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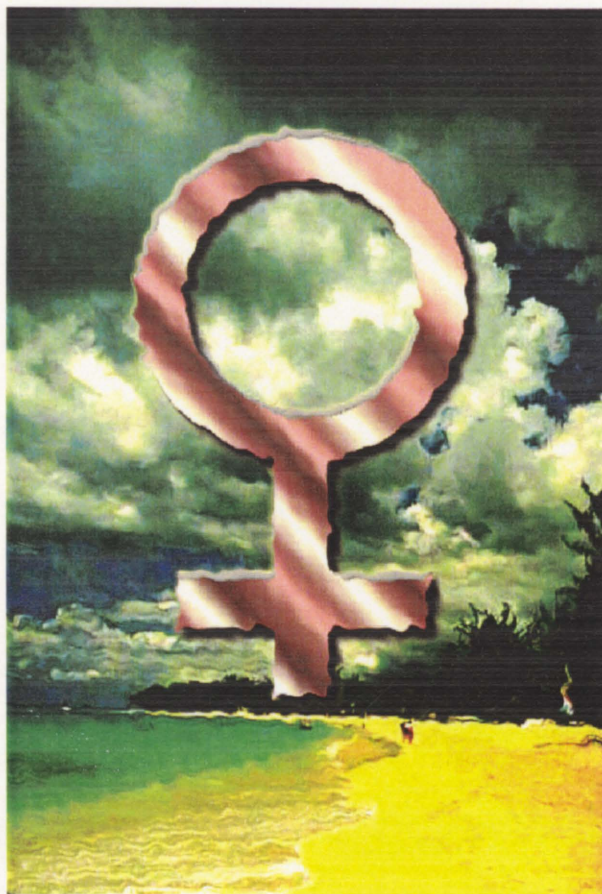
Making waves (Miami, Fla.) Vol. 1

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MAKING WAVES



Women's Studies Center
Florida International University



Volume 1, 2003

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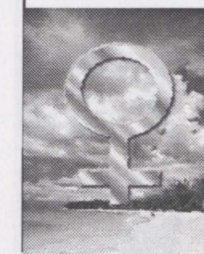
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The following collection is a compilation of the works from the participants of Florida International University's first Women's Studies Student Conference. *Making Waves*, the conference and the journal, was realized through the dedication and love of many feminists and women and men concerned with providing women-orientated productions of knowledge. *Making Waves* was largely a student production, the first of its kind sponsored by the Women's Studies Center at FIU. The initial inspiration came from Shira Fisher, a Sociology and Women's Studies student interested in forming an on-campus proactive academic community concerned with social justice and feminist issues. Student activists Rachael Middleton and Marcela Piñeros each played an important role, as did Professors Suzanna Rose, Aurora Morcillo, Sara Crawley, and Susan Freeman. We hope this serves as a tool to inspire and educate other Women's Studies students to take an active part in the community and create new forms of communication. This journal is intended to serve as a stepping-stone toward the academic achievement and activism that the FIU students and the South Florida community are capable of reaching.



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The following collection is a compilation of essays from the participants of Florida International University's 1997 Women's Studies Conference. The conference, held through the dedication and generosity of the women and men concerned with providing women-oriented productions of knowledge. Making Waves was largely a student production, the first of its kind, sponsored by the Women's Studies Center at FIU. The initial inspiration came from Shirley Fisher, a Sociology and Women's Studies student interested in learning an on-campus progressive academic community concerned with social justice and feminist issues. Student writers and researchers and scholars from across the United States and abroad, as did Professors Susan Freeman, Monica Sims-Crawley, and Susan Freeman. We hope the journal is intended to serve as a stepping-stone toward the academic achievement and activism that the FIU students and the South Florida community are capable of reaching.

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Coloring Outside the Lines: The Art of Being Third Wave

Marcela Piñeros

Upon inheriting a world where many external obstacles have been eliminated, we must now find ways to create our own. The Third Wave is a new approach to feminism, one that is more inclusive and more focused on the individual. It is a wave that is not just about the body, but about the mind and the soul. It is a wave that is not just about the past, but about the future. It is a wave that is not just about the world, but about the self. It is a wave that is not just about the body, but about the mind and the soul. It is a wave that is not just about the past, but about the future. It is a wave that is not just about the world, but about the self.

Postmodern feminism is a new way of thinking about the world. It is a way of thinking that is not just about the body, but about the mind and the soul. It is a way of thinking that is not just about the past, but about the future. It is a way of thinking that is not just about the world, but about the self. It is a way of thinking that is not just about the body, but about the mind and the soul. It is a way of thinking that is not just about the past, but about the future. It is a way of thinking that is not just about the world, but about the self.





Coloring Outside the Lines: The *Art* of Being Third Wave

Marcela Piñeros

Upon inheriting a world where many external obstacles have been alleviated, third wave feminists are directing their energy towards eliminating internalized patriarchal oppression. By redefining their identities and channeling multiple viewpoints in an acceptance of diversity, third wavers can change the discourse. This project examines the erroneous notion that feminism is dead. Moreover, it looks into the reasons behind the conflict and confusion that inherently defines this generation. Borrowing from postmodern feminism and standpoint feminism, third wave feminism seeks to establish a new form of activism that is carried out within each individual and then channeled through artistic expression into our collective social consciousness.

Postmodern feminism offers a foundation for the acceptance of multiple truths, hence challenging objectivity and the notion of a fixed knowable reality. In addition, this feminist framework applies a critical view to the current discourse and acknowledges the possibility of bringing about change through deconstruction (Lorber: 196). Deconstruction however, will only take us part of the way. After breaking down the symbols and messages that we are receiving, we need to clean out internalized patterns of sexism and discrimination that we have come to perpetuate. Standpoint feminism offers a methodology that values

the individuality of experiential narratives derived from different social locations and acknowledges the need to bring personal perspectives to light (Lorber: 131).

Objectivity is an illusion. There is no absolute truth, only a multiplicity of perspectives. By challenging dualistic categories of gender and sexuality, postmodern feminism puts forward a philosophy of diversity. The acceptance of multiple truths and multiple realities along with the rejection of essentialism suggests that there is no such thing as a "woman's" standpoint. While the use of "woman" as an inclusionary category has allowed the previous waves of feminism to prevail in achieving certain political goals, the category in itself has become restrictive due to the contradictions among its members. Clearly there are intrinsic differences among human beings that transcend biology and genitalia. These differences result from the intersection of social, cultural, geographic, religious, economic, and internal forces that construct a person's attitude and belief system.

Our interpretation of reality is tainted by social discourse, established by hegemonic groups and institutions. Applying Simone de Beauvoir's redefinition of the verb "be", as active and performative, we can say that individuals "have become" who they are (de Beauvoir: 150). A combination of external influences,

compounded by internal reaffirmations, creates our view of the world. James A. Holstein and Jaber F. Gubrium address this issue in their book, *The Self We Live By*: "Participation in racial, ethnic, or gendered groups carries with it distinctive auspices that some call 'standpoints', which significantly shape" our interpretation of reality, hence our self-construction (105). In addition, it is necessary to consider that the lack of alternative perspectives contributes to social blindness. Ignorance regarding the "richer contrasting values that compose the whole gamut of human potentialities" is compounded by fear of the unknown (Mead: 134).

The third wave generation has been overloaded with messages and expectations from polar sources. Second wave accomplishments taught us to see "women as capable, full of untapped potential, and deserving of the same societal recognition as men" (Shoemaker: 104). We learned that gender roles were a tool of the patriarchy to promote and maintain male privilege; hence, we began to question the nature and value of both masculinity and femininity (Cox: 178). During the flower power movements of the sixties, gender lines became blurred. Mass media represented longhaired men burning their draft cards while communing with nature and their feminine side. Kaleidoscopic meanings of gender created fear and disorder (Filene: 252). Conservatives coming into power campaigned to save the family and rescue "All-American" values. Through the 1980s, feminism fell prey to biased representation through patriarchal mass media.

Filene describes how the 1980s marked the "end" of the feminist movement. "Veterans looked back with pride; young people with condescension, sometimes scorn" (Filene: 248). College students through the decade of the 1990s shrank away from the feminist label, fearing the stereotypes sold to them during the Reagan years. However, the same students jumped to defend equal rights for women. This contradiction characterizes the "No, but....Generation" (Filene: 248), where

women are not externally feminist yet struggle to battle internalized oppression.

When change comes about, people's behaviors conflict with their attitudes and the resulting confusion grinds down conventional categories (Filene: 252). Many of us have internalized feminist values in our lives, intermingled with patriarchal messages of gender roles and submission. "The result is an identity-blurring explosive combination" (Findlen: xiv). First and second wave feminism struggled to remove external barriers that limited women's development and participation in the public realm. Many of the conflicts perceived by the third wave generation are a result of the accomplishments of second wave activism clashing with the world we live in today. At one time, middle-class white women were fighting for the right to work. Now, with the global economy as it is, it will be imperative for women to continue working harder than men to obtain a livable wage. Likewise, while women struggled for the right to receive the same education granted to men, today women need to obtain more skills in order to secure a good profession. Still, the return value for the money invested in women's education continues to be significantly less.

If conflict between social discourse and social reality erodes categories, the reality lived by third wave feminists is undoubtedly challenging and erasing the category of woman. Social discourse has taught us that difference is determined by opposing one category to another, where deviance from any category is simply considered wrong and threatening (Lorde: 288). However, men have established the category of "woman". By limiting ourselves to this grouping, we are "fragmenting the spectrum of human nature" (Alcoff: 403). Essentialism comes under close scrutiny when we find that a woman's essence is "subject to historical redefinition" and ultimately, socially constructed (Fuss: 424). Rather than focus on an essentialist view of gender, it is necessary to consider concrete historical, cultural, and sociological evidence that points toward the construction

of these concepts. Essentialism strengthens the notion of a monolithic truth. Sherry B. Ortner points out that "women are extraordinarily diverse and even mutually contradictory" (203). If anything, the third wave analysis of race, class, and gender as factors of oppression serves to acknowledge diversity within the category of "women," making the category so broad that it ceases to have clear boundaries.

Our inner realities as women in the third wave are disjointed from social discourse; hence, we are left feeling lost. In our childhood, we were taught to reject anything feminine, to identify women with adjectives like weak, mushy, and controllable. The reinforcement of masculine traits as a necessary condition of success left a single message: you cannot be successful and remain a woman (Shoemaker: 116). We found that being feminine and being a whole person are diametrically opposed. But how are we to develop our full potential when we are in a "woman's" body? We do not fit exclusively into traditional feminine roles (i.e., caregiving, nurturing, emotional, maternal, submissive, heterosexual, etc.). But we do not fit exclusively into traditional masculine gender roles either (i.e., aggressive, breadwinning, rational, paternal, dominant, heterosexual, etc.). As Radicalesbians so concisely put it, "We are at war with ourselves" (196).

Binary hierarchies are not consonant with reality. Theories that base their assumptions on a strict difference between genders accentuate third wave confusion. "Feminist theories...should encourage us to tolerate and interpret ambivalence, ambiguity, and multiplicity" (Flax: 203). Hence, in order to apply standpoint feminism to a form of activism that encourages diversity, it is necessary to eliminate the assumption that, because of their marginal status, women find themselves in a position more likely to achieve objectivity. This argument, based on the Hegelian idea that the slave benefited from understanding the master, increases the gap between genders and supposes the

existence of an objective truth (Harding: 395). Moreover, it presumes the existence of the category "woman."

Rather than speak of inclusion or exclusion, the third wave addresses fusion. Like postmodern feminism, it challenges a dichotomous view of the world. Traditionally, men and women have been expected to complete each other by offering polar attributes that, once united, enable the couple to become successful and happy. Men struggle in the private sphere while women secure the well-being of the private sphere. Men have been given "phallus," privilege of power, while women have been granted emotional concessions. Women in the third wave want to have both! We want to be rational and emotional, pragmatic and spiritual, our feet on the ground and our head in the clouds. Moreover, we witness how it is possible to reconcile toughness and tenderness on a day-to-day basis (Klein: 216).

R.W. Connell suggests that if we used the word "gender" as a verb, (I gender, you gender, she genders...) it would be better for our understanding (47). While everyone is capable of performing both genders, Butler argues that doing so has clearly punitive consequences (471). Even as discourse upholds and rewards men who have a handle on certain emotions (anger, aggressiveness, ambition, etc.), there is still a social punishment for women who dare access this side of themselves. Hence, the label: "bitch." Considering the impact of external stimuli, social creatures make decisions in response to their social environment (Hrdy: 237).

For example, in order to become comprehensible to the world, members of homosexual couples are required to classify themselves as either the man (butch/active) or woman (femme/passive) within the relationship. Only by likening external situations to knowable categories can we include an "alien" circumstance into our discourse. Why? Why do we continue to reconstruct these divisive gender roles? We need to both question external structures and

become aware of duplicating gender roles within ourselves.

Independently of our position within a stratification of power, we are both controlled by and capable of changing the social discourse. For example, if we assume that gender roles are socially constructed, we must recognize that male gendered behaviors are likewise a social product that can be changed (Lorber: 175). Change occurs through variation. Although social construction is oftentimes invisible to those who are engaged in it, transformation becomes visible in retrospect (Holstein: 168). For example, while popular culture of the 1950s would never have envisioned a homosexual character in a television program, the commonality of it today shows a shift in social consciousness. Radicalesbians explain that women actively create a new consciousness of and with each other, which addresses the need to "find, reinforce and validate our authentic selves" (197). Instead of perfecting our role as the "Other" in our daily interactions and within our own bodies, we need to take ownership of our identities.

Flax focuses on gender relations and how, in order to function, they perpetuate exclusionary categories that interact through relations of domination (197). If you do not clearly belong to a specific group, it becomes your responsibility to change, or remove yourself from sight so as not to create confusion. Either way, by conforming to the category system you are in the scope of domination. The consequences of belonging to any given group (male or female, black or white, etc.) deepen based upon myths and ignorance regarding a group or an individual's experience (Williams: 506). Lorber extends this analysis by clarifying that these categories are perpetuated through cultural representations of gender (204). Proof of this phenomenon can be evidenced in Ann Kaplan's analysis of deconstructing gender reinforcement in Hollywood movies (333). You learn to modulate the characteristics of your "part" through the information offered by the cultural discourse.

Visibility is required for an idea/phenomenon to enter social discourse. The "socially constructed invisibility of a group's experience becomes yet another form of immobilization that results from being trapped within an oppressive structure" (Davis: 479). Moreover, popular cultural representation of gender roles reinforces outdated patterns that are not consonant with our reality. But rather than complain about the contradiction, it is necessary to channel contemporary information to replace these representations. The monstrous impact of mass media in our culture can serve two purposes: to increase ignorance through invisibility, or to increase education and understanding of diversity through visibility.

In addition to postmodern deconstructing of gender and sexual symbolism in mass media, we need to uncover diverse viewpoints and make them visible through different forms of expression (Yukman: 169). The way to become acquainted with individual perspectives is by allowing the individual to speak from her particular standpoint. Artistic expression is an invaluable vehicle to communicate individual interpretations of reality, precisely because it is void of limitations defined by objectivity.

Nonetheless, it is important to consider the patriarchal nature of mass media. Oftentimes, a producer will refuse to present artistic creations that challenge the status quo for fear of disturbing the universe! This does not hinder the value of channeling third wave art on a small scale. Moreover, because of the idea that standpoints are a result of an intersection of factors, it is likely to find women in the artist's immediate vicinity who can identify directly with the artist. Perhaps, they share or can relate to the same ethnic, geographic, social, and economic backing from which the artist is creating.

In order to circumvent patriarchal biases in the mass media presentation of third wave art, it is necessary to consider alternative options. By word of mouth, people become acquainted with musicians,

artists, writers, and performers that share their experiences in the underground alternative scene. But it is necessary for people to speak out and share.

By bringing standpoint interpretations of reality to center stage we can challenge social meanings that shape the world. We can participate in the reconstruction of the discourse. In the past, women's voices have been silenced. But currently, women have more freedom to share their experiences and integrate their point of view. "Many of us are finding our voices and the tools to make them heard through books, music, zines, newspapers, videos, and the net" (Findlen: xvi). Poetry offers a medium through which to "give name" to the feelings we are experiencing (Lorde: 15). When we listen to fiction, we hear with our hearts and are more open to the variations that come with diverse viewpoints. "Fiction (art) is the place of hope" (Yukman: 168). Alternative music movements such as Riot Grrl and the Lilith Fair explore the option of gathering audiences to witness standpoint expressions. The Internet makes third wave feminism particularly interesting. Because of this breakthrough in communication, it is possible for women around the globe to share their experiences with other women. The message both emitted and received is: You are not alone.

We struggle to break free from labels and categories, seeking to reserve our

right to walk along a path of self-discovery and evolution. We were taught that we could do anything; therefore, we struggle for our right to explore every avenue of life in order to develop a full opinion of what is "best" for us. Instead of alleviating external obstacles, young women are struggling to develop a new conception of identity, difference, and contradiction. Instead of seeking to tweak and restrict our inner worlds to *fit* social categories, third wavers are exploring the multiplicity of identities that they witness in their external realities to *shape* the discourse.

Although oftentimes confusion brings about silence, the silence is not synonymous with inactivity. Necessarily because of the clash between inner worlds and social reality, women are being forced to reevaluate their roles in the world and their identities. Furthermore, if we aim toward voicing our experiences, we will eventually corrode ignorance and false dichotomies. As a generation, we need to bring our hearts and minds up to date with the world around us. However, instead of changing our hearts and minds to suit the needs of the world, we need to let the world become acquainted with our hearts and minds! It is a dual process that requires patience, reflexive thought, and unity across boundaries. Rather than confining ourselves to the rules and regulations offered by social discourse, we should revel in coloring outside the lines!

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Imagining the Body Differently

Rachael Middleton

Feminist theories on the body are at an interesting point of development, the beginning. More now than ever, bodies are being deconstructed as social scripts and symbols, and for the first time physical bodies are being seen as social constructions. It is an interesting time in feminist theory. Theories of the body are blurring the lines and breaking the dualisms of the physical and mental, social and biological, male and female. Still, for women, ways of understanding and perceiving the body are still very much caught in the dualisms produced by body image: fat or thin, pretty or ugly, perfect or unacceptable. The obsession with body image is deadly and destructive, and it has the majority of American women in its grip. Sadly, when women look to feminist theory, they find as few visionary solutions to body image obsession as they do acceptable alternative forms of beauty in popular culture. There is no theory, which sufficiently explains why body image exists and offers a solution to it. Feminist frameworks that understand power as force, like Marxist and radical feminism, will never be able to offer a theory on body image that provides true vision and strategy because of flawed analysis; on the other hand, body image theories using existing feminist frameworks that understand power

as discourse prove insufficient as well because they lack the vision and strategy to actually change the discourse.

When existing theories are inadequate, as current theories that address body image are, new theories are necessary. However, to make sure that the strengths of old theories are carried over into the new and the shortcomings are not, it is helpful to critique and create theory within the same model. Charlotte Bunch notes, "Theory doesn't necessarily progress in a linear fashion, but examining its components is useful in understanding existing political theory as well as developing new insights" (Bunch 13). She outlines a model for theory consisting of four interrelated parts: description, describing what exists, analysis, analyzing why that reality exists, vision, determining what should exist, and strategy, hypothesizing how to change what is to what should be (Bunch 13-14). Examining body image theories proposed by different feminist frameworks using this model as a guide enables one to pinpoint weaknesses and create strength in new theory.

Marxist and Radical feminist frameworks are in agreement in describing what exists. One Marxist or Radical feminist description might be as follows: American women are enslaved by the obsession to conform to beauty standards,

which have been created by the fashion industry, mass media and pop culture manufacturers, (capitalism or the patriarchy). The beauty standards sought after are characterized by thinness, fairness, and flawlessness. Women are expected to have tight but full breasts, small waists, small hips and no excess fat. Skin should be smooth and unblemished, preferably fair. Facial features and hair should be European. Fashion models have become beauty role models with their flawless features and tiny frames. All women are all held to this standard of beauty, but only "one in 40,000 women meets the requirements of a model's size and shape" (WAC Stats 20). Body image dissatisfaction is high because the standards set are unattainable without severely altering the body through extreme dieting, eating disorders, or cosmetic surgery. By age 13, 53% of high school girls are unhappy with their bodies; by age 18 the percentage increases to 78% (WAC Stats 20). As a result, millions of women are affected by eating disorders, low self-esteem, sexual dysfunction, and depression.

The description of what exists is hard to separate from the analysis of why the reality exists because "choices that we make about interpreting and naming reality provide the basis for" theory (Bunch 13). Therefore, when Marxist and Radical feminists describe body image as a destructive force produced by capitalism or the patriarchy they are already beginning to analyze the cause of the reality. In Sandra Bartky's description of what exists she too is biased by her analysis. She claims that body image is produced by disciplinary practices. She "consider(s) three categories of practices: those that aim to produce a body of a certain size and general configuration; those that bring forth from this body specific repertoire of gestures, postures, and movements; and those directed toward the display of this body as an ornamented surface" (Bartky 65). While the descriptions differ slightly in their implications of origin, there is a general consensus about what image of the body is produced, and the consequences of that image.

The analysis stage is where Marxist and Radical feminist frameworks differ from Bartky's. The main reason for this difference in analysis is linked to understandings of power. Power and bodies are inextricably linked. As Kathy Davis notes, "Feminist scholarship on the body invariably links women's embodied experience with practices of power. From the sexualization of the female body in advertising to the mass rape of women in wartime, women's bodies have been subjected to processes of exploitation, inferiorization, exclusion, and violence. Because the female body has both symbolically and literally been a ground for exercising power, understandings of power must be explored when constructing theory about body image. Ways of understanding power, as force or as discourse, will shape the analysis of why the reality exists" (219).

Understandings of power as force, wherein the dominant group exerts power over the subordinate group via exploitation and oppression, are central notions of Marxist and Radical feminism. Marxist feminists understand relations of power as force between (sex) classes. In Radical feminism, the patriarchy, a system of male dominance, exerts power over women. Therefore, body image obsession is seen as an oppressive practice forced on women by the media and fashion and beauty industries, understood as minions of capitalism for Marxist feminists and minions of the patriarchy for Radical feminists. The analysis puts heavy blame on the media and fashion and beauty industries for their conscious conspiracies against women. The billions of dollars spent by women on the industries' products and services is the proposed motivation for the capitalist or patriarchal oppression.

Alternatively, Sandra Bartky builds upon Foucauldian understandings of power as discourse. Power as discourse is distributed throughout society, and it is exercised "in twentieth century societies less through monolithic state institutions than through pervasive regulatory mechanisms of self-surveillance and discipline" (Kolmar

and Bartkowski 44). Bartky believes that women's bodies are socially constructed through body image, which is enforced by disciplinary practices. She considers dieting and exercise as disciplines enforced by the discourse of normative femininity. The media and beauty industries are part of the discourse but they are by no means the whole of it. While she admits that the beauty industries have significant power in dictating the discourse she also notes, "The normalizing discourse of modern medicine is enlisted by the cosmetic industry to gain credibility to its claims" (Bartky 70). Parents, teachers, friends and schools also have influence in designing the discourse of normative femininity and body image. "The disciplinary power that inscribes femininity in the female body is everywhere and it is nowhere; the disciplinarian is everyone and yet no one in particular" (Bartky 74). Bartky's analysis is a bit more complex than the Marxist and Radical feminists', as is the vision and strategy that it implies.

If power is understood as force, held by the dominant group, then all the subordinate group must do is take the power away, and the oppression will be stopped, problem solved. The vision of a Marxist or Radical feminist involves taking away the power of the industries that promote and produce body image. This power can be taken away in several ways. Marxist feminists say that economics underlies everything; therefore, if the industries' source of money were cut off, they would be unable to manufacture their products and their body image. Radical feminists might envision power being stripped away from the patriarchy by eliminating the oppressive structures and institutions altogether. If there were no mass media and no fashion and beauty industry, body image obsession would end because it would not be manufactured. This vision is flawed because the analysis, which it is derived from, is lacking. If the media and beauty industry were bankrupted or abolished women would still practice body image because they are a part of its production.

Sandra Bartky's analysis of body image, focusing on disciplinary practices, is superior because it takes into account the internalized aspect of body image and the role women play in perpetuating and reinforcing body image by self-surveillance. At the same time she does not discount the oppressive nature of body image, although she pinpoints no one group or institution as the oppressor. Bartky illustrates the dual character of feminine bodily discipline:

On the one hand no one is marched off for electrolysis at the end of a rifle, nor can we fail to appreciate the initiative and ingenuity displayed by countless women in an attempt to master the rituals of beauty. Nevertheless, insofar as the disciplinary practices of femininity produce a 'subjected and practiced,' an inferiorized, body, they must be understood as aspects of a far larger discipline, an oppressive and inegalitarian system of sexual subordination. This system aims at turning women into the docile and compliant companions of men... (75).

However, Bartky's vision is somewhat pessimistic. She realizes that women will have to play an active role in the process of changing the discourse. This could be seen as hopeful because her analysis gives women agency where Marxist and Radical feminist frameworks only give women subjectivity. But Bartky doubts that women will want to give up body image because it has been internalized into the structure of the self (Bartky 77). Because body image defines femininity, destroying or changing it will destroy and change the strict gender roles, an exciting prospect, but one that Bartky does not imagine happening. Her analysis is revolutionary and exciting, but her vision, which could be the same, is doubtful and scared. "Femininity as a certain 'style of flesh' will have to be surpassed in the direction of something quite different, not masculinity, which is in many ways only its mirror opposite, but a radical and as yet unimagined transformation of the female body" (Bartky 78). Now it is time to imagine the body differently.

Using the analysis of power as discourse, the possibilities for vision are

Using the analysis of power as discourse, the possibilities for vision are great. If power is dispersed and anonymous then all people, not just the dominant group, have access to power and the ability to change reality. Not only is changing the discourse possible, it is the only thing that could actually eliminate the internalized nature of body image. The discourse should be changed so that the body and physical appearance of women are not of paramount importance. I'd go so far as to say that they should not be important at all. Women need to be valued in society not merely as sexual objects or beautiful bodies, but as equal members with full personalities and extensions of self that go beyond the physical. No longer should there be only one alternative for women, to be beautiful. Realistically, the concept of beauty will be difficult to omit altogether, and elimination of beauty is not necessarily called for or wanted, rather the elimination of standards of beauty is necessary. There needs to be multiple ways women can be beautiful. Beauty must transcend weight, breast size, and Eurocentric features. It must transcend the body, to the mind and spirit. But how can the things be put into practice?

Constructing strategies for changing the discourse and changing the reality of what is to what should be is not as difficult as it may seem. First of all, people must realize that reality is socially constructed and that power is transmitted through disciplinary practices, which everyone has access to and some control over. Establishing agency is the first step in empowering people to change the discourse. Secondly, people need to open their minds and imagine what reality they want. This is the vision stage of theory construction. I have already imagined my vision for body image, but because beauty needs to be conceptualized in a way that is not monolithic and is multi-faceted many visions of beauty must be imagined; that way each woman will have an image of beauty that she can fit into.

The strategy for changing body image by changing the discourse includes a

simultaneous rejection of the old discourse and creation of the new. To illustrate, women reject the discipline of thinness when they refuse to diet and be obsessed with their weight. As a result, the \$33 billion that the diet industry grosses each year will be freed up. That money could be spent on patronage of art depicting larger women, invested in a magazine (not specifically targeted at larger women), which shows many different sizes of models, or fund activism programs that defame and boycott sexist and sizeist depictions of women in popular culture. Better yet, instead of focusing discourse changes on including larger women in the current concept of beauty, they could concentrate on excluding size and weight as markers for attractiveness. A strong and healthy body, regardless of size, could be revered if women's sports and athleticism were promoted professionally and encouraged at an early age. Women would not be so concerned with their physical appearance if they could be judged by their non-physical qualities.

For body image to be eliminated women must not be judged solely by their ability to match up to standards of physical beauty. Currently women put an amazing amount of time, energy and resources into their quest for the perfect beautiful body. If those resources and energies were spent elsewhere, like on women's education, childcare programs, women owned businesses, or the feminist revolution, women's self esteem would improve because they would be empowered and fulfilled in meaningful ways. "The amount spent on cosmetics each year could buy: Three times the amount of day care offered by the US government; or 2,000 women's health clinics; or 75, 000 women's film, music, literature, or art festivals; or 50 women's universities..."(WAC Stats 18).

If we are conscious about our power to change the discourse we will be able to, in any way that we choose. The discourse will be changed over time as new generations of girls and women are given more ways than physical beauty to express themselves. As

new generations of boys and men, as well as girls and women, begin to value women's physical bodies less and complete beings more, the discourse will change and body image will be eliminated. We can begin instituting this change now in myriad ways. Those raising daughters should not complement them only on their prettiness and encourage them to be clean, trim, and lady-like. Instead, parents should complement girls on their intelligence, sense of humor, or athletic ability, and encourage them to spend their energies on areas other than perfecting their bodies.

Media representation of women must change, but creating alternative forms of media, which expand the discourse, can do this better than overthrowing the fashion industry can. If feminist magazines are as accessible as *Cosmopolitan*, the discourse will be expanded for more people. If feminist theory were a mandatory class in *high school*, more college women would think differently about themselves. If Women's Studies was instituted in *elementary school*, young girls would know they have a place in the discourse that exists outside the kitchen and the bedroom or the runway and the beauty pageant. If young girls knew who Ani DiFranco was, they might choose her for a role model rather than Britney Spears. If bell hooks had a morning show, people might listen to her rather than Howard Stern. In expanding the discourse to make room for feminism above ground, the discourse is changes.

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Changing the discourse is easy once the power to do so is realized. Body image is pervasive and internalized, and eliminating it will take time and generations. It is hard to eliminate old ideas of reality, but it would be less difficult if there were more realities to choose from. The power to create reality lies in everyone through her or his ability to change the discourse. Bartky seems to think that the process of changing the discourse will be more painful than possible. But now is the perfect time for resistance. "Historically, the forms and occasions of resistance are manifold. Sometimes, instances of resistance appear to spring from the introduction of new and conflicting factors into the lives of the dominated. The juxtaposition of old and new and the resulting incoherence or "contradiction" may make submission to the old ways seem increasingly unnecessary" (81).

The condition of contradiction and conflict described above are exactly what is currently ongoing in third wave feminism. Conflicting notions of femininity and masculinity characterize the third wave feminist movement. The third wave is also characterized by artistic expressions that change the discourse. We are at the perfect time and the perfect place to institute the change in discourse that Bartky has "yet unimagined".

It is time we imagine the body differently.

The Threat of Rape Or the Rapist

Alfredo Pérez

Much discussion has centered on the issue of rape and its use as a means of social control. I will thoroughly examine why, after more than two decades of feminist literature on rape and its effects on women's lives, there has been little achievement toward eliminating it from our society. Using Charlotte Bunch's theoretical model, I will describe and analyze the act of rape and the fear resulting from the threat of being raped. My analysis will also focus on why there has been little work done in terms of finding solutions for this problem. I will then present a framework for finding a solution, followed by strategies for positive change resulting from much needed activism. Lastly, I will argue that radical feminist notions about rape remain unaddressed in popular discourse because the focus remains on women as victims instead of men as rapists.

Despite the prevalence of rape in our society the true impact it has on women's lives has yet to be established and accepted by the mainstream. An accurate description of a problem includes all facts. When the real problem posed by rape, the act as well as the threat of the act, are fully exposed, a bleak outlook for resolution becomes apparent. A current definition of rape is: "A sexual assault in which a man uses his penis to commit vaginal penetration of a victim against her will, by force or threats of force or when she is physically or mentally unable to consent" (Stout & McPhail, 1998, p. 225). Another more clear

definition states that rape is "vaginal, anal, or oral penetration without the individuals consent obtained by force, or by threat of physical harm, or when the victim is incapable of giving consent" (Matlin, 1996, p. 499). The definition is quite simple to a woman. "A sexual invasion of the body by force, an incursion into the private, personal inner space without consent in short, an internal assault from one of several avenues and by one of several methods constitutes a deliberate violation of emotional, physical and rational integrity and is a hostile, degrading act of violence that deserves the name of rape" (Brownmiller, 1975). When we look at the statistics of sexual violence they can be quite disturbing. One in every four college women has experienced some form of sexual violence, 84% of rapes are committed by acquaintances, about 38% of women who have been raped are victimized between the ages of 14 and 17, only 5 to 10% of sexual crimes are reported to law enforcement, Nearly half of all survivors of sexual violence have told no one about their experience, nearly 84% of men who commit the act of rape said that what they did was definitely NOT rape, one in every six men is sexually abused by the age of 18, and 57% of rapes happen on dates (F.I.U. Victim Advocacy Center, 2001). According to F.B.I. statistics, a woman is raped once every four minutes. A woman is beaten (and usually raped) by a husband or lover every 15 seconds in the U.S. Perhaps even

more disturbing than the actual rape is the threat of becoming a victim of it.

The intense fear attached to the threat of rape is a major factor in the way a woman lives her life. "Three quarters of women never go to the movies alone after dark because of the fear of rape and nearly 50 percent do not use public transit alone after dark for that same reason (Cunningham, 2000). Considering that the incidence of rape "rose four times as fast as the total national crime rate over the past 10 years, close to half a million girls now in high school will be raped before they graduate" (Cunningham, 2000), it is clear that the threat is real. According to Cindy Leerer of *Women Wise Quarterly*, even those women who manage to escape any form of violence are still victims in a sense "because the fear of rape is part of our lives and it changes the way we live. We learn, 'Don't talk to strangers, don't go out at night, don't walk or run alone, don't go to a movie, for a drink, or go hiking without an escort!'" (1984, p.10). The point is that women learn to be afraid. Violence against women is widespread and fundamentally alters the meaning of life for women; sexual violence is encouraged in a variety of ways in American society and women are often blamed for it (Beneke, 1982, p. 324). From these facts it is not only understandable why a woman would live with the fear of being raped at some point in her life, but it can also be said that a woman should be afraid because the threat of rape is a serious one and should not be taken lightly. Now that the threat rape imposes on the daily existence of females has been thoroughly described, it is necessary to analyze why this threat is present.

Analysis: Radical Feminism on Rape

A useful framework for examining the role of rape in the oppression of women is radical feminist theory. Radical feminism focuses on how men's violence and control of women through methods like rape and battering are prime contributions of gender inequality that work to maintain women in a subordinate position, thus maintaining male

dominance. This is known as a patriarchal (male supremacist) system. In the radical feminist view, western society, in its encouragement of aggressiveness in males and sexual display of women, leaves most women as potential victims (Lorber, 2001, p.78). Considering that women are the principle targets of rape, which by conservative definitions will happen to almost half of all women at least once in their lives, there is a component that remains obscure. The statistics suggest that the "extent and terrain of abuse and the effectively unrestrained and systematic sexual aggression of one-half of the population is basically allowed" (MacKinnon, 1989a). Even more disturbing is the unprecedented number of men (one third), who admit that they would rape a woman if they know they could get away with it (MacKinnon, 1989a). MacKinnon goes on to point out that men often rape women because they enjoy and find it rewarding. With this in mind, it is not difficult to understand that the male-run society not only allows rape, but also promotes it as 'normal.' After all "if rapists experience rape as sex, does that mean that there can be nothing wrong with it?" (MacKinnon, 1989a).

In her article "Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape," Susan Brownmiller cautions us that when we accept as the basic truth that rape is not a crime of irrational, impulsive, uncontrollable lust, but a deliberate, hostile, violent act of degradation and possession on the part of a would-be conqueror, designed to intimidate and inspire fear, we must look towards those elements in our culture that promote and propagandize these attitudes, which offer men, and in particular, impressionable adolescent males, whom form the potential raping population, the ideology and psychological encouragement to commit their acts of aggression (p.262). The pervasiveness and the promotion of rape in our society, coupled with the acceptance of rape as a 'norm,' suggest that we are living in a rape-prone society. The rape culture functions not only as a way of subjugating

women, but controlling them as well. To control (according to Miriam-Webster's Dictionary) means to "rule over; to dominate." This takes us back to the concept of a patriarchal system, which oppresses women and gives superior status and privilege to men. The fear of rape serves the purpose of exerting control over women's behavior and actions, thereby maintaining their inferior status and dependence on men. This ever-present and intense fear reminds women (and girls) that they are always potential victims. "Any woman could be a victim!" The threat of rape and rape itself "severely limits our (women's) freedom as women and as human beings" (Leerer, 1984). Men use the act, threat, and subsequent fear of rape as a means of social control over women.

Radical feminism (and statistics) holds that this is a predatory society where men are predators and women are usually victims, however some feminists vehemently disagree. "Third Wave" feminists, who may be seen as conservative feminists of the "next generation," or post-second wave generation. One author in particular, Naomi Wolf, gives a strong critique of "victimization." She states that "the secret to women's success—one she believes feminists have ignored—lies in women knowing how to end their own victimization and claim power" (Soriso, 1997). In her book *Fire with Fire*, Wolf advocates "power feminism" rather than "victim feminism"; a term she is considered to have coined (Heywood and Drake,). The main issue she has with feminist theorists is that they, according to her, spend too much time emphasizing women as victims and even claiming a 'victim' status. A counterpart of hers, Katie Roiphe, echoes Wolf's frustrations to the point where she has argued "that white middle- and upper-class feminists have exaggerated incidents of date rape and sexual harassment to secure precocious power through victim identity" (p.137). She also charges, "the rape-crisis movement peddles images of gender relations that deny female desirers and infantilize women" (p.137). Roiphe and

Wolf and some of the other popular movement feminists may disagree; however, the fear of being raped is still a legitimate reality, even among other third wave feminists. Ana Marie Cox, one of four contributors to the article "Masculinity without Men: Women Reconciling Feminism and Male Identification", discusses the question "Are you going to rape me?" and how the danger of being raped is part of a woman's existence. That question is always present in women's minds (Heywood and Drake, p.189). She adds that feminism is about wanting to erase that question (p.189). To a degree Wolf, Roiphe, and other "power feminists" are correct. Perhaps the focus needs to be less on the fact that women are the primary targets of rape and should not live life as a victim in a state of underlying fear of the threat of rape. That perpetuates a submissive mentality. They are not correct in assuming that feminists, mainly radical feminists, are not trying to install a victim identity in women. The vocabulary words are somewhat deceiving, but what needs to be analyzed is that (radical) feminists are not saying know that you are a victim, but rather know that men are rapists and you must empower yourself so as not to be victimized by a very patriarchal and misogynistic culture. This leads to the vision for how to deal effectively with the concept and power behind the more damaging effects of sexism, rape and murder.

Vision: Focus on the Rapists

Thus far the debate over the rampant problem of rape and the threat of rape has been approached from a male perspective, with the issue relating to and about women only. This may be a reason the mainstream feminists movements are ambivalent in accepting the "radical" (yet sound) notion that rape is one of the main sources of women's oppression. Perhaps the concern is how to empower women when men are constantly reminding them that they are sexual prey in a predatory male world. The focus on the issue of rape should be shifted onto the perpetrators of the rape and the

people who pose the threat and cause the fear of rape in women, namely men. Rape has to become a societal problem, as this is (like most) a rape culture. Most people, women and men, see the constraint and burden of the prevalence of rape as a female issue. The discourse then is how women should avoid being raped, how women should try not to think about rape, prevention and precaution, or denial.

Since men do not have to worry (as the previously mentioned statistics show) about rape, they don't see it. Women who operate on the male discourse also deny that rape is a serious problem. Often this is accompanied by the belief in various rape myths, such as only bad girls get raped, women who get raped ask for it, or rape is a rare occurrence that results from a few deranged men in dark alleys or jumping out of the bushes, just to name a few. The discourse deals with rape as a dilemma of (exclusively) female concern. "That men will rape is taken to be a legitimized given, part of nature, like rain or snow; the view reflects a massive abdication of responsibility for rape by men" (Beneke, 1982). As long as rape is in any way "regarded as 'natural', women will be blamed for it" (Beneke, 1982). The focus needs to be shifted to the rapists, so rape is not only women's problem. Many men who are rapists, and some who are not yet, do not view rape as a crime of violence. Instead it is an "extreme form of sexual seduction; and that in some way women are blamed for being raped because we provoke sexual hostility from men" (Beneke, 1982). Based on a series of interviews with a variety of men, author Andrea Rehtin noticed that the "underlying assumption in these interviews is that if somehow women would change their behavior, men might stop raping" (Beneke, 1982). This brings us back to the man-made rape myth that the "victim" is to be blamed. This keeps the attention off the perpetrator (the man) and implies that since "she is to blame," she must have wanted to be raped. The recurring problem is that men are not held accountable for being the rapists. In order to seek a strategy for

eliminating rape, we must first envision the blame being laid on the perpetrator, and the discourse must revolve around the rapist and his heinous crime, not the victim.

Strategy: Change the Discourse Standpoint Feminism

In order to take the burden of rape and place it where it belongs—with men (the rapists)—there needs to be a change in the discourse that constitutes the reality of rape. Using a standpoint feminist framework, it becomes clear that the responsibility for rape will not fall where it belongs until women's experiences and their perspectives become a central part of the discourse. Currently the power is held by men. They write the language that is used to discuss rape. They write the laws in regard to how rapists should be punished, apparently minimally. They define the way rape is looked at in this culture, and they have a monopoly on the knowledge that we accept as the truth. In essence, a major factor in women's oppression is that (white) men are the dominant group and they produce a one-sided view of the world, their own. As long as men have exclusivity to power, they will control the knowledge and the discourse. Women will remain powerless and invisible as long as men are the only ones controlling the discourse. In order for women to liberate themselves and gain access to power, they must control the knowledge/discourse. This is the main idea of standpoint feminism (Lorber, 2001). Before inquiring about the silent view of women in regard to rape, the way sexuality is defined in our culture needs to be reinterpreted. Sexuality is a "social construct of male power: defined by men, forced on women, and constitutive in the meaning of gender" (MacKinnon, 1989a). From the dominant male discourse, "dominance in the male system is pleasure." Rape then becomes the defining paradigm of sexuality (MacKinnon, 1989a). This is why rape becomes "normal" according to the male discourse and the blame of rape is usually placed on women. The definition of rape

revolves around the penetration of the vagina, centers on a woman's consent, which could be considered an oxymoron since technically women cannot consent to male sexualized power. This is seen through the language used to describe sex and rape. Sexual discourse puts men in the active role and women always in the passive role. This is why men "fuck" and women get "fucked" or "screwed." There is an extensive list of names and ways men view sex, including, "get a piece of ass" and "I really stuck it to her" (Beneke, 1982).

The solution or strategy is to challenge the popular discourse. The media and society in general speak about rape in terms of battered women, rape victims, and other such terms that conveniently leave men out of the equation. Because of the fact that they are the perpetrators of the abuse, the rapists and the murderers must be included in the discussion. Men must be held accountable for their crimes. Once we incorporate women in the production of

knowledge and hold their experiences as the survivors of a rapist (men) not just a rape then women will begin to gain access to the power they need. Once this occurs, perhaps it will not be women that must prove they were raped, but men who must prove that they did not rape, that they are not violent, and that their past does not reflect that of a criminal/rapist. The key strategy for change is to make the issue of rape an issue concerning not only women's reality in the midst of a rape-prone society, but men's role as the rapists and the source of the problem. In conclusion, the problem of rape needs to be discussed from a woman's point of view so that it can be recognized as not merely a female issue but a societal problem. In doing so, men can be held accountable as perpetrators of the crime of rape. And, by the same process, radical feminist views of rape can enter the discourse and empower women to influence how rape and the threat of rape is addressed.

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Another Columbus Makes Another "Discovery"

Ian Erick Morris

The removal of women from universities that occurred throughout Europe beginning in the 11th and 12th centuries vastly diminished women's prospects in the professional and educational world. Women who wanted to make a living as healers were much less likely to make a career as doctors, and midwives became less respected. In the 15th century Pope Sixtus IV forbade the practice of medicine by anyone who did not have a university education, removing the last chance women had to become recognized as medical doctors. This caused many impediments to the progress and propagation of knowledge about women's health and physiology; the ignorance about women that occurred as a result was shocking and horrible.

Throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance, Padua University was considered one of the best schools in Europe, and it had what was probably the top law and medical schools. A doctor who taught at PU would be considered one of the most advanced sources on the workings of the human body. In 1559, a surgeon who lectured there named Matteus Renaldus Columbus claimed to have been the first person ever to find the clitoris. He included "his" discovery in his newly published book *De re anatomica*. In his composition he called what we now call the clitoris the "seat of woman's delight" and he included, "Since no one has discerned these projections and their workings, if it is permissible to give

names to things discovered by me, it should be called the love or sweetness of Venus." In case anyone is curious, Columbus was anywhere between 43 and 48 years old at the time, depending on which historical source is consulted, when he made this "discovery." Worse, he was married. He also died later that year. After his death, Columbus's successor at the university, Gabriel Fallopius (who discovered the fallopian tubes) claimed that he had discovered the clitoris first! Any woman reading this knows how silly it is for any 16th century male to suggest that he discovered the clitoris, but it gives us a clue as to how little was known about women at the time, and how little sexual pleasure men of the time were able to provide to women. Neither of the self-important fakers mentioned provided us with the word "clitoris," which first appeared in English c. 1615 and is derived from the Greek word *kleitoris*, which means "small hill."

Spreading news in those days was slow, only coming through limited publication and oral tradition. This is how, as Eve Ensler wrote in *The Vagina Monologues*, at a witch trial as late as 1593 the (married) prosecutor made his own clitoral "discovery" and put the convicted woman on display to the whole community to show her clitoris as the mark of a witch, and those who looked declared they "had never seen anything like it."

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Female Contradictions

Barbara Rivera

One of the most powerful instruments of society is the principle of what is considered conventional, particularly regarding gender. "Femininity is a social construction with a particular form of representation under patriarchy" (Kaplan, 189). If possible, society would do anything in its power to maintain the social order that keeps men and women "in their place." There is a tendency for defining "normal femininity" and "normal masculinity." A fevered compulsion to package the distinctions of human sexuality in identifiable "categories" gives way to gender stereotyping that helps disseminate bearings about the division between the sexes. The definition of feminine is then a construction that is to be adopted and performed.

Feminist theorist Luce Irigaray states, "Feminine identity is imitable and performable." Judith Butler says, "Women's identity under patriarchy is constructed rather than given, made rather than found" (Ince, 55). Artists' work like that of Marlene Dumas and her dignified representations of pin-ups and Magdalenas confront this issue. Victoria Gittman and Orlan challenge the image of ideal beauty with their female. Likewise, Mariko Mori and her female cyborg challenge a fixative culture. In addition, *Dogwomen* by Paula Rego portrays relationships from a female standpoint. These artists comment and challenge society's tendency to stereotype. They do this not as victims, but as proud critics of this practice. They are female demonstrators of different aspects of femininity by appearance and/or by conduct.

Marlene Dumas was born in 1953 in Cape Town, South Africa, and now lives in Amsterdam. She creates figurative drawings and paintings in the expressionist style in "a search for answers, advancing various questions concerning the meaning of contemporary beauty with a conceptual approach with sensuous qualities conveying an ambiguous eroticism" (van den Boogerd, Bloom, and Cassadio, 22). Her series of pin-ups, modeled on sex kittens in *Playboy* centerfolds and Pirelli calendars, visualizes images of the sexual body of a woman that appears to linger out of access. These women are not meant to be touched, held, or possessed. These misty shapes give the illusion of a female figure that possesses a subtle ghostlike beauty, along with momentary realistic shadows depicting seduction, eroticism, pornography, and sex. Dumas's intention is to "investigate the field of eroticism and seduction in a search for answers, advancing various questions concerning the meaning of contemporary beauty" (van den Boogerd, Bloom, and Cassadio, 13).

In *Josephine*, a painting of a photograph taken of Josephine Baker (model and former icon of the mass media), Dumas captures Baker's "timeless prototype of style," but with the phantasm of eroticism that is so present in her pin-up series. *Josephine* is the embodiment of glamour, a phenomenon. The aim of such a figure is to reveal and not to display, unlike the female nude, so ever present throughout the history of art. Although the nude was once considered the muse that would always offer inspiration, it plays a minor part in

contemporary painting (van den Boogerd, Bloom, and Cassadio, 1999).

In works such as *Defining the Negative*, Dumas demonstrates a concern with typecasting unclothed women in paintings today. She parodies works by Eric Fischl, Allen Jones, Georg Baselitz, and David Salle who are well known for their representations of the female nude. The stereotypical pose and submissive attitude of the images these male artists portray show an inclination to set women in a particular place in society. According to van den Boogerd, Marlene Dumas does not have a problem with male painters. But, as there are hardly any female painters active in the area of painting female nudes, male artists constitute Dumas's only form of citation (1999).

In *Waiting (for meaning)*, there are certain questions posed, such as, is the subject alive or dead? Is the subject a man or a woman? There are no certainties that the figure in the painting is a woman, but the fact that the subject is lying on a bed appearing passive makes this the first answer that comes to mind. However, Dumas's intention might have been the complete opposite. The feminist theorist Camille Paglia claims that "A woman who is lying on the bed with her legs spread apart is not submissive. On the contrary it is a position of total comfort, regal, and commanding 'serve me and die' that is the message" (van den Boogerd, Bloom, and Cassadio, 1999).

In *Losing (her meaning)*, a body associated with the female has vanished under water. The face and the sex are again absent, but the title of the painting informs that the subject is a woman. The importance of the title, along with the sexless figure, emphasizes "the world behind all cultural constructions is profoundly meaningless. The frightening feeling of being lost, engendered by this experience is counteracted by the attribution of names and meanings" (Van den Boogerd, Bloom, and Cassadio, 1999). This view asserts Dumas's interest in expressing her

concern with society's inclination to classify and to assign roles.

A woman critic once said she was disappointed in seeing *The Particularity of Nakedness*. In response, Dumas explains the critic, "used to enjoy my older, more conceptual work so much, but that what was I doing now, painting pictures of gay men? She called it homosexual painting?! She said my male was too passive. A man (museum director) told me that the painting was a failure due to too many horizontals. It was very hard to make a good painting without any vertical elements" (122).

Dumas's *Magdalena* and *Pin-up* series conveys a beauty that can be classified as female. She exaggerates this feature, and at the same time, indicates that such classification does not have to go along with yet another aspect of femininity, like that of passiveness. Especially in the *Magdalena* series, she breaks the stereotype of such representations by giving her subject qualities that have not been present in the image of Mary Magdalene before, like standing upright and proud (van den Boogerd, Bloom, and Cassadio, 126). This female contradiction fights the norm.

Ideal Beauty

Victoria Gittman was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1972. She studied at Florida International University, and is represented exclusively by a well-known gallery in Florida. Her work focuses on the representation of beauty derived from Plato's debates on aesthetics. This artistic exploration began in the art of the Greek world, through the Renaissance, the Baroque, and finally into the 19th century with academic painting. The ideal beauty created by the male artists of this period represented and carried the meaning of this debate. Gittman's concern is on the "gap" that exists between the reality of the woman and the idealized version of her. She addresses her equality with the masters by creating pieces that focus on the woman's ability to duplicate their technique. She becomes a "counterpart" of artists such as Bronzino, on *Self Representation after*

Bronzino, *Vermeer on Self Representation after Vermeer*, and *David on Self Representation after David*. She also substitutes these artists' images of the ideal woman and replaces them by portraying herself as the "guise," or the "subject." Her paintings "are part of her contribution to the aesthetic debate on ideal beauty, wherein she emerges as a link in the chain that binds the ideal visualization of beauty to a realized vision of aesthetic truth" (Bosch, 2000).

Another artist whose work deals with this issue is the performance artist Orlan. Orlan was born 1947 in St. Etienne, France, and now lives in Paris. In the 1970s she staged tableaux vivants parodying historical portrayals of women. Since the 1990s, she has become the site of an ongoing project of self-transformation achieved through plastic surgery. Her work questions the quest for perfection manifested in idealizations. Orlan states: "We cannot own the way we look because our external appearance is always and irremediably in the domain of the other realm of social relations where so much depends (not always desirably of course) on the appearance we present to the world" (Ince, 24).

She reinvents herself in *The Reincarnation of Saint Orlan*. May 30, 1990, was the beginning of a planned series of operations, each of which was to center on a precise feature of Orlan's face. There was no specific model for Orlan's self transformation. Each feature is surgically resculpted to match a specific feature of a different icon in the history of Western art: the nose of a famous unattributed School of Fontainebleau sculpture of Diana, the mouth of Boucher's Europa, the forehead and eyebrows of da Vinci's Mona Lisa, the chin of Botticelli's Venus, and the eyes of Gerad's psyche. Her work proposes an imitation of the zealous fragmentation of the female body by male artists, and it is also faultfinding and mimicking of the composition of a beautiful face practiced by the Ancient Greek painter, Zeuxis. "When painting his portrait of Helena in the city of Kroton, he chose five virgins so as to reproduce the most beautiful part of each

one." She assimilates with and acts out the absurdness of a "demand for an unachievable physical perfection". Her desire is not to transform her face with the ideal features of these women to then become an ideal beauty, but rather, she wants to show their mythical qualities, including Mona Lisa's androgyny, Venus's connection to fertility and creativity, Diana's insubordination to men and aggressiveness as goddess of hunting, Europa's implication of an unknown future, and Psyche's need for love and spiritual beauty (Ince, 2000).

The operations are shown live. The videos of the performances, called *Omnipresence*, are colorful and theatrical. They have displayed cut-outs of Orlan's work. Props such as baskets with exotic fruit, and some crosses that along with her reclining position are indications of high art and religious painting. All of this is incorporated into this "hybrid cultural space" (Ince, 2000). She reads from thoughtfully selected texts, like Julia Kristeva's "Powers of Horror", and from the psychoanalyst Eugenie Lemoine-Luccioni's book, *La Rose*, about the skin, which says: "It is quite clear that the only possession he has ('my skin is all I have to my name' is a common expression) weighs heavily on him. It is still in excess, because having and being do not coincide, and because having is a cause of misunderstanding in all human relationships; I have the skin of an angel but I am a jackal, the skin of a crocodile, but I am a dog; a black skin but I am white; the skin of a woman but I am a man. I never have the skin of what I am. There is no exception to the rule because I am never what I have" (Ince, 2000).

The choosing of this text demonstrates that she is not against surgery, and that with it you can "change the external image to match the internal image." The work "is against the standards of beauty, against the dictates of a dominant ideology that impress themselves more and more on feminine flesh." To emphasize this point, she uses a female surgeon. She claims that cosmetic surgery is one of the fields where a man can exert power over the body of

a woman. "I would not have been able to obtain from a male surgeon what I obtained from my female surgeon; the former wanted to keep me "cute" (Reckitt and Pelan, 2001).

Orlan's plastic surgery might be interpreted as female submission, but the fact that she remains awake during the procedure sends a message about how she desires her work to be understood. She emphasizes her consciousness, and this is "theoretically significant, in an intellectual rather than a popular context" (Ince, 2000). Orlan aims to get rid of society's program to disallow women of "aggressive instincts" of any kind, demonstrating detachment. This intensifies the "parody" the project is trying to convey. This quality has to be established if Orlan's work is to be acclaimed as feminist. Feminist art critic Marsha Meskimmon comments: "because if she has control of the project it could be a dynamic response to the technological possibilities available to people in the late 20th century and the concepts of excessive femininity as masquerade. If on the contrary Orlan is the object of surgeons and of the art world, her work would be no more than an active representation of the established traditional role of powerlessness given to women in our society" (Ince, 2000). Her intense desire to portray this is more than evident, considering the fact that she risks deformation, paralysis and even death. She receives local anesthesia done through a spinal injection, putting herself in danger each time the procedure is done. This conduct certifies her desire to challenge the conventionalized idea of "woman."

Earlier in Orlan's career, she created a self-portrait as the *Bride of Frankenstein*. It marked the beginning of her conversion into a "cyborg" woman. Donna Haraway's emphasis on how "feminist humanity must, somehow, both resist representation, resist literal figuration, and still erupt in powerful new tropes, new figures of speech, new turns of historical possibility" sums up Orlan's intention with this piece and influence to her later pieces. In Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto," Haraway talks about

the cybernetic organism and how "humanity will depend for its survival on new forms and figurations, newly imagined bodies." She believes that the experience of being a woman is a truth and a myth and that it has been built by feminism. The social veracity of women is a "world-changing fiction". The cyborg offers the option of countless possible identities, implying the chance to become unimagined "bodily identities and social formations." Rosi Braidotti attributes this possibility as positive because it reduces the aspect of the essential female to a possible nonexistence (Ince, 2000). These prospects are taken up by Orlan, and by the next artist to be discussed, Mariko Mori, in the search for the substance, or lack of a particular substance, when referring to the definition of femininity.

Female Cyborg

Mariko Mori was born in Tokyo in 1967. Her work aims to link the ancient with the contemporary through the use of technology. She wants to connect Eastern aspects of culture with Western aspects of culture. Her work is about the philosophical development of these societies and her relationship with the present culture. She says: "I am interested in circulating past iconography in the present in order to get to the future". Mori's concentration is on the identity of the people in a "globalized world." She has been compared to Cindy Sherman who portrayed so many different forms of womanhood. "She emerges in the 'postmodern role' of the medium through which various social and cultural ideas may be evoked." She illustrates the flawless and out-of-reach technological woman of the future (Molon, 6).

Her photographs show a loss of identity that goes along with one's self-conversion through costume, something she experienced as a fashion model. Mori perceives a manifestation of the media's influence on persons who become public figures, including those within the fashion world. In contemporary culture, the commercial personae are seen as artificial and inhuman. Recalling the work of Andy

Warhol, she claims, "we are all children of Warhol." His portrayals of Marilyn Monroe created a "code of Marilyn", a "fabricated personae". In this process, a constructed object, Marilyn Monroe, has been substituted for the actual Norma Jean. Mori makes her own depiction by being the central figure while transforming into other personalities. The difference between her and Warhol is that she separates her own self from the images she makes public. "Her aim is to create characters that need to be created. She wants to create something which will be responsive, integral, and influential to popular culture" (King, 34-35). Here we can recall Haraway's Manifesto and the possibilities of the cyborg personalities.

In *Subway* and *Play with me*, Mori becomes a "sexy" cyborg woman. Her figure is at the core of what appears to be staged scenes. These unexpected apparitions of Mori's transformed self into "electronic geisha girls" are reminiscent of 1970s cinema, recalling films like *Robocop* for the "ultimate fighting machine," and *Blade Runner* for its "pleasured based replicates" that represent the "idealized female companion." These images are an extension of the body into fabricated technology (Morlon, 12-13). Her symbolic transformation implies a transcendence of the flesh into the mechanical, representing the dissatisfaction with the limitations of our bodies and a desire for a conversion into something unearthly and more ideal. These women seem to be satisfied because the reality of being a woman is not theirs. They are apart from being real; they are cyborgs (Rosenthal, 2000).

In *Tea Ceremony III*, Mori is dressed in the Japanese uniform of a female office worker. She is the cyborg-girl who very graciously offers tea to unnoticed businessmen, walking in a corporate plaza. This certifies the Buddhist detachment quality in Mori's work (Rosenthal, 103). Moreover, Karen Higa from *Art Journal* describes: "The tea ceremony which had its origin in 15th century Japan, is now regarded as a feminine pursuit that stresses

constraint, discipline, and tradition. She is 'Other' to the people on the street because of her bizarre appearance. This image captures the incongruity of today's society" (Rosenthal, 105). As Mori stated in an interview, "Girls are actually career women who are super women, who must work harder than men, and also take care of husbands and do all the house work".

Empty Dream contains an artificial version of a "mythical creature" set within a picture taken at a man-made beach. Here she is a transformed human, half woman, half fish, among the actual reality of constructed surroundings, calling upon the patriarchal theme of "bathers." She is an alluring mermaid in a modern "water wonderland," where she is rarely noticed. As Dominic Molon states, it is probable that "Mori is following Sherman's investigation of the flip of fantasy, proposing that this oceanic sea object, once realized, would remain unnoticed, unrecognized, and celibate were she ever to emerge Venus like from the foam of the sea" (6). Her work portrays an outcome of the cyborg that implies an autonomous quality, which seems to be possible and positive if such female forms were ever realized.

Miko no Inori (The Shaman's Girl's Prayer) contains more cosmic and spiritually based female figures. Mori becomes a psychedelic being, who caresses a crystal ball to an eerie Japanese song. "Mori affects an ethereal, techno/traditional shaman—a human figure that serves as a medium between earth - bound humans and the spiritual unknown—who is at once both a cyborg and a bodhisattva figure from Buddhist Mandala imagery." By making works like this, Mori has been accused of creating a visual "mappo" - a Buddhist word for a dark period of moral decline before the coming of the next Buddha (Rosenthal, 2000). Another piece that could fall under this scrutiny is *Nirvana*, which is also based on Buddhist philosophy and contains a feminist undertone by representing a female Buddha. The apparent softness in Mori's work suggests that she sincerely wants to communicate a spiritual

message, but it can be understood as feminist by becoming the Buddha herself. This approach may be insulting to some of the public in Japan because of its "gender-bending revision of traditional sacred imagery" (Rosenthal, 2000). Though the latter may be true, her intention is not for the work to be considered feminist. Rather, it is meant to transport the imagination into the future, where the female figure represents energy and eternal presence.

Dogwoman

Paula Rego was born in Portugal in 1935. She trained at the Slade School of Art in London, then lived and worked in Britain and Portugal before settling permanently in London in 1976. Until the 1980s, she created collages that contained bizarre figurative and narratives until the 1980s. Later, she started to make paintings and collages that depicted disturbing adult relationships in a mocking and humorous way. They were allegories that possess an erotic undertone. Her paintings often seem to tell tales that come from books, films, fairy tales, or fables. She does so in order to investigate the related emotions that describe humans' conduct and relationships. Her paintings "use the stories they incorporate as ways of approaching particular sets of ideas or emotions, exploiting the story as a focus of common cultural knowledge, love with hate, freedom with repression, innocence with violence; she weaves narrative and symbolic webs which in their intersection with our own lives seem relevant and already familiar" (Thames and Hudson, 1997).

Rego wants to make her own image of a woman. She believes she can do as she wants, and make women powerful, savage, or even amenable. Her realistic and at the same time cartoonish style is meant to portray different personalities. She tries to speak directly from the feelings these personalities may keep sheltered. About her series *Dogwomen*, she claims: "To be a dogwoman is not necessarily to be downtrodden; that has very little to do with it. In these pictures, every woman, no

downtrodden, but powerful, to be bestial is good. It's physical, eating, snarling all activities to do with the sensation are positive. To picture a woman as a dog is utterly believable." Perhaps everyone is somebody's dog. "I show them without their coquetry, in the state of animals cleaning themselves" (McEwen, 216). The images started out as a sketch to be used on another painting, *The Barn*, but they became a series on the relationship of dog and master that she converted into female symbolism and related to her past.

In *Scavengers*, one figure is the shadow. Its mood corresponds with other "shore dogs" that appear in works like *Waiting for Food* and *Baying*. *Baying* portrays a woman howling for her unseen lover. The idea of combining the reliant character of the dog with the woman may have arisen from the views of these animals in the two countries where Rego has lived. According to McEwen the English prefer animals over humans, and as a result, stray dogs are not typical. In Portugal, dogs are considered lesser beings, making stray dogs common, through ironically, well fed by people. Rego is capturing the personality of these strays and implies women's tendency to "learn from those they are with; they are trained to do certain things, but they are also part animal." *Bad Dog* shows a woman being kicked out of bed by an unseen man, implying that she has gone through a cruel domestic situation (McEwen, 1997). The animalism in the paintings is emphasized by the behavior or by the situation the "dogwomen" are going through. Rego foreshortens the legs and swells the knees and the thighs. Her use of the medium of pastel has been compared with that of Degas, not only for her "vigorous" use of the material, but also for the animalistic quality apparent in Degas's portraits of women (for example, *Bathing*) and his focus on their animal character and not their intellect (McEwen, 1997).

The series of *Dogwomen* was preceded by pictures of women in clear social circumstances. In *Sleeper*, a "dog woman" is sleeping on her owner's coat.

This female is in the same sleeping position as a dog. This could be the representation of a devoted wife lying on her husband's jacket for consolation, maybe after his death. In *Moth*, she displays a young girl in a formal, satin dress that belonged to Rego's mother. This dress is meant to imply status. Her arms are bent in a pose of "flirtatious and obedient dogginess", implying vulnerability and perhaps a failed marriage. In *Bride*, a woman on her wedding day lies wearied with her shoes off and with a stare of relinquishment. The divided veil forms "wings" that transform her into a "fallen angel." *Sit* is the third piece in which a more rigorous looking character is perceived. Her crossed feet are an intentional reference to a crucifixion. She is pregnant, and her arms are immobile, as the responsibility of childbearing comes in (McEwen, 1997).

Rego's work is about "the tension between sexual terror and desire, the way in which jealousy and irritation fitfully cohabit, the wily means where by the captive wife gains control through seduction" (McEwen, 219). This interpretation contends that her work is not about submission but choices,

and how these circumstances are part of a strong woman, not a passive one.

In 1990, Rego became the first artist in residence at the National Gallery in London. She was given a studio and a stipend in exchange for the job of creating paintings related to the gallery's own collection. "The work contains pictures within pictures, stories within stories, and in these paintings some of the National Gallery paintings make appearance." *Joseph's Dream* is the portrait of a strong girl from time 'past and present' who has grown into a robust young artist. "I wanted to do a girl drawing a man very much, because this role reversal happening in that painting is interesting, she's getting power from doing this" (qtd. from BBC).

This "role reversal" that Rego is proposing, is the reason why all of the artists mentioned make artwork, including Marlene Dumas, Victoria Gittman, Orlan, Mariko Mori, and Paula Rego. Their inspiration is the wish for a comparable and equal view of the female and the male. They hope for a society where all will be viewed as comparable in ability so that no obstacle can come in the way of their given talent, desire, and ambition.

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How Is Life Created?

II. Novel Waves

Caterina Andriani

Ever since the creation of the Garden of Eden, the main question that has most stimulated mankind has been: "How is life created?" As a consequence, Adam ate the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge to become acquainted with the mystery of life, and then the poetical state of man began to be a state of knowledge. After that, most of the greatest works of Western literature have been devoted to the pivotal question: "What is life?"

The main idea of the creation of life is a clear theme in *Frankenstein*, Chapter 4.

The character of Dr. Frankenstein is particularly attractive in this regard. He is a man who is not content with the knowledge of the human mind, but who is also a man who is not content with the knowledge of the human body. He is a man who is not content with the knowledge of the human soul, but who is also a man who is not content with the knowledge of the human heart. He is a man who is not content with the knowledge of the human mind, but who is also a man who is not content with the knowledge of the human body. He is a man who is not content with the knowledge of the human soul, but who is also a man who is not content with the knowledge of the human heart.

After studying the works of the great scientists of the 18th and 19th centuries, a question was raised: "What is the principle of life?"





How Is Life Created ?

Caterina Andriani

Ever since the creation of the Garden of Eden, the main question that has most stimulated humankind has been, "How is life created?" As a consequence, Adam ate the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge to become acquainted with the mystery of life, and here the problem starts. After that, most of the greatest works of Western literature have addressed this pivotal question. Writers, artists, and filmmakers have been both fascinated and horrified by the idea of creation. Therefore, it is not by accident that at the heart of Mary Shelley's novel, *Frankenstein*, the reader finds, among other themes, the recurrent question of "How is life created?"

The main idea concerning the creation of life is clearly stated in *Frankenstein*, Chapter 4.

The character of Dr. Frankenstein states, "One of the phenomena which had peculiarly attracted my attention was the structure of the human frame, and, indeed, any animal endued with life. Whence, I often asked myself, did the principle of life proceed? ...yet with how many things are we upon the brink of becoming acquainted, if cowardice or carelessness did not restrain our inquiries... I was surprised that among so many men of genius who had directed the inquiries toward the same science, that I alone should be reserved to discover so astonishing a secret" (36-37).

After studying science for a few years, a question was aroused in Dr. Frankenstein's mind, "Whence... did the principle of life proceed?" But to

understand from where life proceeds, he has to visit the world of death. Afterwards, he discovers that he is the first mortal capable of extricating life from death. At the same time, Dr. Frankenstein wants to overcome cowardice at any cost, to realize "alone" this incredible task. But his fury for creation does not have the purpose of populating the universe; instead, what he really wants to achieve is the creation of humankind without the help of a woman. Thus, his creature does not come out from a natural union but from filth, and as a result, cannot be good.

By expressing this idea, Mary Shelley not only raised a philosophical question, but also made a clear attack on patriarchy and its excess of misogyny, which has caused half of the society - women - to be ignored. Our Western civilization owes most of its culture to the Greeks, and although we have inherited great thoughts from them, Western men have inevitably encoded in their cells the Greek dark side of hate toward women resulting in a distorted society with Oedipal complex, Electra complex, and so on.

In his critical analysis of *Frankenstein*, Walter James Miller states, "Euripides, for example, in his *Medea*, has Jason shout: 'If only children could be produced some other way. / Without females! If there were no females/Human life would be relieved of all miseries!' " (xiv). As Miller points out, this same idea is shared by the greatest misogynist

Three Novels by Cuban Exiles in Spain: Sex, Politics, and Sexual Politics

Kefryn Thomas Block

When I decided to study Cuban exile writing in Spain, I didn't exactly know what to expect. I could think of a thousand different reasons of why such a study would be interesting, but making a hypothesis as to possible outcomes proved to be difficult. I imagined that I would find common themes, but the preponderant role of sex and erotica in the studied novels was completely unexpected. By the time I read the last book of my proposed project, the theme of sex showed to be the unanimous thematic unifier in all three works. So, in my interviews with the three authors, Marcia Morgado, Mario Guillot, and Jesús Díaz, I decided to include the question: "Why do you believe that sex almost always plays a powerful role in contemporary Cuban literature?" Their answers varied.

They proposed that speaking openly about sex has always been part of Cuban culture and that it is also a part of the self-deprecating nature of Cuban humor. This second reason is something that Marcia Morgado would said, unfortunately, the first Cubans to arrive in Miami had lost in their attempts to become fully integrated into the predominant Anglo-Saxon culture of the United States. On the other hand, Jesús Díaz attributed it to the moral and material degradation of Cuban society. Since there are few theaters, concerts, or even good hot meals on the island, sex has become the only pleasurable refuge left. He reminds us of a popular song in Cuba that says: "Es sabroso y no cuesta na" (it's delicious and doesn't cost a thing). Another explanation is simply

that this literature exists because of public demand. The Cuban erotic novel has proven to be a commercial success and is, to an extent, what is in style right now.

In Ana María Tasende's *Diccionario de términos literarios* (Dictionary of Literary Terms), the erotic novel is defined as: "Narrative genre that has as its main objective the exaltation of the sensual and physical love." Her definition bases the genre's inception in 18th century France with the publication of books like Choderlos de Laclos's *Les liaisons dangereuses* and J.B. Louvet de Couvray's *Les amours du chevalier de Faublas*. She offers more recent examples in contemporary Hispanic literature such as Almudena Grandes' *Las edades de Lulu* (1989) and Antonio Gala's *La regla de tres* (1996) (Tasende 553). One of the most acclaimed and commercially successful contemporary Cuban authors living in exile is Zoé Valdés, whose work often falls into the category of erotica, especially the books like *Te Di La Vida Entera* (1996) and *Traficantes de Belleza* (1998). To clarify, while this paper focuses on sexual and erotic themes in Guillot's *Familia de Patriotas* and Díaz's *Las Palabras Perdidas*, I would say that only Morgado's *69 Memorias Eróticas de una Cubanoamericana* falls within the above-delineated category of the erotic novel.

As we will see, through their sexually explicit themes, these novels ultimately reclaim a lost self-expression. In doing so (and this may or may not be

coincidental) they engage some of the most divisive and inconclusive debates among today's feminists by dealing with issues like pornography and prostitution. Feminist Gayle Rubin summarizes much of what lies within the core of this debate: "Feminism has always been vitally interested in sex. But there have been two strains of feminist thought on the subject. One tendency has criticized the restrictions on women's behavior and denounced the high costs imposed on women for being sexually active. This tradition of feminist sexual thought has called for a sexual liberation that would work for women as well as for men. The second tendency has considered sexual liberalization to be inherently a mere extension of male privilege. This tradition resonates with conservative, anti-sexual discourse" (qtd. in Overall 706). Rubin attributes the rise of feminist anti-pornography groups to a recent surge within the women's movement towards the latter tendency towards anti-sexual discourse.

In the case of *69 Memorias Eróticas de una Cubanoamericana* (*69 Erotic Memories of a Cuban-American Woman*) by Marcia Morgado, the erotic element is evident from the very title. Morgado challenges the feminist anti-pornography movement in her detailed descriptions of the sexual experiences of the young protagonist, Fisselle Fernández, which serves as the basis for the novel's plot. The book intends to be shocking and plays with the boundaries between eroticism and pornography in the same way that Fisselle plays with the limits of what is acceptable and not acceptable in the strange, reactionary, puritanical subculture that Morgado paints of the Cuban population in Miami in 1969.

What Morgado wants to express, at all costs, is that sex is something natural. The Cuban community in Miami, at that time, had changed it into a dangerous taboo. This point of view is evident in the 'masturbation' sections of the novel. These fragments are intriguing because they are written in a completely different tone and style from the rest of the book. These brief sub-chapters describe scenes of different

people masturbating; yet, it is the reading of the same mysterious book that provokes all these separate episodes. The reader realizes in the fifth and final 'masturbation' that the author of the provocative book in question is the adult Fisselle Fernández, the very same protagonist whose crazy teenage sexual experimentations we have been reading about all along. Up until this point, it had seemed that these sections had nothing to do with Fisselle or the rest of the story. These sections are written in the second person perspective by a narrator that we come to realize is Fisselle's husband, who laments the fact that his wife is far away in New York: "Meanwhile, your wife gives conferences, offering explanations to a troop of critics about why she chose eroticism as the central theme in telling her story. They've spent months firing questions at her, those imbeciles. If they screwed more they wouldn't be asking such stupid questions. Screw. That is what you need to do immediately" (156)¹. This is how his fantasies are stimulated, and the consequent masturbation session described in the section ensues.

It becomes obvious at this point that the fictitious book written by Fisselle is very similar to the real book that we are reading by Marcia. Her readers, then, are faced with a curious question: 'Has this book that I'm reading ever provoked my sexual desires?' For some readers, the answer will be obvious. These sections are essential to the novel because this is where Morgado is able to overtly express the natural and fun elements of sex by provoking this type of response in her readers. It is as if she ironically challenges us by asking 'Don't tell me that this book has never provoked your sexual desires?'

And so Morgado shocks us with her vulgarities and offends us with her trivial treatment of the unorthodox sexual practices of the young Fisselle. However, when we read the 'masturbation' sub-chapters, Morgado utilizes the intimate quality of the second-person narrative to paint a sex scene, orthodox or not, but at the very least emotionally *real*.

paint a sex scene, orthodox or not, but at the very least emotionally *real*.

As we have seen, Fisselle's fictitious novel parallels the real novel we are reading by Morgado. So, we can then assume that the article critique that appears at the end of *69*, "Séxito: ¿Erotismo o pornografía? Novela caliente calienta a Miami" ("Sexcess: Eroticism or pornography? Hot novel heats up Miami") could just as easily be a commentary about *69 memorias eróticas de una cubanoamericana*. It is like a prediction, on the part of Morgado, about how the community in Miami will receive her actual book. In these ways, *69* succeeds in using sex as a means of rebellion on two levels: first, on an intimate and personal level as I have described above; and second, on a broader social level, as we observe in the harsh critique at the end of the book. In this critique, the community of Miami unanimously denounces the book so that it appears to be a reaction from a new sort of dictatorship. This is the ultimate irony: the Miami Cubans forming a dictatorship after fleeing the one in their homeland. Morgado shows that the only way to rebel against madness is with more madness and that only by pushing the extremes can she show the ridiculousness of an exaggerated reaction.

This is a light and funny novel and if one takes it too seriously, they would be going against Morgado's intentions that are revealed to the reader at the beginning. The quote that opens the novel is from the protagonist's hero, the cartoon character Betty Boop (Max Fleicher). She simply states, "Boop-Oop-a-Doop." Second, she gives us a hint as to the book's 'moral' from Susan Sontag's *The Aesthetics of Camp*: "One can be serious about the frivolous, frivolous about the serious..." Keeping in mind the first quote, we begin to have an idea as to where the novel stands in regard to the frivolous.

However, Morgado's book does deal with real issues of current feminist debate in that it strives to redefine sexual feminine roles within a repressive subculture for women through subversion in the form

of written pornography/erotica. In the article, "Towards a feminist erotica," Kathy Myers attacks those feminists who denounce pornography, on the grounds that traditional power roles defined by the ruling patriarchy are used to create images that objectify and degrade women. Myers argues that this type of thinking not only denies women the right to find ways to represent their own sexuality but also ignores the whole issue of female pleasure (283). Instead of the ideas promulgated by groups like WAVAW (Women Against Violence Against Women), a feminist group that has lobbied against pornography in the past, Myers suggests, "questions of representation and of pleasure cannot be separated, and that a feminist erotica could examine the nature of this relationship. This in turn demands examination of the forces that produce dominant ideas of sexuality and pleasure. Rather than seeing power as a force that 'represses' or 'holds down' our sense of pleasure and sexuality, I want to suggest the opposite: that power actually produces forms of pleasure and sexuality (283).

In a similar way, Morgado's novel and its protagonist playfully subvert the patriarchal hierarchy which represses them: Morgado by walking (writing) the thin line between pornography and erotica and Fisselle by satisfying her desire for sexual exploration and pleasure that help her break with other restrictions on her freedom in a conservative, machista society.

On the other hand, the treatment of sex in Mario Guillot's *Familia de Patriotas* (*Family of Patriots*) is anything but frivolous. We find out that Tatiana, the granddaughter of the protagonist, Ramón Matamoros, is a *jinetera*. Guillot defines *jinetera* in his 'glossary for non-Cubans' at the back of the book: "name that is given in Cuba, currently, to the prostitutes that engage in work with tourists (the only ones that exist)" (61). In the very first chapter, "Un momento antes" ("A moment ago"), we are given insight into the role that sex will play in this novel. Speaking from a second-person perspective the narrator says, "Well for you, Ramón Matamoros, you've got

yourself a jinetera for a granddaughter, those girls that they used to call whores and who dishonored the family name and had to hide themselves behind fancy stage names; but now they ride mechanical steeds and honor, if not the family coat of arms, at least the pots and pans, with their money neither well-earned nor poorly-earned, but simply earned.

Do you know how many times Tatiana has had to cover her mouth to stop herself from vomiting, with a gesture very similar to the one you make to blow your nose, whether it was out in the sugar fields or in battle training for the military, where you dreamed awaiting the moment that you would be old enough to practice shooting together, without knowing that she would combat the imperialists in another way, helping them to make their wallets a little lighter. (9)¹

Here we begin to see *jineterismo* as another phase of the Revolution. And like any struggle, the sacrifices are seen as secondary to the possible gains. The irony is that if we measure the real gains in comparison to the struggle against the tyrannous empire, it is obvious that spending money one weekend on a Cuban prostitute is never going to bring an end to imperialism. But that is not the point. The point is that this logic—or lack of it—is what allows the reader to step inside the mind of the protagonist/narrator and realize that he capable of politicizing practically anything. This is, in fact, what self-reflection reveals to him by the end of the book and what drives him to suicide. It is absurd to him to justify the prostitution of his granddaughter in terms of the Revolution's goals, an absurdity, he realizes, that he has participated in his whole life.

When everything revolves around politics, the human aspect of life is marginalized in order to create space for more abstract ideals. We see how the protagonist ignores this human element throughout the novel. It is only in the final chapter, "Un instante después" ("A moment later"), when Ramón confronts the raw humanity of it all, without any justifications.

What provokes this personal confrontation are the human emotions related with sex, possibly the only thing that distinguishes us from animals, on the one end, and political fanatics, on the other, "You don't get it, old man. And what if I told you that this new prostitution is the job that the Party has assigned this generation? You don't believe me?"

"Well look at it this way, Ramón, having no sugar, tobacco, or rum to sell; the only thing left to sell are the people. And it makes no difference whether you charge a foreigner few hundred dollars for the procedures of taking an underage girl out of the country or whether you send your daughter to Mexico for half of what you would charge a professional in any other part of the world (and we won't even talk about taking 75 percent of what she earns). Yes, old man, Florita has done the prostitution bid too, but as an office prostitute. Is this easier for you to accept than what your granddaughter does?" (60)².

Here, it is evident that the twisted politics of *jineterismo* is something that even Ramón Matmoros, the die-hard revolutionary cannot accept, because the human and sentimental side of the sexual act is too strong and too universal for anyone to ignore. It is this revelation that allows him to see the less obvious absurdity in other aspects of his life, for example the 'office prostitution' in which his own daughter took part. Who knows if the disillusioned Ramón Matamoros would have arrived at other conclusions had it not been for his suicide in the "A moment later" chapter.

Another interesting part of *Familia* is when Ramón contemplates the sexual life of his daughter, Florita. She studied nuclear physics in the Soviet Union. Upon returning to Cuba, her father had noticed new signs of maturity, not only physical changes, but personal changes, too. To begin with, she had a boyfriend. Ramón remembers, "Upon discovering that she had a boyfriend, you had asked yourself if she was still a virgin, and you repeated to yourself a thousand times that you would ask her; even without knowing how to ask this to your daughter

with whom you had never talked about sex, but mobilization, military service, volunteer work and honorary medals. You never knew that she realized that you were dying to ask her; and, had she still been a virgin, ...she would have told you to put your mind at ease. But you had taught her not to tell lies, to live with the truth in hand and die with it and for it; but she knew that she would hurt you if she told the truth, and so she opted for not saying anything, since you didn't ask" (34-5)³.

It is necessary to include this quote in its entirety because it exactly describes the twisted and conditioned thought process that has manifested itself in these characters. When the time comes for Ramón to discuss his doubts, he hides behind the excuse of not having talked about the issue before, while his daughter justifies avoiding the issue because she does not want to hurt or lie to her father. Hence, the vicious cycle is put into motion and the lack of communication worsens. The exhausted catch phrases, packaged ideologies and the censorship of the Revolution have inspired a sort of auto-censorship on the part of its supporters to such a point that this 'family of patriots' has become incapable of questioning the intimate details of their own lives. To want to know about the sexual lives of loved ones represents an insatiable, and often dark, curiosity that we have—this need to know the truth even if it hurts us or disgusts us. It is the same feeling that makes us cover our eyes during a scary movie while we tentatively peek out between our fingers. But not in this family. They have succeeded in subduing this natural curiosity that leads to self-exploration. The quote above can be seen as an allegory of the novel itself because it clearly depicts the ironic game of distorted truths and lies that became typical of the revolutionary ideology in Cuba as well as other socialist dictatorships of the time, and something that Guillot harshly criticizes.

In *Las palabras perdidas* (*The Lost Words*) by Jesus Díaz, young writers el Flaco, el Gordo, and el Rojo struggle to concretize their ideas and distinguish their

writing styles for the first issue of *El guije ilustrado*, the new literary magazine that they are planning to produce. Although project is never comes to be, we have evidence of submissions that were to appear in the magazine thanks to the existence of the very novel, *Las palabras perdidas*, which is supposedly written by el Flaco years later, telling the story of why the project never materialized.

Perhaps one of the most interesting pieces that was to appear in the magazine is the poem "Réquiem" (229-32) written by el Gordo. In this poem the city of Havana is personified as a whore. The poet in 115 lines symbolically narrates the city's history by telling the story of the life of a prostitute. The erotic element shows itself to be a primary theme from the opening lines of the poem; "This city was born in the salt of the port/ and their she grew up hot, crazy,/ her sex open to the sea,/ her clitoris guiding the sailors/ like a lighthouse on the bay" (V. 1-5)⁴. From this point on, the bacchanalian context of the red light districts in Havana—the parties, the music, the food, the clothes, the architecture, the liquor—come to represent the carefree mix of the cultures, languages, and peoples typical of the city's past. Meanwhile, the sexual theme is present throughout the poem, emphasizing and linking the image of the prostitute to the Havana of old; "...the whitest rice mortised/ publicly with black beans,/ plantains like cocks and for dessert/ an open papaya like a dare/, a grand Havana cigar and a sip of coffee./ Satan's preferred infusion, black and steaming" (V. 25-39)⁵. There is no need to explain the sexual inferences made in these lines because they are intentionally direct and audacious like the city/prostitute herself.

The most impressive thing about this poem is that it succeeds in making the reader accept this metaphor. In the end, we accept Havana as a prostitute and we almost appreciate her as such. Because the tragedy here lies, not in the identification of the city with the prostitute, but in witnessing her death; after all, the poem is a requiem: "They say that she was seething, / that she

fired up the rumba with her waist,/ that at one time, the poor thing, was alive" (V. 113-115)⁴. These are the last lines of the poem. But beyond the finality of this death, it is also an epic poem in that it narrates the history of a city-character. This two-fold condition of requiem/epic proves relevant in realizing that the presence of the poem in the novel is not a coincidence. Moreover, it is one of the few poems that appear in the novel and narrator dedicates a few pages to explain the creative process that went into writing it. What's more, it is el Gordo's principal contribution to the magazine, all reasons why the poem deserves special attention.

It is interesting that prostitution in the novel *Family of Patriots* is representative of the decadence of Cuba and the Revolution, whereas el Gordo's poem in *The Lost Words* portrays it as an indication of life in a Havana that no longer exists. What bothers the reader most about *Family of Patriots* is not the vocation itself, but the fact that it is associated with a political ideology. When we look at prostitution in a society with out these ideologies (i.e., the pre-Castro Cuba of Díaz's novel), we can at least conclude that the profession is, to a certain point, a conscious choice made by a man or a woman. For this reason, we can accept el Gordo's poem which describes Cuba as a whore, because the poem shows an aspect of will on the part of the prostitute: "she had a complex, she was shameless, ridiculous,/ she enjoyed a dark pleasure/ imitating the more famous whores" (V. 38-40)⁵. Yet to think that prostitution, or sex in general, has an end beyond something personal is disturbing.

The ideas portrayed in these last two novels also correspond to the current feminist debate on prostitution in that the question of 'choice' within the context of sex work is complicated. In a capitalist society, we must ask: to what ends is the decision of a woman to prostitute herself free from the social and economic pressures that might lead her to such a lifestyle? As Paula Jennings suggests, it is ridiculous to say that a woman who engages in

prostitution, even outside a desperate socio-economic situation, chooses to do so freely because she 'consents' to the sexual act, albeit for economic gain; "I am surprised the patriarchy has not yet erected a monument to 'Consent,' inscribed with the words, 'without which none of this would have been possible.' Perhaps no other concept has confused so many people for so long. Women 'consent' to: a lifetime of unpaid monotonous work (she took the job); clothing which restricts movement and damages health (no one marched her to the shop at gunpoint); etc., etc." (qtd. in Overall 712-713). Alternately, while many sex workers have little or no choice in their work, there are those who and are "explicitly conscious" of their other options, yet still choose to engage in prostitution. (Overall 713). Thus, if a woman engages in sexual activities that another person would find disgusting, there is still no justification for claiming a moral high ground and writing the behavior off as an act of "false consciousness" (Overall 713). This debate seems to be internalized by the Havana/Whore of el Gordo's poem, motivating her personality complex, her shamelessness, and her dark desires.

But let us not pretend that we can apply these same sociologies to the Cuba of the "Special Period" as it exists in *Familia de Patriotas*. It is precisely the peculiar socio-economic circumstance, the mix of socialism and capitalism, with the controlled allowance of U.S. dollars on the island after the fall of the Soviet Union that made living in on the island "special," in most cases a euphemism for desperate. *Jineterismo* in Cuba differs from prostitution in other developed western countries or even countries like Thailand that have traditionally been havens for sex tourists. First, while many *jineteras* hold university degrees or are professionals who did not prostitute themselves before the Special Period, others are young girls, some only 14 and 15 years old, who have immigrated to Havana from the surrounding provinces in search of dollars. The point is *jineterismo* targets all types of women. As provisions

became scarce without the aid of the Soviet Union and the sustenance offered to Cubans through their ration cards became just enough to stave off starvation, these women and their families had to take matters into their own hands. And in Cuba one of the only ways to do this is to turn to *jineterismo* and 'jockey' the tourists with the dollars. Secondly, sex tourism is much cheaper in Cuba. This is explained partly because of the lack of a third-party negotiator and partly because the abundance of autonomous prostitutes increases the "supply" and so lowers the price: "The absence of third party involvement in Cuban prostitution thus means that arrangements between client and prostitute are incredibly fluid in terms of both price and the content of the transaction." (Davidson 41). So, prices for sexual acts can get as low as \$10 or even as little as the price of a drink and a sandwich (Abiodun 24).

Most feminist writing on sex work analyzes the institution within the realm of a capitalist patriarchy. As we can see, these same arguments are not applicable to the Cuba of the Special Period as described in Guillot's novel, where many women get involved in prostitution even after they had chosen a different livelihood for themselves. What's more, Guillot puts a new twist on *jineterismo*, suggestively interpreting the trade as the Revolution's final campaign against imperialism. The picture of Cuba that Guillot paints in *Family of Patriots* is one where not only are women forced into desperate situations out of which their only chance is prostitution, but the activity is justified as being part of the higher moral cause of a socialist revolution, again, according to terms dictated by the ruling patriarchy.

We have seen how sex plays diverse roles in the three novels discussed. In *69 memories of a Cuban-American woman*, Morgado plays with the idea of eroticism being treated as taboo, as opposed to an aspect of everyday life. In this way, she makes us aware of other possible realities that might be hidden behind our other notions of taboo. Díaz narrates Havana's

decline through the tales and imagery of a decadent whore. Guillot's book shows sex as a measure of personal honor and emotional truthfulness in that, when the topic is out in the open, we see how the protagonist avoids confronting certain realities in his life. It is also through the institution of *jineterismo* that the novel identifies the hypocrisies of the revolutionary jargon.

All of the authors utilize eroticism as a key element in their works, yet, it is intriguing that this element does not represent a shared theme in any of the novels. Consider the inherent elements involved in our notions of sex and its purpose in our lives. The first would be procreation, which would not be the desired outcome in any of these novels. Another possible common objective would be pleasure, but this would not be the case for the *jinetera* Tatiana in Guillot's book who experiences emotional and physical pain when performing the sexual act. On the other hand, neither can we assume that money is the end goal when we think of the joy that Fisselle describes in her sexual adventures. What I am going to propose is not something that is normally considered inherent in the sexual act, but for the purposes of these novels, perhaps it is: sex as an expression of free will, not in religious terms, but referring to the societal pressures of the modern world. Fisselle's sexual experiences allow her to see for herself a different reality from those with whom she grew up in Miami. When she participates in a *ménage à trois* with two priests, she is exercising her right to decide, just as much as when she decides to smoke Cuban cigars in public or move to New York City. All three actions not normally considered 'appropriate' for a young girl in her specific subculture. Yet the freedom of expression is something that *all* the characters mentioned here fight for in their own way: Fisselle, to break with a community that she finds reactionary and suffocating; Ramón Matamoros, who struggles to find his own voice after years of repression, repressed from years of spoon-fed political ideologies;

and the young writers in Díaz's novel who fight against a regime that was becoming more intolerant to creative expression with each passing day. In the end, it is not enough to simply recognize the common erotic theme in all three novels. Once we take a closer look at the underlying motives, we discover a struggle that is much subtler than all the rest, and maybe is the most important struggle of the Cuban novel in exile: the search for a lost expression.

It is not surprising that recent feminist debates are so incredibly applicable to these exiled novelists. It is understandable that in these novels, as well as within the feminist community, sexuality is often an expressive outlet, albeit a controversial one. Because of the taboo

nature of sex within our society as well as its associations with intimacy, sex cannot help but to express the trapped voice. Thus, feminist theory has helped us to understand something about Cuban literature in exile, but there are two sides to this coin. Feminists might have tried to unite in their promotion of female expressiveness, but to their dismay, have found that their repressed voices, once spoken, are not always unanimous. Similarly, the authors discussed here use the diverse sexual exploits of their characters to challenge, provoke, and contest. Yet among them, there is no general consensus, except perhaps the most obvious: that speaking for, speaking up, or even speaking out of turn, is always better than not speaking at all.

Notes

¹ "Entretanto, tu mujer da conferencias, ofreciendo explicaciones a una tropa de críticos sobre por qué escogió el erotismo como hilo conductor para contar su historia. Llevan meses asediándola con preguntas, los muy imbéciles. Si templaran más no harían tantas preguntas tontas. Templar. Eso es lo que necesitas de inmediato."

² "Pues a ti, Ramón Matamoros, te ha salido una nieta jinetera, de esas que antes se llamaban putas y deshonoraban el apellido que escondían tras apodos de cabaret; pero que ahora montan corceles mecánicos y honran, si no el escudo familiar, al menos las cazuelas y sartenes, con su dinero ni mal ni bien habido, sino simplemente habido."

Sabes cuántas veces Tatiana se ha tenido que tapar la boca para no vomitar, con un gesto muy parecido al que tenías para sonarte la nariz, ya fuera en el cañaveral o en los ejercicios del batallón de la milicia, donde soñabas esperando el momento en que tuviera edad para hacer prácticas de tiro juntos, sin saber que ella combatiría a los imperialistas de otro modo, ayudándoles a hacer más livianas sus carteras."

³ "No comprendes nada viejo. ¿Y si te dijera que el jineterismo es la tarea que el Partido le ha encargado a esta generación? ¿No me crees?"

Pues míralo así Ramón, porque al no haber azúcar, tabaco, ni ron que vender, lo único que queda es vender la gente. Y da lo mismo cobrarle unos cientos de dólares a un extranjero por los trámites de sacar una menor del país, que mandar a tu hija a México por la mitad de lo que cobraría un profesional de cualquier parte del mundo (sin hablar de quitarle el setenta y cinco por ciento). Sí viejo, Florita también ha hecho de jinetera, pero de oficina. ¿Eso lo asimilas mejor que lo de tu nieta?"

⁴ "Al enterarte que tenía novio, te habías preguntado si sería virgen todavía, y te repetías mil veces al día que se lo preguntarías; aún sin saber cómo puede preguntárselo eso a una hija con la que nunca se ha hablado del sexo, sino de movilizaciones, guardias, trabajos voluntarios y condecoraciones. Nunca supiste que él se dio cuenta de que morías de ganas por preguntarle; y si hubiera sido virgen...te lo habría dicho para tranquilizarte. Pero la habías enseñado no decir mentiras, a vivir con la verdad en la mano y morir con ella y por ella; y por otra parte sabía que te heriría si te lo decía, así que optó por no decir nada ya que nada le habías preguntado."

⁵ "Esta ciudad nació en la sal del puerto/ y allí creció caliente, deschavada./ el sexo abierto al mar./ el clitoris guiando a los marinos/ como un faro de luz en la bahía..."

⁶ "...blanquitos arroz machiembrosos/ públicamente con frijoles negros./ plátanos como vergas y de postre/ una papaya abierta como un reto/, un gran habano y un buche de café./ infusión preferida de Satán, negra y humeante..."

⁷ "Dicen que fue candela./ que encendía el rumbón con la cintura, que alguna vez, la pobre, estuvo viva."

⁸ "Acomplejada, impúdica, ridícula./ disfrutaba de un oscuro placer/ impersonando a putas mas famosas..."

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The Meaning of a Name: Mercé Rodoreda's Natalia in The Time of the Doves

Elizabeth K. Goldberg

Spanish post-Civil War literature has been privileged to contain a vast number of writers whose historic duty was that of recounting the horrors of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). Among them, the Catalan writer Mercé Rodoreda stands out. She has enjoyed a particular popularity throughout the last four decades. This notoriety comes as a result of the author's style. She wrote from three different perspectives: as a woman in a patriarchal society, as a Catalanian in Franco's Spain, and later as a political exile.

Rodoreda's nostalgic prose has women as protagonists and sometimes narrators of war stories that were usually told from a male's point of view. This, added to a pristine discourse, is what easily engages the reader. As Elizabeth Scarlett observes, "Rodoreda's resurgence has much to do with her thorough integration of feminine physical experience into social settings where men hold sway. Her balancing of the vulnerability of female characters against their considerable inner strength creates a tension that makes her fiction both politically engaged and engaging to read" (99).

The protagonist of Rodoreda's texts are "women of the masses," individuals who are detached from the intellectual meanderings of their era and who lack a political agenda. Their account of events is reduced to their surroundings and everyday life and objects (Scarlett, 102). *The Time of the Doves* (1985) is such a text.¹ This novel exemplifies the alienation women have to go

through in a patriarchal society at war. Natalia is a symbol of all women who at some point in their lives find the strength to ignore the patriarchal discourse and then embark on the ultimate search, a journey for their souls.

We take Natalia's hand and let her show us the effect that the war has had on herself, her life, and her surroundings. As we read we perceive the changes that this character goes through until she reaches adulthood. This paper will concentrate on such changes. The metamorphosis of the protagonist is exemplified by the different names she adopts. In the beginning she is known simply as "Natalia," the teenage girl full of fear and hope. Shortly after, she becomes "la colometa,"² beloved wife and mother. In the third and most important part of the narrative, she is again "Natalia," a young widow living through postwar depression times. Finally, the character becomes "la señora Natalia," a mature woman who has accepted her past and simultaneously tries to face old age with dignity.

The first chapters of the book present Natalia as a young girl. Her voice, though, is that of a child. The simplicity with which she sees her life and her environment is like a breath of fresh air for the reader, who grows progressively fonder of such an innocent little girl. Natalia, at this point in time leads a simple and naïve life consisting of work and occasionally dates with a cook. In her discourse there are no judgments or opinions; she simply relates

her experiences. According to Josep-Anton Fernández, she does this because "Like the angel of history, she does not understand what she sees, so she does not interpret it or turn it into a continuum. Instead, she looks back, not to understand the past but to make sense of it, and to redeem it" (104).

The trait that most describes the character at this stage in the story is that of an internal emptiness and senseless conduct (Aguirre 504). Natalia herself recognizes this flaw: "but what happened to me was that I did not know why I was in this world" (39). Due to her lack of identity and self worth Natalia is on a constant search for acceptance and purpose. Even though an outdated naturalist interpretation of the text is not desired, we must admit that Natalia's background, the absence of her mother, the disinterest of the father, and her own lack of direction drove her straight into Quimet's arms.

This young man comes into her life, with his own emotional baggage, and takes charge immediately. According to Elena Pavia-Sesma, Quimet and Natalia are very similar characters. He is also in constant search of an identity. Quimet needs to be accepted because as a child he had been unwanted by his mother, who wanted a girl. Furthermore, she would dress him as a girl when no one was looking (108). This is the reason, Pavia-Sesma suggests, why he goes to war. The weapons he uses are a phallic symbol of his lost identity.

With him by her side, Natalia becomes a passive observer of her own existence. She exchanges one disinterested father figure for another, that of a despotic symbolic father who controls her. Her emotional state and Quimet's strong personality can be seen in the first chapter of the novel, "The rubber lace encrusted in my waist and a dead mother that could not advise me, that's why I told that boy that my boyfriend was the cook in el Colón and he laughed and told me that all was good because in a year I would be his wife and his queen. And that we would dance our wedding song in la Plaza del Diamante."

It is at this juncture that we notice the first change in our protagonist. Quimet decides, after a few hours of knowing her, that her name should be changed, "and when I told him that my name was Natalia he started laughing and said that I could only have one name: 'Colometa' (11). According to the critic Neus Carbonell, the change of name indicates the transformation of the young girl into an adult woman. She is now subject to exploitation brought about by her marginal position in the patriarchal society (19).

In this chapter of her life Natalia has to put aside her fears and doubts in order to embrace her new life as a motherly figure. She soon becomes the caregiver, not only of her two children, but also of her needy husband: "he wanted me to take his shoes off and put on his sandals, the ones with the little squares of two colors, *café con leche*. Before he went to bed he wanted me to massage his entire body with rubbing alcohol" (57). Natalia does not realize right from wrong in this situation. She has been placed in the role of wife and mother, at a point in her life when she does not even know how to be a woman.

But Colometa's motherly duties do not end here. She also has to tend to the doves. These birds are brought into her life by her husband's unilateral decision. The doves reside in the only space that Natalia had considered her own. Quimet decides that the attic where she kept her personal belongings would be turned into a dove's roost. Colometa accepts this unjust displacement as passively as she accepts everything else in her life. She is only comfortable with one behavior, that of submission. But on the horizon, external forces are changing the world, and the life of a simple housewife starts to change courses.

The Civil War is the catalyst that brings independence and freedom, among other things, to the protagonist. Quimet joins the republican army and leaves in search of his ideals, leaving his wife with all the responsibility of her new home. This, in turn, gives her the space she so badly needed to find some ideals of her own. For the first

time in her life she is on her own to face the everyday workings of the society she is now a part of. She has to care for herself, her children, and the doves, but on her own terms. Josefina Hess adds: "In her married life as well as during the Civil War, [Natalia] matures in a repressive ambiance and in a society that is going through transcendental changes" (286).

As Natalia begins taking charge of her life, she starts making drastic decisions. The first one consists of ending her imposed relationship with the doves: "When the doves seem to have taken over the household and Natalia's very existence, she does battle with them by subverting their maternal instincts, picking up the eggs so that the mothers would abandon them on the roof" (Scarlett 110). By doing this Natalia symbolically challenges the patriarchal discourse that has forced motherhood upon a woman on account of her physical condition (Scarlett 112). Further in the chapter she has to make the even harder decision of sending her son to camp where he would be forced into hard labor in exchange for food: "But to find food became so difficult that I told him that there was nothing else we could do, that it would be for a short period of time and that he would like to play with other children like him" (165). It is obvious that the voice of Natalia has changed. She is using the strong and active voice that her husband once used with her.

The most tragic decision that Natalia has to make is the one that ends up transforming her life. "Quimet's death fighting for the republic worsens Natalia's material and psychological crisis to the point that she plans the murder of her children and her own suicide" (Aguirre 504). This is the moment of climax in the novel because the reader, having seen all the changes that she has gone through, does not doubt that she will commit the crime.

Yet she does not kill the children. Antoni, the crippled owner of the shop, helps her through the difficult times. Here we reach the final chapter of Natalia's growing experience. Natalia now becomes "la señora Natalia." She accepts Antoni as a

husband even though she is not in love with him. Pavia-Sesma sees in this character another father figure for Natalia (111). But we take it in another direction; Antoni has a war wound that does not permit him to father children. Also his humble attitude is so different to that of other men Natalia knows. These traits make him symbolically not a man. He asks nothing of her; he offers all he has to her, and in return he asks only for her companionship.

"And I think that you are very lonely and also the children are alone when you come to work. I could fix all of that... If you do not like what I am saying, make believe that it never happened... but I should add that I cannot have kids, because of the war I am useless, and with you, I already found a family. And I do not want to lie to anybody, Natalia" (209).

This individual does not fit the image that Natalia has of men. To begin with, he has given her a choice. Second, he is a humble person, and lastly and most importantly, he has called her by her name. By doing so he has dignified her as a human being and has accepted her identity, with everything and anything that implies.

The years that "la señora Natalia" spends with Antoni are the best of her life. She finishes raising her children, gets to know herself, and finds the peace she so desperately desires. This is when her final metamorphosis takes place, "in the last chapter after the protagonist has accomplished her liberation from the memory of Quimet and is ready to open the channels of communication with her second and crippled husband" (Carbonell 19).

Natalia's scream in the final chapter lets us know that she has finally found herself. She no longer plays a passive role in her life; she is now actively taking charge of her direction and the results that accrue. She accepts herself as an individual, makes decisions, and has feelings of hatred and love. Only now that she has come to terms with herself can she look forward and show affection to her second husband. This love might not be the same other couples share, but it is the only love she can give. They

engage in a symbiotic relationship where she acquires her name, space, and respect, and he obtains a family (Pavía-Sesma 111).

And so the story ends. Natalia returns to her new home after confronting all her ghosts in La Plaza del Diamante. She is tranquil and at peace with herself. Her past

has been redeemed. The true challenges lay in the future: growing old and finally dying (Forrest 23). This time, though, she is strong enough to face anything; she has the first and last word in the events that encompass her world, and at last she has become a complete person.

Notes

¹ *La Placa del Diamant* was first published in 1962 in Catalan.

² *Colometa* means little dove in Catalan.

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Mercé Rodoreda and Her Discourse

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Mercé Rodoreda (1909-1983) is considered one of the best-known novelists and short story writers in Catalan.¹ Rodoreda's literary production has attained international acclaim from both readers and critics. In fact, her works have been translated into many languages and have won several awards.² This author has inspired many women writers and readers worldwide because of the way she expresses her inner self by linking it with her experiences in exile during the difficult post-Spanish Civil War years. As a Catalan outside of Spain, she felt cut off from her language, her audience, and her country after the fall of the Republic.³ Her experiences as an exile structure her and reflect her point of view as an outsider. This is why Rodoreda's novels deal with freedom camouflaged into the confinement of her characters' projection; it is the author's symbolic lament for the loss of feminine identity due to one person's struggle against the forces that limit and defy her personal experience. An example of this is seen in the main character of her novel *La plaça del Diamant*.

La plaça del Diamant (*The Time of the Doves*) narrates the adventures and, most of all, misadventures of Natalia, a woman who lives in Barcelona during and after the Spanish Civil War. This is a down-to-earth and sensible story that can apply to all women in a patriarchal society, a society where women's feelings, desires, and will are limited. Mercé Rodoreda uses the different physical spaces where the action takes place as a strategy to protest silently the status quo. As a narrator and main character, Natalia shows her world to the

reader by describing and portraying herself as a victim. The city of Barcelona, the Plaça del Diamante, the bakery, and the three houses will determine the protagonist's sense of identity. The reader has to interpret the meaning of each of the spaces and relate them to the role of this marginal and suffering woman. This author wants the reader to understand that her silent protest is a way to emancipate herself from asphyxiating social, political, economical, and personal situations.⁴

It is quite interesting to see how Simone de Beauvoir poses the condition women have had during the history of society: "The Woman has always been the other."⁵ This condition has stigmatized women, considering them different; and not belonging to the same group as men. Women in literature are also seen from the point of view of the patriarchal society: a confined being inside a world dominated by men. It is male figure who dictates how women should be portrayed: on one side is the masculine subject, and on the other is the woman as the object of representation. As a writer, Mercé Rodoreda moves away from this dominant masculine discourse. In her novel, Natalia expresses her feelings and desires as if she were talking to herself through interior monologues. Using this technique, the writer gives Natalia the possibility to demonstrate that her silence is a way to elude authority and shelter in the intimacy of her imagination so that, from there, she can express what she wants. This idea can be linked to what Marjorie Agosin points out, that "The woman's discourse is inscribed into two big metaphors: silence and imagination" (15).

Rodoreda lends her voice to Natalia so she can develop her discourse by narrating her story. She does not judge; she simply presents her feelings and experiences far from any interpretative or analytical aspect. This character not only describes her difficulties, her social position as daughter, wife, and mother, but also lets the reader know about topics like violence, miscommunication, submission, dependency, and solitude without denouncing or reflecting. On the contrary, their protest is silent and is always related to the physical space in a specific moment. Each space is identified with a source to look for the identity as a renewal and is transformed in an extension of her internal evolution. Agosin adds: "It is in this limit boundary where the one who writes can be totally her self, she can own the word and she does not have to be the one who writes to please an imperious culture, but to bring into the light her own language, her own saying" (16).

It is important to point out that Rodoreda uses Natalia as a way to present herself to the readers, posing her personal struggles through the words of her character to deliver her message, which deals with the consequences of the war, her exile experiences as a woman and as a Catalan, and the repression of the woman in the patriarchal society. Her personal circumstances inhibit the author to talk freely; however, she uses metaphors to express her personal situation by inserting her essence into the discourse. Moreover, she uses the Catalan language as an important vehicle to rebel from the political power of Francisco Franco during the postwar years. The language is one of the ways to go against the masculine discourse. Helene Cixous in her article "The Laugh of the Medusa" says: "Woman must write her self... Woman must put herself into the text—into the world and into history—by her own movement (Cixous 1090); furthermore, Cixous adds: "She must write her self, because this is the invention of a new insurgent writing which, when the moment of her liberation has come, will

allow her to carry out the indispensable ruptures and transformations in her history" (1093).

This freedom is seen in the novel as an illusion or as a promise Natalia would be able to find in each space she moves to. First, she works in the bakery in order to find her place as a productive person of the society. Then, she finds herself in la Plaça where she met Quimet. Later she marries him, moves to the apartment, and holds an illusory idea of security. However, that very same apartment gradually resembles a prison when Quimet decides to bring the doves and after she gives birth to their two children. After a while, when she notices that her husband does not care about his family, she decides to work part-time as a maid in a house, leaving her two children locked in the apartment's dining room. The house where Natalia works is described as a maze full of dust and darkness. Eventually, she ends up cleaning for everyone: the people she works for, the doves, her children, and her husband. It looks as if she finds no end to the situation, one where she has no space of her own. Tired of these circumstances, she felt asphyxiated and finally rebels by destroying the doves' eggs. At that very same time, Quimet decides to join a military patrol. Things change abruptly when she loses her job, her husband goes to the patrol and dies, and she needs to provide for her starving family.

These hard times make Natalia think about killing her children and herself. When things reach the point of maximum tension, Antoni appears in the scene just at the precise moment before self-destruction. At first, she cleans Antoni's house and, eventually, they marry. Again she finds another place where she feels in an enclosure space because she needs to keep the doors and windows closed to keep the rats out. Even though she dislikes the house, she manages to personalize it and create a new space by remodeling it. Again, Antoni's house becomes a protective space that shelters her from what Michele Anderson calls: "threatening forces outside her confined space" (122). After a while, when

her children become adults and leave home, she begins to take walks; she goes to her old neighborhood and visits Quimet's apartment. Then, she goes to the Plaça where, at the end, she screams, "freeing herself from the obsession with the past that has been haunting her... Natalia seems to regain some of the self that Quimet and the war had taken from her. As her inner space is freed from the obstruction created from her experiences, especially the war, her marriage, and the difficult years where she had to provide for her family, Natalia now makes the choice to live in the present and to love Antoni" (Anderson 123). In the end, she discovers that love is the force that makes her find her own space as a person and as a woman who is loved and able to love.

The author invites the readers to come inside her novel, her "Plaça" and walk along the places Natalia describes. At this point, Roland Barthes's *El Placer del Texto* (The Pleasure of the Text) expresses the idea that with the literary work, the author should chase the reader from the place that the reader is and transport him or her into that pleasure space that is referred to in the literary work (Barthes 12). Rodoreda calls the reader to participate in her game, to fill the spaces through the reading of the novel.

The reading process carries an implicit message both as a feminine figure and as an author.

In her discourse, Rodoreda includes such themes as violence, miscommunication, submission, dependency, solitude, oppression, confinement, and Natalia's lack of identity. These issues carry her implicit message as a rebellious cry to find her own identity, suggesting that both the character and the author vindicate themselves as human beings free of any social and political imposition. Mercé Rodoreda's readers must fill the gaps the author poses in her discourse, as Wolfgang Iser suggests in his article *The Reading Process*: "one text is potentially capable of several different realizations, and no reading can ever exhaust the full potential, for each individual reader will fill in the gaps in his own way" (Ritcher 1989). In this process, the reader makes the connections that Rodoreda's narrative voice suggests. The author is looking for a way to prove that women are able to go against the stereotypes of the patriarchal society through their self-consciousness, in order to find their identity by searching inside and living in the way they can freely develop themselves as individuals.

Notes

¹Mercé Rodoreda's literary career began in the Catalan newspapers *Mirador*, *La Rambla* and *La Publicitat* and also with various journals. In her twenties she was already a successful published author. Her first narrative work was *Soc una dona honrada?* (1932; "Am I an honest woman?"). During the 1930s Rodoreda published five novels, one being *Aloma* (1938). Rodoreda spent twenty years in almost total silence when she was forced to go into exile once the Spanish Civil War began. Not only did she escape from the political situation, but she also left behind her family's own arranged marriage with her uncle, Joan Gurgui, and the couple's only son. She shared some of her exile years with Armand Obiols, a writer who belonged to the Sabadell group using the pseudonym Joan Prat. Later, she reappeared on the literary scene in 1958 with her collection of short stories, *Vint-i-dos contes* ("Twenty-two tales"). Then came *La plaça del Diamant* ("The Time of the Doves"), published in 1962; this novel won acclaim from the readers as well as from the critics, some of whom considered it the best novel ever written in Catalan. *La plaça del Diamant* has been translated to 22 languages. Four years later she wrote *El carrer de les Camèies* (1966; "Camellia Street") followed by the publication of *Jardi vora el mar* (1967; "Garden by the sea"); at that same year came *La meua Cristina i altres contes* (1967; My Christina and other stories) a collection that includes works published in Catalan newspapers in exile and two unpublished short stories. Another important work from Rodoreda is *Mirall trencat* ("Broken Mirror") which appears in 1974. Her final novel *Quanta, quanta Guerra...* ("So much war") was published in 1980. Simultaneous to the mentioned production, she wrote

and published four volumes of short stories. It is important to add that all of her literary production is written in Catalan as she says in an interview "to honor the Catalan language" (Busquets 58).

²Rodoreda won the Creixells prize in 1937 for her novel *Aloma*, in which she analyzes the evolution of a teenage girl seduced by her brother-in-law. Later she revised and published *Aloma* again in 1969. She also received the "Premio Victor Catala" in 1961 for *Vint-i-dos contes*, a collection of short stories. Furthermore, the City of Barcelona Prize and two Critic's Prizes were given in recognition for *Viatges i flors* (1980; "Journeys and flowers"); and the Premi d'Honor de les Lletres Catalanes, the most important distinction for a Catalan author, in 1980 for her entire literary production.

³By April 1939, the Civil War was over, the Republican forces collapsed, and General Franco began his the new authoritarian regime that lasted until his death in November, 1975. This was a very difficult period and many intellectuals left to exile. Rodoreda, as many women, wanted to become independent by escaping from the paternal authority's imposed by the regime.

⁴The novel's discourse is expressed in monologues, as Natalia recounts her life from the moment she was a teenager and met Quimet, going through the experience of becoming a widow with two children, until she met Antoni. During all this process, Natalia struggles to find her own identity. This technique is used by the author to portrait her survival and the communal endurance of Spanish women during the difficult war period. In this manner the novel represents the lives of those trying to find their individuality.

⁵All translations are mine.

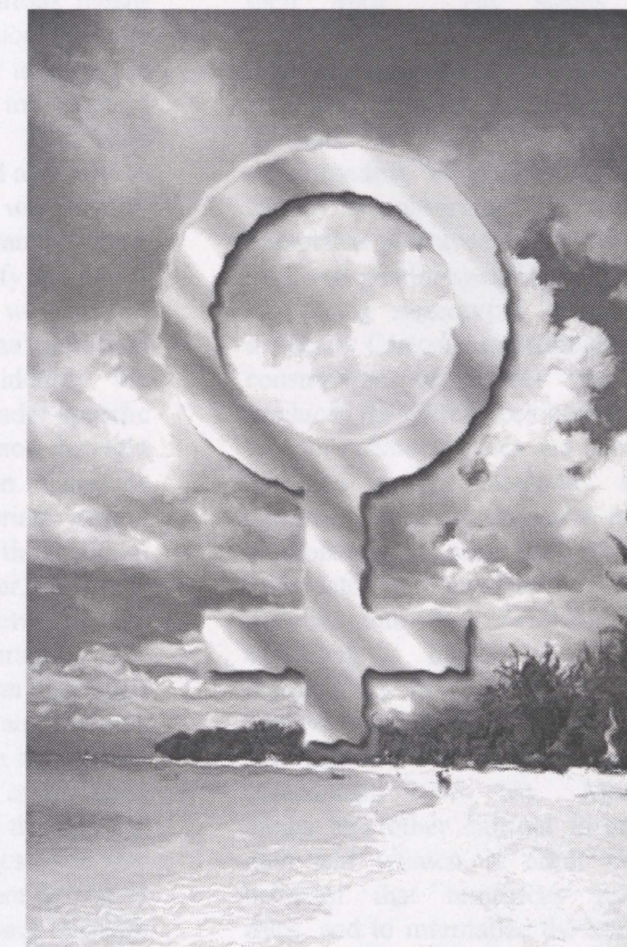
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Cartoons: Gender Socialization

Shira Fisher

Gender socialization is the process by which individuals learn the roles, behaviors, and attitudes that are considered appropriate for their sex. This process is often influenced by cultural norms, family, and media. In this article, we explore the role of cartoons in gender socialization, specifically focusing on the female symbol as a visual metaphor for femininity. The female symbol, a circle with a vertical line and a horizontal line at the bottom, is a common icon used to represent women. In cartoons, this symbol is often depicted as a character, such as a woman with a large head and a small body, or as a character with a large, stylized symbol on her head. This visual representation can reinforce traditional gender roles and expectations, such as the idea that women are nurturing, passive, and focused on appearance. However, cartoons can also be used to challenge these roles and promote more progressive gender equality. For example, some cartoons depict female characters who are strong, independent, and capable of leadership. By analyzing the use of the female symbol in cartoons, we can gain insight into the cultural values and gender norms that shape our society.



III. Growing Waves

Article 10

Cartoons:

Gender Socialization

Shira Fisher

Communication mechanisms learned from society are a crucial part of developing a sense of self. "Societies are said to cultivate people by various means such as education and persuasion, through art and public address, in order to enter, be part of, and contributory to existing cultures" (Watson 1998:12). We learn gender-appropriate behavior and also how to communicate to society that we identify with one particular sex rather than the other. In this we have come to identify gender as yet another institution in which we take part (Lorber, 2001). Language is an important part of the process of shaping identity. We learn language and use it in gender-specific ways. The advent of television brought forth new forms of enculturation. Cartoons function as a form of appropriate gender socialization of one's sex for the children who consume them. In this paper, I examine the apparent interaction between the consumer and the producer of cartoons.

Television has become an institution that instructs us on how to act and interact, how to look, and what to say in accordance with one's sex. The process of assimilation of text and images is achieved through the usage and emphasis of stereotypes. The way male, female, and ethnic roles are portrayed and transferred onto the audience through

characterized behavior shapes how one should act and behave. For children, socialization begins in the earliest phases of their lives. The stages of gender identification for children are integral to their personal and social development. Because children now spend excessive amounts of time watching TV, their understanding of gender and ethnicity is taught by observing the behaviors and interaction portrayed on TV shows. mimick observed gender-specific roles on TV, thus, reinforcing stereotyped behavior prevalent in society. Cartoons replicate the very "social construction of gender (that) not only produces the differences between men's and women's characteristics and behavior, it also produces gender inequality by building dominance and subordination into gendered relationships" (Lorber 2001:180). Children assimilate the gendered relationships in cartoons into their everyday interactions, bolstering highly gender-identified relationships in the long term. It is this "exposure in childhood to forms of activity and play that naturalize gender divisions" (Macdonald 1995: 13). Moreover, "the media and other cultural forms encourage men and women in adult life to adopt behavior that reinforces gender-specific roles, and to internalize the appropriateness

of this as part of their own sense of identity" (Macdonald 1995: 13). Cartoons, children's programming, and commercials are prime examples of how stereotypes are placed upon children at a young age and are reinforced through their development.

Cartoons, children's programming, commercials, and even comics display gender specific behavior that is connected to the particular sex of the character drawn, which is usually extremely exaggerated. "How males and females are portrayed is important because of concerns about the media's role in the socialization process for children and adults, in modeling gender-specific behavior, in influencing the self-concepts of young women, and in creating sexist stereotypes" (Thompson and Zerbinos 1997: 415). As with the likes of Kevin Durkin, this approach takes into consideration the child's ability to relate their experiences in the real world with gendered interactions they see on TV, magazines, and movies. Macdonald's (1995) social cognition theory and Durkin's cognitive-developmental approach suggest that, "we should see children as script-writers, making sense of their viewing in complex and interactive ways" (21). It is important to note that "learning about gender and its implications begins early, is mediated by cognitive activity and is subject to the influences of a variety of distal and proximal factors which may contribute in different ways and different stages" to a child's self perception and gender roles (Durkin and Nugent 1998: 387). To understand more about these complexities one must look directly into the portrayal of characters in mediums of influence such as cartoons.

The importance of cartoons' influence on children's perceptions of appropriate gender-typing can be seen in their preferential viewing of cartoons starting from the ages of 18 months to 2 years old (Thompson and Zerbinos 1995). Cartoons have historically been made to show male and female characteristics through ecological fallacies. The characters have highly stereotyped features or

characteristics that pertain to that particular sex. Males display characteristics such as assertiveness, strength, anger, aggression, athleticism, initiation, intelligence, power, speed, attractiveness, wit, reliability, and independence. Females were portrayed as more emotional, dependent, weak, irritating, sensitive, romantic, highly affectionate (to the point that it was irritating), talkative, concerned with beauty, followers, in need of rescue, and linked with the domestic sphere (Thompson and Zerbinos 1997). Past stereotypes have only minutely changed. It should be noted that, "like ideology, the stereotype works by being plausible, and by masking its own value-system" (Macdonald 1995: 13). These sex based assumptions of what masculinity and femininity encompass have become so ingrained in our society that it has become invisible and accepted as reality, as what a female or male should represent. The male as central character replicates the power structure of our social reality. Females inhabit domesticated roles, showing that cartoons still present "a world that is male and white, where the women are either young and buxom or old and frail—but never equals" (Pecora 1992: 61).

It is as important to locate what is absent in cartoons as well as what is visible. In the 1970s, "many cartoons had all male characters...when females did appear, they needed to be rescued...and had a tendency to fall in love at first sight...Even heroines who were trying to do good caused trouble for everyone in their paths" (Thompson and Zerbinos 1995: 652-653). Even though there has been development over the last 20-25 years, women are still stereotyped into traditional roles. "The women who appear on television tend to be portrayed primarily as housewives and mothers" (Barner 1999: 553). Men, have had fairly stable roles in cartoons, comics, as well as other media-related shows. Whereas "cartoon females were less numerous than males, made fewer appearances and had fewer lines," (Thompson and Zerbinos 1995: 653). Men have maintained the majority of leading roles as well as talk time for voice-overs in commercials. Therefore, it is apparent that

children's television has always been male dominated and remains so (Thompson and Zerbinos, 1995).

The presence or lack of ethnicity in cartoons is extremely important to examine as well. In cartoons, "we learn from these heroes, real or fantasy, the rules of life: what is acceptable, desirable, attractive, successful, and possible" (Pecura 1992: 62). What we therefore learn is that we live in a world controlled by Anglo men and that to be different is less desirable and given less worth (Dobrow and Gidney 1998). To have some other ethnic or gender orientation is to be 'other' (de Beauvoir 1949). Dobrow and Gidney (1998) also suggest that the lack of women and ethnic characters portray for children a world that is more homogenous than in actuality. For African Americans, "the relationship between television content and self concept is such that both the absence of African-Americans and exposure to negative portrayals of one's own group would result in more negative self-concept and self-esteem" (Dobrow and Gidney 1998: 106). Even more disturbing is the fact that at times women and ethnic groups are virtually absent from cartoons. Usually ethnic characters are cast in the role of 'evil doers', blanketing ethnic-looking people as dangerous or untrustworthy in real life. Another trend that is apparent in cartoons is the villain's inability to speak standard American English, which leads into cartoons' use of language.

The use of dialect and language is another device used to create biased perceptions of the sexes and different ethnicities. The use of voice-overs in cartoons is predominantly male, which suggests that men have greater power, knowledge, and competency than females. Commercials also use male voice-overs more than 64 percent of the time, whereas female voice-overs are used less than 16 percent of the time (Browne 1998: 89). The amount of time male characters talk during cartoons is also greater than for females. "Male characters since 1980 have talked significantly more than they used to, but the means for female characters were almost

identical pre and post 1980" (Thompson and Zerbinos 1995: 664). Because "language is the primary means by which the values, norms and acceptable/ not acceptable patterns of society are formed, expressed, and reinforced," (Watson 1998: 12) whoever has the most control over language and talk time shapes how power is structured and replicated.

Gender stereotypes are produced not only through hackneyed images of males and females, but also through characterized dialect or phonetic usage. Cartoons offer "social conceptions of ideal behavior and represent 'ritualized' or culturally prescribed portrayals of men and women that inform the viewer about social relationships" (Browne 1998: 84). Through stereotypical language styles, cartoons inform children of the disadvantages of being different by presenting communication between genders and ethnicities as highly contrasted. "Language is a powerful means of signaling social and personal identity" (Dobrow and Gidney 1998: 106). Accents also play a role in the enforcement of difference and identity. In cartoons like Duck Tales or older cartoons like Scooby Doo the villains were seen to have foreign accents emphasizing difference. Most 'evil doers' have accents from foreign countries or slurred speech. An example of this can be seen in Duck Tales where Scrooge McDuck, who is one of the villains, has a thick Scottish accent while all other characters speak standard American English. Accents for villains are yet another marker for difference, just as is skin color or a character's sex.

As "children's television relies heavily on language to mark characters' personalities...their speech immediately stereotypes them" (Dobrow and Gidney 1998: 112-114). The use of speech as a signifier links to the depiction of women. The lack of women's speech helps children identify female characters as being less significant, while the amount of male 'talk time' gives male figures authority. This idea can also be seen in the type of talk. Men usually make forceful statements that

reaffirm their authority while women's speech usually involves questions, which stereotypically embodies weakness. In more modern cartoons, women's speech is indistinguishable from men's (Dobrow and Gidney 1998), yet there are still distinctions in the power, value, tone, and context that the different sexes' words hold. When there are few or no images to contradict stereotypical gendered behavior it is difficult to make alternative judgments, leading children to adopt, assume, and internalize these images that they view as the norm to themselves and others (Dobrow and Gidney 1998).

As Thompson and Zerbinos (1997) point out, "the favorite cartoon type for nearly half of the children was continuing adventure" (427). For this reason, I focus my analysis on daytime cartoons like *The Adventures of Batman*. While Batman has been a comic for decades and a cartoon for ten to twenty years, there is still an exclusion of ethnic diversity from Gotham City. Even though there are major female characters, which is an improvement, the fact remains that "the great disparity in the presentation of male and female characters in children's cartoons present in the 1970s is still present in the 1990s" (Thompson and Zerbinos 1997). Because Batman was derived from its origin as a comic book, it still carries the presence of masculinity that in "its inherent sense of power is an ideology that is reinforced and replayed for the young adolescent in the family, at school, among friends—and in comic books" (Pecora 1992: 63).

In *The Adventures of Batman*, there are no qualms with not having women or different ethnicities present. The women that are portrayed in the cartoon follow the model beauty mold of being ever so buxom, tall, thin, with long hair, displaying what is emphasized by the media as 'true femininity,' something that every girl should obtain. Even when there are women present they fall into the line of poor Haley Quinn, the tragic, co-dependent, weak, vulnerable, insecure, and irritatingly needy sidekick of the villain, Joker, who just happens to be of

Irish descent. Women in this cartoon fall into these highly negative, gendered traits. Minorities are absent in the land of Gotham City except for the occasional 'darker' or 'more ethnic' bad guy. Yet it can be seen that the main characters—that is the Anglo characters—were shown as having what Thompson and Zerbinos (1995) identified as masculine signifiers such as "a recognizable job, more independent, assertive, intelligent, athletic, important, competent, technical, confident, responsible, and stronger than female characters" (656). Examples like this show an ever growing world that is ruled by white men and anyone else is just plain different.

However, there has been some progress in gender typing. An example can be seen in *The Adventures of Batman*, where more female characters have been introduced, such as Bat Girl, Poison Ivy, reporters, love interests, and even the main character the 'Phantom Menace' in a full length Batman movie. Yet the women still possess more negative feminine characteristics and have less talk time and presence in comics than male characters.

Therefore, it is important to note that, "communication has the power to define, persuade, inform, and to disinform" (Watson, 1998). Cartoons serve to communicate gender characteristics As West and Zimmerman (1987) argue, "gender is not a set of traits, nor a variable, nor a role, but the product of social doings of some sort" (129). It would make sense that to watch a show which spells out how each gender acts or is seen (or not seen) would influence one's own action and interpretation of sexual divisions. Therefore, examining the meanings that are ingrained in children's minds is extremely relevant. Cartoons' stereotyping of gender and ethnicities play an important role in perpetuating gender distinction among children.

Cartoons socialize children to believe that boys are leaders and girls are followers. Cartoons, reinforce the idea that women reside in the home and can never gain any advantage or position of power. Even female superheroes are in subordinate

positions to the men that they fight against or for. In the world that cartoons create, children watch and learn that gender differences are demanded and males can achieve more than women. These gender constructs subliminally and overtly impact

children's socialization and understanding of how their sex and gender roles fit in the society in which they live.

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A Beautiful Mind:

How Method of Instruction Affects Women's Achievement in Mathematics

Joy Beverly

Introduction

The National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering has financed a massive advertising campaign featuring the theme "Math is Power." Like financial power and political power, however, some women find the power available to those who achieve in math unattainable. Many women have been conditioned since childhood to value and cultivate a beautiful face and body rather than a beautiful mind. The result is that young women often do not pursue advanced math and science, a choice that serves to close doors and limit opportunities for future career paths. Math is the hurdle that has tripped up countless students, representing the obstacle between them and the chemistry lab, the statistics course, or the medical school. Math phobia and math anxiety turn many good students from potential college graduates into college dropouts (Covington and Omelich, 1987; Phillips, 1987). Grimes (1997) and Sogunro (1998) support these viewpoints by noting that anxiety has a negative impact on adult learning and is negatively correlated with persistence and academic success in college.

Criticism of society's faults, along with those of teaching and learning at the pre-college level is of little benefit to the college freshmen who are entering a postsecondary institution, regardless of their readiness. Educators are concerned about poor or low levels of achievement across the content areas, the dilemma facing students at

every grade level. Educators are revising the curriculum to include new pedagogical approaches and the use of technology to address the issue of underachievement. For example, many studies over the past few years have pointed to computer-assisted instruction (CAI) as a way to improve general academic achievement (Kay, 1991; Khalili and Shashaani, 1994; Macnab and Fitzsimmons, 1999). Christmann, Badgett, and Lucking (1997) report that CAI has been most effective in science, and only marginally effective in mathematics. Waxman and Huang (1996) on the other hand found a significant relationship between students' use of technology in learning and their level of math achievement. Various subgroups have been identified and examined in regard to the effectiveness of CAI, with differing results. Macnab and Fitzsimmons (1999) found no significant difference in math achievement between males and females, whereas Rendulic and Terrell (2000) and Christmann and Badgett (1997) found that the combination of statistics and computers proved to be fatal for females, causing them to perform at levels significantly below their male counterparts.

Many questions remain unanswered. Christmann and Badgett (1999) propose that more research be conducted to explore whether CAI is more or less effective among certain subgroups of students or within

certain academic areas. In response to their suggestion, this study attempts to determine the effects of CAI for College Algebra students when separated into subgroups by gender.

Problem Statement

The administration and faculty at a large public university decided to take specific action to try to increase the passing rate in their College Algebra course, which, in the past five years, has fluctuated between 41 and 52 percent. Specific concerns were raised about how best to teach the growing population of students who have already failed College Algebra one or more times, especially in light of tighter Florida state legislative restrictions on multiple repetitions of courses. The Department of Mathematics decided to include computer-assisted instruction (CAI) as an alternative to traditional instruction. Two research questions were explored in this study:

What differences exist in the math achievement of College Algebra students whose classroom instruction was supplemented by computer-assisted instruction compared with those students whose instruction was not supplemented by computer-assisted instruction?

What differences exist in the math achievement of male versus female College Algebra students whose classroom instruction was supplemented by computer-assisted instruction compared with those students whose instruction was not supplemented by computer-assisted instruction?

Participants

The researcher was given access to the records of students who were enrolled in College Algebra at a large urban university located in south Florida. The population for this study represented 3,043 College Algebra students. The undergraduate population of the campus was 60% Hispanic, 18% White, 11% Black, 3% Asian, and 8% other. A total of 15 intact sections of College Algebra were randomly selected from those offered, eight

computer-based sections and seven lecture sections. These fifteen sections averaged 44 students each for a total potential sample of 660 students. Because not every student who enrolls in a course completes that course in the same semester, the usable sample was reduced to 394 students who had completed the course, taken the final exam, and received a final course grade.

Instrument

Students' achievement in College Algebra was determined by their performance on a departmentally developed final exam and their final course grade. To assure consistency across instructors they all followed a departmental syllabus and ended the semester by giving a common final exam, which was administered to all College Algebra sections. In addition to the common final exam, final course grades were used that also included the students' results on teacher-made midterms and other related tests. To maintain some control of the validity and reliability of course grades, the instructors were asked to give the same number of tests and follow prescribed guidelines for weighing the tests.

The common final exam was generated based upon the input from all of the College Algebra instructors. A panel of instructors then made the final decisions regarding specific questions. The test items were reflective of course objectives from the departmental syllabus; thus the final exam is considered to have good content validity.

Method

Prior to the beginning of the fall semester, the decision was made to add ten sections of College Algebra taught by computer instruction augmented with mini-lectures. The other twenty sections were to be taught using the traditional lecture method. A similar number of sections were planned for the spring semester. Instructors who were assigned to teach both the lecture and computer-based courses were told that there would be a common final, but the instructors were not aware of the specific details of the study nor

were they able to predict being included in the sample.

The computer-based sections were taught in a lab with 44 workstations. The computers were linked with Academic Systems, a private deliverer of mediated learning. The computer-based sections included mini-lectures that were delivered by each section's instructor. The mini-lectures emphasized higher-level problems and applications, topics that were not adequately covered by the computer-assisted instruction. These problems were similar to those covered in the College Algebra lecture sections. When not lecturing, the instructor in the computer-based course was a facilitator, moving throughout the classroom offering individual tutoring. When extra instruction time was needed in addition to class time, students who owned computers capable of interfacing with the system could choose to use the computer discs to access the lessons from home. Students without a home computer could use a printed version of the material or use the university computer lab.

Results

There were 237 students in this study who completed College Algebra during the fall semester of which 152, or about 64%, passed the course with a letter grade of "C" or better. The passing rate for the spring semester was substantially below the fall semester with about 50% passing the course, that is, 79 out of 157 who completed it. Between both semesters a total of 42 students earned a letter grade of "A."

The first research question was analyzed using separate analysis of variance procedures on the students' final exam grades and their final course grades. The results of the analysis of variance were not significant, $F = 1.888$, d.f. = 1, 387, $p = .170$. There was no significant difference between the students who were taught using CAI compared with those taught using the traditional approach on their final exam performance.

A second analysis of variance was carried out comparing the students' final

course grades. The results of the analysis of variance were not significant, $F = .077$, d.f. = 1, 392, $p = .781$. There was no significant difference between the students who were taught using CAI compared with those taught using the traditional approach on their final course grade.

The second research question was examined by way of a factorial multivariate analyses of variance using the General Linear Model (GLM) approach. The GLM Factorial analysis considered the effects of instructional approach and gender on students' final exam and final course grade. Regardless of method of instruction, the males outperformed the female students on the final exam. More specifically, the males in the CAI group scored about five-points higher than the females in the same group, however, the difference between male and female students in the traditional method of instruction was less than one-point. The results of the GLM multivariate test did not produce significant differences on the main effects or on the interaction of method of instruction and gender. The Wilks' Lambda on the method of instruction was .990 ($p = .15$), gender was .991 ($p = .184$), and the interaction effect was .996 ($p = .496$).

Discussion

There are certain limitations of this study that are specifically related to the use of a causal-comparative research design. First, the lack of random assignment of participants to treatment conditions is always of concern when attempting to identify potential cause and effect relationships. The high drop-out rate of students is another confounding factor. The extent to which attrition may have affected the results is not known.

Regarding the first research question, it was found that the students who were taught College Algebra by way of CAI outperformed the students in the traditional instruction groups on both the final exam as well as on the final course grades. These differences, however, were not significant. The results are consistent with those of Christmann, Badgett and Lucking (1997),

who found that CAI was only marginally effective in mathematics.

The area of interest was investigated with the second research question. The males outperformed the females on the final exam regardless of the method of instruction. The differences in their final exam performance, while not statistically significant, were particularly interesting. The males in the CAI group outperformed the females in the same group by just over five points in comparison to less than a one-point difference in the lecture only group. The findings can be explained by considering the literature that maintains an inverse relationship exists between anxiety and academic achievement. Chipman, Krantz, and Silver (1992) point out that females tend to have a higher degree of anxiety toward math and enroll in those academic programs with fewer math requirements. Rendulic and Terrell (2000) and Christmann and Badgett (1997) found females' academic performance to be at significantly lower levels than males when they were required to use computers to

apply and solve problems involving math or statistics.

Perhaps the margin between males and females studying mathematics, particularly when using technology, is shrinking. Rendulic and Terrell's (2000) study used participants who were graduate students, whereas this study looked at freshmen. While the mean age of the participants was not considered, it is possible that this study and the Rendulic and Terrell (2000) study represent two different generations of females. Today's freshmen, many of whom have been proficient computer users since preschool, are less likely to be intimidated by computers.

The study of the effectiveness of computers with teaching and learning will be an ongoing topic for many researchers. Future research on the effectiveness of computer-assisted instruction should also involve collecting pretest achievement data, information about students' computer skills, survey data on the students' levels of anxiety, and attitudes toward math and computers.

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Gender Differences in the Aggressive Behaviors of Children

Christina Lalama, S.A.

Reports of aggression among children have been studied a great deal, but gender differences in aggressive behaviors have not been the focus of research until recently. According to Holmes, crimes committed by juvenile females rose 34% during the 10-year period between 1984 and 1994 (2001). Although boys outnumber girls in crimes committed at a rate of about 4:1, both boys and girls are contributing to the escalating crime rate (Silverman & Frick, 1999). Due primarily to the rise in female juvenile crime over the last decade, the Office of Juvenile Justice, psychologists, and school administrators have become increasingly more interested in the aggressive behaviors of females as well as how they differ from the aggressive behaviors of males. Previous research has shown that boys are more likely to be physical aggressors than learning others through physical contact, whereas girls are more likely to be relational aggressors, or harming others through manipulation, rejection, and social exclusion. While the aggressive behaviors of boys may differ in type from the aggressive behaviors of girls, it is hypothesized that the levels of physically and relationally aggressive behaviors displayed by males and females are somewhat equal.

Both boys and girls are capable of displaying relational and physical aggression. Over the years, however, girls have been identified as being less aggressive than boys. Research has indicated that the differences between physical aggression and relational aggression exist and good indicators of the distinctions exist between male and female aggression (Lagopoulos et al., 1990). There is an evidence of a great difference between males and females regarding the levels of psychological damage that aggression causes.

Researchers have found that beyond gender differences there also exist developmental differences in aggression (Owens & McWhorter, 1999). Using a developmental theory to explain differences in aggression of the used by children, Owens and McWhorter noted that as girls mature earlier than boys, they develop the more sophisticated aggressive strategies utilized in relational aggression before boys do (1999).

Participants

Eighty-six students in kindergarten through fourth grade participated in this study. All participants were in after school programs at their elementary school or in a

who found that CAI was only marginal. In a study of 100 students, the results showed that the use of CAI was only marginal.

The use of CAI was investigated in a study of 100 students. The results showed that the use of CAI was only marginal.

The differences in their final exam performance, while not statistically significant, were particularly interesting. The males in the CAI group outperformed the females in the same group by just over five points in comparison to less than a one-point difference in the lecture-only group. The findings can be explained by considering the interaction that maintains an inverse relationship exists between anxiety and academic achievement. Chapman, Krantz, and Silver (1992) point out that females tend to have a higher degree of anxiety toward math and math is their academic program with lower math requirements. Patten's and Torrell (2000) and Christensen and Sedgwick (1997) found female students' performance to be significantly lower levels than males when they were required to use computers in

study used participants who were gender students. While the mean age of the participants was not controlled, it is possible that this study and the Christensen and Torrell (2000) study represent two different generations of females. Today's freshmen, many of whom have been previous computer users, may be less likely to be intimidated by computers.

The study of the effectiveness of computers with teaching and learning will be an ongoing topic for many researchers. Future research on the effectiveness of computer-aided instruction should also include collecting pretest achievement data, information about students' computer skills, survey data on the students' level of anxiety, and attitudes toward math and computers.

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III. Growing Waves

Article 12

Gender Differences in the Aggressive Behaviors of Children

Christina Lalama, B.A.

Displays of aggression among children have been studied a great deal, but gender differences in aggressive behavior have not been the focus of research until recently. According to Holmes, crimes committed by juvenile females rose 34% during the 10-year period between 1984 and 1994 (2001). Although boys outnumber girls in crimes committed at a ratio of about 4:1, both boys and girls are contributing to the escalating crime rate (Silverthorn & Frick, 1999). Due primarily to this rise in female juvenile crime over the last decades, the Office of Juvenile Justice, psychologists, and school administrators have become increasingly more interested in the aggressive behaviors of females, as well as how they differ from the aggressive behaviors of males. Previous research has shown that boys are more likely to be physical aggressors (i.e., harming others through physical means), whereas girls are more likely to be relational aggressors (i.e., harming others through manipulation, rejection, and social exclusion). While the aggressive behaviors of boys may differ in type from the aggressive behaviors of girls, it is hypothesized that the levels of physically and relationally aggressive behaviors displayed by males and females are somewhat equal.

Both boys and girls are capable of displaying relational and physical aggression. Over the years, however, girls have been identified as being less aggressive than boys. Research has indicated that the differences between physical aggression and relational aggression were not good indicators of the distinguishing factors between male and female aggression (Lagerspetz, et al., 1988). There is no evidence of a great difference between males and females regarding the levels of psychological damage their aggression causes.

Researchers have found that beyond gender differences there also exist developmental differences in aggression (Owens & MacMullin, 1995). Using a developmental theory to explain differences in aggression styles used by children, Owens and MacMullin noted that as girls mature earlier than boys, they develop the more sophisticated aggression strategies utilized in relational aggression before boys do (1995).

Participants

Eighty-six children in kindergarten through fourth grade participated in this study. All participants were in after school programs at their elementary school or at a

local county park. The participants were identified as being "at-risk" for aggressive behaviors by the park counselors and by their teachers.

Measures

Precursors of Personality Disorders Scale (PPDS) This scale contains internalizing and externalizing items from the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL-T) Report form (Achenbach, 1991). **Child Social Behavior Scale (CSBS)** (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). The CSBS-T contains four subscales: 1) an overt aggression scale with three items (e.g., "This child hits, shoves, or pushes peers"); 2) a relational aggression scale with four items (e.g., "This child spreads rumors...about peers"); 3) a prosocial scale with four items (e.g., "This child says supportive things to peers"); and 4) an isolation scale with three items (e.g., "This child plays alone a lot"). Previous studies have indicated these scales as being highly reliable with the following Cronbach alphas: .94 for overt aggression, .83 for relational aggression, .91 for prosocial aggression, and .92 for isolation behavior (Crick, 1996; Crick & Grotpeter, 1985).

Procedure

This study examines the items on the CSBS-T for male and female students. All participants were assessed by their teachers or park counselors. The items from the CSBS-T rated the children's relationally and physically aggressive behaviors. Children that did not score as either physically or relationally aggressive were excluded from the final analysis.

Results

Preliminary analyses of the children's scores on the CSBS-T showed that the girls scored higher on the relational aggression items than physical aggression items, while the boys scored higher on the physical aggression items than relational

aggression items. All but one of the girls scored higher in relational aggression items than physical aggression items. Sixty-seven percent of the boys scored higher on physical aggression items than on relational aggression items.

Conclusion

Results of the present analysis are similar to findings in other studies where girls score higher on relational aggression scales than on physical aggression scales. As predicted, relational aggression is more characteristic of girls than boys. In this sample of aggressive children, girls were more likely than boys to be labeled relational aggressors. Similar findings were obtained for boys and physical aggression. Examining these results provides preliminary evidence supporting the claim that girls' degrees of aggressiveness have been largely underestimated in prior studies, primarily because many studies did not assess forms of aggression and their relevance to gender. Although girls show levels of aggression as high as boys', many studies have neglected to specify the types of aggression each gender group is participating in, making the overt behaviors categorized in physical aggression easier to observe and record. For example, observing one child hit another is much less subjective than trying to assess whether one child is excluding another from an activity. Thus, when assessing relational aggression, the relevant behaviors are likely to be overlooked. Relational aggression is meant to be covert and therefore, teachers easily miss such behaviors, particularly when teachers are concentrating on the more obvious, more disruptive physical aggressions exhibited by the boys. Additionally, when trying to evaluate girls and relational aggression, it is difficult to get the girls to admit that they are being aggressive when excluding peers from interacting with others.

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Creative Waves



IV. Creative Waves

Article 13

Samurai

Carmen Mercedes Cusak

I Smile
in glance and tooth
just
like
her
but Her
Brilliance
is incomparable
It Is the Mastery
of personal satiation
it comes from the experience earned with acceptance and
the knowledge required for resistance

she is an advocate
an abogada* before God
and every country
for all she observes as good
and free
and real

She senses my needs
in T H A T way a
mother does
that i dare not describe
and i, can only yield,
sensing her in every physical way
as if I continue to be tied
by my
very
soul, fed
through the good tiding
tithing
tubes spun of her flesh-

I know and have always known my Mother smells divine.
an inspired scent
of clean
all around
every bend, fold or twist

of flesh

She is showered and powdered from the inside out.
a refined and holy woman
with no stench

to remove
(only often promotes gratuitous scents
of luxury-all
perfumes she wears well)

Her love is deep and never runs
dry
its source
is rooted in eternal
Waters bringing life to all, who
drink

this
Woman always thinks of everyone
but herself
and IS
an example
of an answer
to a question
I AM
not yet
wise enough to ask
of myself

*abogada (Spanish)- attorney

Radical Cheerleaders:

Breaking through the B.S.

Shira Fisher

The following is a little blurb on the Radical Cheerleaders. The Radical Cheerleaders are a third wave feminist activist group that use nonviolent tactics, such as performance, to protest gender stereotypes, patriarchy, capitalism, sexual harassment, body image, and homophobia. Radical Cheerleading troupes are made up of both males and females. There are no restrictions to enter into squads. Participants wear as much or as little as they choose and talent is not a prerequisite. Radical Cheerleading is about the desire to get the point across that there are still injustices that need to be battled. Their gender-bending antics are portrayed through sarcastic and satiric cheers that belittle the woes within society that they protest against. Radical Cheerleading squads are anarchist groups that expand through word of mouth or free 'zines that provide their background information as well as different chapters' cheers.

Radical Cheerleading began in late 1997, initiated by the Jennings sisters of South Florida, and has spread like wildfire. Radical Cheerleading squads are found all over the United States, Canada, and even in Warsaw, Poland. Radical Cheerleaders can be seen protesting at National Conventions, Earth Day Rallies, or even at your local Gap. The following cheers (the Radical Cheerleaders' greatest cheers, in my opinion) were performed at FIU's first Women's Studies Conference as an active demonstration of third wave activism that is taking place all over the United States.

Harassment

Harassment
I know what your ass meant
p-u-s-s-y
forget what's between my thighs
t-i-t-t-y
that ain't no alibi
you're ugly
you're ugly Mr. Harasser
you're ugly
and you better fucking stop!

Fat and Fabulous

You're not my ideal
 Those hips don't set the score
 Cause sticks and stones ain't what I'm striving for
 Flipping through Vogue
 What a bore
 Hey ladies, yeah ladies
 Let's eat more
 I've got booty on the back and a lot up front
 My secret is I EAT LUNCH
 Now I'm in control and I'm ready to RIOT
 Against your demands that I need to diet
 I'm gonna take up space and love my size
 Cause, fat and fabulous is on the rise,
 Fat and fabulous is on the rise, fat and fabulous is on
 my thighs!

Rebel/Stomp

I don't want to work no more
 What did you say?
 I said the system doesn't work no more
 What did you say?
 I said, STOMP smash the state
 Let's LIBERATE
 Acknowledge me or go to HELL
 Another womyn (worker) to rebel

Here is one of the cheers FIU Radical Cheerleaders created following the student performance of *The Vagina Monologues*. Such an inspirational performance needed a radical cheer to go along with it, so a group of us decided we needed such a cheer to commemorate this event. This is what we came up with:

Rewrite, Debate

Don't be afraid, RECLAIM
 Rewrite, Debate
 Don't be afraid RECLAIM
 V-A-G-I-N-A
 That's a word I like to say
 Vagina, yeah oh, vagina
 Rewrite, Debate (chorus)
 Don't be afraid, RECLAIM
 Rewrite, Debate
 Don't be afraid RECLAIM
 C-U-N-T
 You can't take that word from me
 Cunt, uh uh, Cunt
 (chorus)

*-----so all you womyn
 and men go out and
 be RADICAL! Voice
 your opinion and be
 part of social change
 for equality!*

for equality!
part of social change
your opinion and be
be RADICAL! Voice
and then go out and
change all your community

There is one of the chairs FNU Radical Club members created following the student
performance of the Young Men's Movement. Such an institutional performance needed a radical
chair to go along with it, so a group of us decided we needed a chair to complement the
chair. This is what we came up with.

Radical Club members from 1968-1970

Radical Club members from 1970-1972

Radical Club members from 1972-1974

Radical Club members from 1974-1976

Radical Club members from 1976-1978

Radical Club members from 1978-1980

Radical Club members from 1980-1982

Radical Club members from 1982-1984

Radical Club members from 1984-1986

Radical Club members from 1986-1988

Radical Club members from 1988-1990

Radical Club members from 1990-1992

Radical Club members from 1992-1994

Radical Club members from 1994-1996

Radical Club members from 1996-1998

Radical Club members from 1998-2000

Radical Club members from 2000-2002

Radical Club members from 2002-2004

Radical Club members from 2004-2006

Radical Club members from 2006-2008

Radical Club members from 2008-2010

Radical Club members from 2010-2012

Radical Club members from 2012-2014

Radical Club members from 2014-2016

Radical Club members from 2016-2018

Radical Club members from 2018-2020

Radical Club members from 2020-2022

Radical Club members from 2022-2024

Radical Club members from 2024-2026

Radical Club members from 2026-2028

Radical Club members from 2028-2030

Radical Club members from 2030-2032

Radical Club members from 2032-2034

Radical Club members from 2034-2036

Radical Club members from 2036-2038

Radical Club members from 2038-2040

Radical Club members from 2040-2042

Radical Club members from 2042-2044

Radical Club members from 2044-2046

Radical Club members from 2046-2048

Radical Club members from 2048-2050

Radical Club members from 2050-2052

Radical Club members from 2052-2054

Radical Club members from 2054-2056

Radical Club members from 2056-2058

Radical Club members from 2058-2060

Radical Club members from 2060-2062

Radical Club members from 2062-2064

Radical Club members from 2064-2066

Radical Club members from 2066-2068

Radical Club members from 2068-2070

Radical Club members from 2070-2072

Radical Club members from 2072-2074

Radical Club members from 2074-2076

Radical Club members from 2076-2078

Radical Club members from 2078-2080

Radical Club members from 2080-2082

Radical Club members from 2082-2084

Radical Club members from 2084-2086

Radical Club members from 2086-2088

Radical Club members from 2088-2090

Radical Club members from 2090-2092

Radical Club members from 2092-2094

Radical Club members from 2094-2096

Radical Club members from 2096-2098

Radical Club members from 2098-2100

**Women's Studies Center
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