

RHETORIC OF THE OTHER V: FROM PREVISIBILITY TO HYPERVISIBILITY
RHÉTORIQUE DE L'AUTRE V : DE LA PRÉVISIBILITÉ À L'HYPERVISIBILITÉ

ABSTRACTS

Thomas Armbrrecht, University of Wisconsin
“Turning a Blind Eye: Self-representation in Guibert’s *Vice*”

In *Reading “Rembrandt,”* literary critic Mieke Bal discusses a way of analyzing images in conjunction with text that rethinks the traditional illustrative relation between them. Although she does not mention any autobiographical writings or self-portraits, Bal states that she is not concerned with the “authorship” of either, since she follows Foucault’s logic that the author is a projection of the reader’s need for “semantic centrality.” When authors represent themselves, however, it is especially difficult to consider their work a projection of the reader. This becomes even more of a challenge when self-portraits accompany autobiographical narratives in a seemingly mutually illustrative relation.

Despite frequently writing and taking pictures of himself, Hervé Guibert’s entire oeuvre bears witness to the varied relations between narrative and images and supports Bal’s claim that even self-representation can reveal more about readerly desires than about the authorial truths. In *Vice*, his relation to the text is particularly complex because the text does not fit into a particular genre and gives no clue of what to make of it. The French subtitle, “Photographies de l’auteur,” promotes this ambiguity, since it can mean either “photographs by the author” or “photographs of the author.” This latter interpretation may at first seem implausible, since Guibert’s image does not appear in the book. A closer examination of the photographs, texts, and their connections reveals, however, that Guibert is creating a self-portrait through negative representation. It is almost as if he is depicting himself in silhouette.

Guibert’s *Vice* is a most unusual form of auto-fiction—one that uses words and images not to represent him directly, but rather to make his way of seeing intelligible to the reader-viewer by forcing him/her to approximate it. This visual identification with Guibert’s gaze creates one of the most intimate, if unorthodox, representations of an author who usually placed himself more traditionally and more obviously at the center of his works.

Charles R. Batson, Union College
“A Queer Home: Dubois’s *Being at Home with Claude* and Performance of/in a Queer Montreal”

Traditional readings of René-Daniel Dubois’s 1985 stage-play *Being at Home with Claude* and of Jean Beaudin’s 1992 award-winning filmic adaptation have focused on the psychosexual drama at the heart of the work: having murdered a john with whom he had fallen in love, a male prostitute holes himself up in the chambers of a judge he knows, summons press representatives to publicize his story, and delivers a rambling confession to a detective whose repeated, annoyed *pourquois* reveal his sense that he may never make reason out of the gigolo’s

tale. Ultimately offering an intimate and elegiac telling of a love-filled decision to forever freeze his john/lover's beauty at the moment of *la petite mort*, the prostitute, who has continued to hustle during the months-long affair, presents a *mise-en-scène* of the queerest of loves, at least in the eyes of the detective who would much rather be exploring the joys of one of Montreal's international festivals than the domestic troubles of his native city. In Dubois's text, however, it is precisely this city that becomes a third actor in this *huis clos* between the two radically different men, taking on a corporeal presence both as a partner in the seductions of the gigolo and his john and as a tangible texture linking confessor and confessee. In my analysis that draws on recent research on the Queer City, it is a complex, multiple, and ultimately queer Montreal that comes to mark the judge's chambers and the activities within it. In its (troubled) *jouissance* set in play through its difference(s), Dubois's Montreal, caught in questions of national and sexual identity, is revealed to be as queer as the tale told of its streets.

Vinciane Boudonnet, Laurentian University

“From *Sodom and Gomorrah* to *Our Lady of the Flowers*: Inversion and Alterity in Proust and Genet”

The presentation focuses on the idea and trope of “inversion” in the construction of sexual marginality within canonical French texts. Proust insisted on using the word *inverti* to describe his characters because it combines the notions of reversal and of homosexuality. Beginning with definitions of the function of metaphor by Genette, Derrida and De Mann, I show that Proust's use of metaphor in *Sodom and Gomorrah* constructs the novel's triumph over time as the obverse of an unmasking of sexual conformity. Just as the real meaning of events in the novel is obscured by habit but retained and revealed by involuntary memory, the true meaning of the characters' behavior only becomes clear once the veil of social convention has been torn. Marcel's discovery of his creative vocation B of his own identity B parallels his discovery of the principle of sexual inversion governing the behavior of the novel's main others in an acknowledgement of the importance of sexual marginality that stops just short of outing the author. Sharing essential traits with the *Remembrance*, Genet's entire corpus has been seen as an ambiguous rewriting of Proust, if not as a travesty. Beyond the self-imposed incarceration of the neurasthenic and the penal incarceration of the convict, their sexual “deviance” confined each of them to the margins of society, whence each recreated a world of his own. In Genet's work, sexuality and memory are no longer the implicit terms of an overarching narrative trope; they become the extroverted subjects of a textual identity which glorifies marginality. Genet's exteriorization of Proust's rhetoric of inversion transforms the writing of queerness into something outrageous and other. By doing so, Genet continues the *Remembrance*'s exploration of the interaction of memory, sexuality and metaphor while remaining faithful, if in a somewhat ironic, onanistic fashion, to the Proustian ideal of authorial omnipotence.

Marie-Hélène Bourcier, Université de Lille III

“La Pensée Plate / Flat Thinking : L’universalisme post-moderne — “dernier twist de la théorie queer ?”

Universalisme modifié ou réinventé, appel des normes, désir de reconnaissance, augmentation des droits, combat pour l’inclusivité, modernité new look : un nouveau langage théorique et politique a fait son apparition depuis ces dernières années dans la pensée critique straight et queer. Ces notions (concepts, têtes molles de la modernité?) qui étaient autrefois les cibles privilégiées des déconstructivistes, des post-modernes ou post-structuraux fervents font un come back remarqué dans le dernier ouvrage de Judith Butler *Undoing Gender (Défaire le Genre)* qui vient d’être traduit en France, un an après la parution tardive de (*Trouble dans le Genre*).

Sommes nous en train de vivre le tournant universaliste et humaniste “global” ? Comment analyser ce qui peut être perçu comme un retour à ce qu’il faudrait appeler une tradition? Nostalgie? Circularité du débat? Epuisement du multiculturalisme radical ou de “gauche”? Crispation post 11 septembre? Réappropriation perverse? Occupation de la “maison du maître” et de son maître-mots? Par qui? Des minoritaires ressemblants ou mascaradés comme les gays et les lesbiennes du dernier film des frères Wachovski (*V comme Vendetta*) ou les gangsters en combinaison du dernier Spike Lee (*Inside Man*)? Est-ce le résultat d’une prise en compte de la leçon sur la complexité du rapport des colonisés à la modernité, bien présente dans les écrits des critiques non occidentaux du colonialisme et de l’impérialisme mais que n’ont pas voulu entendre que les promoteurs fondateurs de la dite théorie post-coloniale, occupés qu’ils étaient à marketer l’orientalisme sur le marché universitaire américain? Ultime ruse de la modernité? Développement d’une puissance d’agir majoritaire? Nouvelle dialectique internationale? Modestie feinte?

En prônant la réappropriation de l’universel pour une vision plus inclusive de l’humain, *Défaire le Genre* peut sembler défaire ce qu’avait fait *Gender Trouble* qui proposait notamment un féminisme certes sans sujet femme mais néanmoins facilitateur d’une prolifération, celle des genres en l’occurrence. Les stratégies critiques et politiques esquissées dans *Trouble dans le Genre* pour déconstruire, dénaturaliser et resignifier les genres, plus tard les injures, se voient transposées dans *Undoing Gender* pour transformer un universel transformable puisqu’aussi contingent que les genres (au même titre que pas mal de constructions sociales et culturelles). A la possibilité de subversion ou de parodie certes impersonnelles de *Trouble dans le Genre* vient se substituer un horizon (plus restreint?) des possibles comptant sur la force paradoxale de la vulnérabilité (qui s’explique plus par la négativité constitutive de l’altérité que par la force performative).

Qu’en est-il de l’efficacité politique de cet humain trop humain? Et si peu cyborg ? Qu’apporte ce sujet humain au regard de la prolifération des figures de la subjectivation politique proposées notamment par les théories féministes des différences des années 90 et des subcultures transpédégouines bien réelles?

L’universalisme modifiable ou modifié est-il notre nouvel humanisme ? Si la contingence intrinsèque ne saurait être le propre de l’universalisme, pourquoi en faire le support de la transformation sociale politique et identitaire? Plus généralement, la limite intrinsèque des approches culturalistes et post-modernes (théorie féministe et post-coloniales incluses) n’est-elle pas justement de cultiver à terme un approche textuel ou métaphorique du changement? Plus

localement, en quoi ce néo-universalisme est particulièrement mal venu dans le contexte républicain français?

Jorge Calderón, Simon Fraser University
“Au cœur de soi l’autre”

“Mes doigts s’enfoncent dans ta chair. Syllabique.
L’écho de ma propre voix dans ma bouche.” —Nathalie Stephens

Soi, c’est-à-dire l’être même du sujet humain, est déterminé socialement et construit culturellement à travers l’expérience de chaque individu. Lorsque l’individu en question ne reconnaît pas les modèles culturels proposés par sa communauté, il y a une distanciation qui se produit. Cette distance peut être la source d’une riche différence ou bien d’une profonde blessure. Le résultat final est relatif à la position et aux prises de position de l’individu en fonction de la conscience de sa différence.

Pour cette raison, comme l’ont expliqué Paul Ricœur dans *Soi-même comme un autre* et Julia Kristeva dans *Étrangers à nous-mêmes*, soi peut être une division multiple. Dans le cas de l’expérience queer, il y a, dans un moment précis du développement de ma vie, d’un côté celui que je dois être pour appartenir pleinement à ma société et, de l’autre côté, celui que j’ai le sentiment d’être. Il y a donc un soi qui est projeté pour les autres et il y a un soi personnel et secret.

Par l’expression ‘au cœur de soi l’autre’, j’entends bien sûr la coexistence d’une pluralité de ‘moi’, mais je rends également compte des autres, à l’extérieur de moi, qui me sont liés par les forces de l’amitié, du désir, de la passion, de l’obsession, du phantasme, etc. Ce sont tous les autres que je porte en moi. Le soi est défini en fonction de tous ces autres, de soi et de soi-même comme un autre.

Ces questions seront explorées par l’analyse des œuvres littéraires de Nicole Brossard, Jean-Paul Daoust, André Roy, Nathalie Stephens, Michel-Marc Bouchard et Alain Bernard Marchand. Ils sont tous des écrivains contemporains du Québec.

David Caron, University of Michigan
“AIDS, Tact, and the Poetics of Failure”

In François Truffaut’s *Baisers volés*, a young Antoine Doissel is smitten with a rich and beautiful older woman who happens to be the wife of his employer. As the two are having tea one day, the woman flirtatiously asks Antoine if he likes music. Antoine, extremely nervous, replies “Oui, Monsieur.” He is so mortified by his mistake that he runs out. The next day he receives the following note from the woman: “If a gentleman walks in on a lady in the bathroom, he may say “Excuse me, Madam.” This is called politeness. If the same gentleman says, “Excuse me, Sir,” that is called tact.” Tact, and tactfulness, may take many forms of course, but I am focusing here on the sort described in this scene.

Tact, not unlike taste, is often defined as unlearned and elusive — a natural elegance of the mind. In reality, of course, it is a construct and a mode of social policing linked to shame and

embarrassment. In Western modernity it essentially pertains to the bourgeois ideal of moderation as propriety and it has served as a tool for social inclusion or exclusion. Tact is, therefore, tied to the question of community, which is why, I want to argue, it should be reclaimed to serve the interests of those who have traditionally been excluded by it.

In general, one needs to exercise tact when one's interlocutor is, in one way or another, vulnerable and/or embarrassed; that is, when that person has failed at something. While the avowed purpose of a tactful statement is to mask a person's failure and pretend it never happened, it is in fact an assertion of power that paradoxically singles out what it purports to ignore. Tact as policing simultaneously erases and brings out the other's singularity. It seeks to define its relation to the other as distinction — an essentializing move — rather than difference — a deconstructive queering.

Yet tact (at least of the sort exemplified by the scene from *Baisers volés*) is itself a mode of failure C a willing failure of language. ("Excuse me, Sir" instead of "Excuse me, Madam," for example.) In other words, whereas tactlessness means saying the wrong thing, one is tactful when saying the right thing means saying the wrong thing *on purpose*. Tact, then, is a trope — that is, a *figure de pensée* based on substitution. It is not, however, a rhetorical tool of persuasion, which would imply reducing the possibility of noise, or interpretive errors. (To make sure that one's tactful statement is understood as such would be, well, tactless.) It is, rather, a poetic trope whose readability leaves room for multiple interpretations and maintains the "tactee"'s agency and freedom *not* to see the "tactor" as tactful. In short, tact as queering must contain the possibility of the tactor's erasure.

In this paper, I want to argue that tact may be reclaimed when it is understood not as an (exclusionary) erasure/showcasing of the other's failure, but rather as a way to share in that failure by foregrounding one's own. In that sense, tact may be used as a basis for community — community *in* failure and community *as* failure. In order to address this question I will focus on AIDS narratives by Hervé Guibert and Guillaume Dustan and consider (some of) the following: how being gay and contracting HIV are seen as failures; how recent medical successes in the fight against HIV and AIDS have resulted in a reassertion of the power of doctors over their patients (as opposed to the mutual queering that potentially occurred when medicine failed); what may be gained by defining survival as a failure to die; and what the etymological link between "tact" and "touch" tells us about establishing community through tact.

Philippe Chavasse, Rochester Institute of Technology
"Homosexuality as Religion in the Work of Georges Eekhoud"

Homosexual and Belgian author Georges Eekhoud's work can be best summarized as a struggle against the protestant reformation as it impacted not only religious practices, but also political and social structures. Eekhoud's first novel, *Kees Doorik*, published in 1883, was characterized by a Belgian critic of the period as a moderate and suitable representation of the Flemish temperament. Working against enduring clichés fostered by the overtly sensuous paintings of Rubens and Jordaens, Eekhoud's portrayal of placid and subservient creatures inhabiting the Flemish countryside is considered an accurate depiction of reality contributing to the recentering of a long forgotten national identity. The sudden and violent outbursts of his main characters are deemed appropriate, yet the indulgent rendering of their carnal appetites is identified as a structural flaw

which should vanish as Eekhoud's realist style reaches its full maturity. Such an appreciation is evidently biased in its evaluation of Eekhoud's passionate prose. It fails to recognize the trademark of the author's approach to the real, which is less a faithful observation of a specific region of the world than a long plea for a new social order based on a redefinition of founding myths anticipating the advent of a new religion. Focusing primarily on *Les Libertins d'Anvers*, Eekhoud's historical novel recounting the religious battles which took place in the once glorious city of his ancestors, the presentation will also make references to Eekhoud's realist novels and short stories as they exemplify the author's intent to forge religious symbols working, through the very Wagnerian themes of love and redemption, toward establishing the reign of the homosexual race. Conceived as a modern times epic, *Les Libertins d'Anvers* has been identified as the generating text informing Eekhoud's entire work. Decadent in its parasitic attempt at demoralizing Belgian society via a morally questionable reconstruction of one of its original legends, the novel marks Eekhoud's disengagement from contemporaneity as he abandons the socialist induced naturalism of his beginnings to seek refuge in the comforting utopia of an absolute past offering divine justification for his sexual anarchism.

Juliette Dade, University of Illinois

Colette's *Claudine en ménage* :A Problematic Attempt to Redefine Lesbianism

Colette's *Claudine en ménage* (1902) is one of the first novels written by a woman in France to address the subject of a lesbian relationship. Within the previous thirty years, novels written by men had presented lesbianism either as a sort of social disease that destroyed marriages and hindered the expected role of women as child-bearers, or as a form of erotica used to titillate the reading public. In this novel, Colette both creates a new definition for lesbian relationships, countering this male literary tradition, and undermines this subversive step by blanketing the book with Claudine's constant desire for a "proper" marriage in which she could be a submissive woman.

This novel allows the reader the titillating pleasures of voyeurism and presents them with the Other, helping identify the normalcy of the voyeur, the bourgeois reader. Yet Colette ignores bourgeois conventions of morality and vice when depicting Claudine and her lover; instead, Claudine refuses to accept her husband's definition of lesbianism as a "harmless" companionship "of no importance" and, after accusing him of voyeuristic tendencies, prohibits his access to the sight of the lesbian couple. Yet, while removing the sense of possession related to the voyeuristic eye of the male character, Claudine has not removed that of the male reader, to whom the details of the lesbian love scenes are still available. Furthermore, Claudine is plagued with a perpetual desire to feel submissive to her husband and become what a wife "should be," presenting her lesbian lover as a symptom of her unconventional marriage and undermining her claims with respect to lesbianism. Colette's novel, revolutionary as it is, is not yet able to break free from patriarchal tradition, but it opens a space for later novels, including Colette's own, to do so.

Elena Dalla Torre, University of Michigan

“When the Lips Meet the Anus: Resisting the Phallus Seduction with Luce Irigaray and Guy Hocquenghem”

Why would a queer feminist possibly be interested in the anal theory of gay theorist Guy Hocquenghem? In spite of Hocquenghem’s claim that from behind everybody is equal, “his” anus is both masculine and indeed quite misogynist. In my view, Hocquenghem’s misogyny emerges not only from his direct dismissal of female (homoerotic) desire—a move that made my approach to Hocquenghem’s anus initially quite uneasy, but also in his construction of the anus in apparent opposition to the phallus. This construction, I argue, stems from a rejection of a vulvomorph imaginary which simultaneously unveils Hocquenghem’s reluctance to embrace femininity and helps re-affirm the phallogocentric categories that the theorist is trying to dismantle.

In response to Hocquenghem’s anal theory, I first propose a queer feminist re-reading of the anus through a close reading of Sigmund Freud’s anal phase. In particular I look at how Freud’s account of anal retention is already inscribed as feminine. I then propose to remedy Hocquenghem’s misogynist theory by bringing into the discussion Luce Irigaray’s lips—Hocquenghem’s counter-model for female desire. My paper suggests that the anus and the lips can look alike and can re-connect in their resistance to the discourse of the phallus, thus producing an unexpected queer relation.

Chiheb Dghim, Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle (Paris III)

“Le traitement de l’homosexualité dans la presse de quelques pays francophones”

Les sociétés francophones de la rive nord ont pu débattre de l’homosexualité et accorder une liberté au choix sexuel de l’individu par-delà des crispations religieuses. Des avancées juridiques remarquables ont été réalisées dans ce domaine (pacs, mariage, adoption, union libre, etc.) A contrario, la rive francophone sud qui est musulmane dans sa majorité tâtonne toujours à offrir une place digne à la liberté des mœurs. Une contradiction flagrante s’opère entre la langue française - langue officielle ou seconde dans la majorité de ces pays qui diffuse une valeur émancipatrice - et les langues et les mœurs locales qui demeurent conservatrices et hostiles à l’homosexualité.

Dans cette communication, nous analyserons la vision et le traitement qui ressortent de l’homosexualité dans la presse francophone et cela dans quatre pays des deux rives : d’une part, le Sénégal et le Liban où cohabitent islam et christianisme, d’autre part, la France et le Canada qui sont majoritairement chrétiens. Nous nous demanderons quelle place occupe l’homosexualité dans la presse francophone et quelle image les journalistes nous renvoient de l’homosexuel dans ces pays. Nous traiterons du champ lexical de l’appellation de l’homosexuel et des divers techniques journalistiques pour évoquer cette communauté sachant que le statut de l’homosexuel dans chaque pays est différent dans la mesure où il varie de la liberté à la marginalité. La presse a-t-elle un rôle avant-gardiste dans la décrispation de la vision de l’homosexualité ou au contraire contribue-t-elle à ancrer l’exclusion et la stigmatisation de cet étranger de l’intérieur ? Cette communication tentera d’apporter des réponses objectives en balayant la presse francophone dans ces différents pays.

Philippe Dubois, Bucknell University
« Citoyens Queer : Dire autrement le (dés)Ordre Publicque »

L'autre est-il le même partout ? Ou plus précisément, le *queer* à l'américaine s'exporte-t-il aisément dans le pays qui inspira la ' French theory ' ? Rien n'est moins sûr. Linguistiquement, certains ont bien noté les difficultés que pose la traduction en français du champ des ' *queer studies* ' ; d'autres, tel Robert Harvey, s'attachent à travailler le *queer* dans tous ses états (nominal, adjectival, verbal) pour tenter de proposer quelques possibilités d'équivalences, de *déviant* à *tordu* en passant par *zèbre* et *zigoto* ou encore le très heureux *iroquois* dont l'intérêt pour le cuir fait la peau dure aux stéréotypes et aux conformismes. Politiquement, la provocation *queer* engendre des réactions divergentes dans les institutions qu'elles traversent. Autour de la question toujours très controversée du mariage par exemple, les uns votent le *Defense of Marriage Act*, alors que les autres proposent un PaCS dans lequel Éric Fassin lit une interrogation essentielle de ' la norme hétérosexuelle et la norme conjugale. '

À partir d'une réflexion sur les diverses pratiques culturelles et sociales qu'entraîne la pensée *queer*, cet essai propose de réfléchir aux conditions de négociation des droits, des devoirs et des contrats sexuels possibles au sein d'une relation. Un certain nombre de débats contemporains seront ainsi replacés dans le contexte d'une lecture spécifique de plusieurs auteurs. Balzac entre autres et ses modes de socialisation hors norme guideront par exemple nos interrogations sur le droit à la procréation et donc à la filiation, à la transmission des biens, ou encore la remise en cause de la structure familiale.

Laurence Enjolras, College of the Holy Cross
“L’habit ne vêt plus la nonne”

Depuis que le mot “queer” a évincé les vocables “gay” et “lesbienne” du discours de la recherche universitaire contemporaine (théorie, histoire, praxis, etc.) concernant le sujet non hétéronormé ou hétérosexué — tout comme eux-mêmes l'avaient fait du terme “homosexuel/le” devenu caduc en son temps — et ce dans le souci fort justifié de rendre compte plus justement, sinon de façon exhaustive -B puisque par définition elle échappe d'emblée à la domestication dès que s'enclenche l'analyse — d'une réalité qui trouve ses racines dans les multiples dissidences sexuelles et identitaires actuelles, les représentations et manifestations des sujets dits tels (assumés ou étiquetés) ont à tel point éclaté et se sont à tel point installées dans la sphère publique qu'il est temps en effet de s'interroger aujourd'hui sur sa marginalité supposée et de questionner plutôt son hypervisibilité, même si cette dernière reste encore pour beaucoup circonscrite dans les marges intellectuelles et artistiques qui ont à cœur de se pencher sur ses avatars socio-politiques.

En prenant pour sujet d'analyse de départ plusieurs des textes de Nina Bouraoui (de *L'Age blessé* -1998; *La Voyeuse interdite* -1991; *Poing mort* - 1992; *Le Bal des murènes* - 1996; à *Garçon manqué* - 2000; *La Vie heureuse* - 2002; *Poupée Bella* - 2004; et *Mes mauvaises pensées* - 2005), certains pris au pied de la lettre, d'autres comme métaphore du thème en question, il s'agira de cerner le sujet queer en tant que “monsieur / madame tout-le-monde” qui peut désormais déclarer littérairement (là encore, le vocable ayant évolué, il conviendra de préciser ce que le terme “littérairement” recouvre actuellement par rapport à ce qu'il recouvrait ne serait-ce qu'il y a un demi-siècle) une sexualité naturellement pulvérisée sans que le public ait à

sourciller. Le Renaudot couronnant *Mes mauvaises pensées* (tout comme le Médicis couronnant *Pas un jour* de Garréta en 2002) n'a en aucun cas le même poids public (provocation) que le Fémina de Jocelyne François pour *Joue-nous Espagnã* en 1982, ni n'en a l'impact (voyeurisme), ni n'en porte les stigmates (scandale). Le fait qu'il s'agisse d'un auteur femme et que traditionnellement la sexualité des femmes est d'autant plus banalisée, donc acceptée, qu'elle est "salace" ou jugée (voire souhaitée) telle (cf. les nombreux romans du XIX^e ayant cette portée) n'est plus de mise aujourd'hui. Il s'agit, derrière la consécration littéraire, d'une reconnaissance à part entière de l'individu, fût-il fictif, en tant que sujet complexe in-discernable, in-assignable, in-qualifiable, in-taxable, par une société qui a assimilé (malgré soi et/ou à son insu peut-être, mais comment s'en soucier, si cela a pour effet de libérer les esprits?) la mouvance du sujet (au sens ici du caractère mouvant qu'ont les sables) que les homos des années 70 avaient à grands cris — même dans un sens différent — essayé de faire avaler.

Le ou la queer, ce drôle d'individu de travers par rapport à la norme refusée, et en travers des us et coutumes réfutés, à la fois hors la loi et dans la loi, puise là où est son plein droit matière à êtres / matières à être et manières d'être / manière d'êtres sans cesse à ré-générer. Entre sexes et cultures, entre désirs et écritures, entre êtres et avoirs, entre adhésions et refus, Bouraoui ne cherche pas *sa* moitié platonicienne, mais, de platonique à fusionnelle, passant par la totalité des nuances intermédiaires, *ses* moitiés sans cesse à composer, à détruire, à recycler, à remodeler, à prendre et à laisser. Entre le *tu* passé de Yourcenar (cf. *Feux* B1936B où flottait le spectre d'André Fraigneau pour qui elle se consuma d'un amour, estampillé "viril", impossible) et le *débat* actuel de Bouraoui (cf. l'individualisation à l'identique, incontournable, de l'une à l'autre dans tous ses textes), le *débat* s'est inséré, transformant maux cachés en mots crachés. En conséquence de quoi, l'habit ne fait plus la nonne: non seulement celle-ci ne peut-elle plus être habillée, elle ne veut plus même s'habiller.

Hélène Fleckinger, Université de Paris-I, Panthéon-Sorbonne

“Le Sexe des anges. Lionel Soukaz ou le cinéma comme pratique de luttes et de plaisirs”

Aux origines du cinéma militant homosexuel, radical et révolutionnaire, qui se développe en France dans les années 70, se trouve un nom, celui de Lionel Soukaz. Né en 1953 aux Lilas, en région parisienne, Lionel Soukaz s'empare de la caméra dès l'adolescence en tournant un petit film 8 mm, *Ballade pour un homme seul*, puis, en 1973-1974, il réalise *Lolo Mégalo blessé en son honneur (LMBESH)*, son 'coming out' dans un contexte de répression de l'homosexualité. Ce faisant, il participe à l'émergence d'une 'visibilité active' des gays et des lesbiennes au cinéma, qui correspond désormais avec une démarche politique d'auto-représentation. Lionel Soukaz entend en effet à la fois exprimer son désir, et lutter contre son oppression spécifique, en tentant d'élargir la prise de conscience grâce au cinéma.

C'est dans cette perspective qu'il réalise en 1977 *Le Sexe des anges* : le film s'attaque 'aux clichés de l'homosexualité et à la difficulté du jeune adolescent que j'étais face à cette sexualité "anormale", "différente", "underground"' (Soukaz 2001 : p. 421). *Le Sexe des anges* commence par l'histoire de Narcisse dont, nous dit-on, la morale est simple : 'Narcisse aime son semblable, il est donc homosexuel, ne peut être heureux et ne qu'en mourir'. S'ensuit une série d'images saisissantes : un jeune homme se regarde dans un miroir, allégorie de la société, qui lui renvoie des discours normalisateurs et psychiatrisants : 'Je vois double', 'Prenez vos

médicaments ». Le bris de ce miroir de l'oppression, sur fond de chansons révolutionnaires, devient la condition nécessaire à la re-figuration positive du désir homosexuel, désormais librement vécu : « les anges ont un sexe et ils s'en servent pour leur bonheur », c'est la conclusion du film.

Le Sexe des anges ouvre ainsi un conflit politique à partir de l'intime. L'accent est mis sur l'expérience vécue et le quotidien, mais loin de glisser dans la confession ou l'auto-fiction complaisante, Lionel Soukaz part de lui-même afin de développer une analyse politique, de dévoiler les rapports de domination à partir de l'(auto-)biographique.

Fortement influencé par les textes de Gabriel Matzneff, Jean-Louis Bory, Tony Duvert, René Schérer et surtout Guy Hocquenghem, le film est conçu comme un moyen de dénoncer le « racisme sexuel » (FHAR) mais aussi de figurer la révolution du désir, entre politisation du désir et érotisation de la politique. Car, souligne Lionel Soukaz : « Il y a de la pensée dans le sexe et du sexe de la pensée » (in Biet et Neveux, à paraître).

A travers l'exemple du *Sexe des anges*, réalisé par « un jeune homme en colère et perpétuellement fou d'amour » pour reprendre la belle expression de Nicole Brenez, cette communication propose de s'intéresser à l'articulation que Lionel Soukaz propose entre luttes politiques et « usage des plaisirs ». Il s'agit de montrer dans quelle mesure *Le Sexe des anges* incarne l'idée de Daniel Guérin d'un passage possible, sinon nécessaire, « d'une dissidence sexuelle à la révolution » et comment le film devient « un lieu de mobilisation érotique » (Garsi : p. 48).

Car pour Lionel Soukaz, comme pour les militant-e-s du FHAR (Front Homosexuel d'Action Révolutionnaire) : « Il n'est pas question de séparer notre lutte sexuelle et notre combat quotidien pour la réalisation de nos désirs, de notre lutte anti-capitaliste, de notre lutte pour une société sans classes, sans maître ni esclave. [...] Réapprendre à aimer, à jouir, à être ensemble, à créer notre vie, à faire la révolution par *tous* les moyens » (FHAR : pp. 69-70).

Maxime Foerster, University of Michigan
« L'hospitalité des sodomites (Schérer) »

C'est le manque d'hospitalité qui est traditionnellement reprochée aux habitants de Sodome parce qu'ils ont souhaité avoir des relations sexuelles avec les anges envoyés par Dieu. Dans *Zeus hospitalier*, René Schérer s'attache à définir une érotique de l'hospitalité qui remet en question le postulat de l'incompatibilité entre les lois de l'hospitalité et l'érotisme liant l'hôte accueillant à l'hôte accueilli. Cette théorie de l'hospitalité lui permet de développer une exégèse non homophobe du mythe de Sodome et, par extension, de poser l'homosexualité comme une relation à l'étranger/étrangèreté plutôt que comme la quête du même. Ainsi, fidèle à l'esprit du Guy Hocquenghem de la *Beauté du métis*, Schérer se fait le théoricien de l'homosexualité comme pratique d'une citoyenneté transnationale.

Anne F. Garetta, Université de Rennes 2 – Haute Bretagne
« Le queer paradoxe français »

Par “French paradox,” la médecine pointe un phénomène curieux. Les français s’empiffrent de foie gras, pâtés en croute, viandes rouges en sauces, pommes sarladaises, viennoiseries pur beurre et pourtant jouissent d’un taux de cholestérol (et de pathologies cardio-vasculaires associées) inférieures à ce que l’on serait en droit d’espérer. De même, ce que l’on a coutume de désigner sous l’appellation de French Theory semble avoir été la source cruciale du queer turn (Foucault) et du postmodern turn (Lyotard, Baudrillard). Pourtant, rien de moins Queer au fond que la société française, rien de moins postmoderne que ses articulations culturelles. Le cas français semble être celui d’une spectralité queer. Comment la France métabolise-t-elle historiquement ses minorités? Comment, où et selon quelles logiques s’opèrent les nouveaux partages du sensible (Rancière) et donc du visible, invisible, hypervisible (jusqu’à la simulation) dans le déploiement des sexualités, des identités et des subjectivités? Comment lire en contexte (intellectuel et historique), les formes spectrales que prend en France l’articulation postmoderne des genres et des inscriptions du désir?

Florian Grandena, Université d’Ottawa
‘Comment (ne pas) dire que j’en suis?’ : langages dans *Ma vraie vie à Rouen*

La troisième œuvre de fiction des cinéastes Olivier Ducastel et Jacques Martineau *Ma vraie vie à Rouen* (2003) est un film à petit budget s’appuyant sur une forme cinématographique peu usitée, le faux *home movie*. En effet les réalisateurs se sont servis d’un dispositif cinématographique spécifique qui, mettant la caméra au centre du film, détermine une narration éclatée et une esthétique brute symptomatique d’un réalisme subjectif. Dans ce film, l’accent est mis sur l’incapacité du protagoniste, un adolescent d’environ 17 ans, d’énoncer verbalement son désir pour d’autres hommes. Si Étienne se tourne constamment vers sa caméra (reçue le jour de son anniversaire), c’est parce que celle-ci lui offre un langage alternatif, une façon de dire ce qu’il y a d’indicible en lui. Il y a donc une tension entre l’hypervisibilité de ses désirs non-assouvis exprimés par et grâce la caméra du jeune homme et la non-énonciation de ces désirs dans le langage d’Étienne. C’est justement l’interface entre les langages et de la caméra et de l’adolescent qui constituera l’argument principal de cette présentation. Cette analyse textuelle s’appuiera entre autres sur les travaux récents de Denis Provencher sur le langage queer en France.

Jenelle Griffin, University of Illinois
“Reading and Re-reading Monique Wittig’s *Les Guérillères* in a post-feminist post-queer moment”

Jules Michelet’s 1862 text, *La Sorcière* does not appear in the list of « socio-historico-culturelle » references at the end of Monique Wittig’s *Les Guérillères*, her 1969 work describing the history of an imagined society following the overthrow of heterosexism. However, Michelet’s description of the witch was in the air among several women writers who would become politically engaged following the events of May 1968. The sorcière, a transgressive female figure

feared and punished for her knowledge, her control of nature, death and the body, her ability to thrive outside a male-ordered society, and the possibility of parthenogenesis, appears throughout *Les Guérillères*. Interrogating this image can offer the reader two metaphors for seeing how this text queers its contemporary situation.

First, by problematizing the gender norms while remaining open about the outcome, references to the sorcière queer the heteronormative narratives about feminism and sexual difference central to the multiple movements in which the author was engaged.

Second, looking for the presence of Michelet's sorcière offers a lens through which to examine the importance of literary invention to the act of queering history in order to effect radical change within the existing traditions. *Les Guérillères* is an example of the text which, in engendering the rereading of multiple literatures, seeks to "change the textual reality within which it is inscribed," to quote one of the authors later essays (1980). The presence of Michelet's imaginative history of the sorcière draws the reader's attention to the potentially revolutionary articulation of textual invention and normative cultural memory.

Scott Gunther, Wellesley College

"There's nothing queer about gay media in France"

"The ideal is to have one-third gay boys, one-third gay girls and one-third straight viewership" — Pierre Garnier, marketing director for PinkTV

My paper examines the recent history of gay media in France from the first issue of *Têtu* in 1995 to the creation of the new television channel, PinkTV in 2004. My argument is that for both *Têtu* and PinkTV, there is a distance between the ways in which they describe themselves and the content they actually deliver.

Based on a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the content and advertising in *Têtu* and on PinkTV, it is clear that the primary consumers of these media are gay men, yet both claim to be for everyone. In the case of *Têtu*, the magazine's cover proudly announces each month that it is "the premier gay and lesbian magazine." PinkTV goes even further in its descriptions of itself, claiming that it is a channel for everyone, regardless of gender and sexual identity.

These descriptions, however, should not be confused with an assertion of queer identity. Instead, the presentation of a spectrum of sexual and gender identities must be seen as a manifestation of *Têtu* and PinkTV's need to present themselves as embracing French universalism and not catering to a particular group identity. Indeed, the fact that *Têtu* and PinkTV cannot come out of the closet as media sources for gay men confirms the continued rhetorical force of the French republican model.

Joe Hardwick, University of Queensland

“Rerouting the Road Movie in Martineau and Ducastel’s *Drôle de Félix* (2000)”

One genre holds a particularly privileged place in queer cinema—and more specifically in gay male cinema—is the road movie, whose queer credentials might be traced back as far as *The Wizard of Oz*. The interest of the road movie to queer cinema lies perhaps in the idea of taking characters out of their comfort zone and seeing how they and the characters they meet negotiate the idea of difference, since protagonists are often forced to rely on the kindness of strangers, with both parties being changed by the interaction. While the genre has long held an important place in North American and Australian cinemas, it has until recently been much less prominent in France. One notable exception is Olivier Martineau and Jacques Ducastel’s film *Drôle de Félix* (2000) which recounts the story of a young, *beur* character who decides to hitchhike from Dieppe to Marseilles in search of his father whom he had only previously met on one occasion. This paper will look at how *Drôle de Félix* represents a very specific queering of the road movie genre in its politics of both differentiation—offering a character who openly identifies as homosexual—and indifferentiation, the fact that his sexuality, for the most part, is not an issue for the characters he encounters. One might argue that rather than being either *prévisible* or *hypervisible*, Félix is simply *visible*, though such visibility is problematized since it relates not just to sexuality but to ethnicity. Drawing on theories relating to hospitality deriving from Michel Serres, Ross Chambers and Mireille Rosello, this paper will argue that *Drôle de Félix* reworks the conventions of the road movie genre to present a French post-queer figure significantly different from those one finds in either classic queer North American or Australian road movies.

Melanie Hawthorne, Texas A&M University

“Romaine Brooks: Motherhood, Marriage, and Apple Pie”

This paper argues that the sense of lesbian identity available to the painter Beatrice Romaine Goddard Brooks (1874-1970), the life partner of Natalie Clifford Barney, was shaped in important ways by her experiences of institutions such as motherhood, marriage, and American citizenship.

I begin by considering the rumor that Brooks had an illegitimate child in the 1890s. I present archival evidence that this did in fact happen, and I discuss what became that child. Next, I examine Brooks’s marriage to John Ellingham Brooks in 1903 and its effects on her identity (it affected the name she chose to be known by and her citizenship). Finally, I look at how her American citizenship was revoked through the 1907 Expatriation Act and contrast this repudiation of her with the way she is claimed today as an “American” artist. The effect of the institutional shaping of these identities, I argue, was to teach Brooks that the individual is no more free to define sexual identity than any of the other socially-imposed identities.

Jarrold Hayes, University of Michigan
“Derrida’s Root(s)”

This is a paper about Jacques Derrida’s penis (his root) and about the circumcision of that penis as a figure for his Jewish Algerian origins (his roots). Written around his penis, these origins are also doubly circumscribed by seemingly opposing limits, the limits of identity and those of its deconstruction. By focusing on the homoerotics that arise when Derrida’s penis enters his writing, I will bring Derrida’s autobiographical writing into contrast with his more conventionally philosophical writing and argue that the contradiction between them are at the heart of a queering of identity for which deconstruction might be read as an allegory.

At first glance, Derrida’s deconstruction of origins (a critical component of the deconstruction of essence since his earliest writings) might seem contrary to the articulation of identity through narrative returns to origins or roots that literalize identity’s essence as an organic attachment to origins. Yet Derrida’s philosophical writing was increasingly intertwined with an important autobiographical thread running through later writings such as “Circonfessions” and *Le monolinguisme de l’autre*, a thread that constitutes narrative returns to his Jewish Algerian roots. In other words, in spite of Derrida’s deconstruction of origins, origins keep coming back in his writing. Derrida’s later writings (and their deployment of the autobiographical) therefore offer rich pre-texts for unraveling the threads that bind a metaphysics of origins to accounts of identity as rootedness as well as a strategy for dealing with a rooted identity that resists such an unraveling.

If “Circonfessions” is the text in which Derrida writes the most about his own penis, it is also the text that brings his penis into contact with other penises through what he calls “mon homosexualité impossible” (150) and his queering of Saint Augustine: “[J]’ai la vision de SA, lui aussi, en petit Juif homosexuel (d’Alger ou de New York), il a tout refoulé, se convertit en somme assez tôt en don Juan chrétien par peur du sida.” (161). Geoffrey Bennington’s *Jacques Derrida* (to which Derrida’s “Circonfessions” serves as a sort of footnote running the entire length of the book) also includes a photo of Bennington standing behind Derrida, who is sitting at a computer. This photo (on p. 15) is a visual allusion to the eponymous image of *La Carte postale*, in which Plato stands behind Socrates as if the latter is taking dictation from the former. Derrida reads the elongated object protruding from beneath Socrates’s leg as Plato’s penis and suggests that the latter is sodomizing the former. The photo in *Jacques Derrida* thus turns Bennington into Derrida’s top just as Derrida’s autobiographical reflections are positioned at the bottom of the page. I will link this self-queering with the doting affection Derrida lavishes on Jean Genet’s penis in *Glas*, in which Derrida goes so far as to suggest that the verb *être* should be replaced with *bander*. If replacing essence with erections is one way of understanding deconstruction, I will argue, deconstruction should be thought of as always already queer.

And if, as Stefan Helmreich argues, the term *diaspora* “comes from the Greek *diaspora* (dispersion), from *dia* (through) *speirein* (to sow or scatter),” and “[t]he word ‘sperm’ is etymologically connected to diaspora,” Derrida’s African, Jewish penis disseminates a rather queer notion of diaspora, one with roots that are simultaneously Jewish and African. In addition to its intervention in the small, emerging subfield of queer diaspora studies, this paper will also contribute to a growing body of writings by postcolonial critics who have sought to reclaim Derrida as a postcolonial writer, as an Algerian writer rather than a European one, in opposition

to anti-theoretical postcolonial critics who maintain that reading postcolonial texts in relation to deconstruction constitutes a Euro-centric and imperialist move.

Garett Heysel, Ohio State University
“Les Garçons dans les vestiaires”

The French singer Clarika’s 2001 music video “Les garçons dans les vestiaires” owed more of its success to its evocation of the French National Rugby team and their “Dieux du stade” calendar which debuted in the same year, than to the song’s lyrics. To its credit however, the clip went far to queer the locker room and flaunt homoerotic jocularity between athletes. And while Clarika took some time to release her next hit, the team’s calendars sold an average of 200,000 copies yearly, were best sellers on Amazon.fr, and beginning in 2006 the calendar was simultaneously released in England and the United States. My paper takes Clarika’s music video as a point of departure to read queer French rugby in particular and queer French sports in general within the locker room which is both circumscribed and unraveled by queer desire. I also address the relationship between the locker rooms and the globally mediatized and commodified French rugby jock body.

Lynne Huffer, Emory University
“Mad for Foucault: A Queer Feminist Perspective”

This paper reexamines received ideas about sexuality in Foucault by considering History of Madness’s relevance to queer theory in light of the new English translation (2006). Specifically, I reread Foucault from a queer feminist perspective, drawing not only on History of Madness and History of Sexuality, Volume 1, but also on untranslated interviews and unpublished, unedited materials from the Foucault archives. The primary aim of the presentation is to demonstrate how limited, even inaccurate, some of the stock understandings of Foucault have been, and how important it is to read History of Madness as a way to engage some of the ethical dilemmas that have divided feminists and queer theorists.

Michael A. Johnson, University of Texas
“Comic Book Shame”

As a cultural form, comics are largely associated with adolescent heterosexual male fantasy. Although not explicitly sexual, the major comic book genres, (fantasy, sci-fi, super hero, western) all operate within a highly erotic signifying economy in which verbal and visual content are often in tension with one another, each potentially acting as a screen to conceal the erotic content of the other. One need only think of the shame associated, at least in the US and in France, with reading comic books, consumed usually in the privacy of one’s bedroom. Comic book shame would seem to derive from the fact that comics allow displaced expression of sexual desire at an age when it is not yet socially acceptable to be “sexual” in the usual ways. In other

words, it is a fundamentally sublimatory expression.

In this sense, comics are and have always been queer. This study looks at more “evolved” forms of queer comics — graphic novels, autobiocomics, and “silent” graphic narratives produced in France and in the US during the past fifteen years — in relationship to “comic book shame.” We should not ignore the production and consumption of the mass-market comic book (or in the French context, “l’album”) as we read the more evolved “adult” version. Indeed, adult queer comics self-consciously reflect on the mass-market form’s adolescent masturbatory economy. Comic book shame is perhaps what unifies an otherwise disparate field of cultural production.

Some works considered will include: Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*; Kris Dresden, *Every Part of You is Familiar to Me*; Nicholas Presl, *Priape*; Fabrice Neaud, *Journal*; Emmanuel Lepage, *Muchacho*; and Hélène George, *Les Réveries d’Hélène George*.

Elisabeth Ladenson, Columbia University
“Snails and Oysters: A Brief History of Queerness”

Mehammed Mack, Columbia University
“Ethical Proof: Rachid O. and the Case for a Homegrown Moroccan *homosensualité*”

This study focuses on Rachid O., an out homosexual author of Moroccan origin writing in French. His semi-autobiographical novel, *Chocolat chaud*, as well as his fully autobiographical account of childhood and adolescence, *Plusieurs vies*, are notable for the way they make a social argument via literature: the thesis being that a homegrown, non-western homosexuality flourishes in the Maghreb, ‘proven’ by one inspired (author) individual’s memories, observations, feelings, and his interactions with other Maghrebins who feel the same way. Each successive male character, culled from three different generations, realizes their homosexuality through a kind of poetic, transcendental, self-acknowledgement, spurred by the author who becomes a kind of therapeutic messenger helping others make the same self-discovery. The prototype Maghrebin homosexual, as embodied by the narrator, who is disappointed with his environment because it seems ostensibly impoverished of any ‘gay’ vitality, learns to look for such traces of homosexuality with newly ‘Moroccan’ eyes, that is to say, through the cracks, in the hidden courtyards, with brotherly attention and affection, and with a courteous chastity. ‘Homosexuality’ ceases to be the right word to describe the phenomenon of Maghrebin same sex attraction — Malek Chebel once used the word ‘homosensualité’, a better alternative I think — which takes on spiritual overtones and thus folds into the religious landscape of Morocco, expressing itself in the open, although never announced explicitly. Though such sweet images may seem an exception to the general rule of ‘refoulement’, shame, and sexual brutality so often found in other Maghrebian treatments of homosexuality, Rachid O makes an almost archaeological case — replete with repeated observations of various homosexual phenomena actually witnessed — for a naturalized, organic, widespread homosexuality (homosexuality that conceives of itself as an identity for once), filling the void left by so many sociological and anthropological studies which only offer deflating images of Maghrebin homosexuality, always a ‘substitute’, ‘out of necessity’, ‘ridiculous’, ‘strictly role-based’, strictly physical, and without ethics.

Brian Martin, Williams College

“Bûcheron Butch: Bear Culture, Lumber Lore, and Francophone Fantasy”

The emerging visibility of “bear” culture during recent decades represents, for some, a new site of gay male beauty, erotics, and representation. Once marginalized by a gay male culture (in the 1970s, 80s, and early 90s) which valued young, slim, hairless bodies and celebrated urban style, “bears” represent a queer movement (increasingly visible since the late 1990s) which values larger, rounder, hairier bodies, eroticizes older men, and celebrates the pleasures of rural life. Despite the relatively new visibility of bear culture during the last decade (in new websites, organizations, vocabularies, bibliographies), one can trace the origins of queer bears to earlier erotic preoccupations with wooded masculinity, most notably in the figure of the forester or *bûcheron*. What has become a modern gay male icon, particularly in North America and Europe, is in fact the product of a long cultural history, grounded importantly in the French and Francophone tradition. This tradition was popularized in the oral tales of French woodsmen and trappers in (17th-18th century) Nouvelle France and was later transcribed in an entire genre of *bûcheron* novels in (19th-20th century) Québec. As Québécois *bûcherons* emigrated to the lumber camps of New England and the Midwest, they brought this Francophone tradition, spreading the tall-tale of Paul Bunyan, for example, from Québec’s Lac des Deux Montagnes to the Great Lakes of the United States and the popular imagination of American folklore. It is perhaps here that gay popular culture began to fetishize the Francophone woodsman, in terms that would lead to the gay iconography of the *Village People* in the 1970s, the popular flannel-fashion-clone of the 1980s, the emergence of bear culture in the 1990s, and its explosion as a new global movement celebrating gruff, woodsy, butch, male beauty during the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Sylvain Montalbano,

“Gide’s L’Immoraliste and the Foundation of a Queer Community”

L’Immoraliste has triggered a large debate amongst scholars on the problem of an expressed or unexpressed homosexuality. While this debate is not without interest, it clearly overlooks that this ambiguity was in fact Gide’s central strategy for creating and addressing a queer community. As opposed to writers such as Genet or Wittig, who stated their idiosyncratic vision of the homosexual without any attempt to reach a community, Gide proposes a viable model of a community composed of queer readers. To this end, he has to re-appropriate himself the strategies used for the creation of the nation. This paper will show that imagining and speaking to a queer community can only be envisioned through the prism of the nation. Obviously enough such a takeover implies mutual effects and interferences between the national dominant system and the community Gide wants to connect to. It will also present the peculiarity of Gide’s model, which appears as tainted with neo-colonialism and bourgeois pederasty.

Madison Moore, Yale University
“Your Proustian Guide to Gaydar”

Gaydar has earned a reputation as a mysterious sixth sense used in both the gay and straight communities to play “spot the homosexuals.” When it is written about, Gaydar is usually presented in a satirical format—a format so whimsical that it ostensibly eclipses any possible analytical content. “*But Gaydar is only about gay stereotypes,*” many will protest. What many do not realize, however, is that Gaydar is precisely not about stereotypes because it is a system of reading codes — the same system we use to interpret a literary text — that are not always visible to the untrained eye.

Until now, if Gaydar has been approached from a serious academic angle it is usually the scientists who try to prove its existence. But not so fast — for at least since the era of legendary twentieth-century French writer Marcel Proust, Gaydar as a secret code intended to reveal one’s sexual activities has informed the erotic behavior of many gay men. But what does it mean to suggest there are signifiers that reveal one as homosexual? And how do we learn we’re right?

My paper is an attempt to produce a theoretical axiomatic on the nature of Gaydar. Grounded in Gilles Deleuze’s reading of Marcel Proust, it pulls from contemporary French and American cinema, as well as *Sex and the City*, Proust’s *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, police reports of public sex in 19th century Paris, a Francophone novel, websites and a sociological study of gaydar in order to theorize how Gaydar functions. Perhaps by examining the function of Gaydar not only across centuries but also throughout different cultural media, even in different geographical locations, it will be possible to understand how what we now call sexuality has been at once internalized, institutionalized and rendered secret.

Laure Murat, UCLA
“Queering *Ratatouille*: A Rat Reclaiming French Cuisine”

Remy is not like the other rats: he has an exceptional sense of smell and taste, and a passion for cooking. He will soon make his dreams come true in making the best recipes for the famous French restaurant « Gusteau’s », hidden under the chef’s hat of a young apprentice. Starting from this premise, Pixar Studios produced *Ratatouille* (2007), a spectacular animated movie which could also be read as the story of a coming-out – not from the closet but from the chef’s hat –, where Remy embodies the symbolic lonely gay, both refined and object of disgust, excluded and successful. With a hero torn between his family’s wishes and his true calling, between rodents and human beings, *Ratatouille* is also the story of the Oedipus conflict, mixed with issues of race and species, that eventually resolve into a « happy ending », common to the « wholesome entertainment » industry: if, according to Gusteau’s motto, « anyone can cook », any queer guy has a role to play in this world – at least in Paris. In that regard, *Ratatouille* is probably one of the few contemporary films showing that queerness is not necessarily incompatible with French culture.

Yekhan Pinarligil, Université de Paris-I
“WEBCAM : le réel et le virtuel, l’incertitude”

Lionel Soukaz possède, depuis les années 70, une somptueuse œuvre cinématographique. Au début, profitant de la liberté de la production expérimentale, le cinéaste explore le continent jusqu’ici refoulé, le continent des nouvelles images possibles de et avec l’homosexualité. Avec la réalisation de *Ixe* en 1980 contre la commission de censure et la loi dite X, son cinéma se démarque par ses procédures transgressives, par son engagement et son militantisme. Alors que depuis cette période, aussi bien à la télévision qu’au cinéma, nous pouvons constater la recrudescence des images LGBTQ, représentations hautement codées, consensuelles et parfaitement normalisées, les films de Lionel Soukaz restent critique vis-à-vis de ces images et a fortiori du système qui les produit.

Comme s’il voulait trouver une nouvelle plate-forme d’expression, Soukaz tourne sa caméra dans *Webcam* (2005) tantôt vers les minuscules écrans des téléphones portables tantôt vers le net où les homos semblent trouver une pseudo liberté, un espace a priori non-censuré. Le regard critique et engagé de Soukaz est posé cette fois-ci sur ces écrans alternatifs ; il les décompose ; il les active et désactive, tout en disséquant les nouvelles possibilités d’images, de représentation et d’expression qui s’offrent aux homosexuels. L’acclamation de Nicole Brenez « *Webcam* est *Ixe* des années 2000 » est justement pour souligner le potentiel subversif du film vis-à-vis des systèmes actuels de productions d’images.

Dans *Webcam*, Le cinéaste met alors en scène l’incertitude, basculant de l’indéfini au hasard, de la chance à l’inattendu. Il explore l’écart qui se creuse entre le réel et le virtuel, justement dans une époque où nous perdons nos repères dans la réalité. Le film déambule là où les frontières deviennent incertaines et floues. L’autre n’est alors qu’une potentialité, fragile, souvent passagère, l’autre est un coup du hasard, voyageant entre apparition et absence ; l’autre est – peut-être – un mirage.

Mon intervention sera donc une étude analytique du dernier moyen-métrage de Lionel Soukaz *Webcam*, où je mettrai en évidence les questionnements du cinéaste autour du réel et du virtuel et m’interrogerai sur les procédés critiques et transgressives déployés dans le film, ainsi que sur l’évolution de ces procédés depuis de *Ixe*.

David A. Powell, Hofstra University

“How One Lonely Youth Saved Himself, In Theory: Queer Theory in these C.R.A.Z.Y. Times”

The codes that typified North American gay life in the pre-Stonewall period are for all intents and purposes lost on today’s gay youth. Few of them know who Dorothy is (was), much less why one would care that someone is a member of the choir. While we may no longer need these codes for our very survival, there is a certain sense of loss—a loss of secrecy, thus a loss of a sense of danger: in short, a loss of encryption. In the 1970s, “gay codes” were more or less transparent: we continued to enjoy them but our straight friends were now aware of them. And in the nostalgia for the secrecy of the codes we invented new ones to compensate for their loss—here I’m thinking not just of color-coded kerchiefs, but also about the categorization within the gay community founded on objects of attraction: chicken queens, chocolate queens, rice queens, e

tutti quanti. As gays became more open about their attractions and as society became more aware of gay codes, not only did the codes shift but the consequences of this semiotic shifting added to the unrest of the period. It could be said that this semiotic revision facilitated the social revolution. It is this interim that interests me, the transition from encryption to apparent transparency and the attendant effect on both gay and straight society.

Jean-Marc Vallé's 2005 film *C.R.A.Z.Y.*, which takes place in 1970s Montréal, provides a fruitful text in which to study the transition of codes. The parallels between Zac's coming out and the Quiet Revolution, while not explicit in the film, are clear to those familiar not only with that period of French-Canadian history but also with the association of fictional gay characters and the Quiet Revolution. No longer willing to remain the oppressed and repressed citizens of an Anglo nation, French-Canadians—henceforth known as Québécois—now claimed an identity they refused to restrain. Through and across studies by Roland Barthes, Denis Provencher, William Leap, and Paul Baker, I will explore the nature and function of decoding as it occurs in *C.R.A.Z.Y.* alongside a filmic representation of coming out in the context of the political coming-out of Québec.

Murray Pratt, Nottingham Trent University

“Forgetting to Be Visible Now and Then: Hyperinvisibilities, AIDS, and Cinema”

As discourses relating to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in France recede from the public sphere, recent cinematic productions each work in different ways to memorize, although (problematically) not necessarily resensitize viewers to the lived experiences of those coping with the virus. Andre Techiné's *Les Témoins* (2007) and *Avant que j'oublie* (2007) by Jacques Nolot provide contrasting takes on the effects of living with HIV. While the former returns to the history of the epidemic and its impact on the social place of the protagonists, Nolot's study of an older gay man's accommodations of his HIV-status and his very invisibly gay routine are set in a contemporary France where many of the hopes and fears depicted earlier have come to settle. Francois Ozon's *Le Temps qui reste* (2005) offers a figuration of processes of coming to terms with mortality through an engagement with the present rather than memorization and family reconciliation. This paper sets in motion a dialogue across these films, considering their respective portrayals of past and present visibilities, and the work of memory each enacts as a requirement of living in the now.

Denis Provencher, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

« Tracing Sexual Citizenship and Queerness in *Drôle de Félix* (2000) and *Tarik el hob* (2003) »

In recent years, a growing number of French films have included both primary and secondary Franco-Maghrebi characters who express their same-sex desire. Does this so-called visibility on the big screen suggest a level of sexual freedom, acceptance, and integration that runs counter to the experiences of gay Franco-Maghrebis described above? In other words, do these films neglect, account for, or propose alternatives to the aforementioned social, political-economic, and cultural spaces and constraints? In this essay, I analyze two recent French films that include gay

male Franco-Maghrebis in order to illustrate two paths toward subject formation that are made available to them in the early twenty-first century. In particular, I trace the images of the “good” sexual citizen in Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau’s *Drôle de Félix* (2000) and the “bad” or “queer” citizen in Rémi Lange’s *Tarik el hob* (2003). This article aims to illustrate how gay Franco-Maghrebis attempt to negotiate both their French and Maghrebi origins as they seek a sense of sexual and ethnic self-hood in the Hexagon.

Steve Puig, City University of New York

“Pour (ou contre ?) une théorie de la bisexualité masculine : *Bi*, de Jean-Luc Hennig”

A la fin du dix-neuvième siècle, Freud fait de la bisexualité psychique un des principes fondateurs de la psychanalyse. Pourtant, le concept ne demeure guère étudié dans le champ littéraire. Il aura fallu l’émergence des ‘ queer studies ’ aux États-Unis pour remettre la bisexualité sur le devant de la scène littéraire, avec les travaux, entre autres, de Marjorie Garber. Alors que dans les années 90, les medias font du bisexuel un sujet à la mode (un peu comme le ‘ métrosexuel ’ de nos jours), peu d’écrivains se sont réellement penchés sur ce sujet en France. Une exception cependant : le livre intitulé *Bi*, de Jean-Luc Hennig, paru en 1996, dans lequel ce dernier, sans vouloir offrir de théorie à proprement parler, explore la bisexualité notamment en termes de visibilité/invisibilité et de nomadisme. Il s’agira donc de voir comment cet ouvrage, bien que n’ayant pas le format d’un essai théorique, pose tout de même les bases d’une réflexion poussée, basée à la fois sur des expériences personnelles et des exemples trouvés dans la littérature, la sociologie ou la mythologie. On pourra notamment s’attarder sur les notions de ‘ double ’ et d’ ‘ entre-deux ’ qui hantent le texte, et voir comment Hennig accumule les métaphores, pour faire du bisexuel un être nomade, fuyant, qui échappe à toute cartographie.

Nick Rees-Roberts, University of Bristol

“Christophe Honoré and *French Queer Cinema*”

The time is right to label an existing “French Queer Cinema.” In this paper, I look at the opposing thematic and aesthetic trajectories of Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau, on the one hand, and Christophe Honoré, on the other. Honoré is dismissive of the conventional narrative form of Ducastel and Martineau who have gone from subjecting the musical to AIDS and radical politics in *Jeanne et le Garçon formidable* (1998) through a road-movie that takes HIV-positive identity as a given, *Drôle de Félix* (2000) to a queer family farce, *Coquillages et Crustacés* (2005). Honoré, in counterpoint, began with the traditional form of an AIDS TV melodrama before progressing to the more subversive films *17 Fois Cécile Cassard* (2001) that dealt with grief and love and *Ma mère* (2004), which transposed Bataille to the contemporary “New French Extremism” brand of heterosexual transgression. I argue that these filmmakers share a renewed interest in the work of “new wave” auteur Jacques Demy, whose own distinctive style of sung-through musical fantasy is a template for Honoré’s recent queer revival of the “new wave” form, *Les Chansons d’amour* (2007).

Régis Revenin, Université de Paris-I, Panthéon-Sorbonne
“La visibilité gay dans le Paris des débuts de la III^e République et de la Belle Epoque”

Principalement basées sur des archives policières jusqu’alors inédites, mais aussi sur des sources imprimées plus connues (articles de presse, littérature de premier et de second plans, écrits médicaux, récits autobiographiques), mes premières recherches ont démontré que, contrairement à une idée souvent répandue, il a existé, dès la fin du XIX^e siècle, un monde gay à Paris. Le ‘ milieu gay ’ n’est donc pas né après la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Bien souvent spécifiquement gay (et masculin, mais cela va sans dire dans une société peu encline à la mixité des sexes!), le monde gay de la Belle Epoque est très diversifié (en termes de lieux de sociabilité : lieux commerciaux divers, multiples lieux de rencontres en plein air), vaste (une petite centaine d’établissements en activité à la Belle Epoque), et concentré dans certains quartiers de Paris. Ces caractéristiques symbolisent, à mon sens, l’entrée en contemporanéité des homosexualités masculines parisiennes. En quoi les lieux commerciaux homosexuels parisiens, et notamment les bars en tant que théâtre des sociabilités masculines d’une manière générale, sont-ils un des éléments fondamentaux de l’émergence de la culture gay moderne telle que nous la connaissons encore aujourd’hui dans les grandes villes occidentales ? C’est également à cette époque qu’émerge, notamment dans la littérature, une ‘ parole homosexuelle ’, au moment même où l’homosexualité est dénoncée, par les savants, comme une ‘ perversion sexuelle ’, devenant ainsi un ‘ problème ’. C’est aussi, à la Belle Epoque, qu’une rupture (en douceur) en termes d’identités se produit : la lente transition (entre la Belle Epoque et les années 1920-1930-1940) de l’ancien système de relations socio-sexuelles organisé autour du genre (dans lequel seuls les homosexuels passifs étaient alors considérés comme pédérastes) vers le système ‘ moderne ’ d’orientation sexuelle (dans lequel tous les partenaires, nonobstant leur morphologie et leur rôle sexuels, sont catégorisés comme homosexuels, puis gays). Peut-être la visibilité a-t-elle entraîné deux caractéristiques contemporaines : la ‘ spécification ’ (homo-sexuelle), et l’‘ exclusivisation ’ des pratiques homosexuelles, renforçant *de facto* le dualisme culturellement construit entre hétérosexualité et homosexualité. Ainsi, la modernité a-t-elle certainement construit, à l’instar de la différence des sexes (aujourd’hui pensée comme naturelle) et de la ‘ nature féminine ’ (cf. Thomas Laqueur), une ‘ nature homosexuelle ’ et une bi-catégorisation des sexualités, tout particulièrement en France où la médecine a (eu) une place très importante au détriment de la religion, sans doute.

Kathy Richman, University of the Pacific
“Other Women in Love: Popular Lesbian Novels in Contemporary France”

Je suis une homosexuelle innée et je voudrais connaître une vie aussi belle que ce récit qui, en réalité, n’est qu’un rêve. (back cover of Aquarelle)

Does an “other,” someone in some way outside of mainstream society, need something different from fiction than one whose life falls within accepted bounds? In this paper, I will consider the characteristics, both in plot and literary device, of popular lesbian fiction published in France from the 1980’s onward. I contend that many of those characteristics express the need for an outward representation of lesbian lives, whether realist or idealized, to strengthen or even help

create a sense of identity as a lesbian. One indication of this need, on the part of both readers and authors, is the increasing presence of specifically lesbian novels published by alternative presses, such as Éditions Geneviève Pastre, Éditions de la Cérissaie, and KTM Éditions.

The blurring of lines between fiction and everyday experience is characteristic of another genre, the *roman populaire* of nineteenth-century France. If works like Eugène Sue's *Mystères de Paris* (1842) and Cécile Vargaftig's *Fantômette se pacse* (2006) seem to make strange literary bedfellows, one need only compare the need of Sue's impoverished readers to believe that his hero Prince Rodolphe could help them, too, to the desire of a reader of lesbian fiction to "connaître une vie aussi belle que ce récit." In *Fantômette se pacse*, the focus of my paper, one finds a coming together of what we consider a modern trait, the need for a sense of individual identity and agency, and a postmodern twist of an ironic, self-reflexive expression of that need. In other words, if Sue plays his super hero Prince Rodolphe straight, Vargaftig pretends to do the same with her Fantômette.

Looking at the popular lesbian novel as a descendant of the nineteenth-century *roman populaire* and identifying their common elements enables us to reveal their social function as well as their aesthetic interest as works of fiction.

Timothy Scheie, University of Rochester

"Private Faces and Public Lives: Barthes, Photography, and Gay Visibility"

I will investigate gay visibility in photographic representation through Roland Barthes's cautious deployment of "pre-visible" gay sexuality in his studies of photography. Barthes locates photography's ontology in both the individual's private moment of viewing and in a sociology of images that circulate in a public economy of signification, effectively splitting the viewing subject and situating it at once in both private and public spheres. In Barthes's case, these spheres would appear to map neatly onto what one might call the pre-visible and the hyper-visible. However, it is not just the separation of these spheres that Barthes so eloquently describes, but also their conjunction and the anxious impossibility of definitively situating an image in one or the other. This impossibility serves as both the conduit and inhibitor of desire and visual pleasure, and Barthes appears to erode the very distinction he would seem to erect between previsible and hypervisible sexual identity in photography. Reading Barthes's chosen images alongside recent photographs of gay pride parades, gay marriages, and other mass-media hyper-visible homosexualities, I will interrogate the distinction between personal and social photographic practice, between private and public spheres of images, and between previsible and hypervisible homosexualities.

Thibaut Schilt, College of the Holy Cross

"Queer Waters: François Ozon's *Gouttes d'eau sur pierres brûlantes* (2000)"

This presentation examines the queerness of openly gay French director François Ozon's cinema through the lens of his third full-length film *Gouttes d'eau sur pierres brûlantes*, a *huis clos* adapted from a forgotten play by fellow *enfant terrible* Rainer Werner Fassbinder (*Tropfen auf heiße Steine*). The film takes place in 1970s Germany and recounts the piquant romance between

a fifty-year-old businessman (veteran Casanova actor Bernard Giraudeau) and a young student (newcomer Malik Zidi). Shortly after moving into his lover's apartment, the student reunites with his former girlfriend (Ludivine Sagnier), while Giraudeau's transsexual ex-lover Vera (Anna Thomson) also shows up at the door, turning the relationship into a complicated *ménage-à-quatre*. This relatively early, seldom discussed entry in Ozon's cinematic career comes only two years after his debut film *Sitcom*. Yet, this work highlights the filmmaker's main preoccupations to date, notably, a consistent desire to blur the traditional frontiers between the masculine and the feminine, gay and straight, reality and fantasy, auteur and commercial cinema. I argue that it is essential to acknowledge the fluidity of those frontiers in order to fully comprehend not only *Gouttes d'eau sur pierres brûlantes*, but also Ozon's overall filmography. Indeed, the nine feature films released in the past nine years, together with an equally impressive number of shorts, have consistently challenged our understanding of human interaction by adding complex representations of queer identities to the canon of recent French cinema.

Gretchen Schultz, Brown University
“The Female Offender, the Prostitute and the Tribade”

During the nineteenth century, the French medical and literary communities consistently associated female homosexuality with criminality, despite the fact that there existed no legal injunction against same-sex eroticism between women. In his influential treatise, *La Prostitution à Paris au XIXe siècle* (1836), Dr. Parent-Duchâtelet described the population of incarcerated prostitutes he treated as teeming with same-sex couples, calling female homosexuality “a very important subject in the history of prostitutes' morals.” And later in the century, Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso classified tribadism as one of the deviant behaviors characteristic of prostitutes and other female offenders (*La Femme criminelle et la prostituée*, French trans. 1896). Literature followed suit: lesbian prostitutes in French fiction multiplied toward the end of the 19th century. They came from all points in the hierarchy of prostitution, from high-class courtesans (Louÿs, Feydeau) to lowly street-walkers (Belot, Mendès) and *filles soumises* working in state-controlled brothels (Lorrain). I hope to show that lawful sexual activity between women became irrevocably associated with crime during the nineteenth century in France, fueled by cross-disciplinary contacts, and that these associations remain to this day in the perception of lesbianism as an underground, illicit sexuality.

Elizabeth Stephens, University of Queensland
“Le Plaisir du texte: French Queer Theory”

Although French poststructuralist theorists such as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes have had an enormous impact on the development of Anglophone queer theory, it is only in the last few years that critical studies identifying themselves as queer have begun to be published in France. At present, this field consists of François Cusset's *Queer Critics: La littérature française déshabillée par ses homo-lecteurs* (2002), Marie-Hélène Bourcier's *Queer Zones : politiques des identités sexuelles, des représentations et des savoirs* (2001) and *Sexpolitiques : Queer Zones 2* (2005), and the work of Didier Eribon, along with several special

journal issues. This paper will examine this emergent body of work, focusing on its dis/continuities with Anglophone queer theory and the ongoing process of translation between these two contexts. Specifically, I am interested in the way these recent French texts can help us think through what remains a central and unresolved problematic within Anglophone queer theory: the difficulties of representing a recognizably queer specificity within textual systems that are inherently heteronormative, and in a way consistent with queer theory's deconstruction of concepts of stable sexual subjectivity.

Vinay Swamy, Vassar College

“In the Shadow of the Fifth Republic? Ethnicity and Sexuality in *Rêves en France* (2002) and *Chouchou* (2003)”

Since the inception of the French Republic, there has been a consistent claim to universalism as a foundation of civil society. Politicians and certain intellectuals in the Fifth Republic have cast France's Republican model as one in competition with the so-called Anglo-Saxon multi-culturalist model. However, the rhetoric of a “Universalist Republic,” which, in the name of equality, has historically refused to legitimize the existence of most communities (ethnic or queer or other) within French national space, has visibly come under attack in the last decades of the twentieth century. In this light, this paper will consider the 2003 film *Chouchou*, by Merzak Allouache and Gad Elmaleh, along with *Rêves en France* (a 2002 telefilm by Pascal Kané) to reflect on the contemporary historical moment in which the French understanding of what constitutes the Republic is in flux. The paper proposes a two-part argument on each film's particular understanding of the French nation-state. On the one hand, it will juxtapose analyses of each film's unapologetic, if not fantastically idealistic, representations of ethnicity, sexuality and/or transvestitism to elucidate their respective positions on the question of the Republic. On the other hand, it will address the films' reception (both intra- and extra-diegetic) in the context of France's varied responses to questions of kinship and family, brought about by the debates on civil union (PaCS) and the possibility of homosexual marriage. In so doing, I will suggest that the films both reflect and foster what I call a ‘metropolitan French’ approach to understanding republicanism.

Gregory Tomso, University of West Florida

“Foucault, Liberalism, and Empty Space: Becoming Homosexual in the Age of AIDS”

While scholars have given ample attention to the Foucauldian notion of ascesis, or the ethical “practices of the self” by which the subject responds to power, less attention has been given to the related notion of “becoming,” which Foucault explicitly links to the political project of homosexuality. This paper outlines Foucault's thinking on homosexual becoming and examines the historical assumptions which made it seem viable at time just prior to the advent of AIDS. In the age of the epidemic, homosexual becoming, at least in the U.S., needs reconsideration in light of how sexual politics have altered course due to liberal and neoliberal responses to epidemic disease.

Romain Vaissermann, Université de Provence, Aix-Marseille-I

“Le Sonnet en prose, figure des sexualités mêlées. Pour une autre lecture de Pierre Louÿs”

Les Chansons de Bilitis (1894) sont à juste titre considérées comme l'œuvre majeure de Pierre Louÿs (1870-1925), mais les critiques sont jusqu'ici peu nombreuses à avoir mentionné la forme exacte des poèmes de ce recueil : sonnet en prose. Cette ignorance s'étend même à toute l'histoire de ce genre poétique méconnu, né au début du XIX^e siècle, pratiqué par F.W.Riemer, R.W.Emerson ou A.Rimbaud B et particulièrement apte à suggérer les pratiques libertines évoquées dans le recueil de Louÿs. Car les divers amours de Bilitis se plaisent à la métamorphose, de même le sonnet en prose mêle poésie et prose, contrainte morale et *libido* vivace. Le sonnet en prose oublie âges et différences sociales des deux registres d'écriture que sont poésie et prose, comme le libertinage de Louÿs accouple sans tabou les différents partenaires sexuels. La beauté nie l'animalité mais l'œuvre entière de Louÿs y renvoie, entre mièvrerie helléniste et bestialité crue. Si la suggestion du sonnet en prose pallie l'absence de description dans les *Chansons*, le saphisme, élément récurrent chez Louÿs, y voisine autant avec l'érotisme désinvolte de la poésie qu'avec la crudité d'un lieu — la prose — où le corps de la femme devient machine à plaisir. Nous comparerons particulièrement le sonnet en prose de Louÿs et celui de Remy de Gourmont, autre poète d'Éros fameux à la Belle Époque.

Darren Waldron, University of Manchester

“François Ozon: From Queer *Auteur* to Star Director”

François Ozon is among France's most prolific directors, releasing a film a year since his first full-length feature *Sitcom* in 1998. Characterized by his preoccupation with destabilizing normative conventions of gendered and sexual behavior, it is not surprising that Ozon's earlier work found an exhibition outlet through queer film festivals, both in France and elsewhere. Yet, since 2002 and the release of his most economically successful film to date, *8 femmes*, Ozon's fame has broadened significantly. He now enjoys an established following of enthusiasts, as is evidenced by his significant web-presence including forums and blogs devoted to him and his films. This relationship between the filmmaker and his followers is the focus of this paper.

Through e-mail correspondence and msn conversations, I examine what has made Ozon into an icon of both French and queer cinema. I explore whether his following can still be explained by his continuing appeal to audiences with an interest in queer issues or if his individual filming style or talent for depicting human emotions and relationships is now what attracts his admirers. The discussion illustrates the ways in which directors who assume a star status transcend and undermine the traditional opposition between elitist discourses of art-house film and “popular” constructions of mass-entertainment cinema. Pierre Bourdieu's theories of taste and cultural distinction (1984) are invoked to inform the analysis of the responses, as is Sarah Thornton's concept of subcultural capital (1995). Moreover, the discussion of the data is underpinned by research into fan cultures by John Fiske (1989) and Joli Jenson (1992) and Martin Barker's concept of high spectator investment in films (2006). The paper develops qualitative research into film audiences (Stacey, 1994; Barker and Brooks, 1998; Austin, 2002), as well as

work on star and celebrity cultures in France and beyond (Dyer, 1979; Vincendeau, 2000; Austin, 2003).

Margaret Waller, Pomona College

“100 Eyes and 2,000 Pairs of Men’s Shoes: to Queer or not to Queer the Emperor of Early Nineteenth-Century French Fashion”

For more than thirty years after the French Revolution, the single most important figure in French fashion was not a woman of the world but a former priest from the provinces. As editor of *Journal des Dames et des modes*, Pierre de La Mésangère was the discreet but omnipresent “eye” behind the foremost fashion magazine in Europe. Although he was “the emperor of fashion,” La Mésangère was famously frugal, fussy and, at the end of his life, old-fashioned in his own dress. Although he wielded the power of a tyrant and a publishing tycoon, he lived alone. Although his moniker in print was “A Hundred Eyes” (“Centyeux”), he generally kept himself out of the public eye. When La Mésangère died intestate in 1831, a probate inventory revealed what some knew and many had only suspected: the inveterate bachelor had a secret passion. Over his lifetime, La Mésangère had amassed, by one account, “1,000 pairs of stockings, 2,000 pairs of shoes, 6 dozen blue suits, 100 round hats, 40 umbrellas, 20 snuffboxes and 10,000 francs in small change” (*Le Grand Dictionnaire Larousse*).

In this talk, I propose to explore what La Mésangère’s contemporaries made of this eccentric character and ask what we are to make of him now. In his rise to power from provincial obscurity, in his quirky appearance, and in his larger-than-life obsessions, La Mésangère resembles nothing so much as a character from the novels of his young protégé, Balzac. If, however, as Michael Lucey notes, the Balzacian novel “is quite interested in producing ‘sexuality’ in its characters,” it is not clear whether we should be doing the same by adding this historical figure to the annals of fetishism, for example. Is it time to “queer” the editor of the most famous women’s fashion magazine of early nineteenth-century France? Or does this intriguing but enigmatic figure in fact help call into question the very categories of analysis in gender, queer and sexuality studies?