

## preface

IN THIS SECOND DECADE OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM, we are frequently reminded of the power that structural forces have over people's voices, bodies, and rights. The articles in this issue make clear that neither the search for resistance nor the forms it takes are simple matters. Our authors cover a range of topics from the transnational circulation of cultural products to how ideal bodies are imagined: they include musician Miriam Makeba's antiapartheid politics, contemporary anti-racist feminist debates in the United Kingdom, cross-national efforts to preserve artworks lost or destroyed during the US invasion and occupation of Iraq, sex education in early twentieth-century United States, how US belly dancers negotiate intrusive tipping practices, and the efforts to categorize bodies and bodily parts that exceed gender norms. This issue also features two clusters focused on noteworthy contemporary events: the fortieth anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision and the highly publicized gang rape case in Delhi. The essays, art, and creative work in this issue vary in their lessons about resistance: the history of abortion rights campaigns in Argentina illustrates the success of appealing simultaneously to multiple principles such as pragmatism, freedom, and justice; the problem of Islamophobia in the United Kingdom calls for increased clarity in articulating feminist relationships to cultural difference; and the wave of street protests against the gang rape in Delhi may not necessarily lead to

feminist outcomes as far as the law is concerned. And as we commemorate the historic US Supreme Court decision on abortion, we also witness a shifting terrain: while one feminist calls for a more vigorous celebration of abortion, another notes the weakening valence of the label “pro-choice,” while yet another warns that abortion rights discourse does not acknowledge disabilities as an important form of human difference.

In the opening essay of this volume, Ruth Feldstein traces the international and US careers of South African singer Miriam Makeba in the turbulent 1960s. In the process, she shows that issues of gender and black sexuality were in fact central to the transnational formulations of the antiapartheid struggle that linked Americans, Europeans, and Africans. At the same time, many commentators in the United States read Makeba as “essentially African” and thereby obscured the mutual influences between South African and US culture. In spite of such simplifications, Makeba, while often seen as apolitical, was able to help articulate complex positions through a range of performance styles. Makeba helped change how Americans of different ethnicities saw civil rights and antiapartheid struggles, and she helped set the stage for assertions of female power and sexuality that we now associate with 1960s and 1970s feminism.

A number of articles in this issue remind us that regulatory regimes over bodies require our close attention to the mutual construction of race, sexuality, and gender as well as more neglected markers of human difference such as health and disability. Shari L. Dworkin, Amanda Lock Swarr, and Cheryl Cooky situate the “gender verification” that South African athlete Caster Semenya was required to undergo in August 2009. Through their analysis of media coverage in South Africa, the authors turn our attention not to whether Semenya is a “woman” or a “man,” but instead to the challenges to the International Athletics Association Federation for insisting on such crude verification. They demonstrate how complex dynamics of nationalism and race reinforce simplistic categories of sex and gender. Andrea Deagon turns our attention to belly dancing in the United States, an activity dominated in the twenty-first century by white, middle-class women. Deagon trains an analytical lens on the act of “body tipping” a dancer by inserting bills into her costume as she performs, and she illuminates the subtle power dynamics at play in commodifying white

women's performance of Arab femininity. Karen Weingarten's review essay covers books that explore how sex was "expressed, taught, advocated, and restricted in the United States from the 1860s to the mid-twentieth century." The essay tracks the work of sex educators, public health officials, and women writers in entrenching views of respectable female bodies. Female genital integrity is the focus of Christine Labuski's "Vulnerable Vulvas: Female Genital Integrity in Health and Dis-ease," which examines collective practices and ideas surrounding vulvas especially in a context where gynecological cancers are inadequately detected. She observes how women attend to their bodies in alienated ways, often undergoing cosmetic surgeries that are presented as pragmatic solutions to "vulvar excess." Indeed, these four essays demonstrate how international sporting agencies, consumers, educators, and physicians, respectively, seek to control and dominate bodily excess. They also highlight feminist analyses that challenge these structural controls. Creative works by Alissa Quart, Athena Edmonds, and Sarah-Jean Krahn put a poetic spin on feminist critiques of bodily subjugation, underscoring that clitorises, and indeed the whole of women's bodies, are not only sites of domination but also, and especially, sites of resistance.

Priyamvada Gopal sheds new light on a long-standing question: how to articulate political and analytical positions that are at once antiracist and feminist. In the context of post-9/11 debates over faith, racism, and women's rights in the United Kingdom, Gopal asks: "How do feminists speak and act in a conflictual context that is increasingly overdetermined by the global 'War on Terror' and the rise of specific kinds of bigotry?" Gopal analyzes debates over Gurpreet Kaur Bhatti's play *Behzti* (Dishonor) about a rape in a Sikh community as well as other difficult conversations about human and community rights. She urges that feminists be at the forefront of acknowledging the heterodoxy of Islamic, Sikh, and all other communities; reject simplistic understandings of religious markers such as the hijab; not shy away from critiques of oppression in majority and minority communities; and not be silent on labor injustices.

The US "War on Terror" and its effects are also the focus of our art spread and art essay. Art historian Nada Shabout has been engaged in a heroic effort to preserve the work of Iraqi artists in the course of the US invasion and occupation of Iraq, and Isis Nusair interviews her

to share details of the Modern Art Iraq Archive project, which documents items from the Iraqi Museum of Modern Art in Baghdad that have been lost, stolen, or destroyed during the war. As we mark the somber tenth anniversary of the US invasion of Iraq this spring, we present the striking works recovered by this project as a testament to the ingenuity and endurance of artists everywhere.

In commemorating another anniversary, forty years since the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision (the Supreme Court case that legalized abortion in the United States), we are proud to publish pieces that speak to the language of reproductive rights and reproductive justice in different geographical settings as well as in different physical realities. Barbara Sutton and Elizabeth Borland highlight the framing of abortion rights in Argentina, using the annual Encuentro Nacional de Mujeres as the site of analysis with respect to strategies and analysis around abortion rights and, more broadly, activism and mobilization in Argentina and throughout Latin America. Alison Piepmeier and Carly Thomsen, in separate pieces, offer insights into the larger framing of reproductive rights, the language of choice, and the national (and global) move toward reproductive justice. Piepmeier's reflective piece underscores that we who articulate support for reproductive rights to include abortion have *not* made progress in reframing the problematic link between abortion and the effort to eradicate disabilities. Seeing disability as a "harm" or "infliction" and abortion as a legitimate way to eliminate it, suggests that we are not nearly as progressive in our understanding of human diversity as we might think. Indeed, the continued support of "choice" as the linguistic and political term to frame reproductive rights may well undermine recognition of the differences we have with respect to ability and disability. By contrast, Thomsen's reflection invites us to interrogate why we do not celebrate abortion in our work for reproductive justice. In particular, the push to create and sustain a larger framework of reproductive rights to include sterilization, environmental toxins, and the right to bear children has eclipsed the real and important right to have an abortion—a right that, for Thomsen, should be celebrated. Our final voice in this forum commemorating *Roe v. Wade* is that of Dawn Laguens, executive vice president of Planned Parenthood, the largest organization devoted to providing reproductive and sexual healthcare services in the United States. Laguens reflects on how

Planned Parenthood is adapting to a rapidly shifting landscape in which young activists are more vocal and committed to expanding reproductive health than ever, even if the label they use to denote their activism — “pro-choice” — is under question.

In our News and Views section in this issue, two essays respond to one of the most widely discussed rape cases in recent memory: the assault and murder of Jyoti Singh Pandey in New Delhi in December 2012. Debolina Dutta and Oishik Sircar track how rape cases have historically served as the site for feminist engagement with the law in India, and they offer a critique of an “overreliance on the law” and the foregrounding of punitive responses. Poulami Roychowdhury pursues the question of how and why this particular case attracted media attention around the world and notes that the contrast drawn in media stories between upwardly mobile young urban women and tradition-bound migrant men aligns well with broader neoliberal scripts. Both contributors ask us to consider the horrific event in Delhi from wider angles than are typically found in media coverage.

Stephanie Gilmore and Uta Poiger,  
for the editorial collective