

Statement of Research Interests

Catherine A. Euler, Ph.D. (2016)

I am primarily interested in the relationship between public discourses and the agency of the constructed self. These more abstract concepts cannot, and should not, be cleaved from embodiment, which has an interactive relationship with the other two.

My PhD dissertation (1996) focused on early nineteenth-century intersections of gender, race, class and sexuality in the lives of upper-class white and East Indian lesbians in West Yorkshire, particularly as reflected in the archives of Anne Lister (1789-1840). It has become clear to me since doing this research that public discourses affect personal consciousness such that a pre-modern ‘lesbian’ community ought not to be expected to have consciousness of sexual, class, racial, gender or political identities in the sense we use these today. The bodies these early-nineteenth century gentry women inhabited interacted with the discourses available to them during their own time, and vice versa. Lister and her contemporaries interpreted her gender as ‘masculine,’ although she never tried to pass as male, and both she and the public who saw her interpreted this according to the discourses available to them in their class, time, and culture.

This work has yet to be developed into a monograph, since soon after completing the work I was recruited by a research center in England that focused on sociological research on violence against women. Online European women’s studies publications and a published chapter in that field were a result (2000). After returning to the States I was also involved for several years in anthropology, including archaeology, tribal consulting, editing and writing a chapter for a book on sacred oral traditions among the Havasupai of the Grand Canyon

(2011). There is more work to be done analyzing the gendered aspects of this material, and I have not yet lost hope of eventually also publishing a version or versions of my dissertation, despite the multidisciplinary career paths I have since taken.

Lately I have begun organizing an undergraduate text that would serve as an introduction to the intersectional history of Western Europe and the United States. Many introductory volumes reflect either sociological approaches or modern cultural critique, and I would like to have something basic which I could use in my history-based courses.