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### Colloquium Addresses Queer Pedagogy

Harriet Malinowitz

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# Colloquium Addresses Queer Pedagogy

## Syllabi Collection

CLAGS received an overwhelming number of responses to our request for syllabi used or proposed for graduate and undergraduate courses in lesbian/gay/queer studies. The syllabi have been collated into three volumes (General, Humanities, and Social Sciences) and are available for \$15 each. To order, send a check payable to CLAGS, 33 West 42nd Street, Room 404N, New York, NY 10036. For more details, call (212) 642-2924 or email [clags@broadway.gc.cuny.edu](mailto:clags@broadway.gc.cuny.edu).

On Saturday, March 8, CLAGS held a one-day event called *Queer Pedagogy: A Colloquium on Sexuality and Curriculum*. The colloquium addressed questions about the purposes, methods, language, applications, contexts, affiliations, and performance of queer studies in academic classrooms.

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**The “what” of queer studies—that is, its content—has often elided important discussions about “how” queer studies may be taught and learned.**

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The day began with introductory remarks by Harriet Malinowitz, who spoke about the history of liberatory pedagogy and its implications for lesbian and gay studies. Looking at educational movements spawned by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire and feminism, she contended that the “what” of queer studies—that is, its content—has often elided important discussions about “how” queer studies may be taught and learned.

A round table discussion called “What is a Transformative Curriculum?” followed,

facilitated by Ann Pellegrini and featuring discussants Jan Clausen, Martin Duberman, Berenice Fisher, Harriet Malinowitz, and Kendall Thomas. Breaking with the traditional format of individual presentations, participants conversed with each other about historical precedents for radical experiments in progressive education that can inform queer studies, the relationship of queer studies to women’s studies, and the ways that knowledge may be conceived and purveyed in queer studies classrooms.

Following a session of brown bag lunch workshops, the conference reconvened to discuss “Theory and Activism Inside/Outside the Academy.” Facilitated by Jill Dolan, it included participants Cheryl Clarke, Tamara Jones, Peggy Phelan, Ben Singer, Alisa Solomon, and Stacy Wolf. This session focused on issues of language, debates about “elitism” and “accessibility” in queer studies, the question of whether the inside/outside split is a real division or a false dichotomy, and an examination of the extent to which and in what circumstances teaching may be considered inherently activist.

The colloquium was sponsored by a CUNY Faculty Development Grant as one of a series of autonomously organized events intended to promote discussions about teaching and learning among CUNY faculty.

**Harriet Malinowitz**