

CSWS *Review*

MILITARIZATION AND RESISTANCE IN AFRICA



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UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

From the Director

BY SANDRA MORGEN

This is my last "From the Director" column. I write with an immense sense of gratitude regarding the opportunity to lead CSWS for the past fifteen years. And I write wistfully, with a mixture of sadness at leaving and excitement about the next chapter of my life in the Women's Studies program at Pennsylvania State University. Leaving CSWS, my dear friends and colleagues at the university, and a community where my family and I have thrived is not easy. Given the tiny space allocated to this column and the many of you to whom I owe thanks, let me just say that it has been an honor and pleasure to work with each of you to sustain an organization that I deeply believe is one of the crown jewels of the University of Oregon.

Transitions are rarely easy for organizations, but this transition offers the opportunity for growth, fresh ideas and directions, and a chance for new generations to carry the promise of feminist scholarship, ideas, and visions into the future. CSWS has strong roots, excellent staff members, and dedicated supporters across campus and in the larger community. With the opportunity to do a national search for a new director and the continued dedication of so many of you at the University of Oregon, the future looks bright for our now thirty-three-year-old organization.

Speaking of generations, I want to note the recent passing of two powerful women leaders of the generation that preceded mine: Coretta Scott King, who died January 30, and Betty Friedan, who died five days later. Coretta Scott King is best known for her leadership in the civil rights movement; Betty Friedan, for her leadership in the liberal sector of second-wave feminism. But the vision and political commitments



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of both these women went beyond the movements with which they are usually associated. Coretta Scott King was a strong advocate for women, gays and lesbians, economic justice, and peace. Betty Friedan, especially in her youth, wrote powerfully about labor issues, the importance of unions, peace, and social justice.

At a time when some of the most fundamental rights won through the mass activism of the civil rights and women's movements are in jeopardy, it is important to honor the dedication of those who came before us, to learn from both what they accomplished and from their limitations, and to nourish future generations of researchers, teachers, students, activists, and community leaders linked by a vision of social justice. It is my hope that CSWS will continue to be one thread in that tapestry for many years to come.

CSWS FACULTY AND STAFF

Sandra Morgen
director

Judith Musick
associate director

S. Marie Harvey
director, research programs
on women's health

Shirley Marc
office coordinator

Peggy McConnell
accountant

Debra Gwartney
dissemination specialist

Did You Know?

Manufacturing uncertainty is a term that describes an insidious industry tactic: questioning the validity of scientific evidence to stall or prevent environmental and public health protections. But manufacturing uncertainty is not limited to industry. A similar campaign by religious conservatives is underway to obfuscate research related to women's health.

Many people are familiar with the conduct of the Food and Drug Administration regarding emergency contraception—the FDA commissioner overruled his own scientific advisory committee and, citing "inadequate data," refused to allow emergency contraception to be sold without a prescription. Fewer may be aware of the abuse of science in abortion research. A number of studies published since the early 1990s claim abortion is related to outcomes such as depression, suicide, even schizophrenia. It's clear that these authors have distorted evidence and made unsupported claims to further their own political agenda. Yet, despite criticism by reproductive and mental health experts, the studies have been used at the state level to justify restrictive abortion legislation. These are the tactics employed by anti-abortion groups, similar to industry's ploys. Focus on a small number of studies and ignore the rest. Insist there is a controversy among experts when no controversy exists.

That's what happened in South Dakota last year when several respected researchers, including Marie Harvey, director of the research program on women's health at CSWS, testified before a legislative task force studying abortion. The legislators' final report maligned their testimony and made recommendations such as giving fetuses the same protections as children. Now South Dakota has passed a law criminalizing nearly all abortions. Clearly, women's health is not a priority in South Dakota.

We here at the Research Program on Women's Health continue our work, which includes abortion, sexually transmitted disease, and unintended pregnancy prevention research. We're hopeful that, as groups such as the Union of Concerned Scientists continues to document and draw attention to the abuse of science by the Bush administration, the public and the courts will demand that standards be upheld and integrity restored to science. It's critical that this demand extend beyond environmental research to include all contested areas of science, including reproductive health. Women's health, and the health of our families, depend on it.

—Jocelyn Warren, CSWS research assistant

Welcome Linda Fuller: CSWS Interim Director

In 2003 I served as acting director of CSWS when Director Sandi Morgen was on sabbatical leave. So in a way becoming interim director for 2006–7 feels like coming home. The downside of this homecoming, as most of you know, is that Sandi will be leaving CSWS and the University of Oregon. We will miss her a great deal, but wish her well and hope to see plenty of her on return visits to Eugene.

My main task as interim director will be to guide the national search for a permanent director of CSWS. The CSWS Executive Committee, CSWS staff, and a “transition” subcommittee composed of Barbara Altmann (Romance languages), Judith Musick (CSWS associate director), Julie Novkov (political science and women’s and gender studies), and Mia Tuan (sociology) have already done much important groundwork for this search. Soon, we will have a draft of the job announcement, and we hope to have candidates visit campus early in fall 2006. For this search to be successful we will depend on the participation of all CSWS supporters—encouraging strong candidates to apply, interacting with candidates while they are on campus, and sharing feedback with the soon-to-be-formed search committee.

Recently I also have had the pleasure of working with another “transition” subcommittee charged with gathering opinions from CSWS stakeholders about the center and how it operates. As a first step, this self-named “CSWS Vision Subcommittee,” which also includes Joan Acker (sociology), Nancy Cheng (architecture), Allison Lau (graduate student), Jessica Murakami (psychology), Judith Musick, and Stephanie Wood (CSWS research specialist), sent out a detailed survey. We have now received many responses and will present a draft of our findings to the executive committee in March. So far, it looks as if your comments centered on the following topics: funding for research,



interdisciplinarity, dissemination of knowledge about women and gender, CSWS as community, outreach to groups outside the university, and CSWS leadership models. As interim director I will take these themes seriously, doing all I can to continue and to expand our work relevant to these issues in the ways you have suggested.

I look forward to working closely with all of you—with the faculty, staff, students, and community members who are CSWS—now that spring term has begun.

Linda Fuller has been a faculty member in the UO Department of Sociology since 1989. She is the author of dozens of articles and book reviews; she has also delivered dozens of presentations and has served on many conference panels. Linda has a long and stellar academic career. Here are just a few highlights:

- She received her Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley, 1985
- She served as acting director of CSWS in 2003; was director of the UO International Studies Program from 2000 to 2004
- She has published three books, *Where Was the Working Class?: Revolution in Eastern Germany; Work and Democracy in Socialist Cuba;* and, *Crisis in Central America: Regional Dynamics and U.S. Policy in the 1980s*. She is currently at work on a book about luxury and global inequalities using case studies of the production, distribution, and consumption of two products: emeralds from Colombia and furs from sub-Arctic Canada
- She received the Ersted Award for Distinguished Teaching at the UO in 1996
- She served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ecuador from 1966 to 1969

Visit KUDOS on the CSWS Website

The details of the CSWS community’s accomplishments, awards, and honors are featured on our website, csws.uoregon.edu. Simply click on “kudos” and you’ll discover:

- Who has recently received the Sheri K. Coleman and Marget E. Guitteau Professorship in the Humanities from the Oregon Humanities Center
- Who recently taught a seminar on Feminist Oral History in Zaragoza, Spain
- Who has a novel coming out in January 2007 from William Morrow (HarperCollins)
- Who gave a lecture at the University of Kobe, Japan, on “Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*: Three Scientists in Search of the Self”

- Who was promoted to full professor in Romance languages
 - Who has produced an educational CD about a seventeenth-century Chinese scroll of the Lantern Festival in Nanjing, pictured below
- And much, much more. Visit KUDOS on our website.



THE POLITICAL FORCE IN AFRICA



Feminist and Scholar Patricia McFadden Speaks Out



Patricia McFadden, one of Africa's most well-known and respected feminists, recently wrote that it's time to "take a deep

breath and pause in order to review the past, so that we might understand the present, and through that craft a new and different future."

McFadden, director of the Feminist Studies Centre in Harare, Zimbabwe, who currently holds the Cosby Endowed Chair in the Social Sciences at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, imagines that future as one in which African women "change their relationships with the state and

with males in both the intimate and public spheres.

"The challenge and disruption of old patriarchal relationships that constructed women as private or communal property and men as the natural heirs of all power in our societies speaks to the emergence of a 'post-colonial' consciousness among women," she writes. "African politics are bound to change as we recognize that women are a political force and that we are needed to change the course of this continent."

In encouraging that post-colonial consciousness, McFadden argues passionately about the waging of war on her native continent and "the normalization of war through the militarization of our societies and regions." It's not until the root

causes of militarization and war are addressed and contested, she says, that women will break through the patriarchy that has kept them oppressed for so long.

Besides challenging legal systems that are often blatantly patriarchal—laws that define children as the property of the man, that allow men to "inherit" women, that protect men from being charged with marital rape, and so forth—McFadden warns that African women must "make the personal political by transforming the meaning of politics from its current definition as men contesting power by any means, including and especially through the making of war and the use of our resources at the expense of millions across the continent."

Laura Fair, a UO associate professor of history who has done extensive research on urban popular culture and ethnicity in the country of Tanzania, agrees with McFadden's concerns over the restrictive nature of patriarchy. She adds that in different regions of Africa one would see a range of situations. "It seems to me that patriarchy is still an issue globally, and the degree to which it undermines women's ability to act varies from place to place," she says.

Fair says that though Tanzania is a relatively peaceful country, she has seen changes in that region, as well as the broader region. Conflicts of the past in Africa were mostly centered on struggles for independence; ordinary people had huge stakes in the outcomes of those wars, she points out. But current wars involve "a small group of people fighting over resources, a few people profiteering," she says. "These conflicts are not about changing life on the ground for ordinary citizens. So while these wars impact everything, and create tremendous disruption, ordinary people have little stake in the outcome."

Professor Leslie Steeves, from the UO School of Journalism and Communication, agrees, adding that, "women have not been the instigators of genocide, terrorism, or war, but women have been the

victims, including victims of rape and domestic abuse, which often accompany these other forms of violence.”

Steeves, whose research concentrates on gender and African media in Ghana, Kenya, and Ethiopia, shares McFadden’s concern about entrenched patriarchy throughout the continent.

“Across Africa, women are poorer than men, and a vast literature of gender and development shows that modernization and globalization have worsened women’s situations, largely by favoring males at all levels of the process. The combination of corruption, militarization, and globalization has had a devastating effect on African women and children.”

McFadden also writes about these issues, maintaining that war in Africa has become a means of class accumulation, a set of actions and behaviors that ensure the privilege of a small group over the rights of the majority.

“The generals are consolidating their class statuses by looting national treasuries and extending the arenas of war and destruction across national and regional boundaries,” she writes. “That is why the normalization of war, under the guise of so-called pan-Africanist rhetoric, is totally unacceptable and must be exposed for what it really is—the plunder and accumulative rampaging of gangs and middle-class bandits who openly defy the demands of the people for accountability and democratic responsibility.”

All three scholars point to the many positive changes in Africa—women becoming more vocal, more involved with politics and with the well being of their communities—the “increased consciousness” McFadden writes about.

“Women there are fighting,” Fair says, “They are active and organized. In fact, activist women are much more visible there than they are in the U.S.—it’s part of their day-to-day consciousness.”

“It’s heartening and encouraging

that Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was elected president of Liberia last November over a popular male soccer star,” adds Steeves. “She’s the first woman president of an African country; her success and example, plus the increased activism of women across the continent—and with the help of women globally—provide some grounds for hope.”

But even as women are beginning to take a stand, McFadden writes, those currently leading African militaries are “using the bulk of our national resources to arm themselves to the teeth. I will never be convinced that any argument for military spending is better than putting in place the fundamentals for sustainable development. And we know that it is in women’s lives and on women’s bodies that the consequences of civil strife are played out—there are no effective mechanisms today that will bring to book those men who rape and plunder women’s physical, sexual, and emotional integrity, across the continent and in many parts of the world. The genocide and ethnic violence unleashed against women, children, and poor men are critical issues for all who are concerned with crafting a new society, and they are directly linked with militarization and a fundamental disregard and disrespect for human rights.”

During her May 3 visit to the University of Oregon, as part of the Gender, Race, and Militarization series supported by a Carlton Raymond and Wilberta Ripley Savage International Studies and Peace grant (see details, page 7), McFadden will discuss topics related to militarization in Africa, and how it relates to gender and race.

“How do we initiate and formulate explanatory responses that expose the seemingly unstoppable power of militarized states, to the demise of all things legal and universally ‘sacrosanct’—which are being intentionally and increasingly dismissed as irrelevant, through gestures, policies and practices that smack of a recklessness

terrifying in its blatant disregard of human progress and collective social consciousness?” she writes. “How do we imagine and work toward new frontiers of human coexistence that reflect not only the instinct for peace and human dignity, but which are grounded in an unrelenting interrogation and acknowledgement that privilege and impunity are the foundation stones of supremacy and misogyny?”

* * *



YVONNE BRAUN

New CSWS Publication: *Research Matters*

The second issue in our new series called *Research Matters* is now available. Written by UO Assistant Professor Yvonne Braun, sociology, the current topic is “The Real Costs of Third-World Development,” discussing Braun’s research in the country of Lesotho in Africa. This follows our fall publication of “Condom Use Saves Lives: So Why is it Being Discouraged?” by Marie Harvey, director of research programs on women’s health at CSWS. In late spring, look for our third issue, written by CSWS Director Sandra Morgen, on “Taxes Are a Women’s Issue.”

If you’d like to receive copies of our publication, featuring timely and relevant research being done by UO faculty members, e-mail Debra Gwartney at gwartney@uoregon.edu, or call (541) 346 5015. *Research Matters* is also available on our website, csws.uoregon.edu.

Historian Solinger to Speak at Symposium



“Do Americans want motherhood to be a class privilege? A life experience only available to middle class women?” So asks Rickie Solinger,

an independent historian who lives in the Hudson Valley. Her books include *Wake Up Little Susie: Single Pregnancy and Race Before Roe v. Wade*, *The Abortionist: A Woman Against the Law*, and *Beggars and Choosers: How the Politics of Choice Shapes Adoption, Abortion, and Welfare in the United States*.

Solinger’s most recent book, *Pregnancy and Power: A Short History of Reproductive Politics in America*, will be the focus of her talk when she appears at the UO for the third annual Currents in Gender Studies Symposium. The event is scheduled for Friday, April 28, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Browsing Room at the Knight Library, 1501 Kincaid Street.

In a recent interview, Solinger described encountering issues related to reproduction early in her career as



Amanda Pregnant, 2004. Monotype by Stephanie Woodruff.

a historian. “I knew it was important to find—and write about—politicians and other authorities who claimed that some women produced ‘valuable’ babies, but that the babies of other women have no value and cost taxpayers too much,” Solinger told Mothers Movement Online. “I was completely catalyzed, writing about how and why different groups of women had different reproductive experiences in the United States and what race had to do with those differences.”

In the wake of the South Dakota legislature’s recent vote to criminalize abortion except when the life of a woman is in danger—which will almost certainly lead to a Supreme Court showdown—Solinger’s observations about the loaded word “choice” seem particularly relevant.

“The promise that women can decide for themselves whether and when to become mothers is expressed by this individualistic, marketplace term,” she said. “How can users of such a term avoid distinguishing, in consumer-culture fashion, between a woman who can and a woman who

can’t afford to make a choice?”

“Choice” has come to be associated with possessing resources, Solinger pointed out. Many Americans believe that the only women qualified to exercise choice are women with money. “Distinctions between women of color and white women, between poor and middle-class women, have been underscored in the ‘era of choice’ partly by defining some women (rich and middle class) as good choice-makers and other women (the ones in the reviled categories) as bad choice-makers.”

“I have become convinced,” Solinger

continued, “that many, or most, middle-class Americans have a hard time imagining that a poor mother loves and wants her children as much as a middle class woman does. Middle-class adopters most typically believe that they have the morally upright choice to adopt. They are able to believe in this ‘choice’ in part because they make themselves blind to the fact that their ‘choice’ depends completely on the choicelessness of another woman.”

For more information about Solinger’s UO visit, contact Women’s and Gender Studies at (541) 346-5529.

WGS Faculty Announcement

Ernesto Martinez will join the faculty of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program fall term of 2006. Currently an assistant professor of English, he also is co-director of the Projects of Queer Studies: Race, Pedagogy, and Social Theory and is involved with The Future of Minority Studies (FMS) Research Project, all at Binghamton University in New York. Martinez is also the author of *Queers of Color and the Ethics of Social Literacy* and is co-editor of a forthcoming volume of gay Latino and Chicano criticism.

Membership

Become a member of CSWS! Your contribution helps us fund important faculty research, conferences and speakers, and community programs. Please use the enclosed envelope to send in your tax-deductible annual membership today.

Wednesday at Noon Series

Noon–1:00 p.m., 330 Hendricks Hall, University of Oregon
For more information call CSWS at (541) 346 5015.

APRIL 18: “River in the Sea: A Novel,” Tina Boscha, M.F.A. ’02 in creative writing, intoCareers research analyst, and Lane Community College instructor of composition.

APRIL 26: “Taxes are a Woman’s Issue: Reframing Public Discourse and Research Agendas,” Sandra Morgen, CSWS director and anthropology professor. This talk is based on her new book, *Taxes are a Woman’s Issue—Reframing the Debate*.

MAY 17: “Bias in Believing Accounts of Child Abuse: The Role of Participant Gender, Media, and Characteristics of Reported Abuse,” Lisa DeMarni Cromer, psychology graduate student.

“A Limit to Martha Nussbaum’s Universalist Ethics”

S. CHARUSHEELA, Associate Professor, Women’s Studies, University of Hawaii—Manoa
April 13, noon, at CSWS, 330 Hendricks Hall



The philosopher Martha Nussbaum has launched a strong defense of universalist approaches to the “human,” arguing that without this, we are left with an anti-feminist relativism. She is cognizant of feminist and non-Western critiques of universalism, and thus, her project has been to recover a type of universalism that manages to escape the limits of ethnocentric and masculinist forms. How well does Nussbaum’s project succeed? Taking the example of an article by the African feminist philosopher Nkiru Nzegwu that was published in Nussbaum’s own edited volume, *Women, Culture, and Development*, and placing that next to Nussbaum’s reading of Nzegwu’s contributions to her approach, this paper highlights aspects of Nzegwu’s work that are simply elided or not heard by Nussbaum. The focus of this dispute is how one analyzes—not simply ethically valorizes—the location of literacy in development projects. The contrast between Nzegwu’s text and Nussbaum’s rendering of it allows us to highlight the implicit social analysis deployed in the capabilities approach. Social analysis becomes a space where Nussbaum’s universalism slips back into ethnocentric assumptions, thus showing how her framework fails to address central issues of power that still plague deployments of universalism, especially in the field of “gender and development.”

Charusheela’s talk is cosponsored by International Studies, the Clark Honors College, and Comparative Literature, and is hosted by CSWS’s new Reading Empires Research Interest Group.

Upcoming Road Scholars Presentations

SATURDAY, APRIL 8: Stephanie Wood, “La Malinche,” at the Deschutes Public Library, Bend

FRIDAY, APRIL 21: Mary Anne Beecher, “Martha Stewart and the Tradition of Domestic Advice,” Peterson Barn, Eugene

FRIDAY, APRIL 28: Stephanie Wood, “Frieda Kahlo,” at the university’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in Central Oregon, Chandler Building, Bend.

Patricia McFadden

*Cosby Endowed Chair in the Social Sciences and Women’s Research and Resource Center
Spelman College*

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3

NOON COLLOQUIUM

“Resisting Racist and Gendered Exclusions: Crafting New Notions of Citizenship”
330 Hendricks Hall (seating limited to twenty-eight)

7:00 P.M. PUBLIC TALK

“Plunder as State-craft: Militarism and Resistance in the Restructuring of the Neo-colonial African State in the Age of Neo-imperialism”
Browsing Room, Knight Library



CSWS Director Sandra Morgen and executive board member Mia Tuan both received 2005 Martin Luther King Jr. Awards. The awards were presented by President Dave Frohnmayer, shown here with Morgen.

YOU’RE INVITED!

Farewell party for CSWS Director

SANDRA MORGEN

Wednesday, May 10, 2006

4:30–6:30 p.m.

Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art

University of Oregon

Music • Food • Celebration

Please join us! R.S.V.P. by May 1 to
(541) 346-5015.

Class Questions: Feminist Answers

Professor Joan Acker's most recent book (2006) is *Class Questions: Feminist Answers*, published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. In it, she examines and assesses feminist attempts to include white women and people of color in discussions of class. The following selection is from the book's introduction:

"Some feminists inside and outside academia criticized established, male-centered analyses of class at the beginning of Second Wave feminism. They argued that these analyses could not account for women's exploitation and inequality that was different from and more severe in its consequences than the exploitation and inequality suffered by working class men. Socialist and Marxist feminists, in particular, had intense debates on women, patriarchy, class and gender from the late 1960s into the 1980s, criticizing concepts of class that made women invisible and proposing new approaches. However, as solutions to conceptual and theoretical problems proved to be elusive, feminist debates about class almost disappeared. A few sociologists, anthropologists, and others made new attempts to theorize

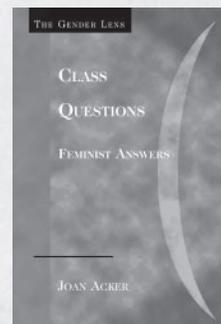
gender and class, even as much attention moved away from class to issues of identity, diversity, race, discourse, and sexuality. Thus, class never completely evaporated from feminist scholarship and writing. In addition, a great deal of empirical work continues to be done on related issues such as sex segregation, wage inequalities, gender relations in work organizations, gendered effects of economy and production restructuring, and work-family connections, but theoretical issues having to do with economic relations were submerged as questions of culture and identity became more interesting. 'Class' was no longer cutting edge.

As black and Third World feminists began in the 1970s to criticize feminist thinking for its location in a white, middle class consciousness that limited understanding of lives of 'others,' many white feminist academics began to try to talk about race, gender, and class. I emphasize 'try' because good intentions did not always result in substantial changes. The unmarked subject position of 'whiteness' persists in a great deal of writing. Although white scholars began to recognize the necessity of

understanding race as important in the structuring of class, in practice race was usually absent or a token presence along with sexuality in their analyses.

These efforts to integrate gender, race, and class have revealed again how racial privileging along with the conventions of sociological theorizing about systems, structures, and levels still constrain efforts to rethink social life from perspectives of women located outside the 'relations of ruling' (Smith 1999) . . . these efforts to reconceptualize have, on the whole, paid little attention to what they mean by 'class.' They have not resolved the issue of how to think about class in ways that encompass the material/economic situations of women variously located in capitalist societies."

Joan Acker is professor emerita in the UO Department of Sociology and is recipient of the American Sociological Association's Career Distinguished Scholarship Award and Jessie Bernard Award.



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