WOMEN AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS: THE CASE OF HISPANIC NEW MEXICO AND COLORADO

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At the turn of the century, the part women played in intercultural relations—in assimilation, acculturation, or resistance—was perfectly obvious to those who studied the question with an eye to Americanization. Women ruled the home. They governed a private world to which they gave outside forces, in this case Americanizers, only limited access. In addition, the women alone, in the eyes of these officials, cared for the young children and shaped the values, habits, and desires of the next generation. In the twin temporal kingdoms of present and future, as guardians of the present home and as mothers of the future generation, they held the primary power to influence their cultural complex.[1]

Many current scholars, like their predecessors, have seen women as crucial to intercultural relations chiefly in their capacity as mothers and guardians of the hereditary culture.[2] Some historians depict women as

[1] See, e.g., George Sanchez, "'Go After the Women': Americanization and the Mexican Immigrant Woman, 1915–1929," Working Paper no. 6 (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University, Stanford Center for Chicano Research, n.d.); and Maxine Seller, "The Education of the Immigrant Woman, 1900–1945," *Journal of Urban History* 4 (May 1978): 307–30.

[2] Richard Griswold del Castillo, *La Familia: Chicano Families in the Urban Southwest, 1848 to the Present* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984); Virginia Yans McLaughlin, *Family and Community: Italian Immigrants in Buffalo, 1880–1930* (Ithaca,

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builders of cultural bridges either between generations or between ethnic groups. Alternatively, women are portrayed as barriers, resisting Americanization, or even as burdens on their own ethnic groups, preventing rapid assimilation and upward mobility as defined by the dominant culture.[3] Other historians have abandoned the traditional attempt to define women in these terms and, instead, look more closely at women's economic activities.[4] These historians describe women's work patterns as part of a family economy and strategy but usually stop short of examining the implications that changes in those patterns had for women and for the group as a whole as it struggled to survive in an intercultural arena.[5]

This article reassesses women's part in the dynamics of cultural interaction, focusing on Hispanic women in Colorado and northern New Mexico. Written histories of village Hispanic women or rural Chicanas are still rare, and of Chicanas or Hispanic women in Colorado virtually nonexistent.[6] The

N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977); Miriam Cohen, "Italian-American Women in New York City, 1900–1950: Work and School," in *Class, Sex and the Woman Worker*, ed. Milton Cantor and Bruce Laurie (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977), 120–43; Judith E. Smith, "Italian Mothers, American Daughters: Changes in Work and Family Roles," in *The Italian Immigrant Woman in North America*, ed. Betty Boyd Caroli et al. (Toronto: Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Conference of the American Italian Historical Association, 1978), 206–21; Charlotte Baum, Paula Hyman, and Sonya Michel, *The Jewish Woman in America* (New York: Dial Press, 1976); Corinne Krause, "Urbanization without Breakdown: Italian, Jewish, and Slavic Women in Pittsburgh, 1900 to 1945," *Journal of Urban History* 4 (May 1978): 291–306.

[3] Seller.

[4] For example, Elizabeth Pleck, "A Mother's Wages: Income Earning among Married Italian and Black Women, 1896–1911," in *A Heritage of Her Own: Toward a New Social History of American Women*, ed. Nancy Cott and Elizabeth Pleck (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979), 367–92; Julia Kirk Blackwelder, "Women in the Work Force: Atlanta, New Orleans, and San Antonio, 1930–1940," *Journal of Urban History* 4 (May 1978): 331–58, and *Women of the Depression: Caste and Culture in San Antonio, 1929–1939* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1984); Mario T. García, "The Chicana in American History: The Mexican Women of El Paso, 1880–1920," *Pacific Historical Review* 49 (May 1980): 315–37; Albert Camarillo, *Chicanos in a Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and Southern California, 1848–1940* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979).

[5] Exceptions include Tamara Hareven, "Family Time and Industrial Time: Family Work in a Planned Corporation Town, 1900–1924," *Journal of Urban History* 1 (May 1975): 365–89, and "The Laborers of Manchester, New Hampshire, 1912–1922: The Role of Family and Ethnicity in Adjustments to Industrial Life," *Labor History* 16 (Spring 1975): 249–65; Judith E. Smith, "Our Own Kind: Family and Community Networks in Providence," in Cott and Pleck, eds., 393–411; Hasia Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983).

[6] "Hispanic" and "Spanish American" refer to Spanish-speaking, Spanish-surnamed, and/or Spanish-heritage people whose ancestors had settled in Colorado and New Mexico before the U.S. conquest. "Chicanos" and "Chicanas" encompass as well the more recent Mexican migrants and immigrants. Recent work on village women includes Janet LeCompte, "The Independent Women of Hispanic New Mexico, 1821–1846," *Western Historical*

mushrooming contemporary scholarship on Chicanos concentrates instead on the urban experience from 1850 to 1930. It indicates that many urban Chicanas worked for wages and headed households, but it assumes that this pattern of activity—outside the home and with some measure of autonomy—stands in contrast to women's lives in the villages.[7] My research on Hispanic-Anglo relations in northern New Mexico and Colorado from 1880 to 1940 undermines the assumptions that Hispanic village women were more subordinated in the village than outside it and that they found the move north to Anglo areas and cities a liberating experience. In other words, the common wisdom will not do. A better understanding of Hispanic women's experience in the village is central, it turns out, to our understanding of the Hispanic experience in Hispanic-Anglo relations anywhere.[8]

In the Hispanic world of northern New Mexico's communal villages, a sexual division of labor and production laid the foundation on which villagers built their strategies for interaction with the Anglo world that surrounded them by the end of the nineteenth century. In the villages, women's activities regarding community networks, land, and production grew in importance as male migration out of the villages for wage work became increasingly vital to village survival. But when entire Hispanic families migrated and settled in enclaves away from the villages, the balance between women's and men's activities shifted. The process by

Quarterly 12 (January 1981): 17–35; Marcela Trujillo, "The Colorado Spanish Surnamed Woman of Yesteryear," in *Hispanic Colorado: Four Centuries' History and Heritage*, ed. Evelio Echevarría and José Otero (Fort Collins, Colo.: Centennial Publications, 1976), 90–94; Joan Jensen, "Canning Comes to New Mexico: Women and the Agricultural Extension Service, 1914–1919," *New Mexico Historical Review* (hereafter *NMHR*) 57 (October 1982): 361–86, and "'I've Worked, I'm Not Afraid of Work': Farm Women in New Mexico, 1920–1940," *NMHR* 61 (January 1986): 27–52; Frances Swadesh, *Los Primeros Pobladores: Hispanic Americans of the Ute Frontier* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974).

[7] On the dangers of accepting the common wisdom, cf. Elinor Lerner, "Into the Melting-Pot," *Women's Review of Books* 3 (June 1986): 12. See also, Rosalinda M. Gonzalez, "Chicanas and Mexican Immigrant Families, 1920–1940: Women's Subordination and Family Exploitation," in *Decades of Discontent: The Women's Movement, 1920–1940*, ed. Joan Jensen and Lois Scharf (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983), 59–84; Blackwelder, *Women of the Depression*, 102, 162; Alfredo Mirandé and Evangelina Enríquez, *La Chicana: The Mexican American Woman* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); Maxine Baca Zinn, "Gender and Ethnic Identity among Chicanos," *Frontiers* 5 (Summer 1980), 18–24. On urban Chicanas, see Ricardo Romo, *East Los Angeles: History of a Barrio* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983); Richard Griswold del Castillo, *The Los Angeles Barrio, 1850–1880: A Social History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), and *La Familia* (n. 2 above); García (n. 4 above); and Mario T. García, *Desert Immigrants: The Mexicans of El Paso, 1880–1920* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1981); Camarillo (n. 4 above).

[8] For a more extended and detailed treatment of this thesis, see Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880–1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, in press).

which women's experiences, so central to village life, became isolated and peripheral the closer women moved to Anglo towns and farms, is inextricably bound to the transformation of social and economic relationships wrought by Anglo-Hispanic contact. Taken together, the changes in those relations across time and space tell us much about how village households could and could not use their production patterns to maintain some cultural autonomy while at the same time taking advantage of economic opportunities offered by a rival culture.

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Looking back on a New Mexico village of the early twentieth century, Luisa Torres recalled: "I watched my maternal grandparents a lot. . . . On the day that my grandmother was seventy, I saw her open the doors of her little adobe house. It was a spring day and there were millions of orange and black butterflies around the corn plants; my grandmother ran towards the butterflies and gathered so many of them in her apron that she flew up in the air, while she laughed contentedly. I wanted to know all that my grandmother knew." Like many grandmothers of the time, Luisa's grandmother knew particularly about medicinal plants, "remedios," but in wanting to know all that her grandmother knew, Luisa was expressing more than a desire to share in the knowledge of herbal medicine.[9] In the Hispanic heartland's communal villages, women had their own world in addition to the one they shared with men. They had realms of expertise that served the entire village, and a society and economy of their own.

Nestled among relatively inaccessible mountains, northern New Mexico's villages seemed to many changeless and idyllic. Yet as mines, railroads, and commercial agricultural enterprises encompassed the region in the 1880s, as Anglo courts legalized the dispossession of villages in the loss of communal lands, and as taxes and cash demands rose, increasingly men migrated seasonally out of the villages in search of wage work. Through at least the 1930s, these migrants provided the majority of Spanish-speaking labor for the mines, railroads, and farms of Colorado and New Mexico.[10]

[9] Luisa Torres, "Palabres de Una Viejita/the Words of an Old One," *El Palacio* 84 (Fall 1978): 12. See also Annette Thorp, "Vicenta," Works Progress Administration (hereafter WPA) 5.5.53, no. 1, New Mexico Historical Library, Sante Fe, New Mexico (hereafter NMHL).

[10] Sarah Deutsch, "Culture, Class, and Gender: Chicanas and Chicanos in Colorado and New Mexico, 1900–1940" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1985), 4–61; William deBuys, *Enchantment and Exploitation: The Life and Hard Times of a New Mexico Mountain Range* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985); Swadesh (n. 6 above); Paul A. F. Walter, "A Study of Isolation and Social Change in Three Spanish Speaking Villages of New Mexico" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1938); Victor Clark, *Mexican Labor in the United States*, U.S. Labor Bureau Bulletin no. 78 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1908).

Despite the migration and the increasing Anglo presence in the region, the villages remained distinctively Hispanic. The social organization of the villages and, in particular, the activities of women, help explain this resilience. For as the men migrated, their participation in the village began to shrink until the women's world and the world of the village began to merge.

Women in the villages had a panoply of responsibilities. They led church services and gained authority as healers, mothers, and midwives. The activities covered here—community networking, property ownership, production, and work—are not comprehensive, microcosmic, or unique, but they best illustrate the trends imposed by geographic and economic change.[11]

Northern New Mexico's Hispanic villages had long survived by a mixture of pastoral and irrigated agricultural activities, along with a modest but absolutely essential amount of external trade that was gradually replaced by seasonal wage labor as barriers to trade rose. This was an economy, in the arid mountains, requiring a substantial amount of communal labor—for both agricultural and stock production—and an economy also dependent on communal rights regarding pasturage and water.[12]

The norm among village households was a complete or extended family headed by a married couple. Unless one was caring for an elderly relative, marriage was the assumed destiny of all young people. One Hispanic woman, unhappy in her childhood and her married home, could see no alternative. "Where else could I have gone?" she asked.[13] Marriage and child rearing performed the important function of creating households varied by sex and age and closely connected to other village households, welding the small communities together. Marriage integrated the individual once more into this essential communal group, and children per-

[11] Deutsch, "Culture, Class, and Gender," 62–102, treats midwifery, the family, and religion in greater detail, though these and other facets of village women's lives still bear further investigation.

[12] See, e.g., Jerold Widdison, "Historical Geography of the Middle Rio Puerco Valley, New Mexico," *NMHR* 34 (October 1959): 264; John Van Ness, "Hispanic Village Organization in Northern New Mexico: Corporate Community Structure in Historical and Comparative Perspective," in *The Survival of Spanish American Villages*, ed. Paul Kutsche, Colorado College Studies no. 15 (Colorado Springs: Colorado College Studies, 1979), 38; Allan Harper et al., *Man and Resources in the Middle Rio Grande Valley* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1943), 18–19.

[13] Luisa Vigil in Nan Elsasser, Kyle MacKenzie, and Yvonne Tixier y Vigil, *Las Mujeres: Conversations from a Hispanic Community* (Old Westbury, N.Y.: Feminist Press, 1979), 13. U.S. Department of Commerce, Manuscript Census, Rio Arriba County, New Mexico, 1880, 1900, 1910, National Archives, Washington, D.C. For example, of El Rito's 117 households in 1880, only nine were headed by women. In 1900, sixteen of 120, and in 1910, eighteen of 164 were headed by women. Six, sixteen, and seventeen of these, respectively, were widows; two, one, and three were single women; and one, one, and none were divorcees. See also Annette Thorp, "Chana," WPA 5.5.52, no. 71, NMHL.

petuated that integration. For every child, the parents selected a *comadre* and a *copadre*, terms for which coparent is a better translation than godparent. And as more children arrived, the networks of coparents spread.[14]

In a household with adult men and women, men earned some cash through trade or seasonal labor and raised grain crops and livestock, while women raised produce, including cash-earning items such as chili and eggs. When one or other of the partners was missing, whether through divorce, death, or desertion, the household became lopsided and difficult to keep afloat. Men and women both owned property, inheriting it equally; community property in marriage was the rule, and husbands left property to wives, not eldest sons. Yet widows and widowers remarried at about the same high rates.[15] As heads of households, single men appeared no more frequently than single women. Single heads of household of either sex tended to live with siblings or nieces or nephews given to them by generous relatives to redress the imbalance of age and sex in their household.

While women and men both demonstrated this desire to multiply attachments to the group, for women there were particular and increasing hazards in remaining unattached. Despite the fact that Hispanic women bought and sold property, homesteaded, conducted business, and let sheep out on shares independently, men had greater access to the cash economy: they could migrate out of the village in search of seasonal labor in local mining ventures, on railroad tracks, or herding other peoples' sheep or cattle.[16] Not one of these cash-earning jobs in the Anglo sector was open to women.

[14] See, e.g., Antonio Goubaud-Carrera, "Food Patterns and Nutrition in Two Spanish-American Communities" (Master's thesis, University of Chicago, 1943), 59; Fran Leeper Buss, *La Partera: Story of a Midwife* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1980), 27. Annette Thorp, "Vicenta" (n. 9 above), "Lina," WPA 5.5.52, no. 74, NMHL, and "Weddings," WPA 5.5.52, no. 67, NMHL. Coparents were usually close relatives, partly because one could not marry coparents, so they were taken from among already ineligible mates of the small villages. See Swadesh (n. 6 above), 189. Widowhood, remarriage, and large families were all common. To contrast with practices in Los Angeles in naming coparents, see Griswold del Castillo, *Los Angeles* (n. 7 above), 97.

[15] Wayne Moquin and Charles Van Doren, eds., *A Documentary History of the Mexican Americans* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 268; Olen Leonard, *The Role of the Land Grant in the Social Organization and Social Processes of a Spanish American Village in New Mexico* (1943; reprint, Albuquerque: Calvin Horn Publishers, 1970), 119. Mrs. J. B. Martinez to J. U. Vigil, January 24, 1900, Vigil Papers, Box 1, Western Historical Collection, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado (hereafter WHC). On Hispanic vs. Anglo marital property law, see Joan Jensen's warning against romanticizing this community property practice in "I've Worked" (n. 6 above), 30.

[16] On women's property management, see John Lawrence Diary, November 5, 1901, and October 27, 1901, WHC; Cleofas Jaramillo, *Romance of a Little Village Girl* (San Antonio, Texas: Naylor, 1955), 125–37; Case 337, Lujan v. Lujan, Catron Papers, archive 29, box

Households required both the cash and the produce, but, limited as most women were to such low-paying professions as sewing and taking in laundry, women who were left without sufficient property or sufficient numbers of male wage earners in their household had a far lower earning potential than did men. Men could, through their earnings, buy those items a wife would have produced, but few women could earn enough to substitute for a man's grain and sheep, and his wages. If widowed or divorced women owned their own property and had grown sons to help work it, they could sustain themselves as heads of families, but divorced or widowed women with young children seldom could sustain an independent existence. They relied on exchange with and the kindness of relatives and neighbors.[17]

It is possible to see, in the light of their greater vulnerability to poverty and their greater stake in supportive networks outside marriage, women's particular part in constructing the sense of community so vital to the survival of the Hispanic villages. They did have, after all, and always have had a hand even in the literal construction of the community. Men made the adobes and built basic structures, but women did all the plastering, inside and out, for their homes and for common buildings, and they built adobe ovens and fireplaces.[18] This was a community service that not only echoed the mutually supportive pattern of production but also took women outside the home and gave them some power over the actual physical shaping of their environment.

201:10, folder 1, Special Collections, University of New Mexico; 1896 Juez de Paz Record Book, Abiquiu, June 15, 1905, and Reception Book, 1887–1912, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe (hereafter NMSRCA); Louis Sporleder, *The Romance of the Spanish Peaks* (n.p., 1960), 16. On business, see Ruth Laughlin Barker, *Caballeros* (New York: D. Appleton, 1931), 177; Case 253, Maria Rita M. De Montoya v. Juan Sanchez and Mrs. Remedio de Sanchez, 1915, Santa Fe, Catron Papers, box 201:8, folder 15. Anaria Margarita Vasquez to Vigil, November 24, 1912; Mrs. Eva Montoya to Vigil, March 19, 1913; and Mrs. J. B. Martinez to Vigil, April 11, 1913, Notary's Record 1906, and file 19, Vigil Papers.

[17] Manuscript Census, Rio Arriba County, 1910, e.g., Chama: nine women did washing, three did odd-job labor, three took in lodgers, and six did housework. According to the census, almost each village had at least one divorced person, usually female, and frequently more. Also see "Tia Lupe," pp. 96–102, WPA files, no. 20, NMSRCA. Case 337 Lujan v. Lujan, *New Mexico Penitentiary Records*, reel 1, NMSRCA. Women and men without ties to the village were also vulnerable to charges of witchcraft. See, e.g., Marc Simmons, *Witchcraft in the Southwest* (Flagstaff, Ariz.: Northland Press, 1974); Marta Weigle, *Spiders and Spinsters: Women and Mythology* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982), esp. 41–42.

[18] Plastering was usually a communal event. For example, Alice Blake in *Home Mission Monthly* (hereafter *HMM*) 27 (November 1912): 18; Leva Granger in *HMM* 16 (November 1901): 16; *HMM* 26 (1911): 14; HMM 19 (November 1904): 4; and A. Thorp, "Chana" (n. 13 above); Sister M. Lucia Van der Eerden, *Maternity Care in a Spanish-American Community* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1948), 34.

Women, also, to a greater extent than did men, nurtured the human networks of the village. Often fourteen different visitors would come to one home, some returning three or four times in a single afternoon. Women also maintained the links with kin in other villages, sometimes journeying with the whole family, sometimes alone, sometimes for several weeks at a time.[19] These links maintained connections with coparents, grandparents, or trustworthy foster parents for the children in case of economic disaster. They provided farm labor in old age, widowhood, or illness, and employment (usually for payment in goods rather than cash). The maintenance of community ties thus became a means to ensure the welfare of oneself and one's family.[20]

Perhaps the most fundamental work of women was one more obviously allied to maintenance and to women's place in Hispanic society; it centered around food. Hispanic women were responsible for the "garden," a plot of irrigated land usually closer to the house than were the fields of grain. This garden produced more and more of the food consumed by the family as Anglo and Hispanic speculators, railroads, and national parks acquired the grazing lands necessary for livestock production. Women controlled this garden land totally. It provided them with an autonomous base, a source of subsistence independent of but not in competition with men.[21]

The effort and time involved in processing food, a love for the land that had produced it for generations, and its life-giving properties imbued food with a symbolic significance. Sociologists have explained that the borrowing and sharing of food among members of the extended family and friends are important means of fostering social cohesion.[22] In these villages the significance went even further, as illustrated by one Hispanic midwife's story.

[19] Compare Nancy Grey Osterud, "Strategies of Mutuality: Relations among Women and Men in an Agricultural Community" (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 1984); Leonard, 75–76 133; Prudence Clark in *HMM* 24 (November 1909): 5; Harriet Benham in *HMM* 16 (November 1901): 8; Elsasser, MacKenzie, and Tixier y Vigil: Vigil, 14; John Lawrence Diary, throughout. See also Griswold del Castillo, *La Familia* (n. 2 above), 42–43.

[20] A. Thorp, "Chana"; Charles Hayden MS, 66, WHC, *HMM* 19 (November 1904): 13; C. Jimenez. Oral History 72, March 31, 1969, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado (hereafter DPL); "Alita," *HMM* 14 (November 1899): 8, Carolyn Atkins, ed., *Los Tres Campos—the Three Fields* (Albuquerque, N.M.: Menaul Historical Library of the Southwest, 1978), 18, 48.

[21] A. Thorp, "Chana"; Flora Lucero Garcia, "Margarita Ruyball Lucero," *San Luis Valley Historian* (hereafter *SLVH*) 8 (1976): 3–5; Matilda Allison in *HMM* 23 (November 1908): 9, Manuscript Census, Rio Arriba County, 1880, 1900, 1910. On women's participation in food processing—butchering, rendering lard, drying meat, shelling, toasting, sifting, and sometimes harvesting grains—see P. Clark in *HMM* 15 (March 1901): 104–5, Victoria MacArthur in *HMM* 24 (November 1909): 16; Jensen, "Canning" (n. 6 above), 365; Hayden MS, 69, WHC.

[22] A. Thorp, "Vicenta"; Leonard (n. 15 above), 71; Goubaud-Carrera (N. 14 above), 64. Compare George Foster, "The Dyadic Contract: A Model for the Social Structure of a Mexican Peasant Village," in *Peasant Society: A Reader*, ed. Jack M. Potter et al. (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1967), 218–20.

The midwife had come to deliver a child and found the labor lasting an unusually long time. Exhausted, she went to borrow something from a neighbor and there discovered the apparent reason for the difficult birth. It seemed the woman ate her meals standing in her doorway but gave nothing away. Children who were hungry asked for bread and stood watching her eat, but to no avail. The midwife concluded that the woman was so stingy the child did not want to be born to her, so the midwife took the woman's wheat flour (considered a luxury and kept for feast days) and made a large number of tortillas. Then she had the mother-to-be call in all the children she could find and dispense the tortillas with her own hands. The child was finally born, and the new mother became very generous.[23]

Food, as a woman's own product to dispose of as she wished, became intimately bound to her virtue, and a woman's treatment of it defined her character both as a woman (one worthy to be a mother) and as a member of a communal village. Women did not belong to the community simply as dependents whose place there was determined by the behavior of their nearest male relative. They belonged as producers, and it was in part through the distribution of their own produce that they held a place in their own right.[24]

Women also produced food for exchange. For example, one woman "sold" her cheese "to the village people who did not have cows or goats of their own." But she sold it within an informal women's exchange network, bartering cornmeal, flour, or homemade soap for the cheese.[25] Women would also pay church dues with hens and the children's school fees with their produce.[26] Any cash they earned from their own products women usually obtained through men's marketing their crops. Trading for cash—outside the village almost by definition since there was virtually no cash in circulation there, and certainly outside a woman's network of community and kin—usually remained in the hands of either husbands or male relatives. This delegation of the cash nexus to men would acquire new meaning when whole families migrated to Anglo areas.

Meanwhile, food remained distinct from other products women and men produced, and there were separate peripheries to its legitimate sale. It was more like village land, whose preferred buyers were always relatives, than like, for example, weavings or sheep. A woman from Cordova rejected the opportunity to sell her homemade ice cream through a local

[23] "Parteras," WPA 5.5.53, no. 8, NMHL.

[24] On distribution norms, e.g., Buss (n. 14 above), 21; Leonard, 80; and Olen Leonard and C. P. Loomis, *Culture of a Contemporary Rural Community* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1941), 19.

[25] Thorp, "Vicenta." See also Ann Lucero, "Memories of Mr. Abel Chavez," *SLVH* 8 (1976): 23–24.

[26] For example, Ruth Barber, Oral History TC 35C, Menaul Historical Library of the Southwest, Albuquerque, New Mexico (hereafter MHL), and various issues of Home Mission Monthly.

merchant. "It would be dishonest to sell food you make in your home for profit at a store," she explained. Her husband concurred, "She is right, because to make food is part of our life as a family and to start selling that is to say that we have nothing that is *ours* . . . better to have less money and feel we own ourselves, than more and feel at the mercy of so many strangers."[27] Exchange for trade, even cash sales if sold by the producer, retained the intimate connection between producer and subsistence product and retained the producer's control over that product. By introducing a middleman, one lost control of one's virtue. Women's production of food, like women's creation of neighborhood, was thus both imbued with the communalism of the village and vital to it.

Much of this women's economy of production and exchange, like its role in the Hispanic-Anglo frontier, has remained invisible to historians, made so less by its unsalaried and often informal nature than by the dominance of Anglos and males among record and census takers. In the 1910 census for Rio Arriba County, for example, male and Anglo female enumerators listed ten females with occupations for every one hundred males in communities they covered. Sophie Archuleta, however, a Hispanic public school teacher in Truchas whose father was a general farmer, whose mother was a seamstress, and whose sister and brother performed labor on the home farm, listed seventy-nine females with occupations for every one hundred males.[28] Seventy-nine, not ten—this statistic argues for a different interpretation of the value and centrality of women's work.

Even the basic outlines of acceptable women's work had always depended more on the composition of the family than on sexual norms. Anthropologists Paul Kutsche and John Van Ness noted that within the household, tasks were divided by sex and age "in a marked but not rigid fashion," adding that "the division of labor is not absolute. If age and sex distribution in a family, or illness, or jobs away from home, makes it inconvenient to go by custom, then anyone does anything without stigma."[29] Men could wash, cook, and iron; women could build fences, hoe corn, plant fields, and herd and shear sheep.[30] In Chimayo, the men usually

[27] Quoted in Robert Coles, *The Old Ones of New Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 25.

[28] Manuscript Census, Rio Arriba County, 1910. Other examples of obscured female activities occur in Leonard, 80; Goubaud-Carrera (n. 14 above), 60; Margaret Mead, ed., *Cultural Patterns and Technical Change* (Paris: Unesco, 1953), 182. Anthropologist Beverly Brown tells the story of a man filming an African village while questioning a man on what women did. As women erected a house in the background, the man, after a long pause, responded, "Well, they take care of the children, yes, that's what they do; they take care of the children." Conversation at sixth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, Northampton, Mass., 1984.

[29] Paul Kutsche and John Van Ness, *Cañones: Values, Crisis and Survival in a Northern New Mexico Village* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), 35.

[30] Men: *HMM* 19 (November 1904): 11; William Parish, ed., "Sheep Husbandry in New Mexico, 1902–1903," *NMHR* 37 (October 1962): 263. Women: "Manuela," 275–76, WPA files, no. 11, NMSRCA; Parish, 285; A. Thorp, "Chana" and "Vicenta"; M. K. Marquez, "Juanita Ortega de Gomez," *SLVH* 8 (1976): 19–23; Juanita sheared and butchered her own sheep on her homestead after her husband died in 1908 and was also a *curandera* (herbal doctor); Jesusita herded and sheared sheep as her father had no sons and found no stigma attached to attending village dances in jeans: "Not like a girl, like a boy. And nobody bothers me, no. Everybody likes me" (Buss, 23–25).

did the carding of wool, the women spun, and both wove. Prudence Clark recalled visiting a house in Chimayo in 1903 where, while twelve women sat spinning, in the adjoining room the men smoked, gossiped, and looked after "the little people." The women, too, would stop occasionally "and have a smoke."[31] As more and more men migrated for longer and longer seasons of wage work to earn the cash essential to village survival, women's work load increased, and the communities' already malleable division of labor flexed to accommodate the new circumstances. The traditional lack of rigidity about the sexual division of labor eased the transition to a migratory community, whether or not ideological norms changed.

Both Anglos and Hispanics noted the relatively rapid spread of "American" bedsteads, tables, chairs, sewing machines, and cooking stoves into Hispanic homes after 1880, paid for by the men's earnings from newly available wage jobs.[32] They noted this technological cross-cultural contact, but they gave less notice to the concommitant extension of women's work in the village. That women often enjoyed the new technology, in particular the cookstoves, is not in dispute. In 1901 two women were sufficiently attached to the same cookstove to bring a case to court.[33] But the changes in women's labor were not limited to their work within the home. When men left the village for wage work each spring, the women were left with the care of the men's crops. The women were moving from a shared position at the village center as village producer to sole tenancy.

As witnesses at the time observed, "There was no abandonment of the land; rather a new order saw the women taking charge of the planting of crops aided in part by their children and men too old to seek work outside the valley."[34] The cash the migrants brought home to the villages paid taxes and permitted such modern necessities as gable or corrugated iron roofs and school supplies despite depleted resources.[35] Without the work of the

[31] *HMM* 18 (November 1903): 10.

[32] For example, V. Clark (n. 10 above), 498, 501, 504. Sue Zuver, quoted in Alice Blake, "Presbyterian Mission Work in New Mexico" (unpublished manuscript, MHL, 1935), 122; Brengle in *HMM* 25 (November 1910): 15.

[33] Case 598, Rio Arriba County Court Records, District Court, 1895–1905, Docket Book D, NMSRCA.

[34] "Deep Village," WPA files, 220, Rio Arriba County History, NMSRCA; and see Leonard (n. 15 above), 27, 29; Juan B. Rael et al., "Arroyo Hondo. . . ," *El Palacio* 81 (Spring 1975): 8, 10.

[35] Buss, 29, 50; N. Howard Thorp, "Rio Arriba County History," 3, WPA files, 220, NMSRCA; Mary A. Steer, "A Journey Abroad at Home," *Women and Missions* 2 (May 1925): 48; Ivie Jones, Home Demonstration Agent, San Miguel County, 13, "New Mexico Agricul-

women in the villages, however, without adapting the sexual division of labor to new strategies made necessary by cross-cultural contact, the Hispanic villages, as such, could not have survived.

Anthropologist Alice Schlegel has pointed out that "division of function . . . does not necessarily lead to stratification."[36] In the northern New Mexico villages, Hispanic men and women worked on and off the land and in their communities not competitively but, instead, in a mutually supporting way. Individuals were not as effective economically on their own as they were in a unit; but neither were they powerless or completely dependent. As women's work was not limited to hidden and reproductive work in the household, the work of both sexes remained visibly essential to subsistence itself.

In a village increasingly divided into village women and migrant men, women's activities sustained the community physically and spiritually. The integrative function of women grew in importance, and increasingly women provided the ongoing principle, the continuity for the village. Through the work of women, Hispanics could maintain an area where they retained control over the development of their own culture, selected artifacts from the Anglo world, and continued their patterns of communal networking and exchange outside of direct Anglo contact, despite loss of overall economic and political dominance. So completely, in fact, had village life come to devolve on these women by the end of the 1920s that one Hispanic male recalled, "When the men came back, they were kind of like guests."[37]

tural Extension Service Report," T876-10-1928, National Archives, Washington, D.C.; Dora Ortiz y Vasquez, *The Enchanted Dialogue of Loma Parda and Canada Bonita* (n.p., 1983), 10; Lyle Saunders, "The Social History of the Spanish-speaking People in Southwestern United States since 1846" (paper read at First Conference of Historians of the United States and Mexico, Monterrey, 1949), 8, Community Relations Papers, box 2, Western History Department, DPL; Elsasser et al. (n. 13 above); Ida Gutierrez, 67; Barker (n. 16 above), 303; Jensen, "Canning" (n. 6 above), 362. Where men did not migrate and opportunity permitted, women in increasing numbers performed wage work for Anglos, usually laundry or domestic service, to provide the necessary cash. See "Home Economics Evening School Classes for Spanish American Women," *New Mexico School Review* 4 (April 1925): 15; Buss (n. 14 above), 32; Ruth Barber, "Financial Independence Increasing," *Women and Missions* 40 (May 1924): 68. The female wage workers, like the males, tended to view wage work as peripheral to their main object, the continuity of village life. As such, the village accepted both the day work of the women and the sorties of girls to Santa Fe and Albuquerque with, as one male Chimayo inhabitant remembered, "a great pride" (interview with John Trujillo, Chimayo, New Mexico, November 12, 1983); Charles Briggs, "'Our Strength Is in the Land'" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1981), 312.

[36] Alice Schlegel, "An Overview," in *Sexual Stratification: A Cross-cultural View*, ed. Alice Schlegel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 355–56. Compare Eleanor Leacock, *Myths of Male Dominance* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1981), 144.

[37] Interview with Arthur Maes, Denver, Colorado, September 12, 1983. (Names of most interviewees have been changed to protect their privacy.) Interview with John Trujillo, Chimayo, New Mexico, November 12, 1983.

This tightly bound economic balancing act worked for the villages and their migrant men, but it would fall apart when whole families moved to the Anglo-dominated city or the Anglo rural north, to Denver or northern Colorado's beet fields, as they did increasingly during the 1920s. In these northern Anglo areas, Hispanic women experienced a new marginality. Differences in the social structure of Anglo communities and restrictions on Hispanic landowning there inhibited the ability of women to play the same vital economic role they had played in the village.

Hispanics in sugar beet growing areas of northern Colorado found it difficult if not impossible to make the traditional progression from laborer to tenant to farm owner. Landowners hesitated to lease farms to Hispanics. Largely restricted, as a result, to seasonal beet labor, the migrants arrived at a time when land values had escalated while wages had not and when the move to ownership by anyone had generally dwindled. Yet without owning productive land, it would be difficult for Hispanics to convert new settlements in the north into stable villages. Even town lots were not easily acquired. Restrictive covenants and low wages kept Hispanics on the margins in northern towns. The state's largest beet sugar company, Great Western Sugar, with its company-financed colonies for Hispanic labor, did not discourage this state of affairs. Rather, the colonies epitomized the effort to preserve a system that identified Hispanics as a perpetual and distinct laboring force. Their one- or two-room distinctive adobe structures stood on lots devoid of shade, sufficient water, or farmland, a mile or two outside Anglo towns, or literally across the tracks.[38]

Women in this setting could not produce enough food to feed their families. Hispanic women in northern Colorado planted gardens when they could, but with over half the women working in the beet fields, even in the relatively rare instances when they had suitable land and water, they did not have the time to tend vegetables, so often they planted flowers instead. Fewer than 2 percent of Hispanic families working in the beet fields in northern Colorado produced a major part of their own food, and at least 33 percent had no gardens at all.[39]

[38] See, e.g., Paul S. Taylor, *Mexican Labor in the United States Valley of the South Platte, Colorado* (Los Angeles: University of California Publications in Economics, 1929), 6:54, 117–18, 136, 138, 171, 185, 186, 189, 191, 209; Sara Brown et al., *Children Working in the Sugar Beet Fields of Certain Districts of the South Platte Valley, Colorado* (New York: National Child Labor Committee, 1925), 64; Charles Timberlake, U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, *Hearings: Immigration from Countries of the Western Hemisphere*, 70th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1928), 701; Robert McLean and Charles Thomson, *Spanish and Mexican in Colorado* (New York: Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1924), 34; Great Western Sugar Company property records, 1920–40, Great Western Sugar Building, Denver; *Through the Leaves* (Denver: Great Western Sugar Company, 1913–35), monthly publication available in Great Western Sugar Company Papers, WHC.

[39] U.S. Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, *Child Labor and the Work of Mothers in*

Hispanic women in northern Colorado, as in the villages, inherited and controlled property when the family had any property. But food had to be purchased; preparation was not shared among the community.[40] In the Hispanic villages, women had measured their value by their ability to provide and prepare food, both for their own and for neighboring families. As in other societies, food was more than sustenance; it carried emotional freight, bound villagers to one another, and defined their relations. Change in this arena would eventually shake all others.[41] Women would have to find new ways to measure their value. As with the men, their relationship to the land and to what it produced, a relationship that had provided the key to village membership, had changed. Membership in the community, like women's own value, would have to be defined in other ways.

The community itself was none too easy for women to find. Its elusiveness became most evident at childbirth. Midwives, essential and respected members of villages, moved north in the same way other women did, as members of beet-working families. But as such, they, too, became highly transient, here one year, gone the next. Some Hispanic women turned instead to free county clinics when they opened in the 1930s, but they found them a mixed blessing. It was "much better" during birth because they had ether for the pain, but much harder afterward. In New Mexico, relatives and neighbors had gathered round. All helped. In the north, remembered one mother, "we didn't have nobody to do anything for us so we had to work up to the minute we had kids and then up immediately, no women around to help."[42]

There were rare stories of interethnic friendship and even intimacy among women. At least one Hispanic mother learned English in an informal group of women beet workers, including Japanese and German-Russian, that met in each other's kitchens and exchanged ways of cooking. She learned to make German bread and other German dishes and cried when her German friend moved away. Maria Chavez remembered that though "neighbors" never visited each other, "white and brown" came to

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the Beet Fields of Colorado and Michigan, Bureau Publication no. 115 (Washington, D.C.: Government Publications Office, 1923), 25–26, 54–55; B. F. Coen et al., *Children Working Farms in Certain Sections of Northern Colorado*, Bulletin no. 2 (Fort Collins: Colorado Agricultural Department, 1926), 99; interview with Rose Lopez, Española, Greeley, Colorado, September 26, 1983, who had a vegetable garden and did not work beets, and with Juan Gonzales, Española, Greeley, September 26, 1983, whose mother had a garden and did canning as did "lots of families" in the colony.

[40] Interview with Margarita Garcia, Windsor, Colorado, October 12, 1983. For property owning, see, e.g., Great Western Sugar Company property records.

[41] Brown et al., 102–4; Coen et al., 95–100. Mead, ed. (n. 28 above), 213.

[42] Interviews with Arthur Maes, with Rose Lopez, with Juan Gonzales, with Margarita Garcia, and with Lucy Romero, Greeley, Colorado, October 12, 1983.

dances on the farms.[43] Observer Paul Taylor related an incident of a woman farm operator who cared for the baby of the Spanish Americans working on her farm for three months when the mother went to the hospital with blood poisoning. There were even a few intermarriages: five in Weld County in 1926, or 8.6 percent of Hispanic and .9 percent of all marriages in the county that year.[44]

For many Hispanic women, however, the loneliness and isolation experienced in a childbirth unattended by women relatives and neighbors permeated their lives. They could remember a life in New Mexico where families always got together, one night at one house, one night at another, and now they spent months on isolated farms, scattered across the valley.[45] Amelia Cordova's mother liked to melt the snow that piled in corners and wash her hair with it. When one night a chemical in the snow blinded her mother, Amelia had to quit school to take care of her.[46] No community of women had arisen to replace the one they left in New Mexico.

Without the communal and exchanged labor of the village, the comradeship of women in childbirth, the power bases of the garden and of the village itself, Hispanic women in northern Colorado found their place in society altered indeed. Thoroughly dependent on a money economy, Chicanas in northern Colorado did not find in wage labor, when they could get it, a satisfactory replacement for their gardens as a means, or for their villages as an end. Performing agricultural labor for wages, unlike the nonwage labor in the garden or the village fields, provided neither the status of ownership nor even necessarily control of income produced. The farmer contracted with and paid the husband and not the wife for the family's labor.[47]

[43] Interview with Maria Chavez, Greeley, Colorado, October 12, 1983; Taylor revealed that in smaller rural communities in the eastern part of the South Platte Valley where there were fewest Mexicans, there was occasional social mingling at dances, and Margarita Garcia's father learned German from his association with the German Russian beet families and gave German square dancing calls (Taylor [n. 38 above], 228).

[44] Interview with Margarita Garcia: one owner's wife, a Swede, was friendly, the other did not want much to do with them. See also Taylor, 155. There were three intermarriages in 1920 and one in 1922; compare to seventeen in 1926 in Las Animas County (13.9 percent of Hispanic and 3.8 percent of all registered marriages) and seven in Rio Arriba County (10 percent of all marriages) (Weld County Marriage-Registers, Greeley, Colorado).

[45] Interview with Lucy Romero; Coen et al., 131–34.

[46] Interview with Amelia Cordova, Evans, Colorado, October 12, 1983. Theodore Rice, "Some Contributing Factors in Determining the Social Adjustment of the Spanish Speaking in Denver and Vicinity" (Master's thesis, University of Denver, 1932), 62. Coen et al., 107–8, 135–36; Brown et al. (n. 38 above), 60–61, 109. Language was a factor: in 1920, only 17 percent of Mexican and just over half of Spanish-American mothers knew enough English to make themselves understood, whereas 42 percent of the Mexican and almost all of the Spanish-American fathers did, a legacy of dealing with external affairs. But even within groups, many families had no visiting contacts at all (U.S. Department of Labor [n. 39 above], 17–18).

[47] Note that, as family labor, the labor of the 60 percent of Chicanas in the beet fields tended not to be recorded by the Anglo census takers, so that, e.g., only approximately 9.5

Moreover, there was little in the off-season jobs available to them that would advance the status of Hispanic women in either the Hispanic or the Anglo society. The winter occupations open to the women were even more limited and poorly paid than those open to Hispanic men. Only about one-tenth of the Chicanos with winter wage work were mothers, and while the men with winter employment averaged sixty dollars a month income, the women averaged half of that.[48] Domestic service, the largest category of jobs open to Chicanas, paid as much as ten or twelve dollars per week in Denver, but Maria Chavez remembered cleaning houses for fifty cents a day in the beet areas of Wyoming.[49] And not all employers looked kindly on Chicana domestics, as one Spanish American girl, a U.S. citizen working her way through school, recalled: "A woman to whom I applied for work when I first came to x—— said, 'People of your nationality are just terrible; I can't stand them, they're so crude, lazy, and so uncultured.'"[50]

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percent of Chicanas in Colorado were recorded as gainfully occupied in 1930, the lowest proportion of any racial or ethnic group listed, whereas beet labor studies showed that 60 percent of Chicana mothers worked in beets (*Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930 Population* [Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1933], 4:238). Also note that Hispanic men were recorded as gainfully employed at 74.1 percent, only slightly higher than the native Anglo (73.8 percent) and lower than black and foreign born, which may have been due to the time of year when the census was taken, to the reluctance of census takers to enter the barrios, or to their inability to communicate once they did (interview with Arthur Maes). See Mario Barrera, *Race and Class in the Southwest* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), 98, on agricultural wage as new to Chicanas.

[48] Brown et al., 83; Greeley Salvation Army report, January–March 1930, cited in Rice, 76. In Greeley no Hispanic clerked in a store until after World War II; Chicanas who obtained teachers' certificates found the north an uncongenial environment for job seeking, and even Denver lacked the Hispanic infrastructure necessary to provide more than a handful of clerical jobs; Helen Salazar, Colorado Board of Charities and Corrections, Colorado State Archives, box 66927; interviews with Rev. Alfonso Esquibel, Santa Fe, November 9, 1983, and Juan Gonzales (n. 42 above). In 1926 Reyes Gutierrez became the only Hispanic teacher in Weld County (Weld County School Records, box 13361, Colorado State Archives, Denver).

[49] "Survey of Employed Women in Denver, Colorado" (August 1920), 7, YWCA Records, Denver; Colorado Industrial Commission, *Annual Report* (1930), 29, on women's wages. Born in 1913 in New Mexico, Maria Chavez completed only the third grade because she "topped," or harvested, beets in December and cleaned houses in winter. She learned English through her contact with Anglos as a domestic worker (interview, n. 43 above).

[50] Quoted in Taylor, 225. Despite the tendency of the men I interviewed to be unable at first to recall many Hispanic domestic workers, at least one had a mother who had taken in laundry, and over half of the women interviewees had either themselves done domestic work or had mothers or sisters who did domestic work of some kind in northern Colorado. Margarita Garcia's mother took in laundry, as did Arthur Maes's mother (a widow). Maes commented, "That was how they made extra . . . not a lot of women, those who had to do it, had to because of the kids." Maes also remembered girls who went out and did day work in Denver. Rose Lopez continued to do domestic work, principally child care (live-in) after she was married. See also Timberlake (n. 38 above), 699. In the 1930 census, 41.6 percent of gainfully employed "Mexicans" were listed under domestic service and 41.5 percent under farm labor (Barrera, 97).

Hispanic women in Anglo areas virtually were left, of the entire panoply of their village activities, with the home alone. In contrast, the male realm of wage earning and external relations took on an ever-increasing importance. Hispanic men in the Anglo north, too, faced limited opportunities and options, and male/female relations in terms of decision-making and respect within marriage did not necessarily change, at least not immediately.[51] But the Hispanic women had lost ground within the Hispanic community as well as in the larger community, for they continued, after all, as inferior wage earners, and now wage earning had become the only means to an autonomous base. The balance within the Hispanic community had altered.[52]

Anglo women, too, had a role to play in this intercultural equation. Both in the villages and in the northern communities in Anglo areas, Anglo social service workers reached out particularly to Hispanic women. They adopted the prevalent assumption that women functioned as cultural bridges, that "mothers frequently furnish the key to the situation" and so shape the terms of cultural survival or acculturation.[53] Over 200 unaccompanied Anglo women missionaries had come to claim the Hispanic villages for Protestant America between 1900 and 1914 alone, and in the Anglo north, social workers and settlement house residents were simply missionaries by another name.[54]

Anglo women, like Anglo men, sought to fit Hispanic women into roles Anglos had designed for them. They envisioned them not as semiautonomous property owners who worked outside the house as well as within it and who lived with a relatively flexible sexual division of labor. Instead, they saw Hispanic women either as women thrust by circumstance and improvident men outside their true role (in the home), or as martyrs to domestic ignorance, their bad housekeeping making them slovenly and

[51] On decision making, see interviews with Margarita Garcia (n. 40 above), with Maria Chavez (n. 43 above); Reyes Ramos, "Movidas: The Methodological and Theoretical Relevance of Interactional Strategies," *Studies in Symbolic Interaction* 2 (1979): 141–65, and "Discovering the Production of Mexican American Family Structure," *De Colores* 6 (1982): 1–19 (typescript version); Helen Walker, "Mexican Immigrant and American Citizenship," *Sociology and Social Research* 13 (May–June 1929): 469; Roland Tharp et al., "Changes in Marriage Roles Accompanying the Acculturation of the Mexican-American Wife," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 30 (August 1968): 404–12, esp. 409; Miguel Montiel, "The Social Science Myth of the Mexican American Family," *El Grito* 3 (Summer 1970): 56–63, esp. 56, 61–62; Mirandé and Enríquez (n. 7 above), 116.

[52] Interview with Arthur Maes (n. 37 above); Tharp, 409; McLean and Thomson (n. 38 above), 4; *Colorado Latin American Personalities* (n.p., 1959), 32. Compare Laila Shukry Hamamsy, "The Role of Women in a Changing Navaho Society," *American Anthropologist* 59 (1957): 109.

[53] Robert McLean, "Getting God Counted among the Mexicans," *Missionary Review of the World* 46 (May 1928): 362.

[54] For more information on these missionaries, see Deutsch, "Culture, Class, and Gender" (n. 10 above), 105–77.

impoverished. From the missionaries in the village to social workers in Denver, these middle-class Anglo women sought to transform Hispanic women into ideal domestic servants and proper housewives capable of Americanizing Hispanic men.[55]

As increasing numbers of women entered the labor force throughout the country, they experienced the same sort of segmentation of their labor market as had men. Different jobs held different status, and access to education coupled with discriminatory hiring practices could divide the female labor force along ethnic and racial lines.[56] Middle-class Anglo Americanizers in northern Colorado as elsewhere participated in this division by seeing Chicanas as they had for years seen "dependent" and other "inferior" females of any race, as the ideal solution to the "one phase of woman's work we seem incapable of handling, that of the large class of women, who, as domestic workers are in our homes."[57] These Americanizers, like social workers with other immigrant groups, displayed a desire to mold the behavior of women from another culture into standards acceptable to but not identical with their own middle-class "American" standards and aspirations. Often themselves professional social workers and teachers, they trained Chicanas to be solely domestic servants and "mothers." They continued to believe that mothers held "the channel through which to raise the standard of community along all lines."[58] And

[55] Flora Leavitt, "Our Spanish-speaking Neighbours," First City Conference on Denver's Social Problems, *Report* (June 1928), Community Relations Papers, box 2, DPL; Mrs. Clara Gard, "The Schools and Our Spanish Speaking Neighbours," Community Relations Papers, box 2, DPL. And see, e.g., Merton Hill, "The Development of an Americanization Program" (1928), reprinted in *Aspects of the Mexican American Experience* (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 93, 103; Anne Reynolds, *The Education of Spanish-speaking Children in Five Southwestern States*, Bulletin no. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Department of Interior, Office of Education, 1933), 17. Camarillo (n. 4 above), 177–79, 221; García, *Desert Immigrants* (n. 7 above), 77, 253; and Blackwelder, *Women of the Depression* (n. 4 above).

[56] Alice Kessler-Harris, "Stratifying by Sex: Understanding the History of Working Women," in *Labor Market Segmentation*, ed. Richard Edwards et al. (Lexington, Mass: D. C. Heath & Co., 1975), 231.

[57] W. H. Slingerland, *Child Welfare Work in Colorado*, University of Colorado Bulletin, vol. 20, no. 10 (Boulder: University of Colorado, 1920); Report of Industrial Committee, Colorado State Federation of Woman's Clubs, *Yearbook* (1914), 54; Dorothy Overstreet, "Problems and Progress among Mexicans of Our Own Southwest," *HMM* 32 (November 1917): 6; Grace Farrell, "Homemaking with the 'Other Half' along Our International Border," *Journal of Home Economics* 21 (June 1929): 413–18, esp. 418.

[58] Sarah B. Sutherland, *HMM* 35 (May 1921): 68. See also Maxine Seller, "Beyond the Stereotype—a New Look at the Immigrant Woman, 1880–1924," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 3 (Spring 1975): 59–70, esp. 59, "The Education of the Immigrant Woman, 1900–1945" (n. 1 above), and "Protestant Evangelism and the Italian Immigrant Woman," in Caroli, ed. (n. 2 above), 128–29; Rudolf Glanz, *The Jewish Woman in America* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1976), 20; Emory Bogardus, *Essentials of Americanization*, 3d rev. ed. (Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press, 1923), 354.

they could imagine no better way to train Chicanas in "American" mothering than by encouraging them to meet the demand for domestic servants.[59]

The assumption on the part of Americanizers that women functioned as cultural guardians ensured women, both Anglo and Chicana, a central role in the process of Americanization. They would comprise both teacher and pupil. Such Americanization, however, was limited in what it offered Chicanas. Improved domestic care and the ability to speak English in and of themselves would not move Chicanas from margin to center in Anglo society and would certainly not return them to the center of Hispanic society. Even their job of cultural transmission was work on the margin of both cultures, at the boundary between them, and so provided them with a central place in neither.[60]

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Increasingly at the center of village life, Hispanic women found the move north anything but liberating. Both men and women settling permanently in the Anglo north suffered from narrowed opportunities, but among Hispanics in the north, women found that their activities declined in significance relative to the men's.[61] Contrary to what many sociologists and other observers believed, this marginality of Hispanic women in the north was not something carried with them from the villages, but the result of adapting to life in a new, an Anglo, setting.[62] In a sense, this development was an Americanization of gender roles. It echoed the experiences of U.S. women during nineteenth-century industrialization as well as those of immigrant groups at the turn of the century. Arenas of female authority—such as food production, nonwage work, and kin and community affairs—for Chicanas became as they were in Anglo society, increasingly peripheral to the main concerns of subsistence in a centralized, male-dominated, and cash economy. For Hispanic women and men alike, a move into Anglo areas to the north afforded a loss of status, but for the women, full integration into the Anglo community would not remedy that loss.

The world from which these Hispanic women came—that of their village lives—has scarcely appeared in the historical literature of Chicanos except as overgeneralized and stereotyped in images of submissive, clois-

[59] Emory Bogardus, *The Mexican in the United States*, no. 5 (Los Angeles: School of Research Studies, 1934), 43.

[60] McLean (n. 53 above), 362.

[61] Maxine Baca Zinn, "Mexican-American Women in the Social Sciences," *Signs* 8, no. 2 (Winter 1982): 272.

[62] On the erection of "the hypothetical traditional family," something evident in master's theses of the 1930s and 1940s at the University of New Mexico and elsewhere, see Miguel Montiel, "The Chicano Family: A Review of Research," *Social Work* 18 (March 1973): 22–31, esp. 25.

tered, and powerless women. The focus has been on the rigidly patriarchal ideology articulated by those peripheral to or outside this world, by the Hispanic elite or Anglo observers of the time, or by later authors imposing views derived from other sites and times. Indeed, the accumulated weight of such stereotypes led some propagators to refute even firsthand testimony confronting them. Americanization teacher Alfred White insisted in 1923, "Mexican men like to refer to their wives as having influence and wisdom although they know such has never been the case."[63]

The relationship between ideology and practical life is more complex than White's claim suggests. A few authors have lately cited Hispanic women's activities in urban areas and even in the villages to cast doubt on the stereotypical ideology.[64] Other work suggests that women's daily activities in some contexts are not necessarily related to ideology; departures from the norm can be justified as emergencies. Frontiers—and in many respects this region encompassed an enduring Anglo-Hispanic frontier—could, in this view, perpetuate emergencies from generation to generation. Some recent historians of Hispanic ideology seem to support this view. They argue that despite differences between ideology and practice, a patriarchal ideal of unlimited male authority persisted in the upper and middle classes and was probably imitated by the lower classes and villagers, presumably male and female.[65] Yet a male villager himself recently rejected such a formulation, casting doubt on the wisdom of assuming that an ideology articulated by one class was consumed by all.[66]

In any case, the concentration on ideology and the confusion of it with practical life has distorted our view of village life and marred our understanding of the dynamics of intercultural relations, both rural and urban. It is against a more concrete, village background that the developments of this region and the Chicanas' and Chicanos' experiences as they moved into Anglo enclaves must be judged. Only by examining the gender structure of the village as it was lived can the impact of cross-cultural relations in the village and outside it be understood.

[63] Alfred White, *The Apperceptive Mass of Foreigners as Applied to Americanization, the Mexican Group* (1923; reprint, R&E Research Associates, 1971), 31.

[64] See, e.g., Swadesh (n. 6 above); and LeCompte (n. 6 above). For protests and summaries of relevant literature, see Baca Zinn, "Gender and Ethnic Identity among Chicanos" (n. 7 above), and "Mexican-American Women in the Social Sciences" (n. 61 above); Mirandé and Enríquez (n. 7 above), 108–17; and Griswold del Castillo, *La Familia* (n. 2 above).

[65] Laurel Ulrich, *Goodwives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650–1750* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), 8, 36, 50; Ramon Gutierrez, "Marriage, Sex, and the Family: Social Change in Colonial New Mexico, 1660–1846" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin—Madison, 1980); Griswold del Castillo, *La Familia* (n. 2 above).

[66] Facundo Valdez, "Vergüenza," in Kutsche, ed. (n. 12 above), 99–106. The impact of class differences among Hispanics on female behavior and the ideology of gender bears further exploration.

The changes in the balance between women's and men's activities brought about by cross-cultural relations affected not only the Hispanic women or the nature of the Hispanic family, for the village's sexual division of labor had sustained the entire group and their cultural autonomy. As varied sources of income diminished, as Hispanics came to rely solely on the men's wages, the autonomy of the community diminished also. Bereft of their autonomous base, Hispanic women in the north could not provide the stability that permitted forays into the cash economy to coexist with an autonomous cultural base. In Hispanic villages, the autonomy of women and the autonomy of the community had depended on each other. It was the work of the village women that made it possible for a time to exploit the exchange between Anglo and Hispanic economies. The Hispanic settlements in Anglo areas could not recreate this system.[67]

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[67] For a discussion of the failed 1932 beet workers' strike in Colorado, see Deutsch, *Culture, Class, and Gender* (n. 10 above), 362–451, esp. 389–92.

THE NATURE OF KNOWING: RACHEL CARSON AND THE AMERICAN ENVIRONMENT

VERA L. NORWOOD

> She sweeps with many-colored Brooms—
> And leaves the Shreds behind—
> Oh Housewife in the Evening West—
> Come back, and dust the Pond!
>
> [EMILY DICKINSON, Poem 219, 1891]

Emily Dickinson offers a succinct vision of woman's relationship with the natural landscape as one of housewife to home—one in which the poetic and the practical coexist. Although seemingly in keeping with gentle, domestic relationships with nature, in which the environment outside the home is experienced as a safe, tamed-garden version of the interior life Victorian women supposedly led, Dickinson's poem leads us to contemplate our definitions of female roles and the natural world, and the metaphors we use to understand our relationship to the world. As with most Dickinson poems, the image contains both text and subtext. The traditional role of Victorian women as household managers is subverted when the housewife inadvertently creates "dust" in her cleaning, and the leavings of her efforts enrich the world. Just as the image liberates women, it also liberates nature by suggesting that imperfection is as beautiful as perfection.

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As natural historian Carolyn Merchant has suggested, such metaphorical connections between women and nature have informed both the environmental movements and the feminist movements of this century. The strength of these connections rests on the image of earth as our "home." Environmentalists take many of their principles from the science of ecology, the meaning of which derives from the Greek *oikos*, or house. Merchant argues, "The connection between the Earth and the house has historically been mediated by women." She notes that many feminists find the image of earth as a female space to be a powerful one, and she argues that defining nature as organic "home" leads to concepts of interrelatedness, equal value to all parts, and increased sense of community. She cites biologist Rachel Carson as crucial to the shift away from a mechanistic worldview and toward an understanding of the organic home suggested by Dickinson's poem. Merchant comments further that the science of ecology and the feminist movement share a similar ethic characterized by an affinity with the concept of nature as home.[1]

The connotations of earth as a house, however, are not necessarily the same as those of the earth as home. In his history of developments in scientific ecology, Donald Worster explains that "oeconomy" was a term used to describe the knowledge later dubbed ecology. By the eighteenth century the phrase "oeconomy of nature" connoted "the rational ordering of all material resources in an interacting whole. God was seen both as the Supreme Economist who had designed the earth household and as the housekeeper who kept it functioning productively. Thus the study of 'ecology' . . . was in its very origins imbued with a political and economic as well as Christian view of nature: the earth was perceived as a world that must be somehow managed for maximum output."[2] Worster sees contemporary scientific ecology continuing to fulfill this economic, efficiency-, and production-oriented, managerial approach to nature.[3]

So, when Carson speaks of the earth as a house, we must be careful to note whether by house she means organic home, economic household, or some combination of both. Dickinson's poem suggests that, more often

[1] Carolyn Merchant, "Earthcare," *Environment* 23, no. 5 (June 1981): 6–13, 38–40, esp. 6–11.

[2] Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: The Roots of Ecology* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1977), 37.

[3] The dichotomy drawn here between Merchant and Worster is a bit simplistic: Merchant acknowledges the existence and continuation into the twentieth century of a managerial response to nature. However, she sees the ecological movement (including modern scientific ecology) as being more in tune with holistic "home" images than does Worster. Worster posits the managerial mode as integrally a part of the modern science of ecology and argues that visions of organicism in scientific environmentalism are a product, instead, of the popular understanding of ecology promulgated by "organicists" such as Joseph Wood Krutch and Alfred North Whitehead. See Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 290–95; and Worster, 332.

than not, home values and household values are intertwined in our daily relationships with the natural world. Consequently, her poetry resists the sort of pigeonholing that simplifies the complexity of her response to the world. Carson's work reflects a similarly complex view of the world in which neither the organic home metaphor nor the economic household metaphor alone describes our natural environment.

Both Carolyn Merchant and Donald Worster credit Carson's work with inaugurating recent environmental movements, but both also locate her writing squarely in the organic tradition that sees nature as home—with all the connotations, both for nature and women, that such a metaphor has.[4] These historians are not alone in their assessment. Most commentators on Carson's works have tended to focus on her "nature writing," the pieces that celebrate the wonders of the natural world, and have ignored or trivialized the works that take a more economic, household-oriented approach, such as the materials she prepared for the U.S. government or much of *The Sea around Us*.[5] Such work has been studied only to the extent that it is considered of the same "literary quality" as her books; it has even been dismissed as evidencing an "enforced emphasis on utility."[6]

Carson, like Emily Dickinson, was much more in touch with the complexities of her world than such categorizing of her work indicates. Indeed, the metaphors of organic home and economic household reside in constant tension within all her work, even while Carson maintains that nature does not really fit into the conceptual boxes these metaphors supply. In fact, human beings encounter the world most often as trespassers, alienated from both the organic home and the economic household. Recognizing this failure of human pattern making to describe the natural world, Carson confronts the epistemological hubris involved in all naming and human pattern making. These issues are first raised in her classic nature books—*Under the Sea Wind* (1941), *The Sea around Us* (1951), *The Edge of the Sea* (1955).[7] These works, which shaped Carson's reputation as a nature writer and popularizer of ecology, are the pieces in which she struggled with the philosophical implications of standard literary conventions for describing nature.

In the late 1950s, the focus of Carson's concern shifted from the epistemological inadequacy of our understanding of nature to the consequences of such limited knowledge. She concludes by suggesting new norms for our relationship with the environment. This shift in emphasis

[4] Worster, 23–24; Merchant, "Earthcare," 7.

[5] Rachel Carson, *The Sea around Us* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951).

[6] See Paul Brooks, *The House of Life: Rachel Carson at Work* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971); Carol Gartner, *Rachel Carson* (New York: Frederick Unger, 1983); Wayne Hanley, *Natural History in America* (New York: New York Times Book Co., 1977).

[7] Rachel Carson, *Under the Sea Wind*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), and *The Edge of the Sea* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1955).

changes her usage of the metaphors as she investigates the negative facets of nature as home/household—the harm that the human nurturer and manager can inadvertently do. *Silent Spring* details this shadowy side of our dealings with nature. In this work, Carson evinces an understanding of the limits of human pattern making that suggests connections between her work and the then-emerging philosophical critique of positivism and objectivism, particularly Thomas Kuhn's conception of science as "paradigm" governed.[8] Carson realizes that paradigm shift occurs only when people are *taught* to see nature in new ways, so her last work emphasizes pedagogy; in *The Sense of Wonder* she offers a program for teaching children (and their parents) how to see nature as a system of processes rather than static conditions.[9]

Thus, I discuss the growing complexity in Carson's nature writing, her movement from philosophical to normative issues, and the connections of her work not only to the ecology movements of the sixties and seventies but also to major developments in the twentieth century in philosophy, particularly the philosophy of science. My analysis suggests not only a new reading of Rachel Carson's work but characterizes her as a major voice within contemporary discussions of gender and science as well. How women respond to the natural world, its meaning in their symbolic constructions of reality, and their own sense of responsibility to the environment at various times and among different cultures are matters of wide debate among scholars in such fields as history, literature, and anthropology. Important to this work is an understanding of the ways in which women use symbolic language—language sometimes perceived to spring from their socially derived roles—to relate to nature. I argue that Carson makes a strong contribution to rethinking and reshaping narrow constructions of nature and human relationships with nature implicit in symbolic language. In so doing, she also participates in a tradition reaching back at least to the poet Emily Dickinson and forward to Nobel Prize–winning biologist Barbara McClintock, a tradition celebrating not narrow, "domesticated" nature but the expanding conceptions of nature as home and family to include appreciation and respect for the uncontrollable, unknown—even the never-to-be-known—aspects of the world.[10]

[8] Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (New York: Fawcett, 1962); Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, rev. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

[9] Rachel Carson, *The Sense of Wonder* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965).

[10] Scholarly material on women and nature is scattered widely among the disciplines, with little cohesion or agreement to date. Good examples are Annette Kolodny, *The Land before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630–1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984); Ann La Bastille, *Women and Wilderness* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1980); Carol P. MacCormack and Marilyn Strathern, eds., *Nature, Culture, and Gender* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Carolyn Merchant, "The Women of the Progressive Conservation Crusade: 1900–1916," *The Environmental Review* 8, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 57–86; Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?" in *Women,*

Under the Sea Wind is Rachel Carson's first book. Influenced by well-known nature writers like Henry Beston and Henry Williamson, the book is a series of classic tales about the migrations of birds and fish over the span of a year. Carson identifies with the animals described and personifies them with names and human emotions.[11] *The Sea around Us* established Carson as a natural history writer of the first order. The book was widely reviewed, quite popular, and earned a number of prizes.[12] *The Sea around Us* catalogs most of what was understood about the world's oceans by the early 1950s, including what use humankind might make of the resources in the sea. Carson's third book, *The Edge of the Sea*, results from Carson's field research along the eastern U.S. coastline. Meant to be a guide or handbook, it became, instead, Carson's meditation on the interrelatedness of land and sea life. The book melds her perspectives in *Under the Sea Wind* and *The Sea around Us*, treating both the animal life cycles and the geology of the coast.

All three early works contain metaphoric uses of nature as home and as household. They also, however, often contradict those metaphors. Since the depiction of nature as home is the most common interpretation of Carson's work, I begin there. "Home" in this context means that there is a family feeling for the physical and biophysical landscape; it evokes the image of nature as our "mother," advocates an identification with other creatures, and promotes a unification of self and nature—that sense of being organically (as if by blood) related to the natural world—all of which leads to a reverence and respect for all the materials of one's home.

In Carson's communities of creatures, nature is described as a mother creating a home for her children. These communities live on "homeplaces" in a natural landscape, homeplaces that can even be constructed by animals who provide shelter for other animals (*Under the Sea Wind*, 84–85; *The Sea around Us*, 25–26; *The Edge of the Sea*, 55 and 101). Human structures also provide homeplaces for nature's flora and fauna, even to the extent that human landscapes of death become homes for life. For example, in *Under the Sea Wind* Carson vividly describes the killing efficiency of gill nets; later she offers her readers some relief from that horror by describing the gill net as homeplace:

> Tonight no fish would have tried to pass through the net, for all its meshes were hung with tiny warning lamps. Luminous protozoa and water flies and amphipods clung to the net twine in the dark sea, and the pulse of the ocean stirred from their bodies countless sparks of light. It was as though all the myriad lesser fry of the sea—the plants small as dust motes and the animals tinier than a sand grain—drifting from birth to death in an ocean of infinite size and endless fluidity, seized upon the meshes of the gill net as the firm reality in their uneasy world. . . . The gill net glowed as though it had life of itself. . . . The light lured many small creatures to rise from deep water and gather on the meshes of the gill net, where they rested all that night in the dark, wide sea. [*Under the Sea Wind*, 178–79][13]

These are comforting images that offer an organic niche for humans in nature. By showing how the natural landscape might absorb the artificial structure, they defuse human destructiveness. Nature's ability to overcome human carelessness is a crucial concept for Carson, one she ultimately acknowledges to be false, but one to which she, nevertheless, was drawn throughout her life.[14]

The glowing gill net also reminds one that home can be a haven from the pressures of a harshly competitive world. Carson's first three books provide a litany of natural and artificial places becoming havens, particularly for babies (see esp. *The Edge of the Sea*, 84). Carson's presentation of herself as a privileged visitor allowed to enter a unique and private world is important to this concept of nature as haven. For example, she describes a favorite tide pool as a place of gentleness and beauty eked out of an otherwise uncaring geological world (ibid., 3). Such a stance speaks directly to the protective atmosphere of home, including our natural home, as an organic, magical, life-affirming place.

That said, we often come to the end of what *is* said about Rachel Carson's nature writing. For most of her critics, her love of nature is the backdrop and explanation for the intensity of feeling in *Silent Spring*. That she also mentions scientific developments in our knowledge of the sea, or "sneaks" in educational information about the oceans, or discusses the

Culture and Society, ed. Michelle Z. Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1974), 67–87; Annis Pratt, "Women and Nature in Modern Fiction," *Contemporary Literature* 13, no. 4 (Autumn 1972): 476–90; M. Z. Rosaldo, "The Use and Abuse of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-cultural Understanding," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 5, no. 3 (Spring 1980): 389–417; Margaret Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), and Ann B. Shteir, "Women and Plants: A Fruitful Topic," *Atlantis* 6, no. 2 (Spring 1981): 114–22. For information on McClintock, see Evelyn Fox Keller, *A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock* (New York: W. H. Freeman & Co., 1983).

[11] Carol Gartner's recent study of the literary qualities of Carson's works provides a nice analysis of form and rhetoric in *Under the Sea Wind*. See Gartner, 29–47.

[12] Brooks, 126.

[13] For other examples of artificial homeplaces, see *Under the Sea Wind*, 93 and 240, and *The Edge of the Sea*, 18 and 183.

[14] A particularly beautiful statement of her loss of this belief is found in her 1958 letter to Beverly Knecht, quoted in Brooks, 9–10.

technicalities of the fishing industry is secondary to her reverent picture of nature as home. But there is another side to Carson's home metaphor, one fed not by her reading of classic nature writers but by her training as a scientist. Charles Darwin is not often mentioned as a source for Carson's writing, but she draws on him frequently in *The Sea around Us*. Both *The Sea around Us* and *The Edge of the Sea* reflect scientific ecological concepts that came out of the merger in the early twentieth century of biology and geology. Much of Carson's college training in biology must have been grounded in Frederic Clements's climax theories. Charles Elton, who first described food chains and wrote about the ecology of land animals, provides the fundamental web of interconnections behind *Silent Spring*.[15]

As Donald Worster notes in *Nature's Economy*, the primary implication of the "well-managed household" is an economic one. Worster traces a convincing history of the connections between science and industrial society over three centuries, based on an economic ideal of progress that culminates in the mid-twentieth century in a "New Ecology." The New Ecology begins with Charles Elton's food chains. Animals and plants are categorized as producers, consumers, reducers, and decomposers: "These labels emphasized the nutritional interdependence that binds species together—the corporateness of survival—and they became the cues from which ecology would increasingly take an economic direction."[16] Although the New Ecology resulted in a decreased interest in Darwinian competitive struggles, Worster is careful to show how new scientific breakthroughs arose from earlier tendencies to regard nature as a factory of sorts and humans (rather than God) as supreme managers.[17]

Rachel Carson learned science and wrote her early books in the midst of the changing vision of nature Worster delineates. Thus her well-managed household looks both back to Darwin and forward to what Worster calls "pacified" nature. Further, in describing nature as an economic household, Carson, as she had done in describing it as a home, looks at the metaphor both as descriptive of the biophysical environment we see around us and as revelatory of our place within that environment.

Although all three books offer fulsome examples of the interplay, in the natural world, between competition and "corporateness," *Under the Sea Wind* offers a particularly illustrative case of the natural world and man's

[15] Worster (n. 2 above), 200–214, gives a clear summary of the scientific climate that doubtless nurtured Carson, with a particularly good description of Clements's contributions to ecological thought at the time. Donald Fleming details other sources of Carson's scientific thought in his "Roots of the New Conservation Movement," *Perspectives in American History* 6 (1972): 7–91, esp. 28.

[16] Worster, 296.

[17] Ibid., 312–15.

impact on that world—a dramatization of men hunting mullet.[18] Initially Carson evokes the high drama of the battles between men and their prey, the uncertainties of the chase on both sides, but she concludes with the image of a well-regulated, cooperative household. Men discard mullet "too small to sell, too small to eat"; the sea carefully "laps" up some of these for "the hunters of the tide lines," the ghost crabs and sand hoppers who then come out to clean up the debris: "for in the sea, nothing is lost. One dies, another lives, as the precious elements of life are passed on and on in endless chains." Significantly, men have not altered the balance of life here as many "mullet [pass] unmolested through the inlet and [run] westward and southward along the coast" (*Under the Sea Wind*, 95–102).

In sum, Carson's work reveals a much more conflicted and complicated approach to nature than her reputation gives her credit for. Donald Worster's placement of Carson in the "arcadian" tradition—assuming identification with the natural world as the proper human response—is a classic example of the general tendency to emphasize only her reverence for nature.[19] Carson, however, understands the economic imperatives too well to render only the solution offered by arcadia. A brief story from her first book epitomizes the tensions in her work, revealing how each of us continually balances the organic home and economic household meanings we find in nature. The story tells of a failed catch seen through the eyes of a young fisherman so new to the occupation that he is still filled with an "unslakable curiosity" about life under the sea's surface. He has family feeling for life in the sea: "It seemed to him incongruous that a creature that had made a go of life in the sea . . . should at last come to death on the deck of a mackerel seiner." Nevertheless, he is stuck with the economics of the household, with the inalterable fact of his own need to consume: "It was only later, when they had finished the long, wet task of repiling the 1200-foot length of seine in the boat, their hour's heavy work wasted, that he realized what it meant that the mackerel had sounded" (*Under the Sea Wind*, 200–203). Thus Carson alternates between a vision of nature as revered, respected homeplace, to be approached with an almost religious curiosity and as a household existing primarily for production, consumption, cooperation, and management.[20]

More often than not, however, Carson is struck by the degree to which

[18] For other examples, see the story of Scomber, a baby mackerel in *Under the Sea Wind*, 129–46; comments on the "fierce uncompromisingness" of the sea in *The Sea around Us*, 17; and predator/prey relationships in *The Edge of the Sea*, 55–57 and 109.

[19] Worster, 23–24.

[20] Gartner's comment that Carson emphasizes the earth as "an interlocking whole where nothing is wasted" (n. 6 above), 60, is common to all her critics. That such a vision could include an economic as well as organic appreciation has not been recognized.

the natural world does not function as home or household for its human children. Finding herself and her fellows to be outsiders, trespassers in a world that is distinctly "other," she declares both nuturing and managerial responses to nature doomed to miss the point. The occasions when she fails to find herself at home in nature, paradoxically, constitute the high points of her experience. Similarly, the occasions when the economic metaphor shatters against the unwillingness of the natural world to "produce" meaning provide her most telling critiques of human limitations and lead her to doubt all "naming," all artificial boxes into which nature has been "fit." In this context, Carson becomes more than a nature writer; she raises fundamental questions about how human knowledge is constructed, questions that reveal the epistemological hubris underlying much human understanding. These questions prompt her later normative work in *Silent Spring* and *The Sense of Wonder*.

The first paragraph of *Under the Sea Wind* begins with a metaphor questioning easy assumptions about categories—in this case distinctions we normally make between land and ocean: "Both water and sand were the color of steel overlaid with the sheen of silver, so that it was hard to say where water ended and land began" (3). The images suggest that the places where ocean meets land will not always conform to visions of a warm, life-giving mother from which all life sprang; this ocean is also cold, borderless, impermanent, and harsh with its living inhabitants. Such uneasiness about the exigencies of the ocean expressed in the opening paragraph of her first nature book flow through all three books. Carson constantly points out the risks in an environment that requires enormous waste of life. She notes, for example, the thousands of young who die in the ocean for lack of a fortuitous piece of driftwood or buoy to make into a homeplace (*The Edge of the Sea*, 188). Her concern is only increased by the tenuous security of these places—so easily destroyed by storms or tides (ibid., 64–65). What are we to make of the mole crab, who lives but one year, dying at the end of the summer, leaving just one generation to tenant the household (ibid., 156)? Or of the sea cucumber spewing forth its internal organs when threatened (ibid., 229)? Looking at such a world, Carson can only note how strange it appears to human observers, how deficient we are in comprehending its reason.

Carson's writings are filled with allusions to the separation between humans and nature. In the most mundane examples, human beings are trespassers, physical intruders. In *Under the Sea Wind* the appearance of fishermen "alarms" a heron, sends shore birds scurrying toward the sea, sets the terns to flight "like hundreds of scraps of paper flung to the wind," and lands a ghost crab into the jaws of a channel bass (34–35). On a wider scale, the arrival of people in the delicate ecology of islands "abruptly changes," "exterminates," "ruins," and "snaps the slender thread of life" for many species (*The Sea around Us*, 94–95). Further, Carson laments

that in important ways humans literally cannot see nature, and she constantly points out the physical limitations of our ability to grasp the world we so blithely call "home." Looking at a tidepool, she remarks, "The human imperfection of my vision . . . prevented me from seeing those microscopic hordes that . . . seemed to me the most powerful beings in the pool" (*The Edge of the Sea*, 116–17).

Humans need mediating symbols (literal and figurative) in their attempts to make the natural world comprehensible. Technology, for example, symbolizes literally the need for some intervening device to aid our limited faculties. *The Sea around Us* is as much about such devices as about the sea itself: "Moving in fascination over the deep sea he could not enter, [man] found ways to probe its depths, he let down nets to capture its life, he invented mechanical eyes and ears that could recreate for his senses a world long lost" (15). A specific example of such technology is the development of wave recorders, allowing us to "read" the language of waves that warns us of storms—an ability, Carson notes, that technology has reclaimed from the skills of earlier peoples (ibid., 115). While such technologies allow for better readings of nature, they do not necessarily lead to an imperial dominance. We can now measure waves, but they still "may engulf lighthouses, shatter buildings, and hurl stones through lighthouse windows anywhere from 100 to 300 feet above the sea" (ibid., 123). Thus technology may help humans cope with their limitations, but it does not harness nature.

Figurative symbols, the meanings we give to natural phenomena, are undercut in similar fashion. A chapter on ocean seasons in *The Sea around Us* is an impressive exercise in the creation and destruction of simile and metaphor, ultimately pointing out the inadequacy of symbolic language. Carson first compares spring on the land and in the sea: "In the sea, as on land, spring is a time for the renewal of life" (*The Sea around Us*, 29). Much of the description depends on the economic household metaphor. She stresses the efficiency of the process of winter survival in the sea and the re-creation of food chains as smaller life forms begin to multiply in the spring warmth. Agricultural images multiply as she describes the ocean's "hills" and "valleys," the plankton "grasslands," and "grazing" fish (ibid., 30). These images continue to arise throughout the chapter, but a new set, stressing the "strangeness" of the seascape, also appears. Suddenly we are confronted with repulsive and nonproductive processes: "The diatoms become more and more scarce, and with them the other simple plants. Still there are brief explosions of one or another form, when in a sudden orgy of cell division it comes to claim whole areas of the sea for its own. So, for a time each spring, the waters may become blotched with brown, jellylike masses, and the fishermen's nets come up dripping a brown slime and containing no fish" (ibid., 30–31). The creatures of this place are not like land creatures but are of another world; they glow and their phosphores-

cence causes "fishes, squids, or dolphins to fill the water with racing flames and to clothe themselves in a ghostly radiance" (ibid., 32).

Natural metaphors no longer suffice. As the seascape becomes increasingly problematic, Carson resorts to descriptions of sea surfaces glowing "with sheets of cold fire" and fish pouring "through the water like molten metal" (*The Sea around Us*, 33). Finally, the ocean is neither home nor household but an ominous place lit by a tiny plant "that contains a poison of strange and terrible virulence" (ibid., 33). It is a place whose meaning must be decoded—in this case by the Indians of the Pacific coast who warn illiterate inlanders of the dangers the ocean poses.

Carson's aim here is not simply to write natural history; having evoked and discarded various figurative meanings given to the sea, she also then questions the adequacy of our pattern-making minds: "Man, in his vanity, subconsciously attributes a human origin to any light not of moon or stars or sun. Lights on the shore, lights moving over the water, mean lights kindled and controlled by other men, serving purposes understandable to the human mind. Yet here are lights that flash and fade away, lights that come and go for reasons meaningless to man, lights that have been doing this very thing over the eons of time in which there were no men to stir in vague disquiet" (*The Sea around Us*, 34). Showing such a need to find meaning or make patterns out of natural phenomena afflicts us all, she concludes with quotations from Charles Darwin and Joseph Conrad on anarchy in the autumn sea and death in the winter sea, respectively, using Darwin's and Conrad's figures to set up her own closing affirmation of life: "The lifelessness, the hopelessness, the despair of the winter sea are an illusion. Everywhere are the assurances that the cycle has come to the full, containing the means of its own renewal" (ibid., 36). In this essay on seasons of the sea she measures the ability of language, even in its most flexible expression in figures, to adequately provide a symbolic match to the protean environment. It is only as we see our similes and metaphors constantly giving way before change that we approach an understanding of nature.[21]

Rachel Carson's questioning of the correspondence between human patterns and the natural world results from her own experiences with epistemological hubris. In fact, it is when she fails to find expected patterns that she has her most meaningful experiences. In the first chapter of *The Edge of the Sea* Carson explains why the shore continually attracts her. The two most important qualities of that place for her are a "sense of remoteness" and its fascination as "a world apart" (4). To experience these qualities, she seeks that place of constant change that has always troubled her—the tide line—not during the day, but at night, to find "a different world, in which the very darkness that hides the distractions of daylight brings into sharper focus the elemental realities" (ibid., 5).

Humans seem to be one of the distractions. For Carson, the blackness of the night is "the darkness of an older world, before Man." In this nonhuman place, with the aid of the intrusive beam of a flashlight, she "surprises" (or trespasses on) a small ghost crab. The crab seems to be the only life on the beach. The night, the individual crab, the alien seascape all conspire to deny her a comfortable sense of identification with the world she sees. This disjunction with nature elicits an epiphany: "I have seen hundreds of ghost crabs in other settings, but suddenly I was filled with the odd sensation that for the first time I knew the creature in its own world—that I understood, as never before, the essence of its being. In that moment time was suspended; the world to which I belonged did not exist and I might have been an onlooker from outer space" (*The Edge of the Sea*, 5). This is not the identification with animal life so commonly attributed to Carson but, rather, a recognition of the impossibility of such identification. Nor is she engaged here in finding transcendent meaning in nature by moving outside her own skin, forgetting herself; she removes human culture but not the consciousness necessary for recognizing nature's "otherness."[22]

The symbolic meaning she gains from such experiences is bound up in process rather than utility, either emotional or economic. The ghost crab experience obliterates the sense of community that can make us feel too much at "home" in the natural world, too able to understand, identify, or control. The crab becomes a symbol of life—"the spectacle of life in all its varied manifestations. . . . Underlying the beauty of the spectacle there is [elusive] meaning . . . that haunts us, that sends us again and again into the natural world where the key to the riddle is hidden" (*The Edge of the Sea*, 7). This grasp of the "elusive," "tantalizing," "obscure," "inscrutable" meanings of nature, coupled with her understanding of the very human need to make patterns, is the basic source of the trespasser images. For Carson, one of the most important aspects of human interaction with nature is the realization that the protean quality of the natural world cannot be caught by our pattern-hungry minds but that it is our "nature" continually to seek the pattern. In these early books, this fact provides a sort of delicious frustration for her. Aiming to describe both beautifully and accurately the sea- and landscapes, she builds some of her most evocative

[21] That Carson consciously works to break down such illusion is made clear in a statement from "Our Ever-Changing Shore," an essay she wrote in 1958 to encourage preservation of wild shores: "The ocean has nothing to do with humanity. It is supremely unaware of man, and when we carry too many of the trappings of human existence with us to the threshold of the sea world our ears are dulled and we do not hear" (reprinted in Brooks [n. 6 above], 219).

[22] In his otherwise perceptive commentary on Carson, Fleming identifies her as a transcendentalist engaged in "self-forgetfulness before nature." He further states that her response to nature entails "fantasies of personal obliteration," citing this passage as an example (12–13). Carson may be obliterating the artificial human world here, but she is certainly not denying her separate existence as an individual human; that, in fact, is a significant part of the equation between herself and the ghost crab.

prose out of foiled attempts at symbolization and categorization (esp. ibid., 123, 250).

By the late 1950s Carson becomes less intrigued by this recognition; knowing that much human destruction results from not understanding nature's protean quality, Carson becomes increasingly concerned about the havoc human trespassers wreak. Faced with the crises of pollution and the nuclear age, her writing increasingly critiques human "nature," delineating our limited knowledge rather than celebrating nature's lessons. Rachel Carson always saw humans as trespassers and breakers, but only post–World War II American industrialization educated her to the massive threat this antagonistic character created for the "other" world, the nonhuman world. When she understands this, her writing takes a polemic turn. The three visions of human and nature interacting—as family in a home, as manager in a household, and as trespasser in an alien world—continue to appear in her writing, but they are depicted with a malevolent facet, introducing the reader to the destructive interactions that take place when homemakers and household managers become sick or corrupted. Recognizing the extent of the malady, Carson's writing shifts to a new, action-oriented concern for "right" understanding, the correct relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world.

The Sea around Us concludes with an upbeat vision of humans' "acquisition" of the resources of the ocean. When Carson revised the book ten years later in 1961, she added a preface that outlined the most recent achievements of science and technology in increasing our knowledge of the sea. Some of the most interesting discoveries pointed to the profuse interconnections between sea and land, fostering a concomitant change in our image of the deep sea from a place of relative stability to an environment of dynamic movement.

Carson particularly feared the growing use of the oceans as radioactive dumps, and she explained how the dynamic sea may distribute radioactive contaminants through the movement of currents and the action of food chains. Carson was outraged by those who act on insufficient knowledge and forget the ghost crab's lesson: we are limited in our ability ever to comprehend truly the protean land- and seascapes in which we live. Thus, the preface ends on an ominous note that questions the notion of nature as home or household: "It is a curious situation that the sea, from which life first arose, should now be threatened by the activities of one form of that life. But the sea, though changed in a sinister way, will continue to exist; the threat is rather to life itself."[23] The sea is no beloved mother, nourishing life, passively accepting, absorbing and redirecting the changes her children go through; neither is the sea an endless factory of resources (or, in this case, storage places). It is "other" than humankind and as such may return our trespasses back on us in totally unexpected ways.

The sea is not the only natural terrain offering unpleasant surprises for human development. Although Carson sometimes uses the disjunction between humans as land creatures and the sea to develop that outsider persona, she finds a similar lack of connection between humans and all the nonhuman natural world. *Silent Spring*, the book following her revised *The Sea around Us*, offers stunning descriptions of the unpleasant surprises nature contains for twentieth-century household managers and homemakers. The book begins with an arcadian fable in which a group of settlers has developed the "middle-landscape," the American dream of home in nature, but the dream has soured: "Some evil spell had settled on the community: mysterious maladies swept the flocks of chickens, the cattle and sheep sickened and died. Everywhere there was a shadow of death" (*Silent Spring*, 13–14).[24] As she lists the various deaths, Carson constructs the lifeless landscape she foretold in the preface to *The Sea around Us*. Limited in their understanding of the ecosystem, the settlers have no idea what is bringing the end to life. Carson argues that they have done it themselves in the attempt to "improve" on their home, to increase the comfort of their middle landscape (*Silent Spring*, 14). In this example, Carson uses both home and household metaphors to emphasize the settlers' attitudes of care toward their natural home and their management approach toward the environment. But her ultimate explanation of the community's demise is that, despite their good intentions, they are unable to see or conceptualize the complex intricacies of their ecosystem. The ecological concept against which home and household metaphors are tested is the landscape's resistance to life, the idea that nature requires waste, impurity, accommodation, and seeming inefficiency in order to thrive. With this understanding as a constant backdrop, Carson redefines the household management and home care metaphors.

Those acting on the notion of earth as a household modeled on industrial economics do not even understand good management, according to Carson. In *Silent Spring* she takes up the burden of their education by redefining productivity and efficiency. Basically, she questions the value of progress toward ultimate goals, as well as the managerial ethos informing most 1950s' discussions of how to improve production in nature. Her analyses of "progress" in scientists' attempts to control the gypsy moth and the fire ant are examples of her manipulation of the economic household

[23] Rachel Carson, *The Sea around Us*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), xiii. The biblical quality to Carson's preface, reminiscent of the jeremiad sermon, is examined in Vera Norwood, "Heroines of Nature: Four Women Respond to the American Landscape," *Environmental Review* 8, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 34–57, esp. 46–47.

[24] On the "middle-landscape" and American culture, see Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

metaphor. For both of these pests, new insecticides were hailed as offering the opportunity to create a perfect environment—one with no "noxious" insects. Expensive and technologically demanding campaigns using these insecticides, however, destroyed or contaminated crops and other agricultural products such as milk and honey, made no change in the gypsy moth population, and led to an increase in the fire ant population. Further, Carson argues that less "sophisticated" methods, not requiring large-scale management techniques, are not only more successful at control but are also less expensive (*Silent Spring*, 142–56).[25] Thus, Carson shows no sympathy for development that assumes a passive landscape, a landscape incapable of responding (in often surprising ways) to human intentions. That is the lesson she offers to household managers. Our ability to know how efficiency and productivity are best served in our interactions with the landscape is limited by our ignorance of the complex, interconnected economies disrupted by any intrusion (ibid., 48–49, 59, 217–20).

Just as Carson in *Silent Spring* both employs and questions the economic approach to nature, she also manipulates reverent, homeplace figures of nature. Those who attempt to identify human nature with the natural world are warned that "home" is in fact no haven from a harsh world. The interconnectedness of all life becomes sinister as we come to understand the webs of death interwoven with the webs of life. Throughout *Silent Spring* Carson emphasizes nature's complex system of checks and balances, which limits as well as nurtures species. Although humankind's interference, in the form of technological manipulations, may change the movers, the shift to regain balance continues, affecting not only the offending insects in the examples above but the whole chain of life and death. From this perspective "home" becomes a place of nightmares.[26]

In the early books, Carson offers fascinating glimpses of developing embryonic life, of the growth and survival of animals in that resistant natural world, and of the lives of animal babies. In *Silent Spring* she continues the theme but considers the ominous possibilities natural processes contain. For example, Carson uses robins, those common harbingers of spring, to show how insecticides work in food chains.[27] Using to her advantage her readers' family feelings toward these yard and garden friends, she leads us through the technical processes by which insecticides affect cell formation as she describes a robin's nest with its "complement of blue-green eggs" lying cold, "the fires of life that flickered for a few days now extinguished." Carson explains that radiation, insecticides, and pesticides interfere with the availability of ATP (adenosine triphosphate, a crucial energy "battery" for cell division) in embryos; she then relates this phenomenon to human life, to our membership in the robin family: "There is no reason to suppose these disastrous events are confined to birds. ATP is the universal currency of energy, and the metabolic cycles that produce it turn to the same purpose in birds and bacteria, in men and mice" (*Silent Spring*, 184–85). A litany of the genetic implications of combined, long-term contact with radiation and chemical poisons concludes the chapter. Thus, using images of common, valued animal life, Carson delineates the consequences of human interference in nature for all life. In this scenario of nature as home we are indeed members of a family, and the death we bring is visited as well on all the family members. Carson does not deny the metaphor of earth as home but, as she does for the economic household metaphor, cautions against interpreting its meaning too simplistically.

In the final analysis, *Silent Spring* really is not about nature, rather, it is a close look at the limitations of human trespassing on nature. The problem Carson pursues throughout the book is that "nature has introduced great variety into the landscape, but man has displayed a passion for simplifying it" (20). *Silent Spring* begins with a people too "single-minded" to understand the effects of their own actions. For example, our sense of the destructive potential of poisons pales when packages of deadly weed killer are illustrated with "a happy family scene, father and son smilingly preparing to apply the chemical to the lawn, small children tumbling over the grass with a dog" (ibid., 161). The real difficulty with such symbols, the underlying assumption that makes them too simplistic, is that they describe only what the chemical creations seem to mean to humans—a better life, increased comfort in our present "home." Such exploitation of the home and household metaphors allows those who use the chemicals to avoid moral responsibility, to justify their activities by basing them on biophysical "laws" that imply humans are only fighting to survive and, in keeping with post-Darwinian ecology, are participating in natural processes of biological succession by helping to "improve" the environment.

[25] Fleming (n. 15 above), 87, notes that the "New Conservationists" of the 1960s (Carson among them) "were basically hostile to utopian schemes in general" and cites Carson's description in *Silent Spring* of government-inspired "nightmare" utopias of eradication.

[26] Merchant (n. 1 above) comments that "the home is . . . no longer a haven" because of the intrusion of deadly chemicals into the indoor environment (10). That the concept of home as a separate environment, a place inviolate to the outside world, is a powerful metaphor in American culture has been amply demonstrated in such works as Christopher Lasch's *Haven in a Heartless World* (New York: Basic Books, 1977). Carson's deconstruction of the home metaphor not only suggests that human homes have been violated by our own poisons but further questions the anthropocentric stance that assumes human environments ever were separable from the rest of the environment.

[27] Although Carson's reliance on food chains leaves her argument open to attack, most commentators feel that there is sufficient truth to her claims that such criticisms do not deny the strength of *Silent Spring*'s statement. Fleming gives a clear assessment of the relative strengths and weaknesses (from a purely scientific viewpoint) of this aspect of Carson's book (32).

Paradoxically, Carson found in our role as trespassers an escape from the seemingly inevitable image of humans as carriers of death and destruction. We are trespassers in large part because of our self-consciousness, our pattern-making minds; we may be of nature, but that observing awareness, a function of culture, also separates us from the environment. The case Carson ultimately makes for gentler dealings with the environment rests on distinctions she makes between nature and culture. Discussing the use of nonselective poisons, she comments that such substances poison "all life . . . the cat beloved of some family, the farmer's cattle, the rabbit in the field, and the horned lark out of the sky. These creatures are innocent of any harm to man. Indeed, by their very existence they and their fellows make his life more pleasant. Yet he rewards them with a death that is not only sudden but horrible. . . . By acquiescing in an act that can cause such suffering to a living creature, who among us is not diminished as a human being?" (*Silent Spring*, 95–96). That we do see patterns in the ecosystem is thus a curse and a blessing; we are condemned to feel like eternal outsiders to our household/home, but we are also gifted with a curiosity and comprehension apparently available to no other creature.[28] Unfortunately, Carson could not find this gift adequately developed in the American culture of her time.

While most commentators feel *Silent Spring* ends on an upbeat note, with Carson's much-discussed case for reliance on and development of natural controls, in fact her last statement is a less than hopeful analysis of the current state of scientific culture:[29] "The 'control of nature' is a phrase conceived in arrogance, born of the Neanderthal age of biology and philosophy, when it was supposed that nature exists for the convenience of man. The concepts and practices of applied entomology for the most part date from that Stone Age of science. It is our alarming misfortune that so primitive a science has armed itself with the most modern and terrible weapons, and that in turning them against the insects it has also turned them against the earth" (261–62). *Silent Spring* ends with an image of failed evolution. The twentieth century merely added new forms of technology to the imperial philosophy that has not changed and continues to operate. *Silent Spring* concludes on this negative note in part because the change in research that Carson prescribes can come about only through what Kuhn would call a "paradigm shift" in the way Americans view the environment.[30] Lack of adequate symbolism, not lack of knowledge, is the issue; we continue to look for simplicity and regularity instead of recognizing that nature cannot be conceptually tamed through metaphor. Whether we define nature as a loved home or as an economic household is moot; either metaphor leads to a comfortable and misleading sense of familiarity. We need a paradigm that acknowledges flux and surprise as well as regularity and stasis.

The only way to effect such a change is to teach the next generation adequate seeing. Carson has a specific sort of vision in mind: "We see with an understanding eye only if we have walked in the garden at night and here and there with a flashlight have glimpsed the mantis stealthily creeping upon her prey. . . . Then we begin to feel something of that relentlessly pressing force by which nature controls her own" (*Silent Spring*, 220). This statement echoes the earlier images of the beach walker trying to understand the tantalizing meaning of the ghost crab or the observer marveling at millions of diatoms flashing in the ocean. Experiencing the natural world as resistant to human pattern making changes the paradigms, moves us beyond Neanderthal philosophies.

Near the end of her life, Carson turned to this image of tantalized observer. She hoped to expand "The Sense of Wonder," an essay she wrote in 1956, into a book for parents that would help them encourage an appreciation of nature in their children. The text of the essay, and a set of complementary photographs, was published as a book shortly after her death. "Wonderment" means a continuing surprise and curiosity about the environment. As might be expected, the quintessential time and place for such an experience in Rachel Carson's world is on a beach at night; so *The Sense of Wonder* begins with Carson and her nephew, Roger, standing "one stormy autumn night . . . out there, just at the edge of where-we-couldn't-see" (8). Immediately following, we see them searching the beach with a flashlight for "those sand-colored, fleet-legged beings," ghost crabs (ibid., 10). Throughout she emphasizes the need to move away from comfortable, assumed visions of the environment and to see it as new, astounding, unusual.

Building off the comment, "How can I possibly teach my child about nature—why, I don't even know one bird from another" (*The Sense of Wonder*, 45), Carson argues that adequate seeing and feeling are more important than the ability to label and categorize the environment. What she hopes to build in the next generation is a grasp of natural processes, not static landscapes (ibid., 82). So *The Sense of Wonder* is process oriented: "There is symbolic as well as actual beauty in the migration of the birds, the ebb and flow of the tides, the folded bud ready for the spring. There is

[28] The nature/culture split is, of course, the subject of endless comment and conjecture. I am concerned here with the meaning such a split might have for the development of symbolic language. In this light I find most useful Victor Turner's comments in *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 31–32.

[29] See Fleming, 32–33; Gartner (n. 6 above), 91.

[30] Paul Brooks notes that Carson was "not only questioning the indiscriminate use of poisons but declaring the basic responsibility of an industrialized, technological society toward the natural world" (see Brooks, *Speaking for Nature: How Literary Naturalists from Henry Thoreau to Rachel Carson Have Shaped America* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1980], 285). For Kuhn's comments on the nature and meaning of paradigm shifts, see Kuhn (n. 8 above), 92–110.

something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after the winter" (ibid., 88–89). That she is not describing any mechanical, knowable environment in noting such "refrains" is made clear by the conjoining, concluding vision of two people—both in their ninth decade of life—who maintain an infinite curiosity about the changing meanings of these rhythms (ibid., 89–95).

Carson recognizes the extent to which burgeoning scientific knowledge displaces the lay person from viable, confident experiences of nature. *The Sense of Wonder* ends with an absolute assertion of the availability of the environment to anyone "who will place himself under the influence of earth, sea and sky" (95). Carson's voice in all her books—her persona, if you will—is unequivocally allied with the nonspecialist. The most sophisticated instruments of technology we ever hear of her using are a flashlight, a magnifying glass, and (infrequently) a microscope. With all her appreciation of the technologies that "open" the natural world to our understanding, she is extremely cautious of supporting our tendency to go too far "into an artificial world of [our] own creation."[31] It is impossible to find her speaking with a voice of superior authority; always her experiences are available to the general reader. In *Silent Spring*, the book most dependent on establishing a correct reading of the scientific findings, the true authority comes from people whose daily lives place them at the mercy of science.[32]

Her commitment to writing for the general public should not, however, minimize the extent of her epistemological sophistication and the thematic connections between her work and important developments in the philosophy of science. Early in her career, Carson came to recognize the hubris implicit in imagining nature as our home or household, but she also seemed to grasp how pervasive such metaphors were in her culture. Their use in her writing gave her a verbal arsenal with which to attack positivism. In this she joined philosophers of science and critical theorists in a central intellectual movement of the fifties, sixties, and seventies.

Carson's comment in *Silent Spring*—which was published the same year Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* appeared—that "nature has introduced great variety into the landscape, but man has displayed a passion for simplifying it" provides a fitting coda to Kuhn's landmark study of how paradigms develop and how they are changed. She would agree, too, with Kuhn's caution about the meaning of progress in our search for patterns that fit nature: "We are all deeply accustomed to seeing science as the one enterprise that draws constantly nearer to some goal set

[31] From a speech given to Theta Sigma Phi, April 21, 1954, much of which was to become part of *The Sense of Wonder* (reprinted in Brooks, *The House of Life* [n. 6 above], 326).

[32] Brooks most clearly states Carson's "challenge to the myth of the expert" and avoidance of technical jargon in *Speaking for Nature*, 274–86.

by nature in advance. . . . Does it really help to imagine that there is some one full, objective, true account of nature and that the proper measure of scientific achievement is the extent to which it brings us closer to that ultimate goal? If we can learn to substitute evolution-from-what-we-do-know for evolution-toward-what-we-wish-to-know, a number of vexing problems may vanish in the process."[33]

What makes Rachel Carson more than a nature writer or popularizer of environmental consciousness is her own commitment to just the sort of evolution Kuhn describes and her mission to educate her readers to seek such a science. Carson's place as a liminal individual, able to deconstruct traditional frames of reference and offer new visions, is the result of her lifelong fascination with what Kuhn calls "progress toward no goal." This fascination is the source of her searches along the beach at night for encounters with the mysteries of life. For Carson, such mysteries were not necessarily interesting only to the extent that they could be solved; rather, they proved the value of the search itself.

One of Carson's least appreciated contributions is to have made available to a general readership new ideas about the nature of knowledge, ideas that have led to significant changes in our perspectives on science and the relationship between self and the surrounding environment. Furthermore, her work in this area reveals strong connections to other women's beliefs about appropriate human relationships with nature. Like Emily Dickinson before her and Barbara McClintock after, Carson displays a "feeling for the organism" much different from that which has dominated modern science since Francis Bacon. Rather than espousing a vision of nature's otherness as nasty and uncontrollable, she is "tantalized" by the alien, the mysterious. Rather than seeing in the "wild" an obligation to control and tame, she delights in the unharnessable quality of nature. Finally, rather than using images of home and household to set limits on the environment, she uses such metaphors to explode limits.[34] Emily Dickinson played with common, domestic metaphors to plumb the wild within and about her; just so, Carson uses similar images to draw her readers out of preconceived notions and into the mysteries of nature. Today Barbara McClintock tends her maize—finding there mysteries more intriguing than those in the fast-paced, technology-driven genetic research laboratories—and echoes Rachel Carson's earlier fears when she laments that "we're not thinking it through, just spewing it out. . . . Technology is fine, but the scientists and engineers only partially think through their

[33] Kuhn, 171. Kuhn's work first appeared in 1962.

[34] Merchant's *The Death of Nature* (n. 3 above) convincingly delineates the dominant and dominating response to nature coming out of the scientific revolution. For a study of the impact of such attitudes on American culture, see Annette Kolodny, *The Lay of the Land* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975).

problems. They solve certain aspects, but not the total, and as a consequence [nature] is slapping us back in the face very hard."[35] Just as literary critics have come to appreciate the philosophical complexities underlying Emily Dickinson's play with common, domestic metaphors and scientists have honored McClintock's contributions to our understanding of genetic processes through her commitment to maize propagation, it is now time to give similar recognition to Rachel Carson's broad participation in and contribution to major developments in twentieth-century philosophy and the philosophy of science, particularly as they were received by her extensive public readership.

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[35] As quoted in Keller (n. 10 above), 206. There are other striking congruences between Keller's descriptions of McClintock's approach and Carson's stance toward nature: McClintock's work emanates from the experimental tradition in biology but also continues aspects of the classic naturalist's dependence on observation (xiii); her approach depends on a capacity to "forget herself" (117), immerse herself in observation, and "hear what the material has to say" (198).

SELF PSYCHOLOGY AS FEMINIST THEORY

JUDITH KEGAN GARDINER

In his last works, psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut, the chief proponent of a new "psychology of the self," upholds empathy as an alternative to the "knowledge values" and "independence values" of "Western Man" and "Western Civilization."[1] Threatened by the "narcissistic rage that might trigger atomic holocaust," humanity, he thinks, must develop more compassion.[2] Whereas other psychologies validate goals of individuation and autonomy, he claims that a more interdependent model of maturity is necessary for humanity to survive. Such characterizations may well sound familiar to those feminists who fear "Western Man" and his planetary effects. For example, Dorothy Dinnerstein ascribes the dangerous tendencies in Western civilization to the misogyny consequent on mother-raised psychologies.[3] However, Kohut uses the generic "Man" unselfconsciously and

For their comments and suggestions, I thank my colleagues Leah Marcus and Linda Williams; psychoanalysts Annette Hollander, Ernest Wolf, George Moraitis, and Brenda Solomon; and Paula Caplan and anonymous others.

[1] Heinz Kohut, "Introspection, Empathy, and the Semi-Circle of Mental Health," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 63, no. 3 (1982): 395–407, esp. 399.

[2] Heinz Kohut, "Two Letters," in *Advances in Self Psychology*, ed. Arnold Goldberg (New York: International Universities Press, 1980), 449–69, esp. 462–63.

[3] Dorothy Dinnerstein, *The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and Human Malaise* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976).

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does not consider gender as a significant variable when meditating about individual psychology and our cultural condition. Even though Kohut does not think in gender-conscious terms and even though his idea of humanity is paradigmatically male, self psychology holds great promise for feminist theory.

The psychoanalytic theory now most commonly cited by American feminists is probably that of Nancy Chodorow.[4] Her central insight that mother-dominated child rearing produces differing capacities and desires in women and men relies heavily on the object relations school of psychoanalysis, a reliance that results in Chodorow's theory having some of the same limitations that its parent theories do. As a separate theoretical system, self psychology avoids some of the problems and limitations of feminist object-relations theory, especially its conflation of femininity with heterosexuality and its apparent closure to historical change.[5]

Freud versus Kohut

Self psychology is a developmental theory about the formation of the self: "The self is not a thing or an entity; it is a concept; a symbolic abstraction from the developmental process. The self refers to the uniqueness that separates the experiences of an individual from those of all others while at the same time conferring a sense of cohesion and continuity on the disparate experiences of that individual throughout his life."[6] According to Kohut's theories, the self forms in the first few years of a child's life through the empathic mirroring and optimal frustrations of the caretaking environment. This social milieu is as essential to the formation of a cohesive self as oxygen is to physiologic survival. The infant uses and perceives other people not as separate, not as "objects" in their own right, but as "selfobjects" who perform functions for the self as though part of the self. Although self psychologists adopt nonsexist language, speaking of the "nurturing parent" or the "child's caretaker," they assume that the mother has the primary role in the infant's life. By reflecting the child's accomplishments with pride and interest, the empathic mother helps the child achieve a positive but realistic self-image. By providing for the child's needs, the parent can be idealized; parental values are admired and eventually incorporated as the child's own. By being reasonably reliable, the mother sustains the child's comfort in existing as a separate being. Kohut summarizes the child's needs in these regards as follows: the child needs "to be confirmed in its vitality and assertiveness by the mirroring selfobject, to be calmed and uplifted by the idealized imago," and "to be surrounded by the quietly sustaining presence of alter egos."[7]

Parents need not be perfect to produce children with healthy selves. Parental failures of response are to be expected, need not be traumatic, and, in fact, are necessary for the optimum frustrations that will realistically curb the child's self-aggrandizing or over-idealization of the parent. Kohut's major departure from the orthodox Freudian analytic tradition is his "double track" hypothesis. Instead of a baby cocooned in primary narcissism, a victim of its instinctual drives, striving only to achieve pleasure and avoid pain, Kohut sees the baby as a relatively harmonious bundle programmed to respond to a caretaking adult from the very beginning. Under optimal parenting, a cohesive self will develop and perform the functions that the selfobjects of infancy once did and will continue to need selfobjects throughout life. Although the self is perceived as continuous and coherent, Kohut speaks about the "bipolar self," its dual aspects being ambitions and goals on the one hand and ideals and values on the other, with these two poles connected in a tension curve by the individual's skills, talents, and native endowments. This whole developmental track is separate from the child's loves and hates for other people, those libidinal investments whose vicissitudes Freud so graphically portrays. Freud claims that babies first love themselves. He calls this primary or infantile narcissism; normal maturation replaces this self-love by love for others, starting with mother and culminating in appropriate people of the sex opposite to the child's.[8] In contrast, Kohut charts the self's development as a separate progress from the development of attachments to others, and he describes its distinctive rules and timetable.

Kohut first began formulating these theories after he discovered disturbed people in his clinical practice who had a common syndrome, which he labels the "narcissistic personality disorders." These patients were not neurotics but arrogant or bored or apathetic people whose problems Kohut traces to defects in their self-structures, which had not properly formed in the first few years of life. Almost invariably, he believes the cause of such

[4] Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

[5] Self psychology is a separate theoretical system in the way it has developed, but it owes much both to orthodox psychoanalysis, which it acknowledges, and to object relations theory, which it does not always acknowledge.

[6] M. F. Basch, "The Concept of Self: An Operational Definition," in *Developmental Approaches to the Self*, ed. Benjamin Lee and Gil G. Noam (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1983), 7–58, esp. 53.

[7] Heinz Kohut, *How Does Analysis Cure?* ed. Arnold Goldberg with the collaboration of Paul E. Stepansky (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 23. Also see Heinz Kohut and Ernest S. Wolf, "The Disorders of the Self and Their Treatment: An Outline," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 59, no. 4 (1978): 413–25.

[8] Sigmund Freud, "On Narcissism: An Introduction" (1914), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. and ed. James Strachey, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth Press, 1973), 14:69–102.

defects to be an unempathic mother who failed to help the child achieve a cohesive self by mirroring the child's accomplishments appropriately.[9]

These patients form transferences in the analytic setting that differ from the Freudian model of transference in which the patient projects repressed desires and antagonisms that were originally directed at its parents onto the neutral screen of the analyst's presence. Instead of these engaged transferences, the narcissists treat the analyst as a selfobject, not as a separate person. Through these selfobject transferences, Kohut found he could help patients previously considered unanalyzable by furnishing them with the empathic milieu that their mothers failed to provide, so that the doctor could become, through transference, a maternal and/or paternal selfobject: "Via transmuting internalization, that is, via a wholesome psychic activity that has been thwarted in childhood," such a transference "lays down the structures needed to fill the defect in the self."[10]

As corollary to their preoedipal emphasis, self psychologists deemphasize the asymmetrically gendered Oedipus complex, seeing its problems not as inevitable but usually as the sequelae of earlier developmental deficits. Furthermore, they believe that oedipal pathology is becoming less common in comparison with preoedipal pathology. Kohut calls the typical Freudian patient "Guilty Man"; he is the son of a seductive mother and forbidding father and has a cohesive self although he is conflicted about his sexual desires and antagonisms. In contrast, Kohut maintains that today's typical patient is "Tragic Man," son of an unempathic mother and an absent father. He struggles for creativity and self-realization against despair, and he is at once a pathological narcissistic personality and a representative of the modern human condition. Modern literature repeatedly describes his problems with fragmentation, "the falling apart of the self and of the world and the task of reconstituting the self and the world."[11] Rebuffing the view that he sees more of this syndrome simply because he has learned to look for it, Kohut believes that narcissistic personalities are becoming more common in twentieth-century Western society as the growing isolation of the nuclear family diminishes the chances that children are provided with appropriately empathic early environments. Clearly, Kohut does not believe that the split, fragmented, or alienated self is an inevitable consequence of the human condition or of participation in the social order but, rather, that is it a specific historical formation prevalent in our time.

Since the main cause of the problem is the child's early unempathic emotional milieu, the cure demands an empathic analyst. Kohut makes the concept of empathy central to his enterprise, distinguishing his use of the term from its popular meanings of compassion or intuition. He believes empathy plays a double role in analysis. First, it denotes the supportive analytic situation provided by the sustained attention of the nonjudgmental doctor. This does not mean that the analyst is to "cure" the patient by supplying surrogate parental love but, instead, that the analytic situation allows the narcissistic adult's defective self to resume its development from the point at which it has been prematurely stunted. Within the protected selfobject transference, the patient slowly develops the mental structures needed for a cohesive self. But empathy has a second meaning, too: "Empathy is the operation that defines the field of psychoanalysis. . . . It is a value-neutral tool of observation. . . . We define it as 'vicarious introspection' or, more simply, as one person's (attempt to) experience the inner life of another while simultaneously retaining the stance of an objective observer."[12] This method of observation is "experience near" rather than "experience distant"; it requires that the analyst mobilize memories of feelings comparable to the patient's in order to understand the patient's emotions, rather than just cognitively recognizing patterns in the patient's dysfunctions that correspond to the doctor's theories.

At their narrowest, Kohut's ideas found speedy acceptance. Analysts recognized that Kohut had developed therapeutic techniques beneficial to a category of patients not successfully treated by orthodox analysis. His theories about the origins of his patients' problems, however, attracted more debate. For example, Otto Kernberg, another writer on narcissistic personality disorders, disputes Kohut's "double track" hypothesis, that is, his belief that goals, values, and self-esteem develop separately from emotions toward others. As Kohut in his later work expanded his theories from remedies for specific malfunctions to broad ideas about human development, some thought he had grown soft and fuzzy-minded. Kernberg claims Kohut errs by denying humanity's aggressive drives: for Kohut, aggression is not innate; it is a by-product of thwarted normal assertiveness.[13] John Gedo, too, upholds Freud's "Augustinian" ac-

[9] Heinz Kohut, *The Analysis of the Self: A Systematic Approach to Psychoanalytic Treatment of Narcissistic Personality Disorders* (New York: International Universities Press, 1971), and *The Restoration of the Self* (New York: International Universities Press, 1977). Kohut's views can thus be seen as mother-blaming in practice, though this is not necessary to his theories.

[10] Kohut, *How Does Analysis Cure?* 4. The different kinds of selfobject transferences discussed by Kohut are not relevant here.

[11] Heinz Kohut, "Psychoanalysis in a Troubled World" (1970), and "The Self in History" (1974), both in *The Search for the Self: Selected Writings of Heinz Kohut: 1950–78*, ed. Paul H. Ornstein, 2 vols. (New York: International Universities Press, 1978), 2:511–46 and 2:771–82, esp. 539–40 and 780. Despite the generic male references, the majority of people who seek psychological therapy are women.

[12] Kohut, *How Does Analysis Cure?* 174–75. Kohut quotes his own earlier paper, "Introspection, Empathy, and Psychoanalysis: An Examination of the Relationship between Mode of Observation and Theory" (1959), in Ornstein, ed., 1:205–32. Also see Michael Franz Basch, "Empathic Understanding: A Review of the Concept and Some Theoretical Considerations," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 31, no. 1 (1983): 101–26.

[13] Otto Kernberg, *Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism* (New York: Jason Aronson, Inc., 1975), 270.

knowledgment of human imperfection in contrast to Kohut's utopian optimism.[14] Other critics feel Kohut's approach is too intuitive and that empathy is unscientific and therefore suspect. This controversy, pitting tough views against tender ones, reason against intuition, aggression against nurturing, and scientific medicine against holistic health, reverberates for a feminist reader with gender-typed connotations such that Kohut's views parallel those of some radical feminists, while his opponents' views share a more traditionally masculine outlook.

The self psychologists do not themselves use gender-based categories. Their obliviousness to gender seems overdetermined, and its causes may include Freud's views on women, Kohut's special sympathies for men, and general cultural prejudices. Kohut's ideas grew out of the tradition of orthodox Freudian analysis that maintains that sexual identity, the child's masculinity or femininity, forms through the Oedipus complex at ages three to six—after the earlier developmental period on which the self psychologists focus. For Freud, the infant girl is a "little man" until this period, and one can treat children as unisexual and paradigmatically male, in the belief that the earliest mental structures do not vary by gender. Current empirical psychology confutes this idea, but the self psychologists have only recently begun to heed such evidence. A more specific reason for self psychology's blind spot about women arises from Kohut's assumptions and the composition of his patient population. He repeatedly says that empathy works better as an analytic tool the more similar the doctor is to the patient. The patients Kohut describes in his published cases are predominantly male, and he seems to have been more comfortable with men.[15] As his career progressed, his patients were increasingly fellow analysts, most of whom were male. Moreover, though his theory avoided Freud's obvious sexism, the theorists were nonetheless subject to ubiquitous unconscious sexism. One example of such unconscious sexism occurs in Kohut's response to a case presentation by Evelyn Schwaber, a woman analyst discussing a narcissistic male patient. Kohut later felt that he had misunderstood her relation to her patient because he "saw the therapist in front of us, with all her warm femininity" at a conference presentation and therefore assumed that she must represent a mother figure for her analysand, not a father figure, as turned out to be the case.[16]

[14] John E. Gedo, "Introduction: On the Dynamics of Dissidence within Psychoanalysis," in *Psychoanalysis: The Vital Issues*, ed. John E. Gedo and George H. Pollack (New York: International Universities Press, 1984), 363–75.

[15] Fifteen of seventeen such cases in Kohut, *The Analysis of the Self*, and *The Restoration of the Self*, are male. The women represent such issues as "analyst's countertransference" and "analyst's resistance" (*The Analysis of the Self*, 343).

[16] Heinz Kohut, "Reflections on Advances in Self Psychology," commenting on Evelyn Schwaber, "A Case Presentation," both in Goldberg, ed. (n. 2 above), 473–554, esp. 512, and 215–42.

That is, in this instance Kohut notes that habitual prejudices about gender disturbed his assessment of the purportedly gender-neutral analytic situation and that he thus assumed a woman physician to be playing the role of her analysand's mother.

Implications for feminist theory

Despite its disregard of gender, self psychology appears in three major respects to be more congruent with feminist values than does orthodox Freudian psychoanalysis: it stresses the preoedipal period over the Oedipus complex; it separates value acquisition from an oedipal superego that is based on castration anxiety; and it places a special value on empathy. Of course, a similarity to feminist values does not prove that self psychology is "true" or useful; however, such a similarity does suggest that its model of human nature will prove congruent with feminist theory.

Self psychology shares one area with contemporary feminist thought in its attention to the first few years of a child's life as the primary period in personality formation. Self psychologists stress the mother's role as crucial in this preoedipal development when the child is under three years old—the mother is crucial not because of biology but because of the social fact of mother-dominated child rearing. This theory thus agrees with feminist views that hold that the preoedipal mother-daughter relationship is the most salient factor in female psychology. Even Freud argues that this period means more for women than for men, and current feminist theorists such as Dinnerstein agree. Although self psychologists emphasize the mother's role in early child development, they do not limit mothering capacity to women. They claim that the mother, the father, or other adults can empathically mirror the child: they do not posit a mothering instinct or insist on mother-child bonding solidified through female-specific practices such as breastfeeding. In therapeutic work, they say that a patient may treat the analyst of either sex in ways reminiscent of the patient's parents of either sex; and indeed, the records of male analysts suggest that they are often proud of having played maternal roles in their analysands' psyches. Thus self psychology parallels various strains in feminist theory that wish to value women's historic importance as mothers while not precluding a future in which men, too, have the capacity to "mother" children.

A second area that self psychology shares with feminist thought is the reconsideration of the relationship between the processes of value acquisition and those of sexual identity development. Self psychology disconnects the formation of goals and values from the Freudian concept of a punitive superego through which the child introjects parental prohibitions, especially the father's "laws." Freud says the boy's fear of castration causes him to repress his desire for his mother and identify with his father, thus

resolving his Oedipus complex and causing him to develop a superego. Because girls are already "castrated," this fear works less powerfully on them, and they therefore fail to acquire the inexorable consciences of men: "I cannot evade the notion," Freud wrote, "that for women the level of what is ethically normal is different from what it is in men. . . . Character traits that critics of every epoch have brought up against women—that they show less sense of justice than men . . . would be amply accounted for by the modification in the formation of their superego."[17] In contrast, self psychologists separate the child's formation of a mental structure governing values and ideas from fears about castration, which are inevitably differentiated by sex. Moreover, since they do not organize all other differences around sexual difference, self psychologists do not insist that the phallus is the privileged "signifier" of cultural participation.[18] Nor does self psychology fall into the Freudian prejudices of believing that anatomy is destiny or of assuming that female genitals are actually inferior to male ones.

The third shared area is a valuing of empathy. Self psychologists award empathy a central role both as a tool in the analytic process and as a major goal of psychological maturity. This emphasis contrasts strongly with classical analysts' faith in rational insight. A central goal of Freudian psychoanalysis is the translation of unconscious conflicts to consciousness, whereas self psychologists, like some feminist theorists, value empathy as well as reason and think reason in and of itself incapable of transforming the patient's life and allowing her or him to develop the mental structures necessary for healthy functioning. Freud writes that "a path leads from identification by way of imitation to empathy, that is, to the comprehension of the mechanism by means of which we are enabled to take up any attitude at all towards another mental life."[19] Despite this strong formulation, Freud refers to empathy rarely, whereas Kohut puts the concept of empathy at the center of his notions about how parents properly treat their children and how analysts create a therapeutic environment.

In short, self psychologists' descriptions of mental functioning for both sexes more closely resemble feminist ideas than do those orthodox psychoanalytic theories whose model of humanity is not only male but also stereotypically masculine. Of course, there is already an extensive feminist literature critical of Freud. Some feminists reject all psychoanalysis as intrinsically sexist and oppressive to women; others adapt the masculinist

[17] Sigmund Freud, "Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction between the Sexes" (1925), in Strachey, ed. (n. 8 above), 19:243–58, esp. 257–58; also see "Female Sexuality" (1931), in Strachey, ed., 21:223–43.

[18] In this respect, self psychology obviously differs from Lacanian psychoanalysis, though a comparison with that system lies outside the scope of this essay.

[19] Sigmund Freud, "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" (1921), in Strachey, ed., 18:67–143, esp. 110.

theories of psychoanalysis to a feminist perspective. This effort at adaptation has flourished in the work of feminist object relations theorists. According to Chodorow, women's greater relational capacities in comparison to men's, women's less rigid ego boundaries, and other psychological differences between the sexes may not be attributed to nature but, rather, to girls' closer childhood identifications with their mothers and to boys' needs to distance themselves from women in order to prove themselves male. The feminist object relations theorists, then, tend to differentiate male from female development and value female empathy, nurturance, flexibility, and interdependence over male abstraction, competition, rigidity, and autonomy.

Along with their important insights, however, these highly influential views assimilate some problems of the object relations theories from which they draw. Alice Rossi notes that Chodorow uses Freudian and ego psychology with restraint but never offers "the smallest critical comment on the work of object relations theorists."[20] Other feminists attack Chodorow's theories in terms of both method and content. Perhaps the most common criticism is that psychoanalysis is suspect because it privileges fantasy over reality and psychological explanations over historical and social ones. Nina Baym objects that feminist object relations–based "mothering" theory demeans adult women, limiting "maternity to a global, non-verbal or pre-verbal endlessly supportive, passively nurturing presence. . . . Pre-Oedipal, then, is an interested fantasy of the maternal. Its purpose—to contain and confine mothers and hence women within the field of the irrational."[21] Literary critic Elaine Showalter faults "psychoanalytically based models of feminist criticism" because they "cannot explain historical change, ethnic difference, or the shaping force of generic and economic factors."[22]

I maintain that the insights of Chodorow and her followers might be developed more usefully if they sprang from a broader psychological base rather than being exclusively tied to the perspective of object relations theory. Self psychology provides that broader base. I have already proposed that self psychology offers feminists advantages over Freudian orthodoxy by emphasizing mothers' importance in their children's early lives. It may seem contradictory, then, to cite critics like Baym who attack this emphasis on the preoedipal. Yet I think that the way that object relations

[20] Alice S. Rossi in "On *The Reproduction of Mothering*: A Methodological Debate," by Judith Lorber, Rose Laub Coser, Alice S. Rossi, and Nancy Chodorow, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 6, no. 3 (1981): 482–514, esp. 494.

[21] Nina Baym, "The Madwoman and Her Languages: Why I Don't Do Feminist Literary Theory," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 3, no. 1/2 (1984): 45–59, esp. 55.

[22] Elaine Showalter, "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness," in *Writing and Sexual Difference*, ed. Elizabeth Abel (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 9–35, esp. 27.

theorists, including feminist object relations theorists, conceptualize the preoedipal does create some problems: an apparent acceptance of the determinate power on adult personality of early infantile experience—this is the heart of Baym's objection; an acceptance of the idea of a mother-child "symbiosis" to which the mother regresses in order to care for her child; and a concomitant acceptance of the developmental model by which maturation for the child is a struggle to break free from this early infantile symbiosis and to gain autonomy. Two other problems with feminist object relations theory arise from its dependence on the model of the Oedipus complex as the means through which children become simultaneously gendered and heterosexual. These problems are the model's inability to account for homosexuality and its acceptance of the notion that femininity and the desire to have children are secondary compensations for frustrated desires. The last set of complaints against object relations theory is based on its neglect of historical and cultural contexts.

Self psychology does not share these problems. (1) Although it stresses the preoedipal over the oedipal stage in the development of the self, it is a whole life psychology in which change is normal throughout adulthood. (2) Self psychology does not use the concept of "symbiosis" for the mother-child bond. (3) Its model of maturity is not organized around the goals of individuation or autonomy. (4) Because it detaches self-esteem from sexual object choice, its model for healthy development is not necessarily heterosexual. (5) It does not view femininity as compensatory. (6) Its concept of selfobjects provides the means through which cultural and historical forces can shape the individual psyche.

First, although self psychologists believe the self should form early in the child's life, they do not see a person's character as entirely determined in childhood. Life circumstances and naturally occurring relationships foster the self's growth in adulthood. Self psychologists follow a person's use of selfobjects through a whole lifespan in which periods of stress may cause the self to lose cohesion, pride, and assertiveness, followed by periods of regained and renewed growth. In fact, Kohut believes that a difficult childhood and an adulthood spent compensating for it may enhance a person's character. "It is my impression," he says, "that the most productive and creative lives are lived by those who, despite high degrees of traumatization in childhood, are able to acquire new structures by finding new routes toward inner completeness."[23] Thus self psychology agrees with those feminist views that see women consolidating an identity in their thirties or forties rather than in childhood or adolescence, although its proponents hold that this flexibility is characteristic of both sexes.

[23] Kohut, *How Does Analysis Cure?* (n. 7 above), 44.

Similarly, self psychologists corroborate views of female psychology as fluid and flexible throughout life rather than as determined in childhood.[24]

Second, self psychology employs a more adult model of mothering than object relations theory, especially in its primary use of the concept of empathy rather than that of symbiosis. D. W. Winnicott implies that a good mother entirely loses her self in caring for her infant. This "extraordinary condition" is "almost like an illness," but in mothers it is a sign of health, he claims.[25] Feminist object relations theorists sometimes sound as though a mother regresses to an infantile position when she enters into mother-child "symbiosis": "Primary identification and symbiosis with daughters tend to be stronger and cathexis of daughters is more likely to retain and emphasize narcissistic elements, that is, to be based on experiencing a daughter as an extension or double of a mother herself."[26] Thus the profound intimacy these theorists claim that women desire resembles an infantile state, and the capacities that women have to nurture and empathize are regressive responses to which their childhood needs impel them as adults. Self psychologists dispute the concept of symbiosis altogether. Although the very young infant is truly dependent on caretakers, the infant initiates actions and responds actively to care, thus shaping a human relationship from birth that is unlike animal symbiosis. Moreover, self psychologists do not describe any aspect of normal parenting behavior as regressive to childhood states. They see empathy as an adult process in which one mature self takes the position of the other person. Such empathy implies an ability to be attuned to the needs of the other, an ability most mothers have developed so that their responses to the infant's cries help the child perceive and articulate feelings and needs. From this perspective, empathy is not the same as but opposite to projective identification in which one person insists that the other is an extension of the first. This self psychology view of empathy entails no merging, blurring, or loss of self for the adult.

No doubt there are mothers who project their own needs onto their children rather than learning to perceive the child's needs. Without undercutting the usual intensity and interdependence between mother and child, however, self psychologists see what some call "symbiosis" as pathological, and they propose instead a model of mothering based on mature capacities. In making empathic abilities one of the highest goals of the

[24] Doryann Lebe, "Individuation of Women," *Psychoanalytic Review* 69, no. 1 (1982), 63–73. Theories based on the work of Erik Erikson also stress development throughout maturity.

[25] D. W. Winnicott, *The Family and Individual Development* (London: Tavistock Publishers, 1968), 15. Paula Caplan criticizes a version of this view of mothering in *Between Women: Lowering the Barriers* (Toronto: Personal Library, 1981), 185.

[26] Chodorow (n. 4 above), 109.

developing self, Kohut implicitly praises the analyst's job, but his ideas also enhance the mother's role. The analyst's claim that empathy develops through psychoanalytic practice is analogous to Sara Ruddick's argument that maternal thinking develops from maternal practice.[27]

Third, self psychology does not depend on a separation/individuation model of maturity. Object relations theorists like Margaret Mahler chart infant developmental growth as a progress from "symbiosis" with the mother to independence, autonomy, individuation.[28] W. R. D. Fairbairn describes this progress as a transition from "infantile dependence" to "mature dependence."[29] Kohut explicitly argues against Mahler and this "maturation morality," which he sees as complicit with dangerous tendencies in Western civilization.[30] Object relations theorist Harry Guntrip corroborates this political connection, though he values it positively, when he speaks of the mature individual personality as being fit for democracy, whereas other personality types are more comfortable with dictatorships or the welfare state.[31] In contrast, self psychologists see all people embedded for life in a network of human relations, and they posit mature interdependence and altruism as among adult developmental goals for both sexes: "Self psychology holds that self-selfobject relationships form the essence of psychological life from birth to death, that a move from dependence (symbiosis) to independence (autonomy) in the psychological sphere is no more possible, let alone desirable, than a corresponding move from a life dependent on oxygen to a life independent of it in the biological sphere."[32] Thus self psychology provides a complete developmental scheme that is not oriented toward individuation or independence as its primary goal. Self psychology's model of maturity stresses interdependence rather than independence, but it makes this only one of many adult developmental goals, not the sole defining characteristic of maturity. Maturity is not something to be achieved in any simple linear progress, and among self psychology's goals are love for other people, empathy, and creativity. Unlike independence and autonomy, these goals are not linked to culturally enforced notions of masculinity.

Fourth, the object relations school follows the "single track" Freudian model by which the formation of self-image and the formation of desire are aspects of the same process. The girl first identifies herself with her mother, whom she loves, then learns she must love father, and later, other men. One learns that one has or is one sex and desires to possess the other. Chodorow shows that all women are originally mother-loving, but she describes the forces driving the girl toward heterosexuality, including a need to distance herself from her mother and an attraction to her seductive father, as successful. Although her theory values women's primary bonds with one another, it does not include lesbians. At one point she notes, "I must admit to fudging here about the contributory effect in all of this of a mother's sexual orientation—whether she is heterosexual or lesbian."[33] Self psychology does not specifically theorize lesbian development either. However, by detaching the development of self-esteem from the development of sexual desire, self psychologists make it easier to conceptualize the development of the lesbian who has a clear feminine gender identity and a strong, positive self-image. As Kohut says: "Although the attainment of genitality and the capacity for unambivalent object love have been features of many, perhaps most, satisfying and significant lives, there are many other good lives, including some of the greatest and most fulfilling lives recorded in history, that were not lived by individuals whose psychosexual organization was heterosexual-genital or whose major commitment was to unambivalent object love."[34]

Although self psychology's "dual track" and "bipolar self" hypotheses sound like examples of dualistic thinking, their polarities are not rigid frameworks: the "bipolar self" has three parts—two poles and a middle term. Instead of seeing it as polarizing, I think Kohut's "dual track" hypothesis can free theory from Freud's libidinal monism and permit us to see personality development not as either one or two straight lines but as a relational web. Kohut's two tracks are neither opposed nor parallel to one another. They may assume different shapes and suffer differing traumas. As a supplement to his theory, cognitive development could be a third track. Developing her self-image along one track and her sexual object choice along another, for example, one girl might remain childishly exhibitionistic while uneventfully becoming heterosexual. To take another example, one might imagine the tracks interacting so that a child's cognitive learning disabilities distorted a self-esteem that had begun strongly in early childhood. The same family environment might encourage or retard a child's growth differently in these two areas of development.

Fifth, self psychology does not view femininity or the desire for children as compensatory. For Freud, girls originally settle for femininity only when they know they are deprived of penises, and they want babies to substitute for these missing penises. Even for Chodorow, women's desire to mother is compensatory, although it is not based on penis envy. She

[27] Sara Ruddick, "Maternal Thinking," *Feminist Studies* 6, no. 2 (1980): 342–67.

[28] Margaret S. Mahler, Fred Pine, and Anni Bergman, *The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant: Symbiosis and Individuation* (New York: Basic Books, 1975).

[29] W. Ronald D. Fairbairn, *An Object-Relations Theory of the Personality* (New York: Basic Books, 1962), 163.

[30] Kohut, "Reflections on Advances in Self Psychology" (n. 16 above), 480.

[31] Harry Guntrip, *Personality Structure and Human Interaction: The Developing Synthesis of Psycho-dynamic Theory* (New York: International Universities Press, 1964), 378.

[32] Kohut, *How Does Analysis Cure?* (n. 7 above), 47.

[33] Chodorow (n. 4 above), 110.

[34] Kohut, *How Does Analysis Cure?* 7.

claims that heterosexual women who are psychologically constructed to need and appreciate intimacy will be disappointed with emotionally distant men. Therefore, they will want to have children for psychological reasons "that have their source in the desire to recreate the mother-child relationship they themselves experienced" as infants.[35] In contrast, Kohut agrees with Stoller and the empirical psychologists that girls achieve a primary femininity prior to the discovery of genital differences between the sexes. Those who receive empathic parenting in childhood, according to Kohut, will be able to give it in adulthood; such "mothering" of others is itself an adult developmental goal that is not dependent on former lacks or present dissatisfactions.[36] Because self psychologists emphasize values and goals, including those related to gender, they can explain the integration of "femininity" and "masculinity" into people's self-structures without conflating being female with desiring men or being male with devaluing women.

Sixth, the object relations school describes the child's growth through social interactions with early caretakers. The self psychologists claim their approach combines both interpersonal and intrapsychic factors, so that it is less deterministic about the specific effects on any child of the same childhood milieu. Self psychologists explain that perfectly good or healthy parents may have an innately healthy child who nonetheless develops a defective self-structure. Although seeing the early caretaking environment as very influential on the child, self psychology is neither deterministically social nor mother-blaming. On the other hand, it conceives of psychological development in a historically changing context. As we have seen, some feminist critics condemn both orthodox psychoanalysis and feminist object relations theory for their ahistorical character.[37] Although Chodorow's popularizers have sometimes been naively ahistorical, Chodorow acknowledges that historical factors might alter the tight duplicating cycle of the "reproduction of mothering" that she describes. However, she casts this historical dimension as outside her scheme, something to be considered elsewhere. In contrast, self psychology's concept of selfobjects provides the specific point in the model through which changing historical forces can affect the child and break into the cycle of socialization. Thus "penis envy" should decrease as modern parents mirror their daughters' bodies more positively than Victorian parents did and as the daughters incorporate such mirrorings into their self-images. Self psychologists' belief in the increasing frequency of narcissistic personality disorders is based on the conviction that changing historical conditions affect child rearing, hence personality structure. Kohut's later work repeatedly stresses the importance of history. "Now it would seem to me," Kohut writes, "that it is up to the historian to undertake a comparative study of the attitude of adults toward children at different periods in history, in order to throw some further light on the conditions that Freud tried to explain biologically."[38]

[35] Chodorow, 501. For Chodorow and the object relations theorists, the pleasures of sexuality are compensatory as well, an attempt to regain the infantile bliss of merger with the mother.

[36] Kohut, "Introspection, Empathy, and Psychoanalysis" (n. 12 above), 228, and "A Note on Female Sexuality" (1975), in Ornstein, ed. (n. 11 above), 2:783–92, esp. 786.

[37] See Lorber et al. (n. 20 above); Baym (n. 21 above); and Showalter (n. 22 above).

A feminist theory of self psychology

Currently, two beginning points inform theories that prevail among feminists. Those who begin by asking how gender is inscribed in culture often assume a model of patriarchy that defines women's condition as oppressed, an oppression that is imposed by men for their own advantage. According to Catherine MacKinnon, to cite one strong spokeswoman for this view, men's sexual desires define women's roles: "Socially, femaleness means femininity, which means attractiveness to men, which means sexual attractiveness, which means sexual availability on male terms. What defines woman as such is what turns men on."[39]

Those who begin by asking what characterizes women often assume models of female psychology or history that favor explanations based on relations among women rather than those based on male domination of women. By emphasizing the intense formative bonds between mothers and daughters, feminist object relations theorists fit this second approach.

In contrast to a focus on male domination or on female bonding, self psychology can incorporate both of these models. Self psychologists stress preoedipal mother-daughter bonds in female personality organization, as the object relations theorists do; however, by also stressing the formation of goals, values, and self-esteem, they show how the larger culture influences the child's development through the early caretaking milieu. Thus the mother who prefers her son to her daughter or who reflects to her daughter that female bodies disgust her will stamp the daughter's personality from its earliest and deepest layers with a patriarchal devaluation of women, and the girl will feel such cultural influences long before she explicitly learns social roles. Kohut explains: "The girl's rejection of femininity, her feeling of being castrated and inferior, and her intense wish for a penis arise . . . because the little girl's selfobjects failed to respond to her with appropriate mirroring, since either no idealizable female parental imago was available to her, or that no alter ego gave her support during the

[38] Kohut, "The Self in History" (n. 11 above), 777.

[39] Catherine A. MacKinnon, "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory," *Signs* 7, no. 3 (1982), 515–44, esp. 530–31.

childhood years when a proud feminine self should have established itself."[40]

In suggesting that self psychology has much to offer feminist thought, I am not denying current gender differences in favor of a gender-blind theory, but instead I am commending a theory whose model of human development fits feminist values for all persons. In order for self psychology to be fully useful to feminists, however, we must adapt it to allow us to recognize the gender differences it elides. Classical Freudians might contend that one advantage for women that I have imputed to self psychology is actually a disadvantage and cause of error: self psychology's preoedipal focus allows it to ignore gender, whereas Freudian analysis devotes considerable attention to the construction of sexual identities through the Oedipus complex. However, the orthodox Freudian account, adapted by Lacanians and feminist object relations theorists, may be incorrect.[41] Some object relations theorists have even simpler views, like Margaret Mahler who believes in "constitutionally predestined gender-defined differences" between the sexes.[42] Empirical psychologists describe the preoedipal acquisition of gender identity in children, and cognitive psychologists theorize children's incorporation of gender schema into their views of themselves and the world.[43] Self psychologists are beginning to collaborate with developmental psychologists. Even if one accepts the empirical psychological account of gender identity formation, one could still appeal to the selfobject mirrorings and idealizations of early childhood as the means through which gender acquires its affective content for each child. These early associations with gender may then be reinforced or distorted during the oedipal stage. Kohut refers to the "oedipal stage" as a "healthy, joyfully undertaken developmental step, the beginning of a gender-differentiated firm self that points to a fulfilling creative-productive future."[44] Moreover,

[40] Kohut, *How Does Analysis Cure?* 21. Kohut noted he had changed his earlier views and decided that "a child's low self-esteem, in general, and low body-self-esteem, in particular" are not "in essence gender-related" (214).

[41] The argument in favor of Lacanian versions of Freud is made by Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, eds., *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1982), 1–57.

[42] Mahler et al. (n. 28 above), 224.

[43] The evidence is that gender identity springs more from social ascription and language acquisition than it does from children's discovery of genital differences. Children know their gender identity by the time they are eighteen-months old and irrevocably consolidate it as a core part of their self-image before the age of three. Moreover, they explore genital differences earlier and less traumatically than Freud thought. See, e.g., Sandra Lipsitz Bem, "Gender Schema Theory and Its Implications for Child Development: Raising Gender-aschematic Children in a Gender-schematic Society," *Signs* 8, no. 4 (1983): 598–616; Eleanor Galenson and Herman Roiphe, "Some Suggested Revisions Concerning Early Female Development," in *Women's Sexual Development: Explorations of Inner Space*, ed. Martha Kirkpatrick (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1980), 83–105; and Robert J. Stoller, "Femininity," in Kirkpatrick, ed., 127–45.

[44] Kohut, *How Does Analysis Cure?* (n. 7 above), 22. Kohut distinguishes a normal developmental "oedipal stage" from a pathological "oedipus complex."

although we certainly do not want to ignore gender, it might be valuable to work within a conceptual framework (like that of self psychology) that minimizes sexual polarizations and that sees such polarizations as do occur between the sexes as distortions of optimal development.

As feminists, we need a gender-sensitive self psychology. This is a new area, and I offer the following speculations about the directions that such a gender-sensitive self psychology might take. These speculations center on two key areas: first, gender differences in the formation of self-esteem, and, second, the salience of empathy in personality formation. Although these speculations are tentative, they are consistent with clinicians' work to date.

I surmise, first, that self-esteem, goals, and values typically take differing shapes in the two genders, not for any innate reason but because a culture's attitudes about women affect who rears children and then the ways mothers typically respond to their daughters in comparison to their sons. Our culture has different attitudes, for example, about the levels of bodily exhibitionism or pride in performance that are appropriate for boys and for girls. Traditionally, girls have been shamed into modesty and discouraged from showing off athletic skills. At the same time, they may be warmly mirrored for presenting the world with a demure appearance, frilly clothes, or a conventionally pretty face. Joan Lang uses self psychology to show how the feminine heterosexual self consolidates in the socially and historically specific circumstances of women's self-devaluation. There are gender differences, she claims, in how aspects of the self are mirrored and idealized, as the parents reflect to the baby how her or his capacities fit the parents' ideas of gender-appropriate behavior. In particular, Lang hypothesizes that a girl in a patriarchy will disavow masculine-assigned potentials of her self, particularly aggression, as "not me."[45] Thus, through differential parental responses in their childhoods, men and women would typically develop different forms of healthy self-esteem and also different narcissistic pathologies. From their case presentations, Kohut and Kernberg seem to have treated differing disturbed populations, and these differences may be related to the gender distribution of their patients as well as to their diverging analytic approaches. Kohut's patients were primarily men who presented themselves as defensively arrogant or as coldly detached, whereas Kernberg's cases included many apparently shallow, flighty, and immature women.[46]

Kohut states: "There is not one kind of healthy self—there are many kinds."[47] This is an important claim, and it should free self psychology from

[45] Joan A. Lang, "Notes toward a Psychology of the Feminine Self," in *Kohut's Legacy: Contributions to Self Psychology*, ed. Paul E. Stepansky and Arnold Goldberg (Hillsdale, N.J.: Analytic Press, 1984), 51–69, esp. 59, 66.

[46] Kohut, *The Analysis of the Self* (n. 9 above), and *The Restoration of the Self* (n. 9 above), Kernberg (n. 13 above).

[47] Kohut, *How Does Analysis Cure?* 44.

any narrow criteria of normality or health, including such culturally determined values as independence, exclusive heterosexuality, or traditionally masculine or feminine personalities. Without prescribing any one healthy masculine or feminine type of self, however, self psychology's pluralism about health permits the investigation of the variously gendered self structures typical in any given society. In addition, the conceptual framework of self psychology should be able to account not only for differences by gender but also for differences within gender. Other groups besides the two sexes might also have distinctive narcissistic configurations. For example, Charles Kligerman hypothesizes that artists were valued for their beautiful bodies when they were children and that their infantile gratification in showing off continues to support their adult performances.[48] Black feminist theorists refute the white-derived, middle-class picture of female psychology as passive, self-denigrating, and ambivalent about mother-daughter bonds. Gloria Joseph cites the "respect that Black daughters have" for their mothers' "strength, honesty, and ability to overcome difficulties and ability to survive" and explains that "Black females are socialized by adult figures in early life to become strong, independent women." Despite persistent social discrimination, black women maintain warm and intense ties with one another that appear less ambivalent than those recorded for white women.[49] A sensitive self psychology that looks at specific kinds of responses that mothers make to their infant daughters may find that empathic, self-assured black mothers reproduce these traits in their daughters, whose self-images, goals, and values might vary from those of white women who have more ambivalent, isolated, or unempathic mothers. Of course, this matter deserves further study, but at least self psychology allows conceptual room for such empirical differences.

Among the views that have most alienated feminists from orthodox Freudian psychoanalysts is the characterization of the normal female personality as passive, masochistic, and narcissistic.[50] Freudian analysts not only assign these qualities to women, they sometimes even attribute them to biological necessity. For instance, they think women have to be masochistic in order to adapt to the pain of childbirth and that they have to be passive in order to adapt to receptivity in heterosexual intercourse.

[48] Charles Kligerman, "Art and the Self of the Artist," in Goldberg, ed. (n. 2 above), 383–95.

[49] Gloria I. Joseph, "Black Mothers and Daughters: Their Roles and Functions in American Society," in *Common Differences: Conflicts in Black and White Feminist Perspectives*, ed. Gloria I. Joseph and Jill Lewis (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Anchor Press, 1981), 75–126, esp. 94–95. Joseph quotes her own and other sociological studies.

[50] See, e.g., Helene Deutsch, "The Psychology of Women in Relation to the Functions of Reproduction (1924)," in *Women and Analysis: Dialogues on Psychoanalytic Views of Femininity*, ed. Jean Strouse (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1974), 173–88.

Gender-sensitive self psychologists would not deny these allegations a priori but would reinvestigate them from their own perspective. Thus they might find that, as narcissism and self-image typically take differing forms in the two sexes, so do initiative and passivity. One indication of the direction such findings might take is found in self psychology's redefinition of empathy, stressing active inquiry and response to others, not mere intuitive receptivity. Thus self psychologists' picture of mothering behavior is more active and less masochistic than the traditional Freudian one, and their picture of male/female relations does not fall into the dichotomies active/passive or sadistic/masochistic.

Empathy is a central concept in self psychology. Up to this point I have argued that self psychology's validation of empathy allies it with feminist theory. However, unlike self psychologists, feminist theorists attribute empathy more pervasively to women than to men and consider empathy as an entirely positive trait.[51] Chodorow claims that girls have "a basis for 'empathy' built into their primary definition of self in a way that boys do not. . . . Girls emerge with a stronger basis for experiencing another's needs or feelings as one's own."[52] Such views run the risk of merely reversing traditional evaluations of the sexes, seeing women as more empathic, intimate, and nurturant than men, that is, as generally nicer. These theories argue that all societies need good parenting in order to reproduce themselves and that all known societies have delegated primary child-rearing responsibilities to women. As a result, women must internalize the traits of good mothers in all societies. Now case presentations by self psychologists parade before us batallions of patients with unempathic mothers. Obviously, self psychology does not agree that women in our society become empathic and nurturing. How do we account for this disparity between the theories?

Self psychology may offer a potentially more flexible and realistic approach to the matter than does feminist object relations theory, valuing empathy but holding a less sentimental view of it than in some feminist theories. Although self psychologists consider empathic mirroring necessary for the self's development, they do not equate empathy simply with love or compassion but insist that it is a mature capacity that can be used for good or ill purposes—in manipulative as well as nurturant ways.

I speculate that empathy is a characteristic that is more "marked" for women than for men. In other words, women may be both more and less empathic than men. Chodorow states that girls' ties to their mothers tend to develop and reinforce empathic capacities in most women. This claim may be true, yet it perhaps oversimplifies the relationship between

[51] See, e.g., Luise Eichenbaum and Susie Orbach, *Understanding Women: A Feminist Psychoanalytic Approach* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); Lillian B. Rubin, *Intimate Strangers: Men and Women Together* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983).

[52] Chodorow (n. 4 above), 167.

empathy and female personality. The very salience of such relational ties in women and the lesser influence of fathers on girls might mean that daughters of unempathic mothers are likely to be more afflicted than sons are. Thus I surmise that women might typically develop the capacity for empathy more than men do but also suffer from more extreme distortions in empathizing. That is, in combination, all women in our society might show a much wider range of empathic abilities and capacities than do men, in much the same way that, in combination, all men in our culture traditionally show a wider range of abilities and capacities for competitive striving than do women, and so they have developed a wider range of personality variables around this trait than have women. Moreover, normal or distorted empathic abilities might play a larger part in the entire aggregate of women's personality structures than in men's. Certainly a woman's empathic capacities may be more heavily reinforced or contravened than a man's would be. An unempathic woman, especially an unempathic mother, is considered a monster, and people condemn her as seriously deficient. In contrast, the unempathic man is perceived as normal in our society and in conventional cultural representations; he may not notice the lack; his family may not feel it; and his untested empathic capacities may have little chance to grow either into distorting intrusiveness or into responsive sensitivity, unless, of course, he chooses to become a psychoanalyst.

Self psychology points to empathy, creativity, love, and humor as characteristics of the mature self. Patterns of creativity, love, and humor, as well as empathy, could assume typically different shapes in the two genders. Self psychologists believe that "Tragic Man" has replaced Freudian "Guilty Man" as the representative of our society. I think that self psychology has the potential to offer feminists a more flexible psychological model for both sexes than either Freudian psychoanalysis or object relations theory now offers. It also has the potential to explain for us "Empathic Woman" in her full variety.[53]

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[53] In another essay, "Maternal Metaphors, Women Readers, and Female Identity" (delivered at the Rutgers Symposium, "Thinking about Women," Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J., Fall 1985, and at the University of Kentucky Women Writers Conference, Lexington, Ky., Spring 1986), I develop the implications of feminist self psychology for literary criticism, especially through the analogy between women's literary identifications and empathizing dialogue.