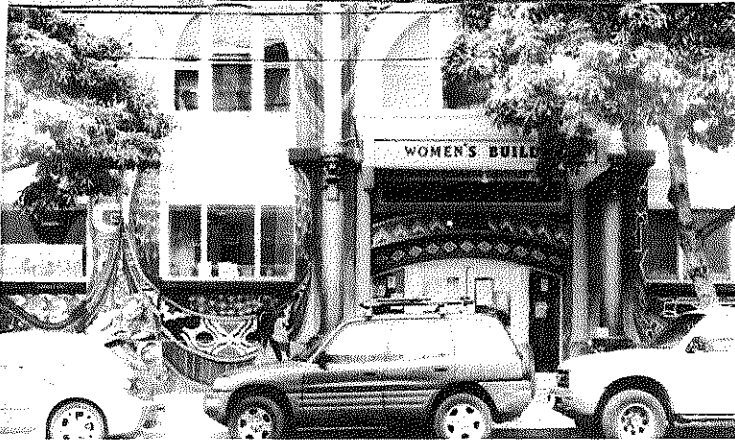
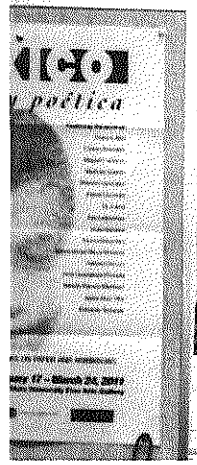
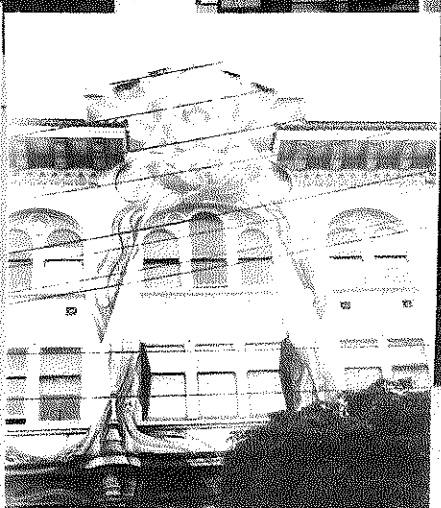
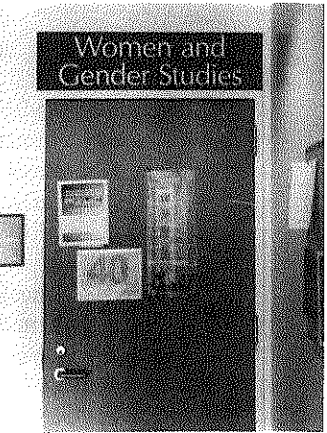
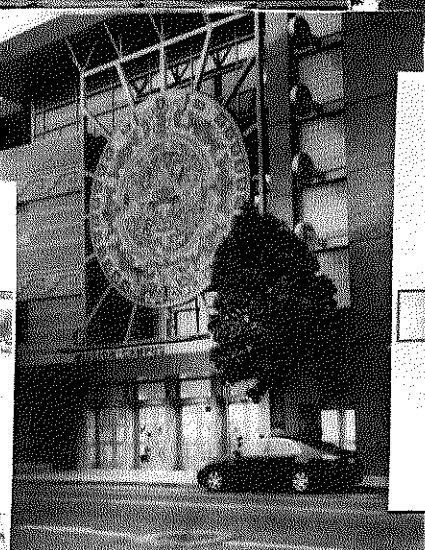
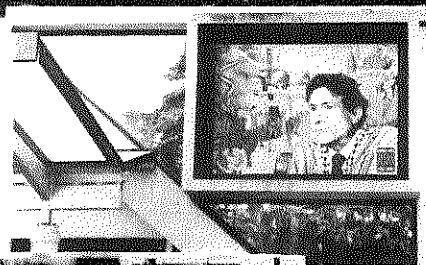
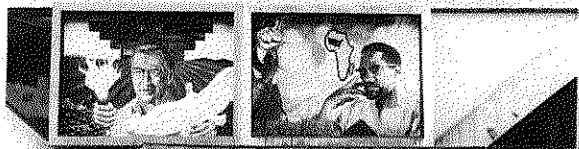
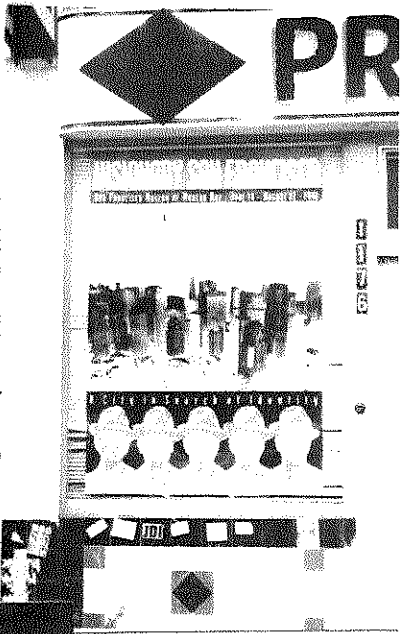
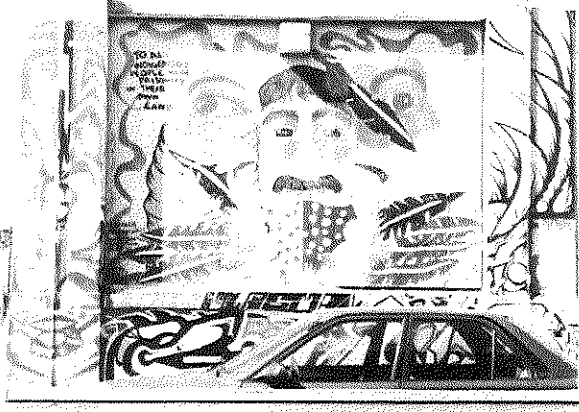


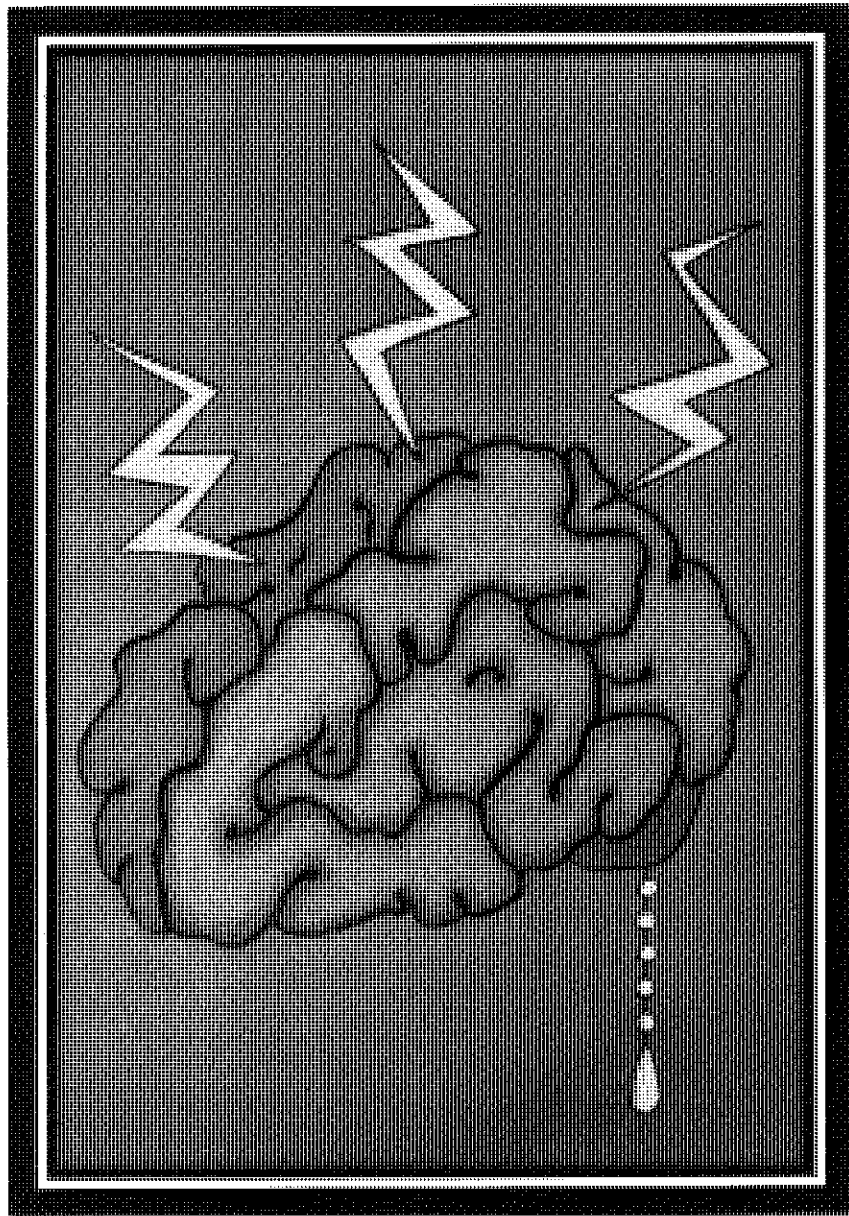
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(Turn It On designed by Sarafina Murphy-Gibson)

Volume 6: Spring 2011

This volume is dedicated to exploring education through its poetics, politics, and practices.

Deconstruct This! is the annual undergraduate publication of the Women and Gender Studies (WGS) department at San Francisco State University. It features original research and creative work by students enrolled in WGS 690 Senior Seminar.

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Serena L. Codioli

Traveling the Underground

As I took my first steps on campus I knew I had found my place among the student body at San Francisco State University. Yet, there were times I felt like a fish out of water as I maneuvered through the complexities of interpreting the framework of women and gender intersectionalities. There were numerous moments when I did not know how to identify the uncomfortable feeling of whether or not I should switch my major. When I challenged this notion of self-doubt I found myself becoming curious about how much I had changed as a student and how open-minded and adapting I was becoming of other women and their experiences. With each article and each paper I read and wrote, I found myself becoming more curious about women and why some voices were continuously silenced and marginalized outside of mainstream U.S. culture. These women's stories had profound effects within my soul and made me determined to find an outlet to speak up and against the injustices each woman had endured. All too easily women of color's voices have taken on a dual purpose. First, as a bridge between the dominant white culture and second, as advocates for their culture and their community. Oftentimes, women of color have to be painfully explicit about how they are marginalized by the color of their skin as well as their gender.

As a college student, I was not aware of the bridge women of color had created for women who were white. Did lack of awareness occur because of my assumed privilege as a white woman or was it caused by the lack of educational awareness of white privilege? After concluding my studies within Women and Gender Studies I was deeply inspired by Cherrie Moraga's prologue in *This Bridge Called My Back*. Her words resonated with the various intersectionalities I have read about within my studies. After reading Moraga's work my eyes were wide open to the creation of the bridge, and realized I too have an equal responsibility to cross bridges with my culture, my community and my experiences. Moraga sheds light on oppressions that we have all witnessed in our everyday lives. Such oppressions include the type of violence men and women of color face on a daily basis through the silencing of their culture, their class, their race, and their gender in America. Moraga discusses numerous scenarios of how classism, racism, and sexism intimately intersect with one another. The prologue's language is descriptive of her struggles: "I Transfer and Go Underground", "A Bridge Gets Walked Over", and "I Have Dreamed of a Bridge." These phrases all show the importance of claiming, labeling and naming because each character's experience sheds light on experiences often times left out of the official news, and are veiled because they occur in the private sphere. Moraga's journey is like an Odyssey of surviving everyday life. Along her journey she witnesses multiple social injustices created by a race-blind society: how one's skin reinforces a particular role of oppression and suppression to the dominant's culture and where the interpretation of the color of one's skin becomes subjective and identifies one as other and/or different.

The aspect of traveling "underground" made me question my own underground when it came to my thoughts, where those perspectives derived from, and how I could change them. This notion of self change was profound because the only person a person can change is oneself. The notion of normalizing subjective and racialized behavior had fallen on deafened ears of the American public and it has continually been silenced especially within mainstream media today. In response, Moraga's book is like a cookbook of understanding classism, racism and sexism, with each recipe based on the ingredient of women's experiences. Their stories were the very essence of the bridge which helped translate their experiences to others who were not aware nor exposed to women of color's circumstances.

Sometimes it is uncomfortable to understand betrayal or the reasons for despair and self doubt. Kristina Rizgs, in "Hijab in the United States," writes about a young teenage woman, Eman, who was waiting at a train stop in San Francisco drinking a cup of coffee. Out of nowhere she was verbally attacked by a man in a suit and tie, spurring out loud insults such as, "Why do you drinking this? This is not your culture. Each your own food if you want to wear the scarf (1)." Because Eman had been wearing a hijab (headscarf) she was identified and labeled by the man as a stereotypical Muslim woman as depicted on American evening news. At no time was the man's ranting challenged by the other bystanders; no one

stepped up to defend this teenage girl, and instead watched in silence. Too many times it appears American Muslim women are victims of another's prejudice. How could we do nothing to help when another needs it? How will we be able to realize our own prejudices which hold us back?

Sister Outsider, by Audre Lorde, looks at the way we use language. She explains to her readers the importance of breaking the silence by talking about our fears, dreams and feelings. She encourages us to look at our personal power through the words we choose to express, since we are the ones who profit by letting our voices be heard out loud (1). The type of spoken language we use when we speak can either be used against us, to make us believe we are weak, or it can be used to unite us through expression of commonality, of bridging two perspectives which may not have been recognized as such. A peer of mine in the Women and Gender Studies department, Paola Souto, notes: "Every day we have the chance to make an impression on the people around us, to add a little of ourselves into their lives. At the same time, they have the opportunity to do the same" (1). I find Souto's words to ring true because through our choice of words we share who we are through our experiences, our fears, our joys, and dreams. When it comes to standing up and expressing one's grievances towards injustices we are able to break the silence of oppression and suppression in various ways.

Moraga, Eman, Lorde, and Souto all explain how emotions, language, and how we choose to express ourselves has a profound effect on the interactions we have on a daily basis. How men and women and others interact with each other depends on whether they are able to see how their biases prevent them from seeing persons, and see instead convenient subjects. By looking at how we interact and how we portray ourselves we can begin to see how our choice of words, our body language, our verbal and non-verbal actions do affect our interactions in the smallest of ways: it's as simple as cause and effect. The aspect of bridging, analyzing, and deconstructing are crucial within Women and Gender studies, since each aspect mentioned plays a crucial role in our everyday life and it is vital that we first look at ourselves before judging others. We have no control over how anyone else behaves, but can control how we react to their behavior and not the other way around.

Elana Finkelstein

(untitled)

Since I've built a lens for intersectional gender analysis throughout my undergraduate education, I've begun to realize how difficult it can be to relay that analysis to those in my life who do not come from the same, or similar educational backgrounds. Accessibility, the concept and practice of approachability and the ability to be understood by many despite disparities in education, is gaining greater relevance the closer I come to graduation from the Women and Gender Studies (WGS) department. For example, I've noticed a distancing occurring between me and many of the friends that I had before I entered the WGS department. It's become increasingly difficult to understand one another's perspectives, especially with those friends and family members who have not chosen a similar conventional path of higher education within an academic institution. As I explore ways to bridge these gaps I also explore how various types of education and the ways they become privileged create barriers even within academic communities. Rather than maintaining these barriers in order to separate our knowledges, I suggest that we open our doors so that further inclusion and understanding can occur.

Going one step further, I do place some blame and critique on our department here. Too often we fall into the trap of assuming we all have entered with the same understanding of so many of the philosophies, jargon, and material that make up much of our studies. For example, I have been assigned to read works that cite Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, yet there has been no class in which we have actually broken down what these philosophies mean in their original contexts and thus what they have to offer. This thought had not occurred to me until I began to ponder the title of this journal, *Deconstruct This!* The concept of deconstruction is so frequently discussed in our classes, yet I have never truly understood the history behind its meaning. In the spirit of accessibility and in honor of Cynthia Enloe's constant prodding of us to always remain curious of all forms of information and education, I will attempt to tackle a definition of the philosophy of deconstruction and the ways we have employed it in our field of study. After all, Enloe does say, "Uncuriosity is dangerously comfortable if it can be dressed up in the

sophisticated attire of reasonableness and intellectual efficiency” (3). In other words, we must never allow ourselves to simply accept what we are told because we are told that it is “common sense.” “Common sense” does not exist.

Defining deconstruction has not been a simple task. This concept, first employed by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, is not merely the opposite of construction. Instead, it is an elaborate practice of approaching a subject with the intentions of unraveling what is not being explicitly stated in order to unearth its contradictions. The reason that deconstruction is so difficult to define is because Derrida pointedly never defined it himself. In his most famous text, *Of Grammatology*, first published in 1976, he introduces the *practice* of deconstruction as a tool to critique and break down other works of literature. Thus, I had to turn to several other sources to compile a more explicit explanation of how this process works. According to David R. Dickens, and in agreement verbatim in one instance with *The Concise Glossary of Feminist Theory*, deconstruction is partially, “a two-step process of reversal and displacement” (150). The reversal is that process of *removing* what is the *construct* of the subject. By distorting the context, one can then see parts of that subject which were previously hidden by the presumptions and general comfort surrounding it. This echoes Enloe’s distrust of any mode of logic or reason assumed to be “common sense.” The displacement is “a way as to discover and determine what it cannot describe” (87), as so thoughtfully explained in the *Dictionary of Critical Theory*. Deconstruction then, in context to our feminist studies, is the process by which we acknowledge the binaries that have been defined in order to map many of the social and institutional forces of oppression to which we object. However, we must work not to reinstate these binaries through further dichotomizing, but work towards qualifying subjects outside of those binaries. So much of what we study and advocate for in this department is recognizing systems of oppression in order to deconstruct them and discover the reasons behind their function in society. An example of this is the very deconstruction of societal gender roles in this society that people are pressured to fulfill according to their assigned biological sex. We have taught ourselves to approach masculinities and femininities as characteristics an individual chooses to adopt and express rather than properties attached and assigned to a body which is unalterable. This example is just a very basic example of how feminism makes use of deconstruction.

This journey of defining deconstruction has once more instilled in me an urgency to maintain a level of curiosity and constantly strive for a form of communication that is both accessible and retainable within my surrounding community. I realize now that the basis of all that we aim to achieve hinges upon not only our access to information but also our communities’ access to information. If we cannot admit to what we do not understand, then we can never begin to deconstruct it in order to reveal the dangerous comforts we may take for granted. Admittedly I am myself still struggling with the application of the deconstruction process as each source I have used to understand it applies similarly vague language for its description. Yet this is one of the challenges I will continue to meet as I begin a process of self-education upon leaving the WGS department. My aim is not only to tackle defining deconstruction, but also to begin to explore the ways that I can educate myself in the absence of the “traditional” structure of the academic University environment.

Morgan Miller

Public vs. Private Education

How can you compare private and public schools when they seem so disparate? Is it like comparing apples and oranges- two different things that can’t be fairly held to the same standards? (greatschools.org) Education is one of the most important things we will acquire over our lifetime. It begins at a very young age and will take us through the course of our existence. The choice of which type of institution you will be sent to is a very big decision that your parents or guardians will have to make when you are very young and before they can really judge which type of education will be most beneficial to you. Whether you attend a public or private school, these decisions help shape the person you will become.

I decided to pick the topic of public vs. private schools for my Deconstruct This! piece because from kindergarten through high school, I attended private Catholic schools (which I assume is not the norm for many of the young people I have come in contact with in my college years). Susan Choy reports, “46

million students are currently enrolled in the nation's public schools, in kindergarten through grade 12, and another 6 million are enrolled in private schools." Personally, I loved going to private school, a large part of that I'm sure is because that was all I knew. I had friends from my club soccer team who went to public schools, and hearing their stories about the large population, not having the same people in their classes each year, etc. just did not appeal to me. I enjoyed having the same 30 kids in my class for 9 years, and then in high school, it was not much more than that. I understand that something like that is not for everyone, but I feel very lucky that I was able to have that comforting, supportive experience. Aside from the academic part of choosing a school, there are many other factors that will affect the child in question. One that I think is very important is the "real life" experiences one gets from a place in which they will spend a majority of their youth. From my personal knowledge, I feel that private schools (whether Catholic or not) are much more sheltered when compared to public. Although I enjoyed my time in school, I do feel that I was at a slight disadvantage when it came to being exposed to other backgrounds. Because of the demographic that (usually) attend private institutions (which is white middle to upper class), it was a bit of a culture shock when I was in places other than my small hometown. Especially at a young age, I do feel it is important for children to experience and be exposed to situations outside of which they are used to or with which they are comfortable.

Going to a public school would benefit a child in that aspect of "real life." By law, public schools must accept all children (with exception of expulsion due to "problem" children or lack of resources for those with disabilities). This means that there could be children from different racial backgrounds, disabilities, etc. I think it is extremely important for young kids to have this kind of exposure. In the long run I think it will help them to be more open and accepting of those around them.

Another decision that largely affects where a child will attend school is where they reside. For the most part, you have to live in a certain area in order to attend public schools. Where a family lives determines which public school the child is assigned to. "80% of public school students in grades 3-12 attended an assigned public school. The parents of 39 percent of those students indicated that their choice of residence was influenced by where their children would go to school" (Choy). This can be a big disadvantage for public school students if they live in an under-funded area, and for certain reasons their family does not have the choice to move to a better neighborhood. This is where income really comes into play. Being financially stable or wealthy would make it much easier for a family to choose where they live in order for their children to attend better, safer public schools (which are typically in white affluent neighborhoods), or be able to pay the tuition fees and go to a private institution.

A big misconception about public and private school is that private school automatically provides a better education overall. However, when it comes to the teacher's credentials, private school teachers are not always required to be as qualified. "All teachers in a public school are usually state certified, or at a minimum, working toward certification. Teachers in private schools may not be required to be certified" (greatschools.org). Another reason that it may appear that private schools produce students with overall higher test scores is that they have the freedom to build their own curriculum. Not to say that this is true in every, or even most private institutions, but private school teachers may design teaching methods and programs of study in a way that will most benefit their students. This can be a positive thing for a child. Being in a private school also means that there will be smaller class sizes, which in turn means more individual attention. According to Lawrence Lee, "A child who needs more individual attention might benefit because it can customize a child's experience a little more."

From my experience, extracurricular activities played a huge role in my childhood. Going to a private school enhanced that experience, and in this way financial status helped quite a bit. Private schools often have better run sports programs since they may be funded by tuition money, grants, or outside donations. However, many public schools do not have the option to have sports teams through their schools. Many sports programs and physical education classes in general have been cut from the public school system. In a private school, we had physical education class at least four days out of the week, with a teacher who specialized in that area. Today, public schools are lucky if they have this option once or twice a week.

Now that I am attending a public institution for the first time, I think it is important that college students know the difference between public and private establishments. Unless someone has switched from public

to private, or vice versa, they may not see why it is good to know the pros and cons of both. However, a person who may be a future planner may see it as an opportunity for something to strive for when they have children of their own.

I am not here to judge which choice of institution is right or wrong, but I think the decision is a very important one to be made by a child's parents or guardians. Everyone should have an equal opportunity when it comes to education, but unfortunately for different reasons that is not always possible. Education should have the same requirements and accessibility across the board no matter what economic class or neighborhood a person "belongs."

Ashley Myers

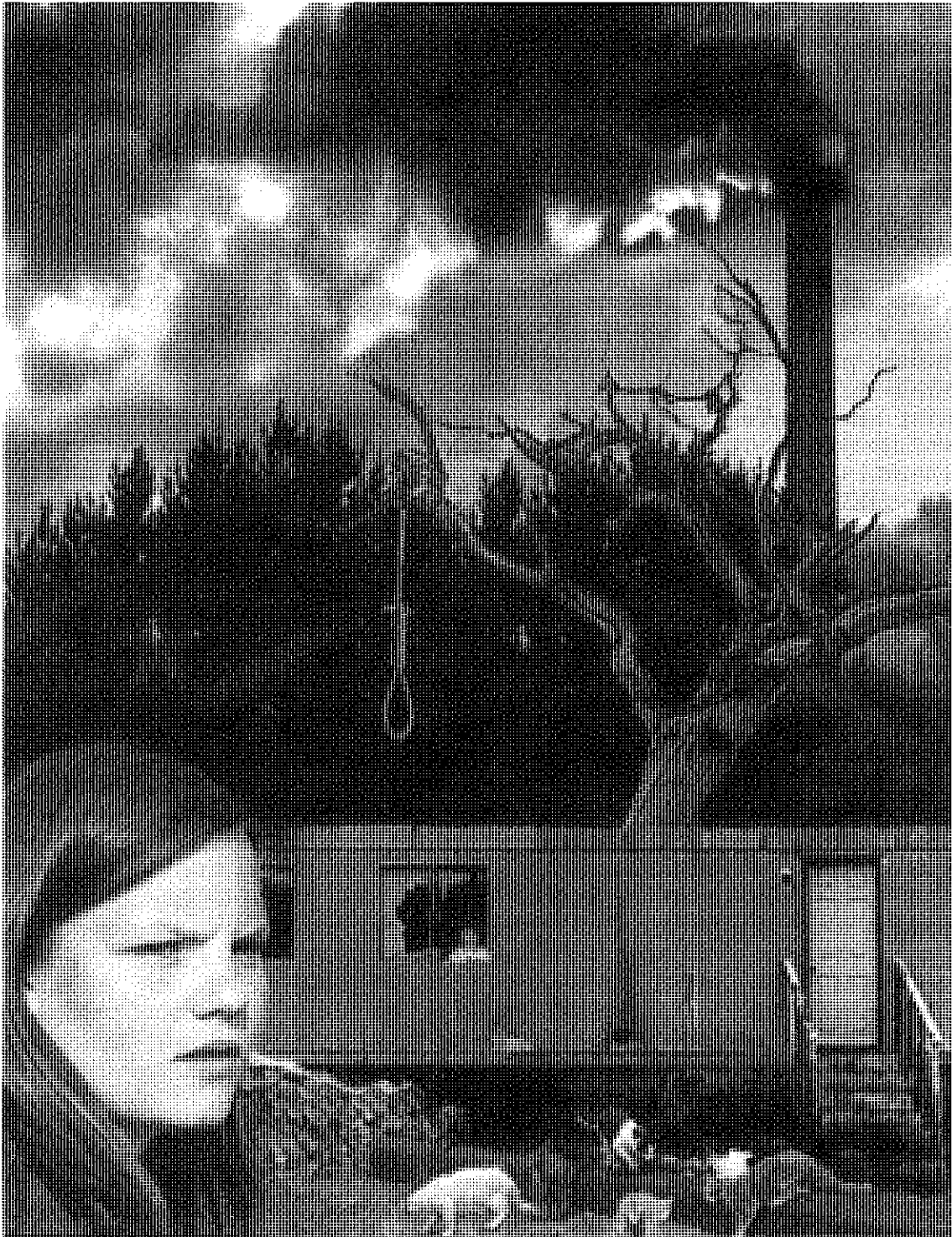
Reclaiming the Erotic as a Path to Wholeness

Only now am I beginning to integrate the erotic into all aspects of my life, including my education as a Women and Gender Studies major. I have always felt a strong pull towards it, but until now, I never understood its presence in my life. I believe the erotic can be a powerful force in people's lives, if only they knew how to access and utilize it. I draw upon Audre Lorde's work, The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power to understand the myriad ways in which the erotic plays in each of our lives. The term erotic is derived from the ancient Greek god Eros, the god of love, and was later used by the Romans as Cupid, the cherub of love. Lorde describes the erotic as "an assertion of the life-force of women; of that creative energy empowered" (341). The erotic, in this sense, is an intrinsic source of power to which each individual has access. It is the ability to live from within, as opposed to from without; living by the directives or 'erotic guides' of the soul. The very act of embracing the erotic within our lives can be a powerful act of resistance toward patriarchy's limiting, oppressive and narrow view of erotic sexuality. If we listen to and follow these intrinsic guides, we are consciously choosing to resist the very same hegemonic power structures which we seek to deconstruct. Lorde connects our societal inclination towards the removal of the erotic in our lives as a symptom of a larger push toward separating the personal from the political and the spiritual from the erotic. This rift in acknowledging interconnections represents a larger cultural consciousness that views all of life as subject to conquest and possession, just as colonial and imperial forces continue to dominate our world.

Prior to my education as a Women and Gender Studies major, I conflated the erotic with the pornographic, the obscene, and I was led to believe it was strictly confined to sexuality, biological urges, and reproduction. I now view the erotic as the invisible, ubiquitous 'life-force' that enables us to love, inspire and create peace within our hearts and minds. The erotic is present in our lives through our personal relationships, identities, communities, work, and our education, and was the force that guided me to become a Women and Gender Studies major. The erotic has played an imperative role in my academic career by guiding me to authors such as Lorde, revealing concepts and theories of transnationalism, identity politics and intersectionality, and inspiration that allows me to connect these larger themes in feminist discourse to my personal life. Since the erotic exists within the space of non-rational knowing, it acts as an invisible intermediary that motivates our desires for learning, curiosity, and self-expression that many of us are closed off to. We enable the erotic in our lives every time we choose not to ignore the intersectional oppressions or inequalities that women face, and choose instead to honor and validate each other's experiences and lives.

The erotic connects our physical bodies to our ethereal bodies and acts as a conduit by which spirit can manifest into form, just as conceptual theories of transnational feminist politics can be expressed through language. We can begin to reclaim the erotic within our lives by abandoning our physical and psychic boundaries, and by experiencing life in each unique moment. As we look back on our education as Women and Gender Studies students, we can see the space the erotic has created in our hearts and minds. By embracing the erotic in our academic careers, we have opened ourselves up to the opportunity to expand our connection with our higher self; the part of us that is whole, loving and infinitely creative.

Sarah Millet
White Trash



I moved to San Francisco,
A pillar of light,
All I found were the same discarded bones.

Theresa Seiger

Keeping the DREAM alive: media coverage, public reaction and the 2010 DREAM Act

In December 2010 the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act) started making headlines. Across every medium the Act was reviewed and explained, opined and discussed. Its goal was straightforward – to address the issue of undocumented immigration in the U.S. by opening a path to citizenship for young foreign-born populations.

In the same year, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Immigration Statistics estimated that there were more than 10 million unauthorized immigrants in the United States. As a young girl growing up 10 minutes from the border in southern San Diego County, I have always been aware of issues these statistics bring up. My mother immigrated to America in 1987 from the Philippines, just one of the more than one million immigrants expected to come to the country each year (Passel and Suro). My first partner's mother was an unauthorized immigrant from Mexico, coming to take advantage of the global transfer of care services, which has encouraged women from the global south to immigrate so women in the global north may enjoy more freedom from the home (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 3-4).

The large number of estimated unauthorized immigrants indicates that similar stories can be told all over the country, an issue the Act was designed to address. It would have allowed people who had been brought to the country before they were 16-years-old, a path to citizenship if they met six criteria, including age limitations and college or military experience. Despite passage in the House of Representatives and polls that showed that as much as 70 percent of the American public supported the Act (America's Voice), it was blocked by the Senate, five votes short of the number needed to introduce it to the floor (Camia).

The issue was shown and debated constantly on cable news networks, recently the most popular source of news in America (*State of the Media*). It is impossible to believe that such coverage did not affect the mostly positive public discourse. So what role did the media play in the support and resistance to the Act? Taking into account the different political views of the major news networks –with MSNBC swinging to the left, Fox News taking up a position on the right and CNN falling somewhere in the middle – we can ask, did these views make their way into news broadcasts? I will focus on content posted to the organizations' websites, as news consumption continues to move online, by taking a random sample of two stories and two videos from their sites.

Looking at coverage on the first of the three cable news networks, MSNBC comes across as the most liberal-slanted in coverage of the issue. In all of their stories, including one taken from the Associated Press, the affected population was called "undocumented" rather than "illegal," an important distinction because of the different connotations associated with the two words. The broadcast segments showed said population in a positive light by explaining the positive effects the law could have, and the struggles of immigrant groups, before discussing the possible repercussions. Looking specifically at an interview conducted by Alex Witt with DREAM Act supporter Cesar Vargas, there are multiple moments where the more left-leaning voice of the organization and coverage is evident. Within the first few seconds of naming her interview subject, Witt highlights Vargas' desire to serve in the U.S. Navy. She highlights the fact that the DREAM Act would affect individuals who were brought to the country "unknowingly" as children. Toward the end of her interview she again highlights Vargas' patriotism by focusing on why he wants to join the Navy's Judge Advocate General's Corps. Overall, the organization does two things: first, it follows earlier patterns which pin MSNBC as the most liberal of the three major news networks (Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism). Second, it shows a heavy amount of positive-slanted coverage in the debate.

However that wasn't the case with other organizations. Fox News, considered the most politically right of the organizations, had a higher number of negatively slanted stories. Even before reading their news articles, it is clear simply from their headlines that they are coming from a very conservative viewpoint, which claims that criminals are going to be allowed to become citizens through the DREAM Act and that the Act would cost billions of dollars. In a clip from September 2010, however, they did also speak to undocumented (always labeled "illegal") immigrants who were hoping for the passage of the DREAM Act. It was interesting to see their coverage after the DREAM Act vote on an *America's Newsroom*

segment from Dec. 10, 2010. Interviewer Martha MacCullum spoke with Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX), the current chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, about whether he was “baffled” that Democrats were still vowing to try to pass similar legislation in the future. Smith explained that the Act was “a nightmare... to anyone who respects the rule of law,” painting supporters as unpatriotic and supposedly against the law. While the interview was being conducted, images of people climbing over the border, presumably to illegally enter the country, were shown in the background. This is undoubtedly emotionally charged footage that was used specifically to cast a negative light on the individuals the Act supposedly would have affected, although the footage did not accurately portray this population. The Act was specifically designed to affect children who were brought to the country at a young age, not individuals who scaled the walls of the border in order to enter the country as adults. Curious again is the constant repetition of only one kind of immigrant and only one entry point into the country (the Mexican border). On CNN, they show much more neutral clips of immigrants who are not necessarily assumed to have jumped over any kind of physical border. Compared to MSNBC and Fox, CNN is the closest to the political middle ground. Throughout its coverage, it switches between calling the affected foreign-born populations “illegal” and “undocumented;” in one article, even using illegal in the headline, while undocumented was used throughout the piece. When composing my sample texts, I took two opinion pieces at random, and one ended up being conservative in viewpoint and the other, liberal. This network also had a very well conducted news story from *The Situation Room* which focused first on the story of 18-year-old, Peruvian-born Lucia Elaine. This is a great example because Lucia Elaine is of the population that would be most affected by the Act. The story also switched from hers, to the debate in the Senate, to efforts from people who are not affected by the Act but still fighting for it. Overall, while CNN seemed to have the most balanced view of the debate, it still had a slightly more positive tone by giving voice to more supporters than critics.

Of the three news organizations, the breakdown is as follows: MSNBC had the most positive stories with both videos and one story showing the issue in support of undocumented immigrants; and one story coming off as more or less neutral. Fox News had the most negative coverage with two negative news stories, one negative broadcast clip, and one positive broadcast interview. Finally, CNN had the most neutral coverage with one broadcast that was positive, one that was neutral, and one story that was positive and another story that was negative. This shows a general trend towards positive-based stories on the whole, reflecting the positivity in the American public, again as shown through multiple polls.

Another pattern can be seen regarding who supports and who is critical of the measure. While many of the private citizens shown seemed to support the DREAM Act, government officials seemed more likely to disavow the Act (Smith, “DREAM Act in Danger”). Despite this, with support from such powerful allies as President Barack Obama, it is doubtless that the Act will come back to try to make more dreams come true in the future.

Pamela White

Higher Education in Women’s Prisons

In the fall of 2010 I began an Internship at California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP). Even though I have completed my internship, I am still involved in the organization and will continue to be in the years to come. It is through my internship and my commitment to CCWP that I have been able to see prisons and those who are incarcerated with a new set of eyes. I have been fortunate enough to have gotten to know formerly incarcerated women, who through education and support from other women, have been able to use their adversities to fight for other women who are behind bars who face sexual abuse, inadequate health care, and other barriers to basic care.

Education is an issue that is quite often overlooked in the most current research on women’s incarceration. Studies on the impact of education have traditionally focused on male prisoners as opposed to women prisoners. While education is quite often left out of mainstream research regarding female prisoners, there has been a fair amount of research that has shown the benefits of higher education among them. Higher education has been found to help women see themselves as active agents in social change and self-change (Law, 77). It helps women to see that they aren’t simply just victims. Many women who

have experienced the effects of higher education have seen dramatic boosts in their self-esteem as well as their self-image. For example, many women are able to see themselves, through education, not as failures. A direct example of this can be seen in the Santa Cruz Women's Prison Project (SCWPP). Victoria Law discusses the profound affects that SCWPP has had on women in her book, *Resistance Behind Bars*. SCWPP was put into place to reform the existing education that was in place for women in prison. Prior to SCWPP, women's prisons' existing vocational programs focused on hairdressing, sewing, and office work. SCWPP offered different types of courses that affected women's lives directly and made them question the social issues affecting their lives. Many of the courses involved creative arts, radical psychology, as well as drug use in the United States. These were courses that affected these women directly and encouraged them to rethink the system that put them into the prison system.

It is quite interesting to see that because of education, women from all walks of life and different races have been able to come together and use the lessons they have learned to challenge stereotypes about one another. Women in prison who have experienced the effects of higher education have also been more likely to encourage other prisoners to get educated and to get involved in higher education programs. The encouragement that women have received from one another has been a tool of agency among them.

One can see that most of these women came into the prison system with past histories of academic failure (43 percent had neither a high school diploma nor GED certificate). The effect of higher education on prisoners therefore has been profound (Law, 82).

There are still, however, many obstacles that get in the way of women prisoners and higher education. Prison regulations and policies often conflict with their participation in formal education programs. For example, many prisons have rules that do not allow prisoners with life sentences to obtain their GEDs or attend class, period. Priority goes to women serving short sentences. Not only does this stand in the way but also prison security measures that disrupt students' ability to learn have had a huge effect on students and how they learn. (If there is a suicide or suicide attempt, or if someone is caught self-mutilating, the entire prison is on lockdown for an undisclosed period of time, with classes cancelled for the duration). Also, in most, if not all states, prison rules allow women to be transferred to other prisons without any warning or regard to their participation in educational programming. Therefore, women who begin a course have no idea if they will ever be able to actually complete the course or not.

In their book, *Prison Nation: The Warehousing of America's Poor*, Tara Herivel and Paul Wright also explain how prison labor plays a huge role when it comes to obstacles that surround women attempting to seek higher education in prison. Many women who partake in college courses and who also work are sometimes forced to miss class because they are forced to work. For example, when women have asked to be brought back from jobs to attend evening classes, they are told that work comes before education. Women who refuse to work are given write ups or other forms of disciplinary actions. Though they face hardships when attempting to receive higher education, the agency that comes along with that education is remarkable. Those who have experienced higher education in prison are less likely to re-enter into the prison system. Higher education has the chance to bring women of all walks of life together and has given them a sense of hope about their future.

The most important lesson that my fellow classmates can take away from *Education and Women behind Bars* is to understand that education is something that is unfortunately not a right in our society. It is important to understand that with our education we now have the agency to take action. My education at San Francisco State has given me the agency to empower myself and those around me. I have been very fortunate to have had the education that I have had and with my college career coming to end, I think that now is the time for us to take what we have learned and take action on the issues we find to be most important.

"If all who know and love even one prisoner, or who simply detest the dehumanization, degradation, and racism of the U.S. prison apparatus, were to join in some facet of the struggle to bring this insane system under control and, perhaps, to change it, even abolish it, change could occur."- Marylyn Buck (political prisoner).

Dana Corrin Williams

Importance of Vocational Education

Of the three public high schools in my hometown, I ended up attending the one that was essentially the "dumping ground" for the other three public and private local high schools' "bad seeds" and "problem" kids. Basically, we were the last stop before a continuation or an alternative education school, which are institutions usually reserved for the previously mentioned "bad seeds" and other educational misfits that just don't quite fit in the established mainstream system (*Alternative Education*). I eventually came to the conclusion that the general "A-G-everyone-needs-to-graduate-and-go-to-college" approach most high schools used just didn't work for a large portion of my peers. As the daughter of two faculty members at my high school, I not only got a student's view of the holes within the public school system, but also the hardships faculty and staff-members have to endure to try and just keep certain kids from being thought of as lost causes and shipped off to an alternative educational institution. Through my father's journey with being a vocational education teacher, I learned that there are certain programs in which a lot of these kids could excel, but they're often under-funded and invisible; the majority of participating students are low-income people of color (Spivak, 1). For example, Vocational education offers knowledge and training for non-academic careers such as automotive technology and cosmetology. My aim with this short piece is to put a spotlight on this particular problem through an interview with my father, an auto tech professor at a Southern California community college, and give readers insight into what could be a saving grace for a lot of young people. The end-results Vocational Education has to offer are both "short- and medium-run earning benefits for most students at both the secondary and postsecondary levels, and these benefits extend to those who are economically disadvantaged" (NAVE xvii).

What is your definition of Vocational Education?

Personally, I believe that all education is vocational. I've learned even a "professional student" is a vocation.

What do the programs look like (structurally) and what is their purpose?

It's traditionally the "non-college" route. It's looked at as the hope for the lesser intelligent. However, with technology growing at the leaps and bounds that it is, it has become imperative that post-secondary education should be sought for the skilled worker as well as the professional.

Do you think vocational education gets looked down on as a "lesser path"? Why/Why not?

Yes and no, depends on who's looking. Most high school teachers, counselors and administrators believe that they are validated and successful if their students go on to a college, whether they graduate from that institution or not. I, and many of my fellow ITE/VOC-ED instructors, believe we are successful if our students become a productive member of society.

Do you think the educational system (especially at the high school level) has a hierarchy?

Yes, there are the chosen few that tend to move up the ladder quickly no matter how incompetent they seem to be.

Why is funding such a problem for Voc/Career & Tech Ed programs?

They're very expensive. Equipment, supplies can suck up a substantial amount of the school budget. Traditionally the IT instructors at the school I was at were allocated four times the amount of supply money that an academic program will get. Also, there is a much higher possibility of lawsuits from injury.

What was your biggest struggle as a Voc Ed teacher at a high school?

Respectability. Within my first year of teaching at the high school level I realized that there was a fairly low level of respect for IT teachers. The academic community within the school had quite a few misconceptions of what it takes to be an effective IT teacher. Their idea of us was "Hand them a hammer and let 'em go." I spent a lot of my time educating my fellow teachers. Some simply dismissed me. I'm reminded of a workshop panel I was asked to be on to develop academic standards for the VUSD. I was asked my opinion on the benefits of educational pathways and my reply was laced with business terms I had become familiar with in my 20+ years as an auto repair shop owner. My concluding question was "what's the ROI?" Several of my fellow panelists asked what the term meant and before I could answer, another teacher, with excitement, said it means

"Return On Investment". This teacher turned to me with a big smile on [their] face and said, "Where did you get your business degree?" I replied "What degree? I was in business for 20 years". [They] refused to acknowledge my presence for the next 2 days we were working together. I found out later that [they] taught business applications, such as MS Office for the other H.S. in town and with a little deductive reasoning figured out that [they] most likely earned less than I was earning when I was in business. Maybe I should have educated [them] on what ROI means.

With the growing unemployment rate in the United States and more students graduating with degrees that do not guarantee a job, Vocational Education needs to be promoted more. There should be basic training classes offered to all students at the high school level. The National Assessment of Vocational Education has stated that, "secondary students who participate in vocational programs have increased their academic course taking and achievement, making them better prepared for both college and careers than were their peers in the past" (NAVE xvii). The report also finds that when both Vocational Education and traditional academic learning are intertwined and taught simultaneously, the outcome is much more successful than if the student pursued one over the other (NAVE xvii).

I hope we can consider the future of secondary education as all encompassing. Being in a scholarly major like Women and Gender Studies, I think it's important to examine and respect all educational backgrounds. The emphasis on where a person went to school and what kind of piece of paper they receive at the end of it has resulted in an educational hierarchy that prizes the university route over career and technical training. I often feel that the importance of Vocational Education is ignored under the pressures of getting every student in to a university. Even if you, the reader, walk away from this piece with only the smallest consideration of the proverbial "other side of the coin," I believe we can work towards a better, broader educational experience for all, not just a select few.

Kalia Williams

Women and Sports/Title IX

When I step on a basketball court something takes over. I feel exhilaration! I feel powerful and as if I can do almost anything in twenty minutes. I am part of a team and having a basketball in my hand is like having my heart pumping blood through my body. When the referee blows the whistle I lose all other thoughts except "I need to be the best me I can be - I need to be phenomenal - I want to win!" That is what it is like to be an athlete. One who has worked hard to be the best one can be. But there are some differences. I happen to be a FEMALE athlete and female athletes do not have the same opportunities as male athletes have.

I have played in games where there were no fans, because who wants to see women play basketball? I have played in "hand-me-down" jerseys because there was not enough money in the budget to buy new jerseys for the men AND the women. When I hit high school, it was never so apparent that being a female playing basketball was a hindrance. In my senior year, our team, led by hard work and determination, made it to the playoffs. Never have I wanted to win more than I did that night. I played with passion. I played with all that had been taught to me in my years of basketball, and yet despite all that I could do that night, we lost. I was devastated. I was angry and I was sad. I felt as if I had let my team down since I was the captain. My parents told me that I did all that I could do and now it was time to look forward to moving on to college. It was time for my coach to do his job and start finding the right fit for me at the college level. However that was not to be. My coach, without a word, without talking to our team, quit that night and never looked back. Upset that this team of girls had not done what he wanted them to do, he walked away. I was left on my own to navigate the college athletic system. I have always believed that had I been a male athlete with the same skill level he never would have left.

Enter Title IX. Title IX, signed into law in 1972 by President Nixon, simply said "No person shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of or be subject to discrimination under any educational programs or activity receiving federal financial assistance (Brammer)."

When Title IX was implemented there were many who felt there was no need for this law. There were dozens of "naysayers" who felt as many still do today that there was no concrete reason to write a law that would specifically ensure that women would have equal rights, and especially in the field of sports. It

was believed that with Title IX it would be applied in every circumstance, and most importantly it would assure that women who participated in sports would be treated fairly and given the same rights as men – WRONG! When you take a critical view of Title IX, it seems that the law that was supposed to do so much good has only barely touched the surface. Women are still discriminated against. They are still treated as second-rate athletes who most often are given less than their male counterparts. Women still find themselves at the lower scale of hiring in terms of athletic directors and coaches, and many colleges use Title IX as a scapegoat to rid itself of male college teams, citing that they needed to do so to make room for the women. Good has come from Title IX but often times that good is overshadowed by the negative aspects that are assigned to women athletes.

Although I am a woman, I do not like the idea of being described as a female athlete! I want to be described as an athlete. But before that can happen, you have to understand why there is a need for Title IX. Billie Jean King said it best when she stated “The 30-year legacy of Title IX is the opportunity for women to get a college education and, second, to get better at their particular skill. It's been a huge difference for women's sports, and it created an infrastructure for women to pursue their passion in sports.” The passing of Title IX has not accomplished what it set out to do. There is still discrimination between women and men. There are still lawsuits for equality against schools and there are still parents of females who state “GIVE MY DAUGHTER THE SAME OPPORUNTITES!”

I play basketball. I am female. It makes no sense that laws must be written to protect and ensure that women have the same opportunities that men have. The notion that sex determines who is better, more athletic, is preposterous. When one thinks of women's athletics almost immediately more negative than positive images come to mind. There are those who believe that it is nothing more than a system of quotas, while those who support it believe that it has finally made us take a look at the way we think about women and athletics in the same sentence. “The implementation of Title IX has changed the way society views girls and women -- that's the part that often gets overlooked, strength, independence and freedom -- those are the kind of things that women learn from sports. These opportunities are changing women -- and they're changing the way men and boys see women (Lopiano).”

I do not play basketball to make a statement. I do not play because I am a female or because I want to be male. I play for the love of the game. I play because it is in my blood and it is simply a part of who I am. I understand Title IX. I know that there was a reason for its creation and there continues to be a reason for its existence. I am thankful for the many advantages that it has given women and I am mindful of the many obstacles still to conquer.

Federico Villalobos

Street Art: Responding to the Community

I never gave much attention to street art until I moved to San Francisco some 4 years ago. Riding Muni up and down the relatively busy main streets, I began to notice the varied forms of street art in The City. There is a lot of what is called “tagging,” which is the usually quick act of the street artist to “write” their artistic name upon a space/location, usually without much care. However, there are the artists such as New York (Brooklyn) based artist AVOID who writes his name with much more of a creative edge, paying attention to form and the space it occupies. But there is also that form of street art that moves beyond that little word “graffiti” and merges into what has only been occupied by highly funded projects: public art. The work of artists such as Blu, Gaia, and Swoon is often massive and in response to social and community politics.

Street art is itself a form of public art that perhaps bears little resemblance to Claes Oldenburg's massive structures of mundane objects located throughout major cities across the Western world (U.S. and Europe). Street art and public art function nearly the same in that they both occupy space, and approach its audience in a very intimate manner out on the street. However, their differences lie in funding, and that's specifically where the problem arises: funding means access and access in turn means discussion and education. Street art also differs from public art politically, because it has no permission to exist from the State, as it is unlawful to paint or post an image upon a building or public space without permission in most places. This act of forcibly bypassing and ignoring the law makes this form of art a kind of

resistance to the state, but it isn't a knee jerk reaction; taggers themselves have to think before acting, looking around for cameras or police, before jumping to write upon a space. Street artists thus take a much more considered and timely approach. Their acts of resistance are critical responses to the community and to the space which their work is to occupy.

Vanessa Kwan's *Vancouver, Vancouver, Vancouver* (2010) is an example of participatory public art that verges on street art because of its particular impermanence. Her piece was a traveling kiosk during the 2010 winter Olympic Games in Vancouver, which sought to force the public to see the Vancouver landscape differently from the consumer's eyes and the interests of the city council and the Olympic committee. The kiosk held post cards that were cut-outs of the Vancouver skyline. The idea was that the public would hold these up in random locations, being able to see and communicate with the city of Vancouver on a much more intimate, personal, and less commodified fashion. *Vancouver Vancouver Vancouver* was then at once a critique on structuring the City of Vancouver as a commodity by the State, and also served as an oppositional narrative.

Street artist Blu revealed a colossal work in late 2009 entitled *Bike Crushing Cars* in Milan. The work looks like the biggest wheat paste you've seen to date. Resting on the side of a light-rail ramp is a colossal headless figure mounted on a bike, riding across hundreds of white automobiles outlined in black. Blu addresses the dependency of a large portion of the world on car culture, and inadvertently, on oil, to move us about in our daily lives. The piece's size reveals the size of the problem: the extraordinary size of the cyclist points out the simplicity of the object itself in comparison to the numerous environmental complications accompanying cars. Blu goes beyond the political, beyond the popular, to produce a coherent work that addresses Europe's and the rest of the "developed" world's car culture that produces much of the world's CO2 emissions.

Street artist Swoon is perhaps the most well-known female street artist in the U.S. She had her first solo exhibition at Deitch Gallery, which is owned by Jeffrey Deitch, now director of the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in Los Angeles. Deitch also wrote a book about her and her work in 2010. Her work consists of depictions of friends and family going about their daily lives, whether that is grocery shopping or talking on a stoop of a home. Her depictions are mostly of women and they are what might look like sketches in notebooks that produce an intimate view into the subject's life. Swoon re-imagines her space and community through these depictions. She places her wheat pastes on worn-down buildings, creating a work that tells a story of a community that is vibrant in life and places women's lives and stories as of importance to them. Swoon is also a member of the art collective Just Seeds, which does a lot of activist work around issues of class, labor and the prison industrial complex in particular.

The collective Just Seeds worked on a few prints for the 10th anniversary of Critical Resistance in 2008. While an extensive series, I will just discuss two prints. One, by artist Lydia Crumbly, gives statistics on Canada's population of indigenous prisoners. The print reads: "Indigenous People Make Up 3% of the total population/ 21% of the male prison population/ 30% of the female prison population/ Canadian Prisons in Apartheid in Action." Another print, by artist Andalusia Knoll, juxtaposes a blueprint of a slave ship with one of a prison, reading: "Prisons/slave ships/on dry land." Both prints force us to rethink the work that prisons do and the role they play in our communities--on the local and global level.

However, problems arise with most art movements and artwork. As Hrag Vartanian points out in his blog *hyperallergic* in "An Experiment in Street Art," oftentimes street artists get stuck in pop culture. They fail to move beyond the popular into the political and the formal qualities of art. In response, he points to Gaia who "looks beyond pop culture, where most street art gets stuck. His linocut prints and drawings . . . react to the intensity of the urbanscape and its manmade fauna." Gaia's work is lush with line work, as if they're sketches in a composition book, and they cover tattered buildings across Baltimore. They reflect on the urban, even the nearly rotten buildings, as homes to people and animals alike, but they also reflect on the community's struggles for survival as large portions of Baltimore become gentrified.

Blu, Swoon, Kwan, and Gaia have work that is not meant for decoration, or simply to fill negative architectural space. Their work serves as an instrument to create dialogue on social problems such as class inequality, racial inequality, and gentrification. While some images are much more explicitly political than others, I argue that street art and public art itself is not simply an act of rebellion, but a critical

response, an act of resistance, to the community, and the State. Ranging from the massive works of the aforementioned artists, to those who make wheat pastes and plaster them on billboards, to those stencil artists that work on sidewalks, they all remove themselves from the enclosed gallery, studio or museum, and situate their work within the public sphere by directly addressing the public in the most personal way.

Dominique Elisondo

Sex Trafficking

This past semester I have had the opportunity to take the class WGS 536: Gender, Globalization and Human Rights. One of the topics that Professor Hua talked about was sex trafficking, an underground business that is a major problem in our world. Most people think that sex trafficking is not an issue when it comes to America, but the reality is that it is a problem that exists in our country. Sex trafficking is an issue that needs global awareness and something that all together we need to try to stop. Statistics tell us that “an estimated 800,00 to 900,000 human beings are bought, sold or forced across the world’s borders and an estimated 293,000 American youth are currently at risk of becoming victims of commercial sexual exploitation” (US Department of Justice, 2011). The media coverage of sex trafficking is problematic. Media mostly cast the women as victims and the men as pimps, but you often do not hear about the customers. By giving women the label of a victim we automatically put them down in shame, but they should not be seen like that. Instead the focus should be on the customers who purchase these women and who that put women in this position. They are often invisible when the issue of sex trafficking gets attention. The thought of sex trafficking makes you automatically think only about the women. This is the concept of the “always already victim” which we are so familiar with because of the representation in the media about human sex trafficking (Hua, Nigorizawa, 409). This concept suggests that the women who are used in sex trafficking have to be seen as completely without agency to win “our” protection. For example, we often hear statements such as: “‘the[se] women, mostly from rural, poor villages- some as young as 14- were recruited under the false promise of getting legitimate jobs’ (Hua, Nigorizawa, 410).” Instead, we should learn that immigrants migrate from their home country in hopes of improving their lives and bettering their futures. People will virtually do anything to try to escape where they have no real vision of a happy life. “Americans immediately think of women and children overseas who are being forced into the sex trade and who are brought into the United States for the purpose of sexual exploitation (Fruendt).” But, a topic that is hidden and not talked about in the media is why young women come here unwillingly, often with a predator. They are brought here to make money for someone else who uses their bodies for pleasure.

An aspect of trafficking that is well known in the United States is drug trafficking. Similar to sex trafficking, these young women are put in a place that does not allow them to escape from their victimizers. These women’s bodies are used for other people’s gain; therefore these women are seen as objects not as humans. For example, the movie “Maria Full of Grace” tells a story similar to what Christy means by “always already victims.” Maria was a victim in her native country of Columbia, using her body for hard labor in a factory. She was given the opportunity to come to America. She had to smuggle drugs into the United States and she was promised money and the freedom that America has to offer. In return, she lost a friend and put herself in a lot of danger with both the government and a drug gang. This film is also a depiction of “always already victims- victims of their native country’s perceived inability to protect their own women ... and victims of their native nation’s inability to provide them an economically sustainable life so that they would not be forced to migrate (Hua, Nigorizawa, 410).” This is very relevant to immigrant and sex trafficking, giving readers the awareness that the lack of opportunities that women have in other countries puts the women in danger.

The US government must do something to understand why these women are in danger. Instead of pushing them or forcing them to go back to their native country, we should put something in place that will protect them. “US officials authenticated the woman as a victim of trafficking. The validation of this statement (above the validation of statements made by those women who were ultimately deported) demonstrates the desire to cast victims as incapable of helping themselves- as utterly and horrifically victims without any successful enactment of agency before the arrival of rescuers” (Hua, Nigorizawa, 409). Knowing that

trafficking is connected to economic status is something that needs more attention from the government. This is true in our country as well. For example, the country of Thailand is an area in which sex trafficking is known to exist. However, "while many Americans have heard of human trafficking in other parts of the world- Thailand, Cambodia, Latin America and Eastern Europe, for example, few people know it happens here in the United States (abcNEWS, 2006)." The rate at which these young girls are used for sex trafficking, some at the young age of 9, and in other cases even younger. These young girls are not the stereotypes that the media often projects. However, many "are runaway children from fragile families or communities, [who] are lured, tricked or coerced by pimps, who promise them love and safety" (Saar, 2011).

Predators are not talked about in the media and are often given no attention. We are giving these men titles like "pimp" and the media gives the impression that these men have a great life. Men at a young age are given these role models of a "pimp" to live a life with all these beautiful women around. While as women we are given tools and a constructed lens that informs us what women are to do when we encounter a predator, but we are left with nothing once we are taken. "Predators.... are going to do everything in their power to try to convince young girls, young boys, to come with them and enter this particular lifestyle" (abcNEWS, 2006). These young women are left with no human rights and are considered to be an object for someone else's pleasure. "The perpetrators of this new form of modern slavery in America can sell girls for sex without fear of punishment. As incomprehensible as it seems, today trafficking girls brings in more profits and results in less prison time than dealing crack" (abcNEWS, 2006). This global issue as to what sex trafficking is doing to young women is something that cannot be ignored. This issue needs global awareness to not only stop sex trafficking but to stop the predators that are involved in sex trafficking. "This single dimension, where 'the global sex trade is more than not portrayed...with women involved represented as 'victims' of male sexual violence' fails to 'embrace the realities, contradictions and intersections of various global relations of power'" (Hua, Nigorizawa , 404).

Vickie Agadzhanova

Globalization and Consumerism

In a few short months, after adjusting to San Francisco, I found myself growing more and more concerned with the effects of globalization- more specifically- the effects of global corporations. This concern came from a combination of my WGS courses and influential people such as co-workers, professors, and classmates who were thrust into my life. After hearing concerns and criticisms of the effects of globalization and global corporations in and out of a classroom setting, these topics quickly became something that I thought about on a daily basis with no sign of leaving my conscience. At first, I was concerned with global corporations such as Nike and Hanes (among many others) for exporting their merchandise to developing and Third World countries in order to have cheaper labor. But, recently, my concern has been shifted to the food realm. Since learning about the complexities of globalization and the rather dire effects they have had on human life and the environment, they have been something that haunt me on a daily basis. Since I had the privilege and pleasure to acquire new information and thus have had the opportunity to view globalization through a critical lens, I would like to pass on some of my newfound education in hopes of inspiring at least one person to take any kind of action they can afford.

Globalization has enabled corporations to ensure maximum profit for themselves at any cost. Some costs include labor exploitation and environmental destruction. This is something that is relevant and important because global corporations feed our consumption – quite literally – and therefore are made rich because of the dollars that people are giving by purchasing shoes, sweaters, meat, etc. Having said this, it must be understood that it can pose a serious challenge in our everyday lives *not* to give our dollar to global corporations. Either because we are detached from what we wear, or what we eat, it is all too easy to neglect considering how we obtain the goods we consume and their conditions of production. It is quite common for a label to read "made in Vietnam," or "made in The Dominican Republic." While we see and understand our goods are made in developing and Third World countries, some find it a nuisance to ponder *why* it was made in various foreign nations. Certain (U.S. based) corporations will use the

resources of a developing or Third World nation, whether the resource is a human being, land, or a seed; it's all done in the name of control and, ultimately, profit.

Although the free market can be seen as ethically flawed, economists like Milton Friedman view corporations as benign entities who have no ethical obligations: "corporations, according to [Friedman], ought to concern themselves solely with making profits for their stockholders. They should not interfere directly with issues like employment, pollution control, inflation, etc... So the corporation has no direct social obligation because it has no direct contract with society to ensure its welfare" (Iyer, 431).

Currently, global corporations have set their sights on having control over food, more specifically, having control over agriculture. U.S.- based corporations such as Monsanto and Ricetec are claiming patents on certain seeds, making it their *property*. This makes it illegal for farmers in Third World or developing nations to plant them (Shiva, 16). Not only are global corporations buying the rights to seeds, which could destroy farmers' livelihoods, they are also manufacturing genetically engineered crops/seeds, stealing food from animal species and potentially causing severe ecological damage. In *Stolen Harvest*, Vandana Shiva discusses all of these things in greater detail and places emphasis on the importance of this topic and of reclaiming our right to food, stating, "global corporations are not just stealing the harvest of farmers. They are stealing nature's harvest through genetic engineering and patents on life forms" (16). Corporations are paying little or no attention to the long-term effects their actions can have. Farmers' livelihoods are being taken due to seed patenting, and since seeds are being genetically mutated, other species, who are our partners in food production, are being robbed of food, thus disrupting nature and rendering it unsustainable. Shiva believes that seed engineering is a way for "the North to globalize the control, management and ownership of biological diversity...so as to assure free access to the biological resources which are needed as raw material for the biotechnology industry" (Jerome, 7). Conveniently, the biological resources that are desired by global corporations are almost always located in Third World and developing nations.

While Shiva writes in an extremely bold fashion, it may be hard for some readers to swallow her confrontational writing style, seeing as how "she is not an economist, and her language is a tad over-the-top in many places: 'corporate hijacking of the food system' and 'food dictatorship' are not terms from which academic articles are often fashioned" (Levins, 1181). Shiva gives little advice on *how* to go about getting to the revolution of true food democracy in a practical manner. On the other hand, Shiva brings up startling facts that are likely to make any reader take notice, and she is radical with her method of combating global corporations stealing food from people and from nature.

So what can we – as the people, as the consumer – do in order to lessen the power of global corporations? Good question! The answer can take shape in many forms, but one of the easiest ways is through education! We can educate ourselves on the products we purchase and where they come from, whether it be the clothes/shoes we wear, the technology we use, or the food/water we ingest. We can do this by asking our local grocery store where their meat and dairy comes from and then researching the ethical standing of that particular farm. Another way we can do this is to buy from local farms: not only will you avoid buying meat and dairy that came from a factory farm, you're also supporting local farmers. Another possible solution may include shopping vintage and shopping local. Instead of going to the GAP for your next sweater, try going to the Goodwill or Buffalo Exchange. There are lots of fun and affordable vintage shops throughout the city of San Francisco, so take advantage of them! By doing these things we can get a sense of our global footprint and just how we are unknowingly yet willingly contributing to corporate profit and power while contributing to labor and environmental exploitation. Through educating ourselves as consumers, we can be informed about which stores/products to avoid.

Most importantly, remember to... "Fight The Power" – Public Enemy

Cheletta Harrold

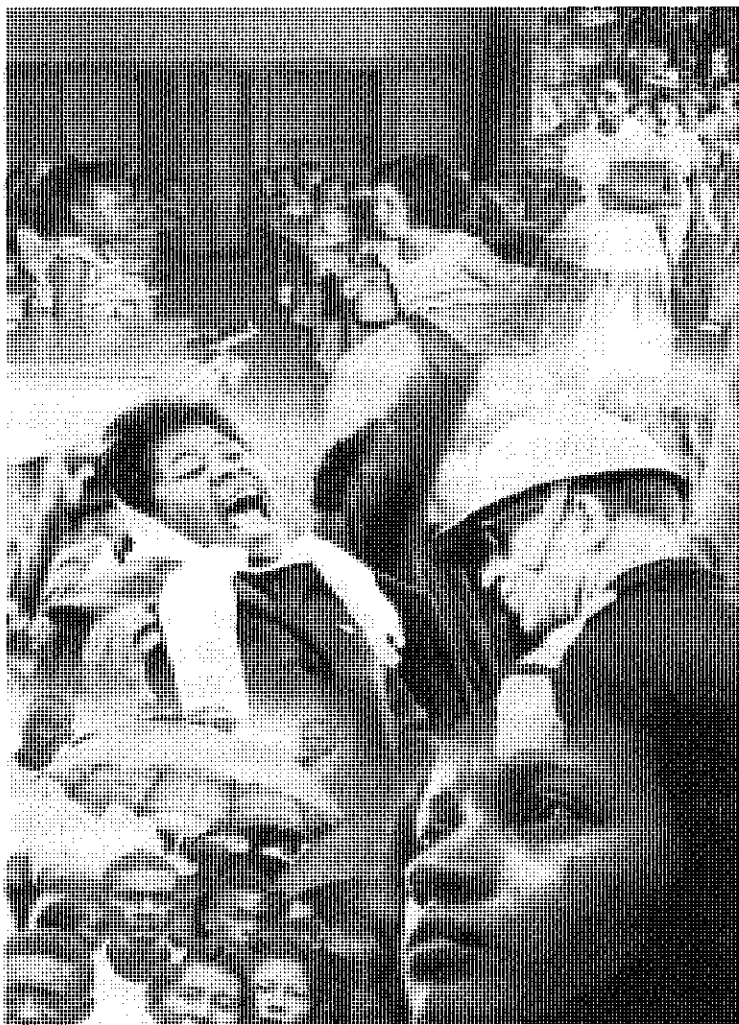
Taking it Back to Brown vs. Board of Education

I.

“Children seemed to wrestle with these kinds of questions too. Some of their observations were, indeed, so trenchant that a teacher sometimes would step back and raise her eyebrow and then nod to me across the children’s heads, as if to say, ‘Well, there it is! They know what’s going on around them, don’t they?’”

Jonathan Kozol states this quote in his book *Savage Inequalities*, which basically says children realize things whether adults want to acknowledge it or not. Children recognize when they are being treated differently and how people react to them. I know this because I was one of those children aware of her surroundings and I believe it is very important for children to get an understanding of their identity. It is important for us as adults and as learners and teachers to encourage children and to let them know that it is okay to be different.

II.



AIM

According to James T. Patterson, *Brown vs. Board of Education* was a decision of the United States Supreme Court (May 17, 1954) which declared that it unconstitutional to have separate public schools for African Americans and Whites. I chose to relate this piece to *Brown vs. Board of Education* case and segregation because I have personally experienced segregation in school and I feel that no child should have to experience this. Though my main experience was only one school year, it felt as if it were longer. I was in the sixth grade and entering a new school: this by itself would make a child uncomfortable and nervous. When I found out that the school was predominately White, I was even more nervous and uncomfortable. Coming from a school that was segregated because it was predominately African-American and Mexican, it was a very different experience for me to attend a new school that was segregated because the school’s population was predominantly White. At my previous elementary school, which was located in East Oakland, basic needs were not met: our textbooks were extremely old and worn, we did not have many after school programs, and our classrooms were very crowded. Since the school was so obviously different from schools in other areas, my mom decided to put me and my brothers into a private school in Hayward, which serves children from kindergarten through high school; I will call this school Hayward Private School.

Before attending Hayward Private School I was already aware of my identity, but my experience with this school made me even more conscious and made me even more sensitive. I don’t feel that I became

sensitive in a bad way, but in a good way. I realized that when people looked at me, they would see an African-American woman—and I begin to think of all of the stereotypes with which we are associated. Thinking of this makes me want to become a better woman and to fight against not only stereotypes, but also the common outcomes for an African-American girl growing up in East Oakland with a single mother.

During my time at this school I felt alone and uncomfortable. Since I was in the sixth grade and one of my younger brothers was in the third grade and the other was in kindergarten, I did not talk or hang out with them at school. In my class there was one other African-American girl who I was friends with, but she did not stay at the school for long.

In my perspective, my teacher—who was also the principal of the school—catered to the White children. On top of that, his own daughters attended this school, and had extra privileges above the other White students, who already had more privileges than we did. When I was in elementary school, I was an outgoing child, I loved doing my school and homework and I spoke up in class. I now realize that this changed once I attended this school. My self esteem went down, because I felt as if the teacher discouraged me from speaking and made me feel as if I were not as smart as other children in the class. He did this by pretty much embarrassing me: when I would raise my hand he would overlook me or if he would call on me, and I said something that was incorrect, he would humiliate me in front of the class.

This obviously changed how I behaved in class. After that I didn't want to speak in class because I did not want to say the wrong thing and have people laugh at me or look at me crazy. In my last two years in high school, I kind of grew out of that, but then once I got to college, I sort of fell back into that role. I felt that everyone in college was probably smarter than me, so I definitely didn't want to say something that would make me seem stupid. Attending Hayward Private School for one year had really affected some of my actions and how I behave and feel in the classroom. My mom and grandmother both realized me and my brothers were not being treated with the same respect as other students, so we only stayed one year in Hayward Private School, and then my mom enrolled us into public schools, which were more diverse, near where she worked in Union City.

III.

Alone

Alone, sitting with no friend around
Steering eyes looking at the new Black girl in town
There's only two Black girls, and about three boys
We're in this system of education; we don't play with it like a toy
We need our education to prove that we can achieve
But the teacher won't even call on me
Why won't he listen?
What makes me so different?
Is it my eyes? Is it my hair? Is it my skin?
Or is he just scared to educate this Queen in training?

"Ordinary, brown-braided woman with big legs and full lips... you become yourself."- For Colored Girls

Paola Souto

"I feel, therefore I can be free" (38)

Do you remember being a kid and saying, "sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me?" Did you really believe that? Because words do hurt. Words are powerful. This is what Audre Lorde explores in *Sister Outsider* (1984), explaining the importance of breaking the silence and talking about our fears, dreams, and feelings. Lorde encourages us to look for our personal power and to express it through words because "the speaking profits [the speaker] beyond any other effect" (40). And it is up to us to choose how to use the power of our language. Language has been used against us to make us think we are weak and in need of protection. But if it can be used to divide and oppress, language can also unite and free. It is time to make this language ours, to tell our stories and truths, and to empower ourselves

with it. bell hooks explores this topic too in Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom (2010), explaining that through our words and stories, we not only perceive reality but we also create it (52). Through words, we name our experiences and are able to learn and grow, finding the power within each of us. Through words, we connect with others and can make social change a reality. In this way, naming and breaking the silence has positive effects on ourselves and our communities.

Naming is the opposite of silence, negation, and emotional numbness. Though naming our experiences and feelings can be difficult and scary, as we learn to use words to express our stories “those fears which rule our lives and form our silences begin to lose their control over us” (Lorde 36). Whether we choose silence or speaking out, we would still be afraid. But if we choose denial and silence instead of naming, our experiences become invisible, as though they never happened. As Lorde says, “[y]ou are never a whole person if you remain silent, because there’s always that little piece inside you that wants to be spoken out, and if you keep ignoring it, it gets madder and madder and hotter and hotter, and if you don’t speak it out one day it will just up and punch you in the mouth from the inside” (42). With words, we name the ideas that, as Lorde says, were “nameless and formless ... but already felt” (36). By naming and breaking the silence, we fight against our demons and take control. We reconnect with and empower ourselves, gaining a deeper understanding of our experiences, desires, and fears. We must re-learn how to listen to our bodies and instincts, what Lorde describes as doing what feels right to us by giving ourselves the opportunity to feel. Lorde affirms “I feel, therefore I can be free” (38). Free of ghosts and ready to grow, we become stronger.

Naming and breaking the silence through writing positively affects not only the individual but also the community at large. Lorde explains that when we write, we transform our dreams into ideas, which we must further transform into action. Ideas are not enough: we need to live them to create real change. By first shaping ideas through naming, and then acting upon them, we use language to connect with and transform ourselves and others. ‘Transform the world’ sounds utopian, but what about transforming the world within our reach? Every day we communicate with the people around us and, in doing so, we add a little of ourselves into their lives and vice versa. By creating and exchanging words with others, we discover, we dream, we reveal, we overcome, we unite, we divide. We are. Every word spoken and shared has the potential of establishing deep connections and building stronger and more loving communities because truly, *the personal is political*.

This transformation of silence into language also has positive effects in the classroom. As bell hooks explains, telling and sharing stories are ways to start building community in the classroom because they help participants think critically and connect with each other (49-51). Stories, she affirms, “are a way of knowing,” and by “telling our stories we make connections with other stories” (53). By connecting with one another, students and teachers begin to build a learning community based on trust, growth, cooperation, and active listening. This type of education follows the lines of Paulo Freire’s pedagogy, which reinforces the importance of students sharing stories and speaking about their personal experiences. For Freire, “to speak a true word is to transform the world” because ‘true words’ require reflection and action to establish a meaningful dialogue among people (75). However, he affirms that to speak true words and thus transform the world, we need others (76). No true word can be spoken in isolation or for others, but *with* others. In this way, through a dialogue among equals, we name the world and transform it (77).

As Women and Gender Studies majors, we spend years discussing, challenging, and deconstructing in the classroom. However, as we go about our lives outside academia (yes, there is such a thing as life outside of school) we might be faced with situations in which we witness unfair and unjust events. What to do then? Silence seems a tempting and comforting option, and excuses such as ‘it’s not my problem’ and ‘what could I do, anyway?’ come up. Nevertheless, we are responsible for being aware of our silences and their consequences, and we must question whether we are supporting a particular system of oppression by remaining silent. “[I]t is vitally necessary for each one of us to establish or examine [our] function in [the transformation of silence into language and action] and to recognize [our] role as vital within that transformation” (Lorde 43). As WGS majors, we also need to be aware of the words we use and avoid using.

Lorde affirms that language can act as a bridge over the differences among women (41). By using the complex label of 'women,' Lorde transforms gender into a divisive category. I believe this bridging could be done among all people regardless of their gender. Lorde also points out the "mockeries of separations that have been imposed upon us and which so often we accept as our own" (Lorde 43). Aren't those 'mockeries of separation' the ones that also give power to sexism in our society? Language could help form stronger connections that become the foundation for understanding. As a result, the differences don't disappear, but are perceived as less threatening. Using our different experiences to form coalitions and connect with people who are fighting for change and a more just, non-violent, and loving world could be a richer project. Sexism, as racism, ageism, ableism, heterosexism, and all the '-isms,' affects everybody. Moreover, it is only through union, equality, and respect that we could fight against them. All. Together.

Adriana Lopez

What Function Does the Prison Serve?

"An Individual Act of rebellion will not, under usual circumstances, start a work stoppage."

– Marilyn Buck.

"For private business prison labor is like a pot of gold. No strikes. No union organizing. No health benefits, unemployment insurance, or workers compensation to pay. No language barriers, as in foreign countries. New leviathan prisons are being built on thousands of eerie acres of factories inside the walls. Prisoners do data entry for Chevron, make telephone reservations for TWA, raise hogs, shovel manure, and make circuit boards, limousines, waterbeds, and lingerie for Victoria's Secret, all at a fraction of the cost of free labor."-Linda Evans and Eve Goldberg.

The Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) has always been of interest to me. Growing up I knew people who were incarcerated and who would speak about prison; I grew up listening to stories about prison life. I was not in favor of prisons but I didn't know why; I did not have a clear position as to why I didn't think they were essential. I knew that I needed to learn more about how they came to be and the ways they operate. During my third year of college I took a class in WGS titled "Women in the PIC". Taking this course and doing some reading outside of what was assigned gave me an in-depth analysis and understanding of the ways in which prisons are constructed.

The Prison Industrial Complex has become an essential institution around the world: "thus, to use a neologism coined by Nawal El Saadawi, it is 'global', a product of local, national, and global political, economic, and cultural phenomenon" (Sudbury xii). Large numbers of people were incarcerated in the 1980's, "during what is known as the Reagan era, politicians argued that 'tough on crime' stances-including certain imprisonment and longer sentences-would keep communities free of crime" (Davis 12). Prisons began to sprout up all over the U.S. and the prison system began to expand. With the rise of corporate involvement in the production of prison commodities, services, and labor, the extraction and attraction of vast amounts of capital began: thus the "prison industrial complex" was born. In California and around the globe, the prison system exists as pools of surplus capital, land, labor, and space. Economic destruction, through a decline in services and neglect of people, led to damage in communities, specifically in communities of color. Thus, it became a struggle to survive, and in essence these communities became the breeding ground for prison candidates, who in turn, became free labor for prisons. Given that the Prison is instantaneously connected to global capitalism, the PIC is built upon this notion of free labor. Let's begin a conversation about building an alternative society that does not need prisons.

We can position the Prison Industrial Complex as a historical phenomenon, one in which "labeling people as criminals and incarcerating them is a weapon of choice in dealing with social problems. Work is defined as a means of punishment in order to correct the punishment" (Buck 453). Not only does the prison function as a response to U.S. social problems, it has minimal effect on addressing the problems it is meant to fix like rehabilitation, doing and selling drugs, and prostitution. "Short of major wars, mass incarceration has been the most thoroughly implemented government social program of our time"(Davis 11). Since the prison has minimal effect on addressing social problems and rehabilitating its prisoners, nearly two thirds of former inmates return to prison at least once in their life. Isn't it ironic that the prison

reproduces prisoners while, at the same time, provides an essential free labor to large corporations across the globe? These large corporations have a vested interest in the reproduction of prisons and its inmates. "The term prison industry can refer precisely to the production of prisoners even as the industry produces profits for increasing numbers of corporations and, by siphoning social wealth away from such institutions as schools and hospitals, child care and housing, plays a pivotal role in producing the conditions of poverty that create a perceived need for more prisons" (Davis 1238). We begin to see job cuts, high rates of unemployment and other social services declining. There exists "a symbiotic and profitable relationship between politicians, corporations, the media and state correctional institutions that generates the racialized use of incarceration as a response to social problems rooted in the globalization of capital" (Sudbury 61). Work is organized and measured by those who own the means of production; "Work is generally an exploitation of human labor and creativity to produce value; even brainwork is likely owned or seized by the persons who pay the teacher's, scientist's, or even assembly-line worker's salary" (Buck 452).

In today's society, labor has been commodified, whereas before labor was performed for our own use. Now our labor is sold because we receive a wage for our day's work, yet prison labor is free because prisoners do not receive a living wage for the labor they perform. The PIC, for both women and men, is an institution that thrives on the free labor of others. Given that capital is in a constant state of expansion, the PIC becomes a space for capital to continue to expand itself through the labor of humans and its relation with the earth. "Work is a measured commodity to order human activity for the benefit, ostensibly of society, but more so for those who own the means of production or have laid claim to all sorts of natural resources: land, minerals, bananas, and human beings. It is extolled on the moral plane to instill habits of order, obedience, and docility" (Buck 452). When organized, the prison is at its most exploitative stage. It is created in order to produce value in commodities, which creates an immense amount of profit for corporations to exchange on the market. "As advances in technology enabled corporations to transport information and capital between distant geographic locations in fractions of a second, new forms of globalized capital began to appear" (Sudbury 60). The perception that more prisons are needed is exactly what must be challenged: The PIC plays a critical role in sustaining a global economy, and poor working class people are the raw materials that fuel its global expansion and profits. We must become aware of how not to create structures that reproduce prisons as well as continue to challenge and struggle for the abolition of all prisons.

The United States of America has used prisons as a plan, an arrangement that can be connected to slavery. Slavery produced an immense amount of wealth and now we can see that prisons are doing the same work. When slavery was abolished in 1865, the first prisons became the new slave plantations. I would like to highlight the Georgia prison strike that took place on December 9, 2010, the biggest prison strike in U.S. history. Prisoners consciously withheld their labor power and refused to leave their cells and work. This prison strike broke down racial barriers as well as mobilized those living under oppressive conditions to self organize and engage in class struggle. We can learn a lot from this prison strike and can begin to see the manifestations of self-organized prisoners who are deconstructing and struggling against the prison complex by refusing to work; we can begin to see the crumbling of prisons. This is not only an example of an alternative but an act of rebellion that can also be applied to the proletariat outside of the prison walls. When we collectively organize we can begin to see the crumbling and dismantling of not only the prison industrial complex but also the system that puts profits before human life.

We must change the form of things by using our energy in order to go on living. Our labor is stolen from us; it is an activity that is performed by all members of society from creating a painting to making a meal. Our labor requires us to be social beings as well as conscious beings. As humans we are constantly creating value in all that we produce and the ways in which our labor is stolen from us can first be examined in regards to time: our time at work is time that we are all sacrificing and is not of value to us but it is done in order to be able to enjoy food, shelter, and ... an education.

Sarafina Murphy-Gibson

Gender and Race in Western Art and Media
A Syllabus

"Seeing comes before words. The child looks
and recognizes before it can speak."

--John Berger.

Despite the ability of art schools to produce fine artists, they often leave their students lacking a thorough education in terms of social awareness. I have frequently found the need to explain that issues such as racism, sexism and homophobia are present inside even the most liberal of art communities. A young art teacher once informed me that I really shouldn't worry about the "conspiracy theories" of Angela Davis, since we've already had a civil rights movement and some people just like to complain. Perhaps these naive misconceptions stem from the fact that most curriculums show a notable absence of art and media done by minority, feminist and queer voices. As the Guerilla Girls say in their *Bedside Companion*, history has "reduced centuries of artistic output to a bunch of white male masterpieces and movements" (7). My goal is to provide a course that offers students a range of voices, while being thought provoking, entertaining, artistic and ultimately consciousness-raising. In no way could fifteen weeks even begin to capture the great expanse that is the alternative art world; there is simply too much to discover. However with the media and literature collected here, I hope to showcase a diversity of identities and ideas to challenge students to look for new ways of addressing and imagining the arts.

Course Overview & Objectives:

Beginning with a summary of the struggle for recognition of an alternative art history, then moving into exploring various forms (film, literature, performance, etc) in western art and how they connect to larger structural issues surrounding sex, gender, race and class. Each week students will be asked to read and reflect on various subjects from stereotypes of masculinity/femininity, the intersection of race and gender and how art can be used as a form of political/social activism. The course will build students' critical thinking, writing and communication skills while allowing space for a variety of powerful artistic statements, educating on the benefits of a pluralistic art history and

ultimately aiming to inspire their own creative works.

Week 1: An Introduction to Alternative Art

* Chapter One in *Ways of Seeing* by John Berger. NY: Viking Press, 1972. 7-33.

* Establishing key terms: intersectionality, biological sex v. gender, social construction theory v. essentialism, mystification of art, subject/object, the gaze.

Week 2: Early Women's Art History.

* Introduction to *The Guerilla Girls Bedside Companion to the History of Western Art* by The Guerilla Girls. NY: Penguin Books, 1998. 7-9.

* Hildegard Von Bingen (1098), St. Catherine of Cologne (1413), Sofonisba Anguissola (1532), Lavinia Fontana (1552), Artemisia Gentileschi (1593), Judith Leyster (1609), Mary Beale (1633), Rachel Ruysch (1664), Angelica Kauffman (1741), Marie Elisabeth Louise Vigee (1755).

Week 3: 19th Century- Modern Women's Art.

* Rosa Bonheur (1822), Harriet Powers & the value of women's crafts (1837), Berthe Morisot (1841), Mary Cassatt, (1844), Georgia O'Keeffe (1887), Dorothea Lange (1895), Tamara De Lempicka (1898), Frieda Kahlo (1907), Faith Ringgold (1930), Deborah Butterfield (1949).

Week 4: Social Constructions of Gender.

* "Don't Look Now: The Instabilities of the Male Pin-Up," by Richar Dyer in *Only Entertainment*. NY: Routledge, 1992. 103-119.

* "Killing Us Softly 3: Advertising's Image of Woman," dir. Sut Jhally, starring Jean Kilbourne. Media Education Foundation, 1999.

Week 5: Minority Men's Art.

* Horace Pippin (1888), Henry Ossawa Tanner (1895), Diego Rivera (1886), Velino Herrera (1902), Jacob Lawrence (1917), Maurice Sendak (1928), Amado Maurilio Pena, Jr (1943), Nahum B. Zenil (1947), Guillermo Gomez-Pena (1955), Albert Chong (1958), Glen Ligon (1960).

Week 6: Sexuality and Race in Film.

- * The Watermelon Woman. a film. dir. by Cheryl Dunye. First Run Features, 1996.
- * Historical interpretations and constructions of racialized, sexualized and gendered bodies and how they support social hegemonies.

Week 7: Queer Culture in Contemporary Art.

- * Funhome: A Family Tragicomic by Alison Bechdel. NY: First Mariner Books, 2006.
- * Homosexuality in relationship to home/ and family, homo/hetero-normativity, metro-normativity, queer pop art and graphic novels, "high v. low" art.

Week 8: Midterm Exam.

- * Includes key terms, images and short answer.

Week 9: The Power of Language.

- * "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," and poem "Living on the Borderlands" in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* by Gloria Anzaldua. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1996. 53-64, 194-195.
- * Select poems by Audre Lorde in *The Vintage Book of African American Poetry* ed. by Michael S. Harper & Anthony Walton. NY: Vintage Books, 2000. 237-239.
- * Overcoming cultural silences, language as tied to identity, code-switching and the value of words.

Week 10: Visual Stereotypes in Media.

- * "The Myth of the Latin Woman: I Just Met a Girl Named Maria," by Judith Ortiz Cofer in *Race, Class and Gender*. Ed. Margaret Anderson & Patricia Collins. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2007. 161-166.
- * "Slaying the Dragon Lady Reloaded: Asian Women in Hollywood and Beyond," a film dir. by Elaine H. Kim. Asian Women United. 2011.

Week 11: Contemporary Feminist Film.

- * "Sita Sings the Blues," a film dir. & distributed by Nina Paley, 2008.
- * Intersectional identities, modernity, cultural accommodation, agency and creative feminism.

Week 12: Art as Civil Action.

- * "The Solar of Chicano/a Popular Culture: Mi casa [no] es su casa," in *Alicia Gaspar de Alba's Chicano Art Inside/Outside the Master's House: Cultural Politics and the Cara Exhibition*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998. 31-88.
- * Art as a spiritual, cultural and political declaration. A space for activism around labor/worker, migrant & minority rights. Reclaiming forgotten histories.

Week 13: Mission Mural Art Walk.

- * "With or Without Permission," in *Street Art San Francisco: Mission Muralismo* edited by Annice Jacoby for Precita Eyes Muralists. NY: Harry N. Abrams Inc, 2009. 29-40.
- * Local San Francisco street art history. Precita Eyes Mural Arts, Balmy Alley, The Women's Building, St. Peter's Church, 24th St. Bart.

Week 14: Performance & Theatre.

- * "The Couple in the Cage: A Guatinatei Odyssey," a film dir. by Coco Fusco & Paula Heredia. Third World Newsreel, 1993.
- * History of popular/ radical theatre, carnival, creative activism. San Francisco Mime Troupe, Teatro Rhinoceros and Brava! for Women in the Arts.

Week 15: The Art of Gender Production.

- * "The White to be Angry," *Vaginal Creme Davis's Terrorist Drag*," in *Disidentifications* by Jose Estban Munoz. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999. 93-115.
- * "Drag Kings: Masculinity and Performance." in *Female Masculinity* by Judith Halberstam. Durham: Duke University Press, 1994. 231-266.
- * "Paris is Burning," a film dir. by Jennie Livingston. Miramax Films, 1990.

Grade Breakdown:

- Along with readings, a midterm exam, and a final paper, students will be asked to write 125 word weekly reflections and give a one time presentation on an art piece of their choice.
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Weekly Journal Entries: | 15% |
| Show & Tell Report: | 15% |
| Midterm Exam: | 30% |
| Final Research Paper (7pgs): | 30% |
| Class Participation: | 10% |

Michelle Ochoa

A Chicana's (Hi)story

"Too often theory is left without a body, without an acknowledgement of its origins." -Cindy Cruz.

To all the girls with the brown skin, Know that you're worth more than the few amount of times that the *gringo* news reporters mention you for doing something great. Realize that not everyone has the privilege of eating *arroz con frijoles* at hand almost any day of the week. Appreciate the tiny bodega your *Tia Olga* owns right around the corner where you can pick up anything from *tamarindo* to *salsa del pato* any time you want. Understand that even though your *nana Lucia* has lived in the U.S. for over 60 years, she will never admit to knowing how to speak english (although she secretly understands). Love who you are no matter how *morena*, or how *guera* you are. To all the girls with the almond-shaped eyes, Know that *La Malinche* is your mother as well and she has never left you, her blood mixes with your blood deep inside your veins. Realize that your skin tone is the one that people dish out hundreds of dollars a year, to try and capture for just a week or so. Appreciate the glass case of *monitas* that your *abuelita* has hanging in her living room wall, for one day it will be yours. Understand that they give you *nalgadas* not because they want to hurt you, but because they want you to learn a lesson. Love *la becina* who gives you a taste of her *cafe con leche* when your mother is not looking! To all the girls with the distinctively shaped lips, Know that your mouth is for more than just kissing *y otras cosas*. Realize that if that boy really loves you, he will want you for more than just your body. Appreciate the body *Diosito* gave you, no matter how *nalgona* or *chichona* you are. Understand that you are the embodiment of all the great women who came before you. Love your curves, no matter how frustrated you may be that you don't look like that skinny girl in the Vogue magazines. To all the girls with the long brown hair, Know that the *trenza* you wear now, will probably be the same one you will be wearing in 60 years and hope that it does not get caught in the tiny hands of your *nietos y bisnietos*. Realize the error of your mistakes in the past so that you could not only learn from them, but grow from them in the future. Appreciate your father's labor, and the callouses on his hands because he did it all so that you would never feel what it felt like to have them yourself. Understand your mothers' concern for you going out so late, *por que nunca sabes lo que puede pasar*. Love those who will love you equally in return. To all the girls with the vivacious curves, Know that *Tonantzin* appeared to *Juan Diego* and made an impact in our lives because of it. Realize that every experience we have is meant to be learned from, and that one of the biggest lessons is to not regret what we cannot change *por que asi es la vida*. Appreciate the little miracles that take place in some of the smallest forms. Understand that what you have done in the past does not always necessarily define who you become in the future (unless you'd like it too). Love your flaws and all. To all the girls with their roads in front of them, Know that your mind is one of the greatest things about you. Realize that you are more than what the naked eye sees. Appreciate the life you live, and do not trade it for a thing. Understand your roots and where you came from, for they will never change. Love your brown skin, your almond-shaped eyes, your distinctively shaped lips, your long brown hair, your vivacious curves for it is what makes you, you. And it is what sets you apart... and it is what gives you a history, a story... and it is your destiny to embrace it.

Lauren Kuizenga

Let Them [All] Eat Vegetables!

Vertical Farming: An Urban Food Source To Feed A Growing Population

"If we do not change our direction, we are likely to end up where we are headed." --Chinese Proverb

The year was 1994. I was seven, and I remember asking my mom where the trash we put outside in a big green can was transported. I don't remember her answer, but I do remember her asking me to think about how much trash we dispose of in one day, and in one week; how all that trash was just for our family, and to multiply the contents of our trash can by all the families just in our neighborhood. I remember being amazed at the idea of this endless cycle of trash and wondering where in the world all of it would go. Today, I doubt my mom remembers this conversation but sixteen years later, it stuck. These questions of the past had followed me and manifested just as I once imagined as a child. Where did all this waste go? The Environmental Protection Agency reports that the United States produces approximately 220 million

tons of garbage each year (*Wastes*). This garbage, once taken away from our houses, goes into a landfill, often located in low-income neighborhoods. Sadly, neighborhoods such as Bayview Hunters Point in San Francisco have landfills, a low-income population, and also an increased rate of cancerous diseases (Ester). Today, with endless consumption, mounting waste and a growing population, the environment is quickly running out of natural resources.

So, what if I told you there was the possibility of taking our waste and making it more sustainable; a system that worked with its environment while producing more accessible goods? It may sound a little outlandish at first, but an inventive farming theory developed in The Vertical Farm by Dr. Dickson Despommier, seeks to use less land and grow more food. His theory proposes to balance urban populations with the natural environment by creating a food source located within an urban landscape.

In today's culture of convenience, a grocery store provides cheaply priced packaged meats and well displayed produce without the consumer ever having to think about where it came from and at what cost. Then we go home, try to use all the produce and meat before it spoils and throw away the excess in one big trash can—it has become quick, easy and cheap to become a detached consumer. Further, what we don't realize is the privilege that goes along with purchasing goods in a grocery store. The presence of healthy food is often something that is characterized for people who can "afford" it. Often in low-income neighborhoods, grocery stores are not present or accessible and create what has been characterized as a food desert. These neighborhoods are filled with convenience stores and fast food restaurants. These corner stores and fast food restaurants are able to thrive because they have been placed in a community that lacks healthy, affordable alternatives. and this denial of grocery stores and healthy food businesses in certain neighborhoods creates a hierarchy of classes: those that are "deserving" or "worthy" of healthy resources and those who are not. The presence of healthy food in a healthy environment in all communities is necessary for everyone to have the opportunity to embrace a healthy lifestyle.

The air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we consume are all examples of our shared tie to natural resources, but often our culture does not integrate our lives with nature. Today industrial agriculture is the largest pollutant to the environment, causing extreme ecosystem disruption through agricultural run-off and by using 70% of the world's fresh water (Despommier, 31). Industrial agriculture also overworks the land it uses, thus resulting in soil that retains fewer nutrients, and leads to poor quality soil, infertility and crop failure, much like what was experienced in the 1930s dustbowl. It is also estimated by the USDA that 50% of crops planted in the US never reach the consumer's plate due to drought, disease, floods and spoilage (26) - a huge waste of water and food at the expense of our biosphere. Not only does industrial agriculture use tons of water, and cause ecological disruption, it also uses a cropland equivalent to the size of South America. Here's where a more sustainable alternative comes in...

Vertical farming can also be called controlled indoor environment agriculture, and can be imagined to be a lot like a greenhouse, but stacked. Vertical Farms would use greenhouse technology to grow plants year round with hydroponics, aeroponics, an irrigation drip system and automated systems to control temperature, humidity and nutrient delivery to individual plants. The main difference between vertical farms and other indoor growing facilities is the use of the urban landscape. Vertical farming would reengineer greenhouses from their horizontal footprint to one that vertically stacks them. As of 2010, 50% of the world's population inhabits urban areas (65), and vertical farms would help provide food for them while reducing emissions of fossil fuels used in transport; instead of miles, produce will travel only blocks, helping to reduce spoilage. Vertical farms could be established in urban peripheries where land is more available and economical and could help contribute to urban rebirth as well as accessibility in outlying neighborhoods.

The benefits of vertical farming would help alleviate many of the environmentally damaging aspects of farming and the food brought to your plate. It would practice a closed loop system modeled after the natural environment that would produce just as much as it uses. It would use 70-90 percent less water than traditional farming (76), and utilize rainwater, as well as a large percentage of our waste to provide fresh food for local residents. Crops can be grown without the use of pesticides, which would reduce agricultural run-off, creating less ecological disruption to wildlife. It would create jobs, help eliminate

crop loss through closely monitored food, while also ensuring food safety. A city can become the functional equivalent to a natural ecosystem that produces food year round while using little land. Vertical farming will not eliminate traditional agriculture all together but rather provide sustainable and accessible produce in an urban environment for a growing population.

The cost to create and sustain a vertical farm is a concern, especially with the unavoidable use of electricity needed to grow crops, particularly during dark and cold winter months. Despommier argues that urban farms could reduce some of their own expenses by significantly cutting transportation costs, but admits the initial cost is the biggest obstacle. The question of how much it will cost to create a working vertical farm is challenging to estimate since there are no existing examples of such large-scale greenhouse farming. Instead of putting a price tag on a vertical farm, let us ask, what would the cost be if we didn't find an alternative? More starvation? Without an alternative or the means to supply food for a growing population, the benefits offset the material cost.

In order to curb the excessive reliance on electricity in greenhouse farming, more economic green technology is being researched. At the University of Arizona, Gene Giacomelli, the Director of the Controlled Environment Agriculture Program, and his students are experimenting with fiber-optic tubes called solar pipes that can capture sunlight to increase the life of natural and artificial sunlight used to grow plants indoor (CEAC). And at Utah State University researchers have developed a clear piece of curved polyethylene that can retain heat in the ground and extend the growing season by up to four months for crops like summer squash and tomatoes (*Skyfarming*). Innovation and education will only help to make a farming alternative not only possible but more economical.

The question remains, can a city produce most of its own food and recycle most of its own waste? I believe the answer is yes. Although there are no existing vertical farms today there are many examples of high-tech greenhouses such as Arizona's 265-acre Eurofresh Farms, which are thriving with their hydroponic tomatoes and seedless cucumbers (*Sustainability*). Gene Giacomelli and his students built a growth chamber within Antarctica's Amundsen-Scott Research Station, and besides supplying light during Antarctica's cold winter months, the indoor chamber yielded a range of crunchy greens, tomatoes, cucumbers, hot and sweet peppers and even cantaloupe. The plot has produced about two-thirds of what top greenhouses in North America can deliver. If it can be done in Antarctica, doesn't greenhouse farming seem to be possible almost anywhere?

It is 2011, a time of great innovation and opportunity for change. There is power that lies in each dollar spent and our actions affect the world around us. Our daily practices should aim to work with our environment rather than use it until it has nothing left to give. It is time we think about where our food comes from, all the resources used in order for it to be produced and brought to us, and the already existing starvation in this world. Imagine a world where we all had equal access to fresh products that were produced reciprocally within our landscape; produced by utilizing our waste rather than sticking it in a landfill. If we don't find another means to produce and distribute food, the expense to the environment and the cost to human life will be greater than any monetary value. We can find a way to work towards equality of access in a way that can also be beneficial to our surroundings. It's time to work symbiotically to meet our needs, rather than just wondering where our trash goes after it's taken away by that truck. There is great value in becoming an educated consumer and seeing our connectedness with our natural environment. Imagine a world with less pollution, more people, and more food. It is possible.

Darlene Jimenez

School to Prison Pipeline

Education should be an opportunity given out freely as well as equally to help foster young children to thrive in an ever changing world. Instead, children are placed into schools that help to push them out of school, by indirect and direct policies, and into the prison system. The American school system lacks the resources and the time to educate the future generation. Instead of fixing this problem, money has been given to fund prison expansion. For example, within the state of California there are more prisons than there are public universities.

Further, the type of education one receives varies from school to school. There are certain students, such as the ones mostly at the top of their class, who are paid more attention to than the rest of the student body. This method of privileging students has profound risks in leaving the larger group of students behind, the ones who are already at a disadvantage. For me, the term “being part of the minority” was something I didn’t learn about until high school, around the same time I noticed the number of white children around me grew. Even though we were at the same high school, the quality and type of education we received from our teachers was very different. During my freshmen year when I asked my Algebra teacher if I could be placed in Geometry Honors Class the following year, she said she didn’t think that was a good option for me. At that time, I had the top grade in all six of her algebra classes: why she wouldn’t think I would do well in the Honors class is still a mystery to me.

The road to college was not easy for me and it was not one I would have arrived at alone either. However, there are children every day in the U.S education system that are simply forgotten because of who they are. I’ve talked with my classmates who felt similarly: like they as students didn’t matter enough to get additional attention. The criminal justice system and the educational system, in my opinion, are directly related. I see how children who are denied education are affected later in life by the criminal justice system. The educational system in the United States, like the nation as a whole, is plagued by vast inequalities- all too frequently defined along lines of race (Wald, 1). The criminal justice system also disproportionately houses more people of color.

When I was younger I hadn’t noticed how differently we were treated until I entered high school. In high school, it felt like I was competing against everyone but was never acknowledged because I wasn’t a 4.0 GPA student. It seemed like those students were the ones always in the limelight at school, involved in every extracurricular activity. Sometimes in high school I felt like I was invisible to even my own teachers. As much as I wanted to go to college there was a time in my life which I had doubts. I thought to myself it was this hard for me to get good grades; how would I ever make it going somewhere else?

High school felt like a mini-prison with a police officer roaming around campus and all the gates locked at all times. I can see where students slipped through the cracks because no teacher wanted to help them. If you did bad your first year they would ship you away to the other side of town, to the alternative high school, where going there made people assume you were a trouble maker. Many alternative schools are immune to educational accountability standards and may fail to provide meaningful education services to the students who need them most (ACLU).

These alternative schools are one example of the ways in which the education system is funneling what they see as bad students instead of taking the time to make changes in that student’s life. I have family members who went to the alternative school and saw firsthand what the stigma of going to this school did to them. If I thought my education had holes in it, the one they received was even worse. They were pretty much shuffled out as quickly as they could be. This type of education directly affected their lives: they all have had various struggles in their early adult hood. I was fortunate enough to have a couple of great teachers in my life and parents that when I was doing bad in a class helped me find a tutor. These teachers kept me on the right track by not letting me fail when I wasn’t good at a certain subject. For those students that slipped through and failed: imagine what their situation is like now? Perhaps the demand for teachers is too much with the larger classrooms and more responsibilities they have with the additional students. They don’t have time to make that connection with every student. Whose responsibility should it be to help these children succeed through education?

In a time where a higher education is now a necessity in securing a better future, the budgets at all levels of the education system continue to be slashed. On the other hand, money that the state spends on prisons continues to remain steady. If our young children grow up without having equal educations, where does that leave them in the future? Statistics show that there is a direct correlation between high school completion and being imprisoned later on in life. “The school-to-prison- pipeline refers to the policies and practices that push our nation’s schoolchildren, especially our most at- risk children, out of classrooms and into the juvenile and criminal justice system (ACLU)”. Schools are directly pushing children in the criminal justice based on the policies they have. Instead of fostering and mentoring these children, any slip up and their “education” is the first thing taken away from them. By being suspended they are

missing classes which makes them fall behind eventually leading to them dropping out all together. School these days are so concerned with test scores and the smart kids, that a whole group of children are getting left behind. These are the students who are often already receiving unequal education due to their race, class, or gender. "The adult prison and juvenile justice systems are riddled with children who have traveled through the school to prison pipeline" (Wald, 5).

I feel investing in education would only benefit our society in the long term. Obviously, investing in prisons is getting us nowhere. Education has the potential to foster our children and help them grow up to give back the community. Currently, though it is failing to do that. Every student should be seen as our future and someone who matters. Imagine all the possibilities if we had schools where everyone felt as though they were equal in every sense. Just because a student gets into trouble when they are younger, or doesn't score well doesn't mean that should determine where they will be in 20 years. "No one's life is set in stone at *any* age, much less the tender childhood years (Peterson)." Instead it should be the education system's duty to help every child. We spend all this money and energy on promoting prison spending that we should focus instead on quality education for all.

Kiley Mercado

The Future is in Our Hands...Supposedly!

"The University of California system has long been one of the gems of American education - a first-rate research university that was one of the most affordable in the country... But its future is now uncertain."

- Tamar Lewin, *The New York Times*.

Having been to a number of universities over the years (I won't say how many!) and experiencing first hand the effects of budget cuts in California universities and community colleges, I have a sense of how these cuts have negatively affected our (meaning the student's) access to education and overall college experience (in terms of dorm rooms, sororities, athletic programs, and so on). I've witnessed departments disappear; I've seen athletes lose their scholarships or have to transfer to other universities because their sport of choice was cut; I've experienced what exactly "tuition hikes" imply. Having witnessed these cuts, I worry about the future of California's educational system, and my worry for the thousands of new students transferring to state universities in the coming fall. I often wonder how their experience will differ from mine. since I have attended a University before the budget cuts were implemented, I wonder what will be different? Will these new students ever know about the two colleges that San Francisco State University cut the previous year? Will their major be one that falls victim to budget cuts in the future? Will they ever know what they lost? All in all I believe and have seen how the future of California's educational system is in turmoil. Now the question becomes: how can we, as students, save it?

As of January 2011, California Governor Jerry Brown has proposed an overwhelming \$1 billion cut from state universities and community colleges all over California in an attempt to "save" the increasing budget deficit (Krieger, 1). According to Lisa Krieger this money would include a "\$500 million cut from CSU and UC campuses and a \$400 million cut for community colleges" (2). These intended cuts essentially mean less access to CSU and UC campuses for many new students, as well as limited access to community colleges all throughout the state. According to the article "California is Failing its Students," California community colleges which were initially intended to be open to all, young and old, could soon experience some of the same limitations in terms of restricted admittance that many CSU and UC campuses currently enforce. As the article states, "[community college] is meant to encourage a wide variety of people to continue their education, whether it be for transfer to a four-year college or the chance to get a vocational degree later in life. Why must the community colleges be forced to make distinctions among the academic aspirations of its students for the first time- simply because California won't give it enough money to perform its mission?" With costs rising and the number of spaces available to students shrinking, the future of California universities and community colleges is looking more and more dismal.

Proposed solutions include limiting state support for students who choose to take "non-academic" courses such as art and crafts, yoga, and other physical activities, to admitting fewer native-born California students and admitting more out-of-state students who would be subject to out-of-state tuition fees.

California is inevitably “making it more difficult to both access and afford public education” which in turn is only “disempowering the next generation and impoverishing the state’s future” (*California is Failing*).

Jerry Brown, who could offer no specific ideas as to where the money would come from, threw out the idea of “reducing the cost of instruction, rather than the number of students served.” (Krieger, 1). However, his proposed cuts would do nothing but restrict classes, increase an already growing class size, and reduce student support services that are currently available at most universities. Continued budget cuts to schools all across California will only damage the state of education even further. Fee and tuition hikes mean less space for students and teachers, while furlough days mean less access to the classroom. The continued decline in our state of education will have immensely negative effects in the future that could eventually lead to the disappearance of some CSU and UC campuses altogether.

With these facts in hand, one begins to wonder what could be done, if anything, that could ultimately save our universities and community colleges. With many students finding their voice and looking for active ways to show their concern over the continued cuts, many have found alternative ways to demonstrate and take a stand against the decline of their education. Although protests would seem to be the most obvious way to express one’s frustration, it is not the only way. Many have turned to writing letters, signing petitions, and spreading overall awareness, including ways in which they themselves can help fight back.

Only when we, as students, educate ourselves about California’s budget can we truly start to make the needed changes. And although these ways of expressing our opinion and concern may not always have the desired effect, doing something is better than doing nothing. I strongly believe in the power of public voice and opinion; there has to be a way to speak out about our concerns and feelings in regards to the cuts, and in a way so that we can truly be heard.

As a Women and Gender Studies major at San Francisco State University, the fear that my major could be next on the chopping block makes the threat of continued budget cuts an ever pressing issue. More money is needed in order to maintain and rejuvenate the California educational system. However with the budget deficit continuing to rise, it could be awhile before we start to see results. As Jesse McKinley states, “where the money might come from is still unclear...But with any new tax in California requiring a two-thirds majority in the Legislature, its prospects are uncertain” (3). I guess only time will tell if our budget deficit can ever be repaired and if our universities and community colleges will ever again be what they once were.

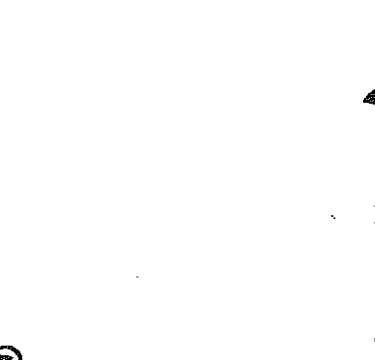
California universities, once highly revered in terms of educational experience and affordable tuition, no longer hold the same appeal they once had. With the average cost of tuition in California continuing to rise, more and more people are looking out of state for their educational needs.

In order to save our universities, something needs to be done, and now. It scares me to think about what might be missing from SFSU in the future. With more and more departments experiencing cuts, the unique majors and diverse social networks that many come to this school looking for could ultimately disappear. I came to SFSU because it offered such diverse surroundings. I like SFSU because of what it has to offer, and can only hope that it is able to maintain this diversity as the budget deficit continues to increase.

Umi Hagitani
A Paper Mural

a Paper Mural

I quit school when I was 10. After 15 yrs of self-education, I came to college system. Many said that college education is just a piece of paper, so they survive when they get out. College is a place to produce knowledge, but often decides what knowledge must not survive. I am making my own paper mural to commemorate many forms of education that I experienced. Please fill the blank in the middle with your own mural. (Umi Hagitani)



- ① sharing a chair & sitting on the floor due to budget cuts
- ② sittin' & thinking in co-op city, NY
- ③ taking kids out of schools
- ④ mating
- ⑤ your education here!
- ⑥ procrastination
- ⑦ nuclear beats lives
- ⑧ farming inside walls or behind bars
- ⑨ the birth of Oscar Grant Hall

Kelly Jordan

What is Feminism?

When I first started at San Francisco State University in the Women and Gender Studies department, I was so excited to have finally found a program that I really loved and cared about! For the first time in my academic career I really took my studies seriously because I was so passionate about my major. I also came in with this idea that I would take to this major like a duck to water, and I was admittedly a bit smug, thinking to myself “this is going to be a breeze, I already believe that women are oppressed, what more do I need? This major is just going to give me more information, more ammo for my pro-feminist arguments.”

This enthusiastic naiveté lasted just long enough to get me through my first full day of WGS classes before I realized that there was so much that I didn’t know, so much that I had yet to learn about women and gender studies. I also realized that one of my biggest obstacles to really understanding the theories being taught was the language used to teach them. A lot of language used within our department was foreign to me, or, if it wasn’t foreign, it was being applied to ideas or concepts I’d never heard of before. It was an encounter with a professor outside of the WGS department that really opened my eyes to this bizarre, hidden language barrier that existed for WGS students. When this particular professor asked me what “transnational feminism” was, I was stumped.

Even though I had only been in the department maybe two months at that time, I had been given a definition of this concept, which is the basic building block upon which our entire department is built, the first day of my Intro class. It didn’t matter though; I knew no matter what I said to this inquisitive professor it wouldn’t be the right answer. I would forget a key point, make it too simple, leave out this important word or that vital idea, and the answer I had would be wrong.

After that meeting I recognized how difficult it can be for WGS students to communicate with those outside of the major in a way that clearly and concisely explains to them what it is we study. For those within the major, it’s barely any better; everyone you ask will have a different definition of even the most basic terms that we learn here. Even within this graduating class,

when asked what “feminism” means, the answers spread across a wide spectrum of definition.

These are the reasons why, I feel, this glossary is so important. To educate those within the WGS major who may be struggling with some of the words or concepts they’re learning in their classes. Also, as an effort to break down the invisible walls that seem to separate our department, our studies, our language and ourselves.

In reference to the title of my piece I’d like to begin with the word “feminism.” While writing this glossary, it has been the hardest word to define in complete or absolute terms. Therefore, my hope is that by including a word search puzzle, using terms that relate to what feminism is, it will show how the definition of “feminism” is multifaceted and often difficult to establish.

Feminism: Find the words marked with a * in this glossary.

T G U V T Z I F E D W
O O Y B R W N E V T O
L D N F A O T M A G M
E N O P N M E I W S E
B H I L S E R N T C N
O Z T X N N S I S H A
J T C H A O E S R C N
H C U D T F C T I M D
X K R U I C T P F W G
A K T D O O I E C Q E
C T S D N L O D Z S N
A L N E A O N A F L D
Q H O N L R A G Q G E
O Q C P D Y L O T B R
X L E Y C S I G H T S
U U D N V E T Y S Q T
U H E F U X Y C I Q U
J G A N X Z Y L X H D
A L W H K P I J A A I
N L M N S E T I R J E
B T S I A R U V P O S
B T V E P K L X T C Z
N I A D V P V B S B X
A I J E Z H A U I P J
L X N D I Q I A N E Y
G W W I V C T D I E X
V T D V C L C J M I A
L H D G B P Y B E H E
P F X O A F K A F F K
E V A W D N O C E S R

*Agency: The ability to act.

Biopower: "The way biology and medicine are used by governments and other social interests to further the goals of those who are in power." (Grewal, 3)

Colonialism: Foreign rule of one society over another by means of both occupation and appropriation of resources.

Commodity: A product, an object, an idea, a model, or labor which can be circulated, bought, and sold.

Cultural Citizenship: Refers to a person's access, treatment, position, or privilege within society. It is different than political citizenship in that it is an informal feeling of belonging, affected by one's intersecting identity strands.

*Deconstruction: An analysis and separation of the cogs that are used to define a concept, with the intention to find and understand that which is hidden within the concept, in order to discover its flaws.

Discourse: A dominant or powerful way of thinking, as defined by Michel Foucault (1978).

Empire: Areas of land that belong to and are controlled by one single, generally foreign, governing body.

Erotic: A metaphysical yearning to integrate or connect that which seems subjectively separate.

Eugenics: The systematic elimination of so-called inferior races through encouraged or forced birth control or sterilization.

*First Wave Feminism: Refers to the North American and European political movement towards women's voting and occupational rights in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

First World/Third World: The first world refers to (generally Western) nations that are arbitrarily defined as modern and progressive. Third World refers to nations that are somehow disadvantaged as compared to First World nations.

Globalization: The networking of every nation's products and currency into one large, worldwide market.

Hegemony: A small elite who hold most of the power and dominate over a consenting majority.

Identity Politics: The viewpoint of those who are marginalized, and the use of one's identity for political action.

Imperialism: Foreign, unidirectional rule of another culture's economy and political system.

*Intersectionality: The idea that everyone has multiple, potentially conflicting, components of their identity. Some of these components are age, gender, race, class, disability, and sexuality.

*LGBTQ: A term used to describe people whose sexuality is self-identified as anything other than heterosexual. It is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer.

Mobility: The ability, or lack thereof, to move within a community, nation, society, or political system.

Modernity: Culturally defined as that which is progressive, new, and improved.

Nation: A group of people who have an imagined sense of belonging based on definitions of "otherness," which create borders and provide a sense of exclusivity among the members.

Nationalism: Loyalty and commitment to the political policy and sovereignty of one's nation.

Nation-state: When a governing body (state) represents their nation's (elite) citizens in its political and economic policy.

Patriarchy: A system of power that is based on and reinforces male power.

*Pedagogy (feminist): A type of teaching and instruction guided by feminist policies of inclusion and transformation.

Political Citizenship: Whether a person is legally defined as a citizen within a nation and their entitlement to equal rights.

*Praxis (feminist): The implementation of feminist theory: theory and action.

Public/Private Dichotomy: A social system that states that within the public sphere a person must follow the rules of the state and the benefit of compliance is complete privacy inside your home, free from outside interference. This creates a dangerous and oppressive environment for women and children, whose position had often been limited only to the private sphere.

*Second Wave Feminism: Refers to political and social movements in North America and Europe in the late 1960's and early 1970's that sought to fight sexism and patriarchy, gain equal rights and sexual and reproductive freedoms.

Segregation: The act of separating one group from another, often done through force by way of laws, policies, or cultural stigmatization.

State: The governing body of a nation.

The "Other": Defined as anything outside of the imagined and arbitrary borders and limitations of what is considered regular, normal, or otherwise ideal.

*Transnational Feminism: Refers to the most current wave of feminism, which examines similarities but also differences among women worldwide. Its analyses are intersectional (focuses on contradictions within identities) and transnational (looks at and beyond the nation-state to understand political flows). It also includes Women of Color and LGTBQ women, which are two groups that were previously

ignored or marginalized within past waves of feminism.

White Trash: A derogatory term that conveys the meaning "economic waste" by signifying a set of stereotypes related to the social behaviors, economic and intelligence prejudice, and gender roles of poor white people.

*Women and Gender Studies: The examination and deconstruction of how gender, sexuality, race, sex, and identity are defined.

*Women of Color: A political term used to describe any and all women who are not white.

Bre Peters

Un-gendering the Language Lens

There is just enough time to duck into the bathroom before class. I make a mad dash for the women's restroom. Great. A line about five deep. I have time. I'll wait. Looking down at the floor, I hear one of my commode comrades begin to yell: "Hey! Hey you! You can't be in here!"

I don't even have to look up to know that this frenzied woman is directing her rant at me. This is what I hear in her impassioned defense of the women's restroom:

"Hey! Hey you gender non-conformist! I am not comfortable with your confusing gender performance and you need to get out of my normative feminine safe space!"

The line is now starting to shift uncomfortably, making way for the self-proclaimed bathroom monitor to enact justice on an unwelcome body. I respond, assuring said bathroom monitor that I am in fact well within my rights to stand in line with the rest of the bathroom patrons. Her response, "Oh." Again, an interpretation:

"Oh. Well, it's your fault that I yelled at you. You choose to be an enigma and should be reprimanded for not being readily identifiable."

When I relay this experience to my partner, she half-sarcastically suggests, "Next time you should just flash her!" But why? Why the need to calm someone's fears by presenting a body that they can easily identify? Why does the responsibility to resolve the awkward tension fall into my lap after I am addressed as "Sir, ma'am, sir?"

Since gendered language has the power to produce such awkward and violent moments, let

us deconstruct some of the terms we use and what we mean when we use them.

Androgyny: A state of ambiguous gender in which identifying sexual characteristics are uncertain or mixed.

Binary: A system or concept that is constructed with only two, usually opposing, pieces. (i.e. The concept that there are only two expressions of gender, masculine or feminine, which coincide with only two sexes, man or woman)

Cissexual: A person whose gender identity does not contradict their physical sex.

Essentialist Theory of Gender: The concept that there are two sets of appropriate and expected gender behaviors that are assigned at birth based on perceptions of biological sex.

Gender: The performance and reception of masculinity, femininity, transgender, gender-queer, or transsexual identity. Gender is socially constructed and is not inherently linked to biological sex.

Gender Norm: That which has been socially constructed as acceptable gender performance. These norms are based on essentialist ideas that biological sex=gender.

(i.e. My gender performance is more masculine, though I am biologically female, which rejects the gender norms set forth that as a female, I should perform femininity and the social roles that are constructed to be feminine.)

Gender-Queer/Gender-Transgressive: Term used to identify those who move outside of binary constructions of gender, choosing to identify with a gender performance that deviates from

biological sex constructions of gender, or both or no gender.

Hir: Neutral or transgender pronoun and possessive adjective for a person of undetermined gender. (i.e., In place of her/him)

Heteronormative: The systematic naturalization of heterosexuality.

Homonormative: A gay and lesbian politic that does not challenge dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions, but upholds and sustains them.

Social Constructionist Theory of Gender: The theory that gender is socially constructed, and therefore fluid, rather than a fixed set of expectations based on biological sex.

Ze: Neutral or transgender pronoun for a person of undetermined gender. (i.e. In place of he/she)

The social lens, through which this society stares, has been a binary construction. It does not take into account the varying prisms of identity, the wonderful world of the in-between or none at all.

Now that we have talked about the language that we use, and its social consequences, what do we do? What should you do if you are caught in a bathroom crisis where hostile language is coupled with already aggressive gender binaries? What happens in a space in which doing one's business becomes everyone's business? Recognize the power of language and the gendered implications that restrooms carry heavily along with them. Recognize that people are often stubbornly invested in the gendered vocabulary that they were taught, that the language holds fast to its speaker, yet is not immutable.

What we ultimately need is a readjustment of our lenses, a re-focusing on how, and more importantly why, we define ourselves and others. Without this more flexible and fluid lens, our society will continue breeding a social and cultural blindness. Leslie Feinberg has offered this lens for our gender transgressive warriors:

"To me, gender is the poetry each of us makes out of the language we are taught."

We need more poets! Like any performance, performing gender can be a nerve-wracking, anxiety-ridden experience, and that's just making it to the proverbial stage. But like any poet, speak your truth. Take each day as a learning experience, and if you run into a frightened bathroom monitor who wants to tear you down because of their discomfort, look at it as a teaching opportunity. Take pride in yourself and courage in your wisdom.

What should you do if you find yourself in the position of policing identity, or as a witness to such, in a socially-gendered space like a bathroom? You can start by deconstructing some of the gendered language you use, and being aware of your behavioral mannerisms—an off-hand glance, or a questioning stare that lasts a bit too long, can make someone like me feel uncomfortable and unsafe. Though you may be acting in an attempt to maintain your own safety, this can unfortunately have the effect of invoking discomfort in someone else. We all need to invest in creating a space for each other, for all; one in which we may all feel safe moving outside of the gendered binaries that prevent mutual understanding.

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Author Biographies

Kalia Williams is a Women and Gender Studies major and Health Ed minor. Played on the Women's Basketball team at SFSU, is from Los Angeles, CA and enjoys spending time with family.

Lauren Kuizenga is a fashion school dropout turned feminist. Ze has a fervent desire to move others to practice composting and thinks living in San Francisco is the greatest thing that happened to hir so far. Lauren hopes to one day land a career where people are willing to pay for hir to travel the globe.

Paola Souto is a feminist teacher and urban gardener from Argentina working to end sexual and domestic violence. For Paola, education has been the gateway to new horizons and opened possibilities for community work and creative activism. Hir future is full of opportunities including a Master in Social Work, family, and many adventures.

Adriana Lopez, Chicana Marxist Feminist, from birth known as China. A blossoming marigold and a traveler of the world. A special eye for art and a soul that has aged like wine.

Pamela White was born and raised in the Bay Area. Her feminist curiosity began in her adolescent years and became a true passion when she began her studies at San Francisco State. By majoring in Women and Gender Studies, she has been able to challenge herself intellectually and is now able to call herself a feminist as well as a critical thinker.

Michelle Ochoa can't help but have trouble with summing up her life into one tiny paragraph. On the other hand, she has absolutely no trouble having pride in being able to call herself a daughter, a sister, an aunt, a friend, and finally, a Latina and a feminist all at once.

Cheletta Harrold believes in uplifting others and serving her community. She is a proud African-American woman who is driven by faith. "Faith is the first factor in a life devoted to service. Without it, nothing is possible. With it, nothing is impossible."-Mary McLeod Bethune

Throughout college, as in all good adventures, I have learned to conquer fierce beasts, engaged with fantastic characters and thought thoughts I'd never thought before. Still, stepping into the vastness of the world beyond, I feel as though my journey is only just beginning. Perhaps Kerouac said it best, "I have

nothing to offer anyone except my own confusion."
Sarafina Murphy-Gibson

Darlene Jimenez has always been a feminist making her way in the world. The knowledge acquired since attending SF State has been the best gift money could buy. Hailing from a town known for its hot days, San Francisco was an easy pick four years ago. Double majoring in Criminal Justice and Women & Gender Studies, she hopes to utilize her degrees to be part of change in the world. She enjoys spicy food, underground hip hop, and has a weird not so secret love for garden gnomes. Family is what keeps her motivated.

Dominique Elisondo loves to laugh and have a great time with the people she loves. Through her journey in life she has met some really great people whom she will never forget. She was blessed with a great family and great friends who have supported her goals and achievements, even though it has taken her way too long to finish school. Without these great people in her life she would not be where she is today.

Federico Villalobos was born and raised in the Deep South, Los Angeles, CA, but has found his home in San Francisco, CA. His academic interests include photography, queer film, Latin American film, prints/print art, graffiti art, gender and sex in fashion merchandising, and art and trauma. His non-academic interests involve bicycles, collage making, charcoal drawing, and book hunting. Future plans for Federico include studying queer, visual culture in graduate school and building his own bicycle.

Vickie Agadzhanova will always be a student, long after she has graduated. She hopes to share with others what has been revealed to her through her scholastic endeavors. Through sharing, she hopes to play a part in helping people in any way she can.

Serena L. Codioli is witty and devilishly optimistic; she enjoys anything supernatural and would not mind taking tea with a ghost. She loves tinkering with technology and she secretly carries in her suitcase a cuddly stuffed animal named Alfred who's a spy monkey. Nothing is more precious to her than sitting down and eating a meal with family and loved ones. Best advice was found on the paper dipper thingy on a yogi tea bag, "Let your heart guide you" so you'll never find yourself lost.

Elana Finkelstein moved to the Bay Area from Southern California and was pleasantly surprised by what she found. She is an avid walker, has a thorough love for all foods pickled, and has finally learned the skill of bicycle riding at the age of 21. The Women and Gender Studies department at San Francisco State University has gifted to her a new feeling of urgent curiosity and critical thinking which she is excited and hopeful in applying to all of her future post-undergraduate endeavors.

Umi Hagitani has been a non-schooler, ski instructor, a voice actress, a radio MC, a bodyguard, a 24-hour nanny, a KFC employee, an embalmer trainee, an interviewer/interviewee, winner, a whiner, a writer, an illustrator, a facilitator, a street vendor, a caretaker, a driver, a cook, a patrol, a tutor, a translator, an interpreter, a loser, a motel employee, a telephone operator, a secretary, a surfer, a student. Good at so many things that cannot be performed/evaluated for at SFSU.

Sarah Millet loves halo-halo, transnational feminism, and her grandma's advice: "oh what the heck, go for it anyway." She believes that feminist theory, especially intersectionality, offers her a complex lens to consider the world with, and one that has saved her many-a-time from clawing her eyes out. She also believes that failing classes, going crazy and taking hella long to complete her degree was the best thing that ever happened to her. As Audre Lorde would say, "waste nothing, Chica, not even pain."

Kelly Jordan is a headhunter, who hooks up out-of-work Soviet scientists with rogue third-world nations. Shout out to Rasputin! In her spare time, however, she enjoys anything and everything that makes her laugh, spending time with friends, arguing, talking, and being right. She is passionate about equal rights and hopes to use her education in the field of Women and Gender studies to change the world.

Morgan Miller is graduating with her degree in Women and Gender Studies. She is looking forward to using the information she has gained over the years as she hopes to pursue her career as a labor and

delivery nurse. Being aware of the differences within each person she will interact with will help show her understanding and compassion for others.

Ashley Myers is an advocate for women's equality who seeks to empower women through feminism and creative expression, and is a firm believer that music and art can be used as tools of self-exploration. She envisions a world in which feminism can be translated and understood by all, through passing down knowledge and wisdom to future generations.

Bre Peters is a fun-loving feminist who revels in the many facets of queer identity, utilizing the playground of marginality and intersectionality as a tool for self-discovery and social change. Bre thinks gender is a farce and enjoys deconstructing it, loves Animal Planet, poetry, and hugging it out after heated discussions. She has learned many of her most valuable lessons from children: "The job of a revolutionary is to learn and to teach." –Keith Taylor, 11-year old Oakland Community School student.

Theresa Seiger grew up under the San Diego sun around a large network of strong women. Since 2009 she has been working as a journalist out of the San Francisco Bay Area. She thinks you should admit to being a feminist too.

Dana Corrin Williams loves life. She spends most of her days dreaming of owning a TARDIS and traveling back to 1990's UK. Her other interests include feminism, sci-fi/fantasy, crocheting/knitting, and making jewelry. She finds great amusement in arguing about misogyny/sexism/racism/homophobia in nerd culture.

Kiley Mercado is a Women and Gender Studies major at San Francisco State University. After graduating in the Spring of 2011 she hopes to further her education and pursue graduate school at SFSU or UC Davis. Although Kiley came to SFSU as an Anthropology major, she quickly fell in love with Women and Gender studies after taking just one class.



WGS 690 Senior Seminar Class of Spring 2011

Back Row: Kelly Jordan, Sarah Millett, Sarafina Murphy-Gibson, Kalia Williams, Dominique Elissondo, Lauren Kuizenga.

Middle Row: Theresa Seiger, Darlene Jimenez, Federico Villalobos, Bre Peters, Kiley Mercado, Cheletta Harrold.

Front Row: Adriana Lopez, Pamela White, Michelle Ochoa, Morgan Miller, Dana Williams.

Seated: Vickie Agadzhanova, Serena Codioli, Paola Souto, Umi Hagitani, Elana Finkelstein.
