kant’s “fundamental ethical affect”—or to the contrary, just one of the many anomalous details that Cassirer would consider irrelevant to the life of a man known for his physical reserve?

While many of Kant’s biographers simply omit the anecdote altogether, and instead attempt to prove Kant’s resolute heterosexualism, Thomas De Quincey’s 1827 essay “The Last Days of Immanuel Kant” offers yet another interpretation. Kant’s imminent death, De Quincey argues, brought about a “revolution” in his character. Once stoic, celibate, and highly-regimented, Kant’s mainly compartmentalized character disintegrated into infantile weakness and a womanly craving “for tenderness and pity.” “Forced by agony,” De Quincey said, Kant “laid down his sexual character and retain[ed] only his generic character of a human creature.” Yet, De Quincey continues, at the same time that Kant became sexless, he also became more sexed than ever before. Kant’s actions were ruled by the “necessity for love” that humans require as animal beings, rather than the moral dictates of universal reason. Wasianski, De Quincey romantically concludes, was thus a stand-in for “female tenderness,” at a moment when the actual presence of females was impossible.

Despite these attempts to make Kant’s kiss intelligible, Clarke argued, Wasianski’s uncertainty and De Quincey’s confusion only render Kant’s kiss all the more intractable. “Simply put,” Clarke said, “Kant’s kiss does not fit.” But the ways in which Kant’s kiss eludes interpretation, he continued, illuminate a key contradiction that queer scholars and activists now face in coming to terms with our Enlightenment heritage of morality and reason. On the one hand, both Enlightenment thought and contemporary queer movements seek emancipation from traditional commandment-based moral systems. On the other, queers depend on the Enlightenment notion of a universalist morality based upon equality and rights, in order to seek social and political enfranchisement. “For queers in particular,” Clarke said, “morality forms the basis for both their vilification and their redemption.”

What is at stake in this tension, Clarke maintained, is the notion of “lifestyle”: the intelligence produced between generalized intellect and individual experience. This term, with its connotations of exercise regimens and home décor, might seem too rooted in contemporary consumerism to be of use as a term of critique. Yet, as Clarke went on to discuss, the notion of lifestyle is a central one for modernity, for it offers an alternative to queer politics that would equate character with identity, as does Cassirer.

After all, one can easily turn Cassirer’s desire for coherence and intelligibility against itself; Clarke pointed to Kant’s passion for flowers, his personal fastidiousness, and the young male university students he always included at his dinner parties, and asked if all this made Kant “simply and old queen.” Interpreting Kant’s kiss through a discourse of homoeroticism, this argument would be no different than the narratives that characterize much of lesbian and gay historiography. Such “recuperation,” Clarke noted, “is the historical corollary of contemporary lesbian and gay efforts towards inclusion, affirmation, and visibility.” Clarke termed this logic one of “representational adequation”: a form of authenticity that takes the form of gay characters on sitcoms, lesbian and gay legislators, or the Greats of Western Civilization on the Queers in History database.

But what do we lose by conflating one’s life with one’s thought? To what degree can individual experience be rendered intelligible as “identity”? Both Cassirer and the queer politics of recuperation, Clarke argued, fail by foreclosing interpretive difficulty—Cassirer by selectively omitting experience, and queer politics by allowing experience to determine identity. The irony of this logic, Clarke went on, is that Kant himself excludes experience from the realm of philosophy.

For Kant, the intellect is rigorously opposed to experience. This is the difference between analytic and synthetic judgments: modes of thought by which we give form to what we know. Both analytic and synthetic judgments involve the relationship between subject and predicate, but analytic judgments are those that clarify the essential components of the object. Thus, analytic judgments can be generated by reason.

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Protecting Iraq’s Cultural Heritage: A Report from the Field

By Zainab Bahrami

Early in 2003, I gave a series of lectures at Columbia on the potential damage that war might inflict upon the cultural heritage of Iraq. At the time, I warned of the possibility of looting at museums and archaeological sites. This is what had happened in the aftermath of the 1991 war, and many of us who specialise in the field of Mesopotamian archaeology had spoken out about it to both the press and government officials.

By April 12th, the news of the looting of the Iraq Museum emerged. The shock and anger of the Mesopotamian scholarly community was increased by the fact that before the war, we had specifically asked arms of both the US and British governments to ensure that guards would be placed at museums. US troops did not secure the Iraq Museum until April 16th. During the intervening four days of horror, when we knew that the looting had occurred and that the museum had not yet been secured, a small group of us in Britain and the US (Elizabeth Stone of SUNY; Eleanor Robson of All Souls, Oxford; MacGuire Gibson of the University of Chicago; and myself) spent literally twenty-four hours a day making hundreds of telephone calls and sending countless e-mails to the military, as well as the British and US governments, insisting that troops be sent to the museum promptly.

The immediate action taking place elsewhere was promising. UNESCO called an emergency meeting of experts from April 16th to 18th, and the Director of the British Museum did the same within days. But the plans drawn up at these meeting (both of which I attended) did not materialize, since there were military, diplomatic, and security obstacles to action in Iraq by any cultural/academic institution or NGO.

By the first week of May, I had decided to go to Iraq myself. It was not a difficult decision. I was determined to go despite any questions of entering a country under occupation, or any issues of personal safety in a war zone. I knew that I had to do something tangible about the disaster with which I was confronted as both a native of Iraq and a scholar of Mesopotamia.

In Baghdad, I worked on the inventory of missing objects with the US military investigation team. Although I remained independent of this team, I volunteered my time and expertise to them, and to the Iraqi Department of Antiquities and Heritage, in an effort to assist in the rescue. I was given permission to go through all the storage rooms in order to help determine the exact locations from which objects were missing and the types of objects that had been taken from them. I also compiled information on specific missing pieces from the museum’s photograph archive, as well as from the archive of field notebooks. This information was incorporated into the final report given by Col. Matthew Bogdanos to the Pentagon in September. While the military has submitted this final report, it should be pointed out that the process of inventory-taking is only in its preliminary stage. The registers and card catalogue do exist, but due to the chaos of the looting and the destruction of the offices, these records are not in a condition to allow a quick or final assessment of the losses.

The conditions of the store-rooms at the Iraq Museum are nothing short of disastrous. Both the new and old storage rooms were ransacked and looted. Things that were not taken were strewn about all over the floors and shelves, and many objects were damaged in the process. Based on my previous experience as a curator in New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, I estimate that an inventory of the storage rooms would require five to ten years to complete. Currently, both Iraq Museum staff and the military investigating team confirm that the estimated number of missing objects is between 10,000–14,000. That number includes both well-known pieces as well as yet-unpublished objects from very recent excavations. Four major objects that had been on display in the galleries have been recovered as a result of the military investigation and the work of military police. Thousands of other, less-known objects, have also been recovered in international seizures and through a local amnesty program that encourages returns with a no-questions-asked policy.

While progress in the recovery of lost museum objects has been encouraging, much work remains to be done in all areas of cultural heritage. The Museum and the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage are still in desperate need of curatorial and conservation supplies. They are also in need of basic necessities such as telephones, e-mail and so on, and academic publications (to which they have had no access since 1990), before they can return to standard working conditions. I and my two friends and colleagues, E. Stone and P. Zimansky, brought computers, digital cameras, and telecommunications equipment, as well as office furniture, to the State Board of Antiquities in June. We raised the money for these supplies from the Mellon Foundation and from an anonymous donor who provided funds for Iraqi cultural heritage to the State Department. As far as I am aware, this remains the only tangible donation to the Department of Antiquities or the Iraq Museum.

In addition to the Iraq Museum, it is important to remember that the Museum of Modern Art in Baghdad, the Mosul museum, and a number of important libraries were also looted and damaged. An assessment of losses needs to be made for these collections as soon as
possible. Right now, however, a more pressing problem is the horrendous looting of archaeological sites that continues across the country. Several sites have already been irreversibly destroyed in this way. Guards must be placed at sites immediately if this plundering is to slow down. Another factor here is the destructive market that supports the looting. The buyers of antiquities are not in Iraq. The primary market is in the US, Western Europe, Israel, and Japan. This illicit trade is a well-known form of organised crime to law enforcement authorities internationally, and it is the third largest illegal trade after drugs and arms. A UN Resolution banning the trade in Iraqi antiquities has been passed, but here in New York we must call for collectors and museums to stop buying Iraqi antiquities under any circumstance.

Another current concern is the potential destruction of cultural heritage through large-scale construction projects and development planned for Iraq. Before contracts are given to corporations, it is of the utmost importance that the sites be surveyed by archaeologists, and that the Department of Antiquities and Heritage be involved at the preliminary stages of such investigations. Such measures for ensuring the safety of ancient sites before construction are not new; they were written into the previous antiquities laws of Iraq and must be continued today.

Recent reports from our colleagues in Baghdad inform us that the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and National Geographic Television are planning to organise a travelling exhibition of the famous Nimrud gold that is destined for the United States. While such an exhibition may be beneficial in raising awareness among the American general public of the magnificence of Mesopotamian arts and culture, it nevertheless raises some important questions about decision-making in the area of cultural property. If the CPA begins to make decisions about exhibitions or the granting of excavation permits without relying on the advice of professional curators and archaeologists who specialise in Mesopotamia, the results could be potentially damaging to the ancient objects in the long term. Travelling exhibitions, if they are not organised according to international museum standards that require specific types of conservation, handling, and packing of objects, can result in irreversible damage to the artefacts. A hasty exhibition that is not prepared by professionals with curatorial expertise is not acceptable to the international Mesopotamian scholarly community. Likewise, decisions about where excavations are allowed to be undertaken and what types of proposals for excavations are scientifically and academically valid need to be decisions made by the Department of Antiquities and Heritage, rather than by government officials who otherwise have no experience in the field of archaeology. The CPA must reach out to the scholarly community for information, assistance, and advice on these matters whenever possible, and those of us who specialise in the field must offer our expertise.

As scholars and intellectuals, we cannot sit by absorbed of responsibility while the cultural heritage of Iraq is destroyed. Without our intervention, the situation will only become worse, and this destruction is irreversible. We thus cannot assume that our silence is merely innocuous, or worse yet, more ethical. Rather, we must make our voices heard, and even more importantly, we must act. We need to take direct action as individuals and scholars, rather than wait for an institution or NGO to make these decisions for us. Only then can we say that significant steps are being taken to preserve the cultural heritage of Iraq. 

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Mindful that our “rights” to education and to professional opportunity have only recently been won, and that what some of us assume to be rights are thought by many to be still-fragile privileges, IRWaG faculty and students remain committed to the necessity and the virtue of programs that place gender and sexuality at their core, and that reflect critically upon the social structures within which difference and privilege are organized. In 2004, courses, lectures, and symposia will express these commitments, as they have in the past. And, to help us reflect upon the difficult ethical issues that attend all discussions of rights, education, and the movement into cultural literacy, IRWaG will host a one-day conference on February 26 (see announcement, this issue) to honor the 20th anniversary of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s writing of the landmark essay, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” This conference is fittingly inspired by a work that has transformed subaltern and feminist scholarship, literary criticism and historiography across the world.
How American Soft Power Allied Itself to Consumers in Cold War Europe

Last spring, IRWaG had the pleasure of hosting a lecture by Victoria de Grazia, Professor of History at Columbia and former Director of IRWaG, as part of our Feminist Interventions series. Professor de Grazia, well-known for her work on consumption, politics, and gender (How Fascism Ruled Women: Italy, 1922–1945 [1992]; The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective [1996, ed.]), drew from her current project on the establishment of American consumer culture in twentieth-century Europe.

Focusing upon the introduction of American-style supermarkets into 1950s Italy, Professor de Grazia examined how the exercise of “soft power” enabled the United States to emerge victorious over Europe’s bourgeois commercial culture, its closest cultural rival in the post-war era. Nowadays, she argued, at a time when the “hard power” of the war against terrorism and the ongoing military action in Iraq dominates US foreign policy, and “softer” tools of persuasion have been reduced to brand-positioning, it is more crucial than ever to understand these past efforts to export American interests and ideology.

The 1950s, Professor de Grazia began, were a time when the United States brought together the forces of capital, military might, and cultural persuasion as never before. Huge sums of money went to both armaments and cultural exports, and American market and civic institutions boasted universalistic ambitions. Louis Armstrong was chosen to represent the United States at celebrations marking the independence of Ghana, Hollywood films projected the values of American civil society to an enthusiastic global audience, and Western Europe became a showplace for the success of American models of development.

In an era of triumphalism, it was thus no surprise that even the introduction of American supermarkets into Europe would take on the contours of a “capitalist adventure story.” The protagonist of this story, Supermarket Italiani, Spa, was a subsidiary of Nelson A. Rockefeller’s International Basic Economy Corporation (IBEC). Founded in 1947, IBEC itself—with its stated goal “to raise living standards and earn substantial profits”—epitomized the optimism and self-confidence that characterized globalization and corporate entrepreneurship in post-war America. IBEC’s earliest investments were in Latin America, but by 1957 it was ready to move into Europe and take on the challenge of negotiating the elaborate laws and regulations that burdened European commerce at that time.

Italy initially appeared to be an inauspicious choice; it was, after all, the poorest country that IBEC surveyed in its initial proposal to expand into Western Europe. Yet it offered favorable foreign investment legislation, and a friendly conservative government willing to bend the rules. This was crucial for IBEC, because unlike some other leading US retail firms, which made significant European investments in alliance with old retail capital, IBEC sought complete freedom of action. Rather than vie with the world of small merchandisers as a threat, it simply wanted nothing to do with local circuits or local knowledge. Instead, IBEC only asked its minority Italian partners to provide capital and political influence, since political parties across the spectrum vied for the favor of these “small-time” retailers.

Thus, when Supermarket Italiani opened its first store in Milan in November of that year, it was the only US retailing company in Europe to underscore openly its American credentials, and the only American firm to be a majority stockholder in a European-based commercial undertaking. Headed by Richard W. Boogaart, a self-styled “hayseed” in the Jimmy Stewart mode, the chain grew to twenty-six supermarkets by the mid-1960s, when IBEC was able to sell its initial stake at great profit in order to move on to new challenges in Buenos Aires.

This story of purposeful and independent globalizing capitalism, Professor de Grazia observed, is such a triumphant one that it is difficult to imagine alternative ways of telling it. It narrates a new “win-win” alliance that emerged between American capital and local consumers: American-style supermarkets raised standards, lowered prices, and freed the European housewife from the tyranny of local shopkeepers and the time-intensive and laborious task of daily provisioning. Meanwhile, IBEC turned a profit and proved that the Communists hadn’t a chance in Western Europe as long as “people had a full belly.”

But beneath this Hollywood tale of a global consumer capitalism gone local, Professor de Grazia argued, lie other ways of understanding the encounter between global forms of commerce and emphatically local moral economies. After all, IBEC’s strategy for success appeared simple: speedy entry and stunningly effective service. Mobilizing technique, knowledge, and capital, IBEC established a monopoly over the modern circuitry of food distribution in only a matter of weeks. It then sought to perform so effectively that public officials, faced with lower food prices and eager to respond to customer enthusiasm, would support applications for additional licenses to open more stores. Finally, IBEC tried to build up the supermarket’s personality, to capture the loyalty of its shoppers.

But while each supermarket opening was spectacularly successful as a public event, the vast majority of visitors were
sightseers rather than customers. IBEC had expected that low prices, combined with the bright and attractive atmosphere, self-service, and cash and carry would attract a large clientele. Yet rather than go out of business, local retailers continued to enjoy mini-monopolies in the neighborhoods they serviced. This posed a challenge that Boogaart found difficult to identify. “I can only say that we have a problem that isn’t operation or prices,” Boogaart mused. “If I were a psychoanalyst, I would say they had some kind of a quirk which we can’t locate.”

Historians have encountered similar difficulties in accounting for these “quirks.” Two common explanations for the tenacity of traditional retailing are the backward state of Italian commerce more generally, and the ubiquity of political pandering to traditional commerce, even at the expense of consumer interests. Others maintain that small commerce performed indispensable social functions, such as absorbing unemployment, or that the convenience of local shopping outweighed the savings a housewife would enjoy if she did her food provisioning at the supermarket.

Drawing from Fernand Braudel’s theories of global capitalism and local exchange, Professor de Grazia took a different approach. The supermarket produced an economic and cultural rupture in Italian society, she argued, that initially favored the personal familiarity of the old shops over the institutional personality of the new supermarkets. Not only did the consumption regimes of the supermarket and the local shop embody two contrasting ways of life, but even the intended consumer of these services were different. The success of supermarkets thus depended on the success of the much larger cultural transformations their establishment introduced.

American capitalists viewed the housewife as a sovereign individual whose weekly one-stop, self-service shopping was enabled by multi-day meal planning, high average family incomes that enabled buying in bulk, the ever-more automated kitchens, and high rates of American automobile ownership. The Italian massaia (housewife), on the other hand, shopped daily, usually on foot, at neighborhood shops and open-air markets for as long as fifteen hours a week. While Americans might have shuddered at the high mark-ups of Italian neighborhood food retailing, with its indifferent hygiene and slow service, the living standards of most continental Europeans made such conditions acceptable.

Moreover, just as labor shortages in the United States made one-stop, self-service shopping necessary, with its costly overhead, specialized equipment, and far-flung auxiliary food processing and packaging industries, in Europe the conditions of agriculture, the high cost of capital and land, and the regulations favoring traditional retailers made alternatives to traditional practices of consumption difficult to imagine. Low family incomes, lack of domestic storage space, minimal food processing, and local cuisine required daily provisioning, and the exploitation of female labor meant that the massaia did not weigh her labor and time against money as an American housewife would. Italian buying habits also tended to stick to convention much more than American ones did: standards of living were firmly fixed by class and regulated by family, neighborhood stores, and local norms. A change in purchasing habits thus required authorization by the male head of household—and indeed, the community as a whole.

Similarly, the American housewife’s relationship to pricing bore little resemblance to that of her Italian counterpart. Prices were more open to haggling in the Italian context, but they were also constricted by the twin notions of a “just price” and a “just profit.” Customers lived alongside local shopkeepers and they considered them to be entitled to the same income as other working people: enough to support their families, but not enough to permit lavish spending. Another consideration in calculating just price and profit were the “services” the local store offered: credit, repairs, delivery, advice, and gossip. Perhaps most important of all, the local store represented a “repository ofneighborliness” in the midst of great social transformation. Its loss was thus perceived as harmful to neighborhood interests more generally, even if the prices and quality of its goods could not rival that of a larger store.

But with the passage of time, Professor de Grazia continued, American-style supermarkets were also assimilated into local exchanges. New housing built up around them, and advertising and habit made them a familiar presence: as much local fixtures as the smaller shops. At the same time, supermarkets also put pressure on their competitors to introduce new goods, new equipment, and self-service. Indeed, by now Supermarket Italiani has become such a natural part of their cultural landscape that Italians are surprised to learn of its Rockefeller origins.

The shifting valuation of female labor in the 1950s and 1960s also ultimately made one-stop, self-service shopping more desirable. As women entered the work force, household labor took on new value, and time was assigned greater importance in household economies. By trumpeting the right to consumer choice, supermarkets also capitalized upon the resentment women felt towards those who questioned a female’s capacity to value and judge.

In other words, Professor de Grazia concluded, the influx of American international capital broke down distinctions between big capital, local exchange, and moral economy. Freed of the rules imposed upon the traditional market, the supermarket imparted a new dynamic to material life. While this transformation initially favored local commerce, the conflicting values that the supermarket brought into play—price versus convenience, freedom versus social control—were ultimately assimilated into the calculations that structure local exchanges and material life.

Professor de Grazia spoke to a packed room of students and scholars from the IRWaG community. She was responded to by Professor Elizabeth Povinelli, whose generous questions and enthusiastic discussion commenced the discussion period. After her lecture, audience members expanded upon the ways that consumer-oriented capitalism not only molds new forms of consumption, but new consuming subjects and new desires to consume. These issues continued to inspire lively discussion in the reception that followed.
life possible. In the philosophy, this distancing between intellect and experience also makes new forms of "inhabit the subjunctive"—to extend ourselves past what experience has provided us.

At a time when opportunities are diminishing for so many in the world, and when war is being used as an alibi to manipulate rights or to rescind funding for all but the most basis necessities, we would do well to recall the long and heroic battles, like those of Professors Heilbrun and Spivak, to help us think differently. Achievements that have taken decades may be undone in a moment. The first step in that undoing may be the forgetting of labor: the labor of struggle and of thought in the interests of justice. So, as we remember Carolyn Heilbrun in 2004, we at IRWaG hope to honor her legacy by continuing to labor, to struggle, and to think in the interest of justice.

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alone. Synthetic judgments, on the other hand, **amplify** what we know about the object through qualities not essential to the thing itself—qualities attained by experience. By combining abstract concepts with concrete experience, synthetic judgments are thus **always tied to the past and the present.** The a priori knowledge generated by analytic judgments, however, allows us to extend into a "not yet temporized future."

What Kant achieves with this distinction, Clarke argued, is a "**thoroughgoing breach**" between "intellect and experience, universal and particular, moral universalism and ethical particularity." That is, Kant draws a clear line between the human as a thinking, rational, and moral being, and the individual character, a locus of experience and ethics. Kant’s notion of the "citizen," Clarke explained, exemplifies this logic: the citizen is "**oneself as an abstraction, a generality, a kind of civil intelligence.**" Like analytic judgment, this abstract citizen of rights enables us to "**inhabit the subjunctive**"—to extend ourselves past what experience has provided us.

While there has been much critique of the disembodied citizen produced by Kant’s philosophy, this distinguishing between intellect and experience also makes new forms of life possible. In the [Philosophy of Money](#), Georg Simmel drew a parallel between Kantian intellect and money: both are "indifferent means to any particular end." While others, such as Lukács, Adorno, and Horkheimer viewed the "characterlessness" of intellect as the instrumentalization of reason, Simmel argued that it provided the distance necessary for any equivalence to operate; whether it be the exchange equivalence guaranteed by money, or the civil equivalence guaranteed by rights.

Paradoxically, the abstract, disembodied citizen imagined by Kant thus enables individualism and idiosyncrasy. And, Simmel argued, the interaction between the two form the basis for lifestyle: forming one’s distinctiveness out of the modern breach between oneself as an abstract human and one’s own experience and character. "This is not a trait that is added to intelligence," Simmel said. "It is the very essence of intelligence itself."

Lifestyle thus provides a way to avoid the temptation of seeking harmony between Kant’s uncharacteristically affectionate gesture and his disembodied reason. Rather than make Kant’s life equivalent with his thought, lifestyle instead enables us to locate "Kant’s queerness" elsewhere; in the "simultaneous harmony and disharmony between it and an identity that would resolve its queerness into authenticity." Lifestyle liberates queer activists and scholars from a politics of identity, Clarke concluded, by allowing us to reach past what is given and "to think beyond experience."
Lesbian and Gay Parenting

By Ellen Marakowitz

Lesbian and gay parenting, viewed as a new family form, is very much in the US news today. As gay rights continue to be a hot topic, particularly given the press surrounding the Massachusetts court ruling on gay marriage, the issue of lesbians and gay men who are parents is also one which catches the public’s imagination—not to mention glances (and interventions) from the legal system. While gay men are certainly also creating new families, either through adoption or surrogacy arrangements, this article will focus primarily on lesbian parenting as a trend over approximately the past twenty years, and the ramifications for legal and cultural definitions of family and parent.

The number of children being raised in gay or lesbian households is unclear, with estimates ranging between one and five million (with most agreeing on the figure of about 1.5 million). While many of these children are the result of heterosexual marriages, ever-increasing numbers of children are the product of lesbian couples who have made a conscious choice to start families. This upswing in families headed by two moms has been described as a lesbian baby boom.

What is most fascinating about the rise in numbers of lesbian mothers, however, is the almost stealthy manner in which these families were created. In most ways the state was out of the picture as far as the creation of these families was concerned. For lesbians to become mothers all that was necessary was sperm, which could be procured via a friend, and with a simple insemination taking place well outside of the bounds of the medical establishment. Even with the increased use of sperm banks, and alternative insemination through anonymous donors, lesbians who choose to go this route are still, for the most part, outside of the purview of legal and paternalistic state structures. Unlike some other countries, which do not support single women attempting to achieve pregnancy through sperm banks, the US does not regulate the usage of sperm banks in terms of the women who come to them. Single, married, lesbian or straight—access to sperm banks is not connected to marital status or sexual identity. And although sperm banks involve financial outlays, the cost for a basic insemination, utilizing no advanced reproductive technologies, is generally not prohibitive.

Lesbian parenting does, however, find itself the object of certain types of scrutiny. As lesbian families become visible, either by emerging out of heterosexual unions, or from the relatively private and protected sphere of pregnancy, lesbians find themselves objects in the legal arena. The idea of lesbian mothers, or a family headed by two mothers, sometimes taps into cultural fears that this arrangement will corrupt or mutilate strongly held ideas about the nature of a nuclear family. The arena of legal intervention differs based on how lesbian mothers enter into the system. For lesbian moms who had children as part of heterosexual marriages, custody issues are the battleground: these women fight to have the right to retain their children. For lesbians who start families as two women, the legal battleground is to gain legal parental status for the non-birth mother through same-sex second parent adoption, a concept that originated in the early 1980s out of the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

In fact, the vast majority of research on lesbian families reflects concerns about children and their upbringing. These studies have been primarily used, and to some extent driven, by the needs of courts in custody cases involving a gay parent, most typically a woman. In looking at the “best interests” of the child, judges have looked to sexual orientation as a factor in determining custody. Judges have sought to determine whether living with a gay parent would, in fact, be in the best interest of the child. Most of the research on these cases rely upon comes from psychological studies which seek to compare children living in either a gay or straight household. The children are evaluated through a number of psychological measures, including gender-role and self-esteem. The studies generated two critical findings: there is no significant difference between children raised in either straight or gay households, and children raised by gay parents are no more likely than kids with straight parents to be gay.

While these findings have been useful in helping courts award custody to lesbians, they do, however, spring from the model of homosexuality as a contagion. While the evidence against contagion allows lesbians to retain their children, it nonetheless reifies the notion that homosexuality is problematic. Based on this research, courts in some jurisdictions have found that the sexual orientation of a parent is not, in and of itself, sufficient cause to deny custody.

This is quite a departure for cultural and legal understandings of the family, as homosexuality and the family have been traditionally considered to be mutually exclusive institutions in the US. However, it is important to note that the patchwork of jurisdictions across the US reflects a wide range of decisions in this area, with certain jurisdictions upholding the sexual orientation of a mother as a significant negative factor in custody decisions.

There are several major limitations of the psychological studies being used. Research on gay fathers is very limited, differences between children raised in two-mom families and those whose original family was heterosexual have been ignored, and research outside of the US is very limited. Psychological studies have also been weak in their attention to larger cultural influences, particularly in the area of how transitioning cultural attitudes toward gays and lesbians impact the parenting experience for both parents and children, although some more recent work has started to look at issues specific to lesbian and gay parenting beyond the scope of “how are the children faring?”

In terms of the lesbians who are seeking to use the legal system to bolster their rights as parents, the same psychological studies are often cited in cases dealing with same-sex second parent adoption. In this situation, the non-birth mother petitions the court to adopt the child without the termination of the birth mother’s parental rights. The result of these “second parent adoptions” is that legally and symbolically, the child...
Another important factor in Rathbone's success was a “hidden network” of women—Rathbone's sisters, assistants, servants, and her life-long companion Elizabeth Macadam—who made Rathbone’s life of “independence” and achievement possible. Both Rathbone and Macadam, however, tried to prevent biographers from writing about them as a couple, or even crediting Macadam’s contributions to Rathbone’s career. Instead, they sought to produce a record of Rathbone that would establish her as a fit subject for British political biography: a modern genre created to recount the lives of eminent men.

Both Rathbone and Macadam were thus so “utterly committed to ideals of women’s independence,” Professor Pedersen realized, that “they had trouble recognizing how they were themselves replicating gendered marital roles.” Understanding Rathbone and Macadam’s own investment in producing Rathbone as an “independent person” and hence an appropriate subject of biography thus became part of Professor Pedersen’s project itself. “I had to write about her as an eminent post-Victorian (as she was), but also show the gendered assumptions of that role, and the psychic costs paid by any woman who tried to fit into it.”

Professor Pedersen’s book on Rathbone will be released in 2004; at the moment, she says, she is in the midst of page-proofing the biography. Her next project is thus still in its early stages, but after so many years writing about one person, Professor Pedersen is eager to take on a large multi-country study. Her research will thus investigate the impact of the League of Nations upon colonial governance in the interwar period.

After World War I, Professor Pedersen explains, Germany’s colonies and some of the Ottoman territories were taken away and awarded as League of Nations mandates to various powers. “There was a lot of hand-waving in 1919 and 1920 about the mandates system inaugurating a new era in colonial government, but historians today by and large agree that the League’s permanent mandates commission was fairly powerless to affect actual administration, and that the mandates were run much like other colonies.” Nonetheless, Professor Pedersen’s project argues that these mandates are important to investigate, because the very existence of the mandates commission provided a mechanism for international scrutiny of the imperial powers, as well as giving inhabitants of those territories an arena for claim-making.

“I think it’s a timely project,” Professor Pedersen says, “and I expect this to be fun: lots of foreign archives, lots of new material.” She has already done research at the League archives in Geneva, but she also plans some trips to ex-mandates, such as Namibia and Tanzania. In addition, last fall Professor Pedersen taught a graduate colloquium in comparative 20th century colonial governance, looking at studies of the British in Kenya, the South Africans in Namibia, the French in Algeria, and the Japanese in Korea and Manchuria. She is also collaborating with Caroline Elkins, an Africanist at Harvard University, on an edited book on settler colonialisms in the twentieth century. “I don’t yet know where this project will go,” Professor Pedersen admits, “but there are a lot of interesting directions to pursue, and I’m looking forward to it.”

Unlike her previous studies, however, this current project will probably not engage explicitly with questions of gender. “It isn’t that one couldn’t use gender to write about this,” Professor Pedersen says, as “there are plenty of assumptions about gender within the rhetoric of trusteeship promoted by the League. But like any other analytical category, gender has more ‘purchase’ in some contexts than in others; one can use this analytical tool anywhere, but the payoffs will be greater with some topics than others.”

Nonetheless, gender continues to be an important category in the courses Professor Pedersen teaches. Regardless of the topic, she says, “I usually try to include work explicitly written within and using the tools of gender history.” Last semester, for example, she taught an undergraduate history seminar on gender and the state in an era of mass war. “We read
a lot of recent work on the challenge to, and reconstruction of, gender roles during and after the First World War, and a lot of work on the mobilization of women by political movements and parties in the thirties.” Upcoming courses include a survey, graduate seminar, and graduate colloquium on British history, as well as another undergraduate history seminar on the League of Nations.

Professor Pedersen says that she has been impressed by the intelligence and motivation of the undergraduate students she’s taught thus far. She also praises the graduate students here as “smart, complicated people with a lot going on. I really enjoyed teaching them across a range of fields—it was fun to have the Middle East specialists and the Americanists in the same room.”

“It isn’t really much of a change from teaching at Harvard,” Professor Pedersen continues, which is important since she believes that the quality of her students is crucial to her pedagogy: “what my students will learn has more to do with their commitment to the class than with anything I can teach them.” She thus tries to shift responsibility to her students fairly early, asking seminar students to prepare the class either individually or in pairs, in order to make sure that the students lead and participate in the discussion. “It’s not that I’m lazy,” Professor Pedersen says, “but this is the only way they’ll get all they can from it.”

Having just arrived last fall, Professor Pedersen says that she is still getting settled within her new department. “My first goal,” she explains, “is to help strengthen the European wing, and to build up British history here.” She looks forward to spending more time meeting the students and faculty at IRWaG in the semesters to come. “It’s essential to provide a forum for advocating women faculty and students in the university,” she notes, “and I’ll help with this in any way I can.” We at IRWaG, in turn, are delighted to welcome a historian whose sophisticated understanding of how gender is operationalized in different historical and cultural contexts will no doubt be an important addition to our interdisciplinary faculty.

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of a lesbian union has two mothers, and a new birth certificate is issued to reflect this. The courts have thus had to face directly the idea of a “homosexual” parent, and in doing so, have been forced to redefine key concepts whose meanings have often been taken for granted—such as “parent,” “family,” and “homosexual.”

As courts around the country decide these cases, complex definitions of family emerge, sometimes based upon gender identity and other times based upon the behavior that defines what constitutes a parent. In a 1994 case in New York, the court of appeals overturned a lower court’s decision that a non-biological mother did not have standing to pursue custody of her children after her relationship with the biological mother ended, and found that she stood in loco parentis based on her membership in the “nontraditional family.” In essence, although not a complete acknowledgment of such, the court introduced the possibility of a normalized same-sex “domestic partner” identity, in many ways analogous to a spousal identity. The notion of a flegding spousal identity as a possibility between two women plays a large role in how the courts are currently addressing the issue of gay marriage. To date, there have been approximately ten thousand second parent adoptions throughout the US.

Over the past ten years, second parent adoptions have been approved by appellate courts in the following states: California, District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey. In California, Connecticut, and Vermont, there are statutes expressly permitting second parent adoptions. Second parent adoptions have also been granted by trial court judges in Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, and Washington.

On the other hand, there are four states in which appellate courts have found that second parent adoptions are not permissible under their respective adoption statutes: Colorado, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Other states, such as Florida, do not permit lesbians to adopt in any context. Interestingly, however, in 2002 the Nebraska Court of Appeals held that Nebraska must recognize a second parent adoption granted in Pennsylvania, even though the adoption would not have been permitted in Nebraska, thus marking the only appellate decision addressing inter-state recognition of second parent adoption.

As lesbian families mature, issues around custody take on new dimensions, and the courts have been very involved in the process of continuing to legally—and to some extent, culturally—define mothers and their legal rights to children. Courts have looked at the rights of non-birth mothers, whether legally defined or not, in order to determine the strength and reach of the rights of non-birth mothers. Current cases include one in California in which a non-biological mother, who had already attained legal parental status to the couple’s first child via second parent adoption, and who was in the process of adopting the second child, is suing to be allowed to continue the process of the second child’s adoption over the objections of the birth mother after the couple broke up. The arguments made on behalf of the non-biological mother include her legal status as the mother of the first child as well as her parental role and guidance for both children. The court’s decision in this case will provide interesting clues as to how far the court will go toward framing a same-sex partner through the lens of spousal identity.

Ultimately, as more lesbian mothers find themselves involved in the legal process, the results of that involvement will become critical for the definition of family and marriage. Lesbian mothers, either by fighting for the right to keep their children, or by demanding expanded rights as parents, are critical actors as the legal and cultural definitions of family, homosexuality, and mother expand. By bringing themselves into the legal system, lesbian mothers and the rights they fight for may be a harbinger of the future of same-sex marriage. The same court which acknowledges same-sex partnerships for parenting purposes may have a hard time arguing that those same-sex partnerships are not sufficient to support the notion of marital rights.
### Spring 2004 Undergraduate Courses

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>V3111y</td>
<td>Feminist Texts I: Wollstonecraft to Beauvoir</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
<td>A. Kimmich</td>
<td>W 11:00–12:50</td>
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<td>V3112y</td>
<td>Feminist Texts II: Beauvoir to the Present</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
<td>T. Sheffield</td>
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<td>V3521y</td>
<td>Senior Seminar I</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
<td>R. Adams</td>
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<td>V3522y</td>
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<td>V3813y</td>
<td>Feminist Inquiry</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
<td>A. Wylie</td>
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<td>W3940y</td>
<td>Queer Theories and Histories</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
<td>D. Kurnick</td>
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<td>BC3110</td>
<td>Intro to Gay and Lesbian Studies</td>
<td>3 pts</td>
<td>C. Hanhardt</td>
<td>R 2:40–3:55</td>
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<td>BC3117</td>
<td>Women and Film</td>
<td>3 pts</td>
<td>P. Romeo</td>
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<td>Women and Art</td>
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<td>BC3131</td>
<td>Women and Science</td>
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<td>L.E. Kay</td>
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<td>BC3132</td>
<td>Gendered Controversies</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
<td>D. Ko</td>
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<td>BC3134</td>
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<td>Gender, Education &amp; Development</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
<td>M. Weisgrau</td>
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<td>BCV3974</td>
<td>Hindu Goddesses</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
<td>R. McDermott</td>
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### Spring 2004 Graduate Courses

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<td>3 pts</td>
<td>R. Römkens</td>
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<td>W4300y</td>
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<td>These seminars are directed toward students with previous work in feminist scholarship but are open to all majors.</td>
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<td>Issues in Global Feminism</td>
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<td>Gender, HIV, and AIDS</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
<td>A. Swarr</td>
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