DIGEST ISSUE 26: SPECIAL THEMED ISSUE: OH MY GOD! OH YOUR GOD!

WELCOME to the continually revamped digital Digest magazine. Utilize our INTERACTIVE design by clicking on subjects to jump!

the WSGS Mission:

Founded in 1979, Loyola’s Women’s Studies Program is the first women’s studies program at a Jesuit institution and has served as a model for women’s studies programs at other Jesuit and Catholic universities. Our mission is to introduce students to feminist scholarship across the disciplines and the professional schools; to provide innovative, challenging, and thoughtful approaches to learning; and to promote social justice.

the DIGEST Mission:

Since 2007, the WSGS weekly digest has grown from a listing of upcoming events, grant opportunities, and other announcements to an interactive digital publication in the style of a feminist zine. The Digest’s mission is to connect the WSGS program with communities of students, faculty, and staff at Loyola and beyond, continuing and extending the program’s mission. We provide space and support for a variety of voices while bridging communities of scholars, artists, and activists. Our editorial mission is to provoke thought and debate in an open forum characterized by respect and civility.

Click here to Contribute (guidelines)!

We encourage Loyola students and staff, and ALL readers, to share with us, small or large, simple or complex.
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This week we are happy and fortunate to share artwork made for the Digest:
These two pieces were done by Halle, an undergraduate at Loyola. Using plain paper and pencil, she sketched the above images to coincide with our this special themed issue on religion. The images represent a so-called “mis-matching” of race and gender boundaries. How liberating are dominant religions when race, gender, and class hierarchies go unquestioned and reinforced?

Artist background:
Halle Petrone is an artist and writer of many pseudonyms. She is graduating from Loyola this May with a degree in Philosophy. She thinks this degree will enable her to be a really great bartender. In art, like in life, she appreciates the rough edge and playfulness that result from an untrained curiosity.

Click here to CONTRIBUTE (guidelines!) We encourage ALL readers to share with us, small or large, simple or complex.
The early Black churches seemed to impose a standard of propriety and fidelity in relation to sexual matters; yet those standards reflected a definite gender bias. The literature of the enslaved says very little about the expectations of the male’s sexual behavior once he joined the church.

Although the Black community is influenced by the same Victorian and Puritanical morality that has made sexuality -- especially as it has been so singularly equated with genitalia -- a very difficult topic of discussion for most Americans, the reticence that surrounds sexual discourse in the Black community goes beyond the awkwardness that surrounds such discussions in the wider American society.

In a society where Black people are bombarded by White cultural messages that decry Black sexuality and disparage blackness, it is not enough for Black church and community leaders to instruct our children to simply say no to sex, drugs, or other destructive behavior. The Black church and community must engage in a sexual discourse of resistance that empowers Black women and men to celebrate and to love their Black embodied selves.

The manner in which Black women are treated in many Black churches reflects the Western Christian tradition’s notion of women as evil and its notions of Black women as Jezebels and seducers of men. For instance, there are still Black churches that require women to cover their legs with a blanket when sitting in a pew so they will not distract men.

In many Black churches unwed mothers are publicly chastised and made to repent in front of the whole congregation while the fathers are often ignored.

The human body and the entirety of the human being are viewed as part of the sacred, as part of the divine, including the human being as a sexual and relational being. This is why many African cultures did not view sexual intercourse as bad or evil, but celebrated this sacred part of life.

In the final analysis, human sexuality makes human relationships possible -- including the relationship to the divine. The quality of a person’s relationship to God, therefore, hinges in many ways on her or his awareness and appreciation of her or his own sexuality.
“Survival of the (Fittest) Religion”

Is religion human-made or pre-human? This is a conversation I will NOT be having for this special themed issue of the Digest. I would, however, like to tell a short story and share some of my thoughts on how various religions have “survived.”

More than once, a simple college course title has reeled me in with its lack of detail paired with its immense possibilities. “Sociology of Religion” was one of the most illuminating classes I have been fortunate to take, and trust: I have taken A LOT of college courses. This one will forever stand out in my life. At that time, before starting college in the summer after high school, I was struggling with not really having much personal practice or experience with religion. I assumed this class could help me learn about the Bible, for instance, without having to attend Church.

It was that very first day he brought up a concept that I find fascinating and scary at the same time: ‘religions must adapt, just like an organism, to changing times; either the religion is applicable and appealing to enough people to stay and maybe even grow, or it loses its following and perishes like an extinct species.’

Wow I was wrong. There he was that first day of class- a bald, effiminate, giant white man conducting this course. He was like an aging gay hippie plucked from the 70’s, especially with his yoga-like posture and sitting positions. He was one of the last people I would have imagined being capable of teaching me about Christianity- as at that time I could not imagine most Church’s even letting him in the doors.

Those first words coming out of his mouth shocked me: “Class, we are not here to discuss Christianity, or Islam, or Judaism, or Buddhism, or any major religion; no, we will ONLY be learning about religion as a concept.” “Damn,” I thought, “what about that little promise I made to myself to try to understand the overwhelming majority of Christian America, including many of my friends and family?” I remember that I considered dropping the course.

But, just that first day, our professor really challenged us to step outside our micro-selves and micro-views and deeply, radically, consider what religions “do” in societies. He asked many questions, none specific to any one religion, such as “what purpose does any one religion serve in a culture?” It was that very first day he brought up a concept that I find fascinating and scary at the same time: “religions must adapt, just like an organism, to changing times; either the religion is applicable and appealing to enough people to stay and maybe even grow, or it loses its following and perishes like an extinct species.”

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It was not until the following few classes, when he offered examples of religions “adapting,” that this concept made deep sense to me. And in a class that did not have any official ties to Women’s Studies, perhaps it is not surprising that many of these concepts have been raised by feminists and other activists for centuries. Many dominant religions reflect the changing popular ethics of the time period in order to keep their members. So when sexism is “sexy,” many religious practices magically receive divine orders to match. Or when racism becomes too racy, you find many religious sects reconsidering and reinterpreting divine orders that were supposedly static and forever.

Think about it. What are some of the most blatant examples, worldwide, or many dominant religions shuffling their views in order to keep up with the times? Slavery? Condom use? Birth control? Same-sex attraction? The list goes on and on; don’t be blind to it.

What we must always remember, regardless of whether or not any religious belief is truth, is that human beings are behind these decisions to include, exclude, define, and redefine. Thus the issue is NOT about religion as human-made or pre-human, but what we choose to do with what we have. Believe it or not (gasp!), every single person on earth, religious or not, has the choice to support certain beliefs over others. It is not too far-fetched to imagine a “market of religions” to choose from, is it?

Then why do so many people “buy in” to the vast array of unfair practices? Control of resources. Next time you agree with a dominant religion’s practices and beliefs, think hard about your role in the survival and purpose of those practices. What are you supporting? What are you helping survive? Does it serve you; or more than you; or maybe even everyone? Who do you want to serve?

It is unfortunate how quickly one human or a set of humans can overtake the most stubborn of people by simply threatening not only their current existence, but their infinite existence. From Adolf Hitler to George W. Bush, the next job scare to new diseases, to threats of the unknown, we are constantly dealing with a stream of attacks to our physical, spiritual, and mental existence. I beg you, dodge these fear-tactics as well as you can before you proceed with the directions that will follow. Again, who are you serving?

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“A woman’s asking for equality in the church would be comparable to a black person’s demanding equality in the Ku Klux Klan.” -Mary Daly

Unfortunately for women, the above is too often, if not always, true. Despite some great leaps in closing the gaps in the workforce, home, and social sphere, the church still remains a nearly complete patriarchy, through and through. Whether it be the Pope, your neighborhood priest, or the Bible itself, the Christian, especially Catholic, faith is a male-driven, male-controlled, and male-enforced system. I might one day become President, but I will never become an accepted priest(ess) in almost all of the Christian sects.

This patriarchy doesn’t just stop at the churches’ doors though. Declarations on what women SHOULD be doing with their bodies, who SHOULD be in charge of the household, and who one SHOULD be sleeping with, when, and why are all often determined by one’s religion. It should go without saying that feminism and religion don’t exactly go hand in hand. So how do I, a feminist and a Christian, reconcile these two opposing forces in my day to day life?

Jesus was a rebel, and challenged the status quo. He opposed social and religious mores of his time and was ultimately killed for his beliefs (and carried on conversation about his beliefs while hanging on the cross). I don’t know if all of us feminists would be willing to go THAT extra mile to defend our “radical” beliefs.

It usually helps me to sleep at night thinking like this. Jesus was kind of a bad$*! I mean, yeah he surrounded himself with twelve men, promoted purity and a religion filled with patriarchy and sexism, but look at the times. The middle east two thousand plus years ago wasn’t exactly female friendly, nor did they have the same norms as we do today. It’s easy for us feminists to go on rants about the chauvinism, sexism, and patriarchy that ruled the world in those times (well STILL today), but that truly was a different world.

Just one hundred years ago, African-Americans and women still didn’t have the right to vote, along with MANY other injustices being seen as “acceptable”. Clearly, progress is a slow moving vehicle, or
for Jesus’ time, a camel. The norms he perpetuated and formed might not ever be seen as right by feminists, but the time in which he initiated these norms must also be taken into consideration.

Even with the times against “Big J”, he still had some major courage mirroring some of our favorite feminists today. The things Jesus preached were damn radical. Jesus was a rebel, and challenged the status quo. He opposed social and religious mores of his time and was ultimately killed for his beliefs (and carried on conversation about his beliefs while hanging on the cross). I don’t know if all of us feminists would be willing to go THAT extra mile to defend our “radical” beliefs.

But the number one thing he did was liberate the oppressed. Back then it was the sick, the handicapped, and the sinners – today the oppressed that Jesus might liberate may not sit well with the Church. But there’s the real problem. Jesus happens to be a great guy in my book, and since Christians see him as one with God, I suppose God gets a gold star too. But the Church? They need a little work. They’ve taken the foundations of a faith and ran with them, ignoring the passage of time and the growth of human beings. I can’t speak for anyone else, and especially not God, but I have a feeling that if Jesus were to come back to We the People, he might not be too pleased as to where the Church has taken mankind. At least one can hope...

So what’s my “feminist” solution to resolving the religion versus feminism issue? Well, the first step is to recognizing that the big, bad capital ‘C’ Church that many of us have issues with is only the physical representation of God and Christianity. In the end, I’d like to believe that the spiritual and personal relationship one chooses to have or not to have with God matters, not whether you’ve gone to confessional, kept up with your lenten promises, or behaved in the prescribed moral ways the Church enforces. And when it’s time for me knock on death’s door I say leave up to God to decide. If one must be a non feminist, straight, pure, and submissive individual in order to get in, I don’t want to be there anyway.

But the number one thing he did was liberate the oppressed. Back then it was the sick, the handicapped, and the sinners—today the oppressed that Jesus might liberate may not sit well with the Church.
I was worried about *For the Bible Tells Me So*. I thought (partially based on the boring cover; insert the usual proverb about books and covers here) that this documentary was going to be a whiny, preaching-to-the-choir documentary about how wrong fundamentalist Christians are. But this documentary really has some heart, some tact, some great interviewees (many from the Christian faith, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate), and some great scientific, historical, and anecdotal evidence to back up its many claims about homosexuality and the Bible.

The film begins a little pompously with a clip of the famous Anita Bryant pie-in-the-face episode which is always both sad and amazing to watch. The rest of the film is peppered with various clips throughout history, whether from films, presidential speeches, interviews with protesters, etc. But the best parts of the film are the family narratives and the interviews with open-minded people from a religious background who have clearly thought long and hard about the relationship between homosexuality and the Bible and have beautiful, thought-provoking perspectives and stories to share.

The film follows the narratives of several religious families, starting from the marriage of a couple, followed by their discussion of having children, one of whom ends up being gay. Then you get the story of the child, now adult, who comes from a loving, religious background. This sets it up so that it is not anger over religious parentage that is felt, but rather a story of changing beliefs based on personal experiences. This creates a bridge rather than a chasm between the different beliefs.

One of the interviewees who is a religious leader started off by sharing his general view on whether or not we should even be interpreting the Bible in such a way as laypeople: “You have to think when you read the Bible. Which is why before the Reformation perhaps the Roman Catholics were right in saying that ordinary...
people shouldn’t be reading the Bible because usually they get it wrong. And I’m convinced that usually we do.”

Although I don’t feel comfortable telling people whether or how to interpret the Bible, it is interesting to ponder whether we should read the Bible for ourselves (something that often doesn’t happen even when people are “quoting” from it) or if we need to have some combination of historians, theologians, etc. help us to interpret it in various ways. If we could treat the Bible like a text in a liberal arts class where many interpretations could be defended and we could rarely say that one interpretation is inherently more correct than another, I wonder how that would change this whole debate.

A large chunk of this film discusses Bible literalists and why this is not the approach to take when reading scripture. Desmond Tutu says, “The Bible is the word of God through the words of human beings speaking in the idiom of their time, and the richness of the Bible comes from the fact that we don’t take it as literally so, that it was dictated by God.” The Right Reverend Richard Holloway, a retired Bishop of Edinburgh: “Biblical literalists are people who know the truth absolutely and so they’re not able to engage in a conversation. They’re only able to engage in a pronouncement.”

Another major point is that we cannot pick and choose which small sections of the Bible to follow literally and which not to. Reverend Dr. Joan Brown Campbell of the Chautauqua Institution imparts, “One of my favorite examples for Biblical literalism is there is a text that says you must take all you have and give it to the poor. I don’t know *anyone* who says, ‘I believe that to be God’s word, and therefore I will close my bank accounts, I will give all my money away, and I will give it to the poor.’“

When taken in context, the section of Leviticus that says a man should not lay with another man as he would lay with a woman is in a long string of thou shall nots that include: not cursing your mother or father, not committing adultery, not being naked in front of your sibling, not having sex during menstruation, among others. All of these things are punishable offenses, often by death. And I have never seen these other things so vilely hated and railed against as homosexuality has been. And of course there are many other things in the Old and New Testament that we can, should, or should not do that are ridiculous when taken as literal truth. I won’t begin to list them here, but it is worth looking up sometime for a good laugh or cry.

For the Bible Tells Me So is not a perfect film, and one of its imperfections is a cartoon that reminds me of the South Park-style cartoon inserted into the middle of Michael Moore’s Bowling for Columbine. It is the vehicle for most of the scientific facts and studies in the documentary. Birth order and genes are cited as major contributors to homosexuality, including the statistic that 70% of twins will end up being gay if their twin is gay as well. These facts are very helpful to the film’s overall intent. However, there is a dig at the end of the cartoon when the animated lesbian talks about “this one girl Heather who does go back and forth,” to which the gay cartoon man nudges her and says, “Shut up!” As a pansexual who is constantly striving to make strides for bi/pansexuality, it is disheartening to see that it is still a joke, even within a documentary that should be about acceptance of sexual orientation. This is why pouring your otherwise supposedly-boring data into an animation can end up being dangerous and offensive. Besides, it cheapens the importance of said data.

There are so many more great parts of this film, many of them touching or inspiring, and I encourage everyone on all sides of the debate to watch this documentary. No matter what you believe or how you live your life, you are sure to be left with something to think about after finishing this film.

**Rewatchability:** This film would probably be easy to watch over and over again if you are introducing it to new people if for no other reason than as a starting point for incredible conversation.

**Where to Find it:** On DVD from Netflix, Specialty Video on Broadway, and Facets Multimedia on Fullerton.

Click here to CONtribute (guidelines) We encourage ALL readers to share with us, small or large, simple or complex.
Since the beginning of spirituality and belief in something more, sexuality has always been a topic of religious focus. While some early religions embraced sex and sexuality, most contemporary practices have rejected them, or at the very least, shrouded them in mystery and silence. In Christianity, sex is seen as a biological function -- a way to reproduce -- and something that should only be done after marriage. In other religions like Islam, there is a similar belief that there should be marriage before intercourse.

**Sex-positive does not mean supporting radical and unhealthy sexual activity, but more so supporting sexuality and the body, and understanding that desire and passion are natural and acceptable feelings.**

Seeing as religion, especially Christian religion, is so prevalent in our society, the way in which our society views sexuality and the body is greatly influenced by the religious rules surrounding the topic. An example lies in sex education within the educational system. Christian religion supports abstinence education, and therefore, students are more likely to receive abstinence-only education over any other kind of sexual education. Why is this? Why has sex and sexuality become such a villain in our culture and world today? In my opinion, our current sex-negative culture has been greatly influenced and shaped by religious traditions, practices that see sex as dirty and sinful.

Sex is natural, not sinful. Morality is not tied directly to one’s genitals, but rather to one’s intellect and ability to critically view the world with compassion and empathy. We can still be a religious culture with a sex-positive attitude. Sex-positive does not mean supporting radical and unhealthy sexual activity, but more so supporting sexuality and the body, and understanding that desire and passion are natural and acceptable feelings. With time, hopefully our society can make a shift towards understanding sex in a way that is healthy and productive for all individuals. Until then, educate yourself on religious views towards sexuality, and towards sex-positivity. Don’t let religion and society mislead you into believing that sex is wrong or sinful. Form your own beliefs and values, and live your life in a way that allows you to be completely free and happy, and most importantly, to be yourself.
Religion is one of the most divisive, polarizing, and segregated entities in our society. For Christians, why is it that we have to worship so far removed from each other, when those of us who believe in a higher power are all striving for the same thing: to be a good person to ourselves and each other? Does God tune a different ear towards a black church than He does to a white church or a Hispanic church? Maybe there’s lots of different Gods out there, each tailor-made for each race. That must be the case, since Sundays are the days that we seek solace in a place of worship surrounded by those who look like us. Maybe there’s a certain comfort in looking around and seeing pews of the same hue when going to church.

I say maybe because my experience with organized religion is probably very different than a lot of people’s in that I grew up in a multi-racial and non-denominational environment. I honestly did not know that churches were so racially segregated until I was in high school and went to church with one of my black friends. The experience was startling to me, not only in the fact that all I saw when I looked around was black faces, but also the loud, joyous environment. In my church, on Saturdays we sang hymns and listened in reverent silence to the sermon while taking dutiful notes. We had such a diverse group of people and backgrounds, so I assumed that other churches were the same. It seems silly to me now, but I was shocked and felt very out of place in that all-black church. The fact that I was going to a church of a completely different denomination (Baptist) and on a Sunday did not throw me off as much as the racial make-up. After that, I began to pay more attention to the different churches in the area and noticed which ones were marked as “black” or “white.”

Is it some unwritten rule that religion has to be drawn along color lines? After all, the main takeaway point from any religion is to be a good person. Even if a person does not subscribe to any certain religion, it is general knowledge that any of the religious writings, from the Koran to the Bible offers rules to live by for a “good” existence. We could argue the merits and drawbacks of one religion over another or no religion at all for weeks, but I bet that we would still come back to the bottom line that it’s not wrong to want to live a better life, and treat others the way we would want to be treated. I, for one, do not want to be treated like a friend all week, but then like a complete stranger on Sunday (or Saturday) mornings. I propose that we branch out a bit—it seems like we are so consumed with staying inside of our religious boxes that we do not ever seek the same kind of enlightenment from a different source. Why not try going to temple with a Jewish friend, or Mass with a Catholic one? Try out a church that is predominantly white or black—what do you have to lose? Our experiences make us richer as people, and even if you don’t necessarily believe in every tenet of Islam or Christianity, the experience of submersing yourself in a different worship environment could not hurt.

Let’s just go out and start being good to each other—regardless of which God you worship or if you don’t at all. Religion or lack of it does not have to drive us apart or bring us together, necessarily. We can learn from each other, no matter what our backgrounds may be. I think that we can all stand by the principle of treating our neighbors well—so let’s do it!
My multiple marginal roles as an African-American woman religious who is a theologian in the Catholic Church in the United States prompts me to face daily my ambiguous identity and my frequent queries regarding my sense of self.

The ebb-and-flow that is my life as an African-American woman religious is marked by the joy of our common seeking of Jesus Christ, along with the realization and subsequent disappointment that for so many of my religious sisters racism and white privilege are simply not on their radar.

The iconography of black women in America is changing in new and exciting ways with the potential of empowering black women to identify and celebrate the goodness and possibilities of their humanity in relationship with God.

Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender. - Alice Walker

In our work we are compelled to tell our stories and identify our social locations to shatter the illusion that white male humanity is normative. It is our job to indicate exactly why and how difference matters.

Although the African-American female experience is not monolithic, far too many black women are forced to negotiate the shifting landscape of race, gender, and class oppression, and with these three categories of oppression exist concomitantly, their impact is multiplicative, not additive, thus compounding an already excessive load.

The spirit of acceptance is most fruitful if reciprocated. Failure to recognize all persons as fully human can spiral into sinful acts that cause suffering and weaken the bonds of human community.

Though not explicitly noted, one can be certain that the human being under consideration was the male human being because his humanity was deemed normative. This problematic assumption has fueled theological feminisms’ agendas since their inceptions.

The state of consciousness of the bystanders is the result of long and complicated histories of colonialism, slavery, and the wholesale objectification of “others” whose arrival in so-called developed countries is marked by the embrace of their service labor, often devoid of rights.
Local Artist: Jay Very

“Mourning Star”

This week we are featuring Jay Very’s art piece:
During the crusades the clergy wielded morning stars and maces that were filled with holy water so that they could bless their enemies before they murdered them. "Mourning Star" was created to replicate the aforementioned weapon and is a hybrid of the aspergail/holy water sprinkler, and a medieval mace. This object is decorative as well as functional.
Materials: Copper, Swarvsky crystals, wood, felt, silver

Artist background:
Jay Very specializes in performance, public speaking, music, and art. He provides transgender inclusion training geared towards clinicians and organizations. Jay facilitated a transgender inclusion training for art therapy clinicians through the Illinois Art Therapy Association.
Jay completed his foundation studies in fine art at Pratt Institute, received a Bachelors in Fine Art from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, a Masters in Art Therapy from the Adler School of Professional Psychology, and completed internships at Evanston Art Center, Community Counseling Centers of Chicago (C4), the Institute of Social Exclusion, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, and Center on Halsted. He is the director and co-founder of the Tongue in Chic Gallery in Chicago.
THIS WEEK’S FOCUS: HOMOPHOBIC CHURCH ADS

- Who was the church targeting before they were targeting queer people?
- Should freedom of religion include freedom from oppressive religions? Is it free speech if it is a paid-for billboard?
- How effective are these billboards? What is their real purpose?

Click here to CONTRIBUTE (guidelines) We encourage ALL readers to share with us, small or large, simple or complex.
"Women Religious, Women’s Archives, and Religious Archives"

The preservation of the past, even in this digital age, often is embodied in the physical—a piece of paper, a photograph, a journal, a diary, a scrapbook, postcard, or other similar item. These artifacts of the past each hold their own version of truth which is the real value of primary sources; all are open to interpretation, all function as a kind of evidence of a particular time, place, person, or event. Religious archives and archives that hold the records of women religious are no different in that regard, but are often harder to find for most researchers. Major religious archives such as the Archdiocese of Chicago, the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, or American Theological Association Library visibly dot our local landscape. But within those more general religious archives the historic records related specifically to women tend to be emphasized less, if at all.

Women religious and religious women’s records can often be broken into two camps: (1) records kept at archives devoted to specific women’s religious orders and (2) records kept at general archives where women’s records might be found. Of the two, the former is the best bet for finding great complexity and depth of women’s historic presence whereas in the latter, the collections tend to favor those with the most obvious and traditional forms of power: men. But emphasis on administrative hierarchy/power is not the only barrier to finding records about female faithful. Indeed, particularly within the western Christian tradition, humility and modesty often served to erase the most visible examples of women religious’ presence.

The best example of this is the 1932 yearbook for Mundelein College, the last four year women’s college in Illinois, a school founded by the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVMs). While all of the male faculty were photographed for their inclusion in the yearbook, the BVMs who built, ran, and taught the vast majority of the classes were not individually identified. Instead, in place of their photographs was a class listing of the “29 Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”

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For most Christian-Catholic women religious orders, there are archives that specifically work to save the history of that order—such as exist for the Sisters of Charity, the Sisters of Mercy, the Canacle Sisters, the Maryknoll Mission Sisters, Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill, Dominican Sisters, Sisters of St. Joseph, and Sisters of Charity of Nazareth among many others. Yet, these archives tend to represent the larger religious orders while the records of smaller groups have become endangered as the orders’ membership ages and there are fewer in number to care for the collections. Further, the records of women’s religious orders do not always include the whole of individual women’s records but can emphasize the history of the organization over individual members.

Sadly, the more radical the woman, even among the faithful, the less likely her records will be saved.

Another issue to consider with religious women’s archives is that not all women of faith are in religious orders. Many, such as can be found in the Women and Leadership Archives (WLA), are laity of the Catholic faith or are women of faith in non-Christian traditions like Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. Sadly, the more radical the woman, even among the faithful, the less likely her records will be saved. But at the WLA, there are many records of individual women and women’s organizations that give evidence of women who claim spirituality among, perhaps, many other identities such as professional, activist, grandmother, mother, or daughter. Yet, this is not of an in itself a complete picture either, just one snapshot at one archives. Preserving the records of women remains generally a difficult task, but this is even truer in terms of documenting women of faith. Internalized faith itself is impossible to prove or witness, but rather what researchers are left with is the evidence of faith through external deed or word. Capturing the records that give such testimony to women’s lived spiritual experience remains a principle task of archivists, as well as theologians, historians, and other academics.
**Year 1st Published:** 1999

**Current Publisher:** Orbis Books

**MSRP:** $13.95

**Pages:** 162

**Genre:** Theology; Race Studies; Womanism

**Topics:**
- Reasons why many black churches and black religious practices treat sexuality as taboo
- Historical processes that have led to black sexuality as a tool used against US black populations
- The liberating and positive possibilities of recognizing and accepting sexuality as it relates to “blackness” in the US, specifically how white racism has affected black sexuality and what can be done to end centuries of sexuality being used as a negative tool.

**What does the back cover say?**

*This book tackles the “taboo” subject of sexuality that has long been avoided by the Black church and community. Douglas argues that this view of Black sexuality has interfered with constructive responses to the AIDS crisis and teenage pregnancies, fostered intolerance of sexual diversity, frustrated healthy male/female relationships, and rendered Black and womanist theologians silent on sexual issues.*

**Pros:**

Douglas leaves very few stones unturned in this analysis, going way back into US history to illustrate a timeline of how race, gender, sexuality, and colonization have led to present conditions. She makes very important and useful connections between dominant discourses in womanism, feminism, theology, anti-racist efforts, and sexuality studies. What she presents is a thorough case for taking the abuses and negativity from white racism and men’s sexism in order to first understand social conditions to in turn shape them for a healthier, better present and future. She does not offer bandaids to issues of black sexuality in the present US, but rather, challenges all parties to really take advantage of “discourses of resistance” to harmful religious and social practices that very often target black bodies.

**Cons:**

Douglas does not go into detail concerning sex-positivity and sexual and gender variance, but her arguments are sound enough for the careful reader to apply her suggestions in broad ways.

**Click here to CONTRIBUTE (guidelines!)** We encourage ALL readers to share with us, small or large, simple or complex.
Hildegard of Bingen

Illuminating the trailblazers of feminism’s past while fanning the flames of its future

Major Works:
- *Ordo Viturtum* (Play of the Virtues)
- *Symphonia armoniae celestium revelationum* (liturgical songs)
- *Scivias* ("Know the Way")
- *Liber vitae meritorum* ("Book of Life’s Merits")
- *De operatione Dei* ("Of God’s Activities", also known as *Liber divinorum operum*, "Book of Divine Works")
- *Physica* (natural sciences)
- *Vita* (autobiography)
- *Causae et Curae* (medicine)

Inspired by:
God, the virginal Mother of God, virginal women, Jutta (the nun she was enclosed with during her childhood).

Is an inspiration to:
Many of the religious people (of all ranks) as well as political figures during her time, theologians, musicians, women and men of faith, and some feminist scholars.

Personal Life:
Born in 1098, Hildegard was the tenth child in her family and so was given as a tithe (10% of a family’s wealth, therefore the tenth child) to the church. She was enclosed for many years with a nun. She later was elected magistra by her fellow nuns and founded monasteries, gave lecture tours, and wrote many books and compositions. She was a visionary who saw “The Shade of the Living Light” which allowed her to counsel people and write texts in the voice of God.

Importance to Feminism:
Hildegard of Bingen could be considered a proto-feminist as she went beyond the common role of a woman and furthered the church in ways that were normally only appropriate for men. She wrote and spoke about the beauty, piety, and importance of women, especially virgins and mothers. Although her texts have references to the “weaker sex” and other such un-feminist wording, it is commonly thought that she had to write this way in order to continue her works without attracting too much negative attention from the church and authorities.

Click here to CONTRIBUTE (guidelines!) We encourage ALL readers to share with us, small or large, simple or complex.
"If being a woman is more accurately conceived as a state which fluctuates for the individual, depending on what she and/or others consider to characterize it, then there are always different densities of sexed being in operation, and the historical aspects are in play here.”

- Denise Riley, Feminist Historian

From: Mundelein College

“1964: Four Female Presidents”

In this photograph:

The presidents of the four Catholic women’s colleges in Chicago; Sr. Mary Olivia (St. Xavier’s); Mother Margaret Burke (Boral); Sr. Mary Candida (Roseary); and Sr. Ann Ida Gannon (Mundelein).

• Did you know that the colleges that these women were presidents of are no longer are in existence or are no longer strictly women’s colleges?

The above photo is part of WLA’s special digital photo collection from Mundelein College. In 1991, Loyola University Chicago incorporated the last remaining women’s college of Illinois, Mundelein. Join us in reanimating photos like this one from the past for glimpses into what made the present and influences the future.

The Women & Leadership Archives (WLA) collects, preserves, organizes, describes, and makes available materials of enduring value to researchers studying women’s leadership activities. The WLA strives to promote knowledge and understanding of women’s many diverse and important contributions to society through active collection development, research, and the facilitation of learning about women’s history. The Women & Leadership Archives functions as a public facility in addition to serving the Loyola University Chicago community.

Click the above paragraph to jump to the WLA website, and the previous paragraph to jump to the photo collection.
In reflecting on our own hybridized existence, Christians might contemplate the mystery of Jesus’ hybridity, not with any fixation on locating any one pure or true story about his divinity or about his humanity, but about being opened to hope and redemption by the rich interplay between these stories.

- Michele Saracino

How can it be that after decades of education, African-American women do not care for themselves adequately? Our sexuality is one of God’s many gifts to us to be treasured, enjoyed, and shared. African-American women must love themselves: mind, body, and soul. Regardless!

- LaReine-Marie Mosely

The subject position of “mother” is a hybrid one, not only in light of the cultural, geographic, and economic differences that infuse the experiences within “motherhood” as a category, but also in that any particular subject in the position of mother is multiple, as mother is called into a variety of roles, responsibilities, and relationships, none of which quite capture the whole.

- Jeannine Hill Fletcher

To allow Jesus’ actions toward women to be understood within the religious and social categories of his time is to open the door to genuine relationship between Jewish and Christian feminists.

- Elena Procario-Foley

Rather than letting ourselves be put into boxes meant to categorize and dismiss, we can use the complexities of our lives to challenge the belief that any person or group is more righteous or deserving of identification with Jesus. While women will never be included in the Vatican body politic as currently structured, they can certainly loosen its hold over women’s bodies by changing the boundaries of the community and creating a space from which differently sexed subjects can speak and act.

- Laura M. Taylor

Although Catholic social teaching identifies political participation for all Catholics as a practical effect of the sacrament of baptism, women are not recognized as the public church.

- Rosemary P. Carbine

In the final analysis, human sexuality makes human relationships possible -- including the relationship to the divine. The quality of a person’s relationship to God, therefore, hinges in many ways...
"Doesn’t religion define justice?
I mean, for those who follow a religion, aren’t we/they given that definition from god, whether it’s ”an eye for an eye” or ”turn the other cheek”?

The mess of Christian republicanism is in holding both of those philosophies (the first from the old testament, the second from the new) simultaneously.”

-Anonymous

"For me, it was in the context of the church that I was exposed to the activism of the 60s so I have a lot of respect. The Christianity expressed by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount rather than all that hate, fire and brimstone stuff that seems to be the meat and potatoes of so much of what’s being disseminated from the pulpit today, was inspiring a lot of that vision, commitment and sacrifice.”

-Anonymous

"I was Jewish growing up. The second most important person in the temple, after the Rabbi, is the Cantor. They lead all the singing, and provide sung/chanted accompaniment to prayers the Rabbi is leading. Like the Rabbi, it’s a traditionally male role.

When we joined our (admittedly Reformed) temple, they had just hired one of the first female cantors around. The rabbi and the temple administration worked to sell the congregation on the fact that this was wonderful and progressive and wonderful for the temple. To their credit, the congregation only seemed to care that their cantor had a beautiful voice, and did her job magnificently.

I like when things that shouldn’t be a big deal aren’t.”

-Adam Ganderson
My first gut-wrenching, no-recovery-in-sight heartbreak was with my first girlfriend in college. I had dated men before and had had a significant relationship with a young man for over a year, but I had never been so consumed and in love until her. Everything was perfect, until I realized this woman could be it for me. After coming to terms with my sexuality, society still remained. The facts were, I was attracted to her, I connected with her on a sexual and emotional level, and most importantly, I felt safe and secure. It was not a question of if I was lesbian or bi or if I was just going through a phase, it was a matter of if I could be at peace being with a woman.

If anyone knows me personally, they will tell you that God is a very important being in my life. With every girlfriend, I had always reached a point where I was torn to pieces because I could not find that God-Gay balance and felt I had to choose one or the other. My church did not condone homosexuality, but it really strengthened my relationship with God. I would bring my girlfriends to church and just focus on the teachings regardless of the gender and heterosexual modules used in all the stories and sermons. Still, the closer to God I felt, the further away from my girlfriends I would feel.

There came a point where I was single and became open to dating men again. I decided to give this a try; besides, it was a lot easier on my family (primarily my mom who does not support me dating women) and my church. I could openly talk about my relationship and although he was a no-good in-and-out-of-prison type of bad boy, you could not imagine the support I received. The stand-by-your-man, be-strong type of support. I have to admit though, I was on my way to heterosexual bliss and marriage! Despite the fact that I was not receiving what I needed from my partner, I was fully supported by society and felt at ease with my God relationship.

Needless to say, that relationship ended, and although I was not opposed to dating other men, I found a beautiful woman that I fell in love with. Now I write this story not to give you a happy, found-peace-with-God type of ending, but to share a struggle that I still deal with. My mother and my church still do not accept us, but I cannot bring myself to choose because I feel that I should not have to. God is Love, she is Love and my mother’s love is unconditional. I do not know if I will ever find peace in this God-Gay (and Mom) balance, but for now I choose to work through my internal conflicts because in the end, Love is all that matters.
"Not a Dinner Conversation"  - Mia Gutsell

Religion.

It is one of the most dangerous of three topics not to be discussed at a polite dinner conversation, along with sex and politics. The last two are as equally controversial as the first, but faith and spirituality are what concerns us this week.

Religion and Women.

This topic seems even more explosive than the first simple subject of religion. Ironically enough, this phrase is the title of a course at Loyola. Anyone can learn about the relationship of religion and women, with a narrower focus based on the professor’s choice of the semester. This situation demonstrates the power that religion has in the world. It is an escapable force that has an effect on community life, media, academia, and especially upon women.

Trying to unravel the giant ball of knot that is religion in relation to society is no small task. It would be foolhardy to pretend that I could do so in the small article here. It is a complex topic. On the one hand, I feel as if I could discuss how many religions of the world have repressed women as whole humans, led to numerous wars and unnecessary deaths by other means.

However, historically, many faiths were actually radical in that they allowed women to have a higher status in various societies. Ancient Christianity treated women as equal members of the church. Being a nun in many cultures during Medieval times was a way for a woman to stand apart as a spiritually wise individual.

Religion has been a force of change numerous times in the history of the world. It has also led to the persecution of millions.

I suppose the only fact that is for certain in this world, beyond death and taxes, is that religion is not going to disappear. At the very least, it is not going to disappear any time soon in the future. Whether it was during the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, or even the Sexual Revolution, some separate individuals thought that new schools of thought would overtake religion. These individuals hoped that secularism would dominate instead of a spiritual faith. So far, this ideal has not occurred in every part of the world yet. It is true that Europe is seeing a decline in Christianity, but Islam is as strong as ever in Europe, and elsewhere around the world.

As such, the only thing that can be said about religion with any sense of certainty is that if women and men are going to be equal, then they have to be qual in these institutions as well. This scenario applies to any faith that excludes someone because of an inherent quality. The institutions of religion have too much power to be ignored, or eliminated as antiquated. If anything, it would probably be best to use the positive aspects of religious institutions in order to better the world. Change must come from outside and inside religious institutions. Not everyone may take this path, but it is a worthwhile one for those who do.

Let’s start the dangerous dinner conversation.
Where I come from you’re either Catholic or a god-less aborigine, I am of the former sect. Now, what does that really mean? I struggle with this a lot so maybe a checklist will help straighten it all out:

• Do I believe in Jesus? Absolutely, I am sure he lived and told folks to not live life as jerks and most responded kindly to it, but others, not so much.

• Do I think the Pope is infallible? About as much as I believe the tears that fall down Glenn Beck’s face when he starts rambling on and on about his country. Rat bastard.

• Do I go to church? Twice a week. Like clockwork.

• Do I believe that the bread and wine served in communion actually turn into the body and blood of Christ (ie transubstantiation)? Grotty!

• Do I take communion? Twice a week. Like clockwork.

• Do I think homosexuality is a sin? If I did, I wouldn’t have time to write this as I would be too busy praying for the souls of all my friends…

• Do I think abortion is a sin? Nope. I can’t say much more because I am preoccupied with making sure I take my birth control pill on time to avoid getting pregnant from all the pre-marital sex in which I regularly engage

Well, so I guess when push comes to shove, I am a pretty craptastic Catholic. Or so I would be told. Of course I wouldn’t waste my time listening to people telling me I will burn in hell for eternity because of the way I live my life. And surely I don’t believe that just because I go to church doesn’t mean I am not a giant sinner. BUT I do believe my first bullet point is what makes me an all right Catholic after all, if not just a decent human being. Jesus did exist and I honestly believe his main goal was to teach people to be good. That’s it. Judge lest ye be judged. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Pretty words. Hard to live by, but I do my honest to God best to do so, instead of sitting in church wagging my finger at sodomites and sluts. So, bad Catholic, good Christian, god-less sinner, who knows, who cares. I say, just do your best to be good, and at the end of the day, if you believe, in good conscience, you’ve done your best to not be a total a-hole, then you’re alright by me. That’s the gospel according to Lola.
When: 4/6/2011, 5 pm
Who: John Sevigny, Photographer & Activist
What: “Jericho Road: Central American Immigration Across Mexico”
Why: Learn about and view the lives of people immigrating
Where: Dumbach, LUC
How: WSGS, University Ministry, and The Institute for Migration & International Social Work

[Click to Play!]
When: 4/6/2011, 1-2 pm
Who: The Wellness Center
What: “300 too many”
Why: Over 300 Loyola students are sexually harassed each year
Where: East Quad, LUC
How: WSGS, University Ministry, and The Institute for Migration & International Social Work

When: 4/6/2011, 1-2 pm
Who: The Wellness Center
What: “300 too many”
Why: Over 300 Loyola students are sexually harassed each year
Where: East Quad, LUC
How: WSGS, University Ministry, and The Institute for Migration & International Social Work
The Postcard Project showcases the individual experiences of women and men surrounding gender, sexuality, feminism, rape, sexual assault, consent, child abuse, and menstruation. This project debuted at the 2011 Vagina Monologues at Loyola and was spearheaded by Halle Petrone. Over 35 stories were submitted and paired with over 8 artwork submissions. Each week until the end of the semester, Digest magazine will be publishing 1-2 art pieces in Words are useless along with displaying each matching story.

**Collaborative** in that over 50 artists and writers contributed images and experiences.

**Inclusive** in that submissions were accepted from any lifestyle or gender, woman or man, queer or straight, kinky or chaste, militant or timid. Let’s be real: it takes all kinds.

**Provoice** in that it is as much a protest as it is a gallery. Voices of the abused, the raped, and the oppressed are silenced everyday because the issues are unpalatable. We fight and change the system when we learn to speak and listen in turn to real stories of men & women.

(continued on next page)
This week and in the coming weeks we are featuring the artwork from the Postcard Project: “Aftermath” is one of several artworks included in the Postcard Project.

**Artist background:**

[Jeff:] “Having survived my formative years surrounded by various disturbed family members, perverse relatives, and demented neighbors, I have always felt compelled to explore and cultivate methods in which to soothe, cope with, and escape myself. The catharsis I undergo through the process of painting provides me with such a mechanism. Through my work, I am able to express and purge many of the feelings of guilt, shame, and confusion that continue to consume me as a result of these collective experiences. The resulting images are merely a logical extension of these feelings.

(continued on next page)
People say feminism is dead. There is no need to fight anymore.

I was born in India. I am the youngest in my family. Ironically, my parents actually wanted a daughter in a country where there are 44 million girls missing. Missing because they weren’t given a chance to live. In this country, women are trafficked and sold in slavery every day. They are raped every three seconds.

I was born in a culture where you can’t help being a feminist.

I grew up in America. Where to be a president a woman has to become manly and to be beautiful she has to be fragile and dumb. In a country where little boys upon loosing on the football or the basketball or the soccer field are told they played like a girl. When did being a girl mean being a loser?

I grew up in a culture where you can’t help being a feminist.

I live in a global city, a global world. In this world women are used, broken, cut, burned, damaged, and eventually killed. Now don’t tell me feminism is dead.

(continued on next page)
“Yes, Men Can Must Take a Stand Too”

The concept of two socially separate sexes is one that has always baffled me. What options do those of us who don’t see our roles as male and female as binary code have? Is it so strange that a heterosexual male can advocate for the fight against sexual violence? The truth of the matter is that sexual violence is a man’s issue. As nearly 100% of rapes are performed by males, how would one argue that men aren’t part of the solution as much as we’ve been part of the problem? While I know I will not be convincing any male to haphazardly take up arms in the battle against sexual abuse, I urge us to think critically, and let’s not miniaturize our potential by emulating the bill of goods that is sold to us in the form of Charlie Sheen, of Two & a half Men lore. The social glorification of misogyny and sexism is where it all starts and is a slippery slope thereafter. Instead, let’s read an article, 1 article on these issues! Let’s talk to a friend about something disturbing we saw at the bar or dorm, and not just pass it off as “that’s normal.”

Our apathy is what makes us, the privileged bystanders, prime culprits and enablers of the realities that abused women and men will face next weekend, and the weekend after that, until we men PARTICIPATE by listening and reading to educate ourselves, to guide us towards the willpower and rational conscience to ACT.

Kind regards,
23 year old heterosexual male & Corporate D-bag
Loyola Chicago, Class of 2010.

(continued on next page)
One time in this past year, a few classmates and I shadowed a professor at the clinic in which she works— a woman’s shelter for battered women. Going into it, I guess I was not as prepared as I thought I was to feel the extreme repugnance to the cycle of abuse as I do now. During the visit, we witnessed a mother and her daughters open up for the first time about their culminating despair of the psychological, physical, and emotional abuse they endured caused by the mother’s brother-in-law holding them hostage at gun point because they previously ran away from his physical torture and confinement exerted on them to keep them under his control until his brother immigrated back to the U.S. We witnessed the rage on the face of the oldest daughter as she spoke about the torture done to her. We witnessed the fear streaming from the face of the middle daughter as she spoke about how her sister now tortures her. We witnessed the sadness in the face of the youngest daughter as she spoke about the humiliation she felt at school. We witnessed the numbness on the face of the mother as she explained their captivity in terms of obligation to her husband and we witnessed the tears pouring from that face in knowing the pain it was causing herself and her children. We witnessed the youngest child, a boy of only three years old, in domineering performance acting out the beheading of a bug and squashing its remains—to which we could have only guessed would have been advocated by the male governed household. Through all of our abhorrence, my professor reiterated her soapbox of breaking the cycle of abuse, because as we had seen, abuse is generational and will not stop until people are taught to define it, identify it, and call out against it.

(continued on next page)
“Bigger person”

I continue to be absolutely confounded by your actions—how could you? How dare you?

Your pretentious education and wealthy parents aren’t enough anymore to veil what you have proven to be your true self: a monster.

I glean solace only from knowing some of the women you think you’ve destroyed have gone on to be among the strongest people I know. (How this has happened is a testament to the brilliance and resilience of women, not any lack of every abuse on your part.) Some of them are not so lucky.

You perpetuate the stereotype of hateful men in our world. You have something bad inside you. And me, we, us having to be “the bigger person” and sit and watch and hope that you will change or learn infuriates me. You haven’t gotten away with anything. We remember.

-Anon. (because I have to be the bigger person.)
WSGS EVENTS

Follow us on Twitter! @LoyolaWSGS

Psyc Sex and Gender Bake Sale and Donation Collection for Deborah’s Place
	Tuesday, April 19 through Thursday, April 21, 10am-3pm in the CFSU Lobby
Sex and Gender students will be collecting donations and selling baked goods for our class civic engagement project. All proceeds will go to Deborah’s Chicago, a shelter for homeless women.
Donations of clothes, shoes, blankets, books or anything you feel appropriate will be kindly accepted.
“Deborah’s Place is Chicago’s largest provider of supportive housing exclusively for women and is recognized as an innovative leader among homeless service providers locally and nationally. Since our founding in 1985, we have worked collaboratively with our participants, offered a range of high quality services and tried new approaches – putting Deborah’s Place at the forefront of agencies making a difference to those in need in Chicago.” Come support your friends and classmates in their civic engagement project to help Deborah’s Place Chicago reach its needs. Email ejordan2@luc.edu with any questions.

WSGS Graduation Reception
	Friday, April 29th at 2:00 p.m. | Piper Hall Gathering Space
WSGS staff, faculty, and fellow students in Piper Hall are cordially invited for a reception celebrating the accomplishments of seniors graduating from the program. Refreshments will be provided and students will receive graduation gifts courtesy of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program. Your RSVP is requested by Monday, April 25th to confirm catering. Please e-mail Kathryn Berg at kberg3@luc.edu.

Women & Leadership Archives Spring 2011 Lecture Series
	Wednesday, April 27, 12:00 p.m. | Piper Hall Room 201, Lake Shore Campus
The Women & Leadership Archives next lecture will be “Sister’s in the South: Roman Catholic Nuns in African American Communities, 1935-1970” by Megan Stout. The series is a forum to highlight interdisciplinary scholarship on women and gender. Presentations last an hour. All lectures are brown bag lunch optional.
Please contact Beth Loch at eloeh@luc.edu with questions or visit our website at www.luc.edu/wla/WLA_Graduate_Student_Speaker_Series.shtml.

Telling HERstory with P. Ann Solari-Twadell
	Wednesday, April 27 | Noon - 1:00 p.m. | McCormick Lounge
Register at www.luc.edu/evoke/rsvp
Co-sponsored with EVOKE

Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, & Gender Annual Conference
Theme: “Performing Gender” Call for volunteers—Opportunity for Practicum credit
We are currently interested in Loyola undergraduate and graduate students signing up as volunteers for the upcoming October conference, taking place at the Orrington Hotel in Evanston and in Piper Hall at Loyola University Chicago. Students may also sign up for practicum credit for either Communication or Women’s Studies and Gender Studies, in which a learning project will be formed with Dr. Bren Ortega Murphy, WSGS Internship Director and Director of this year’s conference.
Please contact Dr. Murphy for further information and details at bmurphy@luc.edu.

Want to POST something? Contact Kathryn at kberg@luc.edu and send us details in the form you see above. Attach flyers in high-quality JPEG & PDF, please!
WGS:
EVENT INSTANT REPLAY
EVENT INSTANT REPLAY
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CALLS FOR PAPERS

NEXT SPECIAL
THEMED ISSUE:
FUTURE/CAREER?
5/9 RELEASE

Mon, Apr 18
Volume 2011, Issue 26

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LOCAL EVENTS

Eat A Slice—Save A Life: Charity Fundraiser

*Wednesday, April 20, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. | Carmen’s Pizza (6568 N. Sheridan Rd)*

All you can eat buffet of pizza, salad, and soda at Carmen’s. All proceeds donated to St. Ignatious Food Pantry & Old Irving Park Community Clinic as part of a Masters of Arts in Medical Sciences Fundraiser. See attachment for more information.

“Why Do Feminists Refuse to See ‘Chaos’ When Others Do?” by Dr. Cynthia Enloe, Clark University

*Friday, April 22, 5:30 p.m.*

Paper to be given at the conference on Gender States and States of Emergency at the Ohio State University and streamed live to Minerva, The Department of Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies’ research and study space in Second Life. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions of Dr. Enloe following her talk. Conference information: http://womens-studies.osu.edu/content/gender-and-states-emergency

Live conference in Second Life. Minerva is open to the public; you must have the Second Life program installed to visit us.

To join Second Life: https://join.secondlife.com/ (A premium account is unnecessary.)

To visit Minerva: http://slurl.com/secondlife/minerva/61/225/28


Exploring the Leather Library: A Week in Un/Common Sexuality

April 25th-May 1st

The Leather Library is a 10,000 piece traveling library featuring artwork, books, magazines, newsletters, newspapers, pamphlets, photographs, club and event pins, posters, and various other materials that reveal the myriad paths of alternative sexuality from the 1700s to today. The collection covers everything from 18th century writings on the intersection of pain and pleasure to pulp erotica from the 1930s and ‘40s, on up to complete series runs of LGBTQ and kinky pansexual magazines like Drummer, Cuir Underground, and Black Leather in Color. The exhibit, seminars, and opening gala are ALL FREE, thanks to support from UChicago’s Uncommon Fund, our community partners, and generous local donors. Accompanying the exhibit will also be a staff of knowledgeable librarians, including one of the Library’s founders, Mama Vi Johnson, an iconic Leather elder and activist whose writings and educational outreach have touched on topics from sexuality and gender to race and power. Come get up close and personal with the history of sex and sexuality in the U.S. and beyond, and hear this phenomenal storyteller guide you through this amazing collection! For more information visit: http://rack.uchicago.edu/events.shtml

Christology can be used to legitimate and sustain patriarchal worldviews and norms; likewise, it can also be reconstructed to promote alternative liberating worldviews; rethink gender, race, class, sexual, and inter-religious norms; and, ultimately, edge us toward more egalitarian and just relations.

- Rosemary P. Carbine

Want to POST something? Contact Kathryn at kberg@luc.edu and send us details in the form you see above. Attach flyers in high-quality JPEG & PDF, please!
Volunteer

Heath Buddies Mentorship Program

**Deadline for Applications: April 21**
Essentially the program is a chance for Loyola students to become Health Mentors for Chicago students enrolled in Hamdard Center summer program. We ask for only a two hour commitment in the summer for 6 weeks. Activities will include goal setting, leading fitness activities, and nutrition workshops to raise awareness about healthy choices that can be made to improve lifestyles. Please email Kesha Baxi with any questions or concerns at kbaxi@luc.edu.

Sexual Assault Advocacy Volunteer Opportunity

**Deadline for Applications: May 4**
The Wellness Center is leading a 3-year grant project through the U.S. Dept. of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. A major goal of this project is to increase the reporting rates of sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, and stalking on campus. We wish to increase our ability to respond to students as immediately as possible. Graduate students in social science, social services, higher education, and other related fields are being sought as volunteer advocates to help increase our response to survivors of sexual assault at LUC. Volunteer advocates will be expected to complete 56 hours of training through Rape Victim Advocates in downtown Chicago. The next training will occur in June 2011 and is split into 16 evening sessions held Monday – Thursday from 5:30 – 9:30 PM. Some of these sessions are make-up sessions; you will not have to attend all 16. For more information or an application, contact Stephanie Atella at satella@luc.edu.

Academic Funding

**Graduate Assistantship in Women’s and Gender Studies**

**Deadline for Applications: April 29**
The Women’s Studies and Gender Studies Program (WSGS) is currently soliciting applications for its Graduate Assistant for the 2011-2012 academic year. The assistant must commit 15 hours per week to the WSGS Program plus occasional evenings or weekends. Please see flier in electronic magazine for additional information.
Graduate Assistantship in Women’s and Gender Studies

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Women’s and Gender Studies, Visiting Assistant Professor

**Dickinson College, Pennsylvania**


Department of Gender Studies, Visiting Lecturer

**Indiana University, Bloomington**


Department of Gender Studies, Post Doctoral Fellowship

**Indiana University - Bloomington**


Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, & Gender Annual Conference

**Theme:** “Performing Gender” **Call for volunteers | Opportunity for Practicum credit**

We are currently interested in Loyola undergraduate and graduate students signing up as volunteers for the upcoming October conference, taking place at the Orrington Hotel in Evanston and in Piper Hall at Loyola University Chicago. Students may also sign up for practicum credit for either Communication or Women’s Studies and Gender Studies, in which a learning project will be formed with Dr. Bren Ortega Murphy, WSGS Internship Director and Director of this year’s conference. Please contact Dr. Murphy for further information and details at bmurphy@luc.edu.

Women & International Policy Seminar in Washington, DC

**Seminar Dates: May 23–27, 2011**

**Registration Deadline: April 29, 2011**

More Information: [http://plen.org/programs/seminars/international/](http://plen.org/programs/seminars/international/) How is foreign policy developed? How does the U.S. conduct international relations? What would a career in international policy be like? Learn about American foreign policy from women who work, every day, on issues that make the news.

These are women Members of Congress, diplomats and State Department leaders, officials with international organizations, think tank experts, and corporate and nonprofit advocates. You’ll hear from women in the early years of their careers and from seasoned professionals at the highest levels. They’ll tell you - and answer your questions - about the varied ways to be involved in international affairs, how to get started on a career, how to balance professional and personal lives, and many other topics that may influence your academic and career decisions. View last year’s seminar schedule [http://plen.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/PLEN-Intl-Final-Schedule.pdf](http://plen.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/PLEN-Intl-Final-Schedule.pdf).
Mothering and Migration: (Trans)nationalisms, Globalization, and Displacement

Call for Papers | Application deadline: May 1, 2011

The editorial board is seeking submissions for Vol. 2.2 of the Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement (JMI) to be published in fall/winter 2011. The journal will explore the topic of Mothering and Migration from a variety of perspectives and disciplines. We welcome submissions from scholars, students, activists, government agencies and workers, artists, mothers, and others who work or research in this area. Cross-cultural, historical and comparative work is encouraged. We encourage a variety of types of submissions including academic papers from all disciplines, workshops, creative submissions, performances, storytelling, visual arts and other alternative formats. Articles should be 15-18 pages (3750 words) including references. All should be in MLA style, WordPerfect or Word and IBM compatible. Please see our style guide for complete details.

http://www.motherhoodinitiative.org/journalsubmission.html

Uncovering the Stories of Midwestern Women Artists, 1840-1940

Call for Proposals | Deadline: May 1 | October 13-14, Bradley University, Peoria, Illinois

This interdisciplinary conference will explore the art and experiences of women artists working in the Midwest between 1840 and 1940. Papers considering these issues, as well as those that deal with aspects of collecting, exhibiting and publishing the work of these women are welcomed. The symposium is organized by the Bradley University Art History Program, the Women’s Studies Department, and the Illinois Women Artists Project with support from the Bradley University Inland Visual Studies Center, and Lakeview Museum. It is held in conjunction with the exhibition Skirting Convention: Illinois Women Artists, 1840 to 1940 at Lakeview Museum, Peoria, from October 1, 2011-January 14, 2012. More information can be found at the event website: http://iwa.bradley.edu/symposium

Want to POST something? Contact Kathryn at kberg@luc.edu and send us details in the form you see above. Attach flyers in high-quality JPEG & PDF, please!
We want you to Submit!

Digest Contributor Guidelines

Principles

i) Feminist Consciousness:
   (a) recognizes all voices and experiences as important, and not in a hierarchical form.
   (b) takes responsibility for the self and does not assume false objectivity.
   (c) is not absolutist or detached, but rather, is more inclusive and sensitive to others.

ii) Accessibility:
   (a) means utilizing accessible language, theory, knowledge, and structure in your writing.
   (b) maintains a connection with your diverse audience by not using unfamiliar/obscure words, overly long sentences, or abstraction.
   (c) does not assume a specific audience, for example, white 20-year-old college students.

iii) Jesuit Social Justice Education & Effort:
   (a) promotes justice in openhanded and generous ways to ensure freedom of inquiry, the pursuit of truth and care for others.
   (b) is made possible through value-based leadership that ensures a consistent focus on personal integrity, ethical behavior, and the appropriate balance between justice and fairness.
   (c) focuses on global awareness by demonstrating an understanding that the world’s people and societies are interrelated and interdependent.

Expectations and Specifics

• You may request to identify yourself by name, alias, or as “anonymous” for publication in the digest. For reasons of accountability, the staff must know who you are, first and last name plus email address.

• We promote accountability of our contributors, and prefer your real name and your preferred title (i.e., Maruka Hernandez, CTA Operations Director, 34 years old, mother of 4; or J. Curtis Main, Loyola graduate student in WSGS, white, 27 years old), but understand, in terms of safety, privacy, and controversy, if you desire limitations. We are happy to publish imagery of you along with your submission, at our discretion.

• We gladly accept submission of varying length— from a quick comment to several pages. Comments may be reserved for a special “feedback” section. In order to process and include a submission for a particular issue, please send your submission at least two days prior to the desired publication date.

• Please include a short statement of context when submitting imagery, audio, and video.

• We appreciate various styles of scholarship; the best work reveals thoughtfulness, insight, and fresh perspectives.

• Such submissions should be clear, concise, and impactful. We aim to be socially conscious and inclusive of various cultures, identities, opinions, and lifestyles.

• As a product of the support and resources of Loyola University and its Women Studies and Gender Studies department, all contributors must be respectful of the origin of the magazine; this can be accomplished in part by ensuring that each article is part of an open discourse rather than an exclusive manifesto.

• All articles must have some clear connection to the mission of the magazine. It may be helpful to provide a sentence or two describing how your article fits into the magazine as a whole.

• The writing must be the original work of the author and may be personal, theoretical, or a combination of the two. When quoting or using the ideas of others, it must be properly quoted and annotated. Please fact-check your work and double-check any quotes, allusions and references. When referencing members of Loyola and the surrounding community, an effort should be made to allow each person to review the section of the article that involves them to allow for fairness and accuracy.

• Gratuitous use of expletives and other inflammatory or degrading words and imagery may be censored if it does not fit with the overall message of the article or magazine. We do not wish to edit content, but if we feel we must insist on changes other than fixing typos and grammar, we will do so with the intent that it does not compromise the author’s original message. If no compromise can be made, the editor reserves the right not to publish an article.

• All articles are assumed to be the opinion of the contributor and not necessarily a reflection of the views of Loyola University and the WSGS program.

We very much look forward to your submissions and your contribution to our overall mission. Please send your submissions to Curtis at: jmain@luc.edu