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November 9, 2014: Traub to deliver Comparative Drama Distinguished Lecture

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Sunday, November 9, 2014

[Traub to deliver Comparative Drama Distinguished Lecture, Thurs., 11/13 @ 7:00pm \(Center for Humanities\)](#)



VALERIE TRAUB (University of Michigan)

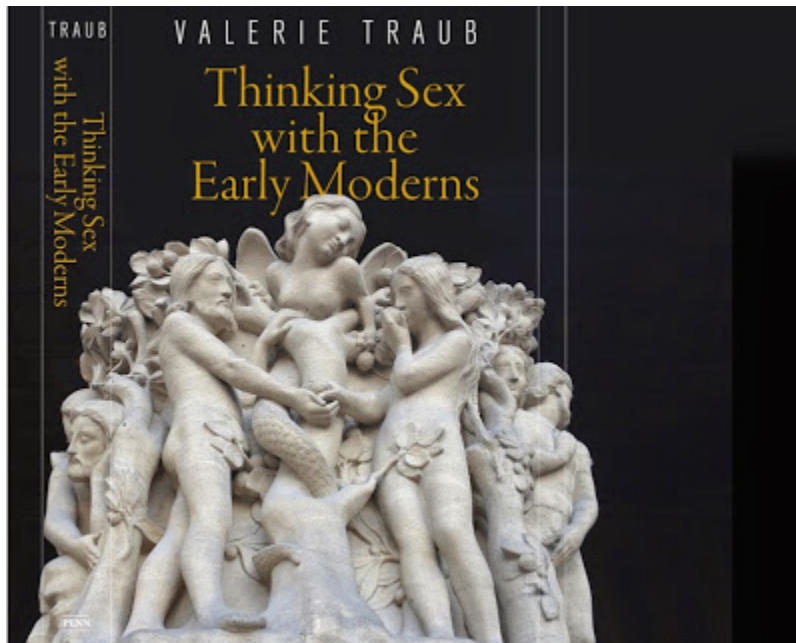
***Comparative Drama* Distinguished Lecture: "TALKING SEX"**

Thursday, 11/13 @ 7:00pm / Center for the Humanities (2500 Knauss)

Professor Traub is this year's Comparative Drama Distinguished Visiting Lecturer, an invitation issued each year to an internationally renowned scholar whose work engages with dramatic literature and culture. She is the Frederick G. L. Huetwell Professor of English and Women's Studies at the University of Michigan, and currently serving as the Interim Director of the Department of Women's Studies. Prof. Traub is the author of a body of influential work in literary and cultural studies, including *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), which won the Best Book of 2002 award from the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women, and *Desire & Anxiety: Circulations of Sexuality in Shakespearean Drama* (Routledge, 1992; reissued as part of the Routledge Revivals series in 2014), and is co-editor of *Gay Shame* (University of Chicago Press, 2009) and *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture: Emerging Subjects* (Cambridge University Press, 1996) and twice received the MLA Crompton-Noll Award for Best Essay of the Year. Her most recent book, *Making*

Sexual Knowledge: Thinking Sex with the Early Moderns, will be published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 2015. She is currently at work on another project on discourses of gender, sexuality, race, and class in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century anatomical and cartographic illustrations, entitled *Mapping Embodiment in the Early Modern West: A Prehistory of Normality*. She is the recipient of the University of Michigan's John D'Arms Award for graduate mentoring and the Distinguished Faculty Achievement Award.

Traub will be giving a public talk on Thursday night entitled "Talking Sex." This lecture will interrogate questions such as: How do early modern words materialize sexual acts? How effective are they in doing so? And what do their linguistic strategies tell us about what sex is, or was thought to be, in the early modern period? Scrutinizing the conceptual work of erotic puns and double entendres, this presentation puts early modern "sex talk" under pressure. By treating the concept of "bawdy language" as an object of inquiry, Traub will analyze how sex is operationalized through the linguistic resources that more often than not fail to indexically denote specific sex acts. Her presentation, in short, aims to reveal the epistemology, competencies, and pedagogies involved in "talking sex," both in the early modern period and in contemporary scholarship. The talk, which draws on material from her forthcoming book, will be followed by a question and answer session with the audience, and a light reception in the WMU Center for the Humanities.



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