

Spring 2007

WGS 301: Queer Studies Lecture Series

Tuesday, 12-12:50, 1002 Stevenson

February 6	Steven Cozza: "Become the Change You Want to See in the World" When he was 12 years old, Steven Cozza took a stand against the discrimination of gay youth and adults in the Boy Scouts of America. He and his father, Scott Cozza, founded an organization "Scouting for All." Scouting for All is now an educational and advocacy organization, reaching out to GLBT youth in its attempt to get the BSA to stop its bigoted policies. Steven Cozza will discuss his continued activism in Scouting for All. <i>Steven Cozza is a youth activist and a founder of Scouting for All</i>
February 13	Susan Stryker "Christine and the Cutting Room: Transsexual Celebrity Christine Jorgensen's Cinematic Sense of Self" In 1952, news of American ex-GI Christine Jorgensen's sex-change surgery in Denmark made headlines around the world. Jorgensen spent the next twenty years in the limelight as the first international transsexual celebrity. Her relationship with the camera was complex, however, because Jorgensen had dreamed of becoming a filmmaker and had worked in an editorial "cutting room." Her cinematic sensibility, as much as her surgeon's scalpel, shaped the image that she presented to the world. Drawing on rare archival clips of Jorgensen's own film work, home movies, and commercial media appearances, this lecture recounts how Jorgensen moved from one sort of "cutting room" to another. <i>Susan Stryker, Ph.D., is an Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker and independent scholar</i>
February 20	Daisy Hernández: "Queer and Colored" <i>ColorLines</i> , the national newsmagazine on race and politics, regularly features stories on issues from queer communities of color. This presentation looks at the reporting, writing and editing behind the stories. Learn about reporting on a story or two queer teens of color who were brutally murdered and the activism that's grown in New York City as queer people of color fight to keep public space. <i>Daisy Hernández is an editor at ColorLines Magazine and the author of Colonize This!</i>
February 27	Frederick Hertz: "California's Domestic Partnership Law, Or, Are We Ready for Same-Sex Marriage?" The political fight for same-sex marriage often obscures the important legal issues that face lesbian and gay couples trying to organize their lives amidst extraordinary social and legal changes. This lecture will summarize the background of marital "status" law, as compared to the "contract" law previously controlling the lives of unmarried couples. From this background the lecture will explain the emergence of marriage-like systems for gay couples, especially California's domestic partnership law. In addition to reviewing the legal implications of the new statutes, the lecture will also explore the social consequences of grafting a heterosexual marriage model on to LGBT families. <i>Frederick Hertz is an attorney and the author of Legal Affairs: Essential Advice for Same-Sex Couples</i>
March 6	Jewelle Gomez: "Vampires, Feminism and Our Future" Fantasy fiction has long been relegated to literature lite, just as television is dismissed as popular culture. But how does culture shape our politics? What do we say with mass entertainment about the LGBT community and social justice? In the creation of any cultural piece, whether a vampire novel or the sculpture of Venus de Milo, the creator is informed by the sociopolitical context – poverty, conservatism, privilege, war, Puritanism, capitalism, or tradition. Most of us have knowledge of these contexts and the inequities that threaten the fabric of society; but we rarely see ourselves as activists for social change in our everyday lives. But we can be and still have fun. <i>Jewelle Gomez is an activists, award-winning novelist, and the author of The Gilda Stories</i>
March 13	Michelle Tea: "Queer Memoir and Autobiography" Michelle Tea is the co-founder of the Sister Spit spoken word tour, Her books, mostly memoirs, are known for their views into the riot grrrl and queercore communities. She has toured with the Sex Worker's Art Show and is a contributor to <i>The Believer</i> magazine. She is also the co-writer for the weekly astrology column, Double Team Psychic Dream, in San Francisco's Bay Guardian newspaper. In this presentation, Michelle Tea will read from one of her memoirs and speak about the relationship between queer memoir and autobiography. <i>Michelle Tea is a writer, poet, performer, and the award-winning author of Valencia.</i>
March 27	Johnny Symons: "Daddy & Papa: Gay Fathers and the Changing Landscape of the American Family" Since its release five years ago, the Emmy-nominated film <i>Daddy & Papa</i> has given millions of viewers a glimpse of something most have never seen: the inner working of families headed by gay men. Director/Producer Johnny Symons will discuss the making and distribution of the film, the ways in which gay families navigate through schools, neighborhoods, and extended families, and his own experience as a gay parent. <i>Johnny Symons is the director and producer of Daddy & Papa</i>
April 3	Marcia Gallo: "Lifting the Mask: The Daughters of Bilitis, "the Ladder," and the Conscious Normalization of Lesbian Images in 1950s and 1960s America" The notion of invisibility, of "wearing the mask," was much more prevalent than "being in the closet" for the lesbians who first organized Daughters of Bilitis (DOB) meetings in U.S. cities in the 1950s and 1960s. They knew that the popular image of "the Lesbian" was distorted and unreal, and they set about to reshape it by using whatever cultural forms they could find or create. This talk will focus on the ways the leaders of the DOB consciously reconstructed media images of lesbians in order to normalize them. "Lifting the mask" was a vital part of their strategy for securing lesbian rights. <i>Marcia Gallo is the author of Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement.</i>
April 17	Cedric Brown: "The Hard Evidence of Existence: Creating Black Gay Arts in Down Low Times" This presentation will discuss the challenges of creating work that reflects the experiences of Black gay men during an era when a public identity as a gay man of color is too often shunned. Cedric Brown will present a brief retrospective of his influences and the rich artistic history of Black gay art and performance born in the Bay Area. He will also talk about his creative process and future projects, and how Black gay men's stories epitomize the deeply-examined human condition. <i>Cedric Brown is a performer, writer, and the founder of B/GLAM..</i>
April 24	"In My Shoes: Stories of Youth with LGBT Parents" Join a panel of young adults who have LGBT parents for a screening and discussion of "In My Shoes: Stories of Youth with LGBT Parents." This 30-minute film was produced by COLAGE Youth Leadership and Action Program during a 10-month activism training program in San Francisco, CA. The film debuted at the 2005 Frameline Film Festival, where it earned the Audience Award for Best Short. The film depicts five young people who give you a chance to walk in their shoes – to hear their own views on marriage, making change, and what it means to be a family. <i>COLAGE is a support and advocacy program for children of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender parents.</i>
May 1	Dean Spade: "Consolidating the Gendered Citizen: Trans Survival, Bureaucratic Power, and the War on Terror" This presentation discusses the impact of the War on Terror on transgender rights, the bureaucratization of trans identities, and models of non-profit governance in social movements. It invites questions about whether and where the state should use gender as a category of identity, and what consequences might result from a reduced reliance on gender in state programs and processes. It will include a discussion of how these issues are increasingly emerging under War on Terror policies and practices of the administrative state that seek to rigidify national identity surveillance. <i>Dean Spade is a UCLA Law Teaching Fellow and the founder of the Sylvia Rivera Law Project.</i>
May 8	Daniel Winunwe Rivers: "From Parents in Hiding to the Lesbian Baby Boom: A History of Lesbian Motherhood 1945-1980" This lecture will cover the changing social, political, and legal realities of lesbian motherhood from the Second World War to the beginning of the 1980s. Topics covered will include: the experiences of lesbians raising children in butch/fem working-class communities in the 1950s, custody cases fought by lesbian mothers in the 1970s, the emergence of a lesbian mother activist movement in reaction to the homophobia faced by a generation of lesbian mothers fighting for their right to be parents, and changes in lesbian parenthood in the 1980s, brought about by increased availability of insemination technologies and changes in custody and adoption law. <i>Daniel Winunwe Rivers is a Ph.D. candidate and Feminist Studies Instructor at Stanford University.</i>
