

Writer to speak on solo sex

The Women's and Gender Studies symposium today in Knight Library will study the history of masturbation

By Chelsea Duncan
Senior News Reporter

Students and faculty from all over campus will have the chance to learn about the history of masturbation today at the inaugural "Currents in Gender Studies" symposium.

The symposium, which begins at 11:00 a.m. and lasts until 1:30 p.m. in the Knight Library Browsing Room, will focus on University of California-Berkeley history Professor Thomas Laqueur's latest book, "Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation."

Women's and Gender Studies Director Judith Raitskin said the point of the symposium is to bring students and faculty from different disciplines together in a discussion about current scholarly works.

"We really need to make these events happen so we are exposed to the important scholars in many different fields," she said.

Laqueur, who also wrote "Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud," said his new book examines the point in the 18th century when masturbation became a cultural debate, which meant that women's sexuality came into the limelight for the first time.

"Most sexuality before the 18th century didn't actually pay attention to women," he said in a telephone interview. "For the first time actually, the sexuality of women became critical."

He said the book focuses on cultural thoughts about masturbation, which gradually shifted from being viewed as a societal wrong to being a way in which women could extol their sexual identities.

"It's an important part of the feminist movement," he said.

Philosophy graduate student Amy Story, who plans to

attend the symposium, said masturbation's role in the feminist movement was important for women in asserting control over their sexuality.

"Women's bodies don't belong to men; they actually belong to women themselves," she said. "It represents the statement of autonomy."

She said it is important for students to be exposed to historical analyses such as Laqueur's book, because they help people understand current social trends in sexuality.

"Books like this reveal a sort of trajectory of history that allows us to better understand where we stand today," she said.

Raitskin said the symposium is unique because instead of simply hearing a quick presentation from a guest speaker, attendees were encouraged to read the book in advance. She said this makes the event "a little more leisurely and a little more luxurious."

Women's and Gender Studies Assistant Professor Elizabeth Reis, who is also speaking at today's symposium, said in an effort to encourage reading, free copies of the book were given to the first 20 people who signed up for the lecture. She said the conversation should be productive because most people have read the book.

"It brings together faculty and students across campus to have a creative and stimulating conversation about intellectual issues," she said.

Raitskin said the University is fairly isolated geographically, which makes sharing scholarship across campuses, or what she calls "cross-fertilization," difficult.

She said she hopes the symposium, which is sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences, the Oregon Humanities Center, the Center for the Study of Women in Society and the Women's and Gender Studies Program, will become an annual event. Each year, the symposium will highlight a current work of an internationally renowned and influential scholar.

Contact the higher education/
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JARVIS

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cooperate and work with the board on the office functions until June.

Goldschmidt said during last week's board meeting in Portland that the search for a new chancellor

will begin once the office's restructuring is completed. On Thursday, he formally announced the appointment of former state Department of Administrative Services Director Jon Yunker as chief operations officer and executive vice chancellor for OUS, according to an OUS press release.

Jarvis is currently one of two candidates for the presidency of San José State University in California, OUS spokeswoman Di Saunders said.

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GTFF

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wages back to the University."

Goff later added that GTFs essentially "have to pay for the materials we teach with." But University Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies Richard Linton, who is a member of the University's bargaining team in the negotiations, responded after the protest, saying, "Most institutions don't subsidize fees for graduate students." Linton also added that the situation for GTFs at the University is quite good relative to GTFs at the University's eight other peer comparator institutions. These are institutions that the University uses to measure comparative faculty salaries and include University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Iowa and the University of California-Santa Barbara. "If you look at total compensation (salary, benefits, tuition waivers) ... when we compare ourselves to our peer comparator institutions ... we're currently ranked third (in GTF total compensation)," he said. "Three out of nine is very competitive."

Another major issue of contention is that certain University departments are hiring undergraduates at hourly wages to fill positions typically filled by GTFs.

Linton said the practice provides undergraduates with "important educational experiences" and cited such

positions as undergraduate peer mentors or lab assistants.

According to Linton, the positions are often ones that could not be filled by a GTF because the posts require far fewer hours than the minimum hours for a GTF. Departments also turn to undergraduates when the graduate-student pool for a particular department has been exhausted, he added.

Lindgren said the practice might decrease the quality of education for undergraduate students. It also, he said, undermines the GTFF and deprives the employees of the benefits of union membership and GTF status, which include tuition waivers, benefits and access to the grievance process and collective bargaining.

"Undergrads might wonder about the quality of their education when they're essentially being supervised by undergrads," Lindgren said. "It undermines our union." The negotiations will continue later this month, with the next bargaining session scheduled for April 19. Lindgren said the University's current offer includes a \$40, or 15 percent, fee reduction. However, the controversial practice of hiring undergraduates remains largely unresolved, Goff said.

The earliest the GTFF could strike is June 30, according to state law.

Senior News Reporter Jared Paben contributed to this report.
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Friday

• Women's and Gender Studies Lecture featuring a talk by Thomas Laqueur from the University of California-Berkeley, Browsing Room, Knight Library, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Part of the "Currents in Gender Studies" series.

• An Afternoon of Italian Music, Poetry and Celebration featuring music and presentations, Browsing Room, Knight Library, 4-6 p.m.

• Philosophy Lecture by philosophy Professor Naomi Zack entitled "Rule by Women: Feminist Ideas of Politics, History and Class," Room 360, Condon Hall, 4-6 p.m.

• Morse Center Conference Lecture featuring Percy Schmeiser, the Saskatchewan farmer sued by Monsanto for patent infringement when their "Roundup Ready" seeds were found in his canola field, entitled "David v. Goliath: Foreign Enforcement of U.S. Patent Law and the Might of Monsanto," Auditorium, Agate Hall, 7-8:30 p.m.

• Oregon Ballroom Dance, Room 220, Gerlinger Hall, 7:30-11:30 p.m.

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