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in Psychoanalytic Thought by Julie Walsh**

Undressing the Bawdy

Call for Papers for the Second Issue of *Pivot: A
Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies and Thought*
Published by the Graduate Program in English at York
University

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Derived from “bawd,” a word of uncertain etymology associated with practices of female prostitution, “bawdy” describes something that is boisterously or humorously indecent.

Considering that one of the earliest known works of literature, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, with its many descriptions of the randy exploits of a Sumarian prince, can be considered bawdy, one might suggest that

bawdiness is an intrinsic quality of literary discourse. From Rabelais’s laughing pregnant hags, to Rochester’s copious odes to genitalia, and Joyce’s “obscenities” in *Ulysses*, the bawdy has titillated centuries of readers. Shakespeare’s statement, “it is a bawdy planet,” further suggests that bawdiness

is in fact a condition of earthly existence, rather than a specifically literary phenomenon. One might wonder, however, if our hypersexual society, with its tendency to overexpose the body, is limiting our ability to engage in a form of expression that seems to be at least partially enabled by sexual restrictions. Or has this contemporary tendency to “bare all” created a unique environment in which bawdy forms like the burlesque can be all the more attractive, because we yearn for the mystery, the comedy, the provocation, and the tease—because for once, we want NOT to see it all, or at least NOT to see it all at once.

These are just some of the lines of inquiry that will be explored in the second issue of *Pivot*, an interdisciplinary journal published by York University’s Graduate Program in English,

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“When I’m good I’m very good,
but when I’m bad I’m better.”

- Mae West

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entitled ***Undressing the Bawdy***. We invite participants from across disciplinary borders to submit proposals for papers that engage with any aspect of this highly mobile field of inquiry.

Possible topics could be inspired by, but should not be limited to, the following thematic concerns:

Gender and the body;
Body/Bawdy;
The connection with the dirty and abject;
Bawdy genres and mediums (the dirty joke, folksongs, limericks, erotic cartoons, graffiti, the burlesque,



etc); Performing bawdiness: bawdy as commodity; The bawdy in the Eastern and Western canon; The intersections of bawdy and grotesque, camp, and kitsch; Changing standards of censorship; Bawdy and satire; Eating, drinking, screwing: the bawdy and other appetites; The interaction between the erotic, the pornographic, and the bawdy; Famous bawds (real and fictional).

Please submit 6,000-7,000 word articles by September 31, 2011 by registering and submitting at <http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/pivot/about/submissions#onlineSubmissions>; all submissions must follow the style guidelines found on the same page. ☺