Feminist Public Intellectuals in the Arts:
The Case of Playwright Wendy Wasserstein

THURSDAY, APRIL 17th

Talk: 5:30pm
Reception: 7:00pm

Location: BISTRO 33
Historic City Hall
226 F Street

Feminist theatre criticism in the '80s and '90s often assumed that "avant garde" was better—more subversive, more challenging, more "feminist." What is the place, then, of a "mainstream" feminist playwright such as Wendy Wasserstein? How are we to understand the mixed public response to her work, especially The Heidi Chronicles, beloved by audiences, yet often dismissed or ignored by critics and academics? Challenging conventional wisdom in feminist theatre theory, Jill Dolan reassesses the career of Wasserstein, her pivotal work as a public intellectual and the role of theatre in shaping and reflecting a critical cultural and political moment in feminism.

Jill Dolan holds the Zachary T. Scott Family Chair in Drama at the University of Texas at Austin, where she heads the MA/MFA/PhD programs in Performance as Public Practice and is a member of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers. She is the author of Utopia in Performance: Finding Hope at the Theatre; Geographies of Learning: Theory and Practice, Activism and Performance; Presence and Desire: Gender, Sexuality, Performance; and The Feminist Spectator as Critic. Her writing also appears on her blog, The Feminist Spectator.

Co-sponsored by: Cultural Studies, the Department of Theater and Dance, the Consortium on Women and Research, the Women and Gender Studies Program, and the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Resource Center