

# APA Newsletters

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## NEWSLETTER ON FEMINISM AND PHILOSOPHY

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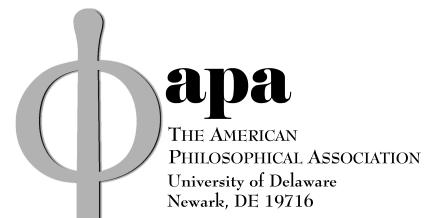
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## FROM THE EDITOR

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As of July 1, 2007, Erin McKenna, professor of philosophy at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, has assumed the role of chair of the Committee on the Status of Women. Erin served a number of years on the Committee on the Teaching of Philosophy, including one year as chair. She is the former chair of philosophy and former chair of women's studies at PLU. She specializes in feminist theory and American Pragmatism, focusing on issues of social and political philosophy. She has published two books, *The Task of Utopia: A Pragmatist and Feminist Perspective* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2001) and the co-edited volume titled *Animal Pragmatism* (Indiana University Press, 2004). In accordance with the new APA committee leadership procedure, Erin has spent the last year as associate chair of the CSW with Rosie Tong as chair. We welcome Erin to the position and look forward to continuing the wonderful projects begun under Rosie's leadership as well as the exciting new ideas on the horizon.

This issue of the *Newsletter* invites each of us to share a story. The contributors participated in panels organized by Sharon Crasnow, a member of the Committee on the Status of Women, who also did the work of editing the essays for publication in this issue. As Crasnow explains in her introduction, each article weaves a story of one professional woman's life, balancing family concerns and professional expectations, meeting the standards for tenure, struggling to overcome the social expectations of traditional motherhood, and countless other challenges. Crasnow invites us to "sit back" as we read these stories; but their relaxed style encourages more story-telling on our own part. Each of us has an experience, a story, or perhaps we might describe it as a "nightmare experience" somewhere in our history as feminist academics. These stories reveal some personal challenges and the lessons learned in responding, but they also reveal the political necessity of continuing to talk about our experiences. Consciousness-raising used to be a sort of hallmark of feminist activism; that is, until we realized that consciousness-raising as it was often practiced also silenced a lot of women and kept us all from a fuller understanding of oppression. But some form of critical consciousness-raising continues to be necessary within the academy just as it does within our families and personal lives. The women who courageously share their stories here understand the limitations of their personal narratives, but they also understand the potential power of sharing experience with a diverse audience and learning from each other as we attempt to remake the academy. With Crasnow, I hope that this issue will spark more conversations and story-telling between colleagues in departments and across disciplinary boundaries, at professional conferences, within our classrooms, and, yes,

even within the published pages of our professional journals. I also hope that the *Newsletter* will continue to be a site for these sorts of conversations insofar as they help us to identify issues within our scholarship, teaching, and administrative service.

This issue also features three book reviews and two important announcements. A forthcoming issue of the *Newsletter* will focus on women's human rights. I hope to gather a number of articles addressing different aspects of this topic. Please contact me if you would like more information and please consider submitting your work. Next, I am nearing the end of my term as editor of the *Newsletter* and the CSW is beginning the process of identifying the next editor. For more information, please see the announcement at the end of the issue.

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## ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER ON FEMINISM AND PHILOSOPHY

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The *Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy* is sponsored by the APA Committee on the Status of Women (CSW). The *Newsletter* is designed to provide an introduction to recent philosophical work that addresses issues of gender. None of the varied philosophical views presented by authors of *Newsletter* articles necessarily reflects the views of any or all of the members of the Committee on the Status of Women, including the editor(s) of the *Newsletter*, nor does the committee advocate any particular type of feminist philosophy. We advocate only that serious philosophical attention be given to issues of gender and that claims of gender bias in philosophy receive full and fair consideration.

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## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

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**1. Purpose:** The purpose of the *Newsletter* is to publish information about the status of women in philosophy and to make the resources of feminist philosophy more widely available. The *Newsletter* contains discussions of recent developments in feminist philosophy and related work in other disciplines, literature overviews and book reviews, suggestions for eliminating gender bias in the traditional philosophy curriculum, and reflections on feminist pedagogy. It also informs the profession about the work of the APA Committee on the Status of Women. Articles submitted to the *Newsletter* should

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be limited to ten double-spaced pages and must follow the APA guidelines for gender-neutral language. Please submit four copies of essays, prepared for anonymous review. References should follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

**2. Book Reviews and Reviewers:** If you have published a book that is appropriate for review in the *Newsletter*, please have your publisher send us a copy of your book. We are always in need of book reviewers. To volunteer to review books (or some particular book), please send the editor a CV and letter of interest, including mention of your areas of research and teaching.

**3. Where to Send Things:** Please send all articles, comments, suggestions, books, and other communications to the editor: Dr. Sally J. Scholz, Department of Philosophy, Villanova University, 800 Lancaster Avenue, Villanova, PA 19085-1699, sally.scholz@villanova.edu

**4. Submission Deadlines:** Submissions for Spring issues are due by the preceding September 1st; submissions for Fall issues are due by the preceding February 1st.

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## NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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As I enter my new role as the chair of the CSW, I would like to thank Rosemarie Tong for her dedicated and able leadership of the committee. From my short time on the committee I can see that much has been accomplished under Rosie's leadership and I will do my best to continue this work. You can continue to look for exciting sessions at each of the APA meetings sponsored and co-sponsored by the CSW. I would like to thank all of you who work so hard to organize these sessions, and those who participate in them. If you have specific ideas for session topics or participants, or would like to organize future sessions, please let me know at mckenna@plu.edu. Other ideas for the CSW are also welcome.

I would also like to thank Sally Scholz for her very capable and dedicated work on the *Newsletter*. Sally will be moving on to other projects soon, though. If you are interested in applying to edit the *Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy* please see the announcement in this newsletter.

I am excited to continue the work of so many people whom I admire. I know I have benefited from the work of the committee. Until recently I was the only tenure-track woman in my department—not an unusual circumstance. While women colleagues in other departments have been very helpful and supportive I know I have always found the CSW sessions, and its work, a big help as I navigated my role as teacher and scholar. Please let me know what we can do in the next few years to be of use to you. I look forward to serving you in any way I can. Thank you.

Erin McKenna

Chair, Committee on the Status of Women

Department of Philosophy

Pacific Lutheran University

Tacoma, WA 98447

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## ARTICLES

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### *Family Matters: Women in the Profession*

Sharon Crasnow

Riverside Community College

By now everyone is well aware that women struggle in the academic world, as they do in many demanding professions; and that struggle seems to be pretty strongly correlated with family. The 2002 Berkeley study by Mason and Goulden indicates that family has a significant negative effect on the persistence and success of women in academia.<sup>1</sup> The causal chain works in the other direction as well. Women who are successful are significantly less likely to have children, more likely to have only one if they do, and more likely to divorce or to separate from their partners. Perhaps your conversations with other women or your own experiences in the profession have indicated to you that this statistical story has a face and voice within philosophy. These papers tell that story to some extent, but they do more than that because these women are philosophers. They have not only lived these experiences but the experiences have been shaped by and have shaped their philosophical concerns, and their philosophical interests have in turn shaped their understanding of their circumstances.

As you read these papers you will find the details of the stories very different from each other. These stories suggest that there are many ways to put together a life in philosophy. This, in itself, is a refreshing change from the idea that there might be only one way to do this. For instance, women are often told, "Don't have children till you have tenure" or "Never get pregnant in graduate school." But these papers indicate that there are many ways to construct one's life, though it is also clear that choices are rarely made without some costs.<sup>2</sup> In some of these papers you may be struck more by the costs, in others, more by the benefits. One revealing theme that emerges is that the costs were frequently unanticipated, but, perhaps surprisingly, so were the benefits.

So, for instance, Joanne Waugh provides "rules" that came out of her own experience in a long-distance commuting relationship that spanned over twenty years, noting how the philosophical directive to "know thyself" took on a particular meaning for her. Rebecca Kukla tells an unusual and fascinating story of the philosophical and the personal inextricably combined in her family and looks at the effect that this has had and continues to have on each. Jean Keller reflects on the interplay between the statistical story and the personal, focusing on how her philosophical interests and professional life were altered by the adoption of her children. Janet Kourany writes a letter to her daughter advising her, and perhaps all young women, on the dangers of making choices that can put you in circumstances where your confidence in your own ability is undermined. Rosie Tong tells a moving story of her own attempts to "have it all" and hopes for a future in which it is possible for women to do this without having to pay such a high price. Finally, Shelley Park describes her life as a "nomad" as she moved between geographical locations and identities all the while resisting classification.

Three of the papers included here were first presented at the March 2006 Pacific APA meeting in Portland, and then again with two additional papers at the joint Eastern SWIP and Society for Analytical Feminism conference in December of the same year. The first panel was organized in part because as a member of the Committee on the Status of Women I

had that responsibility for the 2006 Pacific APA meetings. The source of the particular idea for this panel is more complex. I had been thinking about and dealing with questions of family and philosophy for some time, for most of my professional life in fact, though I had never written about these issues. In the summer of 2003, I met several younger women at an NEH seminar. They were grappling with the same concerns that had been so dominant in my own life: juggling work and relationships, children, parents. How does one put all these parts of life together so that everyone flourishes? I saw both my younger and current selves in these women, though we were also dissimilar in many ways. (For instance, they are all very much cleverer than I am!) I felt empathy for them and a strong desire to offer advice. But each life is so different in detail, even though similar in broad outline that any advice seemed as though it would be of limited value. I believed my own experiences were idiosyncratic. But also, it was not clear to me that advice was what was called for. I thought it might be valuable, particularly to younger women in philosophy, to hear each other's stories, and so I used the opportunity to put together the panel. The idea that the panel should be repeated was an immediate response to the first. Rosie Tong, who chaired the first panel, revealed the story of her three-hour commute to Temple with baby in tow during the discussion. There was not time to hear more that morning and so it was clear that we needed another panel, if only to hear the rest of the story. But more generally, there was a strong desire among those present to do it again. This was more than the autobiographical impulse. That these are the stories of women in philosophy and so had a resonance with the women who were present both as women and as philosophers is part of the reason why these papers—these stories—have the value that they do.

The papers are written in the conversational tone in which they were first delivered, so sit down, read them, and participate in the conversation. Apart from being interesting stories in themselves, these papers have the affect of affirming both the woman telling the story and those to whom they are told. We recognize ourselves here and it is unusual to see ourselves in such a venue. The dominant style of writing in philosophy so discourages the mixing of the personal and philosophical, but surely the philosophy we do is personal in many ways, even when it is not made so explicitly. We are personally committed to the work, doing it is part of who we are as women, as mothers, as lovers, and as daughters. These papers acknowledge that and so acknowledge the lives of women in philosophy.

Let me close by recognizing that these papers are limited in how much they can tell us about all women philosophers, however. One of the philosophical challenges this panel confronts is the tension between the particular and the general. The statistics tell us the story through one means and the individuals tells it through another. But, it is nearly impossible to read the stories of particular individuals without thinking of them as representative. Since that is so, these papers fail to accurately represent because they lack diversity. These papers, even collectively, cannot speak for all women since there are many significant voices missing here—voices of women of color, of single women, of lesbians, bisexual, transgendered women, and of others as well. However, even if all voices were heard, a group of individuals could never present the whole picture unless every single voice were heard. This is a goal worth striving for, but to achieve that goal it is necessary for the conversation to begin and be ongoing. These panels were an attempt to move our private conversations into the public sphere. Let's continue the conversation and ensure that it is inclusive.

## Endnotes

1. Mary Ann Mason and Marc Goulden. "Do Babies Matter? The Effect of Family Formation on the Lifelong Careers of Academic Men and Women." *Academe* 88:6 (November-December 2002): 21-27; and Mary Ann Mason and Marc Goulden. "Do Babies Matter (Part II)? Closing the Baby Gap." *Academe* 90:6 (November-December 2004): 11-15.
2. Mason and Goulden indicate that there is statistical evidence that these particular rules do have some merit. The papers here remind us that statistics track generalities and not individuals.

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## 'We Are Now Beginning Our Descent into Miami'—Twenty Years of Philosophy on the Fly

Joanne Waugh

University of South Florida

Two-city, two-career commuting relationships are not at all unusual in contemporary academic life. When I began to commute nearly twenty-five years ago, however, such relationships were sufficiently novel to prompt a piece in the *New York Times*. After twenty years of commuting, the effects that long-term commuting have on one's personal and professional life are topics about which I know a little, and I was delighted to receive the invitation to participate in the "Family Matters" discussion that appears in this volume.

When casting about for an approach to my topic that would permit me to present what I know (or think I know) in a way that might best serve my audience, I hit upon *The Accidental Tourist*, a movie directed by Lawrence Kasdan based on the novel by Anne Tyler. If you cannot recall it—or do not know it—*The Accidental Tourist* is a story of a writer from a rather odd family (as if there were some that are not) who writes for those, like himself, whose work makes them reluctant if regular travelers. In the film, William Hurt, in a series of voice-overs, recites a set of rules for accidental tourists. I offer rules in the same spirit, for it is usually assumed that if one must commute for professional reasons, she does so reluctantly.

I begin by noting that there was nothing accidental about my choosing a career in philosophy (although it may not have been as overdetermined as Rebecca's Kukla's choice, as described in her piece in this issue). I decided that I wanted to teach philosophy in my first philosophy class in the first semester of my first year of college. I took a very brief detour—four months—into law, because in 1972 the APA had asked all graduate programs to send out a letter to prospective applicants explaining that they should not go to graduate school with the expectation of ever securing a position teaching philosophy. But knowing that I wanted to spend my days doing philosophy was—and is—the only thing I have ever known with certainty, and this seemed reason enough to go to graduate school. This brings me to rule #1.

*Rule #1: Rational choice theories notwithstanding, if you fall in love with something as quickly and completely as I fell in love with the idea of teaching philosophy, trying to be sensible is not very, well, sensible. This might also be true of falling in love with someone that quickly and completely, but it seems we are even less likely to fall out of love with the idea of how we want to live and how we want to be in the world, than we are likely to fall out of love with a person. This is, of course, the very definition of a philosopher, or at least it was in Antiquity. For the Ancients, philosophy was, first and foremost, a way of living.*

It is a way of life that requires, now as then, that we live in accordance with the Socratic maxim “know thyself.” (I had to include this somewhere, for one of my specialties is Ancient Greek philosophy.) Self-knowledge—or at least the pursuit of self-knowledge—is extremely important if one is to choose wisely when confronted with the option of combining a relationship and family with a profession or vocation that entails long-term commuting. It may be of some philosophical interest that the knowledge provided me by my twenty years experience of commuting belied who I thought I was. This has increased my appreciation of French feminism, which, unlike much Anglo-American philosophy, gives the unconscious its due. Acknowledging the unconscious is not an easy thing for philosophers to do, especially if we neglect moral psychology—actual motives and actual consequences as well as the very real imperatives of culture and society—in favor of carefully defined yet imaginary scenarios featuring agents named A and B, and involving decisions about trolleys or transplants. Such improbable scenarios permit the rational reconstruction of human behavior so as to maximize rational agency and autonomy, without paying much if any attention to one’s embodiment in a particular social and cultural context, at a specific place and time. (“Maximize” is, in my opinion, a horrid, but in this context, necessary and, perhaps, even fitting word.) That some feminist philosophers have found approaches maximizing rational agency irrelevant if not hostile to their concerns reflects the degree to which such rational reconstructions omit the very factors that would explain why being embodied as a woman (or as a man, for that matter) affects the ways one is, and is in the world. Those who urge that these objections be discounted because they suggest women are irrational miss the point. The world in which decisions about family and profession are made is not the one that appears in these theoretical exercises. What is at issue is just how rational such reconstructions are if they are to acknowledge what we experience as (1) the radical contingency of the world, albeit itself irrational; (2) the gap between our embodied experience and attempts to constrain it through social regulation and to subject it to scientific classification; and (3) the dissonance between our conscious, articulated choices and the actions that determine our lives. We are not always conscious, or allow ourselves to be conscious, of all that we have learned about ourselves and about our world, and some if not much of what we know is a matter of how our bodies make our way in the world, even if we cannot articulate this knowledge as a sequence of interrelated propositions. One can know and remember how to ride a bicycle without being able to formulate the laws of physics that are in play when she rides, and the knowledge of the heart is hard won, even harder to articulate, and often so painful that we can only retain it unconsciously, in the body. This brings me to another rule.

*Rule #2: The injunction “know thyself” is much harder to accomplish than it is to exhort, especially if one goes about it as a contemporary philosopher, at least one who does not take seriously what the French feminists have to say about how one becomes who she is and comes to know that person. Contemporary philosophers—male and female—who eschew such insights may be hard pressed to acquire the kind of knowledge they need—or to know all of who they are—to make decisions about how they want to live and whether long-term commuting can be part of the lives they imagine for themselves and their families. The desire, if not the need, to deceive ourselves can wreak havoc in the best laid plans. To be more specific, rule #3:*

*Rule #3: When contemplating a position that will require that one work and—for intermittent though regular periods*

*of time—live apart from one’s family, ask yourself whether you are prepared to do this for an extended and indefinite period, perhaps up to twenty years.*

You cannot assume that commuting will be temporary because “things will work out.” They may, of course, but the odds, as we all know, are against you. In the field of philosophy, women are disproportionately junior faculty. One is likely to be applying for an entry-level position at an institution about which she knows very little other than what appears on the website, what she learns by hearsay, and what members of its philosophy (or other) department tell her. She must persuade faculty, who know far better than she what is required to succeed there, that of all those whom they have interviewed, she is the best person for their department. To complicate matters, in the majority of cases one will be applying for a position at an institution that has lower research activity (to use the vocabulary currently in vogue) than the university at which she received her doctorate. It is difficult enough to avoid giving the impression that one suffers from what Clifford Geertz has dubbed the “the Exile from Eden” syndrome, without having also to persuade those interviewing her that although they do not yet know it, they need her partner as well. If it is not appropriate for one’s partner to take an entry level position, the situation is hardly better. It does not make much sense that someone with less of a track record would be the reason that someone with more of a track record gets hired (not that the Academy is all that sensible). If one’s partner would clearly be an asset to this institution, she should not need to tell the interviewing department this, unless the partner’s field is sufficiently distant from philosophy that the department cannot be expected to know his or her work. Last but unfortunately not least, one should not underestimate the power of *schadenfreude*. That I did not encounter it among my colleagues at USF was, I now see in retrospect, crucial to my being able to combine successfully my personal and professional life, and something of a miracle. *Schadenfreude* is, alas, no less common—and may very well be more common—among academics than among those in other walks of life. It is likely that there will be one or more people who would frustrate your attempts to make your life happier just because they cannot be happy unless others are not. Indeed, do not underestimate the power of such dark emotions as the once deadly sins of lust, greed, spite, and envy, despite philosophers’ professed affection for rationality. This is not to suggest that those involved in a dual career union that entails commuting not make the occasional pass at jobs in the same city. But making this the center of your lives will take its toll both personally and professionally.

Having broached the subterranean regions of the heart and soul, it is important to consider the possibility that you are actually, albeit perhaps, secretly attracted rather than discouraged by the possibility of commuting. This brings us to the all important rule #4.

*Rule #4: You must ask yourself whether, in fact, you are or will be a reluctant commuter.*

I suggest this not—or not simply—because I believe a measure of personal autonomy is very important, especially for women. My question, rather, comes as a result of my experience of describing my commuting life to those who had no reason to edit what they were saying. When one commutes between two cities for twenty years she ends up explaining her living and working situation with great regularity to a wide variety of people whom she does not know well if at all, and with whom she is unlikely to have many if any future dealings. A commuter can only schedule dental or medical appointments, or get her hair cut, or have someone come to fix the air-conditioning on specific days in alternate weeks. My experience was that when

the person to whom I was explaining my situation was male, his response—without exception—was: “That’s just terrible. How do you stand it? Can’t you and your husband get jobs in the same place?” Yet when the person to whom I was speaking was female, her response inevitably was: “That is just great. How did you manage that? I wish I had a few days entirely to myself every week.” The same-sex couples whom I have known who were involved in long-term commuting relationships seemed to find it somewhat easier than commuters in male/female relationships. But I think the difficulties that arise in a commuting relationship are not a matter of whether it is a same sex or heterosexual union; rather, they are a matter of deciding whether to have children. The real question about commuting usually comes down to the question of whether one wants to have or be a family, and how one conceives of it.

*Rule #5: There are two distinct though quite often related questions you must think through before beginning a commuting relationship. The first is whether you are certain that you want to form a family, and what shape you would like it to take. The second is, if your family is going to consist only of you and your partner, whether you want or need to live with each other on a daily basis.*

At a very young age I knew that I did not want a traditional family, which at the time meant a man who worked outside the home and a woman who worked inside it as a wife and mother. I was fairly adamant about this, and not because I thought my family unhappy, or my mother not admirable. Indeed, I thought just the opposite, or at least this is what I believed on a conscious level (there is that pesky unconscious again). I felt that a traditional home and family would be for me an unbearable burden, literally, one that I would not be able to bear. The only sense I could make of this on a conscious level was that the responsibility of rearing children was enormous—indeed, there was nothing more important—and that I would not be able to be a good mother and do the other things I wanted and needed to do.

In early 1982 I began seeing Butler—the other half of my twenty-year, dual career, commuting relationship. I was a year and a half out of graduate school—which was the same amount of time that I had been on the faculty at USF. He is a generation older than I, and we were at different points in our careers when we got together. He had already had a career as a faculty member at the University of Florida, and another as one of the five-person team who started Florida International University (FIU), the public university in Miami, and yet another as the Dean of its College of Arts and Sciences. I met him during his subsequent career as a leader in the statewide faculty union. His university appointment was still in Miami but his union duties required that he spend most of his time in Tallahassee, and so ours was a commuting relationship from the very beginning. He had a complex personal history as well. Before we met, he had been married and divorced twice, had six children and a vasectomy. Five of the children were grown, but the youngest one, Will, from his second marriage, was only eight the first time we met.

Not long thereafter, Butler and I picked Will up at his mother’s; he was going to spend a month with his father, and she was going to Nantucket. As we drove away from his mother’s, he was in tears because his sister (from his mother’s first marriage) was going to California to visit her father, and as he put it, “his mother would have no one to take care of her.” We were trying to distract him by talking about Greek mythology since he had just studied it in school, and Butler told him that I was a goddess. Will wiped his eyes, looked up and said, “I know what she’s the goddess of. She’s the goddess of niceness.” Needless to say, I loved him instantly. That remark

was almost as moving and as unforgettable as when he said to me six years later, “You’re really my mother. I mean, you’re not really my mother, but you are really my mother.” When Butler and I began planning a life together, at the same time as Will’s mother began planning a life on a boat with an architect she had met in Nantucket the summer before, I was delighted with the idea of Will’s coming to live with us. Butler would go back to the English department at FIU, and I would commute to Tampa on Tuesdays and stay with one of my friends and fly back to Miami on Thursday or Friday evenings.

We had planned to get married in September 1983. The last day of July, we put Will on a plane to the Virgin Islands; he was going to visit his mother on the boat for a week or two before school started. The next day, August 1, 1983, Butler and I were returning from putting a deposit down on a condominium that the three of us had decided we should buy a few days before, when our car was hit broadside by another car going about sixty miles an hour. I spent two weeks in critical care and another six weeks on the orthopedic floor of the hospital. As a consequence of my injuries, I had a dozen or so operations. Three of my USF colleagues and their spouses came to Miami to visit me while I was in the hospital. Butler spent three weeks in the hospital, ten days of them in critical care. He spent another month flat on his back at home. Will ended up in boarding school in New England. We were married in Miami, March 1984, with family, including Will, and his brother, Charles, and sister, Rebekah, and colleagues from USF and FIU in attendance. One of my colleagues later hosted a wedding reception in Tampa for those friends and colleagues from Tampa who could not make it to the wedding in Miami.

The role that radical contingency can play in “the best laid plans of mice and men,” to say nothing of women, attempting to fashion lives for which there were few precedents, became for me much more than a subject for philosophical speculation. Hence rule #6.

*Rule #6: Your life as a commuter will have the paradoxical character of requiring more planning than the lives of those who do not commute and providing more occasions for disruptions to these plans. There will be much—and if the Fates intervene, perhaps, very much—that will elude your control. If you or your partner cannot stand change and hate to improvise, you need to re-think the whole idea of commuting.*

There was much planning and many disruptions in the twenty years that we commuted, but, when I think back, what I most often remember is the phrase that serves as the title of my paper: “we are now beginning our descent into Miami.” When I heard this I knew it was time to put the papers I was grading or the thesis or dissertation chapters I was reading into my carry-on. I always got even more work done on the plane back to Tampa, though. It became my favorite time for doing that kind of work; in fact, I became so accustomed to it that even though I no longer commute, I take theses and dissertations to read when I travel. By far the worst time of the commute between Tampa and Miami was waiting to get on and off the plane to Miami.

After I got tenure, we both taught in Florence for a semester, and when we returned from Italy, we bought an apartment in Tampa. A year after that, we also bought an apartment in Miami. Butler and I shared the commuting for the next fifteen years. Whether and how commuting affects your being granted tenure depends, of course, on the tenure expectations of your institution. Obviously, it matters whether your appointment is at a liberal arts college, a university that does not offer a degree in philosophy beyond the B.A. or M.A., or a research university that offers the Ph.D. in philosophy. It also matters whether it is

true at your institution, as the old academic adage has it, “that if they want to keep you they’ll find a way to keep you, and if they want to get rid of you, they’ll find a way to get rid of you.” It was so long ago that I was granted tenure—USF did not have yet a doctoral program in philosophy, faculty were not yet being issued their own computers, and research still required carrying large stacks of bound periodicals and a bag full of change to the photocopying machine—that my own experience cannot be of much help here. But I am guessing that the availability of laptop computers for faculty, the existence of the Internet and one’s ability to gain access to it by cell phone, and the marvels of J-STOR, Project Muse, and Blackboard would be a tremendous help in managing your research and teaching while commuting.

I do not think one can underestimate the importance of support from your colleagues and your chair. There were no objections from my colleagues or department chairs about my Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and some time Friday schedule. In fact, for the twenty years that Butler and I commuted, my colleagues were terrifically supportive of my attempt to maintain a two-career, two-city marriage. Once in a great while, a senior faculty member—at times a man and at other times a woman—made oblique statements to the effect that I should be in town and available lest the University need me, although they themselves were not always in town and would have objected had anyone suggested they should be. But even those two former faculty members never really made an issue of my schedule, despite the fact that we were often on opposite sides of a question and very often had strong disagreements.

I know now that this kind of support is very rare, and I suspect that the reason for the good will and support of my colleagues, who were all male for many years, was that we were all part of what my son, Will, calls “the peace, love, and granola generation.” We were politically oriented and committed to change. This is no surprise from those who were sent home from schools with pamphlets about bomb shelters in the ’50s; who witnessed both the inauguration of John F. Kennedy in 1960 and his assassination in 1963, as well as the later assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy; and who watched the civil rights movement unfold—looking at pictures of dogs and hoses being turned on civil rights marchers and of big, hulking, grown-up white men shouting insults at little black girls in carefully ironed white dresses trying to go to the first day of integrated school. We also saw live coverage of Vietnamese monks setting themselves ablaze, and college students being billy-clubbed by the Chicago police at the 1968 Democratic convention. We had far fewer than six degrees of separation from the students killed at Kent State. We watched the Watergate hearings, which occurred the year I received my BA in philosophy—and the impeachment hearings and Nixon’s resignation in 1974—the year I began graduate school. What came from living through this incredible ten to fifteen years was a belief that major social changes could take place, and one could be a part of them.

To give you a sense of how quickly things changed, I recall that when I entered a woman’s college as a freshman in 1969, whenever one of the seniors got engaged she and her friends would stand on their chairs and sing a song, the words of which I never knew, as she flashed her engagement ring. These were women who talked about marrying a lawyer or doctor or a professor. By the time I was a senior, four years later, no one was engaged, none of us would have been caught dead singing in celebration of an engagement or even admiring an engagement ring, and we were going to be lawyers or doctors or professors, not marry them. Many of us did become professors, doctors, and lawyers as well as marry them, or form with them life-long

relationships. And although there was no shortage of sexism on the job trail—I was told by one chair at a campus interview that he was sure I would want to join the University Women’s Group for their annual quilting bee—there were a lot of men who were quite sincere in wanting to hire a woman (inevitably the lone woman) in their department. My colleagues began hiring women around 1976, although three women before me had chosen not to stay at USF. In sum, they wanted it to work for me and it did. This brings me to Rule #7.

*Rule #7: If you have the support of your colleagues—if they want things to work out for you—you can make a dual career, commuting relationship work. If you do not have their support, it is still possible that it will work, of course. I think it will not be easy, or at least not as easy as it was for me.*

In my experience, there is one more thing a woman philosopher needs in order to be happy, whether or not she has a partner or a family, with or without commuting. This is a best friend, preferably another philosopher, with whom one can discuss—in the same, often long distance, conversation—such things as the difference between *de dicto* and *de re* and whether anyone still cares about it, the advantages of short versus long hair, how writing a given paper is kicking one in various parts of her body, what point, if any, there is to the presidential election debates, whether one should get acrylic nails if her nails become brittle, the importance of Rorty’s *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, or, better yet, *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, the debate on the SWIP list about “passing” as a macho philosopher, the endearing and annoying things done by one’s partner and/or one’s siblings, the strong program in the philosophy of science, what one’s children or one’s niece or one’s nephew has just done at school, how completing a long and complex proof in logic made one want to spike the chalk, what, if anything, Plato is teaching and how he teaches it, and how absolutely necessary these conversations are for one’s sanity and well-being.

*Rule #8: Somewhere in your philosophical life—and if you are lucky as early as graduate school—you have met or will meet another woman philosopher with whom you can talk about everything and anything. This is a relationship that can and should last a lifetime, with or without commuting. (It is wise, however, for both of you to have unlimited long distance as part of your telephone service and to be part of the same wireless network).*

### **Postscript:**

As I write this, I have a new friend and colleague, Rebecca Kukla. We met at the Pacific APA meeting in Portland, where we were both members of the “Family Matters” panel, organized by Sharon Crasnow, who is the woman philosopher I met in graduate school who has been my closest friend ever since. The next day, Rebecca, Sharon, and I went shopping and stopped for coffee. I told Rebecca about an upcoming position at USF for which she was uniquely qualified. She joined our faculty in May 2007. The “Family Matters” panel was so well received at the Pacific APA meeting that we added some new members and did another “Family Matters” panel at the meeting of the Eastern Division of the Society for Women in Philosophy, held in conjunction with the Society for Analytical Feminism at USF in December 2006. Sharon and I still talk every week about everything and anything that matters to us as women and philosophers. It was Sharon who first formulated rule #8 during the NEH Summer Seminar on Feminist Epistemology at the University of Pittsburgh in 2003.

She is now the commuter in the two-city, two-career, relationship.



Butler retired from FIU in 2003. We sold the apartment in Miami and bought an apartment in Pass-A-Grille Beach, forty-five minutes from USF, where I am still teaching. We are planning to sell the Tampa apartment so we can get a place farther north to escape the summer heat. Will got married in October 2004, and in my bedroom on the wall hangs a picture from the festivities of Will's two moms and their new daughter-in-law Katy.

*Rule #9: There are different kinds of families and different kinds of careers in philosophy, and you can commute and still have both. There's life after commuting, too, and if you are very lucky, it will be at the beach.*

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## **Familiar Thinking: Reflections of a Mother, Philosopher, Philosopher's Wife, and Philosopher's Daughter**

**Rebecca Kukla**

*Carleton University*

Becoming a philosopher was a matter of continuing the family business. My father is a philosopher of science who recently retired after thirty-five years of service at the University of Toronto. My husband is an epistemologist who is tenured in the same department as I am. My little sister attempted to rebel against familial destiny by becoming a rabbi, but she spends much of her time writing scholarly papers on the relative conceptual priority of ontology and ethics. My five-year-old—who is years behind his peers in learning to ride a bicycle and zip up his own coat—asked me last year whether I thought there was any difference between the real and the actual, and told me last month that he had noticed that his kindergarten classmates did not have as many “theories and arguments” as he did. Hence, for me, philosophical discourse and family discourse are one and the same—a situation that I think contains an interesting paradox. For one of the central tropes of philosophical discourse is a *distancing* from the familiar; we philosophers seek clarity and depth through scrupulous abstraction away from all of the messy empirical details of daily life, often setting our examples on distant planets or in imaginary worlds in order to help us carry out this mental act of what we might call *defamiliarization*—an act that non-philosophers find perplexing and difficult. Consider a classic example such as early twentieth-century sense-datum theory, which held that what we saw most immediately were not worldly objects, but meaningless, alien configurations of patches and flashes. Sense-datum theory asks us to reach into the unfamiliar to recover our own perceptual experience, and then struggle to infer our way back to the everyday world we left. Since childhood, such defamiliarizing discourse has been the medium in which I have negotiated my most intimate relationships and my mundane daily activities.

My father was trained at UCLA in the '60s, by Carnap and other logical positivists. As he is fond of telling me, he took introductory philosophy of science from Richard Montague, who opened the class by announcing that “scientific theories are sets of ordered quintuplets.” Furthermore, he was a Holocaust survivor and a secular, diasporic Jew, for whom unfamiliarity and lack of roots in any concrete environment were second nature, and for whom the ability to live in alternative, imagined worlds was a crucial survival skill. My father had nothing resembling an ordinary childhood and almost no contact with his parents, who were taken to concentration camps, so he had to figure out parenting without models, from first principles. He interacted with his daughters in the tongue he knew and

loved—the tongue that had finally given him a permanent home when he showed up at UCLA speaking English as a fourth language—and this was the defamiliarizing language of philosophy. When we were children, my father encouraged an ongoing family competition to see who could spot infinite regresses the fastest, and we had a little song we would sing when we found one. At bedtime, my sister and I would clamour for a “rap” instead of a traditional story. In our family parlance, a “rap” was a quick explanation of a famous philosophical puzzle or argument. Thus, in my pajamas and well before puberty, I learned about Hume's and Goodman's problems of induction, Descartes' argument for dualism, and Cantor's diagonal proof of the existence of different orders of infinities. We would beg him to tell us about such things again and again—they formed our family mythology.

When I became a philosophy major in my father's department, we went to colloquia and sat in on seminars together, the way other parents and their kids go fishing. When I was nineteen, he and I coauthored my very first publication—a little article in *Analysis* on Fodor's critique of meaning holism. I kept it a secret from my parents when I betrayed my Vienna Circle heritage by signing up for an existentialism course. Soon after, I left for graduate school in philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh, along with a whole cohort of children of University of Toronto philosophy professors, who had a tradition of sending their kids to that program. Ten years later, as 1999 came to an end, my father called to ask me if I wanted to come home for New Year's Eve and watch the emeralds turn from grue to bleen with him.

When I grew up and married a philosopher, philosophers' discourse became the everyday medium of adult domesticity in our household. Quite unselfconsciously, my husband and I discuss our restaurant options in terms of biconditionals and nearby possible worlds, and accuse one another during domestic squabbles of inappropriately demanding necessary and sufficient conditions. Our wedding vows cited both Heidegger and Wilfrid Sellars. When I was pregnant, our friends teased us that our child would be able to say “Geist” and “being” long before “cow” or “chicken.” The abstract and excruciatingly precise rhetoric of philosophy is so deeply built into our tongue that even when we feel like we are being utterly mundane, bank tellers and waiters often ask us what the hell we do for a living anyhow.

You might think that given my childhood and my home life, I would have had an easier time than most other people turning my professional philosophical voice to the concreteness of everyday domestic life. But, in fact, I think just the opposite might be true. Whereas most of my colleagues *return from* the peculiar, intentionally alienated discourse of philosophy to the familiar when they go home for Thanksgiving, or negotiate family business with their spouse, I almost never leave that discursive space. But the thing is, philosophical discourse does not merely eschew or abstract from the familiar—it *fears* it, and seeks the alien for comfort. We philosophers see the concrete and quotidian as a stain upon the purity of our work—we worry that it is too messy, too contingent, too complicated to allow the conceptual clarity we seek. If we must think about something as concrete as abortion, we would rather do so by imagining women hooked up by tubes to full-grown violinists than by talking about women frightened by poverty trying to take care of their children while soaking through maxipads after their operations. For me, philosophical discourse and its defamiliarizing tropes and themes feel safe, authoritative, and legitimizing. Like a true child of the Diaspora, I am most at home in unfamiliar and alien territory.

But I was launched into the familiar when I had my son. I found the experience of becoming a mother so bizarre, interesting, overwhelming, and transformative that I absolutely could not help but devote myself to thinking about it carefully, and of course the only thinking tools I had were philosophical ones. I wanted to think about the nature and meaning of privacy, the retention or loss of identity through profound transformation, how to articulate a robust notion of love that did not presuppose equality or reciprocity and yet was not patronizing or usurious, how love could coexist with anger and resentment, the ethics of dependency and nurturing, and the phenomenology of having one's own body split slowly but inexorably from one person into two. And I did not want to use my mothering or my child as a springboard for thinking about these issues abstractly—rather, I wanted, even needed, to think through them with direct reference to my lived experience right then and there.

When my son was first born, I poured my thoughts and writing energy around these topics into fiction, scrupulously avoiding any philosophical writing. Interestingly, I not only felt that these were not properly philosophical thoughts that I was having, but also that doing any philosophy so soon after his birth would somehow be a betrayal of my newborn son and a blemish on my commitment as a new mother. I churned out 250 pages of what was likely a very bad novel about bodies, intimacy, privacy, medicalization, home, and breaches in people's identities and self-conceptions. But eventually, as I gained confidence as a mother and began to reflect critically upon my inherited assumptions about what counts as philosophical discourse, I decided that I had to try to write about these issues in a professional philosophical voice.

Although I had long been aiming to finish a book on either of the two research projects that I had pursued since graduate school—one on the nature of objectivity and the other on Rousseau's metaphysics and aesthetics—my first book turned out to be about mothers' bodies, pregnancy, and infant feeding. In order to write the book, I had to spend a lot of time learning about anatomy, medicine, prenatal care, nutrition, the history of wet nursing, and many other mundane topics to which philosophers rarely turn their attention. I now spend a big chunk of my professional time talking to obstetricians, epidemiologists, anthropologists, and others who find the defamiliarizing style of philosophers utterly bizarre and incomprehensible. I am slowly and laboriously learning a language in which I can converse productively with these new colleagues.

I have made this transition into thinking philosophically about the familiar with trepidation and self-doubt. I have had a hard time convincing myself that this new work counts as "real" philosophy. I still find myself defensive about my new interests among my old epistemology and history of philosophy buddies—I am always anxious to explain to them how I am still doing my old stuff too, and how I am actually still talking about familiar philosophical problems. Indeed, I am particularly defensive in my conversations with my father and my husband, even though they have been supportive of my work at every turn. Although I have recently found a happy professional niche for myself, in a philosophy department that seemingly welcomes and values my quirky constellation of interests,<sup>1</sup> this situation did not come easily. Along the way, I faced concrete professional penalties for the direction my work took. For example, when I was up for a senior position in a top department a couple of years ago, the chair of the search committee told one of my referees that they would have wanted to hire me on the basis of the quality and quantity of my work in epistemology and history of philosophy alone, were it not for all that weird feminist and mommy stuff cluttering up my vita. At the same time, I still feel unsettled in academic spaces that do not

belong to the discipline of philosophy. I do not actually have any interest in leaving philosophy entirely behind—I want to enrich its discourse and its field of vision from within, as best I can. I want to give philosophy matter and flesh, to force it to confront the contingency and concretia of the everyday. But this is still unfamiliar territory for me—a skill my father never taught me.

What have been the costs of such defamiliarizing discourse to the discipline of philosophy itself? Of course, it has made it harder for many of our students to grasp why philosophy is interesting, and it has made us less than popular at interdisciplinary conferences, when we start talking about the inhabitants of twin earth and about people-seeds drifting in through window screens. It has made it easier for us to teach and use the texts by the great philosophers who also feared the familiar, such as Descartes and Kant, compared with those by the few who did not, such as Heidegger and Rousseau. I suspect that it has also helped to maintain the paucity of women in the field; for whatever reason, women often seem more compelled to turn their intellectual attention to the familiar than men, and we have not generally found professional philosophy to be hospitable to such work. But these are external roadblocks—I want to explore briefly how our fear of the familiar has damaged philosophical thinking itself.

This fear has generated at least one fallacy endemic to philosophy. This is the fallacy of inferring, without further argument, from what is true of fringe or marginal cases to what is true of central cases—or, correspondingly, assuming that because an account or distinction *does not* hold up at the far edges of its applicability, therefore it does not hold up in the central or paradigm cases either. The fact is, sometimes margins work the same way as centers, and sometimes they do not; and likewise, sometimes consideration of fringe cases can bring clarity, and other times it can mislead. So for instance, in the wake of Gettier, it took philosophers a long time to climb their way back to the idea that even if justified true belief does not constitute knowledge in an unfamiliar town filled with carefully constructed barn façades, this does not mean that justified true belief does not constitute knowledge in the course of normal perception.<sup>2</sup> There is no good reason to think that the *real, proper* account of how knowledge works—the one that philosophers should care about—is one that can give us complete certainty when our environment is a strange one designed to deceive us, rather than one that can account for the good-enough knowledge that gets us through the day.

Consider another example. Quine and Davidson developed careful and eloquent accounts of how we could understand other people's language through "radical interpretation"—that is, interpretation in the face of a complete lack of familiarity with the grammar or the meaning of their language or the culture surrounding it. How, they asked, could we achieve a hermeneutic meeting when confronted with the utterly alien? Where do we begin when "natives" about whom we know absolutely nothing shout "gavagai!" at us? This is a fair enough question. But why should we think that it is *this* type of limit case that best illuminates, or provides us with the essence somehow, of what goes on in everyday interpretation and conversation between people who kind of understand what the other person means, and kind of do not?<sup>3</sup> And even if Davidson is right that his theory of radical interpretation has as a consequence that there are no such things as *radically* incommensurable conceptual schemes, then why should this take the bite out of the philosophical importance of the partial divergences between our conceptual schemes—the ones that can be bridged imperfectly, with work? (My husband and I have fought about this particular bit of Davidson so many times that

we have instated a permanent moratorium on discussing that particular Davidson article with one another.) Philosophers are masters at using fringe, borderline, and alien cases in order to generate counterexamples that reveal the weaknesses or limits of our intuitions about more typical cases. However, we are novices at the reverse skill: using explorations of the familiar and the everyday in order to provide checks on our confidence in our reasoning at the fringes of imaginative accessibility.

I think that our fear of the familiar has also resulted in our inability to fully articulate and absorb certain arguments. For example, philosophy since at least Wittgenstein has been rife with detailed arguments designed to show that we cannot properly understand meaning, morality, autonomy, identity, or knowledge without carefully attending to the contextual and the particular, and to interpersonal relationships. Such arguments have come from phenomenologists, feminists, pragmatists, Aristotle scholars, and others. Usually, the arguments themselves are conducted in an abstract and impersonal voice that remains at the meta-level; that is, they tell us, in the same defamiliarized language whose severe limits they hope to show, that such language is insufficient to the project of philosophy. As my father pointed out to me decades ago, most philosophers who argue against metanarratives are in fact spinning meta-metanarratives. Few philosophers actually go on to philosophically mine the particularities to which they plead with us to attend. We feel the need to offer such arguments again and again, but they neither live up to their own standards, nor succeed in compelling a real change in philosophical practice.

Most people already have to make a defamiliarizing leap away from the discourse of their childhood in order to pursue professional philosophy in the first place, often to the bafflement of parents who are doctors, office workers, etc. In contrast, philosophy is my mother tongue—the language of home and family—and hence there is no defamiliarizing distance built in from the start. But at the same time, if I challenge the hegemonic discourse, methods, or topics of philosophy, I challenge my father, my childhood, my husband, and perhaps even my diasporic secular Jewish heritage. I have only recently realized the extent to which my personal identity and self-esteem are built around my legitimacy as a professional philosopher. However, I intend to continue to try to force philosophy to attend to the familiar. I do so out of fidelity to my intimate relationships and daily activities, which demand and deserve my caring philosophical attention, and out of fidelity to the discipline of philosophy, which deserves to be enriched from within.

#### Endnotes

1. Thanks in large part to the support and hard work of my friend and new colleague Joanne Waugh, whose story also appears in this issue.
2. See John McDowell, *Mind and World* (Harvard 1994), for this point, and my thanks to my husband, Richard Manning, for making the point clear to me.
3. I thank Rob Stainton for first raising this question clearly for me.

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## ***Making a Place for the Other: A Letter to My Daughter***

**Janet A. Kourany**  
*University of Notre Dame*

Dear Sonya:

It is time you knew the facts surrounding your birth, so that you do not make the same mistakes I did.

I met your father at—where else?—an APA meeting. He had just gotten his Ph.D. from Pittsburgh, had just started his first university teaching job, and was then cruising around the lobby of the Hyatt Regency Atlanta looking for romance. And what better place to find it than at an Eastern Division American Philosophical Association meeting, with 5,000 men and five women (this was back in 1973)—a gay guy's paradise, to be sure, but he was straight. Nevertheless, he found me and I found him. We were married a year and a half later. There was only one hitch: I was finishing up work for my Ph.D. from Columbia and teaching at one university while Dad's new job was at another, hundreds of miles away. What to do?

What didn't we do? We went on the job market looking for two jobs in the same place, or a job and a half, or a job and a quarter, or even one job that we could share. We tried to get Dad hired at my university. We tried to get me hired at his. We took alternate leaves. We revised our teaching schedules: for example, I started to teach during my university's Summer Quarter so that I could take off to be with Dad during my Winter Quarter. We wrote joint papers so that we could see each other at conferences. We lavished support on telephone companies and airlines. And we were patient: we waited until first one and then the other got tenure in order to be in the strongest possible position in the job market. And finally, with you on the way, I—no, obviously I didn't abort you, or put you up for adoption—but I did something that seemed, at the time, almost as painful: I resigned my tenured associate professor position at my university to become an adjunct associate professor at Dad's.

How bad was that? According to the terms of the original agreement with Dad's university I was to teach two sections of informal logic every year and one other course of my own choosing—roughly a half-time appointment in those days—and I was to be paid half of an associate professor's salary. Moreover, I was to have no benefits or retirement contributions from the university, but I was to have no committee or other departmental or university responsibilities as well. This didn't sound too bad. Of course, the Department at the time did not have the money to pay quite half of an associate professor's salary right off, but that would come. Well, it never did. The chair who promised it moved out of the Department into administration the next year, and by that time he had no recollection of his promise. So, no longer with ties to my old university, I had to negotiate with a new chair, and some years later with yet a newer one, both, to put it mildly, not well-disposed towards adjuncts. Meanwhile, the standard teaching load went down to four courses a year. This left me teaching three-fourths time at less than half-salary—with no benefits to boot.

Then why did I do it? This was the time of nepotism rules, both written and unwritten, at Dad's university and elsewhere, and the thought of a married couple in the Philosophy Department was just too unsavory to some of the more powerful men in the Department. Nepotism was not the only obstacle to a regular position at Dad's university, however. As significant was the fact that my research interests at the time duplicated those of others in the Department, though some of the courses I had taught at my university—especially informal logic—were of considerable teaching interest. Comparable problems had stymied Dad at my university. His research interests duplicated those of people already there and, although he had already published quite a bit, it was not thought that he could be a significant asset to that department either. So our options had been for Dad to become an adjunct at my university, for me to become an adjunct at his, or for both of us to keep our positions and for one of us to raise you largely alone. Of these three options my becoming an adjunct at Dad's university seemed

the best since it provided better students, better research opportunities, and a stronger philosophy program for both Dad and me, two parents for you, and a large and active history and philosophy of science community for me as well. True, my university provided opportunities such as skiing for you, but you did not point that out at the time.

Never mind that the whole situation was exploitative, that the array of options that had led to it was callously meager, that both universities, both Dad's and mine, should have been more accommodating, more encouraging to two young people with a new baby trying to maintain two careers. What were my mistakes and how could I have avoided them? First, I should have asked for more information right at the start. I should have asked why I could not have even a half-time regular position, whether tenured or tenure-producing, one that could turn into a full-time position later on. If sexism were involved I should have worked to make it explicit so that I could at least try to deal effectively with it. I should have asked under what conditions, if any, I would be able to change my status to a regular position, and if I could never change my status under any conditions, I should have asked what the justification was for that. I should have asked under what conditions, if any, I would be able to improve my status even if it could never be changed. I should have asked exactly how my salary and any possible salary increases would be determined and I should have asked what research supports I would have. I was so busy being grateful that Dad's university was making a place for me, so conscious of the favor they were doing me and the power I did not have, that I never bothered to find out exactly what kind of favor it was and for whom. Finally, I should have gotten all this information in writing so that, no matter who became chair, I would have an established understanding on which to rely.

So, failure to get information was my first mistake. But failure to give information was my second. I have frequently heard from people in commuting relationships that their colleagues are amazingly insensitive. These colleagues simply ignore the problems in a commuting relationship and act as though everything about it is fine. But colleagues cannot know the problems unless we tell them. At my old university, for example, I had been criticized by a colleague because I took off Winter Quarter to be with your father and taught Summer Quarter instead (when he could be with me). But, the colleague pointed out, there were heavy committee responsibilities during Winter Quarter and none to speak of during the summer. So, he concluded, I had an easier situation than anyone else, and it was unfair. Had I tried to make clear to my colleague the difficulties of being separated from your father during the entire academic year, year in and year out, how no one else in the Department faced such difficulties but me, and how shirking committee responsibilities was the farthest thing from my mind, he might have withdrawn his criticism. Similarly, had I let my new colleagues at Dad's university know how few rewards came with my adjunct appointment, at least some of them might have come to my aid. Indeed, when I finally did so, some of them did.

People who have interviewed professional women of my generation—people like the journalist Vivian Gornick—have set out poignantly what so many of these women experienced: how they started out full of ambition and promise, how so many of them became trapped in dead-end positions such as research associate positions in the sciences, and how they ended up believing that that was all they could be. Rather than transform a negative environment to meet their needs and deserts, they allowed the negative environment to transform them. Something of that happened to me. Indeed, my third, and probably my worst, mistake was that I allowed

my adjunct status at Dad's university at least to some extent to define me. True, I fought for and eventually got an office with the regular faculty, paid trips to give papers at conferences, the possibility of teaching graduate courses and, in fact, any courses I pleased, and many of the research supports available to the regular faculty, and true, I kept professionally active, but the demoralization took its toll. Ironically, much of what had prevented a regular position in the first place gradually melted away. The nepotism concerns disappeared. The duplication problem also disappeared: the philosophers of science in the Department all moved in different research directions in (and in one case, out of) the field and new faculty and retirements further diversified the group. I myself moved into feminist philosophy of science and feminist philosophy in general, and then into science and social values, and though the thirty to forty men in the Department were never quite comfortable with that, they had to admit it was different from their interests or those of the few women they eventually hired. What did not disappear, however, was the lack of regular status. I should have simply demanded it, and finally I did, though not because I felt an inner certainty that it was long overdue but because a variety of external circumstances ultimately pushed me to it. Indeed, all I did was ask to be considered for a regular position. And all the Department did was grant me my first paid leave of absence when they denied my request. That is when I resigned, paid leave in hand. And that is when I got a regular position.

Why do I bring up this ancient story now? You are still in the coursework phase of your doctoral program, not even up to proposing a dissertation topic. Yet, you are seriously dating a young man who has just landed his first university teaching job far away. Both of you have excellent credentials and you both are full of promise. Yet, some of the same problems that beset my generation are still around for yours.

The hiring of couples, for example. More and more colleges and universities are adopting pro-couples hiring policies, and this is very good. But some may be going too far. Stories are legion about how the wife of the chancellor of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point got her visiting professorship there, or how the provost's wife at California State University's Chico campus got her appointment in the honors program, or how the dean's wife at the University of Idaho's College of Agriculture got her job in administration. It should be no surprise, then, that there is now also a backlash against pro-couples hiring policies. As *The Chronicle of Higher Education* recently reported, many professors are now complaining that taking steps to accommodate partners is "awkward, divisive, and unfair." Said one observer in particular: "Academic institutions are meritocracies in the extreme, and if you start a buddy system, it just looks bad, even if there's nothing wrong with the people involved. You may get the odd star, but you'll pay for it with your morale and your image."<sup>1</sup> Others emphasize that you may get perfectly qualified people, but not necessarily the best people. So, many places (institutions, departments, programs) are now acquiring reputations for being couple-friendly while other places are acquiring reputations for being just the opposite, and which side a place is on frequently has less to do with having resolved the difficult issues regarding couples hiring than with external factors such as whether the place is located in a remote area rather than a large city, or whether it has been successful in meeting its female hiring goals.

The problem of adjunct hiring is still around as well, not only because of current pressures to hire couples, but also because of funding cutbacks in higher education, ever growing numbers of students, and a glut of new Ph.D.s in many fields. Indeed, more than half of all college and university professors are now adjuncts, and this has a disproportionate impact on women,

who often hold these positions, though it certainly affects men as well. These adjuncts face a far worse situation than what I faced when I was an adjunct. They often teach four, five, and even six courses a term just to make ends meet, frequently at a variety of schools, at a salary of as low as \$1,500 to \$2,000 per course, with no health or retirement benefits, no research supports, not even offices in which to meet their students. In such positions, even for a little while, however, the chances for a regular position dwindle. Those who hire regular faculty report that, with 300-400 applicants for a single position, they need some way to weed people out. Fair or not, adjunct status does just that. Though adjuncts' contributions make possible the lighter teaching loads and higher salaries of the regular faculty, adjuncts are seen not as awesome altruists, but as second-rate scholars instead, who deserve no better. And, in that position long enough, they also see themselves as second-rate scholars who deserve no better. Reports the *Washington Post*:

After a while, longtime adjuncts begin to resign themselves to their fate. ...They often give up on doing original research. Mostly they have time only to drive and teach. And they don't cross the invisible line separating adjuncts from full-time members. It's a line that makes one adjunct of 15 years, a winner of several teaching awards, wait till everyone else has eaten when there's food laid out for a department event. He sneaks in later to eat what's left.<sup>2</sup>

This must sound extremely strange to you, for an adjunct to feel so small a part of his department, so small in all their eyes, that he only feels comfortable showing up after all his colleagues have left, but from my days as an adjunct I can understand how he feels. If only such adjuncts could be moved somehow, as I was, to declare their worth and resign. That action would force a reform of our whole system of higher education.

It is always hazardous for a mother to offer advice to her grown daughter, especially when that daughter is as independent and resourceful as you. But I wanted to alert you to some of the challenges that may lie in your future, so you do not make your mother's mistakes all again.

Love always,  
Mom

#### Endnotes

1. Quoted in Robin Wilson, "The Backlash Against Hiring Couples," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (April 13, 2001).
2. Eric L. Wee. "Professor of Desperation: Bad pay, zero job security, no benefits, endless commutes. Is this any way to treat PhDs responsible for teaching a generation of college students?" *Washington Post* (July 21, 2002): Page W24.

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## ***Unforeseen Transformations: One Woman's Reflections on Combining Philosophy and Motherhood***

**Jean Keller**  
*College of St. Benedict*

Motherhood for me has been all about transformations—in how I view myself as a person (I am not nearly as patient as I always thought I was!), in terms of which aspects of my job I put my time and energy into, my research interests, and my ever-evolving understanding of feminist philosophy. Here I tell my personal story of some of these transformations and fit into that story some of the empirical data on professors who are also mothers. What I have learned by doing this empirical research is

that my story is not atypical. Three aspects of this literature that I focus on are 1) the effects of having early versus late babies on rates of achieving tenure for men and women, 2) the so-called "baby gap" between male and female professors, and 3) the effects of marriage and having children on the productivity (measured in terms of numbers of academic publications) of male and female scientists.

First, let me tell you a little something about myself. I am married to a philosopher, although that plays only a tangential role in my comments here. I got a tenure track job at the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University, two small, private, Benedictine liberal arts colleges with a joint curriculum, and my spouse came with me, as he likes to put it, dissertation in hand to seek his fortune. Pretty quickly, marrying me went from one of his worst to one of his best career moves. After several years trying to prove that he was indispensable to the department and college, he was put on a tenure track line.

We have two children, a five-year-old boy and a three-year-old girl, both adopted from South Korea. At some point in the adoption process, I realized with some surprise that I fell into the category of "older mother," in that I had my first child at age thirty-eight. In this respect, I am not atypical for academic mothers, many of whom are "older mothers" because they postpone motherhood until after they achieve tenure. We postponed children until my tenure was virtually assured and my spouse was on a tenure track line. We did not want having children to damage both our careers. When we finally did decide to have children, we were not able to have them biologically. We do not know if this infertility was age related or not. For us, making the transition from birth children to adopting was effortless, and we now cannot imagine having created a family any other way. I mention this, however, because many women are deeply invested in the idea of having biological children and one "downfall" to postponing children until securing tenure can be infertility.

As you can see from the point #I in the Appendix, the timing of having babies can have a significant effect on men's and women's academic careers. Women who have early babies—defined as babies who join the family prior to five years after the parent earns a Ph.D.—are 38 percent less likely to achieve tenure than men who have early babies. Yet men who have early babies are slightly more likely to achieve tenure than men who do not have early babies. In short, babies work in favor of men achieving tenure and against women. Thus, having babies later in their career can be a good career move for women. But note: Mason and Goulden's second study suggests that most of this effect takes place *prior* to achieving a tenure track job. If true, that suggests that bias avoidance strategies taken by academic mothers (such as postponing children until late in their career) are effective. But there are still costs associated with combining motherhood with a career in academia. See point #II in the Appendix: having late babies contributes to the baby gap between male and female professors. Sixty-two percent of women do not have children twelve to fourteen years out from earning a Ph.D. versus 39 percent of men. Of course, we know that not all women want to have children, and it may be that academia contains a disproportionate number of such women. That is why the point #III is important—a survey of the faculty at University of California said that 38 percent of women, versus 18 percent of men, had fewer children than they wanted.

To return to my story: there was an initial reaction of delight, both by my department and the administration, to our announcement that we would be adopting a little boy. But I was never very certain how "thick" this delight was and how much I could rely on it when it came to having those same

administrators help us find reasonable accommodations to our changed family circumstances. Our situation was especially challenging for our institutions because we were so anomalous—we both taught in the same department and were committed to equally shared parenting, and so we both wanted to receive the same amount of parental leave—ideally, a one-course reduction for each of us for two consecutive semesters. (What we were eventually awarded was a one-course reduction for both of us for one semester, one of which was paid.) I worried that requesting accommodations to help us rear our children would count against us professionally. Concerns such as these are widespread and are part of why female faculty have late babies and why male and female faculty, when they are lucky enough to be at institutions that have family friendly policies, are often reluctant to use them.

The 2004 Mason and Goulden study suggests there is not a baby penalty once one is on the tenure track, and I need not have postponed children until after tenure. Perhaps this is true, yet my experiences at my small, Catholic Benedictine women's college, combined with the stresses we experienced adjusting to parenthood, still make me think we did the right thing by delaying motherhood until my tenure was certain and my husband was past third-year review.

Early in my parenting experience, I read with some relief a sociologist who described the first year with the first child as constituting a "crisis" for the relationship. That captured well and put into perspective my husband's and my early experiences of parenthood. While we were in the midst of this initial crisis, I inquired whether it would be possible for my husband to take a second course off, so he would have a one-course reduction the semester after our son's arrival. My department chair reported that the academic deans informed him that my husband should look for a new job if that is what he wanted and that "that's what daycare's for." Needless to say, this response did little to reduce our stress levels, and it created a chilly climate when it came to negotiating parental leave when we adopted our second child, a feisty little girl who quickly showed us what an easy baby our son had been!

I find it striking that our institutions' response to our childcare needs was so different from that which greeted me two years later, when I inquired into a reduced contract so that I could help care for my father, who had recently been diagnosed with an aggressive and deadly cancer. Despite the fact that he lived 2,000 miles away and the semester was soon to begin, my institutions quickly managed to find a way for me to drop one class so I could more easily fly east to help care for him. A year and a half after this, they also found a way for me to take a course off to "regroup" the semester after he died. I cannot overemphasize how much I appreciated my institutions' responsiveness to my desire to care for my Dad; they demonstrated genuine compassion and amazing flexibility at a pivotal point in my life. However, I remain struck by the clear difference in their reaction to that caregiving need versus my need to care for my newly adopted and arguably equally needy children. I believe my desire to care for my father was seen as unchosen, non-delegable, and hence more legitimate than my and my husband's desire to care for our new children. If I had more time, I would like to challenge these assumptions regarding choice, the delegable nature of childcare, and legitimacy—but I suspect that is the subject matter for a different paper.

As conscientious adoptive parents, we thought it important to do as much childcare as we could until our children were clearly attached to us and settled into their new family. Hence, in the first couple of years with our children, we did not use full-time daycare and only a couple of people were trusted enough by us and our children to be their caregivers. I know

we became more difficult colleagues to work with because of the "special needs" necessitated by our parenting approach. For example, there were significant limits placed on when my spouse and I could both attend departmental meetings and events—as we needed to work around our childcare provider's schedule. While my department chair worked hard to meet our needs, I still found it hard always to be the party making special requests—especially when our commitment to equal parenting meant that not just one, but both of us became marginalized at work at the same time. Given the current construction of the academy, and its valorization of the "ideal worker" who can work fifty or sixty hours per week with ease, it is hard to accept institutional caregiving, such as that provided by my department, without feeling incredibly vulnerable—especially with the words of my deans echoing in my head. (Eva Kittay's image of "nested dependencies" seems appropriate here—the idea that someone needs to be around to take care of the dependency worker. This idea is not currently institutionalized within the academy, which does much to explain the struggles academic women have in balancing work and family.) These experiences, coupled with 20-20 hindsight on how hard we both worked on the job prior to tenure and at home while we were adjusting to life with small children, lead me to believe that, even though we probably would have both achieved tenure if we had had children earlier than we did, postponing children until my position was secure and my husband's was well-launched was the right decision for us. It helped us avoid a lot of anxiety about how our parenting responsibilities would be viewed by our deans and colleagues, and it helped us avoid having two of the most stressful and labor intensive phases of our lives overlap.

### **Transformations**

So, what are some of the transformations that were brought about in my professional life by becoming a Mom?

For one, I have experienced a radical transformation in my typical work day/week. I can no longer put in thirteen- or fourteen-hour days to catch up on work when I fall behind; I no longer work fifty- to sixty-hour weeks, but try to keep a typical week to forty-five hours, with a fifty-hour maximum. And this past year, for the first time since I entered graduate school in 1987, I started taking (most) weekends off so I can spend them with my family.<sup>1</sup> With a reduction in my work hours, I have had to radically reconceive my job in order to maximize efficiency. I have become very selective as to what service obligations I take on. With so little time for such commitments, I want to make sure it is important that I do this work, that it is maximally interesting to me, maximally important in its possible effects, and that it takes a relatively minor investment of time. I probably attend 90 percent fewer meetings than before I had children. I am no longer on the electronic faculty discussion list. I no longer write lengthy e-mails to students to wrap up class discussion when an interesting point is made in the last five minutes of class. Before I had children, I was highly visible on my campus as the director of Gender and Women's Studies (GWST) at a women's college/men's university. I was known as a highly effective administrator. After I had my first child, I was asked to run for election for three of the top administrative positions (but below dean) that a faculty member can have at my institution. Needless to say, I turned down these and other administrative opportunities and any possibility that I might some day become part of academic administration (which is something I have considered and my GWST colleagues have strongly encouraged me to do) have been put on indefinite hold and probably will not materialize. I have gone from being highly visible on campus to almost invisible, in four short years. That has been a really bizarre experience.

In all the above ways, I clearly am actively marginalizing myself at work in order to have a more sane life and time with my family—spouse, kids, and dying father. (This self-marginalization at work, I should add, is something that my co-parenting spouse is also actively doing.) Yet, there is a job-related “up” side to this reduction in my work week and emphasis on efficiency. During the past four years, despite adding two kids to my family and losing my Dad, I have also had the most intellectually vital time of my graduate and professional career and have been more productive in terms of written work, publications, and ideas for future research than at any other time in my career. Part, no doubt, has to do with being a mid-career professional—I have had the opportunity to develop philosophical interests beyond those that occupied me in graduate school—and part is due to the fact that between parental leave, leave for my Dad, and sabbatical, over nine semesters I was exempted from teaching seven classes. But part is definitely directly related to becoming a parent and my new approach to work. While I cannot do service work and meetings easily because they are inconveniently timed and someone else determines how labor intensive they will be, I find writing can be squeezed in at any time of day and keeps me more in control of my workload. These factors have helped me re-prioritize my work so that research is higher profile in my work life than it ever was before children.

Examination of the empirical literature (Appendix A, #III) suggests that I am typical of academic mothers in my effort to curb my work hours, although I am probably not realistic in wanting to limit my workweek to forty-five hours. The literature on academic mothers’ research productivity focuses on female scientists and gives mixed responses as to whether children make female academics more, less, or simply as productive as women without children. The research that indicates that academic mothers are as or more productive than their non-mother counterparts suggests that it is through such steps as giving up personal time, focusing on research, limiting contact with undergraduate students, and limiting committee work that academic mothers are able to maintain their productivity. This research suggests that I might not be engaging in self-delusion when I think of my mothering years thus far as some of my most productive time, philosophically speaking.

Motherhood has also been transformative for my professional life in that I have found being a Mom intellectually rich. Being a parent is the hardest thing I have ever done and figuring out how to develop cooperative relationships with my kids at their various stages of development is a huge and fascinating intellectual puzzle to me as well as a daily moral practice. Add to this, being the Caucasian adoptive Mom of two Korean-born children, and all the complex ethical issues that raises, the challenges of trying to engage in equal parenting in a society in which this is still very much the exception, and trying to have a child-centered parenting style in a society that, I am convinced, really does not care about children and is in many ways toxic for them—then I have not just become a parent, I have entered into a whole new research program!

Thus, becoming a Mom has transformed my philosophical interests. To focus on just one of them here, it has transformed my understanding of and relation to feminist philosophy. In graduate school I wrote on care ethics as a critic of Carol Gilligan’s ethic of care. Granted, the ethic itself has changed dramatically in the intervening years, but so, too, has my relation to it. Reading Eva Kittay or Nancy Folbre or Joan Tronto on the devaluation of women’s caregiving labor is a very different experience for me now that I am a Mom. I viscerally understand how very challenging and underappreciated this work is; how good caregiving can open up new realms of possibility for a child,

emotionally, intellectually, and ethically; how vital this work is if we are to have a well-functioning society; and how many social supports need to be in place if it is to be done well. While in graduate school I saw care ethics as a reactionary backlash to feminism; now I see critical examination of the many ways women’s caregiving work has been marginalized, naturalized to women, and devalued as radical, yet transformative and vitally important feminist philosophical work.

In conclusion, my answer as to how well motherhood and philosophy combine is mixed. On the one hand, my survey of the literature suggests that, personally, I have done remarkably well with the career/family balance: I have the number of children I want, my marriage to my first husband is going well,<sup>2</sup> and I am tenured at a college I really like. Moreover, motherhood has been an intensely challenging and stimulating experience that has allowed me to shift the direction of my career and place an increased emphasis on research. However, motherhood has also necessitated that I marginalize myself at work by sharply decreasing my service commitments and participation in meetings. Immediate results of this change have been a much greater sense of isolation at work (I primarily interact with students, not my colleagues), a significant loss of visibility on campus, and, with that, a sharp reduction in the recognition and validation for my work that I used to get from my colleagues. While I think focusing on research is probably a more secure route to promotion than service, at my private liberal arts college I have some concern that focusing on teaching and research will not allow me to advance to full professor. The path I am currently on will not allow me to take on a leadership position at my institutions. As a big picture thinker who has strategic planning in her blood, I feel ambivalent about that career trade-off. And part of me is wondering about the research I found that claims that the preschool years are the most productive ones for academic Moms.<sup>3</sup> Why would this be, I wonder? Is this solely the effect of the shortness of the school day as compared to the daycare day? Or do mothers of older children get magically transformed into soccer Moms who are so busy shuttling their kids around that they no longer have time for research? Or do they get burnt out from living a life devoted to teaching, research, and family, with so little time for themselves and other professional and personal contacts that they drop the research? Looking forward into my career, I have more questions than answers.

#### Endnotes

1. A recent study by Jacobs and Winslow suggests that there is one work-related bonus to becoming a parent—married mothers and fathers work less than those who aren’t parents or aren’t married and, as a result, express less dissatisfaction with their workload (117, 120).
2. Mason and Goulden (1994b, 93) and Perna (7) report significantly lower probabilities of marriage for ladder rank female faculty than male faculty as well as higher rates of divorce for ladder rank females versus males.
3. Studying academic scientists, Fox finds that mothers of preschoolers are more productive than women without children or who have school-age children. She attributes this result to the fact that this is a socially selective group, especially in how they allocate their time.

### **Appendix: Overview of Data on Combining Motherhood and Academe**

#### I. Effects of Having Babies on Tenure and Employment

##### *Effect of Early Babies on Tenure Achievement:*

- “Men with ‘early’ babies—those with a child entering their household within five years of receiving their PhD—are 38 percent more likely than their women counterparts to achieve tenure.”<sup>1</sup>

- Fathers of early babies achieve tenure at slightly higher rates than those who don't have early babies.<sup>2</sup>
- In a later study,<sup>3</sup> Mason and Goulden argue that this gap kicks in *prior to securing a tenure track position*. "Women with children younger than six were the least likely of all groups to secure a ladder-rank faculty position." While "married men with children younger than six were the most likely of all groups to secure a tenure-track position."
  - Mason and Goulden found neither a baby penalty nor a marriage penalty for women on tenure tracks; rather, women, *regardless of marital or child status*, were less likely than men to achieve tenure.

#### Effect of Late Babies on Tenure Achievement:

- Women who have late babies and women without children achieve tenure at about the same rate, and higher than women who have early babies.<sup>4</sup>

#### II. The Baby Gap

- 62% of tenured women in the humanities and social sciences do not have children in the household, 12-14 years out from earning a PhD.<sup>5</sup>
- Only 39% of tenured men in the humanities and social sciences do not have children in the household, 12-14 years out from earning a PhD.<sup>6</sup>
  - But note: "second tier" women, defined as "those who are not working or who are adjunct, part-time, or 'gypsy' scholars and teachers" have children at rates much like male professors.<sup>7</sup>
- In a survey of the entire ladder rank faculty of the University of California, (4,400 respondents out of 8,700 faculty), 38% of women (as compared to 18% of men), said they had fewer children than they wanted.<sup>8</sup>

#### III. Effects of Having Babies on Academic Women's Work Hours and "Productivity," measured in terms of numbers of Published Papers

##### Hours Worked:

- A University of California study suggests that women between ages 30 and 50 put in 101 hours each week on caregiving, housework, and professional responsibilities combined, compared to 88 hours for men with children and 78 hours per week for male and female faculty without children.<sup>9</sup>
- According to this same University of California study, these are the number of hours per week faculty devote to professional work, according to self report<sup>10</sup>:

Women with children	51 hours
Men with children	56 hours
Men without children	59 hours
Women without children	60 hours

##### Research Productivity

Information on how children and marriage affects female scientists' productivity, measured in terms of publications, is mixed. There is widespread agreement that men overall publish more than women overall, and that married men and women publish more than their non-married counterparts. But some studies show that having children has no effect on women's productivity, while others show it has a slightly negative but insignificant effect, and yet others that it has a

positive effect.<sup>11</sup> Fox reports that mothers of preschool-age children are more productive than women without children or with school-age children.<sup>12</sup> Stack reports the opposite,<sup>13</sup> although he differentiates between the positive effects on productivity for women in the female-dominated social sciences versus negative effects on productivity for women in the male dominated natural sciences.

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4. Mason and Goulden, "Do Babies Matter?" 2002.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. Mason and Goulden, "Do Babies Matter (Part II)?" 2004a.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Mason and Goulden, "Marriage and Baby Blues," 2004b: 98.
10. Mason and Goulden. "Marriage and Baby Blues," 2004b: 99. Note, this is a bigger gap in hours worked than reported by Jacobs and Winslow (Jerry Jacobs and Sarah Winslow, "Overworked Faculty: Job Stresses and Family Demands." *Annals, AAPSS* 597 (Nov. 2004): 117). Based on an examination of the 1998 National Survey of Post-Secondary Faculty (NSOPF), they report that married mothers work four hours per week less than single women without children, while for fathers the gap is two hours per week.
11. For example, compare Mary Frank Fox, "Gender, Family Characteristics, and Publication Productivity among Scientists," *Social Studies of Science* 35.1 (February 2005): 131-50 and Steven Stack, "Gender, Children and Research Productivity," *Research in Higher Education* 45.8 (December 2004): 891-920.
12. Fox, 140.
13. Stack, 914.



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## Family Matters

**Rosemarie Tong**

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I do not think there ever was a time in my life that I did not try to be, do, and have it all. It is just that the older I got and the harder my life became, the more I realized that the price for being, doing, and having it all was overly high and that I no longer wanted to pay it. Although I could start my story of workaholicism around age eight, I will fast forward to age twenty-two. By that year in my life, I was struggling—and I mean struggling—to get an M.A. in philosophy at the Catholic University of America. I thought I wanted to be a phenomenologist, to master the works of the likes of Heidegger and Husserl, only to realize that Heidegger's *Dasein* would always remain opaque to me and that Husserl's "eidetic reduction" held little appeal for me. Having waded too far into the waters of writing a dissertation on Dilthey's *Geisteswissenschaften* to swim back, however, I found an oasis in a course (then regarded as seriously off-beat) on Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. The instructor, Paul Ki-King Tong, was from "mainland China." He was an amazingly learned, linguistically-gifted, charming, and perceptive human being. He was also a Roman Catholic priest who had decided to leave the priesthood because of his unwillingness to adhere to Church teachings on contraception in particular, but on reproduction and sexuality in general. Celibacy no longer made sense to him. But at the time I took his graduate course, I did not know that he was a priest on his way to being an ex-priest. I only knew he was a priest, not a surprising fact at the Catholic University.

I enjoyed Father Tong's course. Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism made sense to me in a way that phenomenology did not. I had no personal interactions with my instructor during the course, but at the end of the course, after our final papers had been returned and our grades submitted, he asked the class if anyone would be willing to drive him to the airport and pick him up several days later. My hand went up—unreflectively. I drove him to the airport. Five days later I picked him up. He asked me if I had had dinner. I said, "No." We wound up at the Orleans House, and over frozen daiquiris, he gave me a small gift, a bottle of perfume. Three months later, I was on my way to Boulder, Colorado, with him. Although Paul and several of his colleagues in the Departments of Philosophy and Theology at Catholic University had won an academic-freedom suit against the university, Paul had no desire to remain at an institution that had sought to fire him simply because he, in conscience, could not abide by the teachings of *Humanae Vitae* (the papal encyclical that forbade couples to use "artificial" contraceptives). Paul thought it best to accept a joint appointment in Philosophy and Religious Studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder (that is what the plane flight had been about).

The year was 1969 or so and Boulder was the place to be if you were what is now called "hip." I am not sure how "hip" I was in those days as I struggled to complete my M.A. thesis on Dilthey's *Geisteswissenschaften*. But in between translating articles from German into English, I skied, played tennis, golfed, hiked, and wine and dined some of the famous people Paul's magnetic personality attracted: John Denver, Alan Watts, and the Dalai Lama, to name a few. I also attended courses of interest to me, edited journal articles for Paul simply to keep my mind active, and waited for the papers to come from Rome so that he could officially stop being a priest and we could get married, or at least publicly declare that we were a couple instead of a priest and a parishioner. (Paul ran the campus Catholic Newman

Center for Catholic faculty and students, but they did not know that we were living together).

During this confused, yet exhilarating three-year period of time, Paul encouraged me to apply to Boulder's Ph.D. Program in Philosophy. But Boulder turned my application down. No official reason was given, but I was told that my Catholic University credentials (all As and a high GRE) could not compare to equivalent credentials from a major secular university. I was also told that I would be an ill-fit for Boulder's rigorous program, which was "contemporary," not "medieval." I went home to Paul. I protested that I had taken only one medieval course during my whole stay at Catholic University. Then I cried, a lot. After I got over the injustice I had experienced—not gender discrimination, but something akin to religious discrimination—I decided to accept my lot. I would become a teacher of high-school German, putting to use all the German I had learned in my futile quest to become a phenomenologist. But at the point when things could not get much worse for me—I had no desire to teach German, just a desire to earn my own keep and be something more than a ski bum—the fates intervened. The papers came from Rome. Paul was no longer a priest. We were free to marry publicly.

Paul and I left Boulder and headed toward Chicago, where my parents lived. When Paul left the old China in 1947—the year I was born—he was already twenty-two, the son of an extremely wealthy, royalist landlord. He never saw his parents again. They died one year before he finally got a visa to visit a new China in 1978. Thus, there was no place other than Chicago, my hometown, to get married. My mom and dad hosted a reception for us. They embraced us, odd couple that we were: a twenty-four-year-old white woman of Czech ancestry who grew up working class (dad a baker, mom a factory woman), sibling-less, and Catholic—sort of—and a forty-six-year-old Chinese man and ex-priest who grew up the favored son in an aristocratic, patriarchal, Westernized and Christianized family. What a mix!

The year was 1972. Feminism had yet to enter any consciousness, so it never occurred to me to ask myself whether it was a good idea for me to date and marry my former professor. All I knew was that I loved Paul. Of course, had the year been 1978 (by then I had a feminist consciousness), I might have had all sorts of misgivings about living with Paul as well as marrying him. And for sure, if I had had an adult daughter in 1978 and she had announced to me that she was going to marry her professor, a man twice her age from a patriarchal society, I would have been all over her, asking questions about the sexual harassment policies at her college and pointing out how easy it is for an older man in a position of power to persuade a young woman to do crazy things in the name of love. And perhaps she would have looked me in the eye and said, "Mom, I know it does not look right from a feminist point of view, but it is right *for me*: my true choice, my real love." What would there be for me to say, then, especially because she—if she existed—would know what my two sons who do exist know; namely, that I loved their father who loved me all too much, I fear, as the next paragraph will reveal.

After marrying Paul, he and I left for New Jersey where Paul had a tenure-track job waiting for him at Glassboro State College. On the East Coast I would have access to several universities with strong Ph.D. programs in philosophy: Rutgers, Penn, and Temple. But first there was the matter of the baby. I was eight months pregnant when we arrived in Glassboro in July 1972. Little Paul, as we called him, was born on August 4, 1972, and for the next two years I lived the life of a New Jersey housewife: cooking, cleaning, watching soap operas, walking up and down shopping malls just to kill time, and taking care

of little Paul who was a handful (the kind of baby who never sleeps, cries a lot, and spits out all baby food with the exception of mashed bananas). Paul Sr. knew I was going crazy, but I felt guilty about voicing my true feelings to him; namely, that I was bored by my life as “Mommy” par excellence. So Paul expressed my sentiments for me. “Don’t you think it is time for you to go back to school?” he asked. And so we agreed, I would go back to school and get my Ph.D. in philosophy. Unfortunately, most of the universities in the vicinity did not want me. My Catholic University credentials and stints as a Colorado ski bum and then a New Jersey housewife did not make an impression at Penn and Rutgers. They were determined to admit only the best and brightest candidates to their respective programs. Mercifully, Temple took a gamble on me, cautioning me that I would have to switch from continental philosophy to analytic philosophy, and that I would have to prove myself as a student before they could provide me any funding. I said that their terms of endearment were acceptable to me. All I wanted was a chance to show that I had what it takes to get a Ph.D.

Realizing that our lives would get more complicated now that I was going to go to school full-time, Paul and I determined to make our new situation work. I would make the three-hour round-trip commute from Glassboro to Philadelphia everyday with little Paul in tow, and Paul Sr. would do all the housework and cooking. In those days (circa 1974), believe it or not, Temple had what amounted to subsidized childcare for graduate students and others. I think students from the Education School staffed it, but it did not occur to me to ask. All I knew was that the staff seemed competent, the environment was clean, and that its location was convenient to my office. I usually visited little Paul at lunchtime. He seemed happy enough, even though he was always glad to go home at the end of his nine- to ten-hour day. So was I, despite the fact that by the end of the first semester, Monroe and Elizabeth Beardsley had befriended me. They insisted I be fully funded and that I become Elizabeth’s research assistant, finding through her my first genuine philosophical interest: the philosophy of law. The problem was that not only was I doing research for Elizabeth, I was also teaching undergraduate courses to earn extra money, preparing for my prelim exams, and struggling to give both little Paul and Paul Sr. some semblance of family life.

Paul Sr. was also experiencing difficulties. Making the transition from celibate life to married life was challenging at times and he was simultaneously making his bid for tenure. Then the situation got even more complicated. Somehow, two years into my graduate studies, I got pregnant again—do not ask me how. John was born when his brother was four. The Temple Daycare Center did not accept infants under eighteen months, so Paul Sr. and I had to figure out some way to handle the situation. We hired a woman in her early sixties to help Paul Sr. take care of the boys, while I spent 6:00 a.m. till 7:00 p.m., five days a week, at Temple. The woman came from 6:00 a.m. till 2:00 p.m. for a pittance (another source of guilt for me) and Paul Sr. arranged his teaching schedule so that he could work at home from 2:00 p.m. till 7:00 p.m. We ate pizza and Chinese carry-out a lot—a whole lot. We were exhausted, but happy. Paul got tenure, and, in 1978, largely thanks to Elizabeth Beardsley, I finished my un-publishable dissertation—“Towards a Rational Reconstruction of Anglo-American Law: Reconciling the Insanity and Irresistible Impulse Defenses.”

Now that I had a Ph.D., I wanted a job; and, as you might have already guessed, there was no job for me in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, or any easily “commutable” state. Paul Sr. asked me what I would do if I were single. I said I would apply any place, anywhere in the country, that had a job for which I was even remotely qualified. He said to start applying. If you get a

job, he said, we will figure out some way to handle the situation. I got a job: Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, one of the top three liberal arts colleges in the country. Williams had just made the transition from being an all-male institution to being a 50 percent male/50 percent female institution, and it was hiring its first batch of female faculty. I made the cut even though my pedigree was, as usual, flawed. I was considered an oddity because I was from Temple: a university a cut or two below my colleagues’ alma maters.

The moniker “second-rate” did not hurt my bones. What did hurt my bones, however, was the crushing workload at Williams and the fact that Paul Sr. and I had decided that the boys—now age eighteen months and almost six years old—would come with me to Williams and Paul Sr. would drive seven hours every Friday morning from Glassboro, NJ, to Williamstown, MA, and seven hours every Monday morning from Williamstown, MA, to Glassboro, NJ, so that he could spend weekends with us until both of us could find jobs in the same geographical area.

I patched together babysitters and private schools for the boys, bringing them to work with me when my childcare arrangements fell through. To save money, Paul moved into his very large office—the kind of office that has a run-down kitchenette, old-fashioned bathroom, and beat-up sofa because it is located in a college-owned house that has seen better days. I got tenure by the hair of my chinny-chin. Our boys survived our wacky lives, best captured by the memory of the day my husband arrived at 3:00 a.m. on Saturday instead of 6:00 p.m. on Friday (the snow had a nasty habit of shutting down the New Jersey Turnpike) to find me typing an overdue paper. Little Paul was riding his big wheel around the table on which I was typing and his baby brother John was crying in my lap. Dishes were piled high on the kitchen counter; dirty clothes littered the bedrooms; the refrigerator was nearly empty; and the television was blasting. Paul Sr. did not know whether to laugh, scream, cry, or get in his car to drive back to New Jersey. But after he got over his shock, he took the baby, changed his diaper, and got him to sleep. Then he captured little Paul, dizzy from orbiting around the table, read him a story, and got him to sleep. He then started the laundry and washed the dishes before he pulled my hands off the typewriter and pushed me towards our bed. We all slept until noon. Over a late breakfast, Paul Sr. and I wondered how long we could sustain our chaos.

The answer to our question came nearly a decade later. Paul drove up one weekend for Easter—the religious holiday we were celebrating at that point in our lives. It was April 1st—both April Fool’s Day and Good Friday. Paul arrived in time for breakfast. I had his favorite foods ready: scrambled eggs with scallions, orange juice, banana muffins, and coffee. We sat down. The boys joined us. We ate with gusto. Paul stood up. A pain came over his face. He started to seize. He died right there in front of us—a victim of a massive heart attack. There was no warning. Little Paul, then fourteen, tried to resuscitate his father. His brother John, then eleven, ran upstairs and crawled under his bed. I called 911 suspecting it was over—hoping it was over, wanting my husband to live but not as a “person” in a persistent vegetative state.

Later that day, after the doctor pronounced him dead, crying to me that it made no sense, I hugged my two boys. We would be the three Musketeers. We would go on living, even though God had played a cruel April Fool’s Day joke on us. He had crucified us, for some reason I hoped...or everything about life was indeed absurd.

I blamed my ambition and my career at Williams College for what had happened. Had I not taken advantage of Paul’s self-sacrifice, he would be alive, I told myself. The stress of the commute, of living in his office, of not seeing his beloved

boys, of having a workaholic for a wife had killed him—or so I surmised. I felt sorry for my two boys who never complained when I missed their school events, or shuttled them off to yet another babysitter, or told them Mommy couldn't play. She had to do work. The boys' clothes were rumpled, their hair was a mess, their schedules were erratic, and their diets were anything but balanced. I was a colossal sinner—a neglectful mother. For my penance, I gave up my job at Williams.

We moved to Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina, for a new start. This time, in the South (the home of “family values”), I would not let my career call the shots. I would be a family woman first of all: a real mother. I would bake cupcakes and drive my boys everywhere. They would visit the doctor and dentist regularly, be in bed by 10:00 p.m., and be fed proper breakfasts before they were sent off to school.

After a month or so, the boys came to me, begging me to give them back our old chaotic life. I obliged. As you might suspect, by then I had started to work really hard at Davidson. Moving South had not changed me at all. I still was not the family type. I built an undergraduate program in Medical Humanities from scratch; I became active in FAB, SWIP, and the APA; I started two new books. My father, a widower, moved from Chicago to North Carolina to help me care for the boys. Five years after my dad arrived on the scene, I met and married my second husband—the director of Davidson's pre-medical program. My second husband, ten years older than I, was not in the mood to father my boys, however. He had been there, done that. So we agreed that he did not have to try to be my boys' dad. After all, no one could replace their old dad, and besides, they had grandpa.

To some degree, I was a bigamist. My first marriage was not really over as I entered my second. Indeed, to this day, I feel that I still have two separate emotional lives: the one I lived in Colorado, New Jersey, and Massachusetts with my first husband, and the one I live now in North Carolina with my second husband. I also have the profound sense that work has consumed too much of me—that the boys have become men in their mid-twenties and early thirties without me having taken the time to really participate in, let alone enjoy, their growing process. My dad was the lucky one: he carved the pumpkins, went to the games, and popped the popcorn. Without my dad helping me during the five years when I was a widow, and then for nearly a decade after that, I could not have accomplished what I did in the professional world of philosophy and my sons would not have had a man to love them. I suppose that is why, when my father grew old and took ill, the boys and I struggled so hard to care for him in his home. We wanted to make it possible for him to keep his beloved dog by his side, to eat his favorite Czech foods, to smoke forbidden cigars, and to drink occasional beers before he totally lost the taste for life, as he eventually did.

The three of us ran ourselves ragged. After about two years, I told the boys they needed to get on with their lives. The older one had passed up a good job so he could live close to grandpa, and the younger one had deferred graduate school to do his share. Minus their help, the burden of care fell directly on my shoulders. In between work and caring for my dad, I spent about four to five hours a day just in commuting time. I drew solace from Eva Kittay's book *Love's Labor*, not because I had a dependency worker to help me but because I was a dependency worker, struggling to maintain some sort of family life for fear that if I did not, no one else would, and then there would be only work—unrelenting work.

My dad died last Thanksgiving. I fear his death was meant as a gift to me—a gift I dare not acknowledge with a thank you, however, for fear of having to confront that part of me that

wanted, desperately, even as I cared for him, to be liberated from love's labor. Life is easier now. There is more time for work, but there is also more time to brood as I watch the young women in our profession, struggling to keep family and work together. The structures of our profession—the attitudes prevalent in it—have changed, but not nearly enough to fully accommodate family matters. And, yet, we wonder why there are relatively few women in our profession. My guess is that philosophy's missing women have not been willing to pay the price of trying to have it all. It is a high price. For me the price has been close to the price the spider in *Charlotte's Web* paid. But there is still time left for me. I am not a spider. I do not want to self-immolate like Charlotte: much too ironic a fate for a feminist who wants anything but self-immolation for women.

In July, I will be sixty. I intend to give myself the gift of life and to work only on those projects that I find meaningful—a global feminist ethics of care, for example. I plan to let my family, what is left of it, matter a whole lot; and I plan on doing whatever I still can to make sure that women in our profession pay only their fair share of the dues for membership in it. My hope is to come to a SWIP panel twenty years from now on the topic of “Family Matters” and hear some new tunes being sung, far different from the ones that I have sung today. After all, some dreams do come true. There must be ways for women to have it all without paying the ultimate price: themselves. Of this I am convinced.

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## ***Nomadic Musings: Living and Thinking Queerly***

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I accepted the invitation to join this panel happily enough, believing that tenured feminist faculty have a responsibility to share with their younger colleagues—and, indeed, with each other—whatever wisdom they have accrued about succeeding in the academy. Nonetheless, I have been fretting about my contribution ever since. My fretting stemmed from two primary sources. First, I panicked that I would have nothing to offer an audience looking for sage advice from a senior female colleague concerning juggling work and home. As a mother of two teenage daughters who holds down a full-time job on the side, I am intimately familiar with the juggling act—indeed, the whole three-ring circus—but I do not feel particularly skilled at it. Moreover, I am still struggling with the whole “senior” colleague thing. It is true that I am (as my daughters consistently remind me) no longer young and I did make it from tenure-earning to tenured faculty member some years ago—by a squeaky margin. I have even posed as an administrator for a brief part of my career, directing the women's studies program and chairing the philosophy department at the University of Central Florida for three years each. But, while I may be getting older and while I may have gained some useful experience along the way, I have not published several groundbreaking books, nor even made it to the rank of “full” professor. Some female faculty manage to attain this rank and prestige while also rearing beautiful, accomplished, well-behaved children. Fair warning: I am not one of them and cannot advise you how to do this. I am still working on my first book and my fifteen-year-old daughter has just told me she has no family and considers her dad and I to be “random strangers.”

The second source of my fretting concerned a different variety of “imposter syndrome” centering on issues of identity politics. I was invited to join this panel in order to “diversify” it.

This was and is an odd experience for me. The census bureau would identify me as a white, middle-class, middle-aged, married woman with children. This is hardly the profile of a woman capable of diversifying a feminist philosophical outlook. Indeed, it is precisely the profile of the feminist theorist too long at the center of feminist theorizing. So why was I invited and why did I accept? I believe the invitation resulted from the recommendation of my co-panelist Rebecca Kukla, guest editor for a special issue of *Hypatia* focused on the maternal body.<sup>1</sup> In my contribution to that issue (on adoptive maternal bodies as queer), I described my family as follows:

My family is decidedly queer. It includes, in addition to myself (a white, middle class woman) and my extended family of origin (Canadian), my former husband with whom I continue to time-share a home, my girlfriend (German), my two daughters (one biracial, one white; one adopted, one birthed by me), my adopted daughter's extended birthfamily (Guyanese Americans of Indian descent), my daughters' adopted grandmother, aunts, uncles, and cousins (Jewish), in addition to numerous others that my daughters—and the rest of us—embrace and name as family.<sup>2</sup>

All of this is true, except for the part about my “former” husband. I am, in fact, still married to him and will likely remain so until such time as my children are grown. At the same time, I do have a female partner. This is not a lie, nor a dissimulation. I am, I guess you could say, “in between” relationships.<sup>3</sup>

As my title indicates, I want to think here today—in this place and time—about what it means to live and hence think queerly—which, for me, means living in and in between many places and thus thinking in and through ambiguous and transitory spaces. As Judith Halberstam suggests, queerness may be less a matter of sexual identity than it is “an outcome of strange temporalities, imaginative life schedules, and eccentric economic practices.”<sup>4</sup> I live in queer configurations of time and space. Since my thinking is thoroughly embodied, queer living is accompanied by queer thinking. I like the term queer because it captures a variety of non-normative ways of living and thinking while avoiding the pitfalls of identity politics.

I am married to a man, but not straight.

I am partnered with a woman, but do not identify as lesbian.

This rejection of a lesbian identity is not an issue of shame or closeting. I am perfectly comfortable engaging in public acts of affection with my girlfriend amidst friends, family, or strangers. I do not shy away from the term “lesbian,” nor did I previously when erotically partnered with a man. And yet, I do not identify “as” a lesbian. I am happy to wear birkenstocks and overalls and dig in the dirt. When my girlfriend looks up from gardening to peruse me dressed like this, she teases me about looking like a dyke. As I remind her—and she already knows—I have no personal investment in these categories, nor their performances. I will also unapologetically wear a dress and heels (albeit not very high ones) if going to the theatre or a fancy restaurant. I will wear both forms of drag into the classroom, depending on the gender and class issues I wish to perform on a given day.

If I am to be the token lesbian on this panel, I fear I will disappoint. Dating a lesbian<sup>5</sup> does not make me one, any more than raising a biracial child makes me a woman of color. The diversity I have to offer you is not in who I am, but in how I live and think.

If I have any useful advice to pass on, it would be this: recognize the embodied nature of your thinking and write as you live. In the “publish or perish” world we inhabit, you must write. But such writing will be more interesting, I suspect—both to yourself and to your audience—if there are porous, rather than rigid and impermeable, boundaries between your intellectual and your material homes.

I do not use the term “home” lightly. It is, indeed, a notion that has become increasingly complicated for me over the years. As a Canadian citizen who lived there for the first half of my life and whose family of origin still resides there, I refer to traveling to Canada as “going home.” And yet, as a U.S. resident for over twenty years, who lives out of a suitcase when in Canada, I also refer to returning to Orlando as “going home.” Orlando is the place where I can unpack my bags and settle into my familiar routine. Or, at least, it was. I now live perpetually out of a suitcase. The reason I refer to my musings here as “nomadic” is that I am a woman without a fixed address. Three years ago, after stepping down from administration, I volunteered to work at a satellite campus and thus now commute between cities and campuses on a regular basis. Around the same time, I chose to separate from my husband and we mutually agreed to a joint custody arrangement wherein we, as co-parents, timeshare a family home (where our children consistently reside) and an apartment (where we each live separately on alternating weeks when we are not with our children in the family home). On some of my noncustodial weeks, I reside not in the apartment but with my girlfriend at her home. Hence, in addition to commuting between two workplaces, I am also regularly commuting between three homes.

My intellectual home is no less complicated. Formally trained as an analytic philosopher, I value the clarity of conceptual analysis and rigorous argument. As a self-trained feminist scholar and former director of a women's studies program, I also value highly the richness of narrative and expository prose and the empirical data of social science. As a feminist philosopher interested in issues of family and memory, I travel back and forth between and among feminist, postmodernist, postcolonial, and queer theories and memoirs. As the member of a humanities program faculty, I struggle to learn about mythology, art history, religious studies, and other intellectual locales previously foreign to me.

In her book, *Nomadic Subjects*, Rosi Braidotti describes herself as “a migrant who turned nomad.”<sup>6</sup> I would describe myself as somewhere in between a migrant and a nomad. A migrant, as defined by Braidotti, is “a woman with a clear destination, who goes from one point in space to another for a clear purpose.”<sup>7</sup> She is “caught in an in-between state whereby the narrative of origin has the effect of destabilizing the present.”<sup>8</sup> Unlike the migrant woman, I am not nostalgic for the past. I was happily married for many years. It was a good and loving relationship and the domestic, nuclear family within which I lived was a simpler place than where I currently find myself, to be sure. However, this is not where I choose to be now, nor do I yearn to go back. As a part-time custodial parent, I enjoy the occasional freedom to live according to a schedule not regulated by children's activities and needs. I have more time to write and engage in other adult-centered activities. At the same time, my origin—both as a child and later as a married woman—in a single and fixed family home does destabilize my present. I worry also that it may destabilize my children's present.

Similarly, I do not regret the time I spent as an integral member of the philosophy department and the main campus of my university. Nor do I regret my decision to step down from administration and move purposefully to a more interdisciplinary

intellectual home on the geographical margins of campus life. As a humanities faculty member, teaching in a “Philosophy, Religion, and Popular Culture” program at a regional campus, I can largely do as I please because no one much cares about me or my program, as long as I bring in student credit hours. And I do this, in part, by teaching on the web. Because I have duties on two campuses and also teach online courses, people never know quite where I will be when. And there is something decidedly liberating in the elusiveness that comes with living on the road and in cyberspace. At the same time, my history—both as a former “A” student at the center of campus politics and later as an administrator integrally involved in program building and policy development—does destabilize my current identity. I do not yet know how to live well as a nomad, but I am learning.

The nomad, says Braidotti, is “the kind of subject who has relinquished all idea, desire, or nostalgia for fixity.” Her identity is “made of transitions, successive shifts, and coordinated changes, without and against an essential unity.”<sup>9</sup> I confess to sometimes desiring greater fixity than my life currently has. The move from a centered to a decentered life is fraught with difficulties, both material and psychic. I often do not have the right color socks or shoes to go with the clothing at my temporary residence. (Thankfully, socks are rarely a necessity in Florida, teaching online does not require a coordinated outfit, and my girlfriend wears the same size shoes as I!) As I move from one residence and one office to another, I have to fill large bags with all of the books and papers I need in the upcoming days for teaching and writing projects and cannot always foresee every tome it might be useful to have handy. (I am grateful here for e-books and articles and the fact that my girlfriend is a queer theorist who frequently has useful books handy.) When family from out of town comes to visit, the “home” I have to offer them may be temporary, requiring them to travel from residence to residence with me and requiring me or a partner to ensure there are clean towels, adequate food, and other amenities for guests in each home. There are multiple homes to be cleaned and maintained and paid for and multiple lawns to mow and gardens to plant and weed. (Thank goodness, one home is a rental apartment without a yard!) Moreover, it is difficult to establish stable communities and a regular routine when “home” is fragmented across several counties. Students and colleagues do not just drop by one’s office to chat. Friends do not just stop in at one’s home for coffee. Social engagements, as well as doctors appointments and haircuts, must be carefully scheduled with reference to where, as well as when, I am available.

And, yet, despite—or perhaps because of—the multiple complexities of a decentered life, such decenterings provide important challenges to normative material, psychological, and epistemological assumptions, opening up sites of resistance. In her well-known article “Coalition Politics,” Bernice Reagon Johnson contrasts the space of a coalition politics to that of a home, noting that the former is not a safe or nurturing space where unsettling differences can be locked out, as they can in a home. Similarly, postcolonial theorist Teresa de Lauretis advocates “leaving or giving up a place that is safe, that is ‘home’—physically, emotionally, linguistically, epistemologically—for another place that is unknown and risky,” depicting family, self, and home as “held together by the exclusions and repression that enable any ideology of the same.”<sup>10</sup> Of course, these conceptions of “home” (whether the subject of longing or the subject of critique) as a safe and uncontested space and of the self as a unitary and fixed identity are imaginary. Most homes—and not just my own—are coalitional in structure.<sup>11</sup> As such, they involve conflict and difference and the ability of their inhabitants to shift their perspectives to meet the other. Political scientist Bonnie Honnig,

contesting Hobbes’ distinction between the private and public spheres, notes that

as anyone with siblings must know and as spouses in all domestic situations can surely attest, the practice of teaming up with someone who could possibly kill you is not the opposite of home; it perfectly captures on the defining features of family life itself. What children and/or spouses do not establish temporary alliances with and against each other?<sup>12</sup>

To acknowledge the home as a place where differences reside and coalition politics is inevitably learned is helpful in overcoming the theoretical breach between home and work that suggests the former is a refuge from the latter and the latter encroaches on the quality of life residing in the former. Sometimes inhabiting domestic space is work and the work becomes the sought after refuge and solitude. I suspect this is especially true for philosophers who work frequently in silent solitude.

To reconceptualize home as a place of coalition politics is not, however, to denigrate it. As Honnig also notes, the womb, “if deprived of the inspiration—the life-giving breath—of politics,” risks becoming a tomb.<sup>13</sup> It is the strategic and temporary alliances of difference that invigorate home. As Reagon notes, the diverse and fractious places of coalition are to be celebrated, because in “places of crisis...you can do wonderful things.”<sup>14</sup>

Similar considerations pertain to the philosopher’s work. When work becomes a safe place, a refuge from politics, it too becomes lifeless. Braidotti chastises feminist philosophers for inadequate nomadic consciousness, for embodying “the dutiful daughter” or “devoted mistress,” who embodies a “corporatist’s attachment to the discipline and a strong identification with its masters.”<sup>15</sup> Advocating the cultivation of a “healthy disrespect for both academic and intellectual conventions,” she encourages us to “combine coherence with mobility...to rethink the unity of the subject, without reference to humanistic beliefs, without dualistic oppositions, linking instead body and mind in a new set of intensive and often intransitive transitions.”<sup>16</sup>

This advice, with which I concur, will no doubt sound risky to the tenure-earning faculty member or other faculty member looking for a promotion. Indeed, the typical advice is to be a dutiful daughter and publish in the “right” journals until after you have succeeded in getting that promotion. And I do not blame anyone for following that conservative advice. However, I think it is the wrong advice.

First, as de Lauretis notes, the ex-centric (or what I have been terming nomadic or queer) subject recognizes the “tangle of distinct and variable relations of power and points of resistance” in which she is always already entangled in the forces she opposes.<sup>17</sup> For such subjects, as Honnig indicates, “the question is not whether to become involved in the discourses, practices and institutions of which they are critical, but how? How best to position themselves given their complicity with and resistance to the discourses, practices, and institutions they seek to overcome or transform?” From this perspective, “withdrawal, staying home—in the purest and least complicated sense of that place—is simply not an option.”<sup>18</sup>

Second, we are all potentially ex-centric subjects, with a nomadic consciousness. Postcolonial religious studies scholar Leila Ahmed reflects on her identity as an Egyptian national journeying to and from the west as follows:

I think that we are always plural. Not either this *or* that, but this *and* that. And we always embody in our multiple shifting consciousnesses a convergence of traditions, cultures, histories coming together in this time and this place and moving like rivers through

us...I know that it is of the nature of being in this place, this place of convergence of histories, cultures, ways of thought, that there will always be new ways to understand what we are living through and that I will never come to a point of rest of finality in my understanding.<sup>19</sup>

We too are always plural. Some of us are Egyptian and American. Some of us are married and queer. Most of us gathered here today are feminist and philosophers. All the women gathered here are women who work and women who care for homes, pets, friends, and/or families. We are scholars and teachers and committee members. We can choose to be paralyzed by these and other lived tensions, or we can use them to push our thinking forward by fostering a nomadic consciousness that never stops at a final resting place. Such an unresting consciousness is the best route to quality teaching and prolific scholarship, which is precisely what one needs to gain promotion.

Thirdly, the epistemological nomadism that Braidotti describes as “sustaining the practice of feminist teaching and research” does not exclude “more ‘sedentary’ institutionalized practices.” As Braidotti suggests, “it also makes us better at playing the institutional game, because we are more critically distanced from it.”<sup>20</sup> If we are less settled, less anchored within a particular discipline, we are more easily moved to make important connections with people and scholarship outside our “home” discipline. We are thus better enabled to form the sorts of intellectual and institutional coalitions that result in the building of interdisciplinary programs such as women’s studies, postcolonial studies, and queer theory programs. We are also more likely to be better known as engaged colleagues by persons outside of our home departments—and these other colleagues who know us can be instrumental in supporting our promotion applications at college and university levels. And we are less likely to have offended these colleagues from other disciplines through involvement in territorial, disciplinary “turf” wars.

Finally, to return to a point I made earlier, your work is more likely to be engaging if you adopt a nomadic style of thinking that reflects the plurality and tensions of your existence. Nomadism is “an existential condition that...translates into a style of thinking.” The precise conditions of your existence will be different than others and in sharing it with others you will provide them, perhaps, with a “shifting landscape” of possibilities. The mode of thinking described by Braidotti as “nomadic” is a “figurative style of thinking, occasionally autobiographical, which may at times strike the reader as epistemological stream-of-consciousness.”<sup>21</sup> While the nomadic subject is a political fiction “inspired by the experiences of people or cultures who are literally nomadic,” the epistemological nomad, like the queer theorist, has a “critical consciousness that resists settling into socially coded modes of thought and behavior.”<sup>22</sup> Epistemological thinking that opens up new sites of resistance to sedentary thought is apt to be more meaningful to ourselves as well as to our audiences. And if philosophy is not meaningful to us, there are many other occupations at which we could make an equal or better living.

#### Endnotes

1. I do not intend here to impute any untoward motives here to Rebecca or others. Rebecca has asserted (in response to my comments) that her interest in inviting me stemmed from my experiences, not my identity, and I believe her. My concerns as indicated here were/are a separate matter from the motives of those issuing the invitation. They are also a separate matter from my own intentions. It is quite possible to be “read” as the token lesbian (or other representative) on a panel, even if this was/is *not* the intent of those forming or participating on the panel.

2. “Adoptive Maternal Bodies,” *Hypatia* 21:1 (2006): 201-2.
3. This is not as sordid (nor as exciting, depending on your perspective) as it may sound. The truth is that I remain married to my husband because I care about him and his well-being and he would have no health insurance were we to legally divorce.
4. Judith Halberstam. *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: NYU Press, 2005), 1.
5. Actually, my partner herself cringes upon being labeled a “lesbian” here. She would self-identify as queer.
6. Rosi Braidotti. *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 1.
7. *Ibid.*, 23.
8. *Ibid.*, 24.
9. *Ibid.*, 22-23.
10. Teresa De Lauretis. “Eccentric Subjects: Feminist Theory and Historical Consciousness.” *Feminist Studies* 16:1 (1990): 22; see also Bernice Johnson Reagon, “Coalition Politics: Turning the Century.” In *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology* (New York: Kitchen Table Press, 1983), 356-68.
11. Clearly this is the case in the postmodern family, characterized as it is by commuter relationships, divorce, remarriage, and a variety of fragmented and blended families. From a psychoanalytic perspective, however, nostalgic yearnings for an earlier form of family that was unitary in its needs and concerns is likewise premised on an imaginary version of home, self, and family.
12. Bonnie Honnig. “Difference, Dilemmas, and the Politics of Home.” *Social Research* 61:3 (1994): 9.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Reagon, “Coalition Politics,” 368.
15. Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, 30.
16. *Ibid.*, 30-31.
17. de Lauretis, “Eccentric subjects,” 131.
18. Honnig, “Difference,” 7.
19. Leila Ahmed. *A Border Passage: From Cairo to America—A Woman’s Journey* (New York: Penguin, 1998), 26-27.
20. Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, 34.
21. *Ibid.*, 1.
22. *Ibid.*, 5.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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### ***Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others***

Sara Ahmed. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006. 223 pages. \$21.95/\$74.95. ISBN 0-8223-3914-5/0-8223-3861-0.

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Tables, lines, points, directions, orientations—not the first things that come to mind when considering the word “queer.” And yet these are the stuff of Sara Ahmed’s excellent book, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Writing out of the intersections of several academic fields, Ahmed’s book should speak to several audiences: feminist phenomenologists, phenomenologists of race, theorists of geography and space, and queer theory. And it may even speak to philosophers, if they can find their ways out of the deep habitual ruts of the discipline to engage this provocative offering of new paths.

Claiming that “attention involves a political economy” (32) Ahmed takes our bodily and unconscious habits as the point of departure for the politics of heteronormativity, hegemonic whiteness, and Orientalism. The tools of classical Husserlian phenomenology—background, bracketing, intention, horizons—become her weapons of choice, using them to expose the sleights of hand that constitute normative orientations and also turning them against themselves to show how the projects of phenomenology were always already queer. Ahmed’s book strikes in many registers and encourages us to strike out in new directions precisely by looking “behind” what appears as the given.

She begins with her favorite protagonist, the table—and, more specifically, Husserl’s writing table. Stepping “behind” the phenomenologist’s table, Ahmed reorients us toward that which Husserl never sees: “what must have already taken place for the table to arrive” (37). Because the very act of being oriented toward the writing table is precisely what allows its arrival to disappear, this necessarily unnoted slipping into the background allows the orientation to appear as if it were the only possible orientation.

Drawing on Marx’s critiques of idealism through commodity fetishism, Ahmed argues that paying attention to these erased histories of arrivals radically reorients our fields of perception. It places us at an oblique angle towards the horizon of the familiar. Approaching objects through their myriad histories of arrivals, we enter into a vertiginous regress: we begin to grasp how “objects are objects insofar as they are within my horizon; it is in the act of reaching ‘toward them’ that makes them available as objects for me” (55); and yet to reach toward some objects is necessarily not to reach toward others. Consequently, as Ahmed deftly shows, “what is reachable [i.e., what counts as a meaningful object worth perceiving and pursuing,] is determined precisely by orientations that we have already taken” (55). This sedimentation of orientations shapes the body into repetitive social patterns that create our tendencies—or what we call desire. But because, as Husserl teaches us, the field of action necessarily also defines the field of inaction (58), some desires become more meaningful and more socially valued, while others fade from possibility altogether.

From this detailed argument about the unspoken histories and erasures that constitute bodily habits, Ahmed turns to two of the primary objects that shape the horizon of western culture: heterosexuality and whiteness. Turning first to the “obvious” object of queer theory, sexual orientation, Ahmed extends queer theorists’ arguments that sexuality is not aptly understood as being about object-choice. Rather, drawing on Merleau-Ponty’s model of sexuality as a form of bodily projection, Ahmed develops how “orientations ‘exceed’ the objects they are directed toward, becoming ways of inhabiting and coexisting in the world” (67). Ahmed insists that “bodies are sexualized through how they inhabit space” (67) and, more specifically, how they inhabit the normative horizon of the heterosexual family.

Offering a fascinating reading of Freud’s cases on female homosexuality, Ahmed shows how the patriarchal family creates normative lines that, while parading as a “gift” to the child, demand the return of perpetuating the family’s line of descent. This focus on the demand for reproduction allows Ahmed to break from the veritable orthodoxy of gender and queer theory to argue that, because the ego-ideal is the family and not the father, “identification would not necessarily be determined by the axis of gender, but would be about values and qualities that are attributed to the figure of the father and, through him, the family form (the social good)” (74). This opens a fascinating array of fresh lines to pursue beyond the

sex-gender-desire matrix that has dominated gender and queer theory, as does her related insistence that theorists develop a “fundamental critique of the idea that difference only takes a morphological form (race/sex)” (99).

Moreover, it puts Ahmed in direct conversation with a dominant strain of contemporary debates in queer theory—namely, the repudiation of the future as the temporal horizon for queer politics. As she makes explicit towards the end of the book, while she is sympathetic to the impulse (most cogently represented by Lee Edelman’s recent *No Future*<sup>1</sup>) to disavow the pernicious “hope” that righteously demands its inheritance of the earth, she implores us not to disavow hope altogether. Rather, the act of looking “behind” the given, normative orientation allows a queer politics to “look back to the conditions of arrival” (178) and find “other ways of gathering in time and space” (179). The task is to “embrace the failure to inherit the family line as the condition of possibility for another way of dwelling in the world” (178).

Returning to this loaded word “orientation,” Ahmed draws out its racializing connotations through a simple etymology: it “refers both to the practice of finding one’s way, by establishing one’s direction...and to the east itself as one direction privileged over others” (113). Drawing a careful distinction between being oriented “around” and “toward” objects, Ahmed extends postcolonial theorists’ insights about the essential dependency of the Occident upon the Orient: “the Occident coheres as that which we are organized around through the very direction of our gaze toward the Orient” (116). We know from Fanon the violence that ensues when one is the object upon whom the Occident gazes. But, writing as a mixed race woman, Ahmed asks: What happens if one is both gazing toward the Orient *and is oriented toward whiteness*?

After taking us through her melancholic process of disidentification with her Pakistani father—a desire that she describes as wanting “to give up proximity to that which is given through the background” (145)—Ahmed describes how objects from Pakistan began to create “wrinkles in the whiteness of the objects” (151) in her familial home. Bringing “histories of contact” (151) to the surface, all the objects in her horizon began to shift, move, even dance. And in so doing, they began to “acquire new forms as they register different proximities” (152). As Ahmed explains once more in this political register of temporality, “the magic of unanticipated arrivals points not just to the future but to the past, which also cannot simply be reached in the present” (152). Because she finds “lifelines” from her Pakistani family that are gifts that do not demand any return, Ahmed develops “an orientation that unfolds from the gap between reception and possession” (154). Out of her struggles as a mixed race person excluded from inhabiting the world of hegemonic whiteness, Ahmed creates a fresh orientation that no longer gazes upon whiteness as an object of desire; rather, it is “the backward glance” (155) that allows her to move on.

To read Sara Ahmed’s *Queer Phenomenology* is to be challenged out of our habitual ruts of reading, writing, and thinking as trained philosophers. Given how clearly she understands the politics at stake in this, she is perfectly aware of how unlikely it is that trained philosophers will read her book: the repetition of particular lines (of reading, of writing, of living) lead to well-trodden paths, which lead to momentum, which leads to recognition, which leads to commitments, which lead to normalizations, which lead to backgrounds, which lead to unconscious and bodily habits. As she explains, “the lines of disciplines are certainly a form of inheritance. ...Disciplines have lines in the sense that they have a specific ‘take’ on the world, a way of ordering time and space through the very decisions about what counts as within the discipline” (22).

This is how trained philosophers continue to remain unaware of the work done by feminist, black, queer, and postcolonial scholars on questions relevant to their general debates

not knowing about certain things is an effect of the lines people have already taken, which means they “attend” to some things only by giving up proximity to others, which is at the same time giving up on certain futures. Such a “giving up” is not conscious or even a loss that can be made present. *We do not know what follows from the lines that we have not followed as an effect of the decisions we have taken.* (183, note 8).

In the name of breaking from a constricting and possibly pernicious family line of inheritance, I thereby challenge trained philosophers, of whatever stripe or school or politics, to read this book: “we don’t know, as yet, what shape such a world might take...when we no longer reproduce the lines we follow” (156).

#### Endnote

1. Lee Edelman. *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

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## Feminist Interpretations of Theodor Adorno

Renée Heberle, ed. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006. 376 pp. \$95.00 cloth; \$35.00 paperback. ISBN 0271028793 cloth; 0271028807 paper.

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In her introduction to the collection *Feminist Interpretations of Theodor Adorno*, Renée Heberle acknowledges the difficulty of marshaling Adorno’s oeuvre in service of a particular philosophical purpose: “Adorno himself would protest the ‘application’ of his work—as if we were testing it for feminist purposes” (3). Adorno’s philosophy not only resists straightforward practical or even theoretical application but also is itself premised upon a suspicion of the very possibility of such application. According to Adorno, a philosophy concerned with application risks becoming so mired in the practice it seeks to change that it forfeits its potential for a truly transformative critique.

In response to this difficulty, Heberle explains that the goal of the collection “is not simply to judge whether his thinking is good for women. ...Rather, authors in this volume rethink his work in light of historically specific challenges faced by feminism and in light of diverse understandings of our present condition” (3). Indeed, the most successful of the fifteen essays in this volume use the insights of feminism to re-read crucial Adornian works such as *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, *Minima Moralia*, *Negative Dialectics*, and *Aesthetic Theory* and to re-think critical terms within these works, such as mimesis, suffering, identity, and aesthetic autonomy. The variety of contributors—political theorists, philosophers, literary and legal scholars—ensures that the re-readings presented here are not monolithic.

If anything, in fact, the “diverse understandings” here risk being too diffuse. Readers with an expertise in Adorno may have difficulty comprehending just what feminist philosophy is, what its relevance today is, and how it has developed historically. Those who bring with them expertise in feminist philosophy may have a similar difficulty with Adorno’s philosophy. Heberle does not want to treat feminist and Adornian philosophy “as if each

were a predetermined object, with one waiting to be applied to the other” (3). Nevertheless, it is possible to identify significant moments of convergence between the essays—moments that indicate which issues are potentially the most urgent for future considerations of Adorno and feminism. Heberle’s introduction and her organization of the volume could have done more to highlight what the essays have in common. For the moments where the essays converge represent the volume’s most significant contributions to the study of Adorno in relationship to feminist philosophy. What is most valuable about the volume, in other words, are the unspoken dialogues that emerge between the essays and that merge into constellations around certain issues, of which I will focus on two that I perceive as central: the relationship between theory and practice in feminist and Adornian philosophy, and the role of “mimesis” in Adorno’s philosophy and its relevance for feminist philosophy.

The relationship between theory and praxis, or between thought and action, as Drucilla Cornell frames the issue in her interview with Heberle (Chapter 2), would seem to be the greatest obstacle facing any attempt to bring Adorno and feminism together. As Cornell remarks, Adorno was skeptical of praxis; he preferred instead to insist upon the transformative potential of thought and critique. Cornell insists that she, as a feminist, must therefore part ways with Adorno: “at times, we have no choice but to be activists” (23). As Cornell frames it, the tension between theory and praxis is also a tension between Adorno and feminism; for the latter must, according to her, engage in praxis in order to fight for its ideals. This tension, Cornell argues, also exists within feminism itself, specifically between feminist “theorists” at elite universities and “activists” who question the efficacy of these elite positions (39). Feminists, Cornell suggests, can attempt to resolve this tension by trying to be both theorists and activists. As far as the tension, however, between feminism and Adornian philosophy, Cornell offers no possibility of resolution, nor is it clear whether, for her, one exists.

Cornell’s interview would most profitably have been followed by Lisa Yun Lee’s “The Bared-Breast Incident” (Chapter 6). Lee’s examination of the role of the body in Adorno’s philosophy suggests that the divide between theory and praxis in Adorno’s own philosophy, and, thus, by implication, in Adorno’s relationship with feminism, is not as absolute as Cornell makes it out to be. Through a close reading of Adorno’s *Minima Moralia* and “Marginalia to Theory and Practice,” Lee argues that Adorno’s difficulty is not with praxis *per se*, but with a praxis that is so hostile to theory that it reinforces rather than challenges the dichotomy between intellectual and physical labor, between mind and body. For Adorno, Lee explains, theory should be no more separable from praxis than mind is from body. The widely held perception that they are separable is a reflection of how alienated intellectual and physical labor have become. Unlike Cornell, therefore, Lee suggests that we must look to rather than beyond Adorno to understand and address the roots of that alienation.

The essays by Cornell and Lee engage implicitly in a productive dialogue with each about the role of theory and practice in Adornian and feminist philosophy. But the dialogue is interrupted and thus fails to be sustained by the three intervening chapters, which deal with the notions of “woman,” “feminine,” and “desire” in Adorno’s work rather than explicitly with its relationship to feminist philosophy. Paul Apostolidis’s “Negative Dialectics and Inclusive Communication” (Chapter 11) and Lambert Zuidervaart’s “Feminist Politics and the Culture Industry” (Chapter 12) contribute as well to the dialogue on theory and practice, and might thus have more productively followed Lee’s essay. Apostolidis’s use of *Negative Dialectics* to



enhance Iris Marion Young's theory of inclusive communication resonates nicely with Lee's attention to the use of language in Adorno; Zuidervaart's use of Adorno's notion of aesthetic autonomy to critique Mary Devereaux's notion of a "protected space" has implications for Cornell's discussion of the ideal of an "imaginary domain" as a space of individual freedom.

As a group, then, these essays make clear the need for any future consideration of Adorno and feminism to take into account the relationship between theory and praxis; in fact, the very efficacy, indeed possibility, of such a consideration may hinge upon how the relationship between thought and action is addressed.

The need to address the concept of mimesis is perhaps less obvious. In "Mimetic Moments" (Chapter 7), D. Bruce Martin provides a sustained and thoughtful account of how Adorno's notion of mimesis can prove useful for ecofeminists in considering how to move "beyond situations of social-political domination and ecological destruction" (144). In its most basic sense, mimesis is, according to Adorno, a form of affinity between subject and object. Mimesis is central, therefore, to his consideration of the relationship not only between humans but also between humans and nature, as well as between art and nature—central, therefore, not only to Martin's observations about ecofeminism but also, for instance, to Jennifer L. Eagan's focus on suffering (Chapter 13), Zuidervaart's examination of aesthetic autonomy, and Gillian Howie's analysis of identity (Chapter 15).

The term mimesis, in other words, even if not referred to as such, is crucial to most of the essays in the volume. Whether the notion of "mimesis" that emerges from the essays as a group is consistent with the various dimensions of Adorno's use, however, is not clear and merits further consideration in future studies, as does the relevance of mimesis to the relationship between theory and praxis.

Scholars with expertise in Adornian and feminist philosophy will want to consult this volume selectively. Adorno scholars who want an introduction to feminism and feminist scholars who want an introduction to Adorno would do best to look elsewhere first. At issue here are primarily Adorno's lengthiest and most complex books. Adorno was also a master, however, of the much shorter essay form; his essays, especially those on literature, are both brilliant and accessible. Because they concern themselves with close, "immanent" analyses of objects, they are also the most difficult to apply methodologically. Instead, they offer a model of a mimetic interpretive practice that attempts to get so close to the object under consideration that the two—the object and what has been written about it—seem to merge. For Adorno, only at this moment of potential convergence does what is unique about the object, what ultimately distinguishes it from its interpretation, emerge. From an Adornian perspective, then, any feminist interpretation of Adorno ought to begin by bringing the two as closely together as possible until the differences between them emerge of themselves. Only in this way, I would argue, can one ultimately ensure that interpretation does not become "testing."

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## Women and Citizenship

Marilyn Friedman, ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. 220 pages. \$24.95. ISBN 0195175352 (paper), 0195175344 (hardback).

**Reviewed by Shelley Wilcox**

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In recent decades, debates about citizenship have dominated Western political thought. Although the concept of citizenship is typically assumed to be gender-neutral, feminist political philosophers argue that its meanings and practices are in fact deeply gendered, as well as shaped by other social categories, including race, class, and sexuality. *Women and Citizenship* is a noteworthy contribution to the burgeoning scholarship on gender and citizenship. Its chapters provide fresh perspectives on the central themes within this literature, including women's political participation, the implicitly masculine nature of traditional conceptions of citizenship, and the complex relationships between culture and citizenship. Most essays deal productively with issues of diversity among women, and many explore citizenship practices in non-Western contexts. Thus, in addition to advancing feminist critiques of conventional citizenship theories, this well-edited volume helps to develop more inclusive understandings of citizenship. In the remainder of this review, I will briefly summarize the essays in *Women and Citizenship*, situating them with respect to several of the themes that have emerged in recent feminist discussions of citizenship. (This approach leads me to consider these essays in a somewhat different order than they appear in the text.)

Feminist struggles have brought an end to the wholesale political exclusion of women in many societies. Despite their formal political equality, however, women are still underrepresented at all levels of government. In the United States and Western Europe, feminist discussions about the gender gap in politics have centered on increasing the number of women in elected office. Scott's essay, which analyzes the French *parité* movement of the 1990s, places these debates in their recent historical context. The *parité* movement sought to guarantee an equal number of legislative seats to women. This movement is particularly interesting, in Scott's view, because it eschewed familiar essentialist and separatist justifications for gender parity in politics. Whereas the feminist case for gender parity typically rests on one of two problematic propositions—that society would benefit from the unique qualities that women would bring to politics or that women have a distinctive, shared interest that should be represented in political decision-making processes—*parité* was defended on rigorously universalist grounds.

Most feminists acknowledge that merely increasing the number of female political leaders will not guarantee full substantive citizenship for women insofar as the activities traditionally associated with citizenship are symbolically masculine. These gendered associations, together with the sharp division between the public and private spheres presumed in mainstream theories of citizenship, pose practical and theoretical obstacles for women who wish to exercise their citizenship rights. Chapters by Young and Bartky extend this line of critique to current citizenship practices in the United States. Young interprets the post-9/11 security state by means of the "logic of masculine protection." In its original formulation, this logic charges the male head of household with protecting his family against outside threats. In exchange, wives and children are expected willingly to accept submissive and dependent positions within the household, particularly with respect to

decisions regarding their safety. Analogously, Young argues, the U.S. security state mobilizes fear and appeals to its role as protector of citizens to justify its repressive domestic policies and aggressive war-making abroad. Like dependents in the patriarchal family, citizens are expected to remain loyal to the security state, uncritically endorsing whatever policies it deems necessary for their protection. Bartky argues that symbolically masculine dimensions of the U.S. court system often intimidate battered women who seek legal remedies for domestic abuse. For instance, the architectural style and scale of courthouses can induce feelings of insignificance or helplessness in disempowered women. Attorneys and judges may also abuse their power, patronizing, belittling, or dismissing petitioners who seek their help. In these ways, argues Bartky, the state denies vulnerable citizens the legal protection promised under the social contract.

Some feminist political philosophers seek to remedy women's *de facto* exclusion from citizenship by broadening the scope of the "political" to encompass symbolically feminine activities undertaken in the domestic and social spheres. One such approach seeks to refigure care work as a practice of citizenship. Tronto appeals to this strategy in her chapter on the current "care crisis" in industrialized societies. As more women work outside the home and new capitalist economies place greater demands on workers, citizens of these countries increasingly employ migrant workers to care for their children and elderly relatives. Assuming that socializing care is politically infeasible, Tronto recommends alternative measures to increase the public value of caregiving and to protect migrant care workers from exploitation. In particular, she suggests that granting credit toward citizenship to migrant care workers would further both of these aims.

Another line of feminist thought aims to expand the political realm to include the activist organizations in which many women participate. The essays by Ackelsberg and Jaggar offer contrasting views on the proper role of these associations in feminist understandings of citizenship. Ackelsberg believes that women's community groups, the National Congress of Neighborhood Women (NCNW) in particular, provide valuable models of pluralist civic engagement. Established in 1974, the NCNW aimed to assist "working class and poor women working on issues to improve their communities, families, and their own status" (76). From the beginning, its leadership programs emphasized the need to build alliances across divisions of race, class, and culture. These programs helped to facilitate successful community activism among participants while expanding their conceptions of political participation. Jaggar sees a role for civil society in feminist conceptions of citizenship; however, she warns that "undue emphasis on activism in civil society may sometimes restrict rather than expand women's empowerment as citizens" (98). In particular, certain features of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may hinder women's NGOs from achieving feminist goals. For instance, funding agencies may require organizations to adopt narrower and less progressive projects than their clients otherwise would have chosen. Women's NGOs may also unwittingly advance neo-liberal economic agendas by providing social services that states seek to privatize.

Many feminists argue that an adequate account of citizenship must also theorize the cultural conditions that make the practice of citizenship possible. The chapters by Hurtado, Joseph, Wadud, and Nussbaum contribute to this project. Hurtado uses the theoretical work of Chicana feminists and other feminists of color as a basis for an expanded notion of cultural citizenship that incorporates diversity. Chicana feminists theorize the contours of cultural citizenship from their position

on the borderlands, "between and betwixt cultures, languages, nation-states, and intersectionalities of oppression" (114). Their understandings of citizenship avoid the interest group politics and individual rights central to many feminist conceptions of politics and citizenship. Rather, Chicanas construct their own novel conceptions of citizenship within the domains of language and space. Claiming historically informed discourses and subject positions is essential to this endeavor, as is decolonizing philosophical spaces.

Joseph and Wadud explore the cultural contexts of citizenship in non-Western nations. Joseph analyzes the processes by which cultural understandings of the family shape gendered citizenship practices in Lebanon and other Middle Eastern states. According to the "kin contract," which contrasts with the Western notion of the social contract, the family is considered to be the basic unit of society. Kin entities are thus understood as prior to membership in the state and to claim the primary loyalties of citizens. In the kin contract, the state defers some of its authority over citizens to kin entities and religious courts, and translates family obligations and moralities into law. Since men and elders are privileged in kin structures, citizenship practices both reflect and reinforce patriarchal control of women and juniors. Wadud explores the gendered implications of citizenship in states governed by Islamic law. Islamic states do not traditionally envision the equality of women. However, Wadud contends that Islamic jurisprudence is open to reconstruction. Neither the Qur'an nor the *sunnah* restrict agency on the basis of gender. Moreover, the gender inequalities in Islamic law and Muslim civil society prevent women from carrying out their religious duties. Thus, Wadud urges Muslims to reform their citizenship practices so as to express gender equality.

In the final essay of the volume, Nussbaum defends literacy and education as a key to ameliorating many of the problems facing women in the developing world. Literacy and education enable women to get decent jobs, improve their health, leave abusive relationships, and develop the human capabilities necessary for the practice of citizenship. Education also has intrinsic value, as it cultivates imagination, critical thought, and powers of expression. Women's education is sometimes opposed on the grounds that it poses dangers to non-Western cultures; however, Nussbaum rejects these objections. Literacy is not, as some traditionalists insist, a "Western" value, and women's education does not destroy cultural norms worthy of protection. Thus, she concludes, all nations, both wealthy and developing, should commit significant resources to the effort to promote women's education worldwide.

I have been able to highlight only some of the many insights offered by the essays in *Women and Citizenship*. In doing so, I hope to have conveyed the value of this collection. It deserves a careful read.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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**Shelley Park** is associate professor of philosophy at University of Central Florida–Cocoa. She has published numerous articles on mothering and other topics in feminist philosophy in *Hypatia*, *Adoption Quarterly*, and elsewhere. Her current interests are centered on issues related to mothering and family, especially, but not exclusively, as related to adoptive and/or queer families. [spark@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:spark@mail.ucf.edu)

**Rosie Tong** is distinguished professor of health care ethics at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte. She is also director of its Center for Professional and Applied Ethics. She has published thirteen books and over one hundred articles. As outgoing chair of the APA Committee on the Status of Women, she has come to further appreciate the contributions women are making to the field of philosophy and has promised herself to keep her research interests focused on women's concerns worldwide. [rotong@email.uncc.edu](mailto:rotong@email.uncc.edu)

**Joanne Waugh** is director of Graduate Studies and associate chair of the Department of Philosophy at the University of South Florida in Tampa. She was joint-editor of *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* from 1995-1998, and of *Feminists Doing Ethics* (2001). She has also presented and published papers in feminist aesthetics and feminist epistemology. Besides feminist philosophy, she has wide-ranging philosophical interests including ancient Greek philosophy, aesthetics, the philosophy of language, and historiography. [jwaugh@cas.usf.edu](mailto:jwaugh@cas.usf.edu)

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### Call for Submissions

An upcoming issue of the *Newsletter* will feature a special section on women's human rights. If you have a short article on any aspect of women's human rights, please send it electronically to the editor. Please prepare the essay for blind review and include a cover letter in the e-mail.

### Nominations and Applications Sought:

#### **Editor of the APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy**

The APA Committee on the Status of Women solicits nominations and applications for the position of editor of the *APA Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy*, which the Committee sponsors.

The editor's term will be for five years, beginning in the Fall of 2008 with the editorial responsibilities for the Spring 2009 issue of the *Newsletter*. We welcome applications and nominations for individuals or editorial teams.

Responsibilities of the editor include:

- issuing calls for papers;
- soliciting articles for special topic issues;
- coordinating the anonymous peer review process for articles submitted to the *Newsletter*;
- accepting or rejecting articles submitted, based on the comments of reviewers;
- soliciting book reviews for publication;
- editing articles, book reviews, and other materials accepted for publication in the *Newsletter*;
- meeting deadlines (Feb 1 and July 2 each year) and following APA style and format requirements for two issues of the *Newsletter* each year, including those issues that include guest edited material;
- delivering to the APA completely edited electronic issues of the *Newsletter* for publication in the Fall and Spring terms of each year;
- responding to correspondence;
- serving as *ex officio* member of the APA Committee on the Status of Women, which serves as the Editorial Board for the *Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy*, and fulfilling committee duties as determined;
- sending two copies of published book reviews to publishers;
- sending notification to authors of online publication of each issue and/or a CD-Rom for authors' use in creating off-prints;
- notifying authors of books when their book has been reviewed in the *Newsletter*;
- other standard editorial duties and occasional CSW duties.

Qualifications:

Ph.D. in philosophy and membership in The American Philosophical Association; commitment to giving expression to the diversity within feminist philosophy; excellent organizational skills; editorial skills, editorial experience strongly preferred.

The Committee on the Status of Women welcomes applications from interested individuals or editorial teams. We will also accept nominations for the position. Please send full contact information including email and mailing addresses for all individuals nominated to the chair of the APA Committee on the Status of Women (address below), who will solicit applications from people so nominated.

Applications should include

1. Cover letter which describes the applicant's ability to satisfy the job description, with respect to (a) individual qualifications and experience; and (b) obtaining needed levels of institutional support, (e.g., absorption of some mailing, phone, and duplicating expenses); reasons for wanting to take the position; and vision of future directions for the *Newsletter*.

2. Curriculum Vitae.
3. Names of and contact information for at least three individuals who can speak to the applicant's editorial experience and/or skills.

Applications for editorial teams should include the above plus a letter of application that indicates how the work of editing the *Newsletter* will be shared.

Deadline for receipt of nominations: November 1, 2007.

Deadline for receipt of applications: December 1, 2007.

Please contact Sally Scholz (sally.scholz@villanova.edu) if you have any questions about the current duties of the *Newsletter* editor. Please send nominations and applications to:

Erin McKenna, Chair  
APA Committee on the Status of Women  
Department of Philosophy  
Pacific Lutheran University  
Tacoma, WA 98447