

Center for the Study
of Women in Society
University of Oregon
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Eugene OR 97403

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University of Oregon
Center for the study of Women in Society
1987 **Review**



Unraveling the cat's cradle:
the problem of gender,
page 6.

How jobs look from a
child's view, page 10.

The odyssey of Sarah Rice,
page 14.

**CSWS Publications Set #2
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Center Review

Center Review
annual magazine of the
Center for the Study
of Women in Society

Marion S. Goldman
Editor

April Minnich
Editorial Assistant
and Staff Photographer

Jack Liu
Photographer

Agnes Curland
Administrative Assistant

UO Publications:
Sally-Jo Bowman
Editor

Connie Morehouse
Publication Designer

CSWS Administration

Miriam M. Johnson
Acting Director

Executive Committee

Doris Allen
Aletta Biersack
Beverly Fagot
Marion Goldman
Jean Stockard
Louise Westling

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cover art

Elizabeth Keith, English, 1887-1956. *Kamakura, Summer Reflections*, 1922 (9/100). Murray Warner Collection of Oriental Art. MWB51: K18.

Elizabeth Keith went beyond the limits of traditional English ladies' roles when she spent more than twenty years traveling, usually by herself, through Asia. She searched out and chronicled daily life in her prints, etchings and watercolors. In 1924 Gertrude Bass Warner, the first director and major donor to the University of Oregon Museum of Art, met Keith in Japan and began to collect her works. They are now in the permanent collection of the Museum, as are a wide range of selections by other women artists.

Introduction



APRIL MINNICH

Marion S. Goldman, *Center Review* Editor

This 1987 enlarged CSWS *Review* is the annual Center magazine designed to acquaint a broad scholarly audience with our organization and its ongoing research projects. Miriam Johnson's initial article provides an overview of the Center for the Study of Women in Society this year and includes some of the history and a description of the structure supporting research on women and gender at the University of Oregon.

Research on women and gender has been supported at the University of Oregon for almost two decades. The Center's unique endowment occurred because faculty members and graduate students had already made individual and collective commitments to feminist scholarship. In selecting three featured areas of study for this issue, I chose scholarship that has an interdisciplinary impact and that addresses some of the crucial issues in understanding social organization and gender differentiation. Some of the research presented here is integral to individuals' longstanding scholarly agendas, while other research represents relatively new lines of inquiry. All of it comes together under the umbrella of CSWS and its goal of supporting a wide range of research on women and gender, in society.

Beverly Fagot and Mary Leinbach study early childhood development, gender identification, and gender roles. The first feature focuses on their efforts to unravel the complex interdependencies of nurture and nature occurring when toddlers and preschoolers develop their knowledge of gender and sex roles. Jean Stockard's project examines school age children's more specific conceptions of the kinds of jobs women and men do and how those conceptions relate to the children's own career aspirations. Finally, Louise Westling's oral history of Sarah Rice looks at a Black woman's optimistic and courageous life and her day-to-day struggle with issues of gender, class, and race.

Sociology, Psychology, and English are all represented in these features. However, something more is added, as all of the research borrows from other social science disciplines and is grounded in the broadly sociological approach that is at the heart of CSWS. Nancy Armstrong, this year's Center Visiting Scholar, also addresses interdisciplinary perspectives in her discussion of feminist theory and its influence on English. The final article is my own interview with a local attorney and a financial adviser who are among the many professional women for whom research publications like this *Review* are important. The Center's primary focus is scholarly research, but our goals necessarily include making research and theory available to the larger University and the community.

This *Review* is part of our effort to become more widely known nationally and to bring together the diverse scholarly efforts supported by the Center. Some readers may be well aware of CSWS-sponsored projects in their own fields or subfields but know little about other kinds of research that could affect their own work. This *Review* is our yearly opportunity to bring it all together. We look forward to hearing from readers and potential contributors about the directions their own research is taking and about subjects they would like to see covered in coming issues.

Miriam M. Johnson,
Acting Director, CSWS

Many people in university-connected research centers on women and gender think of the Center for the Study of Women in Society at the University of Oregon with a certain amount of envy. The envy is understandable because of the Center's unusual endowment of more than four million dollars at a time when other centers survive on "soft money," fund-raising activities of various sorts, and relatively small contributions from their universities. This was also the position of CSWS until William B. Harris, former editor of *Fortune* gave the University of Oregon the residual of his estate to honor his wife, Jane Grant. This estate included the proceeds from *New Yorker* stock (Grant had cofounded the *New Yorker* with Harold Ross, to whom she was married at the time) and from the sale of White Flower Farm, a flourishing New England nursery owned by Harris.

We owe it to Jane Grant to retell her story on the occasion of this annual *Center Review*. Grant was a pioneer journalist and feminist activist in a period when feminism was hardly popular. Her career spanned the years 1908-1970. Throughout her lifetime she was concerned with showing that women had accomplished and could accomplish as much as men. She insisted on keeping her own name after marriage to emphasize her separate identity and she founded the Lucy Stone League, which encouraged this

A view of the Center in 1987



APRIL MINNICH

practice. She also envisioned a fund for the study of women, their contributions and accomplishments, and after her death her wish was realized.

In the early 1970s Harris learned about the group of active researchers on women at the University of Oregon and, after a series of discussions in Eugene and Litchfield, willed the residual of his estate to the University of Oregon for "the Study of Woman," which he designated as a subdiscipline of sociology. Upon Harris' death in 1981, the Center for the Sociological Study of Women, in order to clearly include scholars from disciplines other than sociology, renamed itself The Center for the Study of Women in Society. The title reflects both a commitment to the study of women from an inclusive sociological perspective and an invitation to all disciplines to participate in this study. From its inception, faculty members from a wide variety of disciplines and methodological orientations have participated in the Center and its activities.

Since its official opening in November 1983, with Director Joan Acker assisted by Jean Stockard and Marilyn Farwell as codirectors, the Center has grown and changed. I would like to take this opportunity to describe the Center as I see it now, in a period of consolidation before new phases of growth. We are governed by a seven-member executive committee, including myself, working with an eleven-member advisory committee. We have always used a committee structure for carrying out the central

activities of the Center, and this year the committees are headed by executive committee members. To talk about what these committees do is to talk about the central activities of the Center. As general overseer of these committees, I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the committee chairs for the energy and work they have put into their tasks.

The core of our program, and by far the largest category of expenditures in our budget, is the awarding of research grants to UO faculty and qualified researchers in the community. This year we have extended our grant program to researchers in the state. Jean Stockard heads the research grant committee. Over several years this group, in consultation with reviewers both within and outside this University, has selected the proposals to be funded. Grants have been awarded to University of Oregon researchers working on almost every aspect of women in society. Obviously, however, we cannot offer grants of a size to fund large projects and, even with our enviable budget, the Center cannot substitute for outside granting agencies. Our aim is, rather, to provide seed money to get worthwhile projects started. We support significant research while encouraging researchers to think in terms of seeking outside funding and putting their proposals for such funding through the Center. We also offer research grants to graduate students as well as dissertation fellowships.

This year, for the first time, we have made it possible for researchers to put grant applications for outside funding through the Center. In many cases the Center will supply matching funds or in-kind services to researchers seeking outside grants. In this way we hope to further enhance the fundability of Center-sponsored projects and help our Center grow.

We have been especially concerned not only with continuing our large and small grant programs, but also with increasing the direct services we provide researchers. In addition to a computer specialist, we have hired a secretary to help prepare manuscripts and grant proposals and to help with data input, transcribing, and other research needs. We have also hired a funding information specialist who helps put our affiliates in touch with outside funding sources, coordinates with the University Office of Research, helps with proposal writing, and facilitates interdisciplinary proposals concerning women and gender.

The Center has purchased computers, which we loan by the year to researchers who have none available, and a photocopy machine. We also hire work study students to help faculty members with library errands and searches. These support services are designed to supplement rather than replace resources normally provided by the University and academic departments.

One of the indirect consequences of our numerous grants to faculty members for their research on women has been the enhancement of the curriculum on women. Faculty members doing research on women seldom fail to integrate the results and the background of that research into their classes. While the Center has and does provide some support for curriculum development, another way of integrating research on women into the curriculum is to support faculty research on women.

The Center, through its library committee headed by sociologist Marion S. Goldman, has worked with the University of Oregon Library's Special Collections to jointly publish a brochure describing the many resources on this campus for research on women. The Center also maintains



Jane Grant and William Harris

a small resource library in its main office. Because of the ever-increasing number of scholarly books on women, we have dismantled our book collection in the Center, except for a few reference books, some "classics," and books by our affiliates. We do, however, maintain a fairly extensive collection of feminist journals easily accessible to browsers in the office reception area.

The Center continues its active Speakers and Events program under the leadership of Beverly Fagot from the Department of Psychology. This year she organized our first statewide meeting for researchers and teachers in the area of women and gender. The featured speaker, Sandra Bem of Cornell University, talked to an enthusiastic audience of about 100 on recent developments in her thinking about "gender schema theory." After lunch at Collier House, participants

broke into subgroups to talk about their own research in the following areas: Women, Writing, and Literature; Women in History and Religion; Gender Role Development; Women and Work; and Women and the Life Span. The conference was enormously successful and all participants agreed we should make it an annual occasion.

Our overall theme for the year has been how feminist scholarship has (and has not) affected our various disciplines and how feminist scholarship might lead to more interdisciplinary approaches. As part of the Center lecture series entitled "Reevaluating Classic Paradigms," University of Oregon faculty members have spoken throughout the year about their research on women and gender. In line with this theme, the Center sponsored an interdisciplinary symposium organized by University of Oregon English Professor Louise Westling. The theme of the symposium was "Feminist Rethinking of the Classics." In the morning, Page DuBois from UC-San Diego spoke on rethinking

Greek classics, and Mary-Kay Gamel from UC-Santa Cruz spoke on rethinking Latin classics. In the afternoon, Judith Stacey, a sociologist from UC-Davis, discussed the possibilities of feminist ethnography, and, finally, Naomi Scheman, a philosopher from the University of Minnesota, considered a feminist rethinking of philosophy. The final session consisted of a panel of all four speakers seeking points of interdisciplinary convergence.

The Center has brought in outside speakers during the year. Marilyn Yalom, Deputy Director of the Institute for the Study of Women and Gender at Stanford, was our featured speaker for Women's History Week, discussing George Sand and issues in gender and autobiography. Yalom also met with members of the executive and advisory committees of the Center to discuss our respective centers. In the late spring, Elizabeth Higginbotham from Memphis State spoke on "Too Much To Ask: The Cost of Black Female Success."

The visiting scholar program is an ongoing Center commitment to attract visitors from a wide range of academic disciplines to participate in the development of scholarship on women here at the University of Oregon.

The Visiting Scholar in the fall was Nancy Armstrong, whose book, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*, was published this year by Oxford University Press. In addition to teaching a course in the Department of English, Nancy conducted an interdisciplinary seminar for faculty members and graduate students on "Sexuality and the Human Sciences." These sessions will result in a book of essays written by the seminar participants. Nancy also inspired some of us to join her in applying, as an interdisciplinary team, for a grant to study paradigm change in our respective fields and to assess the future of gender studies. Nancy herself addresses some of these issues in this *Center Review*.

Another Center activity is the facilitation of interest groups that meet informally throughout the year. Aletta

Biersack from the Department of Anthropology oversees this program and also heads the travel grant committee. Some interest groups consist of faculty and graduate students from different but related departments who want to get together to talk "shop," while other groups are formed by people who want to know more about feminist approaches to various topics, such as Women and Religion. This group has attracted many male faculty members as regular participants who come to share and learn from researchers exploring the major role that women and female figures play in religions both ancient and modern. The interest group program is a teaching device in itself and is also a way of influencing curriculum development on women and gender.

Ultimately a major goal of research on women is to enhance the status of women in society. In line with this ultimate goal, the Center this year, under the leadership of Doris Allen from the School of Music, organized a session for faculty members on the special problems women face in obtaining promotion and tenure. The practice of holding these sessions for new faculty members was started earlier on an informal basis. The executive committee voted this year to make it one of our regular activities.

Also this year the Center helped fund a preconference workshop held the day before the Pacific Sociological Association meetings in Eugene. Using recent research, this conference explored the current status of women sociologists and discussed strategies for improving this status.

This year the Center has three major types of publications: a monthly bulletin, and an annual report both of which I edit, and this *Review*, edited by Marion Goldman.

Like all centers, and especially perhaps in our case because of the high financial stakes, we have had growing pains. Upon reflection, however, the Center this year has done more adding than changing, by retaining our interdisciplinary focus while providing more direct support to researchers.

We at the Center are enormously proud of the amount of work on women and gender that our grants and

CSWS
is pleased to announce
**VISITING
SCHOLARS
FOR WINTER
AND SPRING
1988**

Francesca Cancian
Professor of Sociology, University of California, Irvine
author of *Love in America*

Cheris Kramarae
Professor of Speech, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana
author of *Women and Men Speaking*

services have made possible. Elsewhere in this *Review* you will find a partial list of the published work that has been supported by the Center from 1983 to mid-1987. A more detailed listing will appear in our annual report.

Like most of the other major national research centers on women and gender, the Center for the Study of Women in Society is a relatively young institution. Our greatest challenge is to support research that has an impact on both the academy and the status of women in the larger society. Our task will not end soon, nor will our growing pains. But we look forward to a widening network of similar research centers and increasing private and public support for scholarly inquiry about women and gender.

Unraveling the cat's cradle: the problem of gender

by Beverly Fagot, Associate Professor of Psychology and Mary Leinbach, Research Associate in Psychology

Like the familiar string figure we remember from childhood, the facts and consequences of gender present a complex pattern whose connections and processes of construction are not so easily discerned. How do we learn to recognize ourselves and to live as beings endowed with gender? When do we begin? Who teaches us—the family we belong to? Is it something in the brain, or the body we are born with, that pushes us to construct a web of social and cultural rules and expectations around our biological sex and define self and soul as well as body as male or female? Where and how do we start to unravel the “cat’s cradle” of gender?

The facts and consequences of gender and gender roles are inescapable. Boys and girls grow up in different worlds, even when they share the same classrooms and the same families. The self comes to be defined by gender, and the consequences of misclassification are tragic indeed. Yet psychologists have all too often proceeded as if they could ignore gender and still understand people, as if findings on gender differences should be dismissed as error variance rather than hailed as major factors in development. Even when psychologists have focused on gender role development, the results have failed to capture the whole pattern or account for its construction.

Two main theoretical approaches have illuminated different aspects of children’s gender development. The cognitive-developmental theory proposed by Lawrence Kohlberg has



Beverly Fagot



Mary Leinbach

emphasized children’s knowledge and cognitive capabilities, assuming that behavioral aspects of gender follow from the child’s own understanding. Social learning theory, on the other hand, has presumed that environmental differences encountered by the child and reinforcement and modeling provided by parents and teachers lead children to adopt the gender roles society prescribes. I have spent the past twenty years studying gender development in young children, coming into the field from the social learning perspective. I see value in both theories and have tried to reconcile and integrate cognitive and behavioral aspects of gender development. What began as my dissertation project has become a lifetime of research questions.

Beverly Fagot’s Early Research

When I was in graduate school, social learning theory was at its height and I was a fairly true believer. When I began my dissertation, I was sure that the gender puzzle would be solved quite simply: I would find that boys and girls received reinforcement from teachers and peers for sex-typed behaviors, which would emerge and grow as a function of this differential reinforcement. I chose to work with three-year-olds because, according to the prevailing view, such young children would show few sex differences. The first hint that things were not as simple as they seemed came when I realized that these boys and girls of three already showed firmly established sex-based differences in their behavior. I did see differences in teachers’ and peers’ reactions, but it became clear that differential reactions were maintaining sex-typing but not bringing it about.



Child Development Laboratory, University of Oregon, 1987

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lthough fathers and mothers were clearly giving feedback based on the child's sex, they were quite unaware of this differential treatment.

The obvious next step was to work with younger children, so I went into homes to examine parents' behavior toward their two-year-olds. Again I found different responses to boys and girls, and, although fathers and mothers were clearly giving feedback based on the child's sex, they were quite unaware of this differential treatment. Again, however, some sex differences in behavior were already evident.

Assertion and Communication

Because I still wanted to determine whether adult reactions to boys and girls differed before the children themselves were showing sex differences in behavior, my graduate students and I began to work with even younger toddlers. We brought 12- to 14-month-olds into the Department of Psychology's Child Research Laboratory and observed the behavior of the children and their teachers in play groups. We were interested in two sets of behaviors, assertive acts and attempts to communicate with adults. We chose these behaviors because researchers working with older children have found consistent sex differences in these areas. We did not find differences in the infants' actions for either cluster of behaviors, but when we examined adult reactions a different story unfolded.

Adults attended to boys' assertive acts far more often than to girls'—80 percent of boys' assertive acts brought

on adult reaction, while only 20 percent of girls' acts received attention. The opposite effect was shown for attempts to communicate. When girls tried to communicate with adults, the adults responded. A little girl's gentlest touch or vocalization was likely to receive a response, while boys were not responded to until their actions had reached much higher levels of intensity. Moreover, teachers' interactions with girls lasted three times as long as their interactions with boys. We looked at the same children a year later, and at that point found clear sex differences in behavior. As two-year-olds, the boys were more aggressive and the girls spent more time talking to teachers. Interestingly, we no longer found differences in the teachers' responses, for this time they were reacting to the behavior rather than the sex of the child. We suspect that caregivers may use gender-stereotypic expectations to guide their reactions to infant boys and girls because, compared with the more clearly defined behavior of older children, infant behavior is ambiguous. For example, if one infant appears to push another, the act may or may not be intentional. But if boys are *expected* to be aggressive, adults may see them as intending to do harm and step in to intervene. However, by using gender

stereotypes to guide their reactions to these little ones, they may be shaping the children to conform to the stereotypes.

In another study of two-year-old children in play groups, I examined the reactions of both peers and teachers to behaviors that were identified as male-preferred, such as playing with trucks; female-preferred, such as dressing up; or neutral, such as playing with clay. Most responses were positive; negative reactions were very rare. Teachers, both male and female, responded primarily to the content of the behavior. Male-preferred behaviors received few positive responses, but, regardless of the sex of the child, teachers reacted positively to female-preferred and neutral behaviors, probably because these were appropriate classroom behaviors. Peer responses were different. Girls responded more positively to other girls than to boys, no matter what the children were doing. Boys responded to the category of behavior and to the sex of the child, giving more positive reactions to other boys engaged in male-preferred activities. But did these apparently reinforcing reactions alter behavior? For girls, yes. Other girls as well as teachers were effective in changing girls' behavior, but their reactions had no effect on boys. Only the responses of other boys influenced whether boys ceased or continued a course of action. While positive reactions can influence

behavior, as these results show, other factors must be at work. Behaviors were maintained under conditions of no response, and, most importantly, the reactions of others appeared most effective when they were processed in terms of gender.

Gender Knowledge and Gender Role

It was becoming obvious to me and to my research associate, Mary Leinbach, that to understand the development of gender we must try harder to find out what was in the child's head. A huge body of work in the cognitive-developmental tradition had shown that children learn about gender in a very regular, sequential pattern, but this acquisition of gender understanding did not appear to be correlated with the adoption of gender role behaviors. We felt that something was wrong here, that there must be some relationship between understanding and behavior. We suspected a problem of measurement. By the time children are articulate enough to perform well on cognitive-developmental tests, a great deal of learning about gender has already taken place. Indeed, many gender-stereotypic behaviors may have become so automatic that they no longer require any decisions at all on the part of the child. Thus the time to study relationships between gender knowledge and gender role behavior should be that period in which children are approaching the first of Kohlberg's stages of gender understanding—of having the ability to label themselves and others by sex—and are just beginning to behave as boys and girls are expected to. Consequently, we developed a discrimination task that allows us to test children's ability to label men and women, and boys and girls. We found that most children have mastered labels for men and women by the time they are 24 months old, but do not label children accurately until 5 to 12

months later. We were now more certain of the age range we needed to focus on and had an age-appropriate test of early gender knowledge with which to investigate the relationship between understanding and behavior.

We first examined children in our play groups, identifying some who could label boys and girls and some who could not. As we expected, the children who had passed the labeling test also showed more sex-typical behavior than those who had not yet mastered the labels. However, this was a cross-sectional study, so we embarked on a longitudinal investigation in which children were tested repeatedly until they passed the labeling tests. We again observed the children's behavior, and, in addition, looked at parental behaviors and attitudes. Again we found early labelers showing more sex-typed behavior. We also found that parents of the early labelers gave more feedback, both positive and negative, when their children were engaged in sex-typed behavior, and that fathers of these children were more traditional in their views of gender roles and stereotypes. We believe that in this study we have evidence for environmental influence on developing gender knowledge as well as on the adoption of gender-stereotypic behavior, but that this process is not as simple as social learning theorists had thought. Instead, it is a process in which environmental input is filtered through the young child's own attempts to understand and fit into the world, and information and responses provided by the environment are equally important.

Current Research

In the current work in our laboratory, we are concentrating on children's construction of gender categories. We are using habituation procedures to investigate the ability of children 12 months old to recognize male and female faces, and to determine the appearance cues to which infants respond. We are also very interested in how children's gender categories become infused with information that has no necessary connection to distinctions between males and females—for example, how and when do little boys learn that pink is for girls? We believe that such "metaphorical" associations are begun very early. We are studying their presence in children between the ages of 9 months and 3 years, using visual preference techniques for infants, and discrimination and sorting tasks for the older children. I would like to point out that preliminary work for these studies has been supported by the Center for the Study of Women in Society, and, as a result, we have been able to obtain outside funding to continue.

Can psychologists unravel the cat's cradle of gender roles and associations? Not all at once, of course, but we are now seeing greater concern and respect for what the very young child knows. By age three, children have a great deal of knowledge of cultural stereotypes and metaphors concerning gender. Our work is probing what they know and how their knowledge is gained.

How jobs look from a child's view

by Jean Stockard, Associate Professor of Sociology

Since my doctoral dissertation in 1974 I have been working to understand gender roles and gender socialization, how males and females come to expect and to have different occupational and family roles. Most of my work has focused on issues such as educational achievement, occupational aspirations, and career patterns. I have concluded that there are few differences in men's and women's achievement in the educational world. Yet, vast differences exist in the ability of men and women to translate their educational achievements into the occupational world. I am still trying to understand how and why.

Most of my work has involved adolescents, college students, and adults. Recently I also explored children's perceptions of occupations through the Study of Occupational Learning, a longitudinal study of the occupational knowledge and aspirations of children in a western Oregon community, which began in 1980. This study was designed by Jeanne McGee, a former faculty member in the Department of Sociology at the University of Oregon and an acting director of the Center for the Sociological Study of Women, the forerunner of today's Center for the Study of Women in Society.

In the first year of the project approximately 500 fourth graders completed written questionnaires and were individually interviewed for about one hour. The questions focused



Jean Stockard

on their perceptions of jobs and their educational and occupational aspirations. The mothers of the students also completed questionnaires about their views of the students' educational and occupational futures.

In 1984-85 we went back to the school district and gathered additional information when the students were in the eighth grade and in middle school, and in 1985-86, when the students were in ninth grade, their first year of high school. Under the guidance of Joyce Briggs, a doctoral student in the Department of Sociology, these data are being prepared for analysis. We hope to contact the students again in the 1987-88 school year, when they will be in the eleventh grade. The result will be a unique data set that

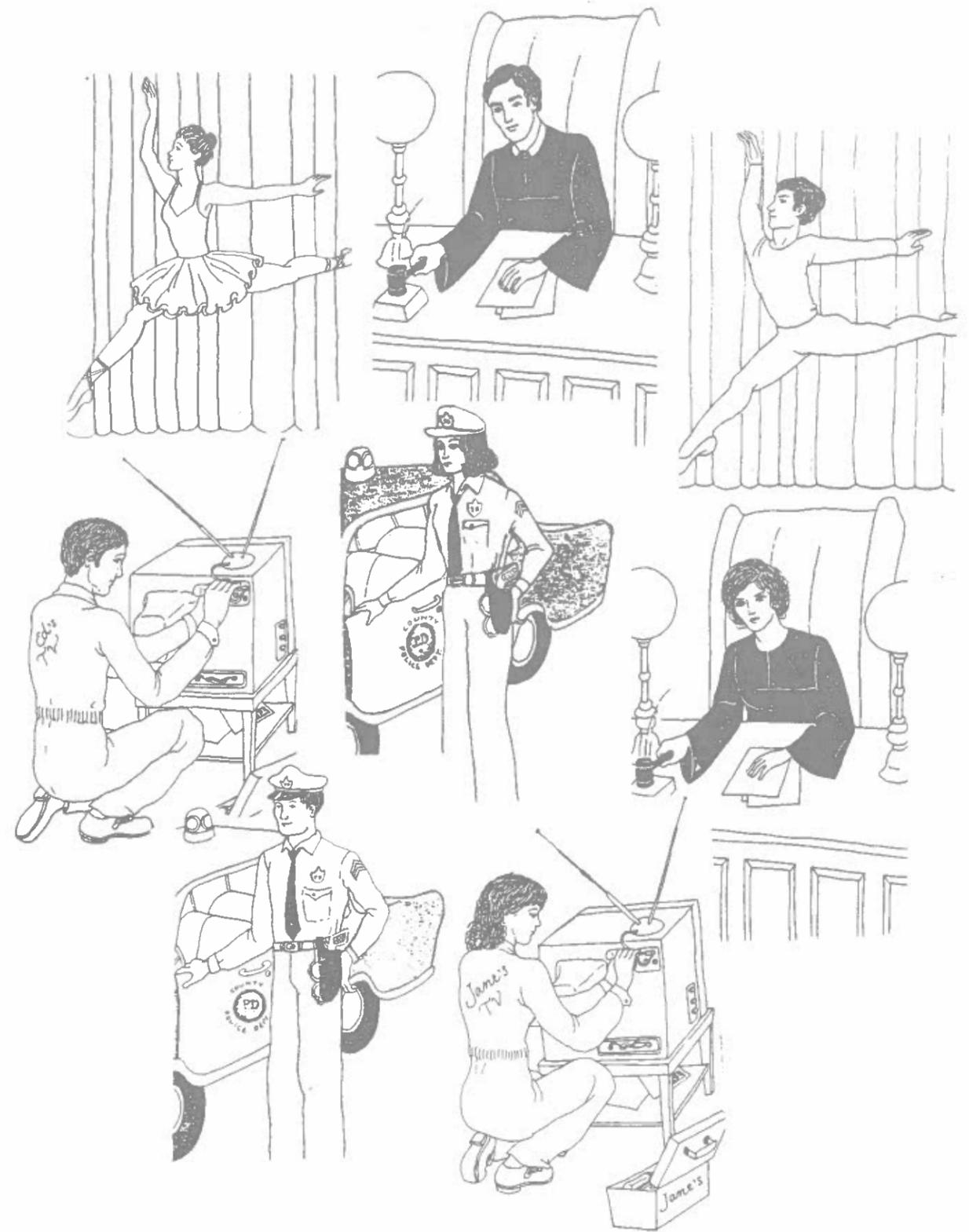
traces the occupational and educational aspirations of a relatively large number of boys and girls over a long time period.

So far, my analysis of the data has focused on the information gathered in the fourth grade. This material, by itself has yielded fascinating information.

Measuring Occupational Preferences and Knowledge

In the interviews, pictures of workers were used to assess the children's perceptions of 22 different occupations ranging from architect, air-traffic controller, and surgeon to farmer, carpenter, and fast-food worker. The occupations represented a broad range of types of work, prestige, and required training and skills. Each of the occupations was depicted in a carefully designed drawing that showed the worker at a task. Parallel drawings for each occupation were developed with a male worker and a female worker and were extensively pretested to assure that children could correctly identify them.

Four decks of cards, each including pictures of workers in all of the occupations, were used. In two of these decks the sex of the job occupant was constant (either male or female). In the other two decks the sex of the job occupant in each pictured occupation was randomly assigned, but switched from one deck to the other. That is, jobs portrayed by men in one of these two decks were portrayed by women in the other deck and vice versa. Other researchers have used pictures of workers in studying children's views of



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occupations, but the design of this study is probably superior because both boys and girls were shown pictures of both male and female workers in traditional and non-traditional roles. In addition, we examined a wide variety of jobs.

Sex Differences in Occupational Preference

The children were first shown the deck of cards in which all of the portrayed job holders were of their own sex. As each card was presented for the first time the child was asked to say the occupation it represented and then to show how much he or she would like to have that job, ranging from "very much" to "not at all."

Almost all of the fourth graders recognized the various occupations, and there were no significant sex differences in students' knowledge of the occupations.

In contrast, there were many sex differences in students' job preferences. The jobs rated low by each sex group were almost always those more likely to be preferred by the other sex group and which were strongly sex-typed in the adult occupational world. The most preferred occupations for the boys were scientist, police officer, artist, farmer, carpenter, and architect. The least preferred were dancer, hairdresser, secretary, nursery school teacher, and judge. The jobs most preferred by the girls were nursery school teacher, high school teacher, farmer, artist, secretary, and grocery clerk; the least preferred were truck driver, TV repairer, firefighter, pilot, and judge.

The only jobs ranked highly by both groups were farmer and artist. These fields probably reflect favorite leisure

pursuits or somewhat romantic ideas of the future. Girls were more likely than boys to prefer the job of farmer. The only job that both boys and girls rated low was judge, although boys were more likely than girls to prefer that job. The only job without a significant difference in the rankings of the sex groups was that of artist.

Sex Differences in Perceptions of Occupations

Why do boys and girls have such different occupational preferences? Is it because they look at jobs differently? For example, do boys perceive that the jobs they want are better in some way than the jobs girls want? Furthermore, are perceptions of jobs related to the gender of the worker? Do children perceive occupations in different ways when they believe a job occupant is a male or a female? To answer these questions the children were shown the card with pictures of both male and female workers. They were asked to sort the cards on four different dimensions: the difficulty of the job, its importance, how much the worker supervises or "bosses" others, and how much money the worker earns. The order in which the dimensions were presented was reversed in one-half of the interviews to diminish any effect of the order of questions on responses.

For the most part, boys and girls saw the occupations in very similar ways. When differences did appear they involved a wide variety of occupations, but seemed to be related to the sex-typing of the jobs. Students tended to rank jobs more typical of their own sex group as earning more, being more important, and being easier. This may reflect a "chauvinistic" view of occupations, with students tending to inflate the importance and the ease of work which is typical of their own gender group.

The results regarding the effect of the gender of the pictured worker on children's perceptions of occupations were not clear-cut. Of the 84 comparisons, only 7 were statistically significant (4 significant differences would appear by chance). In all but one of these comparisons the pictures of male workers were ranked higher on the continuum of earnings, difficulty, supervision. This occurred whether the job was male-typed (firefighter, pilot, architect, police officer) or female-typed (dancer or hairdresser). While some earlier studies suggested that nontraditional workers would be degraded, these results suggest that it may not be the nontraditional nature of the worker, but simply that a male worker, even in a female-typed job, is more highly valued. Because these results appeared in so few of the comparisons, however, this interpretation should be considered very cautiously.

Linking Occupational Perceptions and Preferences

To examine the relationship between students' occupational preferences and their perceptions of job characteristics, I performed a statistical analysis that summarized the relative influence of the children's sex and their ratings of a job's earnings, difficulty, supervisory responsibilities, and importance on their preference for that job. The results of this analysis consistently indicated the importance of the child's gender in influencing job preference. With almost all of the jobs studied, when boys and girls had similar views of a job's characteristics, they still had very different prefer-

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obs rated low by each sex group were almost always those more likely to be preferred by the other.

ences. Moreover, these preferences always paralleled the sex-typing of the occupations in the adult occupational world.

All of the exceptions to this finding involved different relationships between job perceptions and job preferences for boys and girls. Each of these exceptions also involved male-typed jobs. Boys, but not girls, who perceived that truckers, firefighters, scientists, and TV repairers made more money were more likely to want those jobs. Boys, but not girls, who perceived that pilots were more important were more likely to prefer that job. Girls generally did not want these jobs, no matter how much money they believed the workers made or how important they thought the jobs were.

Implications

Many people have commented on the sex-typed occupational aspirations of young children. A common suggestion for modifying these aspirations involves changing media presentations to include nontraditional workers in various occupations. The work reported here, however, suggests that this approach may not be especially effective.

When the children in this study were asked how much they would like to have a variety of male and female-typed jobs, they were shown only pictures of workers from their own sex group. Yet, they consistently disdained jobs which were typically held by the

other sex group. When the students were asked about the importance, earnings, supervisory responsibilities, and difficulty of the jobs, they were shown pictures of both male and female workers. But seeing a worker of their own sex generally had little effect on their perceptions. When boys and girls perceived jobs differently, the differential perceptions were related to the sex-typing of the job, with both boys and girls inflating the importance or ease of jobs typically of their own sex group. In general, however, the children's perceptions of the job characteristics were very similar to those obtained from studies using adults.

These results suggest that by the fourth grade children can recognize a wide variety of occupations and estimate their relative earnings, difficulty, supervisory responsibility, and importance in a manner similar to that of adults. The children also are well aware of the sex-typing of the occupations. I believe that children learn about the sex-typed nature of the occupational world at the same time they learn about other occupational characteristics. This sex-typed nature of occupations, rather than a role model children may be presented with in a media stimulus, seems to be related to their occupational preferences and even, in a few cases, to influence their views of occupational characteristics such as importance, earnings, and difficulty.

The relationship between occupational aspirations and the sex-segregation of the labor force may well resemble the question of "Which came first—the chicken or the egg?" Children have sex-typed occupational aspirations because they perceive that occupations are sex-typed. The occupational world is sex-typed because people aspire to and attain sex-typed aspirations. Altering the relationship may well require much more extensive interventions than simple alterations of media images.

This article is derived from "A Child's View: Children's Occupational Knowledge and Perceptions of Occupational Characteristics" by Jeanne McGee and Jean Stockard, to be presented at the Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association, Chicago, August 1987.

The odyssey of Sarah Rice

by Louise Westling, Assistant Professor of English

The following is a working excerpt from *He Included Me*, the autobiography of Sarah Webb Rice. Last spring Mrs. Rice, whom I have known for 30 years, since she first came to work for my parents when I was 15, approached me about helping her tell the story of her life. Our work is now about half finished, with four chapters in the hands of an interested publisher.

Mrs. Rice's narrative—in very nearly her own words as I took them on tape—is an important addition to the story of black women in the United States, a story only now beginning to emerge with the writings of Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Audre Lorde, Paul Marshall, Toni Cade Bambara, Gwendolyn Brooks, Gloria Naylor and others. Sarah Rice's story is vital testimony to the richness and texture of women's lives, a pattern that feminist scholarship is revealing with increasing breadth and complexity.

Sarah Webb Rice was born in Clio, Alabama, in 1909 to a young school-teacher named Lizzie Janet Lewis Webb and her husband, James Wiley Webb, a minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Sarah, the third of eight children, grew up in a busy family during economic times that were hard for most Southerners, but especially for blacks. But all of Sarah's family worked hard and valued education.

After graduating from high school in 1925, Sarah Webb passed the Alabama State Teachers' Examination and began, at the age of 17, a career in teaching that lasted more than 10 years and ended only because economic and personal circumstances forced her into domestic work for survival. From 1937 until semi-retirement in the early 1980s, she worked full-time in the



Louise Westling

APRIL MINNICH

homes of white people in Jacksonville, Florida, with an interlude of wartime maintenance work at the Naval Air Station in Orange Park. During all these years of work, she also endured two difficult marriages before finding a life partner in her third husband, Andrew A. Rice. Sarah raised a son as a single parent, and worked tirelessly in her church and her community as a leader and agent for constructive change. Even now, she continues to work part-time for employers who have become friends over the years and who have aged with her. Her life is the record of remarkable achievement in two worlds, black and white, as a teacher and counselor and diplomatic leader under circumstances that would have crushed many spirits.

When we met in Jacksonville in March of 1986 I discovered that Mrs.

Rice had a clear idea of what she wanted to say. My job was simply to listen. Later, my job as editor would be only to reshape her narrative when the chronology was unclear. Our first day's work produced eight hours of nearly unbroken narrative. In four more days we had ten 90-minute tapes. Right away I could tell Mrs. Rice was a gifted storyteller whose ear for dialogue and sense of dramatic timing led her to shape episodes with vivid immediacy and clear focus.

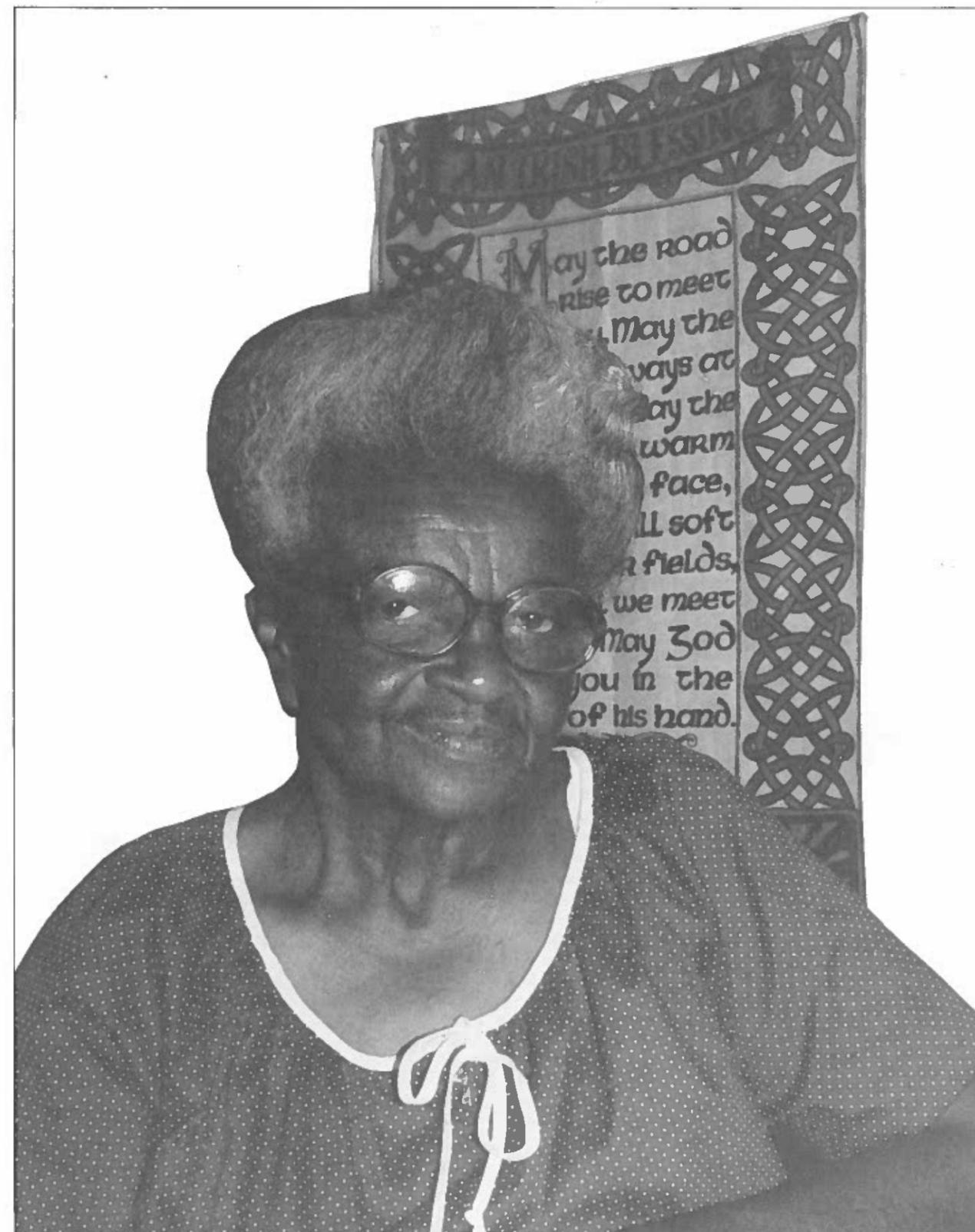
Sarah Rice's use of language is one of the major contributors to the lively charm of her story, and I have sought to quote her as exactly as possible so that her voice is in fact the very style of the autobiography.

The excerpts here show how Sarah adds her own style and personality to the example set by her mother in dealing with difficult situations.

Growing Up

"We went through so many traumatic times as far as food was concerned. We children weren't as aware of it as Mama was, and Mama had to take care of these problems most of the time, because Papa would be away at one of his churches, or at a conference. One time down in Batesville, I remember, things got so hard, and we didn't have any meal. Papa was gone, and Mama was just worried to death. We were always proud people who didn't beg. If people offered things to us, we would go and get them, but we would never ask. Because we were 13 miles out in the country, there was nobody we could work for. We didn't have anything to carry to town to peddle—chickens or eggs or vegetables—we just couldn't buy anything to eat. We had some corn in the field, but it was only half dry, not dry enough to shuck and carry to the mill, but too hard to boil.

"Down in the bottom land by the





High school graduation in Eufala, Alabama, 1925, Sarah Rice is third from the left in the front row.

railroad tracks, we raised our corn. Mama went down in the field, and she was praying, 'Lord, what can I do?' It was getting dark, but she was down there looking in the field to see if she could find some old dry peas, or some sort of thing. She pulled an ear of corn and looked at it hard, and the idea came to her to take some ears home and grind the corn in our meat grinder. She came up the hill from down in the bottom, carrying the corn and singing that hymn about, 'Jesus included me. When the Lord said "Whosoever will," He included me too.'

"We ground and sifted that corn, over and over, until we shook out enough to make a great big hoecake. It was kind of grainy, but sweet! That was some of the sweetest cornbread that I have ever tasted, and we had bread to last until the corn got dry enough to mill. Mama said she just knew the Lord wasn't going to let us starve. With all of that trouble, I cannot remember any time when we hung our heads or went around like we felt sorry for ourselves or went to bed hungry.

"That was a beautiful life, tough as it was. In all of our childish fights, there was always Mama to come home to, to help us reason things out. She would tell us why we shouldn't, or what we should have done. It really made a difference. We always had each other to practice on, too. The whole family worked hard together, and we were happy because we had family and love."

The Great Depression

Ten or more years later, after her minister father had died in his pulpit the day before her high school graduation and her mother had remarried and been widowed a second time, Sarah came home for the weekend from a schoolteaching job in a neighboring town to discover that there was nothing to eat in the house and no money at all. This was the Depression, a time so bleak in central Alabama that the state could not even afford to pay its teachers—or at least not its black teachers. Instead Sarah and her colleagues were issued warrants which would supposedly be redeemable for cash. As she remembers the occasion,

"School had started, but there was still no money in the family, and my brother J.D. didn't have any shoes. He was a big old boy about seventeen years old. We ran out of food again, and Mama couldn't find anything, and I couldn't either. I took J.D. and said, 'Come on, let's get you some shoes.'

He said, 'Where are you going?' I said 'We're going to get some food. Hitch up the horse.' I had decided to myself that day, whether I was going to prostitute or what, I was going to get it.

"We got near town, and I had those old warrants with me from the school board. I went to Mr. Hap Gregory's

grocery store. He said, 'Sarah, I'm sorry, but I can't take any more of those warrants. I have them here, and I can't pay my bills if I keep taking those things in, because I don't know when they're going to be negotiable.'

"I said, 'I understand.' I went to another grocery store—same thing. That was in the early 30s. Then I went to Mr. Jake Oppenheimer, who was a Jew and ran not a grocery store, but a dry goods store. Mr. Oppenheimer knew every prominent Negro in town, and he knew of my family, Lizzy's children. Most all the white people knew Lizzy; Mama wasn't an aristocrat but she was prominent and recognized by everyone. So were her children. I went to him, and he knew me too.

"I have never told such a slick lie in my life, and I didn't even think about it. When I went in there to him to ask for aid, I didn't tell him that I had been to the other people. I didn't tell him that I wanted him to take a warrant. I said, 'Mr. Oppenheimer, I have some cows for sale in Clio, but I need some money until I can get those cows. I wonder if you would hold these warrants and let me have some money until I can get the cows sold.'

"He said, 'Yes. How much do you need?'

"Isn't that some kind of approach? I hadn't thought about that; I had thought I was going to go to him just like I had gone to the rest of them. I knew I couldn't get any groceries from him, but I just wanted him to lend me some money on this warrant so I could buy some food. That was my plan, but when I got in there these other words came to me. I didn't have any cow anywhere to sell. Well, I took about twenty dollars, and I said, 'By the way, do you have any shoes to fit my brother?'

"He said, 'Yeah, I've got a pair of shoes. Come here, boy.' Carried him over there and got him a pair of brand new shoes. I mean he was *barefooted*, and we were coming to the fall of the year and nowhere to get any shoes. My brother was so happy, and to this day he talks about how glad he was. I tell him how good he was to Mama, and he was. She called him her old man. But he tells me how good I was to him.

"I took that money, and we didn't go back to the stores that had turned

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rs. Rice always quietly insisted on her dignity and her rights—decades before the civil rights movement

me down. They were the two best stores, but I went to another one. It was a good enough store. Those other two should have helped me, because we had been trading with them, but since they didn't, I wasn't going to give my money to them. At the other store, we loaded up that wagon with *hard* groceries—meal, lard, white bacon (it was cheap then, about 10 cents a pound), syrup. And I went on and got three or four loaves of light bread—that was something special for us—and some lemons and sugar so we could have some lemonade, and some ground beef so that we could make us some sandwiches. And I had money left over.

"Mama just cried when we got back home. She said, 'I knew you were going on to town, but I wasn't looking for you to find anything.'

"I said, 'You know, you used to sing a song one time when you went down to the Woman's Ridge and got that half-dried corn and came back and we ground it up in the meat grinder and sifted it until we could make hoe cakes. You started singing that song, "Jesus Included Me; When the Lord said, "Whosoever will," He included me." So I'm His child too, and I don't have any business starving. I'm singing the same thing, "Jesus Included Me Too."

"Mama said, 'Bless your heart.'

"The very next week, it came out in the paper that a series of those

warrants was negotiable as of that date. Mine happened to be in that series, the one I had given Mr. Oppenheimer. It was worth \$35, so Mr. Oppenheimer owed me \$15.

After the Depression

From this moment of triumph during the Depression in Alabama, Sarah Rice's career took her gradually farther and farther away from her family home in Eufala, to a succession of country schools, summer college training in Montgomery, and eventually to Florida. State problems with school finance forced her to abandon teaching and enter domestic service. While she took a job with a dentist and his wife in Panama City, Florida, her son stayed in Alabama with his grandmother, and Mrs. Rice sent her earnings home to support him and help her mother. When she moved to Jacksonville in 1937 and married her second husband, her son joined her, as well as her sister Elizabeth. The marriage broke up, Mrs. Rice established her own household with her sister, and within a few years she had saved enough money to buy her own house. Soon other family members, including her mother and two of her brothers, moved down to join her in the neighborhood where her family still lives. She met and eventually married Andrew Rice and entered a busy life of community and church work when she wasn't at her job.

Throughout life, Sarah Rice has continued to follow the code of values

her parents taught her. Their steady Christian faith, their tolerance and generosity towards all their neighbors, black and white, and their proud independence and hard work are all illustrated again and again in her reminiscences of childhood. Many times, for instance, her mother fed poor white neighbors who were in need, even though her own family had only gravy and cornbread for their dinner. She remembers begrudging the food the neighbors ate, but her mother said, "They're human; we'll feed them." Her mother taught her that even the meanest job was better than dependency or stealing, and Sarah Rice herself determined that she would always do more than required and excel in the doing.

Sarah Rice added a tough and cheerful spirit of self-defense to the values her parents instilled. From early grade school days when she and her brother and sister were finally given permission to defend themselves against schoolmates who tormented them because they were minister's children, Mrs. Rice always quietly insisted on her dignity and her rights. Doing so in the South of the decades before the Civil Rights Movement was a demanding and subtle challenge, but insensitive white employers and bullying husbands alike learned that she would not put up with demeaning treatment. The remarkable quality of courteous, firm insistence on her rights marks her dealings with anyone who transgressed them. But above all, in her relations with all the people she encountered across racial and social lines, Sarah Rice's conduct is marked by generosity and cooperation. One of the unusual qualities of her narrative is the positive emphasis in relations with people, especially with white people. While she always has a sense of the real political problems that have beset the South, most of Mrs. Rice's encounters progress cooperatively, a testimony to her own character. Wherever she went, she created situations in which she and her employers worked together and benefitted from each other's company, a remarkable achievement.

Literature as women's history

Nancy Armstrong, Professor of Literature and Comparative Literature, Wayne State University and 1987 Visiting Scholar, Center for the Study of Women in Society

How Feminism has Influenced my Field. The impact of feminism is everywhere apparent in the literary disciplines. It is apparent in the number of university presses that promote "women's studies," "feminist theory," and criticism that uses the themes of modern sexuality.

Every year the Modern Language Association job list announces positions for feminists, for scholars with a secondary interest in feminist theory, and for administrators who can integrate women's studies into the curriculum. The Norton Anthology has similarly felt the blow. There are two new editions of their standard anthologies for literature courses; one includes work by women authors in surveys of English and American authors, and the other is devoted exclusively to women's writing. Finally, an increasing number of male scholars and critics acknowledge feminist work in the field as legitimate. They allow it to be published in some of our stuffiest journals and to be taught in ordinary classrooms, and they even designate it as an area in which to train graduate students and hire new faculty members.

We have lived to see male scholars write about women authors from the women's point of view and male feminists describe literary representations of women from a feminist perspective. But women may still be the most underrepresented and overworked members of English



Nancy Armstrong

departments. Tenure and hiring committees may view work on women with some suspicion, and the NEH may claim it has already given away too much to women who write about women.

But, in a very real way, the battle has been won. Feminist theory and research on women have gone legitimate. Universities seek stars who work in these areas with every bit of the lust that they devote to hiring renowned Shakespeareans. In time, I truly believe, the impact will be distributed evenly throughout the ranks. As many women as men will be teaching on literature faculties, and scholars of both sexes will be writing about female authors as often as they write about males.

But so long as the whole category of "literature" and the procedures we adopt in doing a "literary interpretation" remain unquestioned, in my

opinion we will simply have reproduced the world we had before—a world divided between male and female—within the framework of our discipline. The past 10 years have brought both sophistication and respectability to feminist theory and, with these, a growing demand for women faculty members. But also in the past 10 years a new area of work has taken hold and expanded within the field of literature.

More new Ph.D.s have come into the profession to teach and write about composition than to teach and write about literature, and most of those who teach composition full time are women. With the increasing number of women in literature, then, there is occurring a division of labor that devalues work designated "female" even when it is performed by a male. Departments feel that one or two people who write from a feminist perspective are quite enough and that a core faculty should be maintained to bring traditional (male) approaches to traditional literary categories. Many universities and departments have already created ghettos of "women's studies," with the result that traditional categories are rarely reconsidered in the light of feminist theory or infiltrated by it.

Then there are those traditional critics who appropriate the issues of literary feminism and present them as one more literary theme. Why I seem so gloomy at the prospect of feminism's success within my field will, I hope, become more apparent as I explain feminism's impact upon my own work. Indeed, my scholarship has been largely devoted to understanding the history, sociology, and anthropology

of this tendency of a gender-divided world to reproduce itself. I have pursued this topic in hopes of stumbling upon a way out of the bind that condemns us to feminize and thereby devalue masculine work whenever we claim a place for ourselves within the masculine world.

How Feminism Has Influenced My Own Work

I work on the British novel. I consider myself very fortunate to have been paid by several state governments to teach and write about books that delighted me as a kid, shaped my most ruthless strategies for negotiating adolescence, and give me the fortitude to survive intellectually among academic men.

From the time I was in sixth grade and the effort to indoctrinate me into the ideology of conventional history was well underway, I knew that Dorothy (from the *Wizard of Oz*), Emma, Jane Eyre, and my mother had far more to do with making me who I was than did Lincoln, Darwin, Edison, or Freud. Fiction gave me a history of the yearnings and anxieties that I felt then and still experience now—ideas of normalcy, its rewards and limitations—all founded in an intricate system of comparisons of genders and generations.

Yet the production of this psychosexual formation was and still is a debased form of history. To those who control the teaching of history in this country, it is not a history at all, for it is only a story about a little girl and not a story about a large and manly state. What is more, to those who control the literary establishment in this country, to say that the gendering of the individual has a history and to consider fiction the instrument and record of it is simply preposterous. Yet my own research shows that well

The Armstrong Seminar

Aletta Biersack, Assistant Professor of Anthropology

To do something interdisciplinary it's not enough to choose a "subject" (a theme) and gather around it two or three sciences. Interdisciplinarity consists in creating a new object that belongs to no one.
—Roland Barthes, "Jeunes Chercheurs"

The epigraph, which introduces an important collection of essays in anthropology, *Writing Cultures*, reflects a truth Nancy Armstrong helped feminist scholars on this campus understand: that people in departments of English, art education, history, sociology, comparative literature, and anthropology can belong to one another more than to those administrative entities if they share an object of study that cannot belong to any one of these. Armstrong recently spent a term in residence as Visiting Scholar at the Center for the Study of Women in Society.

The title of Armstrong's new book, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), takes the measure of her own interdisciplinary accomplishments. In it she announces her intention to draw together what other frameworks scatter: sexuality, domesticity (and, by implication, women), politics, history, and literature. In arguing that sexuality is an historical artifact rather than a timeless essence, Armstrong focuses on literature within this array and proposes that literature is the historic condition of everything else.

Armstrong's domestic fiction "writes" engendered subjects into existence, yesterday's fiction becoming today's fact. Literature then has an extraordinary instru-

mental and productive power. Her view, however, is denied in the conventional claim that literature merely reflects a prior and independent reality.

Armstrong is intensely political and feminist. In her opinion, western knowledge, through its very categories, conspires to mythologize male power and to conceal female power. If literature is merely reflective, it is also unproductive and impotent. But if literature is, Armstrong argues, a feminized category of writing, then literature implies the impotence of women. But this implication masks the very real power women writers of domestic fiction have exercised historically.

It is not always ourselves we "write." Sometimes we "invent" others as well. "Othering," as Armstrong calls it, refers to constructing people different from the self. Those who are "othered" are made to appear exotic, abnormal, strange, weird. Consider the prostitute, the nigger, or the cannibal, who are as much the symbolic products of writing as engendered, white, middle class women and men. The prostitute, the nigger, and the cannibal also exist because they are authored into existence.

Armstrong ultimately abandons the category "literature" and embraces writing in all its forms, in principle including the writings of anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, and historians, and others. In her "history of fear," Armstrong examines "othering" in all these fields. Beginning with a handful of observations about one nineteenth century genre, Armstrong sets a post-disciplinary agenda that can belong to no one, but belongs to everyone.

before England can be said to have undergone an industrial revolution, she experienced a revolution in the home. And well before it passed into the domain of speech, thought and feeling, this revolution was effected in and through writing for, by, and about women.

My work is compelled by certain knowledge of the female's centrality in modern history, knowledge for which I must argue in the face of experts who declare, on the weight of tradition alone, that what I have claimed is simply not true. My belief—call it feminist if you will I think it is only intelligent—has cost me a couple of jobs. Yet I think that it is imperative at this time in the history of women to persist. As increasing numbers of us take positions of authority within the literary disciplines, it seems to me we should do so with much more awareness of the historical foundations on which our authority rests both as women and as literary critics. For upon such awareness rests in turn the possibility for upper middle class white academic females to exercise their power as such with something akin to Sartrean responsibility.

By way of explaining feminism's impact on my own work, then, let me take you through a few of the steps I have pursued in order to valorize the intellectual labor of women. My inspiration came first from Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, an essay that began as a talk on "women and fiction." To figure out this relationship adequately would, according to Woolf, require the entire rewriting of history. This new history would have to account for a change that took place toward the end of the eighteenth century, one she would have to "describe more fully and think of greater importance than the Crusades or the Wars of the Roses. The middle-class women began to write."

If we are to understand the power of writing for, by, and about women, which is prerequisite to understanding our position within gendered spheres of knowledge, we must first grant writing a kind of material reality and political agency in its own right. We must challenge the reigning notion of

history that understands "events" as changes taking place in and through the institutions run by men.

My own effort in this direction began from the position Marx puts forth in *The German Ideology*: no political revolution is complete without a cultural revolution. To dominate, the dominant class must offer others a view of its domination that makes it seem true and necessary, if not always desirable and right. At this point, I took up the Foucaultian hypothesis that the modern world is called into being in writing rather than through force. The first volume of Foucault's *History of Sexuality* argues that the very forms of subjectivity we consider most essential to ourselves as gendered beings did not exist before they became symbols, that, in a word, our deepest and most private selves existed in writing before they were reproduced in the mother tongue in thought or in feelings.

In England, this was the only revolution, because there the revolution in words took the form of strategies that prevented popular revolution. Many kinds of writing, much of it by women, collaborated to make physical violence on the part of any group into the symptom of personal deficiency, deficiency that began in the home with the quality of mothering. The symptom, therefore, of a pathology that would find its only remedy in institutions that applied the socializing techniques of the middle-class home on a mass basis. Once you grant the Foucaultian hypothesis, you can begin to see the intellectual labor of women as an historical process rather than as the reflection of a separate and more primary process orchestrated by men.

Foucault will not allow this last step, however. His *History of Sexuality* is not concerned with the history of gender. Nor does it deal with the role that writing for, by, and about women played in it. His *Discipline and Punish* does not talk about the groundbreaking prototype of modern institutions, by which I mean a household represented

as a space divided and made functional along the lines of gender and generation, a cultural space that preceded the formation of other institutions by at least 50 years, a household overseen by a woman and espoused by a class of people. This is where a feminist perspective must be invoked, for at this point it is necessary to consider fiction as the instrument for producing a class sexuality.

British domestic fiction created a cultural domain outside history, one ruled by women. This was the domain of the modern household, of leisure time, courtship procedures, and kinship relations. And it was here, such fiction suggests, that what was most basic to individual consciousness was formed and therefore revealed. Of course, the formation of the feminine sphere did not take place outside history. Nor did it come into being reactively, as a response to more primary changes that occurred in the institutions dominated by men.

A new (feminine) rhetoric of common sense and sensibility successfully combatted one kind of power—based on title, wealth, and physical force—with another—based on the control of literacy—and so helped to write a new class of people into existence. Agreeing on little else besides the way a home should be run and a woman should behave, this class gained and still maintains its power through observation, information gathering, and interpretation. It created institutions to perform these operations upon masses of people in much the same way the narrators of Austen's and Bronte's fiction did upon their characters.

Because we ourselves have grown up within these institutions, each of us carries around such a narrator in his or her head. Sensitive to the least sign of disorder—a foul work, a piece of clothing undone, a bit of food skidding off one's plate, and, worst of all, some loss of bodily functions—the presence of this voice (now more than two centuries old) is what really keeps us in line. It does this political work much more effectively, I might add, than fear of the police or the military, whom modern societies keep around for mopping up the mistakes—the imperfectly socialized people who have

failed to develop such a voice as ours in their heads. Produced in fiction and conduct books for women well before it entered the domain of social fact and, finally, psychology, this voice is, without question, the source of historically specific, culturally acquired, class-biased forms of desire and fear.

Where do we go from here?

As a literary scholar and critic, I enjoy a workplace that, to some extent, finally recognizes the years of sexual bias in hiring and curriculum practices. It is only fair to admit that English departments are generally making an effort to hire more women and to support research and criticism that deals with female subject matter. At the same time, in doing my own work, I still write in opposition to a notion of literature that generates two spheres of knowledge—one kind of (historical) truth for men, and another kind of (hysterical) truth for women.

That is to say, I am living in the world that Mary Wollstonecraft saw as a forboding horizon: a world in which women were empowered to write and, in writing, to do the major work of gendering knowledge. Virginia Woolf herself was bound by this rule. Where Wollstonecraft would write as an intellectual first and a woman second, her daughter would write as a woman who was the wife of an intellectual, and the daughter's writing would ultimately have more authority than her mother's by virtue of implying a properly gendered origin for its meaning. Because I believe we also exist in a world that compulsively genders knowledge, I am not particularly cheered by the goal of statistical equality for which English departments seem to be striving.

It is on this note that I return to the problem with which I began: how to avoid reproducing a system of dominance and subjection that inevitably debases the very forms of intellectual labor most essential to that system's power over us all. One of the lessons to be learned from Foucault is that institutional power does not really change with the individuals who

exercise it. In using a discourse, we are used by it. Foucault reveals the system for what it is: powerful where it appears most powerless, most invested with class-specific interests where it appears to be doing what comes naturally, and concerned with defining deviance where it seems to be exalting the normal. But there is an equally important lesson that Foucault cannot teach us: how individuals may change the structures of power that so define them.

Such change begins with understanding who we are and what we do. It has always astonished me that, as men and women who teach and write about certain kinds of writing, few of us know our own history. Not only has it been buried, dispersed, and devalued, but, it turns out, our history as literary critics cannot be distinguished from that of middle-class women and of their power to write. Our history has been suppressed along with that of the gendering of knowledge because that history and ours are one and the same. Few of us know that our standard humanities curriculum came from a female curriculum, that we developed in part as a means of socializing children, the poor, and foreigners before we became a masculine profession.

Who has had the time and energy to discover the buried tradition of literary criticism that grew up around fiction in order to protect women from its polluting effects? Yet this tradition shows the gradual development of interpretive strategies that allowed women to translate virtually any reading material into some form of modern consciousness as if they were discovering forms of thought and feeling that were universal in man. For at least two centuries previous to our own, educators made no bones about the fact that certain kinds of writing were particularly useful for training people to see themselves and others in terms of a system of signs that affixed gendered desire to social behavior. All of these happened before fiction went arty in the last decades of the nineteenth century. All this remains to be uncovered by literary critics and historians, yet is the very source of our power.

Ours is a power from which, as people who are paid by the state to teach and write about literature, we cannot choose to escape. We can only choose to exercise this authority more or less responsibly. All this is at stake, I believe, in understanding the significance of that time when middle-class women began to write. Instead of concealing the powerful role that women and literature have both played in history—their histories are linked, I have argued—it behooves us to lay claim to this power consciously and to decide deliberately what we want to do with it. Instead of reproducing false histories, histories in which neither women nor literature have any agency, we can begin unearthing the countless documents and kinds of writing that as yet have no place within the disciplines. We can begin the massive cross-disciplinary project of writing a history of ourselves as gendered forms of consciousness and of the world of everyday objects we actually inhabit. In this history, literature would have a major role to play and—with literature—so would intellectual labor of women.

Interview

From the University to the Marketplace: Applications and Directions for Scholarship on Women

by Marion S. Goldman, Associate Professor of Sociology

As a sociologist and a member of the executive committee of the Center for the Study of Women in Society, I am primarily committed to research on women and society and the integration of that research with classroom teaching. But in my other roles as wife, mother, and community member I am concerned with the everyday problems and rewards of being an American woman in 1987. I hope my own research and that of other feminist scholars will allow us to understand better the varied situations, experiences, and histories of women in American society.

This is the first in a series of interviews with women who have used feminist research in their daily lives and who need more of that kind of research.

In this interview, with lawyer Sharon Gordon and financial consultant Jeanne Wagenknecht, my original purpose was to see how feminist research did or could affect their professional lives. It immediately became clear that none of us, myself included, could separate the professional role from that of mother of young children.

Both Jeanne and Sharon now live in Eugene, near the University of Oregon. They are both in their mid-thirties, highly educated, married, and relatively prosperous. Each of them was on an elevator to success, taking the express to the top floors of their professions as part of the first generation of American women for whom doors to occupational advancement and recognition had opened a crack in response to a decade of feminist protest, lobbying, research, and education. As they spoke about their own lives, how they had used academic research, and how they would use it in the future, the need for a Center for the Study of Women in Society and many other similar centers was again validated.

Let's begin with a little background.
Sharon: In the last six years I moved from private law practice to academic administration at the University of Oregon Law School, and then to being an active member of the 1986 Oregon Commission on Childcare and playing in the Eugene Symphony String Quartet.

When I had my first child I moved from my law practice to the job of Assistant Dean of the Law School. I felt that I would have more control and flexibility in an academic workplace. It still turned out to be an endless job though, with evening meetings and phone calls. Finally, last June 30, I resigned to play in the symphony and use my legal skills on the State Commission on Childcare, which was created at the end of the last legislative session to study the needs of Oregon parents and children and to suggest proposals for how those needs might be met.

Jeanne: My doctoral research in 1972-73 was on female-headed disadvantaged families, and it demonstrated that the presence of husbands was the primary determinant of the economic status of a family in the United States. After completing my Ph.D., I spent five years teaching in personal finance at a state university in the West and consulting about the economic status of women. Then I moved to another city and spent about a year and a half writing and assessing my goals. After that I entered the "school of hard knocks," working for four years as one of the few women account executives for a major New York-based brokerage house. I took a leave of absence with the birth of my second daughter and got some distance and perspective. I decided to begin my current career as a financial adviser. I am also writing two books. The first is an exposé of the investment business, discussing the rules of the game from the inside out. The second is a humorous book about my own funny, crazy experiences in trying to reconcile my own super-achiever motivation with the day-to-day demands of being a mother. Basically, it's about handling life's crises with humor.

Why do you think your careers have taken these turns?

Sharon: Because it is very hard, maybe impossible, to balance a strong family life with young children and a full-time, demanding career. Working at the Law School was the most flexible job I'd ever had, but it was almost impossible to succeed and still have



Sharon Gordon



Jeanne Wagenknecht

enough time for a young family. I think now, with a second pregnancy, I might do a better job of balancing if I were still at the University. I'd be more assertive about what I needed from my work situation, and I'd use my power differently.

Jeanne: "Using your power differently," is a real issue that we, as women who are blazing trails in male-dominated fields, have to initiate. When you have the first pregnancy in that environment, you are often pioneering. You have to deal on a day-in, day-out basis with discrimination as it is. Add pregnancy to your physical state and you add another dramatic adjustment that men have to make in their perceptions and attitudes about women, pregnant women. When I entered the investment business the intention was to embellish my school of hard knocks background in finance. I had never intended to make it a lifetime career. To answer your question, it seemed like a perfect time for my career to take the turn that it did. Financial advising and writing offer me the autonomy I need at this stage. As Sharon said, it is very hard to balance the demands of young children and certain kinds of jobs. Those jobs that are male-filled, defined, and dominated are especially difficult. It is in these areas that we need to use our power, or perhaps influence would be a better word, to

advocate longer leaves for maternity and parenting. It is in these areas that there is so little recognition and value of the needs and rights of children. *Sharon:* I think professional women have to extend their influence to all women in their workplaces, although my own situation and interests make me particularly sensitive to the needs of mothers dealing with newborns, sick children, and the general lack of good day care in the United States. Parental leave is a focus for the whole issue right now. As a member of the Oregon Commission on Childcare I helped frame the recommendation that workers have the right to take a leave of absence of up to 12 weeks to care for their newborn, newly adopted, or seriously ill children, and that they be given the same job or its equivalent on their return. There are a number of other important recommendations that I won't discuss here; but I urge readers to see the Commission Report *Child Care: A Quiet Crisis in Oregon*, Report to the Governor, 1986. *Jeanne:* I think it's up to professional women to speak out and advocate changes like that—not just because it's the law, but rather because it's a necessary step forward for everyone's humanity. The questions of what changes need to be made and how they can be supported most effectively need

to be answered by the kinds of research that goes on at the Center for the Study of Women in Society.

Sharon: I used a number of studies of family life and workplace to help the Commission grapple with some very important policy issues. For example, the *Boston University Balancing Job and Homelife Study* by Dianne Burden and Bradley Googens found that married women working full time still spent about 45 hours a week doing childcare. We need more studies about women at home and in the workplace. For example, when I was on the University task force on childcare, I found that the University of Oregon as an employer had no idea how many of its staff members had children, let alone how they handled day care. It's to everyone's benefit to find answers to questions like that and also to ask why there are certain patterns of childcare responsibility in our society. I think we also need studies about cultural values and parenting. We still don't understand why mothering and parenting are so devalued or why children are so little respected.

Jeanne: I think that there is another problem in bridging the gap between academia and the labor force. There's a great deal of good basic research that has not been communicated to the business community. We need more academic women willing to talk about

research issues and findings to the corporate president, or the small businessman, or the woman who is a secretary. Women speaking to a wider community need to clarify their own assumptions and be willing to spend lots of time getting the message out. Let's talk about the implications of our informal policies about women and children and what the human and financial costs could be to this generation and the next and the next.

To play devil's advocate: What about the 20-year-old woman who says, "Jeanne and Sharon, you've sold out. I want a role model who shakes off the chains of tradition and goes straight to the top. You are still bound in family life, and both of you seem to be willing to regress on the gains feminists have made and leave your high-status jobs."

Sharon: For me it would be selling out not to consider something larger than ourselves. In my case, I have decided to focus on my own children and to lobby for legislation that supports children throughout the state. Advocacy was what I did when I was in private practice, advocacy was what I did at the law school, and advocacy is what I'm doing now.

Jeanne: Perhaps one could argue that I have left the fast track for a slower, more scenic route, but I have hardly derailed! The key descriptor of your devil's advocate is her age. At age 20, I might have agreed with her view of me. But at age 20 I was totally ignorant of the awesome task of making the world fair, of eliminating discrimination against women. At age 20, I hadn't the foggiest notion of the demands of parenting. At age 20, I had never encountered the actions and attitudes of men who saw me as a direct threat to their positions, power, and prestige.

Your 20-year-old is old enough to read John Rawls' book, *A Theory of Justice*. The ideal justice comes from decisions made behind a veil of ignorance. This keeps the decision maker from knowing where he or she ends up after the decision. This forces the maximization of the position of the least advantaged. A simple example of this is if I have a pie to cut up and share with a room full of pie lovers, and I did not know which piece that I myself would get, I would cut the pieces equally to maximize the size of my piece, just in case I am the last to choose. This is not reality. Men have been deciding how to slice the economic pie for centuries, and that explains a great deal about the economic status of women today. I have been a pathbreaker, but I'm not willing to sacrifice my two daughters while I continue to bump up against a glass ceiling, an invisible barrier to women getting up to the very top. I know the ceiling is there in most professions, and especially in the corporate structure. Part of it is built on the failure of either public or private employers to consider the needs of women with young children. I hope that people doing research on gender can identify the contractors who built the glass ceilings, how they were built, why they were built, and what material bases and cultural values support those ceilings. Then we'll be able to shatter them.

The next Center Review will include an interview with women facing different issues. Because this feature is different from articles usually found in reviews from academic centers, the author, Marion Goldman, would like to hear readers' responses and suggestions. Please write to her at the Center for the Study of Women in Society, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403.

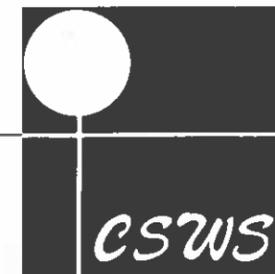
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Center for the Study of Women in Society

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The Center for the Study of Women in Society is establishing a visiting scholar pool. The Center has positions available for varying time periods. Competitive stipends are offered to those willing to assume duties such as teaching a one-term upper-division course, participating in a faculty seminar, and giving a public lecture. Stipends ordinarily supplement other income. Duties, stipend, and length of time in residence are negotiable.

To apply, please send a vita and a description of your current research project, and the names and addresses of three references. Applications must be received by December 1, 1987. Notification of award will be made by January 15, 1988. Send applications to Miriam Johnson, Acting Director, Center for the Study of Women in Society, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403. The University of Oregon is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution.



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CHAMPION LADY BARNCOCK BAITER
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