



Social Text 84-85: What's Queer about Queer Studies Now?

David L. Eng, Judith Halberstam, José Esteban Muñoz

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This special double issue of *Social Text* reassesses the political utility of the term *queer*. The mainstreaming of gay and lesbian identity—as a mass-mediated consumer lifestyle and an embattled legal category—demands a renewal of queer studies that also considers the global crises of the late twentieth century. These crises, which are shaping national manifestations of sexual, racial, and gendered hierarchies, include the ascendance and triumph of neoliberalism; the clash of religious fundamentalisms, nationalisms, and patriotisms; and the return to “moral values” and “family values” as deterrents to political debate, economic redistribution, and cultural dissent.

In sixteen timely essays, the contributors map out an urgent intellectual and political terrain for queer studies and the contemporary politics of identity, family, and kinship. Collectively, these essays examine the limits of queer epistemology, the potentials of queer diasporas, and the emergence of queer liberalism. They rethink queer critique in relation to the war on terrorism and the escalation of U.S. imperialism; the devolution of civil rights and the rise of the prison-industrial complex; the continued dismantling of the welfare state; the recoding of freedom in terms of secularization, domesticity, and marriage; and the politics of citizenship, migration, and asylum in a putatively postracial and postidentity age.

Contributors. Michael Cobb, David L. Eng, Roderick A. Ferguson, Elizabeth Freeman, Gayatri Gopinath, Judith Halberstam, Janet R. Jakobsen, Joon Oluchi Lee, Martin F. Manalansan IV, José Esteban Muñoz, Tavia Nyong'o, Hiram Perez, Jasbir K. Puar, Chandan Reddy, Teemu Ruskola, Nayan Shah, Karen Tongson, Amy Villarejo

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