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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday September 10, 2012

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Inaugural 'Positions of Dissent' lecture is Sept. 20

Helen Horowitz, Sydenham Clark Parsons Professor of History Emerita at Smith College, will give the inaugural lecture in the Syracuse University Library's Ray Smith Symposium, "Positions of Dissent," on Thursday, Sept. 20, at 6 p.m. in the Peter Graham Scholarly Commons on the first floor of Bird Library. Her talk is entitled "The Battle over Sexual Knowledge in 19th-Century America."

The talk will address the question: Is a "new reticence" creeping back into public discourse? Are we returning to issues faced in an earlier America, when open, fluid conversation about sex was shut down? Horowitz believes that words matter, and that to forbid key words from public discourse has serious implications both for intelligent discussion and human freedom. An exploration of what happened in the 19th century may allow us to see more clearly the issues at work today.

Horowitz's 2002 "Rereading Sex: Battles over Sexual Knowledge and Suppression in Nineteenth-Century America" was one of three finalists for the Pulitzer Prize in History. She is the author of "Culture and the City" (1974), "Alma Mater" (1984), "Campus Life" (1987), "The Power and Passion of M. Carey Thomas" (1994), "Wild Unrest: Charlotte Perkins Gilman and the Making of 'The Yellow Wall-Paper'" (2011) and editor of "Landscape in Sight: J.B. Jackson's America" (1997) and "Attitudes Toward Sex in Antebellum America" (2006).

For more information on this lecture or the full "Positions of Dissent," symposium series, contact Lucy Mulrone at 443-8538 or ldmulron@syr.edu.

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