Interview with Valerie Lee, interviewed by Karen Hall

In Search of a Womynist Tradition and Consciousness, by Michelle Diane Wright

Interview with Yukari Murayama, interviewed by Andrea Allison

Recent Lesbian Non-Fiction: A Bibliographic Essay, reviewed by Linda Krikos

The Black Women's Health Book: Speaking for Ourselves, reviewed by Halimah Duncan

Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research, reviewed by Nichole C. Raeburn

Announcements

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Interview with Valerie Lee
Interviewed by Karen Hall, Department of English, The Ohio State University

Valerie Lee is a new faculty member of the Center for Women's Studies and the Department of English. Karen Hall had the opportunity to interview Dr. Lee this fall.

KH: I feel like I have a real advantage doing this interview because even though you're a new faculty member here in the Center for Women's Studies, I've known you for quite a few years and have had the privilege of working with you. Perhaps a good place to start would be to describe your last teaching position at Denison University.

VL: I was a professor in the Department of English and taught there for the last fifteen years. Along with teaching the required canonical courses, I specialized in African-American literary studies. Teaching such courses as "Women in Literature," "Toni Morrison Senior Seminar," and "Third World Women Writers," kept me very involved in the Women's Studies program. In fact, I was one of the persons involved in the creation, teaching, and monitoring of a general education requirement in Women's Studies/Minority Studies that has been in existence at Denison for over a decade.

KH: You've already done some teaching at Ohio State with the Center for Women's Studies. How did that come about?

VL: While I was on sabbatical, Susan Hartmann extended me an invitation to teach "Women Writers of the Harlem Renaissance"-an opportunity that I'm glad I didn't refuse.

KH: Did that experience lead you to apply for this job?

VL: No, not exactly. Although it was a very fulfilling teaching experience, it was one of many factors--my conversations with people in both Women's Studies and English, warm memories of my graduate school days here, and the general direction that I wanted the rest of my career to take.

KH: What are you most looking forward to about teaching at Ohio State?

VL: I think there will be more opportunities to merge my teaching interests with my research interests.

KH: What kinds of classes will you be teaching?

VL: All the good stuff--the energizing and compelling voices and visions of such writers as Toni Morrison, Gloria Naylor, Zora Neale Hurston, Alice Walker, Paule Marshall, Rita Dove, Octavia Butler, J. California Cooper, Terry McMillen.... You wouldn't want me to give you my full book list. Just take a glance at my bookshelves.

KH: What sort of critical and theoretical problems do these authors present to the traditional canon? I realize that because of the vast number that's a difficult if not impossible question to answer, but what I'm trying to ask is what are your special interests?

VL: Let me try to give you a specific example. One of my fields is nineteenth century American literature. The day I found out that there were over 6,000 slave narratives written, and many of them by women despite that fact that most people are only familiar with Frederick Douglass, it changed the way I taught American literature. I could no longer call it "Masters of the American Renaissance" which is what we were calling it then. This fact automatically brought up questions of history, genre, gender, race, and color. When I found out that Douglass' narrative sold more copies than a number of "American Masters" combined, I could no longer dismiss slave narratives and had to rethink issues of genre. I am also interested in continuity, the fact that female slave narrative is being revisited by authors like Octavia Butler and Toni Morrison, and in the way Black speech patterns, African-American folklore and African myths are used by writers today, in how their stories are a part of and apart from other American writers.

KH: You and I have talked some before about your excitement that you'll have more time here at OSU to work on your own scholarship. Could you tell us about the work you're currently involved in?

VL: My current scholarship explores the way that African-
American women writers use midwives, rootworkers, and folkhealers as narrative strategies. Combining folklore and literary analysis, it is a work that draws from an Afrocentric feminist-womanist perspective... yet makes some use of traditional approaches as well.

KH: I noticed you paused and then added the fact that you also use "traditional approaches as well." Do you feel that those of us on the political left can no longer use terms like Afrocentrism, terms which we originally used to challenge the way we read the master canon, because of the PC debate?

VL: My only hesitation is that so many people don't understand what feminist Afrocentrism is. If feminism is the "F" word, you can guess what Afrocentrism is! You have to be careful using a label before an audience knows what it means.

KH: I know that at Denison you sat on a number of committees and had numerous roles besides being a teacher and advisor. What responsibilities do you hope to take on here at OSU, either now or in the next few years?

VL: Although I want to do my fair share of service, right now I am most interested in teaching and research. In the next few years, I will be interested in those committees that affect policy and curriculum. You're right-- I have served on every committee from Allocation of Resources to Tenure and Promotion. I don't eschew active involvement, but I always begin by seeking balance.

KH: I know that in the past you have been involved in a great deal of community work in Columbus. I seem to remember that you and your husband were involved in teaching. Are you still devoting energy to this?

VL: I think that anyone involved in such disciplines as Women's Studies and Black Studies should have a love for teaching and learning in those communities and among those persons whose lives and life stories form the academic texts. Other than pedagogical and philosophical reasons for involving myself in the Columbus community, my husband and I have personal and social reasons for doing so. We feel that too many persons coming from these communities divorce themselves from the communities. Their academic degrees become mere assimilation tools. My husband is an attorney, and we fight against living complacent, easy, middle-class lives.

To answer your question, one of the things that we did for many years was to found and direct an adult summer education program, TEACH, Inc. Using T.A.'s from Denison and teaching professionals from various Columbus schools and colleges, we offered workshops and three to four week non-credit courses that focused on gaining verbal and quantitative skills. The need was great, but it takes grant money to sustain those kinds of efforts. Approximately three years ago I founded and presently coordinate, "Womanist Readers"--a community group that meets once a month to discuss black feminist writers. The group began with Denisonians who had been English majors in college and were complaining about their lack of active, compelling reading post-college. Pretty soon, many of their mothers, sisters, and co-workers joined the group. The group provides me with another critical forum for the discussion of literature.

KH: I've been concentrating on your professional life, perhaps this would be a good place to introduce your family and your more personal side--you don't have to get too personal! I'm not doing an expose!

VL: Well, we have four children--nine and seven year old girls and five year old twin sons. Their presence in our lives has shifted the literacy work to the home front. They know that I have changed universities, but sometimes they get the letters "OSU" mixed up. The other day, one of the five year-olds asked when was I going to ABC?

KH: I have to add that I feel a special closeness to your sons as you were pregnant with the twins when I took your Harlem Renaissance class. I feel like I can truly appreciate your great energy after watching what you were able to do and give in the classroom while eight and a half months pregnant with twins!

VL: My response is the same as Alice Walker's and Toni Morrison's. Let me try to paraphrase--to do any less would be a betrayal to the generations of women in my family. I can do more than one thing because it is all I've ever done, all I ever saw my mother do.

I can tell you a story. I was on the hiring committee for Denison and had to go to MLA in New York when I was nursing the boys. My mother and my sister went with me
and booked the room next door. So there I was, interviewing candidates in one room while my mother and sister were feeding my babies in the next room. I guarantee I had a much different experience than the men in the room.

KH: When I was at Denison I looked up to you as a role model. You were the only African American professor in the English Department for the first few years I was there, and I remember talking to you in your office one day about issues of difference and especially about making a career out of studying issues of difference. You told me what it was like for you as a graduate student at Ohio State in the early '70's trying to study African American literature. Can I get you to tell part of that story again?

VL: When I came to OSU in the early '70's to do my doctorate, I was fascinated to be at such a large school. After having attended several small private universities, I enjoyed walking to class with 50,000 other students. All of my classes took place in two or three rooms in Denney, and I enjoyed those classes. I lived and breathed literature.

I don't remember that there were any formal graduate classes in Women's Studies or Black Studies within the English department. However, I was creative and the department gave me the flexibility that I wanted. I remember coming across an article that Murray Beja wrote on a black author, so I asked him to sponsor a directed study for me in black literature. I found out that Pat Mullen was teaching something that I had grown up around and he was calling it "folklore," so I did an independent study with him also in black literature. I took a long seminar in Herman Melville from Julian Markels and then combined Melville and Ralph Ellison for my dissertation. My request that black literature be one of the four fields on my general examinations was also granted. My list could go on with ways in which I shaped my program to my interests. I knew what I wanted to do in graduate school, and I knew how long I wanted to take and found the department very accommodating. That's why it is an honor to return.

That look on your face makes me think I must have told you something juicier. In all honesty, the only negative advice I can remember that anyone ever gave me while I was going through my program was a cautionary statement not to invest too much energy in black literature, for it may "blow over" before I got out of graduate school. As you can see, I knew what advice to dismiss. Nothing has "blown over." Indeed, black America is in the midst of another literary renaissance. OSU is a great place for learning, and I claimed my education.

KH: I think students can really sense the strength and confidence and what I'll call honesty, for lack of a more descriptive word, you have which allowed you to do that -- I know I did. Do you feel a sense of pride for being a member of the generation of scholars who have institutionalized the study of 'marginal' literature, for making it possible to sign up for classes in women's literature and black literature through BRUTUS rather than seek out mentors and 'safe' faculty members to do independent studies with?

VL: Well, I do, but I still feel surprised that there are students who are afraid to take these classes. There was a student who wanted to take a class in the Harlem Renaissance and asked me how it would affect his getting into law school. The institution sanctions these classes, but I still think students need more personal reassurance.

KH: You mentioned that you maintained contact with former students and began a reading group with them. We've discussed your community work. This brings me to my last question--do you see yourself as a role model?

VL: I never took a high school course, a college course, or a graduate course from a black teacher. I never met a black woman college professor of literature until I went to my first professional conference and that was when I was already teaching at my first job! I don't think anyone should have to be in that type of a vacuum for long.

I know two high school-aged girls who told me they wanted to be college professors. I see them every other week, and I have introduced them to each other. I'm amazed they are able to say so young what they want to do. I don't sit back and say, "I'm a model," but what makes me feel good is knowing that they are able to reach for that partially because they see me and know I did it.

I feel as Alice Walker does--to be a model is to save one's own life. And I would hope that in doing so, in saving my own life, it becomes a sisterly experience.
PART I: Introduction

In 1983, Alice Walker introduced a new term to describe the condition and experiences of African American women. The term was womynism, and Walker defined it in the following manner:

Womanist 1. From womand, (Opp. of “girlish,” i.e., frivolous, irresponsible, not serious.) A black feminist or feminist of color. From the black folk expression of mothers to female children, “You acting womanish,” i.e., like a woman. Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or willful behavior. Wanting to know more and in greater depth than is considered “good” for one. Interested in grown-up things. Acting grown-up. Being grown-up. Interchangeable with another folk expression. “You trying to be grown.” Responsible. In charge.

Serious.

2. Also: A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually. Appreciates and prefers woman’s culture, women’s emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women’s strength. Sometimes loves individual men, sexually and/or nonsexually. Committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a separatist, except periodically, for health. Traditionally, universalist, as in: “Mama, why are we brown, pink and yellow, and our cousins are white, beige, and black?” Ans.: “Well you know the colored flower garden, with every color flower represented.” Traditionally capable, as in: “Mama, I’m walking to Canada and I’m taking you and a bunch of other slaves with me.” Reply: “It wouldn’t be the first time.”


4. Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender.

Walker additionally defines womynism as a consciousness that incorporates racial, cultural, sexual, national, economic, and political considerations. The preceding definitions sparked the beginning of a scholarly argument between African American as well as European American women and men who have embraced the label womynism and those who continue to define themselves as black feminists.

In 1985, Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi carried the meaning of the term womynism to a new level by putting forth a comparison between African American and European American views on gender issues. She makes this comparison in the context of literary expression, which has always been an important indicator of societal trends:

“It is important to establish why many black women novelists are not feminists in the way that their white counterparts are and what the differences are between them. African and Afro-American women writers share similar aesthetic attitudes because of their race, because they have experienced the past and present subjugation of the black population along with present-day subtle (or not so subtle) control exercised over them by the alien, Western culture.”

This is Ogunyemi’s statement in defense of the term womynism to describe the African American female struggle for liberation. This contention is based upon shared historical differences from mainstream feminists as well as the unique condition of the African American woman.

Another advocate of the womynist label is Elsa Barkley Brown. A prominent historian and sociologist, Brown grounds her philosophy of womynism and builds her definition upon the foundation of both Walker and Ogunyemi. She states:

That understanding is in part hampered by the prevailing terminology: feminism places a priority on women; nationalism or race consciousness, a priority on race. It is the need to overcome the limitations of terminology that has led many black women to adopt the term “womanist.”

These three women, Walker, Ogunyemi, and Brown are the foremost advocates of a womynist consciousness defined in this forum as a progression from black feminism. Each has made arguments to support the existence of womynist consciousness and theory that have evoked provocative dialogue with staunch black feminists.

By far, the most recognized anti-womynist is bell hooks. She has been a very vocal advocate for the retention of the label black feminist due to what she claims to be a rooted
tradition that womynist consciousness lacks. In her book *Talking Back*, hooks speaks out on this issue:

I hear women academics laying claim to the term "womanist" while rejecting "feminist". I do not think Alice Walker intended this term to deflect from feminist commitment, yet this is often how it is evoked. Walker defines womanist as black feminist or feminist of color. When I hear black women using the term womanist, it is in opposition to the term feminist; it is viewed as constituting something separate from feminist politics shaped by white women. For me, the term womanist is not sufficiently linked to a tradition of radical political commitment to struggle and change. What would a womanist politics look like? If it is a term for black feminism, then why do those who embrace it reject the other?

Hooks raises a number of interesting questions. First, does the usage of a womynist label necessarily reject the entirety of feminist consciousness? Second, is the utilization of the term womynism in opposition to the term feminism? Third, is womynist consciousness viewed as something separate from feminist politics shaped by European American women? Fourth, has a feminist consciousness always been present in the ideological thinking of African American women? Fifth, has the consciousness of African American women been historically rooted primarily in gender or race issues, or both? Finally, has there existed a tradition of African American women that has resulted in a consciousness that can be labeled womynist consciousness? These are but a few of the questions that will be addressed in this essay.

It is extremely important at this point to note women of color other than African American women. Women such as Indigenous Americans, Asian Americans, Latina Women (this includes Hispanics, Chicanas, Mexican Americans, Cuban Americans, etc.) are part of a group of women that have recently been labeled "Third World Women". While an objectionable descriptive label, this group of women equally experience a triple oppression of racism, sexism, and classism. While the nature of certain aspects of their oppression may differ from African American women's, the interrelated tripartite oppression is still present. Womynist consciousness and tradition is certainly present in the lives of most women of color in the United States and globally. Womynist commitment can also be an effective and valuable tool in the struggle of all people of color. The focus of this study, however, will only be that of the African American womynist consciousness. The author believes that she cannot speak for an experience that is not totally hers. An analysis of Indigenous American women and men, for example, must come from Indigenous Americans. It is this reason that only African Americans will be discussed in this forum.

**PART II: Research Methodology**

This essay analyzes the basic qualities, elements, and attributes of the African American female experience. The African American female experience is the sum total of the content of African American female lives through history. There are five main levels of this experience as described in Table 1.

**TABLE 1 -- BASIC ASPECTS OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE EXPERIENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of human reality</th>
<th>Key concepts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Biology</td>
<td>Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Social Orientation</td>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Political Economy</td>
<td>Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Consciousness</td>
<td>Ideology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Society</td>
<td>Culture</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 illustrates the conceptual framework that clarifies the experience of African American women. Each of the five points are units of analysis. The first three aspects—race, gender, and class—are independent variables. Although each independent variable has a unique impact upon the experiences of African American women, they also have a compounded effect upon the African American female condition. In this context of this study, each variable will be examined individually as well as together to reveal their interrelated nature. Ideology is a dependent variable that is determined by each of the three interrelated independent variables, gender, race, and class. Ideology is not static, and changes with the natural evolution of culture. Culture is a contextual variable. Culture is a contextual variable because it results from the social context of a particular historical time period. Contextual variables act upon both dependent and independent variables in that they continuously, but subtly, alter the way in which these variables make up the condition of the African American woman. This is described in Figure A.
Biology and Race

On the level of biology, the key variable is race. Race is a biological trait that is genetic. One’s race code is inherited from biological parents. Race is determined by specific physical traits such as form of hair, color of eyes, and color of skin. These sole differences in physical characteristics do not determine inferior or superior status within any society. While racial differences are often put forth as the cause of social inequality, this is not actually a result of race. It is the result of racism. Racism is a doctrine that claims to find racial differences in the character of one race that asserts the inferiority of that race to another. This doctrine has no scientific support. In the context of this study, racism refers to the belief that European Americans are superior to African Americans.

Social Orientation and Gender

Gender is the key variable on the level of social orientation. While gender is often used as a synonym for sex, each word actually possesses meanings that are quite different. Sex is a biological term that describes a human population sharing specific physical traits of genital organs, especially the external sexual organs. Gender is a term of social orientation that refers to the socially imposed dichotomy of masculine and feminine roles and character traits. In other words, sex is physiological while gender is social. It is important to make this distinction because those who use the two terms interchangeably are inadvertently assuming that cultural norms of masculinity and femininity are natural and determined by biological differences.

Just as in the case of race, sex or gender differences in physical characteristics do not determine inferior or superior status within any society. As with race, gender differences are often put forth as the cause of social inequality, but this inequality is actually a result of sexism. Sexism also has no scientific support. Sexism is the social domination of members of one gender group by another. For the purposes of this study, this domination will refer to the belief that males are superior to females. Sexism is the behavior, policy, language, or other actions of men or women which express the systematic and comprehensive view that women are inferior.

Political Economy and Class

The central concept of political economy is class. An economy is the management of wealth and resources. Economic activities include the production, distribution, and consumption of the wealth and resources within a given society. Class describes a group of people that are considered a unit according to their economic and social status within a given society. Class is also the historical relationship between these different groups of people. "It is a relationship of power that determines who works, what they get from it, and what impact they can have on the society at large." Within each society there is a ruling class. It is this ruling class that owns the means of production. This ruling class has the highest economic and social status within the society. Although the case is some societies, class is not hereditary in the United States, and individuals may move in and out of varying class classifications. Classism is the systematic domination and exploitation of the underdeveloped class by the privileged class.

Ideology and Consciousness

The human reality level of consciousness is ideology. The consciousness of any social unit is dependent upon other variables. The consciousness of the social unit 'African American woman' is dependent upon three independent variables: race, gender, and class as well as the contextual variable of culture. Consciousness is the experience of the abstract mental images that enable a group or individual to make choices and to be aware of the group or individual feelings. In other words, the African American female consciousness is the abstract mental images and the awareness that results from her condition of race, class, and gender. Again, this consciousness is not static, but changes
as culture changes which thereby affects the changes in condition of race, class, and gender for the African American woman.

The consciousness of a social group or individual can be organized into an ideology. An ideology is the doctrines, opinions, or way of thinking of an individual or social group. These opinions serve to define physical, social, mental, and spiritual reality. The ideology of African American women is a group of beliefs that determine their outlook on society and determine the social reality of that society. Again, ideology is dependent upon other variables.

Society and Culture

The major aspect of the human reality level of society is culture. Culture is the ideas, customs, values, and lifestyles of a people in a given period of time. Culture is a permanent feature in every society. Although the culture of a given social unit may evolve with time, there are always core characteristics that remain distinct and differ in some way from other distinct cultures. Culture is a contextual variable in this study because all other variables, both independent and dependent, must be examined within the context of society during a particular period of history.

Historical change within the African American female experience alternatively represents social cohesion and social disruption. These two terms are defined by Abdul Alkliamit: "Social Cohesion--An established and relatively stable pattern of social life that is transmitted across generations....Social Disruption--Occurs when patterns of social cohesion are broken and people have to adjust to a new environment, to a new set of relations, to a new way of life."

Figure B illustrates this conceptualization as it relates to the African American female experience.

This overall framework represents a paradigm of the African American female experience. This is a fundamental model that organizes this view of the African American female condition through time. Out of each social disruption, a new form of social cohesion is created.

### Figure B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL COHESION</th>
<th>SOCIAL DISRUPTION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. West African Society</td>
<td>Mobility Passag B</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Slavery</td>
<td>Emancipation D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Sharecropping &amp; Tenant Farming</td>
<td>Migration North F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Urban Life</td>
<td>Integration H.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I. Integrated Life</td>
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### PART II: Discussion and Analysis

Cognizant of the fact that many black feminists view the utilization of womynist terminology as being anti-feminist, it is important to first understand the feminist tradition. While many equate feminism with middle-class European women seeking equality with European men, most are unaware of the many diverse facets of the feminist movement. Within the traditional mainstream, predominantly a European women's liberation movement in America, there are several distinct ideologies. In "Political Philosophies of Women's Liberation," Alison Jagger outlines five major categories of the wider feminist movement. She notes that although different, each faction believes that "...justice requires freedom and equality for women, but differ on such basic philosophical questions as the proper account of freedom and equality, the functions of the state, and the notion of what constitutes human, and especially female nature." Jagger defines the five major categories of feminism as:

1. Liberal Feminism
2. Classical Marxist Feminism
3. Radical Feminism
4. Lesbian Separatism
5. Socialist Feminism

Although Jagger provides an extensive characterization of each classification, the limitations of a paper of this type make it necessary that only brief definitions will be
10

provided.

Liberal Feminism. Jagger’s first classification, is a reformist ideology which seeks legal reform to improve the status of women. Organizations such as N.O.W. (the National Organization for Women) are liberal feminist groups that have been known to fight for such causes as the Equal Rights Amendment (E.R.A.) and other legislation. Gloria Steinem, editor of Ms. Magazine would be considered a liberal feminist. The political message of her magazine is very liberal in content. Fundamentally, the liberal feminist “…does not believe that it is necessary to change the whole existing social structure in order to achieve women’s liberation.” Instead, liberal feminists perceive that the only change necessary is that of the consciousness of American women, and more importantly, reforms within the legal system. This ideology is individualistic in nature, placing the individual woman above the collective of all women in the progression towards reform. Liberal feminism with roots in the women’s suffrage movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth century was led by women who believed that the vote would solve most gender oppression. Today, liberal feminists are the most visible faction of the feminist movement. This is a result of the media hype and the large amount of attention placed upon this mainstream movement.

Classical Marxist feminists believe that all gender oppression stems from the institution of private property. In other words, the oppression of all females is a result of the capitalist economic system. Most Marxist feminists do not align themselves strictly with traditional Marxist theory on all issues. Generally, there is an attempt to wed the best aspects of feminist theory with the best aspects of Marxist theory thereby creating a Marxist feminist theory. Usually the aspects of Marxist theory are not strictly the traditional ideas, rather a neo-Marxism that integrates issues of race and gender within the theory to a limited extent. Within this Marxist feminist theory, however, there is a definite emphasis placed upon Marxism as the primary theoretical foundation over and above feminist theory. Classical Marxist feminists tend to view capitalism as the cause of patriarchy, therefore the incitement of male domination. Abolition of capitalism must take precedence over feminist concerns. The reasoning is that the end of capitalism will bring about the end of patriarchy. This theory tends to be more collective in nature, denying greater importance of the individual over the group.12

Radical feminists claim that the root of gender oppression is biological, a result of female capacity for childbirth. All subsequent treatment, gender role socialization, labor opportunities, and the overall status of women in society stems from this basic biological fact. Therefore, a biological revolution is the solution to sexism whereby women would be freed of the responsibility of childbirth and child rearing. Some radical feminists believe that technological advances have created an atmosphere where artificial reproduction is possible, thereby relieving women of these organically assigned duties. Inherent in this classification of feminism are ideals of androgyny, where social roles of masculine and feminine would be abolished.13 Another thrust of radical feminism is directed to the documentation of the slogan “the personal is political.” This statement emphasized the feminist concern with self, but “…it did not insist on a connection between politicization and transformation of consciousness.”14 This gives radical feminists the tendency of being somewhat more individualistic than Marxist feminist, however, more collective than liberal feminists. Radical feminists understand the oppressive nature of the capitalist economic system, but place more importance on ending gender role socialization.

The classification of lesbian separatism has its foundations in the idea that “…male supremacy requires that women should refrain from homosexual relationships.”15 Lesbian separatists contend that the only way to escape male domination, whether it be in the context of individual relationships or within the wider society, is by establishing loving relationships with other women. Inherent in this theory is the belief that the problems of patriarchy can never be solved. This theory calls for the redirection of individual lifestyles rather than mass action.

Finally, socialist feminists believe that classical Marxism and radical feminism each have insights and deficiencies. It is the task of the socialist feminist to construct a theory out of the best of both schools. Most of the earlier socialist feminist such as Heidi Hartmann, Juliet Mitchell and others advocated a dual systems theory whereby two distinct structures, movements, and histories are merged into one system but not completely forged into one distinct system.16 The later trend has been to “…develop a single
[emphasis mine] theory out of the best insights of both Marxism and radical feminism, which can comprehend capitalist patriarchy as one system in which the oppression of women is a core attribute. The socialist feminist believes that the monogamous family is based not upon biological conditions, but rather economic conditions. She contends that the liberation of women depends upon their incorporation into public industry. The overall belief is that there must be an entire transformation of the economic base of male/female relationships as well as the interpersonal characteristics of those relationships. It is in this regard that socialist feminism addresses both gender and class issues within a cohesive revolutionary theory.

Upon examining the categories of feminism as defined by Alison Jagger, it becomes evident that all factions provide varying solutions for the problem of gender oppression. These solutions are either reformist in the case of liberal feminism, or revolutionary as in the case of Marxist feminism. Therefore, all categories of feminism address sexism. Two of the categories, Marxist feminism and socialist feminism confront the oppressive nature of the capitalist economic system. These theories attempt to draw a connection between economic oppression and gender oppression and propose solutions to these problems. Consequently, these two categories address classism. It now becomes tremendously apparent that issues of racism are never centrally addressed in any of the major theories of feminism.

Endnotes

1 Although Alice Walker originally spelled this word "womanism," throughout the remainder of this paper, the term will be spelled "womynism," except when quoting another scholar. This is referring only to the spellings of "womynism," not "woman" or "women" in the context of this paper, which will adhere to the traditional spellings. The reason behind such a spelling usage in the term "womynism" is that I do not choose to use the patriarchal spellings of "woman/women." In her article "Intertextuality," Debbie Aiken has described the reasons why many women choose an alternative spelling of these terms. She has also traced the linguistic meaning of these words, therefore providing a foundation of alternative spellings. She states that "Woman" is derived from the Old English words wif and man. The combined form of wifman from which comes woman explicitly connects any entity called woman to man as a form of property. I deny the necessity and/or the desirability of such a connection of property and use the spellings womon/wommin/womyn as one way of denying that definition of property." I too view the spelling woman as a connotation of male ownership of women and will spell womynism with a "y" to illustrate that belief. I feel that women must be defined in terms of themselves rather than in terms of men. Simply because man is not utilized in the term womynism in no way implies a separation of women from men. This spelling as an act of self-definition, therefore an act of self-empowerment.


5 Barkley Brown, page 613.


7 I agree with June Jordan when she states "How can a people that were here on this earth first be called 'Third World'?" This label should be changed to 'First World' to reflect that firstness.


9 Ibid., page 25.


11 Ibid., page 9.
Interview with Yukari Murayama
Interviewed by Andrea Allison, Undergraduate Major in the Center for Women's Studies, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.

Yukari Murayama visited the Center for Women's Studies on October 13-15, 1991. She is on a mission from Japan to learn about women's issues in the United States. Ms. Murayama works at the Bureau of Waterworks for the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. She will be in the U.S. for six months to assess how women's issues are addressed here. She is scheduled to meet with various women's agencies in a few different cities. Her first assignment was to visit the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) in Pittsburgh. While Ms. Murayama was visiting the Columbus, Women's Studies major Andrea Allison got a chance to speak with her about women's issues in America and Japan.

AA: What did you like about the CLUW convention?

YM: It was a great opportunity to meet women who are involved in issues that help women. They are establishing the importance of women in the workforce. I was surprised to find out how many women do not have health insurance. When I came to Columbus, I met with Judi Moseley who is in charge of the Women's Health Program for the Ohio Department of Health. She explained some of the programs that have been developed and I hope to utilize this information when I get back to Japan. I was also able to tour the Elizabeth Blackwell Center at Riverside Hospital.

I was impressed with the way women's health issues are treated in some of these facilities. In Japan, women may take six weeks off prior to giving birth and ten weeks off afterward with pay. I was disillusioned when I found out women don't have similar coverage in the states.

AA: Do women usually return to work after having children?

YM: Most men still think of wives in a traditional manner. In my own family, my mother worked until she had her first child when my father forced her to quit her job. He did not see her career as important. My mother did encourage me to think independently and I obtained a four year degree from an all-women's college. Now, however, my parents are anxious for grandchildren. Since I am approaching the age of thirty they are worried about me. They tried to arrange a marriage for me before I left for the United States. I refused and told them I would take my chances on finding my own mate. It seems to me that in the United States women are more career-oriented. Is this true?

AA: Actually, parents often think in traditional terms as far as their children. They still want their daughters to marry and reproduce in addition to being career-oriented. Does that surprise you?
YM: Yes. I always thought women had it much better here in the States. I also thought there was less job discrimination and women had more promotional opportunities, but I'm finding women face many obstacles in the United States. I am glad I was able to visit the Women's Studies Department in Columbus to find out what types of courses are offered for women that enhance career opportunities. It has been a good experience meeting so many women who are strong and independent and have good careers.

AA: Does Japan have specific courses for women at the universities?

YM: Yes but they have developed only in the last few years. I think we need to make more progress in this direction.

AA: What kind of qualifications are required for your current position?

YM: The government has tests according to your educational level. In Japan, women make up almost 40% of the labor force and about 50% of married women work. The main problem is that they often fill female-dominated jobs such as clerical positions (similar to the United States.) Although more women are being hired and being promoted through qualifying examinations, men still fill the higher level jobs. The top executive positions are almost all men. Part of the reason I am here is to learn how to encourage women to enter non-traditional positions. Also, there are no affirmative action programs in Japan.

AA: Thank you for taking the time to talk about women's issues with me.

This is not Yukari's first visit to the United States. She visited five times previously. From here she will go to New York city to learn more about women's issues and how to address them. She will also learn about the legislative process and how it encompasses women's issues. She will be meeting with women leaders and policy experts in order to enhance her skills so she can actively incorporate women's issues in Japan when she returns.

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Recent Lesbian Non-Fiction: A Bibliographic Essay

reviewed by Linda Krikos, Women’s Studies Library, The Ohio State University, Columbus.

The number of titles focusing on lesbian experiences has mushroomed in recent years. In addition to lesbian and feminist publishers, university and mainstream presses such as Columbia University Press, University of Minnesota Press, and Garland have inaugurated or committed themselves to series on gay and lesbian studies. New York University Press will introduce a series about lesbians to be called The Cutting Edge: Lesbian Life and Literature.

This essay discusses titles on lesbian philosophy and theory, lesbian writing, lesbian history, and Jewish and Chicana lesbian experiences. All were published within the last three years and are part of the collection in the Women’s Studies Library.

Lesbian Philosophies and Cultures, collected by Jeffer Allen, is a collection of essays, poetic prose, and experimental writing that focuses on lesbian pluralism. Rather than focusing on lesbianism as it relates to or contrasts with heterosexuality or patriarchy, the collection emphasizes lesbian perspectives on ethnicity, race, class, physical ability, age, and nationality. All of the 23 writers represented reside in the United States or Quebec. Joyce Teblico, Julia Petepo, Ana Lee, Maria Lugones, Baba Copper, Monique Wittig, and Gloria Anuldua are all included.

In Love and Politics: Radical Feminist and Lesbian Theories, Carol Anne Douglas traces the evolution of various radical and lesbian feminist theories, the assumptions behind them, and the similarities and differences between them. Activist/theorists Kate Millett, Mary Daly, Audre Lorde, Marilyn Frye, Jill Johnston, and Charlotte Bunch are quoted and analyzed on a variety of issues. Biological determinism, sex, sexuality, love, separatism, power, and violence as strategy are all examined in this book. The emphasis is on French and American theories and theorists.

One of the first anthologies to establish lesbian feminist criticism as a distinct area of study, Lesbian Texts and Contexts: Radical Revisions is edited by Karla Jay and Joanne Glasgow. Lesbian Texts and Contexts discusses interactions between writer/text/reader/reader where one or more of them is identified as lesbian. In the first section, authors Valerie Minn, Mary Meigs, Lee Lynch, Maureen Brady, and Elizabeth Meese explore the relationship between writer and reader through the text. The next section re-examines nineteenth and early twentieth century "straight" texts by authors Emily Dickinson, George Eliot, and Willa Cather from a lesbian point of view. The final section looks chronologically at overtly lesbian authors. This section ranges from Djuna Barnes, H.D., and Radclyffe Hall to contemporary American and French writers like Audre Lorde, Paula Gunn Allen, and Nicole Brossard. Other essays in this section provide a synthesis of trends and issues in lesbian literature.

In The Safe Sea of Women: Lesbian Fiction, 1969-1989, Bonnie Zimmerman examines how lesbian fiction has taken literary genres and myths and used them to reflect and influence lesbian culture. Zimmerman discusses the contributions of 167 books to the development of the ideas of lesbian self, the lesbian couple, lesbian community, and differences within the community particularly differences of race, class, and ethnicity. Finally, after demonstrating that the most recent (1986-1989) literature reconsiders the ideas of the early literature, Zimmerman speculates on the various ways the themes may be developed in the future. Rita Mae Brown, Jane Rule, Ann Allen Shockley, Katherine V. Forrest, and Jeanette Winterson are a few of the authors whose works are examined.

Not a Passing Phase: Reclaiming Lesbians in History, 1840-1985 is an initial step toward more inclusive, diverse, and detailed research on British lesbian history. The contributors are all members of the Lesbian History Group based in London. Their awareness of the work of American authors such as Adrienne Rich and Lillian Faderman is evident. Some of the essays discuss the friendships of well-known authors like George Eliot.
Charlotte Bronte, and Edith Simcox. Other chapters uncover the existence of women's networks in a particular section of London, examine the attacks on spinster school teachers between the two world wars, analyze the school girl theme in literature, and trace the history of the butch/femme concept in lesbian culture. The final chapter is an annotated bibliography of mostly American and British titles on lesbian history studies.

Lillian Faderman's *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth Century America* focuses on the evolution of lesbian self-definitions within the context of a changing society. The early chapters trace how the often admired "romantic friendships," common in the early part of the twentieth century, gradually came to be viewed as lesbian and "sick" as defined by one of the early sexologists. The remaining chapters take a decade by decade look at the development of diverse lesbian subcultures. By examining archives, journals, and other published materials as well as interviewing almost 200 lesbians, Faderman presents a broad spectrum of past and present lesbian life. Diverse class, race, age, ethnic, and geographic perspectives are included.

Comparing gay men and lesbians in the today's Jewish community to the secret Jews in Christian communities during the Inquisition, the authors collected in *Twice Blessed: On Being Lesbian, Gay, and Jewish* address their invisibility and experiences of being "doubly other." Editors Christie Balka and Andy Rose organize the essays around five themes: the importance of naming, reclaiming history, honoring relationships, creating gay and lesbian Jewish community, and reaching out to the Jewish community. Both personal narratives and theoretical writings are included. Felice Yaskel describes growing up Jewish, lesbian and working class. An anonymous Jewish rabbi reflects on her life in the closet. Judith Plaskow suggests a new theology of sexuality. And Evelyn Torton Beck examines the Jewish lesbian community.

The stress and pull of religion, family, and community are examined in *Chicana Lesbians: The Girls our Mothers Warned us About*, edited by Carla Trujillo. The authors write of trying to fit into two different worlds, neither of which is eager to accept them. Over forty essays, poems, interviews, and images by such writers and artists as Cherrie Moraga, Gina Montoya, Gloria Anzuldua, Terri de la Pea, and Ana Barreto examine Chicana lesbian life, sexuality, passion, the pervasiveness of color, and the constant struggle of each author's life.

The titles discussed here represent only a few of the titles pertaining to lesbians and lesbianism that are available in the OSU libraries. Many additional materials cover topics such as coming out, aging, sexuality, motherhood, violence, health, relationships, spirituality, and cultural experience. The following lists are a sampling of the works available through the OSU library system.

**WORKS DISCUSSED**


**SELECTED RELATED TITLES**

Do You Want To Be Published?

Feminisms welcomes submissions of articles, essays, reviews, artwork and graphics (black and white), information about upcoming events, community news, and cartoons of interest to feminists. Submit your work to: Sue Green, Editor, Feminisms, The Center for Women’s Studies, 207 Dulles Hall, 230 West 17th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43215. We reserve full editorial rights.
The Black Women's Health Book: Speaking for Ourselves
Reviewed by Halimah Duncan

In the introduction to this well-documented book, Evelyn White explains her motivation for undertaking this project, the realization that "scores of physically and emotionally scarred black women have died before the severity of their wounds could be recognized or treated." She goes on to tell us that the life expectancy for whites is 75.3 years compared with 69.4 years for blacks; that the infant mortality rate for blacks is 20 deaths per 1000, about twice that of whites; that 52 percent of the women with AIDS are black; that more than 50 percent of black women live in a state of emotional distress, and that black women stand a one in 104 chance of being murdered compared with one in 369 for white women. Given these tragic statistics, one would seriously have to question the African American woman's chances of surviving. But Evelyn White makes an effort to make these statistics "less haunting, less foreboding and less of a reality for black women," and in response to the alarming health crisis now facing the African-American community.

The Black Women's Health Book addresses the question of survival and supplies the reader with a necessary tool for understanding and assistance in finding resolutions to many issues that face the health and well-being of African American women. It is not an anthology of victimization, but of empowerment and of the African American woman's readiness to accept wellness. The book takes the reader on an enlightening journey through the voices of diverse African American feminists representing a broad range of health issues through essays, historical pieces, political debates, poems, interviews, and personal stories. Even though it is obvious from its title that the book was written for African American women, all women will be able to learn and benefit from its content.

From the fiery political context of African American women's health issues delivered by Angela Davis, to personal sojourns of life experiences to prescriptions used in ancestral folk healing, this book finds its way to the very being of the African American female to promote self-healing and a renewed sense of being.

The sisters whose writings appear in the book represent a myriad of the community ranging from health and social professionals, literary artist, midwives, and prostitutes to women's health rights activists and mothers, daughters, sisters and grandmothers as diverse and as vulnerable as the reader. Whether it is a look into the most intimate parts of their lives with the hope that it will help with the healing of others or raising the consciousness of the reader concerning African American women's health issues, The Black Women's Health Book does speak for ourselves.

The unique format allows the African American female to identify health problems she or someone close to her may have. This is not to say that the book is by any means a medical encyclopedia, rather an encyclopedia of informed perspectives, personal accounts, comfort, inspiration, and strength.

Each of the four chapters contains approximately ten articles. The articles are short and easy reading and allow one to browse the table of contents to read whatever appeals to them in no particular order without losing the essence of the message of the book.

Chapter One: "There Is A Balm In Gilead," contains a historical and political perspective given by Byllye Avery of the National Black Women's Health Project and Angela Davis. These two articles set the tone of the theme: "I'm Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired" as spoken by Fannie Lou Hamer. Janis Coombs Epps, a cancer survivor, takes us intimately into her life as she describes her battle with the disease in a piece entitled, "On Cancer and Conjuring." The piece exposes the power of words as she relives her experience from the initial discovery of the disease through her recovery. Janis begins her story by quoting our legendary poet and black feminist, Audre Lorde (who is also featured in the book and is quoted by many of the authors):
Words are to be taken seriously. I try to take seriously acts of language. Words set things in motion. I've seen them do it. Words set up atmospheres, electrical fields, charges. I've felt them doing it. Words conjure.

To Janis, cancer was a conjuring word with its power stemming from fear. Janis, courageous and triumphant in her struggle, shows us the power of spirit over body and sheds a different perspective on the fear felt by women with cancer.

Also in Chapter One are articles by two women who surpassed numerous personal, social, and political obstacles in order to become physicians. Their stories reveal the crucial need for more women to enter the medical profession in order to combat the shortage felt hardest by the African American community in handling the overwhelming health crisis of today and the future.

In Chapter Two: "Tell the World About This," survivors of childhood sexual abuse, incest, reveal that speaking out is a crucial part of the total healing process. The struggle of one author, Linda Hollies, with incest took on a twisted dynamic since her father was an assistant pastor of a Pentecostal church, where "God's love was constantly being preached." Linda survived and has begun to heal. Her story gives inspiration to other incest survivors who remain trapped in guilt and fear.

Abortion, teenage pregnancy, and the crisis of the black family are addressed in a sensitive manner by Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund. Startling statistics reveal a cycle of destruction of our children and gives the reader scholarly perspectives on the black family, asks the question where are the black fathers and addresses what is being done by the black community. Given these distressing revelations, an interview with a traditional black midwife gives us hope that as a people, African Americans have a high value for life. For example, Mattie Hereford practiced in Alabama and delivered over 839 babies since she began in 1951, confirming the many African Americans practicing midwifery, leaving an unsung legacy of nurturing and support.

AIDS is the most serious health crisis to affect African American women in recent history. AIDS is the leading cause of death for African American women between the ages of 24 and 36. Chapter Three: "Climbing Higher Mountains," features three articles on AIDS that reveal startling facts about that disease: 25% of all people with AIDS are black, 52% of all women with AIDS-related illnesses or HIV positive status are black, and 59% to 80% of all children afflicted with this virus are black. These articles are a call for action among the black community hitting as hard with facts and softening the blow through poetry.

Other issues addressed in this chapter are hypertension, sickle cell anemia, diabetes, the health of incarcerated African American women and a poignant message to the black community concerning its failure to deal with the gay/lesbian issue in a sobering discussion with Jewelle Gomez and Barbara Smith. "Take the Home Out Of Homophobia: Black Lesbian Health," presents a serious challenge to face homophobia for what it really is and to come to terms with one's own sexual identity.

The final chapter "Rocka My Soul," brings an end to the book confronting the reader with articles dealing with alcoholism, crack, nicotine addiction, and one women's triumph over smoking. There was a particularly impressive article by Bridgett Davis entitled "Speaking of Grief: Today I Feel Real Low, I Hope You Understand." Bridgett lost five immediate family members during an eight year period and most of the deaths were violent acts. Dealing with death and grief is something one traditionally handles alone. Her story tells of a sad but triumphant struggle of coming to terms with her grief.

Although the entire book was enjoyable, one article in this chapter stood out concerning our mental health. Julia A. Boyd, a psychotherapist from Seattle, Washington, wrote of her concern for African American women to receive proper therapy. The National Black Women's Health Network reports that over 50% of African American women live in emotional distress. Julia felt that if white feminist therapists were to provide services to women of color, they must be culturally sensitive. Her message defines the steps necessary for white therapists to reach this sensitivity including a willingness to examine their own beliefs regarding African American women. She also instructs the woman of color on how to select the proper therapist.

As an African American woman who has just crossed another milestone in life, I could personally identify with
many of the articles contained in the book. I envision this book being a preventive instrument against negative health and well-being for African American women. Whether by starting as a text for high school students in health education classes or informing women at the college level through Black Studies or Women's Studies, the most powerful weapon for the survival of the African American woman is knowledge.

Evelyn White has given us that knowledge in *The Black Women's Health Book.* It allows African American women to relate to other women who share the same malady or suffer from a feeling of being powerless. This book can cause a positive reaction inside the reader calling for her to take responsibility for her own health. By doing so, women assist with the health of others and increase the chances for survival for African American women. After reading the book, every woman will undoubtedly feel the spiritual power in its pages, recommend the book to others, give it to loved ones, and open up the process to allow the healing to begin. In closing, Evelyn White leaves us with this plea, "Please take this sisterly medicine and pass it on."

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Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research

Reviewed by Nichole C. Raeburn, Department of Sociology, The Ohio State University

Obscene phone calls, comparable worth, black feminist thought, pornography... Fonow and Cook present their readers with a number of works by feminist authors that are as varied in subject matter and field of origin as they are in method. Using a sociology-of-knowledge perspective, the editors provide a better understanding of feminist research through their focus on epistemology—the study of assumptions about how we "know the social and apprehend its meaning" (p.1)—and methodology—the study of the practices and techniques actually used in the research process. Fonow and Cook present four themes that run through the literature on feminist scholarship. This review will discuss the four themes in relation to the articles in the book.

Reflexivity, the first theme, is the tendency of feminist authors to reflect upon and examine critically the nature of the research process. Kathryn Pyne Addelson examines the role of 'cognitive authority' within science. Cognitive authority is an epistemology whereby scientific specialists' understandings of the world come to be taken as the definitive understanding of reality.

What Addelson focuses on are the social arrangements that come into play in determining which group will exercise cognitive authority—factors which are usually neglected whenever philosophers of science discuss science itself. These social arrangements include issues of power and prestige; political considerations regarding funding; social status of the researchers themselves; and 'metaphysical commitments' (i.e. functionalism versus interactionism which determine not only what questions are asked in science but also what are deemed social problems. Addelson calls for the inclusion of these elements in any discussion of scientific rationality, making such reflexivity an explicit part of the scientific method.

Toby Epstein Jayaratne and Abigail J. Stewart offer an excellent overview of feminist criticism of quantitative methods which traditionally have been sexist, racist, and elitist. They argue for an inclusive feminist perspective which encompasses qualitative as well as quantitative
methods. They offer several strategies for practical implementation of a feminist perspective in social science research.

Though most feminist criticism regarding research methods is directed at those which are quantitative, the feminist commitment to reflexivity means that a critical eye must be turned towards qualitative research as well. Lynn Weber Cannon, Elizabeth Higginbotham, and Marianne Leung discuss how women of color and working-class women are often excluded in qualitative research. Through interesting examples from their own work, the authors discuss why this is the case and what can be done to correct it.

Consciousness raising is included as part of the reflexivity theme. Patricia Hill Collins' article captures the essence of this in her discussion of black women academicians' status as 'outsiders within.' A unique black feminist standpoint is made possible by experiencing the contradictions inherent in holding a position of marginality within various disciplines. Such a standpoint and consciousness of oppression make possible the ability to critique the understandings of insiders who are too immersed in their disciplinary patterns to see their own biases.

Fonow and Cook include collaborative scholarship as part of the reflexivity theme since many feminists feel that a more thorough intellectual analysis is possible through joint-authorship. Kathryn B. Ward and Linda Grant explore collaborative research through their examination of ten major sociology journals from 1974 to 1983. Their findings are especially important for feminist scholars who co-author--and their figures show that there are many--since sole authorship brings greater rewards in hiring, promotion and building an academic reputation.

The second theme in the literature on feminist methods is one the editors call an action orientation. Joan Acker, Kate Barry, and Johanna Essedvedt offer a clear example of this orientation in their article on objectivity and truth. They argue that research should contribute to women's liberation by generating knowledge that can be used by women themselves; thus, their statement, "This means a commitment to a social science that can help change the world as well as describe it." (p. 134.) Part of their emancipatory research includes the strategy of sharing their written work with the women they write about so that the study participants are an active part of the research process.

Maria Mies' article on the debate surrounding feminist science and methodology provides a vivid illustration of the action orientation theme. She contends that "feminist science...is a part of [the women's] movement or it is nothing." (p. 63). Mies argues for the creation of an alternative scientific paradigm--feminist science--that will support emancipatory movements and will not force false dichotomies between thought and action and between science and politics.

The editors examine the public policy implications of feminist research. Ronnie Steinberg and Lois Haignere provide an example of this in their contribution on comparable worth. The authors provide a clear discussion of the methodological issues surrounding comparable worth studies, and they deal well with much of the critics' arguments. On the other hand, they fail to address (or even mention) those feminist critiques of comparable worth which raise the question of how politically and strategically worthwhile it is to push for comparable worth when implementation of such a policy does nothing to desegregate occupations.

Other articles which tie in to the policy implication element are Christine E. Bose's article on factors affecting U.S. women's gainful employment at the turn of the century and Ruth Dixon-Mueller's piece on women in agricultural labor in developing countries. Using various quantitative methods, they show how using a technique or model different from dominant methods results in a more accurate portrayal of the women's work. Currently, policy decisions are often based on studies which depict women as a lower proportion of the labor force than they truly are. More accurate means of measuring women's labor force participation would allow better policy decisions to be made.

The third theme Fonow and Cook discuss is attention to the affective components of the research act. Verta Taylor and Leila Rupp include a discussion of this emotional dimension in their work on what they call the 'elite-sustained' phase of the women's movement (the 1940's and 1950's.) They refer to the negative attitudes held by some of the women activists of that period toward lesbians and women of the working-class and how taken aback the authors were to hear such attacks during interviews. Though such attitudes are far from what current activists would label 'feminist,' the authors chose to learn about the world of these women on
their own terms, which meant that they could not ask directly about the role of lesbian relationships within the movement since that would have been imposing contemporary perceptions on the women's own definitions.

Attitude and emotion are considered, though in a different manner, by Pauline Bart, Linda Freeman, and Peter Kimball. These authors focus on the differences in attitude between women and men toward pornography as well as changes which can occur in those attitudes as a result of viewing an anti-pornography film.

The fourth and final theme Fonow and Cook introduce is the use of the situation at hand. For example, Laurel Richardson takes advantage of the situation at hand in her chapter on sharing feminist research with popular audiences. As a result of a long and exhausting book tour to promote her book on single women involved with married men, the author discovered for herself how the media manipulates both people and topics. Richardson writes candidly and critically about her experiences during the tour, utilizing the situation at hand to help other sociologists learn to use the various forms of media rather than being used by them.

Liz Stanley and Sue Wise offer another powerful example of this last theme by turning a daily occurrence—obscene phone calls—into an unexpected but challenging research project. They discuss not only the obscene calls themselves but also how the calls actually changed their theories about the research process and the nature of women's oppression.

This contribution, with its positive utilization of a daily intrusion into the authors' 'real' lives, adds concrete meaning to the editors subtitle Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research, making such a subtitle all the more appropriate for a book well worth an extensive read.

New Course: The Body in Comparative Perspective
Comparative Studies 792/Women's Studies 792/Philosophy 792

This five credit course will be an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural study of the human body as an object of reflection and intervention for philosophy, medicine, and religion. It will explore ways in which the body has served historically as a source of meaning and metaphor. Topics may include ethics, medicine, and sexuality in Western antiquity; fasting, gender, and religion; the somatics of prayer and fasting; the posing of the mind-body problem in Western philosophy and theology; Asian body-mind theories; the body as object of discipline and torture; metaphoric relations between the body and society or the body and the cosmos. Readings may include Tom Laqueur, Gilbert Ryle, Michel Foucault, Carolyn Bynum, Page du Bois, YUASA Yasuo, Emily Martin, and Margaret Miles as well as primary texts.

The Body in Comparative Perspective will be offered Winter Quarter 1992, Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-11 am. Professors Tom Kasulis and David Horn will teach this course. For information, please contact the Division of Comparative Studies in the Humanities, 306 Dulles Hall, 230 West 17th Avenue, 292-2559.
Announcements

Center for Women's Studies Seeks New Director

The Center for Women's Studies at The Ohio State University invites nominations and applications for the position of Director of the Center to begin September 15, 1992. The Director holds a joint appointment with an academic department at the rank of Professor or Associate Professor. Candidates must have administrative experience and a strong record in women's studies scholarship and teaching.

The Center's curriculum and appointments reflect its commitment to diversity in terms of race, sexual identity, and nationality.

To apply for the position, please send a letter of application, c.v., and names of three references to: Judith Mayne, Chair of the Search Committee, Center for Women's Studies, 207 Dulles Hall, 230 W. 17th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210.

Applications should be received no later than November 15, 1991. OSU is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Women's Drumming Group Forming

A women's drumming and conversation circle is forming in Columbus in November. The group will meet on the first and third Thursdays of each month from 7:00 to 9:30 pm. Drums, rattles, bells, and other fun instruments are provided but feel free to bring any and all of your own! Conversation will be free-ranging and open to themes or issues as they arise. These evenings are celebratory in nature and serve as a great way to rejuvenate. For information and location, call Christina Cappelletti at 292-9141.

Call For Papers

Constructions of Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Identities in the Popular Media is the title of the 4th annual Sager Symposium in Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Studies to be held March 27-29, 1992 at Swarthmore College. Papers are being accepted until November 20, 1991.

Suggested topics include a broad range of mass communications media including sub-categories such as daytime tv talk shows, televangelism, magazine advertising, talk radio, sporting events, political speeches, and graffiti. Papers should be no more than 20 minutes long, and the proposal should be under two double-spaced pages.

Each presenter will receive lodging, meals, and a $200 honorarium. Some travel funds are available. Send papers to: Sager Fund Advisory Committee c/o Daniel Smartt, Art Department Swarthmore College 500 College Avenue Swarthmore, PA 19081-1397 (215)328-8119.
Announcements (continued)

Lesbian and Gay Community Center Opens

In conjunction with National Coming Out Day, Stonewall Union welcomed the community to its new Community Center on Friday, October 11, 1991. The space will be available for rental by community groups. For additional information, contact the Stonewall office at (614)299-7764.

New Ecofeminist Educational Program to Begin at Grailville

New Women, New Earth, a residential, wholistic living and learning semester for women will be offered at Grailville January 27 - May 20, 1992. The program will focus on ecology and the economy, ecofeminism, spirituality, and the multicultural American experience. Grailville's 300+ acres of organic farmland, pastures and woodland will be the base for the program.

Students registering formally for the program will receive 12-14 credit hours from the Cincinnati College of Mount St. Joseph. Grailville is located in Loveland, Ohio near Cincinnati. Cost for the program is $2400 and includes room and board. For more information, contact Audrey Sorrento, Grailville, 932 O'Bannonville Road, Loveland, OH 45140 or call (513)683-2340.

Call for Proposals for Sixth Annual Ohio Coalition On Sexual Assault Conference

The Ohio Coalition On Sexual Assault (OCOSA) is accepting proposals for its sixth annual conference. The conference will be held September 10-11, 1992 in Columbus, Ohio.

Proposals will be accepted until December 6, 1991. For more information or to request a copy of the Call for Proposals form, contact Debra Seltzer at (614)469-0011 or write to OCOSA Conference Planning Committee, Room 400 YWCA, 65 South 4th St., Columbus, OH.

Sixth Annual Midwest Feminist Graduate Students’ Conference

Feminist graduate students throughout the Midwest are invited to submit papers and/or presentations for the Sixth Annual Midwest Feminist Graduate Student Conference to be held February 14-16, 1992 at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

Proposals should be postmarked by November 30. The abstract should be one-page and should not include your name. Enclose a cover sheet with your name, address, telephone number and title of your proposal. Please send one-page abstracts to: Midwest Feminist Graduate Student Conference, c/o Women’s Studies, 152 Upham Hall, Miami University, Oxford, OH 45056. Call (513)529-4616 for questions.