NOT YOUR MOTHER'S WHITE FEMINISM

Let's Get Real: About ORGASMS

Post-Colonial Feminism, Global Relationships of Love & Understanding: Finding and Nurturing the Consciousness of the Mestiza in Our Communities

Reproductive Failure: The Norm for Human Sexual Activity

Beth's Final Director's Cut

Unknown Sister
Helping Young Kenyan Women One Pad at a Time

The Role of Women in Hip-Hop

You Have a Voice Too

To All Who Must Concern: A Feminist's Sociopolitical Deconstruction of the Implications of Osama bin Laden's Death

The New WC Director

Body-Positive Activism

UPCOMING EVENTS
THE WOMEN’S CENTER
“EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, SUPPORT”
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EMPOWERMENT
INITIATIVES
MENTORSHIP
LIBRARY
EDUCATION
VOLUNTEERING
STRENGTH
DISCUSSIONS
**Women’s Center Open House**

October 12th, 2011 4-6p @ the Women’s Center
Enjoy free cupcakes and a tour of the Women’s Center!

GWN will also be hosting weekly thesis support groups on Wednesdays from 5-7pm starting October 12th. This is a drop-in group for women at any stage in their thesis writing to receive peer feedback, brainstorm ideas, or quietly write in the company of other women.

National Love Your Body Day
October 20th, 2011
NOT YOUR MOTHER'S WHITE FEMINISM

By Virginia Martin
The term "Feminism" is a layered and complicated topic that can invoke a variety of both personal and political images and ideals. It is not uncommon in US-American culture to hear women characterize feminists as man haters, angry lesbians, bitter old spinsters, or any number of other derogatory adjectives. It is also common in this culture for women to distance themselves from the identity "feminist" while maintaining the importance of equal rights without regard for gender. With my own identity being strongly and primarily that of a feminist, I often take these comments personally and proceed to mentally berate the women making the comments. In a very condescending, yet educational, internal voice that I try – with marginal success – to keep from becoming also the voice that is coming out of my mouth, I might call into question the education and historical competence of these commentators. In a running line of rapid fire rhetorical questions, I posit pointed inquiries about exactly how these women came into the fine privileges of things like employment, access to reproductive health care, and the right to marry and/or divorce at the whim of their fancies. This is inevitably followed by some well deserved shaming, a tone that is not unlike one that accompany any sentence that begins "Jesus didn’t die on the cross so that you could...." about the costs paid by our Fore-Feminists to provide a generation of ingrates with the opportunity to be "uncomfortable" with feminism.

However, I have recently discovered that my annoyed perspective, while often valid, may be a bit limited. The thing that I had not considered is that the term "feminist" as an identity marker has a legacy of racism, colonialism, and homophobia. Women of color and working class women might find it difficult to trust the mainstream feminist movement, and in fact, should be suspicious of it. For example, the history of Planned Parenthood – the poster child for (middle class, white) feminist reproductive justice, is disturbing to say the least. Margaret Sanger, pivotal as she may have been in making birth control widely accessible, was deeply involved with the eugenics movement. "[We propose to] hire three or four colored ministers, preferably with social-service backgrounds, and with engaging personalities. The most successful educational approach to the Negro is through a religious appeal. And we do not want word to go out that we want to exterminate the Negro population, and the minister is the man who can straighten out that idea if it ever occurs to any of their more rebellious members," wrote Margaret Sanger in a not atypical memo.

Women of color and working class women might find it difficult to trust the mainstream feminist movement..."
As a white, queer, femme, middle class, third wave feminist with socialist leanings who has spent her entire life in Alaska, Washington, and Oregon, saying my perspective is "limited" is an understatement. I'll admit it, I love(d) Planned Parenthood, and I worked for them for 2 years with nothing but dedication and without knowing anything about this racist history. I believe strongly in a woman's right to choose...but I know now that this is from a white girl perspective – I didn't learn about Sanger's little foray into the field of eugenics until I was in graduate school. For those taking comfort in the idea that this example is scary but ancient history, 4 years ago In Portland, members from the African American community protested a Planned Parenthood that was being built in a predominantly Black neighborhood. Many feminists (mostly white) counter protested, and did so assuming that the protesters were ignorant and uneducated about reproductive choice; the irony of course being that the (white) feminists had no clue what Planned Parenthood represented for this particular community.

My renewed commitment to feminism is to move toward a complicated but more educated understanding of social class, racial and ethnic identity, sexual identity as well as gender, and how all of those social locations relate to feminist activism. Let me end with a quote from my new favorite feminist academic, Chandra Talpade Mohanty. Mohanty has a vision for what the world could be without all of this pesky oppression that feminists always seem to be griping about: "Here is a bare-bones description of my own feminist vision; this is a vision of the world that is pro-sex and -woman, a world where women and men (and everyone along the gender continuum) are free to live creative lives, in security and with bodily health and integrity, where they are free to choose whom they love, and whom they set up house with, and whether or not they want have or not have children; a world where pleasure rather than just duty and drudgery determine our choices, where free and imaginative exploration of the mind is a fundamental right; a vision in which economic stability, ecological sustainability, racial equality, and the redistribution of wealth form the material basis of people's well-being. In strategic terms, this vision entails putting in place antiracist feminist and democratic principals of participations and rationality, and it means working on many fronts, in many different kinds of collectivities in order to organize against repressive systems of rule. It also means being attentive to small as well as large struggles and process that lead to social change – not just working (or waiting) for a revolution. Thus everyday feminist, antiracist, anticapitalist practices are as important as larger, organized political movements."
SisterScholars is a program for female-identified students to connect, learn, and socialize. Throughout the year, SisterScholars will welcome guest speakers; sponsor workshops and educational sessions; and host socials for everyone to relax, enjoy each other's company, and meet new friends.

The SisterScholars Socials:
The First Friday of every month (10/7, 11/4, 12/2) from 12:30-2:30 in the Women's Center. Join us for a snack, a chat, and some fun! (and maybe a craft project or two)

The Graduate Women's Network (GWN) is open to any female-identified graduate student at Oregon State looking for a space to connect with other graduate students and learn from each other's experiences.

Graduate Women's Network Socials:
At the GWN socials we will host round table discussions, welcome guest speakers, and get to know each other as a means of finding support and resources to help in your experience as a graduate student. See you every Second Wednesday (9/28, 10/12, 11/9, and 12/7) from 3-5 in the Women's Center.

Contact Sarah Jane, the SisterScholars Program Coordinator, for more information! (sarah.mcconnell@oregonstate.edu)
Unknown Sister

I asked you your name,
And my question became our answer
Your answer became our question, changed your name, my body, our love, the space in between
you and me...

All of these things became who we both were, for a moment, and then that moment was gone,
But we remained to bleed into the next one together as ourselves, as we really were, not like strange syllables spoken only by mouths who can’t understand each others’ tongues—like friends instead.

The truth is, when I first met you, I thought I could pronounce your name, I thought I already knew you, even though I thought you could never know me.

Or I couldn’t pronounce your name at all, and so I said nothing. You were foreign and different and your difference was what was unknowable to me. What is unknown is darkness, is frightening, especially when it’s within me. The truth is, I used to pretend sometimes that you didn’t exist at all.

But darkness is just what exists without light. It’s space, it’s spaciousness. It isn’t the opposite of light, or unwelcoming of light. It just isn’t lit yet.

It’s the beautiful face of a sister or brother of any color from any country I want to know, but I haven’t yet truly seen.
After we'd danced,
when I heard your name again,

Post

It sounded like music.

It sounded beautiful because it meant you and it meant me
and all that we are, together, in the shared space of knowing
we create.

There is still so much of me out there, I now realize, so many
voices singing in the shadows outside of my awareness, wait-
ing to be heard so that I might join their chorus.

And there is sadness, because I know that some will never be
heard by be, that chance will pass away.

But I will resolve to honor all my unknown sisters. Within me,
without me, in all of the oceans-wide world.

Because until I am willing to explore and learn to love the un-
known pieces of me, I will live inside my fear of this blessed
pregnant darkness.

By Rachael Cate
PREGNANCY
RESOURCE GUIDE

If you have questions, the PRC has answers!

The PRC is a comprehensive guide to women's choices for birthing, parenting, adoption and pregnancy termination emphasizing local and women-centric organizations.

Pick one up at the WC today or check it out online at www.oregonstate.edu/womenscenter/
Imagine having no access to the menstrual products you need every month—no pads, no tampons, no diva cup—and instead, picture having to use newspapers, rags, or camel skin. According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), more than 1 in 10 school-aged girls in sub-Saharan countries either skips school when she is menstruating or is forced to drop out entirely for missing up to a week of school each month. In these areas, school attendance and dropout rates are among the highest in the world. Many factors such as the onset of menstruation, sexual harassment, and pressure to become caregivers at young ages account for the statistic that only six in ten children make it as far as primary school.

How can you help? By donating a reusable cloth menstrual pad and giving a young woman living in poverty the opportunity to stay in school and receive an education. Although some non-profit organizations do take donations of disposable menstrual products, disposable pads run out quickly, are unaffordable and not easily accessible, and contribute to the significant increase in waste. Also, the used products are often burned, releasing toxic gases into the air in rural areas or filling scarce landfills, both of which are not environmentally friendly.

Pads cost half as much as the average person living in these impoverished areas makes in a month, and women menstruate about 60 days on average, per year. Most family’s income is spent on necessities like food, so at the end of the month there is simply no money to travel to the nearest town and buy a 10-pack of disposable pads for 8 Namibian dollars (a little over $1 U.S. dollar). Donating reusable cloth pads removes at least one obstacle in a young woman’s fight for an education and offers a source of empowerment to girls in need of support. There are plenty of reasons kids miss school; being a girl should not be one of them.

As of April 2011, Project Thrive’s Days For Girls program has supplied over 4,500 kits directly to women and girls in need and almost 50,000 via organizations they have taught/guided to making kits. That’s over 1 million days given back to women. Way to go Days For Girls!

Lunapads’s Pads4Girls - For over a decade, Lunapads has been donating washable pads to women’s groups to support their fundraising efforts. The Pads4Girls campaign, in partnership with individuals and NGOs, supplies washable pad kits to girls in low-income nations.
To All Who Must Concern: 
A Feminist’s Sociopolitical 
Deconstruction of the Implications 
of Osama bin Laden’s Death 

By Andi Gutierrez 

On May 1st, 2011, the United States of America captured and assassinated Osama bin Laden, the founder and commander of the global, militant Islamist group al-Qaeda. As the perpetrator who orchestrated the attacks on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001, bin Laden was America’s catalyst to the beginning of the “War on Terror” and the beginning of the United States’ ten year witch hunt. I have been asked countless times since then, “Are you happy Osama has been killed?”

To put it simply: absolutely not.

As is the death of any human being (with the inclusion of internationally reviled figures) it is a mournful event and one that requires a substantial amount of silent introspection. The implications of Osama’s death not only suggest, but also nearly request retaliation from al-Qaeda; moreover, the barbaric and religiously insensitive manner in which we captured and disposed of his body will not allow us the opportunity to negotiate or peacefully remove troops from their occupied territories. It has been reported that Osama bin Laden was shot and killed after a firefight in his mansion just outside north-west Pakistan. It has also been alleged that because no nation was willing to bury him, his corpse was disposed of in (reportedly) the Indian Ocean.

Osama’s death is a bleak, bittersweet accomplishment, at most, and America has readily celebrated it not clearly thinking about what it means for our people in the West and those who are also suffering under the fear of al-Qaeda in the middle east. It is indisputable that bin Laden mobilized hundreds of citizens oppressed by his rule and committed the ultimate act of protest - terrorism and the deaths of hundreds of innocent lives. While this fact is certain, it is also unmistakably that the Bush Administration utilized this opportunity as a vehicle to propagate social, political and rhetorical fear of Islam and its adherents. This Islamophobia has had nothing but negative effects in America and other various western countries. Innocent citizens are punished every day for exercising their religious freedoms in a country where “freedom” itself is boasted as a founding principle. While American women and men were attempting to exercise the freedoms they had left, the populations of other countries involved were also suffering—often without protection or government regulatory procedures.
Across the Atlantic ocean, inhabitants of the middle east are living in a constant flux of leadership, fear, poverty, homelessness, corruption and insecurity. Women were most noticeably affected in Afghanistan at the start of the war. It is no surprise that Afghan women were perplexed by the incredible determination of the United States to “liberate” them from “Islamic oppression” and the statement was too sudden of a conversion of the United States to not elude to a right of convenience. These women were foreign entities to the West and were perceived as the Other, therefore marking their barbarity of culture. American men set out to rescue these foreign women from their foreign men. This subjugation did not sit well with Afghan women, who felt as though they were being used as pawns within the international political arena. I would not be surprised if foreign women are once again used as a guise for future American endeavors for power, resources or territory. It is important as women that we highlight these issues to prevent future situations from occurring. We need to step back and refocus on the issues, not allow ourselves to be lulled into a false sense of security now that bin Laden has been assassinated.

What can we as feminists do and how can we apply the feminist model to international relations after Osama’s death? Primarily, opposing binaries and our previous government’s zero sum approach to international relations is crucial. Binaries will often restrict vision and obstruct various options available for peace and just intervention. Reinterpreting war language and strategies with a critical eye will also shed light onto a patriarchal system and will allow us to construct and perpetuate our own language for international unrest (i.e.: Instead of using the word ‘security’ which is often a word of military overbearance, trying to define security in it’s own, unique, situational terms and contextualizing the event so the American people do not have to question the actions or motives of their government).

Lastly, keeping the lines of transnational feminism accessible will allow for more than a white, heterosexual male approach to homeland security. Listening to those marginalized voices that were lost in the rubble of the War on Terror will prove fruitful for our future. It is my hope that after the death of Osama bin Laden, a new approach to national security and international relations will be implemented, one that does not lead America into a war without clear objectives, unidentifiable enemies or an unforeseeable end. After bin Laden’s life, it is imperative that President Obama revisit his foreign policy procedure and consider the feminist model and to take preventative measures against any retaliation.

It’s important to always examine politics underneath the surface of any national event. Who is being affected most? What are our objectives? How will we hold ourselves accountable and how will our nation be judged by future generations? Osama’s regime has not died with him as much of America seems to believe. Proactivity and positive collaboration internationally are the only actions that will serve us now.

...keeping the lines of transnational feminism accessible will allow for more than a white, heterosexual male approach to homeland security.

U.S. KILLS SEPT. 11 MASTERMIND
"American forces recover body after firefight"
President Obama: ‘Justice has been done’
LET'S GET

By Anna Dewey

Swashbuckling pirates and spirited maidens
Hard muscles and soft bodies swathed in silk
Writhing on the bed - both completely satisfied
Storybook tales, romance novels, and the ilk

Let’s wake up and face the facts: more women fake it than feel it
Sex Ed spent no time on the star that sets me aglow
The clitoris wasn’t even a footnote in my textbook
But we did spend time learning to roll, jerk, suck and blow

The “oh baby, yeah baby” conversation didn’t discuss my desires
And my partner never dreamed I’d want more than he’d know
We need pictures and diagrams, directions and value
Not just pornography’s inaccurate and sadistic show

Candlelight, wine, romantic glances and chocolate are fine
As are black leather, handcuffs, and a feather too
But if you don’t know how to push my button
I’m sorry, my love, but we’re through

It’s time for society to step up
Start recognizing that women’s pleasure matters too
Spend a day in class talking about lube and vibrators
Fingering, cunnilingus: I’m ready to stage a coup

Because we shouldn’t have to know how to ooh and ahh by rote
Thinking of grocery shopping, that last paper and dishes in the sink
We deserve attention and pleasure, mind-blowing orgasms and rolling waves of joy
Not that barely satisfied, fun for a while, time to please him and think

How are we going to make that change?
What is it going to take to be good-enough to be in the curriculum?
We need a ton more zine’s, picket signs and letters to the editor
Screaming clearly: ORGASMS...we want some.

It really needn’t be this big secret
The unicorn between the sheets
Magical and mysterious - lovely, but rarely seen
This music isn’t hard to play if you can count the beats!!!
One - the foreplay. DUDE. It’s necessary.
REAL!

It's not hard music to dance to
No secret steps or complicated spins
Just practice and play and get down
Get ready for more involved dancing with bigger grins

Because we shouldn't have to know how to ooh and ahh by rote
Thinking of grocery shopping, that last paper and dishes in the sink
We deserve attention and pleasure, mind-blowing orgasms and rolling waves of joy
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It really needn't be this big secret
The unicorn between the sheets
Magical and mysterious - lovely, but rarely seen
This music isn't hard to play if you can count the beats!!
One - the foreplay, DUDE. It's necessary.
Two - the clitoris, learn it and love it.
Three - the g-spot...it's kind of amazing
And Four - repeat, especially the clit.

It's not hard music to dance to
No secret steps or complicated spins
Just practice and play and get down
Get ready for more involved dancing with bigger grins

So I ask you - will you stand with me?
Will you write a letter, tell a friend, be true?
Let us advocate for education, for social credence, for orgasms
Because I'm tired of sitting and waiting for prince charming to

QUICK LESSON ON THE GLORIOUS CLITORIS:
The pea-shaped clitoris that you can see under the clitoral "hood," is actually the tip of a long shaft that goes deep into the woman's body, and separates into two shafts that surround the vagina. The entire length of the clitoris contains cavernous bodies (including the G-SPOT!!) that can engorge with blood, when a woman sexually aroused.
For the majority of my life I have identified as feminist as well as have loved hip hop music. As far as I can recall, I started smuggling rap CDs into my dormitory room (I went to a Christian boarding school in India where rap music wasn't allowed) when I was twelve years old. Stacks of CDs from artists such as Ludacris, Snoop Dogg, MC Lyte, and Missy Elliot were stuffed in between spare bedding in my closet so that I could listen to them after "lights out". It has been interesting to see the role that women have played in hip hop for the last ten years, not the least of which has been providing eye candy in music videos. I admit that the majority of mainstream hip hop artists portray women as sex objects in their songs and videos, and songs with lyrics that degrade and depict violence against women seem to sell millions of copies. While as a feminist, woman, and human being, I would love to see some more respect for women in hip hop, I won't dismiss the entire genre solely on this basis.

Since its beginnings in the 1970s, women have been a part of hip hop culture - a unique form of rap, DJing, break dancing, graffiti, spoken word, and fashion. Female rappers such as Sha Rock, Roxanne Shante, Salt-n-Pepa, MC Lyte, Lauren Hill, Foxy Brown, Lil Kim, Missy Elliot, Trina, and more recently Nicki Minaj, have all vastly contributed to hip hop, which has its roots in African tribal rhythms and oral traditions. Hip hop grew to be the party music of African Americans in New York in the 70s who didn't have the money to go to the clubs.

As I continue to absorb hip hop culture, from the 70s to present, one of the most impressive qualities of hip hop music is its ability to tell stories through music. Hip hop allowed women and men, more than anything, to raise their voices and tell their stories. One of the most memorable videos I've ever watched is a teenage Roxanne Shante rapping a "dis" record in 1984 as response to a song called "Roxanne, Roxanne" by another rap group, UTFO. Other rappers such as Queen Latifa rapped about female power in "Ladies first", and MC Lyte rapped bravely about claiming power back in her neighborhood: "I'm all that, you're all that, now I'm all of that, yes I'm all that. You ask how? I'm all that, now. I'm all of that, yes I'm all that. And rollin through your hood with a baseball bat".

In the 90s we saw a surge of female hip hop artists such as Trina, Lil Kim, and Foxy Brown, and thus the image of the hyper sexualized female MCs began. However, amidst all their sexiness, Missy Elliot debuted in her first music video dressed in a trash bag and still managed to sell millions of records, continuing on to become an icon in the hip hop industry.

Today Nicki Minaj is on everyone's radar. Rappers like Trina, Lil Kim and Missy Elliot are still putting out records even after their ten year run. Additionally, we are seeing a huge surge of women in the underground rap scene. If women are carving a platform for themselves in a misogynistic genre, then I think that I as a feminist should sit up and pay more attention to where hip hop came from and is going.

There is plenty of bad rap out there which do nothing but harm to women in various ways, but by dismissing hip hop as a whole, we dishonor the women who are part of the movement which is "talking back" to the misogyny in hip hop. Roxanne Shante did this in "Roxanne's Revenge", and various underground rappers such as Detroit's Invincible continue to speak out for women and for women's rights. Additionally, it is unfair to single out hip hop as the sole genre that depicts violence towards women. Various country music artists continue to do this again and again but they hardly ever get any flack for their lyrics. Tim McGraw's "Angry all the time" serves the purpose of telling a woman that anger is not a feminine emotion to have, and Big Bill sings "I'm lookin' for a woman that ain't never been kissed. Maybe we can get along an' I won't have to use my fist", in his song "When I be drinkin". Yet, when the Dixie Chicks wrote a song called "Goodbye Earl" about two women bonding over killing a man who used to beat his wife regularly, they encountered backlash to the lyrics. While I don't believe in murder or violence, I do recognize the double standard for men vs. female artists in country. Contradictorily, we find women's voices regularly, they encountered backlash to the lyrics. While I don't believe in murder or violence, I do recognize the double standard for men vs. female artists in country. Contradictorily, we find women's voices regularly, they encountered backlash to the lyrics. While I don't believe in murder or violence, I do recognize the double standard for men vs. female artists in country. Contradictorily, we find women's voices regularly, they encountered backlash to the lyrics. While I don't believe in murder or violence, I do recognize the double standard for men vs. female artists in country. Contradictorily, we find women's voices regularly, they encountered backlash to the lyrics. While I don't believe in murder or violence, I do recognize the double standard for men vs. female artists in country. Contradictorily, we find women's voices regularly, they encountered backlash to the lyrics. While I don't believe in murder or violence, I do recognize the double standard for men vs. female artists in country. Contradictorily, we find women's voices regularly, they encountered backlash to the lyrics. While I don't believe in murder or violence, I do recognize the double standard for men vs. female artists in country. Contradictorily, we find women's voices regularly, they encountered backlash to the lyrics. While I don't believe in murder or violence, I do recognize the double standard...
The Women’s Mentoring Program (WMP) is a peer-to-peer mentoring program for female-identified students in their first year at Oregon State. No matter the time of year, the WMP can connect you with a mentor to help you adjust to life at OSU, connect with a peer group, and become a stronger woman.

Throughout the year, mentors and mentees will participate in developmental activities, educational workshops, social events, and be invited to learn from guest speakers. The Women’s Mentoring Program is looking for current female-identified OSU students to serve as mentors.

Fall Term WMP Activities:
- Cupcake Party!!
- Tile Painting at The Pottery Place!!
- Challenge Course!!

The Fall Term WMP Activities are meant to help mentors and mentees get to know each other in the company of other awesome women!

Applications available NOW and due back by noon on Monday, October 3.
Reproductive Failure: The Norm for Human Sexual Activity

By Rachel Ulrich

A human couple engaging in male/female intercourse with healthy reproductive systems only have a 20-25% chance of conceiving during the month (Resolve, 2008). Of those fertilized eggs, 60-80% will die before being implanted, suggesting that there is only a 15-20% chance of a fertilized egg implanting into the uterus (Hall, 2004). Of the embryos that implant, 25% will end in a miscarriage (APA, 2007). The result is that there is only a 3.5% chance of a baby's birth nine months after its parents have sex. In essence, reproductive failure is the norm for human sexual activity.

Women's bodies are the locus for where reproduction occurs. The tremendous toll that pregnancy and infancy plays on her body reflects the necessity of organisms as complex as humans to create a child only if the physical and social environment can support another being. In contrast, men create millions of sperm with little energy expenditure. This suggests an evolutionary trade-off between the labor needed from humanity to create and raise a child, and biology's basic drive to create offspring to pass' genes on. Theoretically, men can ejaculate inside of a different woman's vagina every 30 minutes. If every single one of those ejaculates resulted in a baby, the environment would collapse within nine months. The complexity, unlikeliness, and yet biological requirement of human reproduction imply that human sexuality is based on something beyond reproduction and babies (Cheyney, 2011).

If human mating systems do not, by and large, result in pregnancy and birth, then the question becomes why humans have sex. The Domestic Bliss theory of the female orgasm provides the likeliest answer. Men are most successful with passing their genes on if a woman stays around them and makes herself sexually available on a regular basis. Her body will notice that she has a regular partner nearby and will cause her to ovulate on a more regular cycle. Although ovulation is concealed from men, women report desiring sex more frequently in accordance to the ovulation patterns. It stands to reason that if a woman is spending time with a particular man or men, they would be her first choice to have sex with, when she desires it. She can only know that she is desiring sex if there is something about sex that she desires, such as orgasms. Prior sexual experience with men who provide her with orgasms will likely be what she will look for when she is ovulating and craving sex (Cheyney, 2011).
Biology may support the Domestic Bliss theory, in the form of the Hoover theory. As the uterus contracts during the orgasm, the cervix dips down into a pool of sperm and essentially sucks it into the uterus to eliminate that hurdle to fertilization before they die. Additionally, similar to how blood flows into a penis when a man gets an erection and then surges out after he has an orgasm, blood vessels around the crura of the clitoris swell with blood when a woman is aroused and flows out during an orgasm. This may support the Evolutionary Leftover theory, although rather than the female orgasm being unneeded, it actually provides the framework for the physiology of the penis and erections (Cheyney, 2011).

The biological ability of men to father children with a variety of women and of women to birth babies without any involvement from the man who provided the sperm prove that humans are promiscuous maters. Male reproductive ecology suggests that it expects women to be promiscuous due to sperm's ability to detect and destroy other sperm from other men they find in the vaginal canal. Furthermore, when comparing sperm quantities in human males to other primates, male chimpanzees produce much more sperm and male gorillas produce much less. The mating styles of female chimpanzees is promiscuous, compared to the typical single-male mating that is found in gorilla harems. Male humans produce enough sperm to fall between these two extremes, suggesting that excess sperm need to be produced to battle with other men's sperm, though pair bonding is likely (Cheyney, 2011).

Women's noncopulatory orgasms acidify the cervix which can kill sperm and prevent many of them from traveling to the egg. As a mating strategy, this could suggest that women have evolved to receive sexual pleasure in any number of ways and benefit from the pair bonding resulting in it, but those orgasms are designed to prevent her from getting pregnant as easily if penetrative intercourse occurs afterwards. In support of the Domestic Bliss theory, after she bonds with a mate through receiving enough orgasms, she may consciously decide to procreate with him and engage in intercourse with an acid-free cervix (Cheyney, 2011).

"As a mating strategy, this could suggest that women have evolved to receive sexual pleasure in any number of ways..."

I believe that human culture and reproductive evolution are not at odds with each other. Although social strictures expect monogamy and purity from women, women have not and, in instances of rape, could not live up to that expectation. That men have strategies to compete with other men's sperm in the vagina suggests that human women have always rejected the imperative towards sexual prudishness. As with many social rules, they appear to exist as guidelines and suggestions for people rely on when needed.

Social constructionists argue that human's ability to choose a set of behaviors that don't comport with the biological imperative to procreate means that society and culture are more important than biology. This is extremely tempting to believe. However, humans' decision-making abilities were not created absent of biology and evolution. When people choose, for instance, to have sex, their bodies and millions of years of evolutionary history are along for the ride. The manner in which people decide to have sex and how to have sex doesn't seem nearly as important as the fact that no matter what sexual practices, beliefs, values, and traditions a culture have, they can all result in babies being born (Cheyney, 2011).

Evolutionary biology suggests that human sexual behavior is predicated, as in all animals, on procreation. However, as discussed above, the majority of sexual encounters that humans have are expressly not for reproductive purposes, nor is it statistically likely that procreative sex will result in a baby. Instead, it appears as though evolutionary reproduction developed strategies to enable humans to create their own sexual destinies that allow them to create an intimately emotional bond with other humans before creating a baby (Cheyney, 2011).

An integrated biocultural approach to reproductive biology can deconstruct social constructs of hateful views of sexuality, especially female sexuality. By viewing biology through the lens of how and why humans create and sustain sexual relationships with each other, we are led to question the basic doxa of patriarchy. If women are naturally monogamous, then why does a dispassionate view of their biological capabilities suggest the exact opposite? If homosexuality is unnatural, then women's menstrual cycles would only regulate when they are near men, not women. Perhaps these are coincidental examples, but the biocultural approach provides us with a framework to re-evaluate these beliefs and norms.
I had always had the negative stereotype or feminism in my brain, one way most people do, that feminists are man-haters, harry, hippie peace lovers, who kill babies. To be honest, there are feminists who are hippie earth children, don’t shave because there is no biological reason to, may never consider an abortion themselves but would not take away someone else’s freedom to, and feminists who love women. There are also feminist housewives and women of faith, feminist mothers, and, I might add, feminist husbands, brothers, grandfathers, dads, uncles, and boyfriends too! Sure, there are those radical-separatists who believe that a matriarchy is the way to go, but there will always be radical people and groups on all sides, so focusing on the bad stuff only when it’s most convenient, does not a legitimate argument make. When I realized this and found out where my resistance was truly coming from, my whole perspective changed.

I grew up my entire life with my dad expecting me to be capable of doing everything my brothers did and as well as my brothers did, but for less of a reward when it came to getting paid for it. I never questioned this or my dad until I took my first Women’s Studies class. Imagine, I was experiencing pay inequalities at the age of fourteen, and I didn’t realize it because my parents and outside societal influences told me to accept this pay discrepancy as the right and not to be questioned. My dad said that was the way things were, and as a woman, he expected me to try to work as hard as my brothers, but “biologically” it wasn’t possible. So, to him, despite putting in the same amount of time and same amount of work, meant less to him apparently because I don’t have a penis surging with raw-manly-man-power. My dad was raising me to believe that I was capable of doing the same things as my brothers, raising me to be a strong woman, while at the same time, undermining the lessons with the knowledge that because I was a girl, no matter how hard I worked, it would never be the same or equal to anything my brothers could do. Finding out that my dad didn’t believe in equality among men and women became very apparent the day I told him I didn’t know if I wanted to get married or not. I asked him if equality in a relationship was too much to ask for, and he replied that it was. Not joking. I felt like I had been sucker-punched. I didn’t speak to my dad for a month after that. I called off my wedding because I couldn’t handle being trapped in a relationship with a person who didn’t see me as his equal, it was a decision that not a lot of people expected me to make, but one of the best decisions I have ever made in my life.

Patriarchy works as a trap, leading women to believe that because of their size and strength they will never be able to have equality with men because men are stronger. A lot of women and men believe this and it saddens me; I fight for equality for all individuals, especially women because so many women think they have equality because they have achieved what men have defined as “equality” when it really isn’t. Perhaps we need to look at what we teach children to accept as equality and how we shape their understandings of empowerment and entitlement.
The Women's Center welcomes volunteers from all class years and fields of study. Volunteers fill a variety of roles at the Center, including working regular weekly shifts and/or assisting on an as-needed basis with special projects and events.

Please contact Leah, the Volunteer Coordinator, at 541-737-3181.

ATTENTION WOMEN STUDIES STUDENTS!

The Women's Center is now carrying the textbooks for YOUR Women Studies classes! These textbooks are on reserve in the center and for in-house use only.
Because I identified personally as a multi-cultural woman growing up in the southeastern United States in a climate of sexism, racism, classism and hetero-sexism and my own experiences led me to develop a strong opposition the oppressive forces within culture and society, I've searched as a teacher and a scholar not only for modes of social relations that promote equality and justice, but also for ways to describe myself that are more accurate and less restrictive than the dominant exclusive ones. Adding to conversations about what constitutes a socially-just model of identity politics and a way to create relationships across boundaries in a culturally-diverse world, feminist cultural theorists like ecofeminist Donna Haraway and post-colonial feminist Gloria Anzaldua have worked to develop feminist cultural lenses for reading inter/intrapersonal identity and relationships that reflect the ways in which individuals and local to global communities exist, grow, and learn with one another. Their models also point toward the kinds of learning relationships that might most effectively promote both individual autonomy and mutual dependency in order to encourage healthful and socially just environments based on mutual respect and understanding in a constantly migrating world characterized by intercultural dialogue and exchange.

My personal search for an ethical philosophy of social action and relationships that can reach across borders has been most helpfully informed by the study and scholarship of women writers from all over the world whose search for perspectives and methodologies from which a feminist, non-domination-centered identity politics and mode of collective organization of feminists can emerge. The coherence of the term 'women' as a social category that can facilitate the implementation of social change and justice for a specific segment of the population has been called into question by some of these critics as the adherence of language itself to the moorings of a concrete, unchanging reality has disintegrated into the uncertainty and flux of the 'postmodern' situation. At the same time that the delineators of human, race, gender, national, and all forms of identity politics are giving in to processes of cultural and theoretical deconstruction, post-colonial feminists continue to identify the incongruities and injustices inherent in a culture which marginalizes non-dominant social 'others' or outsiders and favors dominant values as a rule. As an active answer to these injustices, they have also been looking for ways to bridge across the divide of identity politics between the first and third (second, fourth, and infinitely diverse) worlds in order to bind together coalitions of individuals who would work collectively to affect positive social change for all. Because I see the concepts of self-identification, community organization and collective work toward political change as essential elements in the struggle for social justice and the development of ethical relationships, I have seen the scholarship and texts of these feminists as integral to my understanding of consciousness-raising and organization or affinity-building within the context of a deconstructed, fluid, hybridized, and intercultural system of identity politics.

By envisioning and engaging with key biological and material metaphors, Haraway reconstructs marginalized identity to become a 'cyborg' body—a metaphor for consciousness which accounts for the infinite variation and diversity inherent in individual subjectivities. By showing readers how we, as cyborgs operating within a world based on the principles of the organic metaphor, can engage in a process of cultural re-envisioning by relating ourselves to one another in a union into which our individual identities do not dissolve, and through which we can work together to continue our struggle toward a just and ethical society. In order to realize this self and community awareness, though, communities and individuals must together undertake a process of consciousness-raising, starting with the deconstruction of the myth of patriarchy and dominance, and they must learn to read and recode the stories which have been told about life, its origination, and it’s engendering. The lines that have been drawn must be exposed. Only then can a new myth be built.
Post-colonial and chicana feminist Chela Sandoval, in her essay “Cyborg Feminism and the Methodology of the Oppressed,” articulates the theoretical and discursive influences that activists can take from Haraway’s work. She explains that “Colonized peoples of the Americas have already developed the cyborg skills required for survival under techno-human conditions,” (Sandoval 408). According to Sandoval, the kind of subversive or oppositional consciousness to which Haraway refers has already been a commonly-employed strategy of oppressed peoples who have taken up the struggle for justice in a globalized system of identity politics. “This oppositional ‘cyborg’ consciousness has also been identified by terms such as ‘mestiza’ consciousness” (408).

By applying modes of identity deconstruction and reconstruction, Sandoval argues that third world feminists have already opposed colonialist domination and utilized many technologies for self-realization and self-determination at their disposal (411).

The “mestiza consciousness,” to which Sandoval refers to is the term used by Mexican-American post-colonial feminist Gloria Anzaldúa. Anzaldúa’s texts and theories take their roots at the intersection of postcolonial, ecofeminist, and queer cultural studies discussions of identity politics. Her theories offer suggestions for ways to construct the self as an author and to discuss the identities of others in terms that recognize and respect difference both within and between different communities. Specifically, Anzaldúa’s texts present applicable metaphors for and constructions of alternative identity politics: the nepantla or mestiza consciousness, the bridging of identities, and the “path to conocimiento” (or pathway of learning to accept difference between and within individuals and communities). In 1987, Anzaldúa published her perhaps most widely-read collection, Borderlands/La Frontera. In Borderlands, Anzaldúa continues her bridging-out geographical metaphor for bringing nosotros (we) and otras (others) back together to form nosotras (us), and she expands on and explains her idea of mestiza consciousness as a feminist and postcolonial concept. She suggests that “the new mestiza copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity... She has a plural personality... Not only does she sustain contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else” (79). The something else that Anzaldúa seems to refer to here is an alternative way to see one’s own identity as not only able to absorb and “sustain” contradictions but also to take on a self-conception that becomes a testament to the invalidity of the mutual exclusivity of terms such as Mexican/Anglo and virgin/whore. In this way, Anzaldúa breaks the oppressive system of binary logic to yield space for a plurality of identities.

In the forward she writes for this bridge we call home, Chela Sandoval explains well the methodologies for spiritual consciousness that Anzaldúa’s metaphors of “bridging out” and “path to conocimiento”:

This method provides cognitive and emotional maps necessary for guiding internal and collective external action. Briefly put, the technologies of this method are (1) reading power, as in radical semiotics, la facultad, or ‘signifying’; (2) deconstruction, or coastliene; (3) meta-ideologizing; (4) differential perception, or nepantla, and (5) democracies, the ethical or moral technology that permits the previous four to be driven, mobilized, and organized... this methodology provides passage to that unfastened, differential juncture of being—la conciencia de la mestiza (24).
Reading power, deconstruction and meta-ideologizing, then, must necessarily come before the awakened state of *nepantla* or the mobilization of social action can take place, as Sandoval sees it and as she interprets Anzaldúa’s ideas. In fact, the reading power quality could be seen as the ability to interpret any text, including socio-cultural and political practices. Deconstruction, then, could, in other words, be likened to the ability to not only see false masks, but to understand the politics of how they’ve been placed atop real faces—and perhaps by whom or why it was done. Meta-ideologizing, then, corresponds with both Haraway’s and Anzaldúa’s ideas of counter myth-building, the strategic construction of an alternative signifying system often illustrated through metaphors like cyborg or *metiza* consciousness upon which subversive and non-oppressive meanings for identity can be founded.

In a world of ever-broadening globalization, cultural mixing and diversification, there are increasing numbers of individuals who, like Gloria Anzaldúa, have found themselves excluded and marginalized by monolithic expressions of identity. As differently-identified cultural groups encounter and relate politically with one another, the potential for oppression and marginalization grow as socially/economically elite peoples seek to dominate and/or render obsolete those who identify as “other”. Besides finding ourselves excluded by the dominant practices, many are experiencing the profound loneliness of a life on the margins. By following Anzaldúa’s example of alternative myth-building and bridging out to connect to one another across the myth of separation, though, I find that we can discover the flip-side of the potential homogenization and oppression of globalization—increased diversification and the opportunity to learn from, understand and respect one another more fully. The concept of *metiza* consciousness is a “way of seeing” that we can put to work in our lives in order to heal the wounds of fragmentations and enact as a philosophy of education and learning that honors both individual uniqueness and the power of collective effort. As feminists, as writers, as teachers and as richly and deeply interconnected individuals, we can begin to see each other and ourselves for the first time, perhaps, for what we are. I posit—and I believe that Gloria Anzaldúa would agree—that when we are able to do this, we will finally be able to give ourselves and each other the respect and love we all intensely deserve.

**Feminist Spotlight**

Gloria Anzaldúa, a self-described “chicana dyke-feminist, tejana patache poet, writer, and cultural theorist,” is considered a leading scholar in the field of cultural theory/Chicana and queer theory. Additionally, she made many contributions to feminist scholarship, including the introduction of the term *mestizaje*, meaning a state of being beyond binary (“either-or”) conception, into academic writing and discussion within the United States. Emphasized in postcolonial feminist theory, Anzaldúa calls for a new way of thinking she terms, a “new mestiza,” which she describes as a person conscious of her conflicting and intersecting identities, and uses these “new angles of vision” to challenge binary thinking in the “Western” world. In the same way that Anzaldúa felt she could not be classified as only part of one race or the other, she felt that she possessed a multi-sexuality. Furthermore, Anzaldúa called for people of different races to confront their fears in order to move forward into a world that is less hateful and more transformative. In *La Conciencia de la Mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness,* Anzaldúa insisted that separatism invoked by Chicanos/Chicanas is not furthering the cause, but instead keeping the same racial division in place. Many of Anzaldúa’s works challenge the status quo of the movements in which she was involved. She challenged these movements in an effort to make real change happen to the world, rather than to specific groups.
Think of your body as the vehicle to your dreams. Honor it. Respect it. Fuel it. • Put a sign on each of your mirrors saying, “I’m beautiful inside and out.”

Body image and self-esteem are suffering in this country and many people have expressed a desire to make a difference. Have you want to make a difference? All you need is an afternoon! Here are some fun and easy ways you can make a difference:

• Find a group of friends to work with; you can get a lot more done this way.
• Make a pact to each give 10 compliments this afternoon.
• Write body positive messages on 20 mirrors/whiteboards.
• Go flier bombing! Make up body positive fliers and stick them in diet books, fashion magazines and ads for weight loss.
• Put up posters (http://fatpocalypse.com/). Point out that fat people eat their veggies, look hot, or think that something is bullshit.
• Make a body positive playlist, play it in public places as often as possible.
• Hold a smashing of the scales in the MU Quad or hook up with an organization that does this (at OSU this group is FMLA!)
• Make a body positive zine.
• Make a collage of beauty featuring people of all sizes, races, religious, gender identities.

Get more inspiration
http://loveyourbody.nowfoundation.org/0209kit.html

By Anna Dewey
This is it. My last article as Director of the Women's Center. My swan song. The last dance. My last hurrah. The eleventh hour. That's all she wrote. I am so used to beginnings that I rarely think of endings. But the time has come.

Full disclosure: When I first took responsibility for the Women's Center in 1993, I didn't really identify as a feminist. I knew all of the stereotypes and for some reason I just didn't fit the stereotypes. I don't think I told anyone. That was probably smart.

It didn't take long to figure out that the Women's Center was the center for activism, education and advocacy on behalf of the injustice that those of us who identify as women all experience. Sexual assault, domestic violence, objectification of women, sexual harassment, discrimination of lesbian students, eating disorders...and that was just in the first year. Bullying, pregnancy options, pay equity, birth control education, parenting, breast cancer, lighting/safety on campus...the list goes on. And before I knew it, I was mad as hell. And low and behold, I became a feminist.

I think that people who do not call themselves "feminist" would change their minds if they worked just one week at the Women's Center. Or took just one Women Studies class. Just wait until you realize that the guy at the next desk makes a lot more money than you (for the same job)...or when the boss comes on to you. You will wish you paid attention more attention to the feminists at OSU.

A couple of years ago I wrote that as much as I want all of those negative issues to go away, I nevertheless expect that we will need Women's Centers and Women's Center Directors for generations to come. So I am riding off into the sunset and a new person will soon be hired to take my place.

I hope that you will welcome the new Women's Center Director when she or he is hired and make her/him feel the spirit of community and care that I have felt these past 32 years. I have loved the ride. And overall, the students I have had the privilege of working with, have been among the best feminists I could ever hope to meet. Thanks for the memories.

So now it's time to leave 'em laughing. See ya later alligator. Until we meet again. Hasta la vista, baby!

Beth Rietveld, Women's Center Director (soon to be retired)
On behalf of the Women's Center Director search committee, it is with great joy and enthusiasm to welcome Dr. Mirabelle Fernandes Paul as Director of the Women's Center. She will begin in this role on September 12, 2011.

Mirabelle has most recently worked in OSU's Office for Women's Advancement & Gender Equity as the WAGE Associate, coordinating the OSU Women's Network, guest lecturing on women's issues, mentoring with the OSU cross-cultural mentorship program, and research initiatives that advance the quality and experiences of women and all people on campus and in our community. She has been an active member of the OSU Campus Coalition Builders, and has a background in mediation and conflict resolution.

Mirabelle has a diverse academic portfolio, with a graduate background in biochemistry and molecular biology, as well as a doctoral degree in educational leadership.

-Mamta Accapadi
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SPIRITUAL SOCIAL JUSTICE OPEN-MINDED WILLING BRAVE

“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they have none.” – Alice Walker