

font makers—which goes beyond the three-dimensional and so catches the outside of the outside, the questions at hand are indeed part and parcel of the Deleuzian fourth dimension to which I refer.¹⁴ The questions on my lips have everything and nothing to do with one another. And this is precisely my point. Where is the space in queer studies for a feminist who still believes that state-sanctioned marriage is one of the most insidious forms of institutionalized racism? Finally, when is it appropriate to have a discussion about all of these things that surely have their parallel in the principles of connection and heterogeneity that describe the Deleuzian fourth dimension? *Out there*, our nation chases a phantom menace called terrorism that is a cover for a “holy war.” If you wonder what I am talking about, check out Jerry Falwell’s recent missive on his Web site: “At this critical time in our nation’s history, it is imperative that Christians join together in prayer for our troops who wage war against a merciless enemy.”¹⁵ In the guise of the first menace, fundamentalists everywhere are waging war on an other menace—the queer, the freak, the one who sits at the outside of the outside.

I have little patience in these warring times for silence, since, as Toni Morrison reminds us, this is serious and dangerous work. To do it, we must change the way we think about the initial questions and their relations, literal or figurative.

Against Missionary Positions *Daniel Balderston*

Five years ago I interviewed Winston Leyland, the longtime director of *Gay Sunshine*, the tabloid in San Francisco, and of the publishing houses Gay Sunshine Press and Leyland Publications, for an article that José Quiroga and I subsequently wrote.¹⁶ It was clear that Leyland situated himself in an artistic, political, and spiritual vanguard and expected others to pay him homage. In fact, many years ago he wrote of “a Gay Cultural Renaissance as a world-wide phenomenon” and proclaimed his intention to help make this renaissance visible through his publishing endeavors.¹⁷ I am afraid that the imperialism of this gesture seems to have repeated itself in queer theory and in much work on queer culture internationally.

But first I would like to tell a couple of anecdotes. One takes place at a large international conference on Latin American literature in Caracas in 1996. A panel on homoerotic literature in Latin America was announced in the program, but the participants had all canceled, and the program supplement (which few saw) said that in its place there would be a panel on mystical poetry. Those of us who turned up for the queer panel milled around outside until the mystics were done

and then went back into the room, where a lively discussion ensued, with a number of Venezuelan students asking some of us from elsewhere (Quiroga and I among them) what to do to ensure that queer work was taught in their universities, and with a well-known lesbian critic who teaches at one of those universities commenting that no one was prepared to come out in their institutional settings, a necessary first step to the teaching of the material. When I mentioned this event in the post-script to my 1999 book of essays on gay Latin American writing, *El deseo, enorme cicatriz luminosa*, one of the reviews (by a Latin American critic who teaches at a wealthy Ivy League institution) accused me of being a missionary.¹⁸ The point was quite the opposite, I think: the Venezuelan students had asked for access to a body of work, for help in contacting critics in this field, for help in figuring out how to change their institutional context in the direction of greater inclusiveness.

I have now had this experience several times more, most recently as keynote speaker at the *Semana Rosa*, the gay and lesbian week in August 2002 in Bogotá that was sponsored by the Goethe Institute and a think tank, the Instituto PENSAR, at the Universidad Javeriana (the Jesuit university in Bogotá). Once again there was a hunger for information, which I think is being supplied in a useful way by Adán Griego of the Stanford University Libraries, who maintains a Web bibliography of work on gender and sexuality studies in and on Latin America and who is trying to incorporate full-text materials into the bibliography.¹⁹ I see no reason why facilitating the flow of information—as Griego very modestly does and as I have tried to do—need be confused with a missionary undertaking of the kind exemplified twenty-five years ago by Gay Sunshine and more recently by queer theorists.

This leads me to a reflection on the questions that Elisa Glick circulated in preparation for this panel. We can probably all agree that queer theory is not enough, that the interactions of queer studies with ethnic studies have changed our way of looking at both fields, that globalization is an important process in the reconfiguring of queer studies, that we value interdisciplinary approaches, that we feel a variety of tensions in our institutions concerning these questions, and that we have all experienced methodological challenges at the intersections of various differences, including sexual, racial, ethnic, and cultural ones. We can probably even agree about the dangers of inserting ourselves into a cultural vanguard, or what Quiroga here calls an imperial discourse. Yet there is a curious double bind in assenting to these propositions: the scales of an earlier gay and lesbian studies have fallen from our eyes, we have recoiled from the hubris of the queer theorists, we know how to take more differences into account, and thus we become cast—or do we cast ourselves?—in a new imperial discourse.

17. Winston Leyland, ed., introduction to *Now the Volcano: An Anthology of Latin American Gay Literature* (San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1979), 6.
18. Daniel Balderston, *El deseo, enorme cicatriz luminosa* (Caracas: eXcultura, 1999). The reviewer was Luis Ernesto Carcamo, in *Revista iberoamericana*, nos. 194–95 (2001): 318–21.
19. *Bibliography of Sexuality Studies in Latin America*. www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/hasrg/latinam/balder.html.