Warsaw University
Gender Studies Center and American Studies Center

Seeking Queer Alliances: Resisting Dominant Discourses and Institutions
7th international queer studies conference
29–30.08.2006

As the political climate in many parts of the world turns increasingly conservative, we are asking whether a concept such as global homophobia may be a useful analytical and/or political tool, and—as a correlate question—whether queer concepts travel well across political borders and geo-cultural spaces.

Do dominant discourses that include neo-liberalism as well as fundamentalisms of all kinds, and dominant institutions spanning the state as well as churches, require distinct forms of counterpractice? How to reclaim discourse appropriated by the dominant institutions?

What are and what could such practices of resistance be? To what extent may our experiences of LGBTQ subjugation and LGBTQ resistance be shared and also used to mutual advantage? Who may our dialogue partners be for such sharing? What alliances have been formed, and in which locations, for purposes of political activism and for achieving particular strategic aims? What is the place of feminist concepts in queer theory?

How is queer theory reflected in political activism, and how have particular theoretical concepts been adopted for political practice in different cultural contexts? How do activists serve as theorists, how do theorists serve as political practitioners, and how does the relationship between those functions manifest itself across contexts?

What is the role of mutual respect and self-respect in the forming of queer/LGBTQ alliances across cultural spaces? What are some internal and external obstacles to communication among queers occupying different social and geographical spaces? What role does the category of gender play in those different places? And what are the factors of cohesion from one alliance to another?

We wish to ask those questions, and others, in the context of the translatability of queer concepts across cultural and linguistic spaces, as well as the translatability between the analytical and the practical uses to which these concepts are put.

As far the format of the conference is concerned, there will be twelve 90-minute sessions over the course of two days, and a two-hour summing up discussion at the end of each day. We would like each of the 90-minute sessions to be hosted by individuals or teams ("session leaders") who will be responsible for the theme and form of the session, e.g. workshop, roundtable discussion, conventional panel, panel consisting of several short statements (or "postcards") followed by a discussion, or any other format.

We welcome 200-word proposals for whole 90-minute sessions or individual papers until May 15th, 2006.