



L'Institut d'études des femmes Institute of Women's Studies

la première conférence annuelle des étudiant-e-s diplômés
first annual graduate student conference

8 avril/April 2010

105, 30 Stewart

9:00-16:00

L'ORDRE DU JOUR/AGENDA

- 9:00-9:10 Bienvenue/Welcome: Dr. Claire Turenne-Sjolander, Directrice/Director, IEF/IWS
- 9:10 -10:35 Atelier/Panel: **Constructing Nation/Constructing Normativity**
- *L'intégration des réfugiées Somaliennes au Canada*
Mané Ahmed
 - *Interconnected Identities in the Former Yugoslavia*
Jessi Taylor
 - *Keeping Children from "Harm's Reach": Mature Minors, Faith and Canadian Jurisprudence*
Heather Hillsburg
 - *(In)Visible Queers: Articulations of an Iranian Homonationalism*
Sasha Cocarla
 - *Homonationalism and the Harper Government*
Ariel Troster
- 10:25-10:35 **PAUSE/BREAK**
- 10:35-midi/noon Atelier/Panel: **Creativity, Collaborations and Coalitions**
- *Challenging Globalization: Co-operatives and the Importance of Place*
Lesley Voellmecke
 - *Femmes et les nouveaux medias : Le cas iranien*
Hanieh Ziaei
 - *Doing it Ourselves: Alternative Pornography as Activist Prefiguration*
Sarah Lawrance
 - *Psoriasis and Coalition Politics: Investigating the National Psoriasis Foundation's Message Board and the Address Psoriasis Campaign*
Ashley Bickerton
 - *Vers de nouvelles formes de réappropriation citoyenne: Typologie de la résistance créative*
Maria-Hélène Pacelli
- 12:00-13:00 **Déjeuner/Lunch**
- 13:00- 14:10 Atelier/Panel: **Citizenship, Bodies and Belonging**
- *Looking Men in the Eye: Villages of the Damned and the Phenomenon of Scapegoats and Backlash*
Marie Kuntze
 - *Where are women? A critique of the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the Millennium Development Goals*
Karen Lawford
 - *La citoyenneté des femmes canadiennes, est-ce un mythe?*
Mélanie-Eve Bourque
 - *Transnational Adoption and Social Constructions of Motherhood*
Tara-Lynn Guénette

- *Questioning Civil Rights, Freedom and Equality for Indigenous Women's Health*
Cynthia Stirbys

14:15-14:30 **PAUSE/ BREAK**

14:30- 15:55 Atelier/Panel: **Discursive Landscapes, Media Imprints**

- *Foreign Aid as Gift: Canada's Response to the Earthquake in Haiti*
Corinne Mason
- *Deconstructing Hysteria: Moving Beyond the Moral Panic of the Trafficking Discourse?*
Tuulia Law
- *The Child-free Woman in Contemporary "Chick Flicks"*
Tanya Watson
- *Exploring Representations of Gender and Race within the Ideological Framework of the Primetime Television Drama Grey's Anatomy*
Jean Durr

15:55-16:00 Conclusion/Wrap-Up

Cette conférence comprend les étudiant-e-s qui sont inscrits
dans un des cours diplômés suivants:

This conference includes students enrolled in one of the following graduate seminars:

FEM 6101 Gender, Power and Representation, Dr. Shoshana Magnet
FEM 6102 Women, Rights and Citizenship in a Globalized World, Dr. Denise Spitzer
FEM 6502 Femmes, droits et citoyenneté dans un monde globalisé, Dr. Mélanie Knight

Nous sommes reconnaissantes pour l'appui de:
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Ms. Margot Charbonneau & Ms. Michèle Phillips, IEF/IWS secretariat



Dr. Claire Turenne-Sjolander, Directrice/Director, IWS



Nos ami-e-s et nos collègues de la communauté d'études des femmes à l'Université d'Ottawa
Our friends and colleagues in the Women's Studies Community at the University of Ottawa

CONSTRUCTING NATION/CONSTRUCTING NORMATIVITY

9:10 -10:35

L'intégration des réfugiées Somaliennes au Canada

Mané Ahmed

Ma recherche examine l'intégration des femmes réfugiées Somaliennes au Canada bar le biais du discours néolibéral qui se pose en sauveur de ces victimes de crimes. Elle se penche sur les différentes stratégies d'accueil existantes au Canada. En particulier, nous nous intéressons aux programmes d'intégration par le travail ou l'apprentissage d'une des deux langues officielles du pays qui doivent amener ces réfugiées Somaliennes vers l'autonomie financière. Et, dans cette partie, nous analyserons comment ces stratégies d'accueil expriment les attentes que le Canada a envers les réfugiés. Également, dans cette deuxième partie, nous analyserons en profondeur pourquoi ces stratégies sont aussi importantes et comment le statut de citoyen actif, qui est accordé aux réfugiés Somaliennes, n'est pas aussi libérateur qu'il y paraît puisqu'elles continuent d'être marginalisées et contraintes à survivre avec des postes précaires.

Interconnected Identities in the Former Yugoslavia

Jessi Taylor

Ethnicity, gender and enemies are socially constructed identities that were heavily influential in the Bosnian War. I intend to explore both a) the interrelatedness between the Serb's construction of ethnicity, gender and enemies and b) the dependence of the Bosnian War on these constructions. I will argue not only that these concepts are socially created but also that these identities interlock, depending on one another and strengthening each other as systems. My argument relies on the writings of Benedict Anderson who discusses national identity and John Jillions who considers the creation of enemies but especially Dubravka Zarkov, who argues a connection between gender and the construction of ethnicity. By connecting these constructions, I want to reveal the complicated nature of these categories and the way they worked together to buttress conflict in Bosnia.

Keeping Children from "Harm's Reach": Mature Minors, Faith and Canadian Jurisprudence

Heather Hillsburg

Jehovah's Witnesses are consistently marginalized within the Canadian legal system. This discrimination is particularly noticeable in cases involving children such as child custody battles, as well as in the language used at law to describe the Witness religion. Children are characterized at law as "choosing" mainstream religion, whereas Witness elders "coerce", "force" or "inculcate" children into a religion that will ultimately harm them. The biases within this language played a key role in the recent A.C. vs Manitoba decision. In this case, the court rules that a 15 year-old girl suffering from Crohn's disease was ordered to undergo a blood transfusion against her will. In this essay, I will draw from child custody cases to illustrate that "choosing" one's religion used as a marker of maturity at law. The language of "force" and "coercion" used to depict Witness teachings constructs Witness children as incapable of critically choosing their own faith. As a result, any medical decisions informed by Witness beliefs are the result of "brainwashing" rather than of maturity or sound decision-making. Consequently, the doctrine of mature minor is not extended to Witness children in Canadian law.

(In)Visible Queers: Articulations of an Iranian Homonationalism

Sasha Cocarla

On September 24th, 2007, an audience at Columbia University in New York was greeted by the following phrase uttered by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad – “In Iran, we don’t have homosexuals, like in your country” (CQ Transcript Wires, 2007)¹. Laughter immediately ensued, followed closely with angry shouts from the audience. How could Ahmadinejad deny that there are homosexuals living in the Iranian state? And how could he claim that this was an occurrence that only happened in the United States of America, and, arguably, in other, similar Western nations? This paper will immerse the claim that there are no queers in Iran into a discussion with Jasbir Puar’s articulation of “homonationalism” – where in order to maintain popular notions of national belonging, “proper” hetero and homo identities are encouraged in reaction to and in distinction from “othered” bodies – read: terrorist (Puar, 2007)². Following from here, this paper will work towards reading Ahmadinejad’s claim and the subsequent reactions to it within the context of good/bad queer bodies. In this utterance, is the Iranian queer body purposefully (re)defined by and against homonational concepts of queerness, resulting in the emergence of an alternative (Iranian) homonationalism?

Homonationalism and the Harper Government

Ariel Troster

On February 2, 2010, political candidate Pamela Taylor accidentally “outed” John Baird, a Conservative cabinet minister and close stalwart of Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper. When pressed by a CBC Radio interviewer to name one openly gay member of the Conservative Party of Canada, she mentioned Baird’s name. And what followed was a deafening silence from the official party ranks. Baird’s office neither confirmed nor denied the rumour and the mainstream media didn’t make anything of the story. An article describing the incident in the gay and lesbian publication *xtra.ca* garnered dozens of comments from gay men in Toronto and Ottawa, who commented on the “fact” that Baird’s sexual orientation is common knowledge in the GLBT community. A debate ensued about whether Baird should be compelled, as a prominent Conservative politician, to reveal the “truth” of his sexuality. Weeks later, Immigration Minister Jason Kenney came under fire for altering a guide for new immigrants, to erase any mentions of same sex marriage or constitutional rights. In my paper, I will examine the “outing” of Baird and the immigration guide scandal as political moments that reveal the ways that the Harper government has managed to use tropes of homonormativity and homonationalism to appeal to both the religious right and liberal-minded gay and lesbian voters.

¹ CQ Transcript Wire. “President Ahmadinejad Delivers Remarks at Columbia University”. *Washington Post*, September 24th, 2007. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/24/AR2007092401042.html>. March 2nd, 2010.

² Puar, Jasbir K. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007.

Creativity, Collaborations and Coalitions

10:50-midi/noon

Challenging Globalization: Co-operatives and the Importance of Place

Lesley Voellmecke

The processes of globalization are often portrayed as homogenizing and omnipresent, responsible for economic and social change around the world. This paper challenges the notion of globalization as all-powerful and unstoppable by focusing on women-centred, place-based initiatives which both influence and affect instruments of globalization and create alternatives. Examples from the co-operative model are used to illustrate this point. Co-operatives, due to their inherent structure, can function as sites of social encounters and economic alternatives which challenge globalization. In this paper, the ways in which women utilize co-operatives to imagine political and material alternatives to dominant economic and social constructions are examined. The combination of a feminist analysis of the importance of place and the co-operative model brings together two bodies of literature with limited previous engagement in order to present a new angle from which to challenge the dominant discourse of globalization.

Femmes et les nouveaux médias : Le cas iranien

Hanieh Ziaei

Durant la campagne des élections présidentielles en Iran en juin 2009, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube et les messages textes ont été des outils politiques stratégiques. Les femmes iraniennes utilisent aussi ces nouveaux médias en créant un plateforme d'échanges et de discussion à travers un espace virtuel. Comment utilisent-elles ce type d'outils ? Quel est l'impact de ces médias interactifs et des blogues iraniens ? Peut-on parler de l'utilisation des nouveaux médias comme étant une forme d'agentivité? En sachant que la création de tels lieux de dialogue et de communication, en Iran, est difficile, voire quasi impossible, même s'ils existent des endroits clandestins, il est difficile aujourd'hui de discuter publiquement et ouvertement de politique, voire même d'avoir des échanges culturels et/ou sociaux. Toutefois, cet espace virtuel est utilisé par de nombreuses personnes dans la société iranienne, malgré le système de filtrage et de blocage mis en place par le gouvernement iranien.

Doing it Ourselves: Alternative Pornography as Activist Prefiguration

Sarah Lawrance

"Don't like mainstream porn? Go make your own!" Such phrases have been a battle cry for sex-positive feminists of the last three decades as they realized that the best form of direct action against the pornography they found objectionable was to create their own "alternative" pornography. This paper examines two such "alt porn" projects—Lickety Split, a Montreal-based pansexual, sex-positive smut zine, and Made in Secret, a quasi-documentary tale about a Vancouver-based anarchy-feminist porn collective—and their efforts to create pornography in line with values of social justice. Based on publicly available information about each project, I explore how these alt porn experiments embody, in both content and structure, a utopian pedagogical model of social change by being critical of the state of contemporary pornography while simultaneously putting into practice a vision of how ethical sexual representation could work.

*Psoriasis and Coalition Politics: Investigating the National Psoriasis Foundation's
Message Board and the Address Psoriasis Campaign*

Ashley Bickerton

Narratives on the *National Psoriasis Foundation* message board reveals that psoriasis touches the bodies, emotions, sexualities, careers and finances of up to 7.5 million Americans. Amidst the *NPF* message board's disjointed narratives, my paper explores what coalition politics could bring to psoriasis advocacy and health initiatives. Moreover, it investigates what types of coalitions could be made and how such politics could be sustained on the *NPF* message board and campaigns like *Address Psoriasis*. The *NPF*'s message board and the *Address Psoriasis* campaign are this paper's two objects of study that underwent close readings influenced by the theoretical work of Clare (2009) and Cohen (2009). From the *NPF* message board I expose and examine discourses of just war against oneself, intense marginalization of queers with psoriasis, concerns about corporate interests, dangerous drugs, expensive therapies and lack of access. I argue that these narratives provide opportunities for coalition politics between disability, queer, anti-war and anti-imperial politics which together could have informed campaigns like *Address Psoriasis* on the problematic nature of simplistically framing medication and style as solutions to psoriasis.

Vers de nouvelles formes de réappropriation citoyenne: Typologie de la résistance créative

Maria-Hélène Pacelli

La résistance est un sujet sociologique qui prend de plus en plus d'importance. Dans un monde où la mondialisation néolibérale a un pouvoir ubiquitaire sur nos vies, la résistance devient un point d'entrée pour mieux comprendre comment s'exerce le pouvoir. Cette communication présentera une typologie de la résistance créative sous ses trois formes les plus visibles, soit l'écriture, la performance et les arts visuels. La réappropriation citoyenne par la résistance créative offre un terrain fertile pour la reprise en charge de l'espace public, les revendications citoyennes et la mise en jeu de l'autoreprésentation. En examinant ces formes de résistance créative je m'intéresse à ce que ces pratiques ont en commun, ce qu'elles offrent aux femmes et aux groupes opprimés et comment elles leur permettent de retrouver leurs voix.

Citizenship, Bodies and Belonging

13:00- 14:10

Looking Men in the Eye: Villages of the Damned and the Phenomenon of Scapegoats and Backlash

Marie Kuntze

Women and children's bodies are known for silently suffering the consequences of war with their mortality rates often higher than that of male soldiers and or male civilians. UNIFEM reports that "70% of the casualties in recent conflicts have been non-combatants [with] most of them women and children." Habitually, it is their tortured body politic that is intentionally muted or erased entirely in a media process and legal signification that panders to male dominated agendas. Usually with the use of front page headlines that more often than not, seem to offer more detailed, visual and formal representations of the tortured adult male or fallen uniformed soldier. This bias includes legal proceedings that focus only on sexual violations of the female instead of her experiences with torture, while complicitly ignoring sexual rape that targets men and children. This has been critiqued as a legal process that may or may not take away from the survivor experience. Most certainly the process of muting the tortured female and or youth body, within any gendered biased paradigm, takes away from the formal practice of informing the public. Similarly, legal discourse regarding torture often fails to take into account the female and youth body polity as a national priority, perhaps intentionally so, and at times, overriding their gendered citizen identity experiences of torture altogether. I suggest that this is a male driven imagery, one that casts its gaze with an intentional lens and is seeped in misogyny most often invoked to meet Empire agendas.

Where are women? A critique of the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the Millennium Development Goals

Karen Lawford

Globalization has resulted in an interconnected world which can be attributed to accelerated and intensified relationships of all sorts including technological, economic, political and cultural to name but a few. Accompanying these relationships and ensuing "social interconnectedness" is the development of globalized standards, including that of human health indicators and outcomes. Through the global spread of neoliberal policy grounded in an economic framework, human health has become commodified within international agencies and instruments which guide and direct funds for policy and program development. The purpose of my presentation is to critique the United Nations, the World Health Organization and Millennium Development Goals and to continually question: where are women? With the use of scholarship from Anderson (1993), Smith (2004) and Da Silva (2007) I will shape an argument that the main reason women continue to experience lives that do not allow them to exercise their "entitled to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health conducive to living a life in dignity" is that women were not and are still not considered human, or human enough, to have these rights and therefore do not deserve resource allocations to improve their health on a global scale.

La citoyenneté des femmes canadienne, est-ce un mythe?

Mélanie-Eve Bourque

Selon T.H. Marshall, un citoyen est quelqu'un qui est membre à part entière d'une communauté et qui possède des droits civiques, politiques et sociaux. Mais, est-ce qu'une telle citoyenneté peut vraiment exister? Est-ce que les femmes sont réellement des membres à part entière? En utilisant l'approche de l'intersectionnalité, nous constaterons que le concept de citoyenneté est un modèle qui exclue certaines personnes de la société canadienne, nous pouvons ainsi dire que ce concept est à la fois genré, racisé et classé. L'objectif de ce texte sera de montrer que les politiques sociales ne favorisent pas la pleine citoyenneté des femmes, particulièrement celles qui sont assistées sociales et celles qui sont chargées des soins de santé. Nous devons ainsi repenser le modèle de citoyenneté proposé par Marshall afin d'inclure les exclues, car ce modèle favorise les hommes blancs, hétérosexuels de classe moyenne.

Transnational Adoption and Social Constructions of Motherhood

Tara-Lynn Guénette

In order to address the central question of our class, that is, *what is globalization and what is its impact on women, women's rights, and the shifting terrain of citizenship*, for my final course paper, I have decided to look at transnational adoption and social constructions of motherhood. Specifically, I will examine the social constructions of motherhood and the family and their impacts on transnational adoption; adoption discourse, including societal notions of adoptees and adoptive parents and the challenges they pose to nuclear family mores; the discourse surrounding transnational adoption, including discourses of kinship and family ties, and the alternative forms of citizenship trans-racial and transnational families offer us; as well as the implications of transnational adoption with regards to globalization and viewed within the paradigm of globalization. My paper will examine how transnational adoption is both a product of globalization and also influences our notions of globalization.

Questioning Civil Rights, Freedom and Equality for Indigenous Women's Health

Cynthia Stirbys

Equality from one particular Indigenous scholar's viewpoint (Monture-Angus, 1995) is defined as respecting and celebrating the differences between peoples. This standpoint however, is contrary to the notion of civil rights and freedom. Civil rights and freedom are equal participation in society in a homogeneous sense where individuals can join others who are already treated as full citizens. By being treated the same in order to attain equal status in society this does not allow the right to govern one's own affairs as in the political self-determination sought by Indigenous Nations. Freedom for Indian women cannot be attained through achieving equality and civil rights alone. Accordingly, Indigenous women striving to achieve mainstream 'equality' does not eliminate patriarchal notions that see women as inferior. Indigenous women seek freedom not through the notion of equality but through sovereignty and nation-building instead. Concomitantly, Indigenous women are reclaiming their worldview of egalitarian ways where women and men, children and Elders are equally valued.

Therefore, I will argue that civil rights are a limited way of thinking about equality for Indigenous women because of such legislation as the Indian Act and Bill C-31 which undermines self-determination.

Discursive Landscapes, Media Imprints

14:25- 15:40

Foreign Aid as Gift: Canada's Response to the Earthquake in Haiti

Corinne Mason

In Angela Davis' lecture for Canadian universities' Black History Month 2010, she called for more attention to be paid to the representation of Haiti's poverty as "natural" in the media. In response to her call, this paper explores the construction of Canada as a benevolent nation through the distribution of aid as a "gift" (Kapoor, 2008; Derrida, 1992). By analysing news media reports by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) during the period in which the Canadian government matched citizen donations (January 12 to February 12, 2010) I argue that Canada represents itself as a generous giver, and Haiti as (sometimes ungrateful) receiver of the "gift". Understanding the gesture of gift giving as a project of self-construction, I argue that the media representations of Canada giving foreign aid made Haitians hyper-visible as poor, desolate, and violent while simultaneously rendering Canada's imperial project in Haiti invisible.

Deconstructing Hysteria: Moving Beyond the Moral Panic of the Trafficking Discourse?

Tuulia Law

Contemporary depictions of trafficked women bear a striking resemblance to 'white slavery' novels of the early 1900s and the efforts and discourses of salvation and abolition they inspired. In this paper, I examine the sensationalism, sexism, racism and classism inherent to contemporary popular representations of trafficked women and issues of trafficking. I analyse the philosophies and campaigns of two international aid organisations, the Salvation Army and the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, and the work of two Canadian journalists, Lorna Dueck and Victor Malarek. Using the writings of sex workers and feminist theorists such as Razack and Mohanty, I suggest a critical re-evaluation of how trafficking is defined, what constitutes evidence of sex trafficking, as well as a reconsideration of what trafficked persons are victims of – perhaps it is not innate male lust, or corrupt cops and mobsters, but rather the multifaceted and far-reaching effects of globalized capitalism.

The Child-Free Woman in Contemporary "Chick Flicks"

Tanya Watson

In this essay, I examine the depiction of child-free women in a common genre: films geared toward women (also referred to as "chick flicks"). I contend that a theme for such films is the evolution of the white, female, heterosexual protagonist from a selfish, materialistic, immature child-free woman to a mature, selfless and less materialistic mother. I argue that within such films as "The Family Man," "Four Christmases," and "Raising Helen," the female protagonist's evolution of becoming a "better" person is contingent upon her decision to become a mother—or her realization of her desire to mother—biological or otherwise. I argue that this representation serves to reflect and support negative discourse about child-free women as well as provide a limited representation of the "ideal" mother: white, heterosexual, and middle-class.

*Exploring Representations of Gender and Race within the Ideological Framework of the
Primetime Television Drama Grey's Anatomy*

Jean Durr

Anatomy is a television drama that seemingly defies normative typecasting by positioning both women and Black protagonists in positions of authority above and alongside their male and White counterparts, respectively. Yet, despite its feminist advances, a heterosexual script is maintained; racial stereotypes are perpetuated; and dominant ideologies are reinforced through the tokenizing of disenfranchised peoples' concerns. Is it progressive and empowering to depict social advancements in representation for television audiences; or is it misleading, and, thus, further-damaging to imply that strong advancements for marginalized populations are commonplace; when, in fact, exploitative social systems of hierarchy are upheld through orchestrating this very disillusionment, thus privileging the dominant discourses of white, capitalist, heterosexual and patriarchal systems of power.