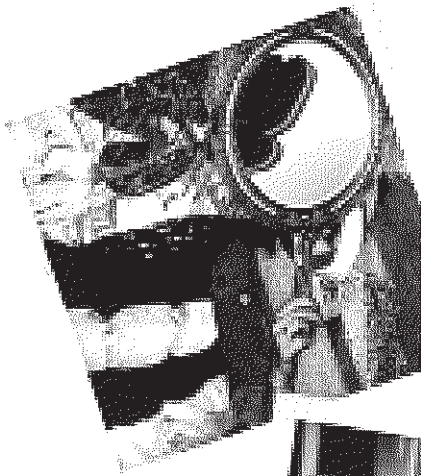


(UN)PHASED

SPRING 2012

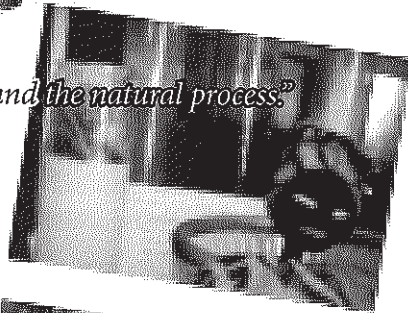
"Shed it off, my skin, thin and once broken."

"I can transform feelings of shame and guilt into acceptance and self-love."



"My body is not all there is to me."

"Trusting in womyn and the natural process."



"I discovered that the best weapon to fight back is through awareness, and education."

"Curves and waves of uncertainties."

Letter From The Editors:

The creators of *(Un)Phased* want to thank you for reading our annual publication. Formerly known as *Deconstruct This!*, this magazine has been a vital aspect of the Women and Gender Studies (WGS) department since 2006. The publication allows graduating seniors to express their passions and ideas about issues that have been central to their educational experiences as WGS students, such as sexuality, race, class, gender, globalization, citizenship and nationality, and how they intersect with one another and affect our personal lives. The WGS courses and faculty have greatly influenced the contributors' pursuit of a wealth of knowledge on topics including gender and health, immigration, queer visibility, body image and sexuality.

We made the decision to change the title from *Deconstruct This!* to *(Un)Phased* to reflect the ways in which the department and various feminisms have evolved over time. "Feminism" is not a single, static set of ideas held true by all people. We acknowledge the various forms of feminist activism and theory. This publication celebrates the evolution of action, education and thought in the WGS department. *(Un)Phased* represents a new time in our activism, one in which we seek to engage with a praxis of power through creative collaboration.

We hope that future WGS students continue to cultivate the evolution of this publication and make it their own, as we have with this issue. We did not want *(Un)Phased* to only address one idea or theme; instead we wanted the publication to reflect the diversity of its contributors. What resulted is a powerhouse publication that neatly ties together all of our passions and expertise. The WGS program has taught us how to think critically about the world around us and now we seek to take this knowledge and raise consciousness through our writing, photography, art and poetry about issues close to our hearts. *(Un)Phased* is physical evidence of our personal and academic growth resulting from our time in the department, evidence we hope accurately conveys even the smallest degree of our transformation. Enjoy!

A Note Regarding the Title:

We chose the title *(Un)Phased* because of its ability to be read multiple ways. One sense of the word is lunar; it hints at evolution and transformation as well as to create an image that is strong and unyielding. The transformation aspect refers to the fact that, like the moon's phases, feminism also experiences different reworkings and problematizing. While "-ed" denotes a completed change, we are not referring to something static. The "(un)" nullifies that idea and leaves room for further evolutions. By embracing and acknowledging fluidity, we also speak to the nature of the pieces within the publication as they represent various combinations of art, poetry, pictures/visual, academic/research writing, theory, personal histories and analysis.

The secondary meaning, the play on words, declares that we - womyn, women, womyn-allied, feminists, woman-ists, gender studies students - are not fazed by negativity, trauma, violence, etc. Like cycles of nature, we will adapt and keep growing from those experiences instead.

A Note Regarding Pronouns/Spelling:

Please note that some of the submissions may use pronouns other than "his/her." Gender neutral pronouns like "hir" may be used instead and you may see "ze," "sie," "zhe" or "they" instead of "she" or "he." People use gender neutral pronouns because they do not identify with the male-female gender binary or because they are intentionally trying to dismantle the restrictions of the binary.

In addition to the usage of gender-neutral pronouns, you may see different spellings of "woman/women." The alternative spelling of "womon/womyn/womxn" is often used in feminist writing to divert from male-normative language practices and patriarchal notions that constrict our vocabularies. This is only one deliberate challenge that resists male-centric language.

Volume 7: Spring 2012

(Un)Phased is the annual publication of the Women and Gender Studies Department at San Francisco State University. This issue includes original research and creative work by students enrolled in WGS 690 Senior Seminar.

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BODY YELL

Stacey Jean Speer

My body is not for policing.
What I do with it,
how I feed it, how
I choose to cover it, or
not cover it at all,
These things
are not up
for your discussion,
opinion,
influence,
or insults.

My body
wants to be explored
by willing and consensual
hands that have been given
my
permission.

My body wants to be furnished
with beanies and worn-in Converse
and tank tops and black jeans in between,
with scarves and necklaces and rings,
but no bullshit cashmere, diamonds, or gold
for these aren't ideas
which I can be sold.

My body wants to be pierced,
dressed in artistic skin

**Why should I be scorned
for the art which I've had adorned
on my healthy limbs**

while others are rewarded
for socially acceptable cosmetic trends?

My body wants
to eat when it is hungry
drink when it is thirsty
taste when it is craving
to not go down the road
that other agendas are paving.
A path that leads to a world of
fast food,

eating disorders,
a smothering diet industry,
fat shaming,
thin shaming,
keeping us from being free.

My body is real.

While fat shaming is unacceptable,
and curvy ladies are no doubt **beautiful**,
the phrase "real women have curves"
has hit some feminist nerves,
because **thin women are real women too.**

And although this may surprise you,
some women are born into this body type
and we must refuse
to be pitted against one another in this fight
because countering fat shaming
with thin shaming is not the key
and there are more than these two
bodies that can be
made invisible
to feel ashamed
glorified or vilified
to the media's gain.

Beauty is not a size.

My body is not a crime,
nor a display for your consumption
My body wants to be my own,
to determine its own function.

My body is not merely a reflection,
what I see in the mirror,
or what you see when you look at me

My body is not all there is to me.

I will present my body
in my own way
and the bottom line is
I am **the only one who** has the say.

AM I A (W)HO(RE)?

Maliyah Coye

“Am I a ho?” I’m not talking about being a paid sex worker. I’m talking about the kind of girl that has a reputation of giving it up. I am talking about the way women are categorized as being too sexy or too promiscuous. “Am I a ho?” I have asked myself this question a thousand times; fearful of what others might be thinking of me. As a young woman I wanted to be seen as “good.” Being too sexual was not “lady-like,” and I was taught to believe that sex was a sacred act that should be shared between a man and a woman who were in love. In high school I made sure to keep my sexual experiences discreet, to ensure that I wouldn’t be the target of gossip.

At an early age, I learned the boundaries I was confined to being a girl when it came to sex and sexuality. Boys could explore, men could have sex, any kind, and numbers didn’t matter. Men are not judged for wanting sex or being lustful and labels like slut, whore, fast are not assigned to men for partaking in sexual activities. I learned that boys and men did not really have restrictions when it came to sex.

But a girl could easily be called a slut (even if she is NOT sexually active). Labels like ho, slut, and bitch are tossed around so easily to police women’s behavior and keep them in a submissive role. What makes a girl a slut is not just about her sexual appetite or “track record.” Slut shaming is used when there is a threat that a girl may like your boyfriend, or she has too many flirtatious friendships. She’s a ho for wearing her clothes too “tightly,” or being the object of someone’s desire. Women’s sexuality is constantly being regulated, and at times more often by other women than men.

Even though I played the game and made sure to uphold my good-girl image, secretly I wanted to challenge these boundaries. I wanted to define my own rules around my body. But more importantly I wanted to have sexual experiences without feeling guilty or feeling like I was giving something away. I wanted to stop obsessing over the question “am I a ho?”

Once I started college I started working for a non-profit and began facilitating sex positive workshops with teens. This forced me to think about sex differently, since I was promoting the motto, “if it’s safe, fun, and consensual, it’s okay” in workshops, I needed to change my own

mind about sex. But for many people sex isn’t always safe or fun or consensual, especially for women.

Many women are survivors of sexual abuse or incest. I learned through my workshops that many young women have difficulty enjoying sex because of the way they feel about their bodies.

Because so many sexually positive people surrounded me I felt a certain safety to explore my personal feelings about shame when it came to receiving pleasure. In groups and alone I began investigating the idea of a female slut. When did we become hos? (Damn Eve, why did you eat the fruit!). Why are women sluts and men not? Why am I and other women condemned for enjoying our bodies and sexuality? Why are we conditioned to easily degrade women for being sexual? Finding answers to these questions opened Pandora’s box.

There wasn’t a quick answer. (And I am not necessarily going to give you a concrete one in this submission). However, I did realize that our cultural beliefs about female sexuality are connected to western colonialism religious doctrine. Women receive messages through religion that their bodies are for procreation and that sex is not to be enjoyed. And there is a long history of controlling women’s bodies in the US through various methods of taking away women’s reproductive rights. I know my own guilt is connected to heteronormativity and racism. Being a woman of color my sexuality and body has been under attack for generations before me.

I have acknowledged that my shame around sex stems from a larger problem that I may not be able to change. But I have decided that I do have power. I can choose to think differently about my body, my sexuality, and other women. I can transform feelings of shame and guilt into acceptance and self-love. I can reject the labels and notions society has created to define and limit female sexuality. I have the freedom to re-define my terms and rules, and can let go of any beliefs that make me feel bad. And more importantly, I can choose to not be haunted by the

question ***“Am I a ho?”*** I will no longer feel guilt for enjoying sex whether it’s in a loving, monogamous relationship or a one-night stand. I will see words like slut, ho, bitch as arbitrary terms that have no power.

WHY BUY THE COW...

Sara White

I'm a dirty slut with spiders on my chin.
Wherever I go, I feel their phantom legs.

I swat away their tickles
and damn their joy

because I am filthy
and unloved.

Milk me
and I will feed you.

Pluck my udder
and leave me be.

This is only the beginning of my madness.
I have done it again.

QUEER

Sara White

I see the faces of my nameless lovers in every man I see.

When will my repulsion stop?

TRANSFORM ME

Fabián R. Arizaga

It is perhaps more damaging to have an internal repugnance about one's own sexual preference than to experience discrimination from our own family and especially from the community because we are LGBT. It is within my own individual experiences that I have learned to accept the innumerable levels of discrimination I have faced because of my intimate sexual life. To what point does society control sexuality, and who has power over sexuality? These were the many traumatic questions I would ask myself. However, throughout my own encounter as an adolescent to the word sex, I would always imagine a man with a woman, never a man with a man or woman with a woman. The word homo was constantly tyrannizing masculinity and those in control of pronouncing this word were somehow augmenting to their authority within their circle of friends or their community. That's when I realize that the power to oppress people was perchance an appealing snack for the teasers. But in particular a craving for more self-fulfillment especially when one allows the tormenter to feed from our dejection and misery.

By no means had I had the opportunity to defend myself from any impolite remarks by others because of my 'secret closeted life' but, suddenly one day I learned to take those remarks and transformed them into delectable compliments. The tough intimidator was paying more attention to my own sexual preference than anything else, and possibly this was intriguing because it possibly revealed something about their own sexual predilection. Why are the bullies interested in using sexuality as a weapon of detestation? The ability to afflict other people is only one's frightful reality that does not permit us to accept ourselves. At least in my opinion, I believe that the best way of oppressing people is by perturbing our own negative reality into others. It is like a mirror that replicates an image of terrifying realities similar to when one wish to have what others possess, but because we don't have it our common reaction is jealousy. Jealousy is equivalent to envy like envy is to hate. If it was not for envy, like racism, discrimination would not exist. I would like to think that discrimination is more than just scary judgments, but further than simply a motivation to progress more. It

is to say that in order to be known and recognized as dominant, the oppressor must promote intolerance and toughness, to keep people in their surroundings scared. Just like a cat shows his claws and teeth when it's furious and frightened.

I discovered that the best reaction to a homophobic remarks was to smile with very sarcastic expression. This was in fact my favorite dessert; feeling no emotion in response to their comments and this was the best way of not showing any interest. This really proved that one gives power to the oppressor. The oppressor increases their power when we decrease our personal barriers that allow us to acknowledge our identity, whether is sexually or emotionally. If we allow the oppressor to break down our emotional walls, which is fundamental to our identity, especially in the teenage years, then we offer ourselves to self-hate.

"I discovered that the best weapon to fight back is through awareness and education."

Perhaps, I know today that disregarding any uncouth, racist comments is perhaps not the best way of showing any concern about their rude comments other than possibly feeling bad for their ignorance. Lack of knowledge or ignorance then de-

velops into a terrifying weapon when people only know how to hate and subjugate others because of the color of their skin, or because of their sexual desires. Maybe I discovered that the best weapon to fight back is through awareness and education. We cannot blame the individual who is scared to accept what has not been thought. Possibly bullying is a way of showing masculinity and toughness but presents as well characteristics of nervousness and apprehension, because one only has to act tough when danger is presented. Education is the best way of teaching ideas, and principles, and the best method is to become critical thinkers. The problem about racism and homophobia is that one becomes the victim when one allows the dilemma to attack us emotionally, but it also becomes the solution only and simply when we attack back not with fear but with intelligence.

THE BURDEN AND PRIVILEGE OF INVISIBILITY

Denia Perez

As I stood in line at the airport, holding tightly onto my Mills student ID card, I wondered if this was the moment and place where I would be forced to come clean about my immigration status. For nineteen years of my life, I had fooled everyone, including my closest friends and acquaintances, into believing that I was a US citizen. Because I spoke fluent English and have light skin, most people didn't and still don't bother to question the lies I would have to feed them in order to keep the truth about my legal status a secret. I had never been in a situation where these lies would be questioned or compromised until I was chosen to fly from Oakland to Portland with the Mills College soccer team in the fall of 2009.

While the rest of my teammates compared their licenses and talked about how they hated their pictures, I quietly stood by hoping that by some miracle, I would be able to get through the security checkpoint with the only valid identification I had. When it was my turn to walk up to the gentleman checking plane tickets and IDs, I said a little prayer and hoped for the best. To my surprise, he took my college ID and without hesitating, let me through. No questions, no hassle. I got through and flew to Portland with the rest of my team.

Although this was just one event in my life, it is significant and telling of the ways in which passing has been a complicated part of my existence. Because I am undocumented, my parents conditioned me to keep my status a secret so as to avoid unwanted attention. Because most people assume that I am White upon meeting me, blending in and avoiding invasive questions was and has not been a problem for me. However, the issue with passing is that it has also helped erase a part of my cultural and legal identity of which I am actually very proud.

Growing up in a community where the majority of my peers were White made me internalize a lot of the negative stereotypes and perceptions they had of Mexicans and undocumented people. Whenever the topic of conversation of immigration or Mexicans came about was always negative, I did my best to avoid associating myself with the people I knew I had a connection to. Passing facilitated my life at an institutional level, but devastated me at an emotional and psychological level. I hated myself for most of my life because I internalized a lot of the garbage that was constructed about undocumented people.

However, when I became involved with organizations and groups that directly worked with different aspects of the immigrant community, I began to heal by reclaiming parts of myself that I eschewed for too long. By working with undocumented students like myself and raising

"Because I am undocumented, my parents conditioned me to keep my status a secret so as to avoid unwanted attention."

money for organizations that work directly with those crossing the border, I began to deconstruct the lies and negativity that made me complacent about passing. Although I still pass, I have learned to

embrace the complexity that this phenomenon brings to my life. While I can never rid myself of my light skin and fluency in English, I have learned to use my privilege to pass in ways that bring more visibility to the issues of immigration and racism. Understanding my relative privilege has helped me become more active in the struggle for immigrant justice. While I will never be able to solve or address all of the problems associated with being undocumented, I know that I must continue working with those who face similar struggles in order to bring understanding and compassion to this issue.



REFLECTIONS OF S/HE

Mayo Inoue

After reading Shab's piece "These Saffron Lips" I was inspired to create a collage that reflected the themes that came from her poem.

THESE SAFFRON LIPS

Shabnam Farhoomand

That face that stared back wasn't mine, for its eyes were too empty, too expressionless to belong to me. I imagine punching the reflection. The image became shards, and the face would dissolve.
And Then

Then

Then

then the sun would set again. But the sun didn't set.
So I reached out, reached out, reached to hold your hand. But
you smiled, and turned away.

They

They

They spit in my direction, threw carrots in the bathroom stall,
and they laughed, oh how they laughed and looked farther down
the landscape so they could not see the pain. "She wants it",
they said.

So silence became my friend, knowing it was safer that way.

But then you came, yes you girl, you,
don't pretend like you don't hear me

You

You

you and your pretentious love of sisterhood, and shared
innocence, twist and turn things with your words and mind.
And though you taught so much, you took even more.

And so silence became my friend knowing it was safer that way.

And then he came, with his warm eyes, embracing me as if we were one. And then

You

You

You—

with one swift motion, with heartless words, and cruelty. You
walk into a room and everyone bows-- so highly revered-- and
you don't hesitate to soak in the glory, and all the while I
watched stunned wondering where you went, while you shrug
and look past these saffron lips

PRIVILEGE

Kristie Miller

When one hears the word “privilege” they usually imagine wealthy white people who live in mansions, vacation in their summer and winter homes and enjoy untold wealth to spend on what are considered the luxuries of life. Through Women and Gender Studies, we discuss aspects of privilege that are not so easily recognized. White privilege, male privilege and class privilege are social entitlements not so easily recognized to those who possess them. Privilege does not always mean shopping at Tiffany’s, yearly tropical vacations and daily gourmet meals. Privilege serves as a bubble that protects those who possess it from truly understanding the extent of the advantages they are afforded. For example, a man walking down a dark street alone at night does not usually have to consider the possibility of rape, as a woman will have those thoughts in the back of her mind. A white person searching for a new home or apartment will not have to fear the initial judgment of a prospective landlord based solely on the color of their skin. Even middle class folks will not have to always worry that their paychecks will not stretch far enough to put dinner on the table each evening.

Privilege is defined by dictionary.com as “a right, immunity, or benefit enjoyed only by a person beyond the advantages of most[i].” But many feminist, anti-violence, anti-oppression and pro-feminist activists and scholars challenge us to examine the privilege within the daily experiences of our own lives. Anti-racist activist Tim Wise points out how “white privilege is when you can get pregnant at seventeen like Bristol Palin and everyone is quick to insist that your life and that of your family is a personal matter, and that no one has a right to judge you or your parents, because every family has challenges” or that it “is being able to be a gun enthusiast and not make people immediately scared of you[ii].”

Peggy McIntosh points out aspects of class privilege as being referred to as Sir or Ma’am when shopping as opposed to being followed at all times by store security or the immediate assumption by law enforcement of being a non-threatening individual.[iii] Those of us who experience these considerations must recognize them for what they are. For although they may be entitlements we are born with because of the color of our skin or our family’s class standing, they are not earned but passed down from historical legacies of oppression and racism.

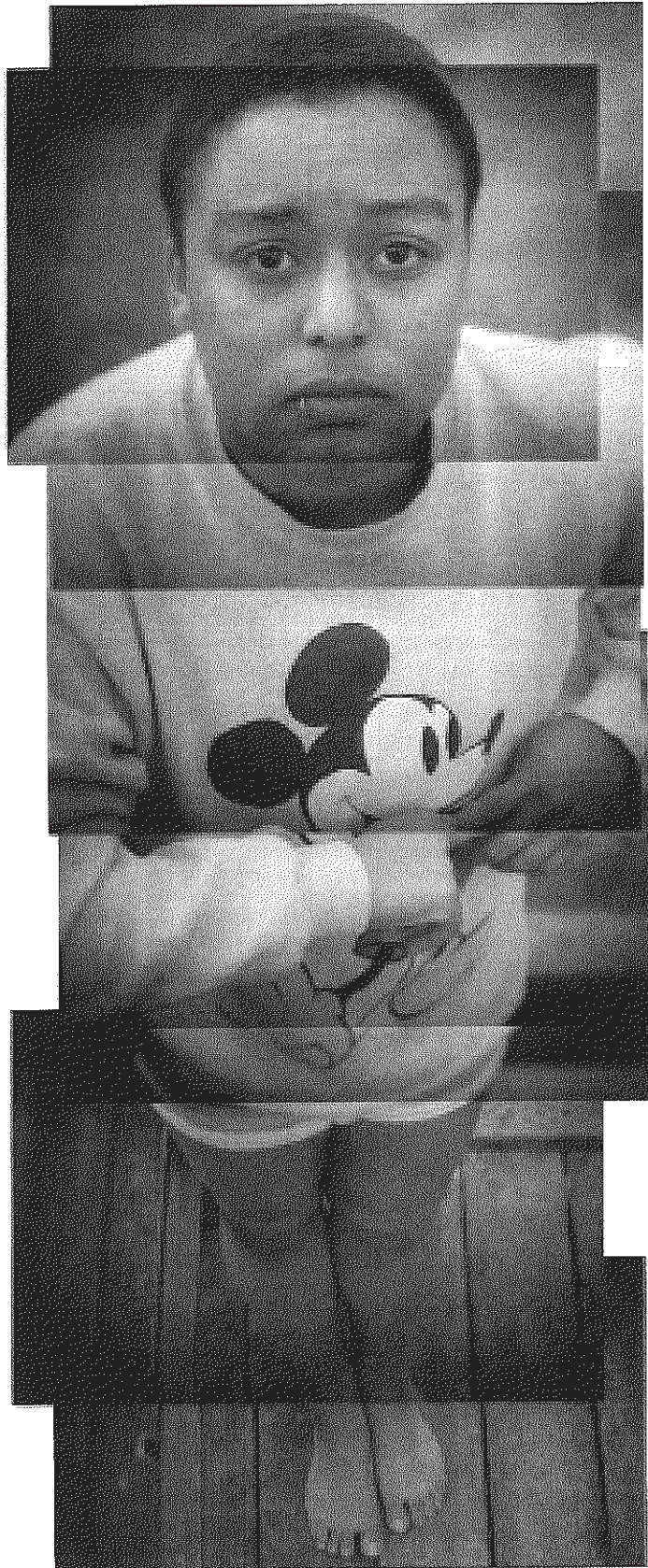
So what does one do with our own privilege beyond recognizing it? Disrupting denials of privilege to others is a good start. If a friend makes a sexist comment about

a female co-worker receiving a promotion based on size of her breasts, it is our responsibility to question that statement. If a salesperson gives you preferential treatment over another person who may have been ahead of you in line, we must point out that the other person was before us, no matter how much of a hurry we are in. If someone makes a derogatory comment about young men of color looking silly for wearing such baggy pants, we can try asking them what older people said about their clothing style when they were young. These may seem like small trivial ways of disrupting privilege, but they are easy steps to point out to others how they are really treating people as if they are less than. Hopefully even such a small gesture will cause the person to stop and think of how arrogant they sounded. In this recognition of arrogance comes an awareness of privilege. If these sorts of statements are made to them multiple times by a variety of people, just maybe we can all begin to view each other as equals and not as less-than because of differing race, gender, ethnicity or class composites.

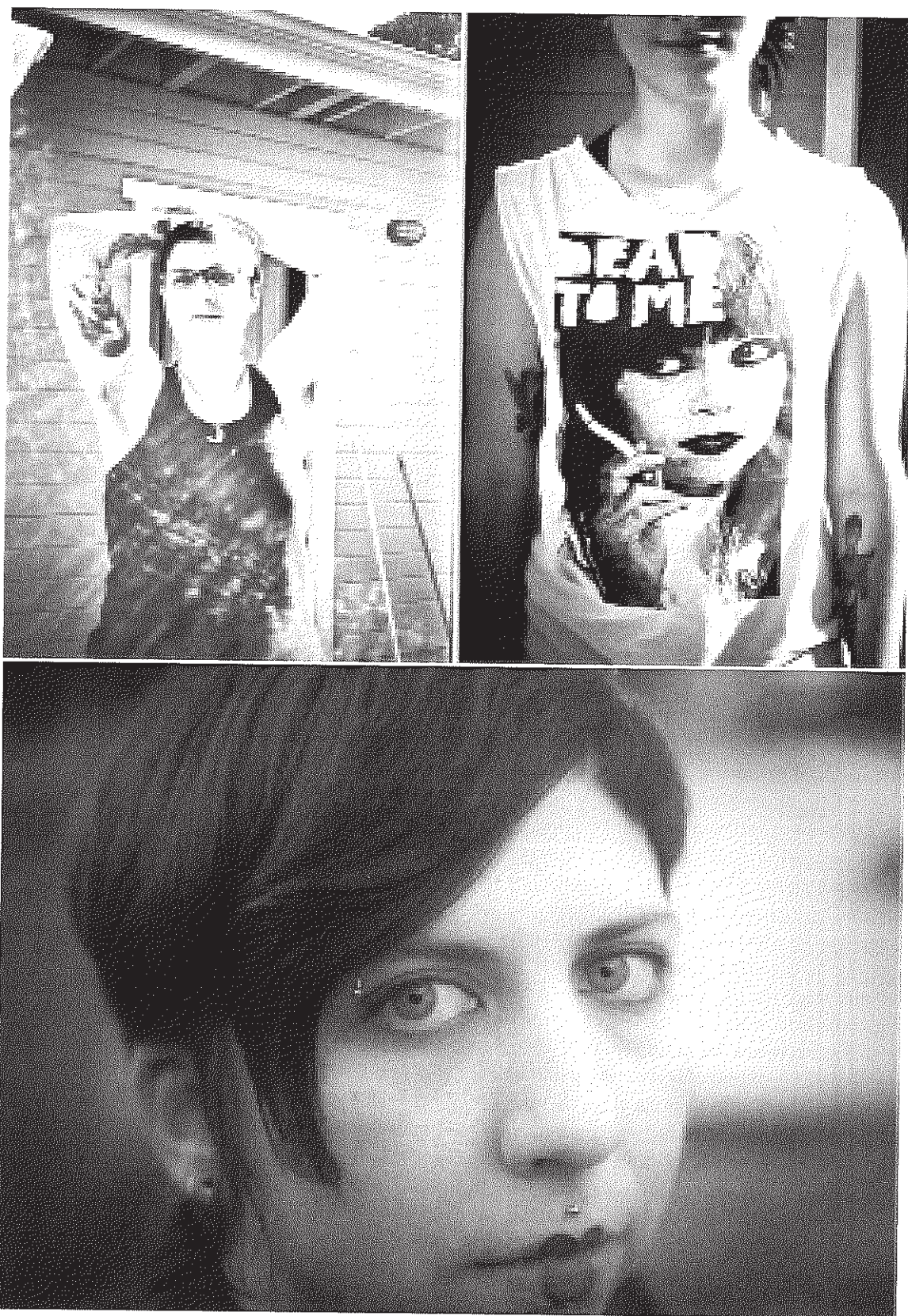
[i] <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/privilege>

[ii] <http://redroom.com/member/tim-wise/blog/this-is-your-nation-on-white-privilege-updated>

[iii] http://sap.mit.edu/content/pdf/class_privilege_checklist.pdf



FLUIDITY: A (Re)CONSTRUCTION OF GENDERQUEER
Milo Ashcraft



This photo series came into fruition with the help of supportive and inspirational gender non-conforming friends, a simultaneous frustration with and embrace of gender fluidity, and a reverence for artists such as David Hockney, Berenice Abbott, Amos Mac and Nan Goldin. "I'm beginning to believe that one of the last frontiers left for radical gesture is the imagination...Sexuality defined in images gives me comfort in a hostile world. They give me strength."—David Wojnarowicz, *Postcards from America*

WHAT'S FEMME GOT TO DO WITH IT?

Elise Favalora-Ukestad

Ever since I can remember, my mother outlined a role she saw her mother fulfill as the mother of the household. This role included such things as cleaning the house daily, paying bills, ironing my dad's shirts, doing the family's laundry and cooking daily for the family so that when five o' clock rolled around and my father walked through the door, a balanced meal was on the table warm and ready to be eaten. Her role was one that had been passed down to her by a line of strong Sicilian womxn. I was never taught by her that caring for the people around us was a weak or inferior role. Society however made this very clear in the ways that her labor went unrecognized within our household; as I have grown older I have realized the ways her labor is historically gendered as invisible work assumed to be work womxn could and should do (by themselves) and that is wasn't as important as say my father's accounting business because ultimately her financial livelihood was within his hands. The arguments my parents would engage in as well as the depression this form of unrecognized labor created for my mother would be the beginnings of my early feministhood that blossomed out of countless nights spent in my mother's bedroom processing her anger at the instability she felt within the household because of the gendered world she was working so hard to navigate.

As a queer womxn of mixed race identity living in the Bay Area and navigating queer spaces, I have begun to see the ways in which these beliefs many people grew up being influenced by—given the patriarchal society we are all daily engaging in—has affected gender dynamics as it applies to our interactions. Even though many queer folks I have met reach for the stars politically in terms of dismantling capitalism, many do not reflect on the ways patriarchy is the backbone to capitalism and therefore the working tool of oppression. Or they feel patriarchy is within politics and don't reflect on the ways they engage with misogyny in an attempt to feel empowered themselves. As someone who is pegged as a "femme" (more feminine centered or presenting queer womxn) within the queer community, I have experienced firsthand the misogyny some folks more masculine-centered within the community (gay cismen, transmasculine folks, butch womxn, etc) utilize as a means of acting out their maleness. Most often this includes objectification and fetishization of my body and an assumed notion that I will play submissive to and dependent on the more male-centered or presenting individual. This can be seen in the ways that my work as a caretaker is assumed or naturalized because

of my appearance and therefore expected to transfer to whatever group of people I am around. The other night, a queer Latino friend and I stepped outside after a night of dancing, and as we were looking for a lighter, he had his hands full, leading me to reflexively make the decision to ask around for a lighter. In the middle of lighting and chatting with friends, my friend paused to say, "I recognize your femme labor, thank you." Ever since this interaction, I have started to use this term (femme labor) as a means of drawing attention to the work that is otherwise assumed and invisibilized as an extension of patriarchy even within queer spaces.

So what's femme got to do with it? As an anti-capitalist organizer with a queer Marxist theory as a part of my framework, I have been exposed to the ways in which race, class and gender inform our livelihood under capitalist rule and also work to divide our experience with labor. As Johanna Brenner discusses in her book *Women and the Politics of Class*, the household has often been determined by historical moments of production. One example is the ways in which womxn (mostly of European descent) were targeted to join the labor force in the war industry during World War II, while men were away at war. The catch was that not all womxn were asked to join this assembly line. Womxn of color were often not hired or targeted within the campaign and were instead hired as maids while the new workforce attended their jobs. Also, mostly married womxn were hired in order to guarantee that when the men returned, the household would dictate once again the "rightful place" for a womxn: in the home. While this example is from decades ago, the underlying sentiment as what is deemed "womxn's work" is still upheld today as normalized and unrecognized. As Chicana Marxist organizer Adriana Lopez pointed out, "The household family system is connected to wage labor outside of the home, according to Brenner, "Sexual division of labor within the household and in the labor market, serve to reinforce each other. Women's low wages and their segregation in a limited number of occupations effectively consolidate their position in the family, and vice versa." Not that the home cannot be made up a division of labor; but rather to point out the ways in which an unrecognized labor either through social expectation or income sets up an oppressive division of labor interested in "gendering" certain labors to seem naturalized.

It is important to constantly review and engage in conversation over the ways capitalism dictates notions of gender and roles within relationships to examine what sorts of privilege and oppression we all engage in. Hopefully this piece will inspire folks to review the roles they

engage in either within relationships, friendships, or familial structures as a means of decolonizing their thoughts and actions and to no longer pick up the “master’s tools so that we might dismantle the master’s house” (Audre Lorde, 1984).

A WEIGHTY ISSUE

Jamie Waterman

Late Fragment
And did you get what
you wanted from this life, even so?
I did.
And what did you want?
To call myself beloved, to feel
myself
beloved on the earth.
- Raymond Carver

Body image is a difficult topic to approach. On one hand, countless articles have been written about the prevalence of eating disorders among women. On the other hand, many studies and articles lament the extremely high rates of obesity in the West. On yet another hand, the goal to be thin is disparaged as being vain and narcissistic, a product of the male gaze. What we have here are too many hands.

Concerns about body image do not exclusively belong to women; however men only make up 10% of eating disordered individuals who seek treatment according to nationaleatingdisorders.org[i]. This does not mean that men do not suffer from body image concerns, but statistically the majority is comprised of women. Many women hold themselves to the nearly unattainable standard of Hollywood. What we often don’t see is the human behind the image. *The Sunday Times* quoted Demi Moore saying, “What scares me is that I’m going to ultimately find out at the end of my life that I’m not worthy of being loved.”[ii] If the people we aspire to be like are unhappy with their lives and appearance, are we striving to be miserable? We all know that models and mainstream Hollywood actresses are consistently underweight, yet that is touted as the ideal of beauty: “It has been estimated that models and actresses in the nineties

have from 10 to 15 percent body fat and average body fat for the healthy woman is 22 to 26 percent”[iii]. Turn on any television show or movie and anyone can see that little has changed in that respect.

Maybe we should not focus on how fat or thin we might be, but work to maintain a healthy body and healthy body image for our own physical and mental well-being. What we need is an overhaul of how we as individuals and as a society view beauty and health. If happiness and feeling good both physically and mentally become our main goals, the pressure to meet some unhealthy, unattainable goal will lose power over us. Obesity and eating disorders are symptoms of not only the media’s representation of perfection, but also our culture of mass-consumption. Deciding not to abide by society’s rules of beauty will not stop the media onslaught. However, retraining ourselves to treat our bodies well for the sake of being well may start the ball rolling toward a future of positive changes. The next generation may put less pressure on how they are viewed and focus more on how they feel. John Berger’s “men act and women appear”[iv] may become an outdated meme. Changing the way we think about body image is the first step to creating a future where body image is no longer an issue.

[i] Shiltz, Tom. “Males and Eating Disorders: Research.” Nationaleatingdisorders.org. Web.

[ii] Devine, Miranda. “Girls’ body image needs makeover.” *The Sunday Times* 12 Feb. 2012, ProQuest Newsstand, ProQuest. Web. 2 Apr. 2012.

[iii] Cussins, Anne Marie. “The Role of Body Image in Women’s Mental Health.” *Feminist Review* 68 (2001): 105-14. Print.

[iv] Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin, 2008. Print.

Additional Recommended Reading:

Tovee, Martin J., Joanne L. Emery, and Esther M. Cohen-Tovee. “The Estimation of Body Mass Index and Physical Attractiveness Is Dependent on the Observer’s Own Body Mass Index.” *Proceedings: Biological Sciences* 267.1456 (2000): 1987-997. Print.



THE WALK HOME

Jeriel Sydney

After reading Flannery and Natalie's piece, I wanted to create an artistic contribution that reflected and conceptualized the images and feelings the reading provoked. The focus of my piece is the exploitation of immigrant female workers. The piece is done on a piece of a Chinese newspaper taken from the advertising section. I used this part of the paper to reflect the nature of American consumer culture that often engulfs immigrants, the idea of achieving the "American Dream" though the process of purchasing of products. The smoke stacks represent the machine of corporate America and the abuse of marginalized communities in America and throughout the world. The tree is the false representation of a "green industry."

INJUSTICE IN SILICON VALLEY'S HIGH-TECH INDUSTRY

Flannery O'Donoghue-Williams & Natalie A. Sifuentes

Silicon Valley, an area encompassing Santa Clara and part of San Mateo Counties, is considered to be the epicenter of the high-tech industry. A \$300 billion powerhouse, electronics firms and the high-tech industry dominate the global economy. The electronics sector is the largest manufacturing industry not only in the United States, but also the world (Pellow 86). Unfortunately, many people remain unaware of the toxicity involved with electronics manufacturing, which occurs both in the United States and on a global scale. The toxins in Silicon Valley do not impact all residents and electronics workers equally - inequalities that already structure the lives of people in Silicon Valley serve to exacerbate the inequalities in health that arise from exposure to high-tech's toxins. In this paper, we expand upon the research and analyses of the book *Silicon Valley of Dreams* by David Naguib Pellow and Lisa Sun-Hee Park, in hopes of drawing more attention to the issue of toxicity in Silicon Valley's high-tech industry as an example of environmental injustice.

High-tech is frequently touted as "green," but this clean image has been debunked. One series of tests performed by Santa Clara County authorities found that eighty-two percent of electronics companies (including IBM, HP, and Intel) had hazardous chemicals in the soil beneath their plants (Pellow 76). Sites that are perceived by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to be "the most threatening to both surrounding populations and the environment" are placed on the National Priorities List, or the Superfund list (O'Neil 1087). Santa Clara County has twenty-nine Superfund sites, more than any other county in the United States; twenty-four of these sites are the result of pollution by electronics firms (Pellow 76). As of March 2003, the Superfund list was comprised of 1,484 sites - and 6.5 million people were documented as living in census tracts with Superfund sites (O'Neil 1087).

Toxicity is built directly into cutting-edge technology for several reasons. Silicon, a natural conductor of electricity and one of the main materials used in electronics manufacturing, increases its conductivity dramatically when certain chemicals are applied to it (Pellow 77). Up to one thousand different chemicals and metals are used in the various processes required to produce semiconductor chips (Pellow 91). While not all of these chemicals and metals may necessarily be toxic in small amounts, a great number are harmful to humans and

other living things. Breakthroughs in research and development in the petrochemical industry have made more powerful chemicals available in larger quantities (Pellow 77). Additionally, Silicon Valley and the high-tech industry have a longstanding and close relationship with the United States military, the nation's largest producer of toxic waste (Pellow 77). The fast-paced technological innovations that we have come to rely on are the result of toxic processes.

The toxicity involved with electronics production spills over into areas surrounding the plants, having dire effects on Silicon Valley residents. A study in 1997 found that women who lived within a quarter-mile of a Superfund site during the first trimester of pregnancy were four times more likely to give birth to a child with serious birth defects than women living in communities with no Superfund sites (Pellow 94). In December 1981, it was discovered that the drinking water of 16,500 homes in San Jose was contaminated with the carcinogenic chemical trichloroethane (TCA), a solvent used to remove grease from circuit boards and microchips. An estimated 14,000 gallons of TCA and another 44,000 gallons of other various toxic waste materials had been leaking from an underground storage tank for over a year (Pellow 73-4). With great effort, community organizations forced the corporation responsible for the leak to clean up the area, and the plant was eventually closed. The EPA has estimated that one large swath of land in Mountain View (a community with a large population of working-class people, people of color, and immigrants), which has been contaminated by eleven electronics plants, will take \$60 million and 300 years to clean up (Pellow 75). The toxins that are integral to high-tech manufacturing are not confined to the plants themselves.

Workers who are directly involved with the manufacturing process are at a serious risk. Studies performed over the last four decades have shown "alarmingly high" rates of illness among Silicon Valley production workers, three times that of any other basic industry (Pellow 9). These occupational hazards include respiratory disorders, cancer, birth defects, miscarriages, and more. Sara CarPELLI, a cannery worker who later went to work in the 'clean rooms,' where microchips are cleaned with numerous hazardous chemicals, recalls the effects of these chemicals on her health, as well as the health of others (Pellow 113). Sara CarPELLI remembers a co-worker who was married with one child and pregnant with another,

and still working in the 'clean room.' "She became pregnant again and continued to work, but had a stillbirth. I wondered at the time if her work had anything to do with that" (Pellow 115). After retirement, CarPELLI was later diagnosed with cancer. Another woman reported producing orange breast milk during her pregnancy. She stated that she "constantly smelled xylene when she worked" (Pellow 120). Employees who work in these clean rooms, on assembly lines, and in other jobs involving constant exposure to hazardous chemicals often questioned the long term effects to such exposure and the common symptoms which these women were experiencing.

A specific incident, in which twenty-five people were directly exposed to a chemical spill where "everybody got sick" (Pellow 124) led to an assessment at the industrial clinic, in which this incident "was classified as 'mass hysteria'" (Pellow 124). One woman worker stated that upper management would offer excuses for similar incidents and often times described it as 'mass hysteria.' "You haven't smelled nothing, there's nothing wrong with you, you just smelled a little something and went off the deep end" (Pellow 124). The idea that these women were lying about a reported incident and then being deemed 'hysterical' has a long patriarchal history which serves to make men more credible than women. The idea that these women employees were somehow 'hysterical' is a direct attempt to categorize these women as irrational and thus destroy their credibility. This leads to management's perpetuation of control over their employees, while further maintaining gendered stereotypes within a white patriarchal authoritarian high-tech industry.

Electronics manufacturing employees are disadvantaged in other ways as well. Approximately seventy to eighty percent of production workers in Silicon Valley are women, immigrants, and people of color - the majority of whom are Asian or Latino (Pellow 88). "Within and beyond electronics, Asians and Latinos are disproportionately concentrated in low wage and/or high-hazard occupations in Santa Clara County" (Pellow 89). Social hierarchies influence the conscious and selective recruiting done by managers, who often deliberately choose to hire immigrant women of color to perform the most toxic production jobs (Pellow 88-89). In an interview with local sociologist Karen Hossfeld, one employer described his racialized and gendered recruitment practice. "He told me, 'There's just three things I look for in entry-level hiring. Small, foreign and female'" (Pellow 88). The toxic work environment of high-tech manufacturing, then, has had a disproportionate impact on people who have historically suffered from inequality.

In April 1999, a survey was published by the San Jose Mercury News which released the "ethnic composition of the high-tech workforce" (Matthews 162). Although the data released does not offer explicit statistics on populations of immigrant women, it does "suggest the extent to which the high-tech industry is segregated" (Matthews 162). Sixty percent of 'white collar' jobs are filled by white employees, though whites make up only fifty-one percent of the total population in Santa Clara County. Furthermore, Asians and Hispanics make up twenty-two percent and twenty-four percent of the overall population in Santa Clara County, but are disproportionately represented in 'blue collar' jobs which involve working with contract companies. This data shows that Asian-Americans constitute "three-quarters of the workforce" (Matthews 162). This number is significant and needs to be further explored as to why Asian Americans are disproportionately represented in the manufacturing workforce of Silicon Valley.

Women workers in high-tech manufacturing were seen as "mothers" who needed to "protect" their microchips, which managers referred to as "babies" needing women "whose job was to tend to them" (Pellow 121). This kind of essentialist gendered articulation to describe the relationship of a woman and a material object such as a microchip was used to "implicitly ask workers to make sacrifices for the welfare of the product" (Pellow 121). In doing so, women were essentially being asked to sacrifice themselves, their health, and their own families. According to a spokesman for The National Semi-Conductor Corporation, these stereotypes are especially focused on South East Asian women. Stereotypes in and outside of the industry have imagined South East Asian women as a homogenous group who are believed to have exceptional "dexterity and are best suited for this kind of work" (Pellow 89). These women were further described as "the FFM - or 'fast fingered Malaysian'" (Pellow 89). Other racialized and gendered stereotypes are deployed by hiring managers who describe Latinos as being "desperate" and Blacks as "militant" (Pellow 89). These stereotypes have a long historical legacy, and were deployed to "help them hire individual workers and create a workforce that they believe is less likely to demand rights individually or organize collectively" (Pellow 88). Securing protections for workers is very difficult in Silicon Valley, where unions are practically nonexistent in the electronics industry thanks to a long history of union-busting (Pellow 98). Many women workers' experiences are affected by subcontractors, "who employ temporary workers" (Matthews 165). These small subcontracting companies often contract with corporate giants such as Hewlett-Packard

and Cisco Systems (Matthews 165). This subcontracting system perpetuates the need to use immigrant women as temporary workers. The marginalization of immigrant women is further exemplified in wage earnings. Statistics show that "immigrant women make only fifty-seven percent of the weekly wage of immigrant men" (Matthews 176). When putting this in context with temporary workers who are often "young, female, and of color," temporary employees earn, on average, less money (thirty-six percent less) than permanent workers (Pellow 156). This statistic offers evidence of how immigrant women clearly make less than immigrant men, and further exemplifies secondary marginalization, because large corporate giants look for temporary workers who can be paid significantly less. Often times these women know that their job can be cancelled at any time, however they "will remain temps as long as they work for that particular firm" (Pellow 155).

The women working in these jobs, often mothers, must contend with the double burden of working outside and inside of the home. A specific incident shared by a woman who worked in a semi-conductor room states how her life has been altered because of constant exposure to toxic chemicals. Gendered labor in the home for women like Selena Gonzales is forever changed. "I always have problems with my arms when I'm cooking, carrying things," she explains how she can no longer cook and take care of other domestic duties around her home (Pellow 119). The inability to perform these duties clearly can have real material effects on mothers like Selena Gonzalez and might negatively impact their idea of what it means to be a good mother. Leaving these jobs is not always an option. Many women in the industry who face such health problems often stay at these jobs for the sake of their families, for whom they are frequently the sole supporters. "Many women were also economically vulnerable and afraid to speak up about toxics for fear that they would lose their jobs and jeopardize their families' economic stability" (Pellow 121). These women have no choice but to stay at these hazardous plants so that they can support themselves and their families.

The high-tech industry's toxic manufacturing processes and subsequent contamination of workplaces and communities is a case of environmental injustice. Environmental injustice is a broad term that refers to the disproportionate exposure to hazards that any marginalized group must contend with (Pellow ix). One specific type of environmental injustice is environmental racism, which is the "unequal protection against toxic and hazardous waste exposure and the systematic exclusion of people of color from decisions affecting their com-

munities" (Pellow ix). The injustice experienced by Silicon Valley's production workforce - largely immigrant women of color - is not experienced by the white men who fill the majority of managerial and ownership positions. Further, there is a strong correlation between the location of toxic facilities and communities of color in all parts of the United States (Pellow 4, 12). People of color, especially immigrants, are exposed to these hazards both in their workspaces and in their communities. In this way, the toxicity of high-tech becomes racialized. Furthermore, because these jobs pay such low wages, the fact that many "immigrant families have fallen behind in the ability to own a home no doubt owes much to the women's consignment to assembly work, poorly paid jobs" (Matthews 162) - and as we have noted, many of the women who hold these positions are immigrants or from communities of color.

Electronics manufacturing in Silicon Valley's high-tech industry is one clear example of environmental injustice and environmental racism. Electronics corporations must devise alternative production methods or better containment and treatment processes to reduce the toxicity that comes from high-tech. Since corporations are not known for their self-policing, it is our social responsibility to spread awareness of this issue and to pressure the corporations themselves, along with governmental enforcement agencies, to reduce the hazards being posed to workers, communities, and the planet. Additionally, our society must address the inequalities that place workers and communities in such vulnerable positions. High-tech is seen as "the way of the future," and it is obvious that technological innovations are here to stay. By reducing the environmental injustice that high-tech simultaneously creates and reinforces, we can embrace technology with a truly clean conscience.

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MOTHER - PART ONE OF A SERIES OF POEMS

Katie Tims

「終わり無き愛情」 — Never-ending Love

葉の丸さ
古い強さや
母の声

TRANSLITERATION:

HA NO MARUSA
FURUI TSUYOSA YA
HAHA NO KOE

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

THE CURVE OF THE LEAVES
STRENGTH MARKED BY PASSAGE OF TIME;
MUCH LIKE MOTHER'S VOICE

LIVING, BREATHING, CARRYING – SHE IS LIFE

down but not broken	weak but not perished	stained scarred marred torn and cut
but here	here for me	not broken, nor maimed, not torn – in spirit
knowing hands adorned with glitter	hands that still my heavy sobs	heal
my wounds, so small	steady my breathing	your flooded chest
no eruption	no great burst of light nor dark	my eyes drown
alive	she is alive	gentle hands still breathing
	my mother.	

Japanese translation:

ママ 転んじゃて立ち上がって 壊れず 生きている。痛みを噛み締めながら
私・娘の側にいる。プライドを破れず 私の痛みを いやす。
ママ その手 ハデすぎるネイルがあっても その手で 自分の息を優しくさせて
ゴミがあふれる胸でも ママ 優しいよ その手。
もう暗くないよ。それともまぶしくない。激しいことじゃなく、ただ生きている。
私とママ。共に できるだけ 元気な息を感じている。共に 生きている。

ALTERED SPACES

Jenese Jackson

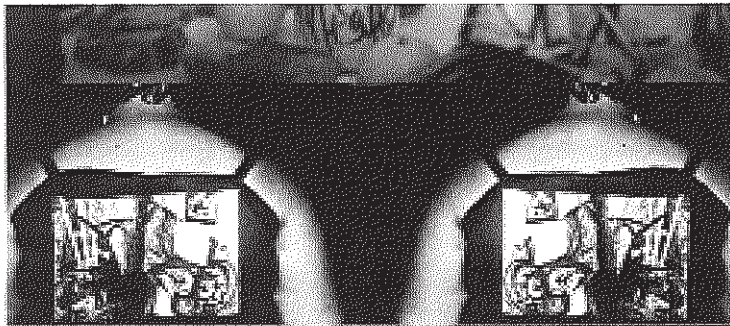
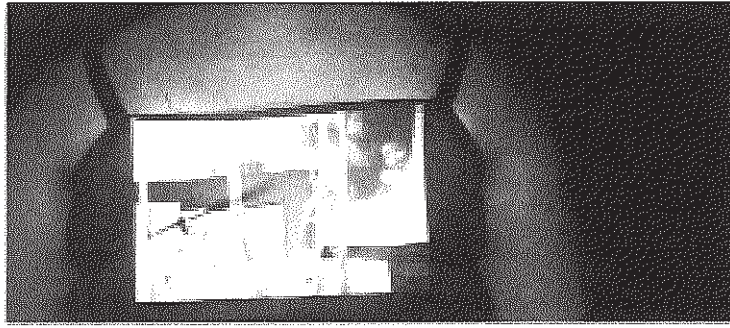
"From Our Wombs,
We Carry on Our
Backs the Stories
Held In Between
Our Thighs"

What imagery does the black female body invoke? In what image is she made available and yet invisible? In what is her rite of passage and creative potential? Constant questions I find myself engaging and conceptualizing. The political, the historical, the (meta) physical black female body.

In this piece, I created an image that speaks to the corporal body of the black female, to her ancestry and lineage. What is that "thing" passed from generation to generation, that power that invokes within black woman, a creative force of insight and embodied knowing. What is that split of constant negotiation between the inner and outer self?

Is it Aje; this energy that dwells in the souls of black women, the same energy of motherhood, creation and birth? Where is that conjured space of creation that resides in us all? How do we locate it? Learn to act from it and make it relevant into our daily lives?

Aje, Diedre Badju defines as "an embodiment of power and an expression of the matrix of potentiality from which that power emanates. Yoruba cultural analyst Ayo Opefeyitimi asserts that Aje endows woman with "Celestial, terrestrial [Sophistication] and unrivaled powers" that surpass "those of men". Henry Drewal and Margaret Drewal define it as women's possession of "secret of life itself". An always already "force that has always existed and is ever prepared for action-a biological, physical



and spiritual force of creativity and social and political enforcement," (Washington 13).

I found that space within the visual of the (art)ifact of living, the altered spaces of one's own existence.

Altered spaces of the seen and unseen, the reclaiming of the body and all its manifestations. Altered spaces, in which black woman contentiously carve out for themselves to navigate the subjectivity of their bodies, their labor and their creative spirits. These spaces we define and locate in secrecy and in public, a constant navigation of ones ID within the entity. The middle passage, of our in between, our survival within borders of lands never claimed.

Never promised, and remain but a dream, yet continue to birth our legacies. These altered spaces passed and inherited generationally, proudly strapped on our backs, seated in our hips and held between our thighs.

Aje is more than literal birth; it is the figurative, the creative and the exponential.

These altered spaces we hold as black woman in love making, in healing and in labor. The work we do and don't do, the space we create for re-generation. In those altered spaces of darkness and light we are in the process of becoming.

Washington, Teresa N. *Our Mothers, Our Powers, Our Text: Manifestations of Aje in Africana Literature*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005.

TEARS OF INVISIBILITY

Pepper Watts

*Eugenics was turned into one big clinic
that housed misery, pain, and strife
where privilege could hold the knife
forced sterilization that swept the nation all for limiting procreation
no way was this supposed to happen
someone scream and tell the captain
the ship is sinking*

*the tiers of invisibility have bled the hearts of many
pressed to hide what is inside in order to survive
social deviant mothers and sisters bear the sores that fester
women give birth to this nation
its time for a new creation*

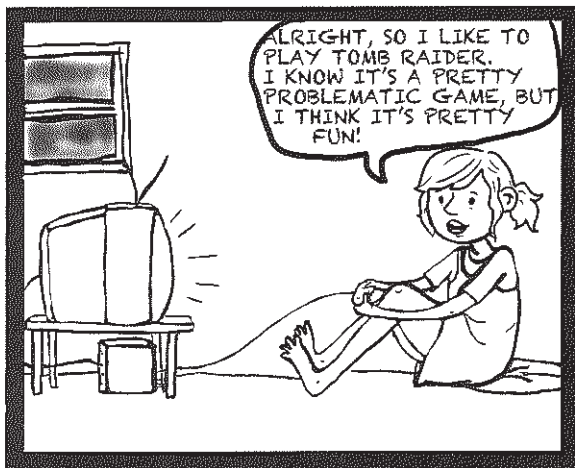
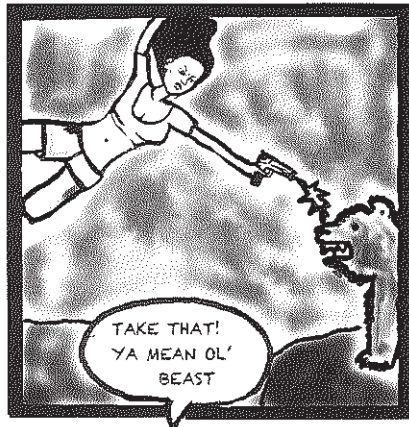
*we build and learn to only be concerned with our own Commonwealth
while shamed and ostracized we've been removed and no one had disapproved
i feel the life being drained and as i cry it begins to rain
but theres no drain for the
water to flow
just like people who have disabilities no where to go
life only has one fast-lane this is for the privileged
rise and shine world it's time for me to be heard
forget me not as i remove the pain of the slain
the waves rise and fall just like the sun*

*my back is against the wall why is it always hard to stand tall
as i kick and gasp for air i notice that no one really cares
watch out beware
the Diaspora creeps in and takes a seat at the bottom of my feet*

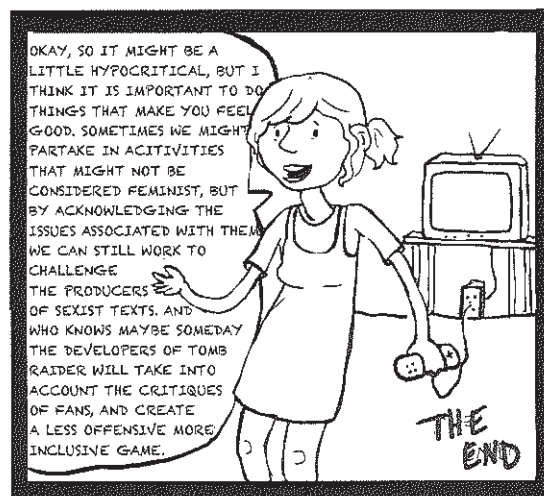
*social learning institutions need to stop with the illusions
remove the labels of the past
destroy the walls that caused social caste
education should always be heard no need for derogatory words
up lifting people of tomorrow and today rise above the ashes of yesterday*

*history has such misery for women of color like me
stereotypes that have come forth throughout the years
it's hard to listening to them without tears
its time to climb out of the trenches and march towards the light
hear my thunderous foot steps while my head is held up high
no longer shall i cry for those that have placed me in an hour glass
i stand now at you're level proudly
free at last, free at last*

Feminist Dilemmas



FEMINIST DILEMMAS
Courtney Dawson



BRIDGING THE GAP

Misty Johnson

"From the 19th century it [the term "ivory tower"] has been used to designate a world or atmosphere where intellectuals engage in pursuits that are disconnected from the practical concerns of everyday life. As such, it usually carries pejorative connotations of a wilful disconnect from the everyday world; esoteric, over-specialized, or even useless research; and academic elitism, if not outright condescension.

In American English usage it is a shorthand for academia or the university, particularly departments of the humanities."

--Definition of "ivory tower" from Wikipedia

"Within the educational institutions where we learn to develop and strengthen our writing and analytical skills, we also learn to think, write, and talk in a manner that shifts attention from personal experience. Yet if we are to reach our people and all people, if we are to remain connected (especially those of us whose familial backgrounds are poor and working-class), we must understand that the telling of one's personal story provides a meaningful example, a way for folks to identify and connect."

--bell hooks, "Keeping Close to Home:
Class and Education"

Throughout my years in academia, I've experienced many moments of frustration with the phenomena often referred to as "the gap" between academia and the "real world" -- the gap between theory and practice. As a first generation college student, from a poor background, there has always been this tension between academic culture and academic "speak," verses the language spoken by my family and my communities that exist outside of the ivory tower. For example, I've often found myself wanting to translate much of the feminist theories of empowerment and class awareness to my mother, who never had the opportunity to attend a university. Yet, even in a cooperative, independent, feminist bookstore, I'll scour the shelves for an empowering book that contains language accessible to a woman who has lived her life in poverty, without even a high school education -- books that will resonate with my mother, without her having to learn an academic language in order to access the knowledge. These books are far and few between. Another instance of this seeming divide between college and the "real world," has presented itself many times in casual conversation among friends, lovers and family,

sometimes in regard to popular culture that offends my feminist senses. Upon pointing out both overt, and/or subtle manifestations of sexism and misogyny that often permeate cinema, advertising, and music, a common response will be, "*Does everything have to be an academic conversation?*" or, "Can I just enjoy this movie?" I remember a close family member telling me that my personal response, as an adult reflecting on the physical abuse I'd witnessed my mother face growing up, sounded as if it "came straight out of a textbook." The range between accusing a feminist of "taking things too seriously" (for noticing!) and the dismissal of my feelings in regard to my father's abuse (namely when I dared to name the abuse), are symptomatic of the perceived divide between formal education and the "real world," both by those of us that exist within the institution, as well as by those outside of academia.

It is easier to write off the dismissals I've met from family members and friends who make sweeping generalizations about the college experience, given that the judgments are based on assumptions and/or insecurities and don't truly reflect my experiences within women and gender studies. The cognitive dissonance among those of us who are having the college experience and who are grappling with the invisible bubble surrounding us, that somehow creates a thin barrier between ourselves and others, perhaps even those who inspired us to become women and gender studies majors in the first place -- this is not as easy to write off.

This sometimes perceived/sometimes real separation that many of us experience having our feet planted in seemingly different worlds, can sometimes feel isolating. I've known that I am not wrong to notice blatant sexism inherent in my culture. I've known that there is empowerment to gain by naming negative experiences with violence to women. Yet, in many instances, I am being told to shut my smart mouth because, either it is a topic that is no fun (too serious) for others to hear or think about or because it is too truthful and perhaps some of my family members aren't ready to face some truths that are painful to acknowledge. This would be an easy predicament to get out of if the people in question were just some sexist schmucks that I can walk away from -- but when these reactions are coming from our own family, friends and community members, it's not so simple.

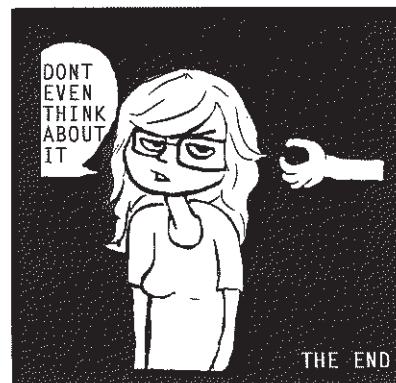
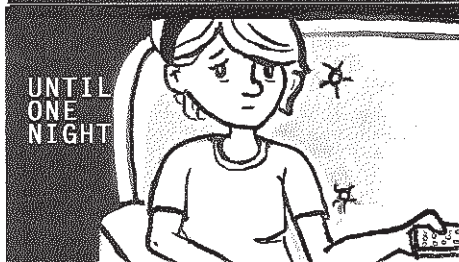
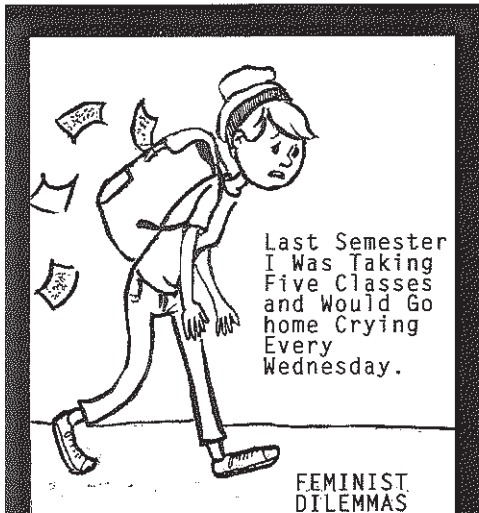
From my standpoint, it is crucial and imperative to view the world through a lens that employs strong feminist critical analysis and the knowledge, theory, teaching and curriculum within women and gender studies has excellently created and enhanced these skills for us -- it can sometimes feel overwhelming, as if we exist in two separate worlds. In one world, we are encouraged to critique, to analyze, and to actively engage in theory and problematizing. In the "real world," we might often find ourselves being strongly discouraged from these intellectual activities and are sometimes even punished for them, vis a vis social sanctions. It can be tough to find balance while charting these often treacherous waters! I was lucky enough to find some balance that has probably saved my sanity, at times, by dissolving those occasional feelings of alienation out there in the "real world." After moving to San Francisco, I found a community that, while existing outside of academia, has served as my bridge between the classroom and the "real world." Paralleling my undergraduate work, for the last four years, I've been volunteering as a rape crisis counselor with San Francisco Women Against Rape (SFWAR). SFWAR is a women of color led, anti-oppression, social justice organization -- as well as the Bay area's primary provider of rape crisis services and prevention for more than 30 years. When I went through the SFWAR training in 2008, I immediately felt that I had found the feminist community I've always longed for. Not because I'd never been part of a feminist community, but rather, it is because SFWAR embodies the feminist praxis, and meets its community members where they're at, in the most authentic and effective ways that I've experienced throughout my fifteen years of involvement within women's movements. It was the first space I'd existed in that allowed us to honestly and openly examine where the intersections of our oppressions meet -- as well as our differences.

Being part of the SFWAR community has provided me with opportunities to take direct action, relieving my angst with the sometimes isolating and removed work of academia. Not only have I learned valuable counseling and facilitation skills, I've been able to work as an ally with some of the amazing and diverse communities that thrive in San Francisco, including the sex work community, queer communities and kink communities -- to build alliances around positive sexuality and consent. Within the WGS department, we often discuss theories that acknowledge the intersections of oppression, like race, class and sex, to name a few. We've critiqued service providers, including rape crisis centers, some of

which have historically been inaccessible to many, due to language barriers, cultural inadequacy, or discrimination around race, class, or immigration status. SFWAR works to break down these barriers, both through outreach of services to prioritized communities, (communities that are the most vulnerable to sexual violence and who also face the most barriers when attempting to access services), as well as encouraging leadership from members of prioritized communities. It has been invaluable to my education to learn about the shortfalls of service providers, while simultaneously learning from SFWAR how to create more effective and comprehensive models of community based rape crisis services.

It has been an amazing growth experience for me to learn about theories of intersectionality, inside the classroom, while actively practicing these theories with SFWAR, and truly learning how to apply anti-oppression work in very specific ways, such as providing support for survivors of sexual violence as well as joining in preventive work in our communities -- work that involves addressing all forms of oppression that contribute to violence. I've seen some truly transformative work happening on individual levels, as well as with entire communities. These experiences have deepened my understanding of feminist and queer theory, and gave me a sense of purpose that extends beyond academic deadlines and final exams.

I've come to understand how this type of activist community can be an essential link between academia, feminist theory and the so-called "real world." We are lucky here in the Bay area, surrounded by anti-oppression, harm-reduction, social justice modeled organizations that embody similar philosophies as those understood by SFWAR. I would strongly encourage any humanities major to become involved with an organization like SFWAR, that employs a feminist praxis, to help stay grounded in all of the worlds that we simultaneously inhabit.



FEMINIST DILEMMAS
Courtney Dawson

ON THE PATH TO MIDWIFERY

Molly Raynor

I have always had a fascination with Midwives. Even as a young girl, I wanted to know more about these mysterious wise womxn. By the time I started college my fantasy of becoming a wise womxn helping womxn give birth had been pushed into the very back of my realistic young adult mind. I still felt a strong desire to work with pregnant and laboring women and that desire manifested into a decision to study nursing with a specialize in labor and delivery. I embarked on that path but knew immediately that it was not the right fit for me. I changed majors several times before committing to Women and Gender Studies. I felt of all the majors, Women and Gender studies provided me with the most space to research and critically engage with the ways our society views and treats the birth experience.

Birth is one of the only natural processes to occur regularly in the hospital. It is treated as a medical procedure requiring advanced technology and the specific medical knowledge of an obstetrician. Over the past century this medical knowledge has eclipsed the innate knowledge womxn have of how to give birth. Midwifery, on the other hand, values womxn's knowledge and midwives and other traditional birth attendants take a much more passive role providing support and wisdom as needed, but also trusting in womxn and the natural process. Midwives also acknowledge that every womxn and every birth experience is unique, and so, must be attended to individually and appropriately.

With the medicalization of childbirth came the standardization of maternity care and the hospital birth experience. There is no denying that, especially in this country, hospitals are driven by profit. Health care is not just a necessary service being provided it is an industry. This fact becomes apparent when we look at the ever-increasing use of costly obstetric technologies in hospitals. Most of these technologies were initially developed as preventative measures to reduce complications for high-risk laboring womxn. Electronic Fetal Monitoring (EFM) is an ultrasound device used to monitor and record the baby's heart rate during labor and birth either continuously or intermittently. Though its use has become standard procedure in many hospitals, countless studies have shown that continuous use of EFM does not improve fetal outcomes. Use of EFM does, however, increase the risk of cesarean for mothers. The World Health Organization warns that EFM is often used inappropriately and encourages intermittent manual monitoring. Why then, do hospitals continue to encourage the use of EFM even for low-risk births? Unfortunately, the reason is that these interventions are very expensive. And this example is only one of many perplexing realities of the way our hospitals view and treat childbirth. Many hospitals are definitely making strides to incorporate more natural options into their maternity programs, but the hospital industry remains greatly influenced by the capitalist patriarchal society we live in.

As I learned more and more about hospitals and the "childbirth industry" I felt the old ways of midwifery calling me stronger and stronger. Also, as a member of the growing group of people without health insurance, I became determined to specifically involve myself with the alternative/subversive natural birth movement in order to make it more accessible to everyone. As a Women and Gender Studies major, I feel I have the both the freedom and the analytical tools to critique the current state of maternity care in the United States using an intersectional approach. I am also inspired by my Women and Gender Studies professors and peers to believe that I can help to achieve the future of childbirth I imagine.

Mires, Gary, Fiona Williams, and Peter Howie. "Randomised Controlled Trial Of Cardiotocography Versus Doppler Auscultation Of Fetal Heart At Admission In Labour In Low Risk Obstetric Population." *British Medical Journal*. 322.7300 (2001): 1457-1460.

MOTHER - PART TWO OF A SERIES OF POEMS

Katie Tims

BIRTH

my blood my blood dictates that I will suffer that I will lose
that I must fight to bring another to this earth that the world denies me
the world is not ready the world resists my mother the world resists the women
I bleed for, who bleed for me, one who bled me so they bleed and bleed
and bleed life spilling from them the ironic, iron-rich life
that escapes them they set it free it lives with urgency now with grace
with robustness seeping, filling my sister my blood
her blood her blood my blood our blood it fights it lives it flows
and fills my veins the veins of that child like I was
like she from our mother our mother she bled and bled
I'm supposed to be blood nothing but I'm supposed to be dust
to be trash to be blood I am more I am flesh
 thank you mother for bleeding and screaming
and setting me free I am free and I bleed
because mama bled to see me though I may not suffer
though I may not set free another into this life I must sweat, regardless
I must bleed and breathe I must live take back the being
that mama set free I must smile and scream I must be.

THE POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL

Sara White

Shed it off,
my skin,
thin and once broken.

Touched and bitten by that past,
where trauma was the marker.
That good self, lost.

It was a trap.
A maze.
Find the cheese.
Find the cheese.
Find the cheese.
Find the escape.

Once, I couldn't move.
So I watched myself starve,
dehydrate,
suffocate,
shit where I stood.
That fight was gone.

Where did I go?
Where did I go?
Always pretending I could find myself.
I reached and reached,
but as I grasped my fingertips,
I slipped.
Always, I slipped.

Hate. Hate. So much.
Distance,
but desire for him.
Always desire.

He threw rocks at me and let me
flounder.
I thought I loved,
he loved,
but we didn't.

CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Fabian R. Arizaga is a very nosy, hyper individual who is fascinated by small creatures, and clothes. He is addicted to black and white movies, ice-cream and especially cheesecake. He is a fan of great conversations, sincerity and especially friendships. He is a terrible perfectionist, compulsive shopper, who is obsessed with naps. He is always distracted but is a man of mystery and power, whose power is exceeded only by his mystery. His main goal though is to help this community achieve a better standing in life, and hopes that one day he will become a great professor who will make a small difference in each of his student's lives.

Milo Ashcraft is a self-identified twinkerbelle whose current areas of interest include the intersectionality of queer theory and the social construction of mental health, as well as the complexities of self-representation through photography. Their other hobbies include gender bending, community building and empowerment through art and music, reading young adult fiction and learning new methods of self-care.

Maliyah Coye was raised in the Bay Area and feels that her community, family, and friends have deeply influenced her decision to choose Women and Gender Studies as her major. As a woman of color, WGS has helped her root her own experience in theory. She has used performance art and writing as a way to engage audiences in conversations about race, gender, and sexual violence. Maliyah plans to continue to combine both her passions, feminism and performance, to create art that will inspire social and personal transformation.

Courtney Jane Dawson is both of average height and arm span. she likes cake and pretzels, but not salt. she enjoys deconstructing nerd culture. she draws upon both the mundane and magical for her creative endeavors. she is studying both women gender studies and biology. she is interested in pursuing a career in women's health care, and plans on applying to nursing school after graduation. yet, she secretly dreams of drawing comix for the rest of her life. she sometimes misuses punctuation and grammar, though she knows the difference between your and you're.

Shabnam Farhoomand. I have a zest for challenge and love pushing my thinking to its limits. My interests inside academia are: create writing, gender and sexuality studies and teaching composition. I also love practicing Bikram Yoga and also enjoy hiking, exploring the city, trying new things, expressing myself through any creative medium and spending time with friends and family. My education in WGS, submission for *(Un)phased*, and my experiences outside of the classroom have deepened my commitment to activism and self-expression as a tool to better understand one's self and the world around us. "I have come to believe over and over again that what is most important to me must be spoken, made verbal and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised or misunderstood." – Audre Lorde

Elise Favalora-Ukestad. Comes from a line of strong Sicilian womxn. Would not be here today without the strength, courage, and insight, and love of her mother. Wants to be able to connect and talk with all walks of life. Is a queer cultural eco-feminist. Respects the life of other species besides humans. Is lucky enough to have been politicized by living revolutionary Crunch Hurston as well as Ida B. Wells, Winona La Duke, and Frida Kahlo. Is in awe of people such as the womxn in India who killed her rapist by decapitating him with a sickle as he attacked her working in a field as well as India's Maoist rebels living in the jungles of India fighting against global capitalism. Is always evolving. Appreciates womxn with a strong sense of sexuality who aren't afraid to express desire and pleasure.

Mayo Inoue is an aspiring freelance graphic designer with the hopes of being able to combine digital art with social justice and reform. She is a sucker for old Polaroid cameras and vintage typewriters, boasting a collection that edges on the side of hoarding.

Jenese Jackson is a spiritual earth child, creative and stubborn. A seeker of truth and social justice. Her interests are in sexuality, race and culture production as it relates to health and community healing. Jenese, a soft spoken poet but a hard-driven student of life, she used to dream about being a star, but has decided she would much rather be the moon.

Misty Johnson grew up witnessing some gnarly manifestations of sexism, racism and homophobia in her small hometown in Oklahoma. My experiences with violence to women and racism have instilled in me a strong drive to transform negative experiences from my childhood into positive action, so that fewer children in this world grow up watching their mothers face the interpersonal, institutional and state violence that my mother has been met with her entire life. Never did I imagine I'd find myself living, growing and thriving in this beautiful, diverse city where so many fierce folks are dismantling oppression with joy, commitment, flair and sexiness! I feel overwhelmingly lucky and privileged to be graduating from the Women and Gender Studies Department at San Francisco State.

Kristie Miller is a Women and Gender Studies/International Relations double major whose academic work has focused on providing a critical feminist analysis of global anti-trafficking policies and practices. By highlighting the connections between human trafficking and global structural inequalities, Kristie hopes to make a positive contribution to global anti-trafficking efforts.

Flannery O'Donoghue-Williams is a Women and Gender Studies major whose academic interests include the feminization of poverty, critical globalization studies, and political philosophy. When not studying, she spends her time fighting for a spot on the couch against a cat of epic proportions. Flannery loves bowling and has never met a potato she didn't like.

Denia Perez is a Mexican DREAMer with aspirations of becoming a lawyer. When she's not commuting, working as a nanny, or volunteering with E4FC's legal case analysis team, she is most likely working out, sleeping, hanging out with her family and friends, or dancing to Rihanna's "We Found Love." Her good sense of humor and unwavering faith in a progressive, open-minded, forgiving, and compassionate God has kept her sane and optimistic throughout her life. She hopes to always maintain a smile and sense of optimism despite whatever obstacle or challenge presents itself in her path.

Jeriel Sydney. "I have no special talents, I am only passionately curious" - Albert Einstein

Molly Raynor is a Scorpio (Leo rising, Scorpio moon) from Oakland who hopes to become a birth doula and eventually a midwife. She is passionate about being conscious, loving, and creative. She enjoys music, dancing, singing, crafting, and swimming in natural bodies of water (preferably naked). Though she loves living in the city she would not be able to stand it if it weren't for the nearby magic of the Oakland hills.

Natalie Sifuentes. Growing up Mexican and French has made me a composition of two worlds, cultures, ideologies and thus a product of something new; a blended identity, similar to when you mix together two colors of paint and make something new and different. Coming from a family where I am first generation American and first to receive a Bachelor's degree, my story is unique and yet representative of many others. However what makes mine different is that it is my own. What I have learned is that the journey is what creates the individual. A journey which continues to take me on paths which I am still wondering upon, but am never lost. As I continue upon the winding road I take all of my experiences with me of identity, the love and wisdom which my mother has given me, the importance of commitment and continuous desire to want to help others in whatever way possible. I want to do this for others in my community, my family, and most importantly for a world who needs change as much as it needs love.

Stacey Jean Speer is passionate about feminism, kindness, music, books, and making a positive difference in the lives of others, no matter how small. Besides perusing the Internet to stay up to date on feminist issues, she enjoys reading, tea, yoga, tattoos, hiking, dancing, vegan food, photography, exploring San Francisco, and spending time with her amazing friends on top of a mortuary. She believes in bringing empowerment to people of all gender identities, no matter where they fall in the intersections of our countless socially constructed identity categories. She strives to always live by the mantra that is permanently inked into her skin: "If not now, when?"

Katie Tims is a neurotic, private, but caring person. She loves creative writing, Japanese pop culture, cute animals, video games and the smell of books. She enjoys making meticulous schedules and puts this interest to work as Secretary for the Queer Alliance on campus. Sometimes she will feel like analyzing everything with the knowledge and perspectives she has studied in the department. Katie lives in her head most of the time and enjoys anything with a mystery. WGS has been most valuable to her inner sense of justice. Having always loved theories, the queer theory and gender diversity areas are her main focus. WGS has been vital to her mission of finding value in all humanity and finding out how to help others feel the same.

Jamie Waterman is a self-proclaimed nerd, musician, actress, and feminist-activist. She stumbled upon Women and Gender Studies while intending to pursue a degree in the field of Human Sexuality. Through theatre she learned to project her voice and her passion. Through music she learned to share her love. Through fantasy novels she learned that the purest heart wins (though having a sharp sword and a wizard for a friend can make a huge difference). Through Women and Gender studies she found her purpose in life.

Pepper Watts. Hot mama, has finally begun to spread her wings just a little bit. The women and gender studies program has allowed Pepper to embrace topics that are not easy but are important to change society. Bold like the red that keeps compassion in her. Purple that brings enjoyment to her life. Yellow that shines brighter than the sun. Green like a rare emerald. Pepper hopes to build her own nonprofit organization to assist single parents.

Sara White is a lowly undergraduate at San Francisco State University, studying journalism and women and gender studies. She hails from Southern California, is an avid baker, has an obsession with all things feline, and is a huge nut job when it comes to The Golden Girls.

