

April 29, 2005

MEMO

TO: Vicki PatraKa

FROM: Rob Buffington and Susana Peña

RE: Sexualities and Borders Research Cluster Annual Report

### **Sexualities and Borders Cluster Report**

Submitted to: Vivian PatraKa, Director, Institute for the Study of Culture and Society

Submitted by: Robert Buffington and Susana Peña, on behalf of the Sexualities and Borders cluster

#### **SUMMARY OF CLUSTER ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Organized the Sexualities and Borders Symposium on March 23-24, 2005.
- Met regularly to discuss members' works in progress.
- Fostered research productivity of faculty and graduate students. Specific accomplishments are noted below.
- Fostered graduate curriculum development. In Fall 2005, Robert Buffington and Susana Peña are co-teaching a graduate course that builds on the cluster's work. The course is entitled "American Borderlands: Race, Sex, and Nation" (ETHN 680/HIST 680).
- Fostered interdisciplinary academic conversations between junior faculty, senior faculty, and graduate students.

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## **INDIVIDUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS for AY 2004-2005**

### Susana Peña

All of the major research and teaching projects I am engaged in this year have been directly related to the ICS Sexualities and Borders Cluster. I revised the paper we discussed in our cluster meeting entitled “Sexuality and Citizenship in Miami” and presented it at the international congress of the Latin American Studies Association in Las Vegas in October of 2004. I am currently incorporating this paper into the first chapter of my book manuscript, “Oye Loca: The Making of Cuban American Gay Male Miami.” The successful Sexualities and Borders Symposium was a product of a year’s preparation and an accomplishment that the entire cluster can claim. Building on the intellectual work done by the cluster and the Symposium, Robert Buffington and I are co-teaching a graduate class on American Borderlands: Race, Sex, and Nation. Finally, the symposium was the inspiration for an edited collection on sexualities in Latino/a and Latin America that Robert Buffington and I are proposing.

### Christina Gerken

In December 2004, we discussed my work on immigrants and welfare reform at our cluster meeting. I presented a shorter version of the paper at the “Citizenship in Times of Crisis” Conference in February 2005 (“Immigrants and Welfare Reform,” Citizenship in Times of Crisis Conference, Center for the Study of Citizenship, Wayne State University, February 2005.)

I won the Snook Paper Award for a paper on “The Color of Birth Control Politics: Race, Class, and Norplant.” Initially, this paper was written for Eithne’s “Race, Sexuality, Nation” class, but my work with the research cluster helped me to improve the paper significantly.

I presented this paper at the Snook Award Ceremony on April 14th, 2005 (at BGSU)

A longer version of this paper will be published in the McNeese Review in Fall 2005

I will present a paper at the NWSA Conference in June (“Third World Women and Western Politics of Population Control: A Feminist Analysis of Long-Acting Contraceptives,” National Women’s Studies Association Conference, Orlando, June 2005).

## Eithne Luibhéid

### **TALKS:**

“Racial Reconstruction Through Childbearing in Contemporary Ireland,” Women’s History Month Presentation, BGSU (March 1, 2005)

“Heterosexuality as the Logic of Immigrant ‘Responsibility’ Under Neo-Liberalism” at the Sexualities and Borders Conference, panel on Queer Border Control: Crime, Surveillance and Sexuality, Bowling Green State University, OH (March 24, 2005)

“Contracting Personal Responsibility: U.S. Immigration Control, Sexuality and Subjectification,” at the Private Conduct/Private Spaces: New Media, Surveillance, Sexuality Conference, panel on Surveillance and the Public Sphere, University of California, Berkeley, CA (April 8-9, 2005)

“Challenging National Sovereignty Through Childbearing,” Reproductive Disruptions Conference, University of Michigan, MI, May 21, 2005

“The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act: 40 Years Later,” Berkshire Women’s History Conference, Claremont Colleges, CA, June 3, 2005

### **PUBLICATIONS:**

#### ***Edited Collections and Special Issues:***

“Representing Migrant Women in Ireland and the E.U.,” a special issue of *Women’s Studies International Forum* 27:4 (October-November 2004). Co-edited with Ronit Lentin.

*Queer Migrations: Sexuality, U.S. Citizenship, and Border Crossings*. Co-edited with Lionel Cantú. University of Minnesota Press, 2005

#### ***Published Refereed Articles and Chapters:***

“Introduction.” In Luibheid and Cantú, Jr., eds., *Queer Migrations: Sexuality, U.S. Citizenship, and Border Crossings*. University of Minnesota Press, 2005, pp.ix-xvi.

“Well-Founded Fear: Political Asylum and the Boundaries of Sexual Identity in the U.S./ Mexican Borderlands,” co-written with Lionel Cantú, Jr. and Alexandra Minna Stern. In Luibheid and Cantú, Jr., eds., *Queer Migrations: Sexuality, U.S. Citizenship, and Border Crossings*. University of Minnesota Press, 2005, pp.61-74.

“Childbearing against the State? Asylum Seeker Women in the Irish Republic.” In *Women’s Studies International Forum*, special issue on “Representing Migrant Women in Ireland and the E.U.,” 27:4 (October-November 2004), pp.335-350.

#### ***Published Non-Refereed Articles and Chapters:***

Eithne Luibheid and Ronit Lentin, “Introduction,” *Women’s Studies International Forum*, special issue on “Representing Migrant Women in Ireland and the E.U.,” 27:4 (October-November 2004), pp.293-300.

***Forthcoming Articles and Book Chapters Completed:***

“Heteronormativity, Neo-liberal Governance and U.S. Immigration Control.” In Bradley Epps, Keja Valens, and Bill Johnson Gonzalez, eds., *Passing Lines: Immigration and Sexuality* (Cambridge, MA: The David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies and Harvard University Press). Anticipated 2005.

“Immigration.” In Bruce Burgett and Glen Hendler, eds., *Keywords in American Cultural Studies* (New York: New York University Press, 2006)

**COURSES:**

Ethnic Studies 680, Re-making US Identities Through Immigration (Fall 2004)

Ethnic Studies 650, Sexuality, Race and Nation (Spring 2005)

Robert Buffington

**BOOKS:**

*Case Studies, Cause Célèbres, and Other True-to-Life Adventures in the Social Construction of Deviance in Mexico* (edited with Pablo Piccato). Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, forthcoming (Fall 2005).

*Keen's Latin American Civilization*, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition (edited with Lila Caimari). Boulder: Westview Press, 2004.

*Mexico: An Encyclopedia of Contemporary Culture and History* (written with Don Coerver and Suzanne Pasztor). Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004.

**ARTICLES:** (Both these articles were read and critiqued by earlier ICS clusters)

“La ‘Dancing’ Mexicana: Danzón and the Transformation of Intimacy in Post-Revolutionary Mexico City,” *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* (April 2005).

“Towards a Modern Sacrificial Economy: Violence Against Women and Male Subjectivity in the Turn-of-the-Century Mexico City Penny Press” in Victor Macías González and Anne Rubenstein, eds., *Masculinities Uncut*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, forthcoming (Spring 2005). A Spanish version of this article will appear in Elisa Speckman Guerra and Claudia Agostoni, eds., *Discursos, prácticas y sanciones. Ensayos de historia social en una perspectiva comparada (México y Argentina, 1850 - 1950)*. México: El Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, forthcoming (Fall 2005).

**CONFERENCE PAPERS:** (Both these conference papers were read and critiqued by earlier ICS groups).

“Dancing Race and Class in Post-Revolutionary Mexico City.” Presented to the Ohio Latinamericanist Conference at Ohio State University, 27 February 2004.

“Subjectivity, Agency, and the New History of Gender and Sexuality in Latin America.” Presented to the Colloquium on Race, Class, and Gender in Latin American Civil Society at Ohio State University, 30 January 2004.

**GRANTS:**

Social Science Research Council Research Associate (for Susana Peña), Sexuality Research Fellowship Program (2004-2005)

Applied for NEH Fellowship for 2006 (decision pending).

**COURSES:**

Susana Peña and I will team teach a course based on the Sexualities and Borders Symposium in the Fall (2005): American Borderlands: Race, Sex, and Nation (HIST 680/ENTH 680).

Bill Albertini

While I joined the cluster only in January, it already has contributed to my research.

**TALKS:**

“Sexualities & Borders Symposium, Introductory Overview of Roderick Ferguson's Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique,” March 24, 2005.

**CONFERENCE PAPER:** (proposed and accepted, Spring 2005)

"Divided Image / Undivided Memory: Jenny Boylan's 'She's Not There' and the Mainstreaming of Transgender Memory." M/MLA convention in Milwaukee, November 2005. Panel: "Memory and the Performance of Gender"

**ARTICLES:** (being prepared for submission to journals):

"Blending: Art, Activism, Authorship." Workshopped in Sexualities & Borders cluster, April 2005. Journal submission in early summer 2005.

"Contagion at the End of the World," concerned with bodily and national boundaries and the narration of contagious illness. Journal submission in late summer 2005.

**TEACHING:**

*Fall 2005:*

ENG 311, “Gay and Lesbian Literature and Criticism.” Redesigning class with an attention to multiple forms of sexuality and the intersection of ethnicity, race, nationality, and sexuality, stemming largely from cluster discussions and from the Sexualities and Borders Symposium, March 23, 2005.

## Amy Robinson

Participating in the writing cluster has helped me think about new angles and directions for my research on nineteenth and twentieth-century Mexican literature and culture. I presented a paper to the cluster about a novel by Ireneo Paz, and I have since proposed a panel at the Latin American Studies Association around the topic of gender and citizenship in which I will broaden my analysis of that author. I have also applied for two summer grants to continue my research on Paz. The results of this research will be a chapter for my book manuscript, which is an elaboration of my doctoral dissertation about the representations of bandits in Mexican literature.

### **PUBLICATIONS:**

“Illegitimacy, Incest and Insanity: An Analysis of Secrecy in Cecilia Valdés (Cuba 1882) and Carmen (Mexico 1882)” in Margaret Parker and Yvonne Fuentes, eds. Baton Rouge: LSU Press. (Forthcoming)

“All Revolutionaries Have Been Called Bandits”. *The Image of the Hero in Literature, Media and Society: Selected Papers* 2004 Conference. Will Write and Steven Kaplan, eds. Pueblo, Colorado: The Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery, 2004. 220-225.

Book Review: Vanderwood, Paul. Juan Soldado: Rapist, Murderer, Martyr, Saint (2004). *Reviewed for The Americas: A Quarterly Review of Inter-American Cultural History*. (Forthcoming)

### **CONFERENCES/TALKS**

“Foundational Girlfriends: Gendering the Conquest in Ireneo Paz's Amor y Suplicio (1873) and Doña Marina (1883). Latin American Studies Association. Las Vegas. March 2006. (Under Review)

“Chucho el Roto, or, The Impurities of a Mexican Bandit”. Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies Conference. Louisiana State University. April 2005.

“The War on Terror: Perspectives from Mexico”. Latino Issues Conference. BGSU. April 2005

“Heraclio Bernal and the Social Bandit Debate in Porfirian Mexico.” Latin American Studies Association. Las Vegas. October 2004.

**GRANTS:**

David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies (DRCLAS) Library

Scholars Program at Harvard University. Summer 2005. (Under Review)

Mexico-North Research Network Transnationalism Fellowship Program for research in Mexico. Summer 2005. (Under Review)

Ohio Humanities Council Teachers Institutes in the Humanities:

“Perceptions and Constructions of Latin American Identities in Global Times.” Proposed with Federico Chalupa, Francisco Cabanillas, Ana Del Sarto. Summer 2005. (Proposed/Not Awarded)

## **Sexualities and Borders**

### **Proposal for Interdisciplinary Research Cluster**

#### Overview

The “Sexualities and Borders” research cluster will be an interdisciplinary working group that includes BGSU faculty and graduate students engaged in research on the intersection of sexuality, gender, race/ethnicity, migration, and borderlands. It is intended to encourage intellectual exchange among scholars from different departments and different disciplines including Ethnic Studies, History, American Culture Studies, English, Spanish, and Communications. In practical terms, it will provide collegial support for members’ ongoing research, opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration, and a forum for structured scholarly exchange.

#### Rationale

Interdisciplinary work has come to occupy a privileged place in academic discourse. Indeed, “best practice” in most disciplines (at least in the humanities and humanistic social sciences) requires a solid grounding in recent theoretical advances in cultural studies. At the same time, most academic work is still produced within a disciplinary context that appropriates useful insights from “outside” and limits opportunities for truly interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary exchange. It is appropriate that this cluster which focuses on border crossings structurally facilitates the crossing of disciplinary borders.

Even within disciplines, however, the study of sexuality, race/ethnicity, gender, and immigration has been limited by a narrow focus that viewed each of these structuring categories/processes as self-contained. Our cluster seeks to overcome this limitation by centering the intersection of these hierarchies of sexuality, race/ethnicity, and gender.

#### Goals

1. Offer a structured forum for interdisciplinary dialogue on sexualities and borders; and facilitate the exchange of ideas, theoretical models, and methodologies across disciplinary boundaries.
2. Support and strengthen members’ individual research through readings of work in progress, commentary on new proposals, and focused suggestions for revisions.
3. Provide occasion for discussions of selected readings in the scholarly literature on sexualities and borders, and sustain an ongoing effort to assemble a bibliography of theoretical sources.
4. Create opportunities for collaborative research and interdisciplinary projects or partnerships.
5. Support courses on sexualities and borders at BGSU through discussion of ideas and syllabi.
6. Develop a working bibliography of important work on sexualities and borders.

7. Plan public events that extend the group's activities and enrich the BGSU community. The first of these events—a symposium featuring invited speakers and highlighting the work of cluster members—is planned for Spring 2005. (Drs. Peña and Buffington have already been awarded a Social Science Research Council Grant for 2004-2005 that will provide some funding to supplement the ICS cluster funds.)
8. Enable and enhance both individual and group applications for external grant funding.

### **CLUSTER MEETING AND READING SCHEDULE:**

5/4/04, 242 Shatzel Hall

- Discussion of cluster description draft
- Introduction of interested people, brainstorming goals for cluster
- Preliminary discussion of Symposium (Spring 2005)

9/20/04, ICS conference room, College Park 106/108

- Discussion of paper by Susana Peña, "Sexuality And Citizenship In Miami"
- Discussion of symposium budget and planning

10/25/04, ICS conference room, College Park 106/108

- Discussion of paper by Amy Robinson, "Joaquín Murrieta: Banditry in the Borderlands"
- Discussion of symposium description, how to organize symposium, and list of possible invited speakers

12/6/04, ICS conference room, College Park 106/108

- Discussion of paper by Christina Gerken, "Immigrants and Welfare"
- Discussion of symposium planning

1/21/05, ICS conference room, College Park 106/108

- Discussion of *Aberrations in Black* by Roderick Ferguson, speaker invited as part of Provost Lecture Series and Sexualities and Borders Symposium
- Discussion of logistical planning of Symposium
- Distribution of ECAP proposal for Symposium cultural events

2/18/05, ICS conference room, College Park 106/108

- Discussion of paper by Eithne Luibheid, "Contracting Personal Responsibility"
- Discussion of symposium planning

3/18/05, ICS conference room, College Park 106/108

- Discussion of paper by Joelle Ruby Ryan on media representations of transgendered people.
- Last minute planning for symposium to be held 3/23-3/24

4/22/05, ICS conference room, College Park 106/108

- Discussion of paper by Bill Albertini, “Blending: Art, Activism, Authors”
- Discussion of cluster goals for AY 05-06
- Feedback forms for Sile Singleton, performer of Paint!

### **ROSTER OF ACTIVE CLUSTER PARTICIPANTS:**

**Bill Albertini** (Asst. Professor, English) – Bill Albertini is assistant professor of English at BGSU. His book, "Catching Discourse: Contagion, Narrative, and US Cultures at the Century's Turn," an examination of the role of contagion in American cultural production since the beginning of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, is in progress.

**Vibha Bhalla** (Asst. Professor, Ethnic Studies)—Vibha Bhalla will begin her first year as an Asst. Professor in AY 05-06 after 3 years as an Instructor in BGSU’s Ethnic Studies Department. Her research focuses on immigration from India to the Detroit Metropolitan area.

**Rob Buffington** (Assoc. Professor, History)-- Robert Buffington is associate professor of history at BGSU. His books include *Criminal and Citizen in Modern Mexico* and a collection of essays entitled *Reconstructing Criminality in Latin America*, coedited with Carlos Aguirre.

**Christina Gerken** (graduate student, American Culture Studies)— Christina Gerken received a Master's degree from the University of Goettingen, Germany in 2003. She is currently developing a dissertation project on social citizenship and welfare reform for the American Culture Studies Program at BGSU.

**Eithne Luibheid** (Assoc. Professor, Ethnic Studies)— Eithne Luihhéid’s research analyzes the intersections of sexuality, racialization and migration, and her most recent project focuses on the connections between sexual regimes and asylum seekers in the Irish Republic. Publications include *Entry Denied: Controlling Sexuality at the Border* (University of Minnesota Press, 2002); co-editor of a special issue of *Women’s Studies International Forum* on “Migrant Women Transforming Ireland and the E.U.” (forthcoming) with Ronit Lentin; and co-editor of *Queer Migrations: Sexuality, U.S. Citizenship and Border Crossings* (University of Minnesota Press, in press) with Lionel Cantú.

**Susana Peña** (Asst. Professor, Ethnic Studies)—Susana Peña is currently working on a book-length manuscript that analyzes the creation of a Cuban American gay male culture in Miami, Florida. Using a framework informed by cultural studies, ethnic studies, sociology, and [most recently] history, this project examines the process of border crossing (immigration) and the ways in which the State monitored and selectively controlled sexuality. In addition, it analyzes the creation of a distinct culture by first- and second-generation immigrant gay culture.

**Amy Robinson** (Asst. Professor, Romance Languages)— Amy Robinson’s research examines how representations of bandits and outlaws in late nineteenth-century Mexican literature reflect the interaction between dominant and marginalized groups during the Porfirio Diaz dictatorship. Mexican identity was often depicted as a duel between opposing identities such as regional and national, masculine and feminine, Mexican and U.S., or criminal and citizen. It argues that bandit literature often exposes and transgresses the boundaries between those apparent dichotomies and thus reconfigures notions of cultural and political legitimacy.

**Joelle Ruby Ryan** (Graduate student, American Culture Studies)— Joelle Ruby Ryan's research focuses on images and representations of drag queens, drag kings, transgender, transsexual and intersexual people in film, television and video. S/he is interested in studying these gender diverse constituencies in a wide range of media, including television talk shows, horror films, pornography, pseudo-scientific programs, and independent documentaries. In addition to gender, s/he is interested in the ways that these media represent trans people in terms of race, sexuality, class and nation and how they both reify and subvert dominant notions of identity and relationships of power.

**In addition, the following people attended cluster meetings:**

Eric Anderson (graduate student, American Culture Studies)

Vivian Patraaka (Director, Institute for the Study of Culture and Society)

## REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON SEXUALITIES AND BORDERS

The Sexualities and Borders symposium will focus on the intersection of sexuality, gender, race/ethnicity, migration, and borders. We will analyze sexualities in relation to different kinds of borders: borders between and within social hierarchies, the geographical borders between nation-states, and borders between disciplines.

### *The Borders between and within Social Hierarchies*

The study of sexuality, race/ethnicity, gender, and immigration has been limited by a narrow focus that views each of these structuring categories/processes as self-contained. This symposium will challenge this limitation by centering the intersection of these hierarchies of sexuality, race/ethnicity, and gender. As Judith Butler argues, the materialization of sex through normalizing regimes of power (in everyday life) produces borders (inclusions/exclusions) of all kinds from the psychic/psychological to the international. This constantly reiterated materialization process places sexuality at the center of lived experience and explains the state's obsession with what Michel Foucault calls biopolitics (i.e. state discourses about social reproduction). We will also use this intersectional approach to challenge any notion of race, sexuality, and gender as monolithic categories. Therefore, we are also interested in the borders within racial, sexual, and gender categories, communities, and cultures.

### *Geographical Borders and Migration*

Focusing on the movement of people, cultures, and capital across the borders of the nation-state, draws our attention to the contact zone between 'native' and 'alien', 'white' and 'Other.' This symposium will focus on research that analyzes migratory process and immigrant culture in relation to sexuality. Specifically, we will highlight research that focuses on immigrant gay men and lesbians of color and the ways in which anti-immigrant discourses are tied to normalizing discourses about the heteronormative family as nation.

### *Borders between Disciplines*

Because we believe that sexualities are best understood through interdisciplinary study, we are interested in fostering conversations across disciplinary borders. Invited participants will have backgrounds in History, Sociology, Anthropology, Literature, and Performance Studies, among other disciplines and interdisciplinary areas.

**FORMAT:** The symposium will last 1 ½ days and will include invited speakers from the Midwest region as well as contributions from the ICS Cluster group. Papers will be presented as part of panels. One panel will be organized as a response to *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique*, the recently published book by our keynote speaker, Roderick Ferguson. Dr. Ferguson is an Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Minnesota. His book, *Aberrations in Black*, carefully analyzes the relationship between heteronormativity and blackness in the U.S. Ferguson's talk is part of the Provost Lecture Series. In addition to academic lectures, the symposium will feature a facilitated discussion and screenings of "Mind if I Call You Sir?" and "Some Reasons for Living," two documentary shorts that focus on transgender Latina/o experience. The final event of the symposium will be a one-person show entitled PAINT! by transgender performer, Sile P. Singleton.

**FUNDING AND INSTIUTIONAL SUPPORT:** This symposium builds on the work of the “Sexualities and Borders” research cluster of the Institute for the Study of Culture and Society. The cluster is an interdisciplinary working group that includes BGSU faculty and graduate students engaged in research on the intersection of sexuality, gender, race/ethnicity, migration, and borderlands. Thus far we have received generous support from the Department of Ethnic Studies, the Institute for the Study of Culture and Society, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Graduate College, and the Social Science Research Council’s Sexuality Research Fellowship Program.

### **POST-SYMPOSIUM REPORT:**

- An estimated 250 people attended at least one of the academic panels on Thursday and approximately 150 attended Sile Singleton's Performance of Paint!.
- During Thursday’s panels, a core group of approximately 20-30 people stayed throughout the day. Most attendees came for one panel, with attendance increasing as the day progressed.
- Because we had a sign in sheet (only a minority of the attendees signed in), we know some information about the attendees at the academic panels. We had attendees from the following institutions:
  - B.G.S.U.
  - Oberlin College
  - Ohio State University
  - University of Michigan
  - TG Toledo (community organization)
- The audience included undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff from the following units:
  - Africana Studies
  - American Culture Studies
  - BG News
  - College of Arts and Sciences
  - Communication Studies
  - Creative Writing
  - English
  - Ethnic Studies
  - HDFS
  - History
  - Romance Languages
  - Sociology
  - Theater
  - And students from UNIV 100