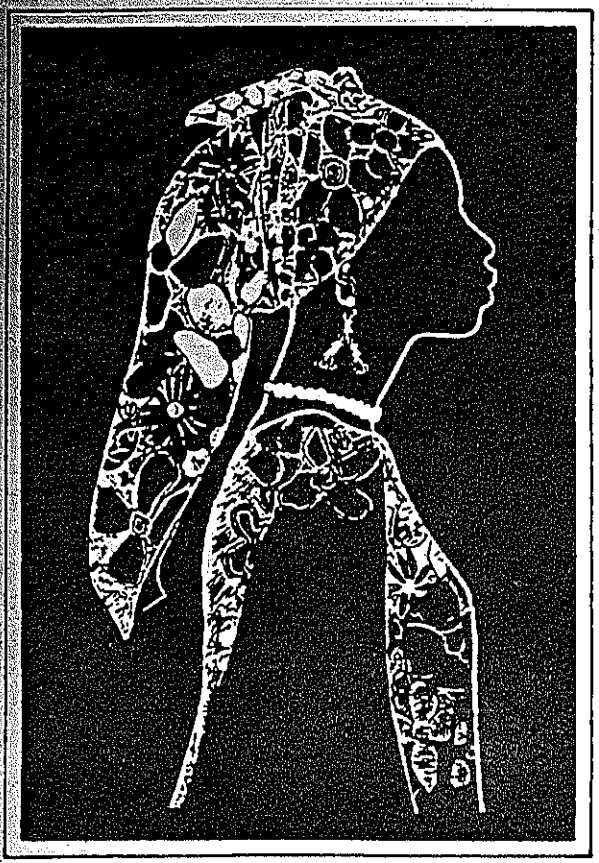
THE ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

AFRICANA WOMEN'S CENTER



AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES SERIES: AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES IN THE UNITED STATES

Volume 4

AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES SERIES:

AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES IN THE UNITED STATES

VOLUME 4

Africana Women's Center

Atlanta University

Atlanta, Georgia

1985

Africana Women's Studies Series

Volume 1: Course Syllabi in Africana Women's Studies

Volume 2: Bibliographies in Africana Women's Studies

Volume 3: Cross-Cultural Bibliography of Africana Women

Volume 4: Africana Women's Studies in the United States

This series was developed by the Africana Women's Center under grants for curriculum development and dissemination from the U.S. Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE).

To order publications in series, write to the Africana Women's Center, Atlanta University, 223 James P. Brawley Drive, S.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30331.

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PREFACE

The Africana Women's Studies Series results from five years of related work. Two years of conceptualizing and developing a program in Africana Women's Studies, two additional years during which a Developmental Faculty Project funded by the Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE) enabled us to develop and enhance the research and teaching skills in Africana Women's Studies of thirty graduate and undergraduate faculty in five historically Black colleges (Atlanta University, Hampton University, Atlanta Junior College, Southern University and Jackson State University), and one final year during which time students enrolled in a graduate degree program in Africana Women's Studies helped us to refine, revise, enhance and eventually change some of the courses and program objectives. Also during this final year the Africana Women's Center received a Dissemination Grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE) which was used to host a National Conference on Africana Women's Studies in the United States, and to publish conference proceedings. The works in this Series result from these planning, training and conference activities.

The Series is published in four separate volumes to be used collectively or individually in the identification and organization of available resources in Africana Women's Studies, and in the identification of perspectives, strategies and contributions of Africana women. As a resource kit, the Series represents a first in Africana Women's Studies.

Volume 1 consists of thirty course syllabi which serve as models for teachers in the development of courses in their various disciplines. Volume 2 contains thirty bibliographies which support the course syllabi. They are published to aid teachers, scholars and students involved in researching Africana women. Volume 3 is a selected bibliography of materials arranged to facilitate cross-cultural research and study, and Volume 4 contains edited "Proceedings of a National Conference on Africana Women's Studies in the United States," held December 13-14, 1985 at Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia.

The course syllabi and multi and interdisciplinary bibliographies bring together a wealth of information. They provide examples of courses taught, citations of scholarship published, and new scholarship on Africana women. We recognize the gaps and uneveness in courses and bibliographies, but we hope they suggest the need for continuing the challenge to raise questions, conduct research, develop courses, transform the curriculum and publish the results.

The best thinking and hard work of many individuals and organizations are reflected in this Series. Appreciation needs to be expressed to Dr. Cleveland Dennard, former President of Atlanta University who encouraged the establishment of the Africana Women's Center and worked diligently to get it approved by the Board of Trustees. Professor Lucy Grigsby who aided in the formulation of Center proposals and objectives, and Dr. Kofi Bota, Vice President for Academic Affairs who supported the programmatic activities of the Center through two very turbulent

years, are owed our thanks as well. In addition, a host of faculty, students and administrators at Atlanta University gave invaluable assistance to the program. Sincere appreciation must also be expressed to The Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education for the financial and technical assistance given to the Africana Women's Center in the form of a project grant and a dissemination grant, with special thanks to Felicia Lynch who served as our program officer. To the large numbers of scholars who called, wrote, stopped us in the streets and at conferences, and many who dropped by our Center to say that what we were doing was what you needed, we say thank you for your support and encouragement. Marcia Cross-Briscoe who served as the Administrative Assistant for the two year Developmental Faculty Project provided the clerical and organizational support and commitment that were instrumental in its success. She also assisted in editing course outlines and bibliographies. Carolyn Clark, a librarian in the Atlanta University Center, aided by typing the cross-cultural bibliography in volume 3, and Colette Hopkins, Assistant Professor of Education, Atlanta University assumed responsibility for typing and proofing and disseminating the "Proceedings of the National Conference on Africana Women's Studies in the United States." We offer thanks to them for their commitment and work. Finally, the thirty graduate and undergraduate faculty members who participated in the Developmental Faculty Project in Africana Women's Studies deserve the lion's share of the credit for this publication. Their cooperation, hardwork and support, and the course syllabi and bibli-

ographies produced by them, form the core of the Africana Women's Studies Series.

To the Africana women of the world who are engaged in armed struggle against oppression, we offer this four volume series as a tribute to your efforts and to the unsung efforts of countless Africana women across the centuries.

Shelby Lewis
Eleanor Hinton Hoytt

Staff

Shelby Lewis, Director, Africana Women's Center
Eleanor Hinton Hoytt, Co-Director, Africana Women's Studies Project
Marcia Cross-Briscoe, Administrative Assistant

AFRICANA WOMEN'S CENTER

"NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES IN THE UNITED STATES"

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Friday, December 13, 1985

11.00 a.m. - 5.30 p.m.	CONFERENCE REGISTRATION (Foyer Dean Sage Hall)
12:30 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.	BOOK EXHIBITION "Materials and Artifacts in Africana Women's Studies" (Foyer, Dean Sage Hall)
1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	OPENING PLENARY SESSION (Bacote Auditorium, Dean Sage Hall)
Presiding:	Shelby Lewis, Director, Africana Women's Center Atlanta University
Greetings:	Dr. Kofi Bota, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Atlanta University
Panel Topic:	PERCEPTIONS AND STATUS OF AFRICANA WOMEN
Speakers:	"An Overview of Africana Women" Shelby Lewis, Africana Women's Center
	"Caribbean Women" Erna Brodber, Researcher/Consultant Kingston, Jamaica
	"African Women and Development" Maigenet Shifferraw, Women and Development Consultant, University Maryland.
	"African-American Women" Gloria Watkins, Assistant Professor of English, Yale University

3:30 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. COFFEE BREAK

3:45 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. WORKSHOP
(Bacote Auditorium, Dean Sage Hall)

Presiding: Eleanor Hinton Hoytt, Developmental Project in Africana Women's Studies

Workshop Topic: FUNDING AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES

Speakers: Ama Seran, National Black Women's Health Project

Julia Scott, Children's Defense Fund

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. RECEPTION
(Faculty Lounge, Dean Sage Hall)

Saturday, December 14, 1985

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. REGISTRATION
(Foyer, Dean Sage Hall)

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. BOOK EXHIBITION
"Materials and Artifacts Africana Women's Studies" (Foyer, Dean Sage Hall)

9.00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. PLENARY SESSION
(Bacote Auditorium, Dean Sage Hall)

Presiding: William Boone, Political Science Department Atlanta University.

Topic: DISCIPLINARY ASSESSMENTS OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES

Speakers: "The Humanities"
Janis Epps, Department of English, Atlanta Junior College

"The Social Sciences"
Gloria Braxton, Chairperson, Southern University

"The Sciences"
Betty Jones, Department of Biology, Morehouse College

11:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. COFFEE BREAK

11.15 a.m. - 12:45 p.m. ROUNDTABLE REPORTS

(Bacote Auditorium, Dean Sage Hall)

Presiding: Olivia Boggs, School of Education, Atlanta University

Topic: CASE STUDIES OF AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES IN HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES

Speakers: Jewel Prestage, Dean, School of Public Policy, Souther University

Charlyn Bolten Harper, Department of Political Science, Hampton University

Velvelyn Foster, Chairperson, Department of History, Jackson State University.

Clara Prevo, Assistant to the President, Atlanta University

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. AWARDS LUCHEON
(Sun Runners Restaurant, 19 Ashby Street)

Presiding: Collette Hopkins, Focus on Black Women Luncheon Honorees:

(a) Professor Margaret Rowley received the 1985 Africana Women's Studies Award for her outstanding contributions to the oral history of Africana Women and for her many years of teaching women's history.

(b) Mrs. Tandi Gcabasche received the 1985 Africana Woman Activist Award for her outstanding contributions to Africana women in liberation struggle, espcially women under Apartheid.

(c) Professor Lucy Grigsby received the 1985 Africana Women's Center Award for her outstanding contributions to the conceptualization and development of the Atlanta University Women Center.

Awardees:

AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES AWARD
*Margaret Rowley, Chairperson History Department, Atlanta University

Presenter:

Beverly Guy Sheftall,
Women's and Resource Center,
Spelman College

AFRICANA WOMAN ACTIVIST AWARD
*Tandi Gcabasche, Director, American Friends Service Committee of Atlanta

- Presenter: Fay Bellamy, Atlanta Woman Activist

AFRICANA WOMEN'S CENTER AWARD
*Professor Lucy Grigsby, Chairperson, Department of English, Atlanta University

- Presenter: Shelby Lewis, Africana Women's Center, Atlanta University

2:30 - p.m. - 3:30 p.m. MATERIALS EXCHANGE AND NETWORKING (Foyer, Dean Sage Hall)

3:30 p.m. CONFERENCE ADJOURNS

INTRODUCTION

- Shelby Lewis

Some of the most significant changes and challenges to American higher education during the second half of the twentieth century came out of the Black and Women's Studies Movements. Scholars in these two movements called for a reconceptualization of history, contributed to improvements in the academic knowledge base, developed courses and theories, generated data which exploded myths and stereotypes about Blacks and women, introduced new and innovative research methodology and pedagogical approaches to academic disciplines, and perfected creative and useful strategies for promoting reform and equity in American society. Unfortunately, these movement scholars were remiss in addressing the needs and concerns of that segment of the population which is both Black and female. Black Studies research and teaching concentrated primarily on Black males, and Women's Studies research and teaching concentrated on white females. Black females were viewed as sub-sets of the two major groupings; appendages not requiring separate and focused attention.

In response to the absence of adequate research and teaching about Black women, a new field of concentration emerged, namely, Black Women's Studies. This new field confronted the problems of gender bias in Black Studies and racial bias in Women's Studies, but left notable gaps in its own theoretical base. Like mainstream Women's Studies, the orientation of Black Women's Studies was basically middle class, urban and northern. Furthermore, comparative and international dimensions of research

and teaching in the new field were underemphasized. In addition, too little attention was given to the role of class in the lives of Blacks and/or women. Finally, programs in Black and mainstream Women's Studies were concentrated in undergraduate institutions. In point of fact, over 90% of the more than 30,000 women-related courses offered in colleges and universities in the United States in 1983 were accessible to undergraduate students only.

Based on a survey conducted by the Africana Women's Center in 1983, the following conclusions were made about Women's Studies in the United States: (a) All (100%) undergraduate Women's Studies degree programs are located at predominately white institutions; (b) Apart from the graduate degree program in Africana Women's Studies at Atlanta University, no degree granting program in Women's Studies is offered by a historically Black college or university, (c) The majority of the Women's Studies programs are in large, northern institutions; (d) Only a few of the Women's Studies programs have specific international or comparative foci; and (e) Apart from the Africana Women's Studies Program, no degree program in Women's Studies in the United States focuses on women of African descent. Some non-academic women's projects, women in development programs and international centers and institutes focus on women of African descent and encourage research and socio-economic and political action by and in behalf of Africana women. While these programs are important and make significant, measurable contributions to our knowledge base about Africana women, and promote improvements in the quality of

life for women of African descent, they cannot and do not fill the void in academe.

Explanations for the void vary, but the crux of the matter is that individual and group biases govern decisions and directions of movements in American society even when the thrust of the movement is against a specific form of bias. The failure to engage in comparative research and teaching on women of Africana descent, the failure to adequately address the conditions, needs and concerns of rural women, poor women and international women, the concentration of Women's Studies programs at undergraduate institutions, and the absence of degree programs in Women's Studies at historically black colleges are part of the development process in higher education in America. The ultimate tragedy in all this would be our failure to understand and meet the challenges posed by these biased developments in the Black and Women's Studies Movements.

One attempt to address the void created by the dominant thrust towards the universalization of the thinking, activities, conditions and needs of white, middle class, urban, Northern American women through research and teaching in Women's Studies, and the universalization of black, middle class, urban, northern American women through research and teaching in Black Women's Studies was made at Atlanta University in 1982 with the conceptualization of a program in Africana Women's Studies. This program was actualized in 1983 with the establishment of the Africana Women's Center (AWC). The Center's primary aim was to address the obvious need for comparative research and teaching

about women of African descent. A conscious decision was made to emphasize research and teaching which focused on the conditions, activities and priorities of Africana women in the Caribbean, Africa and the southern region of the United States. The major objectives of the program designed by Center founders were:

Objectives

1. To provide opportunities for students to systematically analyze gender bias in the history of knowledge and to examine its consequences for women.
2. To encourage and support examinations of the intersection of race, class and sex bias and its consequences for Africana women.
3. To promote the comparative examination of the contributions, strategies, perspectives and ideologies of Africana women.
4. To provide a forum for dialogue and exchange of international and comparative research on women, especially women of African descent.
5. To build a resource base for research on Africana women.
6. To develop interest in and expertise in teaching about Africana women.
7. To promote theoretical and comparative research in feminist theory.
8. To encourage and support the comparative study of poor and rural women.
9. To promote research, projects and activities leading to improvements in the lives of Africana women.
10. To contribute to a reduction in global oppression based on class, race and sex.

Administratively, the Africana Women's Center was divided into three major components: (1) Research--including faculty and supervised student research as well as visiting scholars programs; (2) Community Outreach and Networking--including lending support to women's organizations and study groups and promoting inter-

national linkages between academic and community groups in Africa, the Caribbean and southern U.S.A.; and (3) Teaching--under interdisciplinary degree program leading to the Master of Arts and Doctor of Arts degrees (in the Humanities and Social Sciences) in Africana Women's Studies.

The interdisciplinary degree program in Africana Women's Studies was designed to focus on courses and research normally subsumed under other academic areas of specialization, including but not limited to (a) Area Studies, with comparative focus on Africa, the Caribbean, and the U.S.A.; (b) Black Studies, with emphasis on theories, behavior, history and conditions of Blacks in the diaspora; (c) History, with particular concern for the precolonial, slavery, and pre-civil rights eras; (d) Women's Studies, emphasizing feminist theory and international feminism; (e) Political Science, with special concern for how state theory and revolutionary politics impact on oppressed groupings; (f) Agricultural Sciences, with a focus on rural food production and farm management, practices and problems encountered by rural women; (g) Policy Studies, with development policies in the Third World and social policies in the U.S.A. being highlighted; (h) Health Sciences, with emphasis on problems of nutrition and sanitation, especially water sanitation; and (i) other Social and Behavioral Sciences which look at the political, social, economic and psychological factors which determine the policies, practices, obstacles, conditions, forms of resistences and the general quality of life for Africana women.

Clearly, this broadly based program of study required modification and refinement from a diverse interdisciplinary faculty. So, in 1983 funds were requested and awarded from the Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education for a two year Developmental Faculty Program in Africana Women's Studies. Ten (10) faculty members from Atlanta University and twenty (20) faculty members from four (4) undergraduate colleges and universities (Hampton University, Atlanta Junior College, Southern University and Jackson State University) were selected to participate in this program. They formed a consortium of faculties and insti- institutions in Africana Women's Studies. The Africana Women's Center served as the coordinating entity and the base for the program.

The disciplinary specializations of participating faculty members ranged from Biology, Business Administration, Library and Information Studies, Political Science, History, Sociology, English, Afro-American Studies, Art, Music, Psychology, Education and Social Work to Communcations. The program designed for the faculty consisted of intensive training institutes, research (individual and collaborative) and developmental activities such as the development of course outlines and bibliographies, course piloting and the integration of courses into existing academic programs. In addition, participants were involved in networking and promotional activities for Africana Women's Studies.

Data from the Faculty Development Project and an extension of that Project in the form of a Dissemination Project, also funded by The Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education,

form the base for the publication of the Africana Women's Studies Series. The four volumes in the series culminate and document five years of collaborative work by professors, staff and administrators in the five historically Black colleges and universities in the Africana Women's Studies Consortium. A list of Consortium members is found in the appendix of each volume.

The Series is offered as a guide to scholars, programs and institutions interested in transforming the traditional curriculum, integrating information about Africana women into existing Black and Women's Studies courses and designing new courses and curricula. It should provide useful data and innovative techniques and approaches to research scholars, teachers and students in and outside academia. The four separate volumes in the Series can be used collectively or individually in the identification of available resources, materials and perspectives on Africana women. They make no claim of definitiveness, but are presented as a resource kit for beginning the process of removing biases and including necessary knowledge about Africana women in institutions of higher education in the United States.

Volume 1, Course Syllabi, consists of thirty courses, eleven graduate level and nineteen undergraduate level, which can be used as models by teachers in the development of courses in a variety of disciplines. The courses were pilot tested by the developmental faculty and many have been offered for credit in the institutions where they were piloted. Included among the syllabi in Africana Women's Studies are courses on Black Women in American Politics, The Social World of Older Africana Women, Africana

Women and the Media: Image and Action, Third World Women and Development, Women in Contemporary African Fiction and Women in International Business: Africa and the Caribbean, and many others. Volume 2, Bibliographies in Africana Women's Studies consists of thirty well researched and updated bibliographies which will be useful in classroom settings, for academic research purposes and for national and international policy research. The bibliographies include listings on Africana Women and Development, Africana Women: Mothers and Sons, Africana Women in History, Mental Health Issues of Africana Women, and many many more. As a companion and extension of the topical bibliographies, Volume 3, Cross-Cultural Bibliography of Africana Women, contains four sections of citations which cut across topical and disciplinary foci. Works on African women, Caribbean women and African-American women are listed in separate sections, and the fourth section lists cross-cultural works on Africana women to facilitate comparative, cross-cultural research and study. Finally, Volume 4 contains the Proceedings of a National Conference on Africana Women's Studies in the United States, held December 13-14, 1985 at Atlanta University. The proceedings reflect the state of the art in Africana Women's Studies in the United States and should serve as a valuable resource for teachers, students, researchers and institutions interested in understanding how women of Africana descent define the discipline of Africana Women's Studies.

We view the Africana Women's Studies Series as the beginning of a long and protracted intellectual, cultural and political

journey. The journey is not expected to be without hazzards or barriers, but if the Series illustrates the need to continue to meet the challenge of developing a less biased, more comprehensive data base and more creative approaches to research, teaching and curriculum development in higher education in the United States the journey will have gotten off to a good start. If it serves as an incentive and model to teachers, students, researchers and other individuals interested in learning more about perspectives, goals, ideologies, activities, concerns, problems, accomplishments and contributions of Africana women it will have made a significant mark on the history of knowledge.

As this new field of scholarship develops, we expect to continually, review, revise, refine, update and change, when necessary, both content and approaches to address the needs of Africana women, the discipline, higher education and global equity. We hope that many of you will join us in our developmental journey.

SECTION ONE

THE AFRICANA WOMEN IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

AFRICANA WOMEN: AN OVERVIEW

Shelby Lewis

All persons of African descent regardless of current nationality, language or culture are subsumed under the umbrella term- "Africana." In addition to the vast populations on the continent of Africa, groups designated as Africana inlcude the aborigines of Australia, African-Americans from North America, Afro-Brazilians and other South Americans of African origin, Caribbean islanders, African peoples in the Pacific Islands, African descendants living in Europe, and Afro-Asians. Though scattered across the globe as a result of slavery, voluntary migration, or exploration and planned settlement, Africana poeples constitute a sizable portion of the world's population and Africana women, no matter where they are found, constitute more than half of the Africana population.

Africana women come in varied shapes andd sizes and their ideologies vary according to individual, local, national and international circumstances. They hold membership in all economic classes but the majority are of lower class, primarily peasant stock. They are urban and rural but approximately 75% of those on the African continent live in rural areas and their percentages in rural populations in other parts of the world are disproportionate to their numbers in the general population. They are educated and uneducated, feminist and non-feminist, western and non-western, healthy and ill, yet medical and health problems tend to plague them more than

any other segment of the world's population. You will find Africana women among the activists and non-activists and they can be categorized as conservative and revolutionary, violent and non-violent to the same degree as other discrete groups of people. These variations simply point up the fact that Africana women are not monolithic. Like other populations around the globe, they too are stratified.

The uniqueness of Africana women grows out of a combination of factors which define their existence in the world order. One, they are primarily rural dwellers in a world which caters to urban/industrialized populations; two, they are black in a racist world where the rulers are nonblack; three, they constitute an economic underclass in a capitalist dominated world where class privileges are sacred; four, they are women in a patriarchal world where men view women's rights as personal privileges to be granted by them; five, they are politically powerless in a world where power is basic to economic well-being; six, they are part of the underdeveloped third world at a time when development is a mandate; seven, they are basically non-technical amidst a worldwide technological revolution; eight, they are oppressed by the oppressors of the world, including other oppressed groups such as racist white women and sexist black men because they are black, rural, poor, powerless, and underdeveloped; nine, they constantly struggle against their oppression and dehumanization and are always found in the frontlines of liberation struggles even

when they are not credited as essential forces in the struggle; and ten, they are women of courage, women of character, warm, compassionate achievers who, despite multifaceted oppression and centuries of discrimination and deprivation based on race, sex, class and rural status remain fiercely proud of their Africanity, femaleness, and regional residence. What is more, they refuse to be passive victims of oppression. They have made vital contributions to world civilization and remain unsung heroines of the world.

Any analysis of the developed, undeveloped and underdeveloped conditions of Africana women requires clear acknowledgement of the diversity and complexity of their lives. Their developmental status is at the same time a cause, consequence and a condition and the context for this reality must be understood by scholars attempting to characterize their existence. For example, Africana women, like other groups, take on the burdens and characteristics of the nation state and the local areas where they live and work. Thy are affected by the world scene, its political economy, communications order, ruling system and their values, contradictions, conflicts and struggles. Patriarchy, racism, class bias, the rural/urban dichotomy, the industrial/agricultural dichotomy, the women's movement, national liberation struggles, and all forms of subjugation and struggle past and present impact on their lives in varying degrees. Yet, their Africanity, femaleness, rural status and their underdevelopment are constants which transcend political, cultural and geographical boundaries.

These commonalities emerge from a heritage which conditioned the way they see themselves and the way they are viewed by others. It also conditioned the way external forces such as international agencies and patriarchal/racist/industrialized states and institutions relate to them. The heritage is both ascribed and proscribed. We might illustrate this point by indicating that the heritage of race is ascribed, but the consequences of racial identity in particular parts of the world at specific historical junctures led to the proscribed heritage of slavery (migratory or settled) and colonialism. Furthermore, colonialism, which is a form of racism and slavery, led to economic deprivation, discrimination and poverty which in turn led to the heritage of female household heads and a preponderance of Africana women being left in rural, unproductive areas while Africana males migrated to national and international urban centers in search of wage income and social dynamism.

Internalized and institutionalized female subservience to males, or patriarchy, is a consequence of gender ascription. In addition, this ascription has led to the bypasisng of educational and professional training and work opportunities for women. Double standards, convoluted laws and practices which confuse, confound and denigrate humankind, the socialization of males and females result from female gender ascription in a patriarchal world order. Patriarchy inevitably leads to

an underclass status for women and the consequent feminization of poverty.

The ascribed characteristic of race in which dominated society leads to internalized and institutionalized black subservience to whites and conscious limitations being placed on educational and professional training and work opportunities for blacks. Double standards in public and private spheres, convoluted laws and practices which confuse, confound and denigrate humankind, the socialization of blacks and whites (and others) to undergird the system of racial subservience, and the legitimization of a racist system which rewards discrimination and injustice based on color are among the consequences of race ascription in a racist world order. White racism inevitably leads to an underclass status for blacks and pervasive poverty in black face.

When individuals or group individuals are victims of both racist and patriarchal oppression the underclass status becomes persistent and the poverty become generational. When these individuals or groups reside in rural areas where economic, social and political conditions combine to increase the hardships of those at th bottom, drudgery is the order of the day and survival for themselves and their families becomes the major force in their lives.

This state of underdevelopment is but one view of the common heritage of Africana women. However, the reasons for the underdevelopment are so obviously discriminatory and oppressive that it is no small wonder that "the victimization

theme" is so prevalent in literature by and about Africana women. It is critical, nonetheless, to draw attention to the often overlooked side of the coin, namely, the rich heritage of resistence, struggle and achievment which is also common among Africana women. This heritage is based on inner strength, compassion, humaness and an undying opposition to injustice. Out of this heritage has come creativity, hard work, major cultural, political, social and economic contributions and the will to survive and struggle against all odds. Africana women like Sojourner Truth, Queen Nzinga, Harriet Tubman, Winnie Mandela and many many more are models of this heritage. It is the kind of heritage which enables Africana women to cherish their Africanity and femaleness. It is the kind of heritage which allows them to transcend the layers of pathology surrounding them and to emerge as champions of liberation for all peoples. Yet, this rich and awesome heritage has neither been recognized nor acknowledged in most of the literature on Africana women.

In fact, much of the literature on Africana women is uninformed by the multi-faceted nature of their oppression and the commonalities which transcend national and cultural boundaries. It separates the interlocking characteristics of race, sex, class and ruralism and pigeon-holes Africana women into political units based on nationality. The cross-national, cross-cultural, comparative literature which weaves together the common heritage of Africana women is seldom found. Litera-

ture focusing on class or economic trends tends to overlook or minimize the rural/urban dichotomy, racism and sexism, and literature focusing on race tends to neglect or minimize the role of sex, class and ruralism in creating adverse conditions of specific populations.

The limited works on Africana women which address the multidimensional nature of their oppression and discuss the combined impact of race, sex and class often neglect ruralism and tend to eschew the theoretical and comparative approaches which would assist us in understanding how patriarchy, classism, racism and ruralism are manifested in different cultural, national, political and developmental settings. The similarities and differences between the conditions, status, activities, concerns and priorities of Africana women from different settings, and their differential approaches and strategies for offsetting oppression based on race, sex, class, technology levels, and ruralism are fertile grounds for research.

There are two notable exceptions to the dearth of comparative works on Africana women. Black Women Cross-Culturally (1982), edited by Filomena Steady and Comparative Perspectives of Third World Women (1980), edited by Beverly Lindsay look cross-nationally, cross-culturally and theoretically at Africana women. These works provide a starting point for Africana Women's Studies. But more comparative theoretical and empirical works are needed.

While acknowledging and celebrating the rich and persistent

tradition of Africana women writers around the world, it is necessary to raise questions and invite critical discussion of issues which are basic to an understanding of the similarities and differences which have evolved in the global conditions, concerns, priorities and needs of women of African descent. One critical issue requiring discussion and immediate action is the segmented approach that is taken to research and teaching about Africana women.

When asked to conceptualize research, presentations and projects on Africana women scholars, including Africana women scholars, usually focus complacently on one particular national or cultural group. African-American women generally focus parochially on African-American women, though scholars like La Frances Rodgers-Rose, ed., The Black Women (1980) and Angela Davis, Women, Race and Class (1983) attempt to provide background on the African heritage of American women. African women from the continent are also parochial in their focus. Most of them focus on one national or cultural group among the thousands which exist on the continent, but few are cross-national. Christine Oppong, Female and Male in West Africa (1983) is an example of a regional focus, but it is exceptional and even more exceptional are comparative works like Steady's Black Women Cross-Culturally (1982). Books of readings on African women often include works on a variety of national groups, but the similarities and differences between and among them and their common heritage are seldom presented. Caribbean

women are equally narrow in focus. Their works usually concentrate on women from a particular island and fail to look at the region as a whole. The seven volume work by The Women in the Caribbean Project, Phase I (1982) edited by Jocelin Messiah is the notable exception to the parochialism of Caribbean women scholars. However, a genre of scholarship which makes the theoretical and empirical connections between Caribbean, African and African-American is still unborn.

The accomplished nature, informative, inspirational and practical value of non-comparative works on Africana women is not being questioned or denigrated. What is being questioned is the wisdom of continuing to neglect the comparative perspective, the comparative research and writing dimension. To live and describe out lives in narrowly defined geographical, political and cultural boundaries inhibits us from sharing the kind of insights, information and experiences which would enable to better understand our general conditions, our history and our alternatives. Certainly there is real stratification among African peoples and among Africana women and that reality must inform our scholarship and our political, economic and social action. But, this does not preclude positive accentuation of our commonalities. We can celebrate our accomplishments, our heritage and our similarities without romanticizing them, in fact, we should actively seek to provide realistic views of our strengths and weaknesses. We can promote Africana sisterhood without promoting sameness. Sisterhood does not

come easily, especially when we have been deliberately divided and pitted one against the other. Cross-national, cross-cultural comparative studies could provide the impetus for self-conscious struggle among Africana women. The isolationist approach which is so prevalent in the literature and at conferences surely limits our access to strategies, resources and support systems for our struggle against oppression.

The point to be made here is that scholars, even Africana women scholars, allow artificial boundaries created by others for purposes of oppression to obscure the common heritage an links which bind women of African descent. Thus, Africana women have failed to provide the needed cross-cultural and cross-national research and writing which would minimize the segmentation of Africana women into seemingly unrelated groups. It seems clear than an important theoretical, ideological and practical dimension of the struggle of Africana women is lost because of this segmented and parochial approach to research and teaching.

This National Conference on Africana Women's Studies in the United States provides a unique opportunity for women of African descent to critically discuss similarities and differences, problems and concerns and strategies for change. We should not expect to find all of the answers, but we can begin to ask the pertinent questions. We can begin the search for theoretical an empirical answers, and we can explore appropriate praxis for liberation.

This National Conference is part of the ongoing commitment of the Africana Women's Center to encourage and facilitate cross-national, cross-cultural, comparative research, teaching and networking among Africana women. Conference participants represent women of African descent from all walks of life, from the continent of Africa, the Caribbean and from North America. They are rural and urban, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, radical and conservative, feminist and non-feminist Africana women who are here to share their views, ideas, problems and strategies in the struggle to improve the quality of life for Africana women around the globe.

We hope to begin at this Conference weaving a tapestry which depicts the similarities and differences between and among us while joining the threads which tie us together as women of common heritage whose future is inextricably linked. May the sessions bind us and encourage us to explore our Africanity.

PERCEPTIONS AND STATUS OF THE CARIBBEAN WOMAN

Erna Brodber

Definition of Terms

(a) Caribbean Women

Caribbean women come in several racial groupings. There are European women, white-skinned and straight-haired, with ancestors in the Iberian peninsula, in France and in England, principally. There are Indian women, black-skinned and straight-haired with forebears from India; there are Chinese women, yellow-skinned and straight-haired, whose ancestors originally came from China and Hong Kong; and there are, of course, Africana women, black-skinned and kinky-haired, whose forebears came mostly from West Afria. In all the Caribbean territories with the possible exception of Trinidad and Guyana, Africana women have, through time, been demographically predominant. This is a conference on Africana women and for this reason as well as because of their historical numerical significance, this paper will focus on the Africana women in the Caribbean though comparisons will be made with women of other types from time to time.

(b) Africana Women

Miscegenation has been a traditional fact of Caribbean life. Whereas in most of these cases, sexual cohabition has been between the Africana women and men of other races, the increase has been defined socially out of the other race, taking only its labels, so that we have 'half-white', 'half-

Chinese', 'half-Indian', 'quarter-Chinese', 'quarter-Indian', 'Chinee-royal', 'Coolie (Indian) royal'. Totally new words have been created in some cases to describe what was obviously considered by the labellers as a new breed. So we have had terms such as 'coloured', quadroon', 'mustee', 'mustafino', 'sambo', 'mulatto', to describe the outcome of sexual alliance between Africana women and men of other races.

In this study we treat these variously labelled women, all of African ancestry, as Africana women and though we will for comparative purposes refer occasionally to women from other English-speaking territories, it is on the Africana women from Jamaica on whom we concentrate. We call the genetically mixed women 'mulatto' and the others 'black' or black-skinned and the culture evolved out of the 'black' woman's experience as Afro-Jamaican. We refer to that fashioned by the mulatto as 'mulatto'.

We shall look at how these Africana women were perceived by the rest of the society and how they perceived themselves. We try to determine their status within the social system and see what changes have taken place in their social status with time. For the purpose of this paper, time has been divided into three segments: (1) slavery time (c 1655-1838); (2) post-Emancipation (c 1838-1962) and (3) post-independence (1963-the present). Data have been derived from secondary sources and from interviews conducted for other purposes but the contents of which bear on this work.

(c) Status, Perceptions

The term 'status' points us to a social situation - an assessment of some by others. In this paper we look at the Jamaican society's evaluation of its Africana women. Not everyone's assessment has significance within a society. Those who wield power are those who assign people to status positions. We shall be looking at their views of and treatment of the Africana woman. But the reigns of power can move from hand to hand and those observed can force others to change their opinions of them and so change their place within the social hierarchy. In this study we look at the dynamics of power within the Jamaican society to see the extent to which the identity of the powerful has changed, and to see, if this has happened, what new perception and new status of the Africana woman has thereby resulted. We try to see too whether over time the Africana women's actions have changed and have forced society and herself to re-assess her and to change her status positions. We look at these things within the time segment already elaborated.

II

1. Slavery Time

The Afro-Jamaican Ethic

There were two societies during slavery and concomittantly, two frames of reference for evaluating behavior and assigning African peoples to status positions. There was the white

man's view of them and there was their view of themselves. Planters during slavery had a preference for adult labourers. Good merchants got them what they wanted and so transported to Jamaica in the early days of the slave society, black men and women who were already socialised into the African rules for evaluating women's behavior and for assigning them to status positions. Africans had brought with them a notion of social organization based to a great extent upon separation of the sexes. Within their system of thought and behavior there were very clearly defined sex roles very carefully taught to each sex. The female roles were buying and selling, farming, mothering and the related skill of preparing and administering medicines.[1] Women were classified in this society, to a significant extent, according to their abiity to perform these tasks. The Africana woman in Jamaica could rate herself as good, bad or indifferent, assured that her peers agreed with her assessment of herself.

But the Afro-Jamaican woman was not only an acculterated African dwelling among similarly acculterated people. She was a slave to a man with a different culture and was subject to his definitions of her and his definitions of right behavior for women. According to Mathurin, Anglo-Jamaican society was initially unsure of its purpose and accordingly unsure of its expectations of women.[2] It couldn't therefore make women comfortable. The planters' wives "came, saw and fled."[3] Middle class women who might have been able to pay their own fares to

Jamaica could find very little to do that was gainful and female labourers would have been considered too unaccustomed to tropical conditions to have been recruited. Plantation Jamaica, and particularly in the C18th, in the hey-day of sugar had no such uncertainties about its need for black women. They had a very clearly defined place within the white structure: they were labour.

To be labour meant weeding the sugar canes. But it also meant the receipt of land for cultivation, no less than that accorded to men. With the medical practitioners in short supply, it meant treating yourself and your kin and possibly the elevation to 'nurse' on the plantation. Jamaica, like West Africa, has tropical foliage. West African pharmacology could be applied here and could be sustained . The woman could continue to be farmer and healer as she was in Africa and with the Sunday markets, be the trader that she also was at home. To produce children and to mother children was high on the list of things expected of a West African woman. They were not necessarily the same thing. One was biological and the other social. The good woman produced children but was able to share them with others and to share in the caring of other people's children. The end of the slave trade made planters value women for biological motherhood and these children had to be cared for, if they were to be robust labourers. In the planter's view a child did not have to be cared for by its own mother. A mother was therefore sometimes sold and thus

separated from her child and the pair must have been great but there was the solace that there were always children around, for whom the caring was traditionally sanctioned by her own culture and in her new abode institutionalized in the fact of the respected grandee who was assigned the task of caring for small children.

The healing, planting, mothering and buying and selling which were female roles in West Africa were also sanctioned in plantation Jamaica as fitting work for women. If there was a clear alternative to this kind of occupation, these tasks, traditionally female in the West African/Afro-Jamaican perspective, might have been viewed pejoratively by these women, and themselves, the performers, likewise devalued by their peers. As it is, absentee plantation wives left a perceptual vacuum and in addition, blacks being marginal to the political rituals of the establishment, could remain physically and emotionally close enough to each other to perpetuate the African culture and evaluate their women in terms of its norms. Plantation owners certainly would not have expected those they see as women - i.e. their wives or daughters - to do the work which Africana women did. If they had defined Afro-Jamaican women as women rather than labourers they might not have required those tasks of them, but what they did ask of them as labour did not fundamentally contravene what these women expected of themselves. Quite unwittingly then, slavery society reinforced the traditional definitions of a good black

woman.

Surely the Africana woman during slavery was angry, was fearful and was tired because she was treated as a slave; but she must also have been confident of herself as a woman, and aware of how much the society needed her, must have felt quite important. Brathwaite[4] suggests that with the paucity of white women and the natural need for sex, she must also have been, as some of the cases he presents indicate, quite precocious. Below an irate slave owner complains to the Kingston Common council in 1817:

> Sir,
>
> I feel it necessary to complain to you of the conduct of the Overseer or Supervisor of the Kingston Workhouse. A Negro woman belonging to me named Diana was sent into the Workhouse by a Mr. B. Williams as a punishment for frequent running away - but instead of being worked she was taken into the Overseer's House and when I sent my Overseer and Bookkeeper at different time to take her out, she refused to return and further told one of my negroes that she was very comfortable and that they need not be afraid of the Workhouse.[5]

Miss Diana was obviously so aware of her importance to the slave system as labour and as sex object that she could metaphorically shake her skirt tails at the Workhouse supervisor, and at her master and his underlings and in addition openly advise her peers to flout his authority. But it was out of her perception of herself as valuable because she was a sex object that an alternative ethic developed, one which was to make her feel eventually in some measure, de-valued.

In the meantime the traditional combine of agriculture,

agrobusiness, mothering and healing remained the basic indices of womanhood[6] for Afro-Jamaican women. Our study[7] of 45 women born about 1900, finds then talking with pride of the fact that they had mothered so many children, not their own, and in some cases as many as thirty. Black mothers in early C20th Jamaica and even today still share their children with childless kin and feel that they have acted nobly. For one child to say to another in a quarrel, "Ah under yo Ma', or simply "You Ma", is the deepest of insults. The passionate blows delivered to the speaker and the appeal to the audience "Him tell me 'bout mi Ma", are evidence of the sanctity of motherhood among Jamaicans. And the family planning agencies still complain that the fear of being called a "mule" continues to push girls into early pregnancy. Biological motherhood and social motherhood continue from West Africa to present day Jamaica to be for the AfroJamaican woman and her community, measures of womanhood.

The concept of mothering is so central to Africana thinking, that it carries sub-categories. Thus we have the head of a non-established church being called "mother", and all old women being likewise addressed. The Afro-Jamaican community is heavily involved in the supernatural. Men and women tend to be involved in it at different levels. Men tend to be the "dealers-in-darkness" (obeah-men). Their skills can be learnt.[8] Women on the other hand tend to be healers. Their skills are especially given to them by God, with whom

they are usually in constant touch. Unlike the "dealers-in-darkness", women usually practice openly, healing sometimes free of charge. They continue today as in earlier times to be loved and venerated. These too are called "mothers". Clearly the community sees healing and religion as an extension of the mothering role and an excellent woman, one who can mediate with the supreme being on behalf of her charges, a being important socially as well as cosmically.

The black woman's control of the internal marketing system is well known. There is now less land available to her for farming but she continues to buy and sell agricultural produce -- to be a higgler, and has extended her markets overseas. That the community offers accolades to the woman who has the physical stamina to plant a field, and to higgle its produce, is clear from Manboy's recital of the characteristics of a good wife:

> . . . I could even look at the young lady walking out there and I could tell according to the movements of the body if that person would be an active person to do service. Because according to how you handle your limbs, your hands . . . you see some young ladies, they walking along but they trying to prevent the hand from going to the side and are like that. Those are actually invalids; they don't have any use you know. Soldier-like women make a good hustling wife.[9]

Manboy, a black farmer, was talking in 1975 at the age of 75 about his perceptions of and preferences in women.

The Mulatto Ethic

All through the New World the white master had sexual intercourse with his black slave and feared the issue.[10] His

concern was greater in such areas as Jamaica where the black population outnumbered the white by 10 to 1. As Sparrow[11] says, "Ten to One is Murder" and this is precisely what the economically powerful feared: that his half caste children would side with their mother's people, murder his and inherit his kingdom. Consciously and unconsciously, the white oligarchy set about to erect barriers between blacks and coloured, between blacks and their coloured kin to control the latter by psychological devices, and to divide the Africana community into black and mulatto.

Some techniques of control were making the plantations out-of-bounds to freemen most of whom were coloured, and separating the coloured slaves from the blacks by assigning them the more prestigious tasks such as house hold labour and work as tradesmen. Thus coloureds were separated from the day interaction with their mother's clan and it follows, from the acculteration process. In the white man's homes and in the towns to which the free coloureds flocked, they could see power in action and naturally hanker after it. But what they saw and thought to be real, was superficial, the mechanics of power being far too subtle to be so easily observed.

The free-coloureds became involved with form: the substance was usually kept out of their reach. Though their white fathers, for instance could leave them property, its size was curtailed by a law of 1761.[12] Though some were sent

to school by their fathers, along with other non-white freemen, they were barred by edits of 1711 and 1713[13] from managerial positions on estates which could even be their father's. But the most pernicious of all the flirtatious acts was the offer of "whiteness".

It is normal to yearn after power over one's environment, social and physical, and blacks in bondage were normal. Rebellion was the black route to power and although here are few recorded cases of female leadership of these revolts, there is strong evidence that black women from slavery to the early 20th century delivered the short, sharp shock which can so weary the enemy. They were poisoners; they were incendiaries; they were missile throwers; they were hecklers and hurlers of abuse, and from their own pockets established soup kitchens to keep strikers strong and determined.[14] More lately, they have in Jamaica as in other parts of the Caribbean, been the grassroot canvasers so necessary to a successful election campaign. Other paths to a place in the national power structure were offered to their coloured sisters.

A law of 1733[15] confirmed that "mustafinos", i.e. coloureds three degrees removed from a negro ancestor, were deemed white and could enjoy the status of English citizenship. It was the black woman not the black man who mated exogamously. The law of 1733, therefore on the surface meant that if the black woman mated white long enough, she could ensure her offspring a place in a political and economic system not

available to blacks. It devolved on the mulatto woman, the cross between black and white, never to look back -- to separate herself sexually from her mother's racial group. There is evidence that she took the promise of whiteness seriously. There was a subsequent increase in the number of quadroons (mulatto + white) and mustee (quadroon + white).

But the promise was not sure. To be white was not entitlement but someting to be petitioned for, and herein lies the flirtation. The application was examined by a small (male) committee of the House of Legislature so that as Mathurin[16] points out, the coloured person's mobility depended on the favour of a few evaluators. The larger point, however, is that in terms of values, status and mobility, the Africana woman, usually the mulatto, who was interested in a place in the establishment for herself and for her offspring, had to deny her black roots, had to accept what was usually nothing more than a sexual relationship with a white man, had to ingratiate herself with powerful patrons, had to operate on the outskirts of a culture which she couldn't learn from the inside, and most important, had to rely totally on a sexual partner to hand her her status. The primary dyad here become a client relationship rather than a partnership.

Such a life,[17] as I have argued elsewhere, must have depressed this woman's self-worth to the point of annihilation. Enough of them continued to take this path of insecure status and cultural annihilation for Hurston to wonder in the 1930s whether white men came to Jamaica "scratch(ed) out a nest and

lay(ed) eggs to hatch out 'pink' Jamaicans."[18] Mulatto women had committed social suicide with the connivance of their children. The majority of these women were however too poor to sue for whiteness -- property was one of the variables examined -- but that the possibilities were open to them and not to other Africana women was community knowledge and created animosity towards them from slavery days to today.

Bambi, a black skinned woman, "80-odd" years old in 1975 when she was interviewed, hands down information given to her by her grandfather about slavery days after, thus:

> Him [grandpa] seh:
>
> "Gal mek mek mi tell yo wha happen slavery time." Him go up pon platform go gi speech but him couldn't . . . you know dem before time people can speak English you know, dem speak bare broken language . . . Den when dem hear the broken language now, one mulatto boy go laugh! Him seh:
>
> > Hush you mout sah, you mulatto. Hush you mout sah, you don't count. Let me tell you now in slavery time . . . now when Massa want him work to drive, him mek mi go and ketch a pattoo, kill it and when it half rotten, him tek a mulatto woman and tie de pattoo pon di neck fi drive de gang and when de woman dem lick hoe, and when di mulatto woman coming up to dem, dem seh, 'Km, Km, Km' and dem lick hoe lef him, dem lick hoe lef him, dem weed grass, dem weed grass (fi no mek dem smell the stench you know) - dem work now, dem work lef dem. You don't count, come to laugh after me."[19]

It is not the authenticity of the report concerning plantation life or early post-emancipation days that is so important here, but the attitude of blacks to mulattos, so strong as to be selected for transmission, and so strong in the hearer as to be repeated as a matter of fact. We are

dealing here not with an isolated case of anti-mulatto feeling among blacks. More recently, a black retired female school teacher mentioned in conversation to me that her own grandmother had advised her as a black woman to step on a mulatto's sore foot, rather than help to heal it because the foot when cured would repay her with a kick. She had tested and found truth in her grandmother's words and was offering me this as a guide to my future action. Mathurin's comment on the coloured woman of slavery times seems to justify blacks' negative perception of her/them. She says:

> In a crisis she could be relied on to throw her lot in with the white interest which always promised promotion, which accommodated, albeit uneasily, the black skin, as long as it wore a white mask.[20]

The perception of the light-skinned woman as inherently treacherous towards black people, created a chasm between Africana women. This in itself made it difficult for the values brought over from West Africa and nurtured under slavery to impact on her and to become values by which Africana women in Jamaica are nationally assessed. The mulatto woman created a new ethic governing status assignation, to wit social mobility by skin, colour, hair length and texture and status determination by sexual association.

2. Post-Emancipation

The mulatto woman was not only seen by African people as treacherous, she was also seen as successful and although her success fulfilled their negative prophesies, they coveted her

ability to manipulate the official and white culture into which they themselves now sought a path. Freedom and the loss of customary plantation grounds now made it necessary for Africana women of all kinds to contemplate new ways of making a living. Missionaries of established churches came with European-style education. delivered through their elementary schools and created the conditions for black women to move away from the combine which so depended on the availability of land, mothering, agriculture, higglering and healing and into teacher-training colleges. Blacks from West Africa to contemporary times, have held the "book" in high esteem.[21] Those who could not only read but could teach people to do so were accorded within this schema, high status. Thus elementary school teaching which was now an alternative for the black-skinned woman was also a highly prestigious one, giving her increased esteem in her own community and a place in the public domain. It was also an alternative which did not require the adoption of the mulatto style.

The Africana black woman could get little further in the public domain and in private employment than elementary school teaching. Other paths were blocked by the ascriptive criteria of colour and sex. The white world, unlike the black, saw women as delicate and pale. It didn't have a numerically strong enough pool of white women to counter this image and the mulatto women were too concerned about acceptance into the

status quo, to trouble its waters. The best jobs in the public arena therefore went to men white or black, these creatures who were perceived as "strong", "great in action" and "daring" rather than to the women perceived as "beautiful", suffering", "eager to persuade and please", "diffident and unassuming", the Excellent Ellen who "sobs hysterically and produces delicious tears."[22] Black women did not accept their lot quietly. We hear Amy Bailey, a black school teacher commenting in 1940:

> The women teachers of Jamaica have proved themselves able by examination, by experience and practical ability to stand on the same plane as men colleagues.[23]

She was objecting to the fact that no woman had been raised to the position of Inspector of Schools.

The black-skinned woman had to fight with men for status commensurate with her performance. She had also to fight "fair" women who seem to have made fast hedges around certain jobs which the establishment allowed to women. Ably supported by a white ethic which sang praises to a woman's form, to her hair and to her pale skin, "fair" women celebrated these superficial characteristics as quintessentially female and closed the door to the jobs to all but themselves. Violet's comments in Jessie M. Chace's letter of 27th August 1919 to a Sister at the Alpha Convent of Mercy is suggestive:

> Of course I want another girl to come on the same terms Violet came, and if she has not changed her mind about this, please send me another girl, a light-skinned (to please Violet) and one not afraid to wash and cook.[24]

Violet had got a job in the United States. She was apparently

light-skinned and wanted a co-worker of her shade.

Employers such as Jessie Chace above seemed willing allies in this policy of colour discrimination. In an age when migration was to black Jamaicans the path to social mobility within Jamaica,[25] Violet with the support of her employer and very possibly with that of the Catholic Sisters makes a double hit at her black-skinned Africana sisters. This was not an isolated attempt at blocking the black-skinned woman from migration and from the attending possibilities for social mobility. The following ads from the Daily Gleaner of 5th May 1920 (page 28) makes this clear:

> A high class family in Cuba desires the service of a refined well-educated white or fair young lady, expected to teach music - best wages to the right person.[26]

The colour bar existed at home too. Mrs. Burke of St. Catherine - a "cool dark" lady[27] - interviewed in 1973 when she was 75 years old, comments concerning early 20th century Jamaica:

> You didn't have black typists, you know! No. No. . . there were no dark girls that work in the stores on King Street. But all the stores on King Street had fair girls. . . You could never get a job as a typist if you were dark. You have black school teachers but not as secretary.[28]

Mrs. Hilda Durrant, a black-skinned woman of Hanover, interviewed in 1975 when she was 81 years old, says of the same period, "Education never carry like colour."[29] Offered a teaching post, she declined it and had no recourse but to migrate to Cuba as a nursemaid. In this system of colour discrimination, the "fair" girls were very sure of themselves as the ads in the Daily Gleaner of 1st February 1938 indicate:

Position wanted - a decent honest fair girl seeks position as a bar maid or to work in a store or factory. A refined coloured girls wants position as housekeeper.

There are still fair-skinned girls with long straight hair in contemporary Jamaica. Indian and Chinese men have added to their number so that it is still possible to divide the Africana community in terms of skin, colour and hair texture and to distribute status within the Africana community and the scarce jobs that support it, accordingly. Only two years ago, an ad on the back page of the Daily Gleaner invited "fair girls" to apply for certain positions. Thus the supremacy of form over function lives on. Given the persistence of colour as a sign of social acceptability, it is not surprising that in the Jamaican community, 90% of whose women are of African ancestry, a black skin carries negative value and that black Jamaican women, though they appear to have infiltrated deeper in the public sphere than their sisters in Barbados and Trinidad, appear to be more concerned than they about the cosmetic.[30]

3. Post Independence

The plot,[31] the farm, has been the socio-economic space which has supported Africana women's definition of themselves as women, good, bad or indifferent. We have noted how the erosion of this base after Emancipation forced them to contemplate other sources of employment and pushed them into

the public domain where they have had to contend very often with a different, a mulatto criterion. The process of erosion of the plot continued after Independence in 1962. We have seen too that slave society pushed the mulattos into the town where naturally their ethic would hold sway. It is into the towns that black women, no longer able to survive on the plot, went, there to absorb town life and its definition of the good woman and her place in society. There has been no significant land reform programme that could reverse the process of erosion of the plot. On the contrary, there have been other factors which have contributed to this process and rendered the plot with its culture, marginal.

One of these factors is the education system. Until the late 1960s, most of the high schools were in Kingston. Students were physically removed from the influence of the plot and what is more, that which they were taught in schools and for which they were rewarded with certificates and expected to change their status positons, had nothing to do with the Afro-Jamaican style and much to do with the Euro-American life style. Novels, films, TV programmes continued the celebration of this life style, making the traditional activities - mothering, agriculture, healing and higglering, unacceptable values for the Africana woman or any other. With their traditional values thus defined, the new Africana women were particularly susceptible to the urban, mulatto values which force her to

see herself as physically, if not socially and mentally, inferior. Thus one black-skinned woman can say in 1985 to a lighter-skinned who is on her way to the beach, "Why are you going to the beach to get yourself dark? You know how many people would like to have your colour?" A poignant comment on perceptions of the Jamaican woman.

In Afro-Jamaica as in West Africa, the community was the key unit of interaction. Its resources and problems were shared. It held very clear views on what a woman should be/do. It ranked women according to age but also according to performance of the tasks deemed to be female. Age was accessible to every one and with effort any woman could be a good woman. With the marginalisation of the traditional Africana culture and its measures, and the ascendancy of the mulatto, achievement has given some way to ascription. What is more, with the continued unavailability of land and the drift to town and to foreign lands, the Afro-Jamaican community in Jamaica is being destroyed. But though the socio-economic entity is dwindling, some aspects of the culture still remain. One such is that the community shares in the care of children. Without tangible community organization, however, those who continue to act out of this view will disperse their children in a willy-nilly fashion. This has been happening. Poor women do abandon their children.[32] The Africana woman, usually the black-skinned and the poorest, is now seen in the eyes of the society as a thoughtless breeder given to neglect of her children.

But on the social margins and in people's heads, the strong black woman tilling the soil, mothering the many children by migrating mothers, higglering agricultural produce self-grown or bought, and getting visions about what bush to administer to what sick person,[33] still exists. Here then are two dissonant images of the black-skinned Africana-Jamaican woman. There is My Mother Who Fathered Me,[34] and the careless breeder, the butt of the family planning ads. These two kinds of ladies are felt to be low-incomed - the rural woman and the woman living in the depressed areas of the cities. Those who live in the middle-income section of the towns and cities, see themselves as separated from and higher statused than these. At this level, education and physical beauty of the Euro-American kin battle for supremacy as the criterion by which women evaluate themselves, are assessed and are assigned to status positions.

4. Status and Perception of Women and Political Change

Emancipation brought freedom to the Africana people, the majority of whom were slaves before 1838. Independence in 1962 brought autonomy from Britain. But none of these political events brought to the communities in which black Jamaicans lived the kind of economic independence which allows for the evolution of a culture strong enough to resist the socialising influence of the white planter class. The planters for the most part have left but the mass media to which education and cash have exposed the black Jamaican, have effectively sustained

their opinions in their absence. Their views, their systems of rating remain entrenched, while the social and economic base of the Afro-Jamaican community has been subject to erosion and its values, including those by which women have traditionally been ranked, have been marginalised.

There are still women on the periphery who judge themselves and are judged according to Afro-Jamaican norms but the majority of women, contrary to slavery days behavior, are now incorporated into the establishment and judge themselves and are judged by a more recent set of criteria, the version of Western culture which the slave society allowed to develop among its mulatto children. This allows a fair complexion and straight hair to be one of the measures of social significance and leaves women not born with these features to feel apologetic and less than right.

5. Conclusions

If this paper has not discussed the status and perceptions of Africana women in terms of the ranking of men and women within the Jamaican society, it is because the differential position of men and women has not been a priority concern of the society. The predominant dichotomies throughout the years have been slave vs free, politically enfranchised vs the disenfranchised, haves vs have-nots, rural vs urban, PNP vs JLP. In all of these, a common physical element, its presence varying by degree, has been a black-skinned vs brown/white-skinned

alignment of people. But the country's motto is "Out of Many One People" and the political directorate is very careful to broadcast the fallacy of colour harmony implicit in it. Discussion of colour cannot therefore be seriously placed upon any agenda. Thus the deep colour lines continue unexorcised and other issues are drained of the energy needed to attack them.

Africana-Jamaican women, like all others within the society, see themselves and are seen in terms of the emotion-laden concept, colour. Until this emotion is treated, they will be unable to position themselves in relation to men and to address such issues as sexual exploitation of (young) women which public opinion, social workers and lonely hearts columns know to be rife in the society. Unity of Africana women - the 90% - and eventually of all women, is part of the solution to problems such as sexual exploitation, but it cannot be, while one set of women is assigned by ascription to an inferior position. Thus colour discrimination or at least a perception that colour matters, continues to do the job for which it was designed in the Caribbean, to wit, to create artificial and adversarial groups and thus to undermine the unity of Africana peoples.

FOOTNOTES

[1]This and most of the information in this paper on the women in the slavery period comes from Lucille Mathurin's A Historical Study of Women in Jamaica from 1655-1844, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, U.W.I. 1974.

[2]As above, page 3.

[3]As above, page 26.

[4]Edward Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica 1770-1820, Clarendon Press 1970. Chap. 19.

[5]As above, page 304.

[6]See Victoria Durant-Gonzales' Role and Status of Rural Jamaican Women, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Dept. of Anthropo Togy, UCLA, for a discussion of gradation within two of these roles -- mothering and higglering.

[7]Erna Brodber, "Afro-Jamaican Women and their Men in the late C19th and early C20th" in forthcoming ISER Reader on Caribbean Woman.

[8]_____. Afro-Jamaican Religious and Medical Thought with particular reference to the deLaurence Publications (unpublished) commissioned by the African Caribbean Institute of Jamaica, 1984.

[9]_____. "Man Boy" (parish of Clarendon) tape reference 5CHb in Life in Jamaica in the early C20th - a presentation of 90 oral accounts. Unpublished. ISER Documentation Centre, 1980.

[10]Mathurin already cited, using examples from North America and the Caribbean, discusses the relationship between masters' fears and the size of the black slave population.

[11]"Sparrow", Franciso Slinger, is the most famous of contemporary Trinidadian calypsonians. This is the name of one of his calypsos.

[12]Mathurin, chapter entitled "Mulatto Woman".

[13]As above.

[14]The efforts of Aggie Bernard and her group of women to maintain the most significant strike (1938) in modern Jamaican history, is part of the general folk knowledge.

[15]As at note 12.

[16]As above.

[17]This is one of the themes developed in my Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home, New Beacon Press, 1980.

[18]Zora Neale Hurston, Tell My Horse, Turtle Island, Berkeley, 1981, page 19.

[19]Erna Brodber as at note 9 "Oral Historian" (parish of Hanover), tape reference 60StjFa, page 6.

[20]Mathurin already quoted, page 152.

[21]A.J. Williams in Role of the Prophet in Jamaican Millenial Cults, B. Litt. thesis, Oxford University, 1974, makes the point that literacy was highly regarded in West African societies. The transported people, he argues, came quickly to see it as the key to the white man's superiority.

[22]See Erna Brodber, Perceptions of the Caribbean Woman, ISER, Eastern Caribben, 1982, pages 22-36.

[23]Daily Gleaner, 3rd January 1940.

[24]Co. 137/746, Dispatch 30 21/1/21, Probyn to Milner, enclosure 2.

[25]Erna Brodber, The Second Generation of Freemen in Jamaica 1907-1944. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, U.W.I., 1984. This idea is discussed in chapter 8.

[26]The Daily Gleaner was then and still is Jamaica's major daily newspaper.

[27]The skin colour, that according to Errol Miller in "Body Language, Physical Beauty and Colour among Jamaican Adolescents," S.E.S. Vol. 18, No. 1, March 1969, had become most popular at the time of his research [the 1960s].

[28]Erna Brodber as at note 9, "With Forebears from Guinea," (parish of St. Catherine), tape reference 48StCFa, page 31.

[29]As above, "A Droger's Daughter" (parish of Hanover), tape reference 9HFc, page 25.

[30]See Erna Brodber, Perceptions of the Caribbean Woman, already cited, for the evidence on which this statement is based.

[31]The formulation - "plot and plantation" to describe the economic base of the two major cultural orientations in Jamaica, was first used by Sylvia Wynter in "Novel and History, Plot and Plantation," Savacou, June 1971, No. 5.

[32]See Erna Brodber, Abandonment of Children in Jamaica, ISER, 1974 for a discussion of this phenomenon. Note also a news item in the Daily Gleaner of 22nd January 1985, wich commends the Sister in charge of the children's department of a rural hospital for caring of 13 children abandoned at the hospital.

[33]This is one of the ways the cure came to the healer. See

Mother T's evidence in Erna Brodber's Afro-Jamaican Religious and Medical Thought . . . mentioned at note 8.

34The title of Edith Clarke's most provocative study of Jamaican family life. It was first published by Allen and Unwin in 1957.

PERCEPTIONS AND STATUS OF AFRICANA WOMEN: WOMEN IN AFRICA

Maigenet Shifferraw

The present status of Africana women resulted from the following three historical events which took place on the continent of Africa: the slave trade, the colonial experience, and the post-colonial economic and political structure. Each of these realities greatly affected the present perception and status of women of African descents. Furthermore, the history of the African women in the diaspora as well as their struggle for freedom and equality in the New World added another dimension to the perception and status of the present Africana women. Nevertheless, the similar experiences Africana women have in general are more than the differences they encounter.

The similarities between women in Africa and women of African descent in the diaspora are based on our history and culture which originated in the African continent. We are people who have suffered similar oppressions because of our race. We have been subjugated and mistreated either in the form of slavery or by colonial domination. Above all, we share a common experience of oppression because of our gender. To understand the similarities and differences that exist among Africana women, I will discuss briefly the most significant historical events that took place in Africa and for Africans in the diaspora.

The great migration of African people from the continent took place during the slave trade. It has been roughly estimated

that during the three hundred years of the slave trade (16th to 19th century) between fifteen to twenty million slaves were brought from West Africa to the New World. A similar number is estimated to have perished at various stages between the raid and wars in the interior of West Africa and the passage across the Atlantic. As one historian put it, for every slave that arrived safely in the New World, another is believed to have lost his/her life. All told, therefore, West Africa lost between thirty and fourty million of its population in the course of the slave trade (Osae, Nwabra and Odunsi, 1973: page 168). In the eastern part of Africa, many Africans were taken by Arabs and were sold to Arab buyers (Rodney, 1974: page 95).

Africans were dispersed involuntarily to serve and build the economies of the countries they were forced to settle in. They were alienated from their history and culture and relegated to inhuman conditions in all the countries they settled. The Europeans did not only sell Africans as slaves to the New World but they also colonized the continent. During the colonial period Africans were treated as second or third class citizens in their own land.

Enslaved Africans in the New World were detached from their history and lost their cultural identity. This detachment created the situation whereby Africans in the diaspora lost their roots and ties to the continent of Africa. The second and third generations of Africans in the diaspora adopted the

cultures of the new countries their ancestors were forced to settle in. As time went by, Africa became such a remote and far away place for African descents in the New World. For example, for Afro-American children, Africa has been projected in the schools and through the media as a jungle inhabited by wild animals and primitive hunters. The Tarzan story portrayed Africa as a backward continent and Africans as people who live with lions and tigers under the same tree. This belief is still persistent in the minds of many Americans. The colonial period and its system that subjugated the African people nor the rich history of Africans were not taught in American shcools. As a result, the majority of the American public is biased toward Africa and misinformed of the African history and the dynamics that shaped the current African political economy.

The same form of cultural alienation operated in Africa as well. African children, during the colonial period, were taught the histories and cultures of their colonizers only as if Africa had no history and culture of its own. Slavery in the Americas and the history of Africans in the diaspora were not taught in African schools. Black Americans, for example, were projected to African people, through western journals and literature, as poor and lazy people who could not help themselves with all the opportunities available to them. The poverty in the ghettos of the big cities of the United States such as in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles were portrayed as examples of the inabilities of black Americans to develop their own societies.

For all the conditions that happened in the black communities, the blacks were blamed and the underlying reasons of social and economic inequities were not presented.

Africans in the continent and in the diaspora have resisted, from the beginning, against the oppression imposed on them. But the struggle of Africans for independence from colonial rule in Africa and the struggles of black people in the Americas created the foundations for black consiousness movements. The Marcus Garvey "Back to Africa movement" and the Pan African movement of Nkrumah and other African nationalists brought closer Africans throughout the world.

The 1960s and early 1970s were significant in the history of black people. Most African countries achieved independence from the European colonizers during those periods. The civil rights struggle was intensified in America and black Americans made significant progress in gaining their civil rights. In the 1960s, blacks all over the world started identifying themselves with the continent of Africa and called themselves Africans by origin.

The struggle of Africana people in continous. In Africa today, apartheid in South Africa is still a legacy of oppression of Africans by race. In almost all African countries poverty, hunger, disease, oppressive leaders and international debt are issues of great concern. For Africanas in the disapora, the struggle for economic independence, political power and equal

rights are of great concern as well. Although the civil rights act has done tremendous justice for the black Americans, maintaining these gains have also become important recently.
The above breifly discussed historical events which, in one way or the other, have shaped black peoples' lives in general will help us to analyze the current perceptions and status of Africana women.

Africana women face additional oppression because of our sex. Gender oppression is manifested upon us by men of all races. Our struggle against sex oppression has been severely challenged. Whether or not women's liberation or feminist movements can serve the black women's cause is debated among ourselves, and questioned by women of other races as well as by black men. Some suggest that Africana women's struggle should concentrate on the struggle against race and class oppressions instead of sex oppression. Others argue that Africana women's struggle is for generic liberties and not even for class liberations. Such remarks about Africana women have been documented by several progressive writers such as Maria Rosa Cutrufelli in her book, Women of Africa: Roots of Oppression (Cutrufelli, 1983: page 12). It is, therefore, the responsibility of Africana women to respond to these challenges presented to us. We should be able to analyze our political, economic and social status as black women. It is not my intention to put forth the premise that only Africana women can understand the Africana

women's problems but it is obvious that African women have the greatest responsibilities to take the lead for the struggle of the liberation of Africana women. Others cannot understand our oppression better than ourselves. Africana women, therefore, have to capitalize on our similarities and minimize our differences and strengthen our solidarity. With this in mind, in this presentation, I will focus on the status and perceptions of women in Africa and will briefly highlight some of the economic, political and social status of women in African countries.

Status of Women in Africa. The status of women in Africa cannot be analyzed without analyzing the economic, political and social conditions that affect us and determine our status. African countries have different culture, history, religion, political systems and economic standards. The present status of women in Africa, therefore tend to slightly vary from one country to the other. In this paper I will discuss some of the similaries African women share.

The status of African women, in general, must be analyzed from three perspectives: economic, political and social. The econoimic status of African women cannot be separated from the general economy of a given African country. Although women usually do not enjoy a fair share of their country's wealth, economic development tends to impove the overall economic status of African women. Historically African womem, especially in West Africa, had economic power which in turn gave them some political power. During colonial period most African women lost their

economic power as well as their political power. In other parts of Africa, such as southern Africa, the men were forced to migrate to work in the mines whereas women and children were left behind. Women in southern Africa, therefore, were responsible for food production. The post-colonial African states have continued the colonial policies of utilizing the female labour force in the subsistence sector of the economy.

The present African women work at home and out of their houses. They are farmers and traders. They are responsible for rearing children, preparing food and performing other necessary house chores. But in the formal sector of the economy their work is considered marginal. Educational opportunities which can help women to fully participate in the formal sector of their countries economic development is not equally available for women. The kind of education and training women receive in the formal and non-formal educational systems are geared to prepare women for the traditional women's role of homemaking and child rearing. In a research I conducted in Zambia in 1981-82, I documented that although educational and training opportunities are more available for Zambian women today than during the colonial period, women still are being socialized into the traditional women's role of homemaking. For example, even though most African women have been and still are farmers, the present agricultural schools and colleges are dominated by men because women are not prepared for this specialization at secondary school levels (Shifferraw, 1982: page 95).

Economic autonomy seemed to be the prevailing concern of women everywhere in Africa (Obbo, 1980: page 4). African women believe that economic autonomy will give them security and power for themselves. To get economic autonomy women have to work outside of their homes. In the informal sector, women have been working as petty traders and food producers. Rural economy depends on productes manufactured by women through the use of local available materials. About half the handicrafts in Ivory Coast, Togo and Benin is women's work. Women make up 60% of the labor force in the craft center of Lesotho as knitters, weavers, designers, cloth dyers (Cutrufelli, 1983; page 93).

The political status of African women may not be separated from the economic status they hold. African women's economic and political power was greatly affected by colonial domination. Africana women fought against the colonial domination in order to liberate their societies. Their participations in resistant movements against the colonial rules were significant. Women all over Africa have struggled against European aggression. Ethiopian women fought side by side with their men against the facist aggression of Italy. The West African women's solidarity and resistant movements against the European colonizers often used to shock and sometimes used to impress the Europeans themselves. In recent histories, women in Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Zimbabwe have played fundamental roles in the struggle for national independence. There are many women of distinction in the history of Africa's struggle for independence.

The continuous struggle of South African women is not adequately recorded to give them the credit they very much deserve. But the question is: did African women's involvement against the colonial and foreign oppression gave them equality and enhanced their political power after independence? As one woman from Mozambique indicated "... in many countries women have been a crucial factor in libertation struggle; yet after victory, they have been rewarded for their splendid militance with the mere bestowing of a slightly higher status than the one they had before." (Cutrufelli, 1983: page 174). This situation existed in almost all African countries. After independence, women's political status and political power is not enhanced and given proper credit. The women who fought colonialism side by side with their men now face sex oppression and exploitation by their battle field comrades.

African women's oppression is more visible in social and cultural settings. The social status of African women is much more complex because of the differences in culture, religion, and political systems among African countries. By law women, in most African countries are protected. Women in most African countries are allowed to vote. But protecting them by laws which are put in paper only is not enough. Cultural biases and taboos, religous beliefs and practices limit women from full political participation as well as advanced economies. Women

are regarded as keepers and reproducers of culture. Christine Obbo in her book, African Women: Their Struggle for Economic Independence, pointed out that the weight of moral pressure, often backed by law, is exerted on women in order to reverse or hinder possible changes in the power and authority relationships between men and women. Obbo said, "... It is doubtful whether anyone will pay heed to individuals or to a group who are being constantly corrected. The few women who brave it to engage in politics are reminded by hecklers and friends that their rightful place is 'beside the three cooking stones with the children'". (Obbo, 1980: page 15).

Today, when African women demand their equal rights it is regarded as unAfrican and part of western influence. Western women's liberation movements are seen as middle-class white women's struggle to get access to good jobs and get equal pay for equal work. African men argue that African women have never been oppressed and the women's movement is seen as a movement which will destroy the African family and traditons. When women are organized and speak out, their demands are trivialized and regarded foreign to African culture.

This brings me to the concluding part of this paper and I would like to refer to the similarities of Africana women I discussed earlier. As indicated, Africana women's struggle against sex oppression, has been considered secondary to their struggle against race and class oppressions. It seems that when we fought side by side with our men against slavery, colonialism and

racism, our struggle was considered just and appropriate. But when we speak out in regard to our oppression becasue of our gender, suddenly, it becomes unpopular and we are considered unpatriotic. We are often misunderstood by our men (Africana men) and sometimes by women of other races and cultures. First, when we ask for equal rights and resist the sex oppresion manifested upon us by men of all races, the black men, in particular, tend to be unhappy because they fear our struggle against sex oppression will divide the unity of black people. Second, even though we fully support and give our solidarity to all women's struggle against sexism, we, Africana women, feel that we have to organize ourselves because of the multiple oppresasions we face. This organization of Africana women is considered racist and women of other races and cultures fear that it will divide the women's liberation movement. These fears, I believe, are baseless and we should not be discouraged. Because, we have to write our history from our own perspectives and try to have all parties understand that we fight multiple oppressions, hence our struggles are multiple. We say to black men the liberation of black women is the liberation of black family. We say to all women that we need each others' support toward gaining equal rights. Sex discrimination will be a major issue for women of all races and cultures for a very long time to come, because it will be a very long time before women get political power to fully stop sex discriminations.

In the end I would like to quote one Africana woman who lived and struggled long against race, class and sex oppressions. This woman was a black American woman. Sojourner Truth was her name. She lived in New York City forty years as a slave and more than forty years as a free woman. I am quoting her because what she said more than a hunderd years ago is a burning question for Africana women even today. Sojourner Truth spoke at the convention of the American Equal Rights Association in New York City in 1867. She said, "... There is a great stir about colored men getting their rights, but not a word about the colored women; and if colored men get their rights and not colored women theirs, you see the colored men will be masters over the women, and it will be just as bad as it was before. So I am for keeping the thing going while things are stirring; because if we wait till it is still, it will take a great while to get it going again." (Lerner, 1972: page 569). Now, more than a hundred years later, after Sojourner Truth's speech, the status of Africana women still needs to be improved. The above statement which was said in 1867 in New York city by Sojourner Truth, was reiterated in the 1970s by the woman from Mozambique who I mentioned earlier.

There shall be an awareness of our past history, present conditions and the future route we should take. To do this, our educational institutions, the media and community organizations should play active roles in transmitting the rich history of

Africa and all black people throughout the world. Africana women and women of all races and cultures need to come much more closer, identify the issues which divide us and try to find solutions to them. Our oppression as women can only be overcome through our solidarity. Feminist consiousness, awareness and appreciations of each others culture and history and class consiousness will bring women of all races and cultures closer and make us more stronger. As one Italian writer, Maria Rosa Cutrufelli wrote, "Where cultures tend to integrate, economies become increasingly interdependent and political events may be fully appreciated only in an international perspective. Women throughout the world should now, more than ever, surmount any cultural, racial and historical divide between them and learn to know one another better." (Cutrufelli, 1983: page 1).

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REVOLUTION: THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE OF STRUGGLE

Bell Hooks

> "The building of any mass movement requires the understanding that the ruling class in this country maintains its dominance through illusion as well as violence. A key illusion among the oppressed masses that helps perpetuate class rule is the belief that the system is capable of reforming itself and satisfying the needs of the vast majority. It is only through the experience of struggle that it becomes clear to masses of people that they must take over and control society for themselves if their demands are to be fully met. And it is through struggle that the oppressed and exploited began to see the potential power they have to do this."
>
> Linda Jenness
> Feminism and Socialism

In Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center I defined feminism as a political movement to end sexism and sexist oppression. Since such a movement would necessarily work to challenge and transform the prevailing patriarchal male supremacist hegemony it would be revolutionary, not reactionary, not reformist but revolutionary. Feminism in the United States has not been a revolutionary movement. Hence it is not surprising that masses of black women are not actively engaged in feminist struggle. A co-opted feminist politic that serves the interests of white supremacy and the needs of women from privileged classes can and should have no appeal for exploited and oppressed black women because our situation is grave. (Despite the reality that there are individual black women who are relatively privileged I employ the collective "we" to emphasize our political identification with and commitment to those black women who are the most exploited and oppressed in this socity and in the world).

Our situation is grave.

We are suffering. We are suffering daily. Our suffering is political. Imperialism, racism, sexism and class exploitation are interlocking systems of domination that work together to ensure that our suffering both individual and collective will never cease. These systems of domination must be eradicated if we are ever to live lives that are not daily filled with pain, insecurity, anguish, and the fear of horrors to come. As African-American women, as black women globally, we are called by circumstance to face reality -- to confront the fact that mean and women who benefit from our exploitation and oppression will never make the political movements that will unite us in liberatory struggle. We must do this work. We must labor together. We must be politically aware, committed and active. We must waste no more time debating which struggle is primary, arguing among ourselves or with the dominant white culture about which issue is more important. In the struggle to end domination and oppression, all issues imperialism, racism, sexism, class exploitation are primary. We must continually assert that systems of domination that exploit and oppress us are intertwined, that the struggle to resist one form of domination (be it the struggle against sexism or the struggle against racism) can be effective only if it is inextricably linked with other struggles. This awareness is crucial. It should serve as a grounding principle informing our theory, shaping our praxis.

Individual African-American women who advocate feminist struggle yet remain staunch critics of any so called feminist politics that is rooted in racism and the support of class oppression, have been the primary voices challenging the naive assumption that woman's status can be best understood through an analysis of gender and insisting on a recognition of the importance of race, sex and class. This insistence automatically demands a shift in the direction of feminist politics in the United States, as it indicates that only a revolutionary feminist struggle can change the status of black women and all women. Given this framework, the development of Africana Women's Studies looms large as one of the most significant steps in the progression towards a revolutionary feminism.

In Pedagogy of the Uppressed, Paulo Friere asserts, speaking of the oppressed that "we cannot enter the struggle as objects in order to later become subjects." Feminist politics is important for Africana women because it provides a political framework in which we can move from object to subject in the arena of our daily life. It enables us to give voice to the specific exploitation and oppression we as black women face solely because of our gender. We can then link that awareness with knowledge of the ways we experience race and class oppression, noting the connections between these systems of domination. Through naming our specific history, articulating our unique experience we claim the right to exist as subjects -- as independent beings. We assert ourselves as active agents creating history, making informed political choices.

Within Africana Women's Studies we must create a pedagogy of liberation that will assist in developing radical political consciousness. We must learn how to examine and analyze the exploitation and oppression we experience in political terms.

SECTION TWO

FUNDING AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES

WE'VE BEEN LOOKING AROUND AND WE'VE BEEN HERE ALL THE TIME: FUNDING AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES

Ama Rashida Saran

I am Ama Rashida Saran, a mother, a worker, a student. I am the visionary, the dresser, the magician-in-residence for the National Black Women's Health Project. Because funders do not understand this unique and vital role in just these terms, I am called Care Consultant--the third eye for the organization.

I am here at Atlanta University as a first year doctoral student in Africana Women's Studies with a particular concentration in economic development for women of the Third World.

For the last ten years I've worked exclusively within the non-profit community primarily in the role of a management consultant and fundraiser. I came to that role very purposely after working in a number of efforts that seemingly died an early death because of inadequate funding. It appeared we in the Black community always knew exactly which house to build but some of us were uncertain about whether to use bricks or straw. What we often failed to do was design our own development--fund our futures not simply our today's.

This is the major lesson that I've extracted from a decade of work in the best of all times--a time when we, no matter where we are, are at least beginning to entertain the notion of our own

self-reliance. A number of us have been pushed against the wall or dragged to it kicking and screaming. But what really excites me most is that we're here.

Perhaps that is why Geraldine Wilson confirms ("The Self/Group Actualization of Black Women" in The Black Women, edited by LaFrances Rodgers-Rose, California: Sage Publications, 1980):

> . . . through the history of this nation, the political, social and cultural forces in the society--that is the forces of colonialism, set in a framework of Capitalism have stimulated/forced many individuals and different cultural groups to involve themselves in the process of consideration, reflection and evaluation.

Isn't this just what we are here for now so why don't we do this now--the consideration, the reflection, the evaluation? But if you will, within the parameters I set down, stay with me for awhile as I reflect on not merely the question of funding Africana Women's Studies, but share with you my notions, my deliberations on strategies for our own self-reliance.

The Politics/The Issues/The Challenges

In the beautifully crafted introduction to All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies (Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott and Barbara Smith, eds. New York: The Feminist Press, 1982) Hull, et al., insist,

> That to examine the politics of Black Women's Studies means to consider not only what it is but why it is and what it can be. (p. xvii)

Stay with me. I want to talk with you about what it is to me. I shall do this within the context of a letter I wrote several weeks ago to the President of Atlanta University. This is the gist of it:

> Dr. Williams:
>
> I am a first year doctoral student who has recently transferred to Africana Women's Studies for my first opportunity to come home to myself without apology or equivocation. This is my time to celebrate myself. This is my time to hold up to the light our women-wrought history in all its real complexity. I want to check the records to play back my life's lessons from all those Black women who've walked ahead of me. I don't intend to lose this chance.
> How, my brother, do you stand?

'Nuff said.

Hull and Smith continue their introduction by delineating four issues which " . . . seem important for a consideration of the politics of Black Women's Studies:

1) the general political situation of Afro-American women and the bearing this has had upon the implementation of Black Women's Studies;

2) the relationship of Black Women's Studies to Black feminist politics and the Black feminist movement;

3) the necessity for Black Women Studies to be feminist, radical and analytical; and

4) the need for teachers of Black Women's Studies to be aware of our problematic political positions in the academy and of the potentially antagonistic conditions under which we must work."

Sisters, I would insist we move this even further and add a fifth issue:

5) the opportunity/the challenge this represents and the demand it makes upon us all to be a model of that which we espouse as the very essence of our origins--self-reliance.

Let's take ownership of this: DuBois in the chapter, "The Freedom of Womanhood" in Gift of Black Folk (1924) makes absolutely clear our impact on the life of this nation. He portrays us as we have been: domestics, workers, mothers, concubines, and what he called "Negro Women in revolt not just there to guide their own folk, but to influence the nation and emancipate all women" in The Black Women.

(We've been looking around and we've been here all the time!) Just as Harriette McAdoo contends ("Black Mothers and the Extended Family Support Network" in The Black Women, p. 125).

> One of the strongest Black cultural patterns is that of extensive help systems. The family's effective environment is composed of a network of relatives, friends and neighbors. The social network acts to provide emotional support, economic supplements and most important to protect the family's integrity from assault by external forces.

Are we not family? Do we not have the responsibility for protecting ourselves from the inevitable assault of those external forces?:

1) the college and university administrators who would make us mere temporary adjuncts;

2) the funders who choose to "womanize" their funding agendas for whatever the moment can bear; and

3) the groups that understand our role as only transient and not deserving of continuous adequate funding because after all it is women's stuff and if we want a resource base at best it will be voluntary and sparsely supported.

That marginality, that invisibility imposed from within and without that attends our every effort no matter the far reaching impact of our goals that would benefit women, the family, the community.

The solution is to go back to the source--go back to us, the Black women not in some romanticized fashion but with a deliberate focus on strategizing to end our institutionalized dependency, self-reliance at the outset not after the fact.

We do have the answers: at least most of them. We celebrate ourselves as African women, "instrumental in the economic marketplace," controlling a variety of industries ("A Historical Overview" in The Black Women, edited by LaFrances Rodgers-Rose, p. 16).

> We are the Black women who oftentimes worked the land alone. In the city and town we were the race women. We were the women who had worked for a long time for change in the Black community.

("Holding Back the Ocean with a Broom: Black Women and Community Work" by Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, in The Black Women, p. 217).

> Black women, through their work in the community, aid the community in its response to the problems of surviving in a racist society while attempting to change that same society. (p. 218)

Our legacy is one wherein "we have transformed problems we faced in helping to support and educate our families from private troubles to public issues." (p. 218)

We are the ones we have been waiting for, ready to use the dialectic of our oppression as a framework from which to fashion a sharper and more precise instrument of opposition. Thus, the attack from witnin and without simply advances the form of our resistance.

What does it mean, The Black Women as the Source of Self-Reliance in Academia? What does it look like?

Close your eyes for a moment, let's visualize what we have here: An Africana Women's Studies Program Course Title and Number: "Some of Us Are Brave 2000".

We know well the engaging, innovative course content, that is not what's at risk. But how do we see to the perpetuation of what is emerging as a major force for the creation of life strategies not just a wonderful and unique knowledge base in academia?

It will not be funded alone nor is the design and execution of grants, in-kind, direct mail, solicitation, contracts, special events going to be enough.

We must talk about a systematic game plan, program and products composed of two major components:

1) the community-at-large, and

2) the academic community, in that order.

The community ought to be the integral support, the infrastructure not as audience for our efforts but collaborator. Thus, the programs address a larger agenda spawned from the alliance of women of all sectors. Think what that means relative to creating a rich and viable continuous and substantive resource base. Our networks are already in place.

It is not a difficult task to create the critical economic base necessary for the independent, autonomous, Africana qualitative survival of an Africana Women's Studies program. Thus, our funding mix is a reflection of all the components of our support system--all the representatives of our collaboration.

1. I see our formal support structure in the form of our friends who will once or twice per year sponsor a special event for us.

2. An ever expanding network for our direct mail solicitation.

3. Heightened visibility for our program efforts that result in a better reception for your grant proposals --they'll ask you to submit.

As good as this is it's not nearly enough, move back to the source. Again, where self-reliance begins with the individual to ultimately strengthen our collective voice for our own advocacy.

Let's sky--move up mentally like Nikky asks us to--<u>On Wings Made of Gauze</u>.

Remember our resistance is shaped around our opposition to the prevailing economic order to the extent that we can.

What would it mean--what would it mean for us to ask students to give back some of what they've gotten in the form of monthly pledges? What would it mean to immediately activate our learning and fulfill a number of needs through an:

1. expertise-for-hire component

2. the sale of publications

3. conference planning teams for hire

4. evaluation teams

5. curriculum developers

6. writers/editors

This is the design for our development.

Let's build coalitions/alliances--design collaborations with existing organizations within the community, building a base, Sisters!

So then again I can come home to oneself--a home that houses the very best offerings of all my sisters:

Julia Scott
Byllye Avery
Beverly Guy-Sheftell
Bell Hooks
Marsha Darling
Angela Davis
Gerri Wilson
Patricia Bell Scott
Cheryle Chisholm
Eleanor Hinton-Hoytt
Barbara Huell
Toni Cade Bambera
and me,
Ama Saran

You are as real as our collective commitment to bring fundamental change.

> Oh yes. We must walk the path together and our definition of us exists. It BE. It includes who we were, who we are, wherever we are. That includes those of who who have remained tillers of the soil and those who are shouldering rifles as guerillas in the liberation struggle. We've been characterized and actualized by our contradictions, our sometimes paternalism with our men and children, our evilness (sometimes situations require it!) and by our independence, our response to oppression, our beauty, our anger, our strength, our resistance, our humor, our spirit, our songs, our tears, our toughness, our ability to do the job, our deep pain, our love, and our laughter. Most of all sister, our love and laugher. (Wilson, p. 241)

SECTION THREE

DISCIPLINARY ASSESSMENTS OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES

TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES: AFRICAN-AMERICAN, AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN EXPERIENCES

Mamie Locke and Gloria Braxton

Assessing research and teaching of Africana Women's Studies involves a variety of complex and interesting questions. How do we present research that is orderly, coherent, and logically organized? To what extent do Africana Women's Studies meet the objectives and priorities of the student? Is exposure to Africana Women's Studies likely to increase the appreciation of the women studied? Are the new attitudes, learning and behavior easily described? or, Do the courses contribute to the general understanding of human relationships?

Several researchers have attempted to assess feminist social science research. In discussing feminism and the social sciences, Liz Stanley and Sue Wise maintained, "Feminism demonstrates, without any possibility of doubt, that the social sciences are sexist, biased and rotten with patriarchal values."[1] They continue, "The most simple and in many ways the most powerful criticism made of theory and practice within the social sciences is that, by and large, they omit or distort the experience of women."[2] They conclude that future research within the social sciences ought to be on and for women and should be carried out by women.

Current research and teaching on Africana women focuses on some of the things women spend most of their time doing; on the many facets of oppression; the mechanisms employed to seek solutions to their problems; and the limitations and constraints the socio-economic structure places on women as they seek to survive in a male-dominated society.

This paper will review some of the more pertinent and current research on African women, noting some of its weaknesses and strengths; brief discussions on the teaching of Africana Women's Studies; and sources of funding. The paper is divided into three main sections, one each on African-American Women, African Women, and Caribbean Women.

THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

In recent years there have been many studies which have examined the plight of Black women in the United States. Some of these studies have focused on the issues of racism and sexism and have sought to debunk the myths and distorted pejorative images of Black women. Until the late 1960s most studies on Black women emphasized the Black family, particularly the themes of matriarchy, Black female relationships, and Black female sexuality. Much of this literature perpetuated the already distorted and negative images and misconceptions of Black women. Images of pancake box jemimas, Sapphire, and Amazon were prevalent in many of those writings.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, as the civil rights movement came to a close and the women's movement began to escalate, Black women's issues began to surface and were investigated from many angles, economically, socially, politically and historically. Copious studies on Black women began to be undertaken. Here we began to see a reinterpretation of Black womanhood through anthologies, articles and books, depicting the slavery experience, connecting issues of sexism and racism, debunking the matriarchy myths, and revealing the whole range of Black women's oppression.

Following is a review of research currently being undertaken on African-American women in the social sciences. Additionally, areas of teaching on the experiences of African-American women are explored, as are the sources of funding

provided for research and/or teaching. The studies listed herein are by no means an exhaustive list, but provide a representative sample of work being done. Not included are the many dissertations and master's theses being devoted to the study of African-American women.

Research

In 1981, Gloria Hull, Patricia Bell-Scott, and Barbara Smith edited a book entitled All The Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave (Old Westbury, N.Y.: The Feminist Press). This book focuses on the development of Black Women's Studies in both teaching and research. Since its publication, more research in various disciplines is being conducted and new courses are being taught, exploring the diversity of the Black woman's experiences. It is also indicative of the growth, beyond the earlier "trendy" studies, in Black Women's Studies.

The current research in the social sciences is based on historical, theoretical, sociological and comparative analyses highlighting many areas. The most common topics being explored are health and poverty issues, slavery, comparative sex role studies, gerontological studies, race/sex/class, feminism, labor and employment. The topics seek to integrate Black women into areas where they were previously omitted as well as redefine roles and concepts relative to the unique experiences of Black women. The majority of these studies are the result of individual research efforts and interests, with some being funded by

foundations and federal agencies. Further, there have been many conferences and workshops exploring Black Women's Studies and the necessity for further research and the development of new courses.

Black women's health issues have become an important aspect of research in the social sciences. With the Black Women's Health Project leading the way, many studies have focused on the problems of stress and anxiety, high blood pressure, nutrition, abortion, drugs, suicide, and the overall mental health of Black women.

In Psychological Report (Volume 55, December 1984), E. J. Bailey investigated high blood pressure, a critical health problem among Black women. Bailey sought to establish a relationship between state and trait anxiety to the presence of high blood pressure in Black women. Elsie Smith focused on the mental health of Black women in her research published in the Journal of Black Studies (Volume 12, December 1981). Her primary concern was with service delivery systems for Black women. While R. Moise (et al.) focused on the results of drug abuse treatment programs on Black and white female participants (International Journal of Addiction, Volume 17, 1982), A. B. Rushing addressed the issue of suicide in the article "For Colored Girls, Suicide or Struggle," (Massachusetts Review, Autumn 1981). Finally, the Psychology of Women Quarterly (Volume 6, Spring 1982) devoted a special issue to the problems of Black women. Edited by Saundra Rice Murray and Patricia Bell-Scott, this special issue sought to fill the void left in American psychology on Black women's issues.

Sociological and economic studies have brought to the fore issues of labor, employment and poverty. Historically and currently, these areas of research attempt to explain the special problems of Black women in the world of work and tangentially examine the class question. "Comparative Labor Supply of Black and White Women" is the title of the article written by E. P. Hoffman in the Review of Black Political Economy (Volume 11, 1982). Further explorations of comparisons between Black and white women can be found in the Social Science Quarterly (Volume 62, March 1981) with Larry Lyons and Holley Rector-Owen's study "Labor Market Mobility Among Young Black and White Women." In the Journal of Ethnic Studies (Volume 12, Winter 1985), Beverly Lindsay reviewed one of the many dilemmas for Black women: economic and social psychological independence. Suzanne Bianchi has written a book entitled Household Composition and Racial Inequality which addresses many economic issues faced by Black women.

In this same vein of employment and labor, Beverly W. Jones in her historical study "Race, Sex and Class: Black Female Tobacco Workers in Durham, North Carolina, 1920-1940" (Feminist Studies, Volume 10, 1984) examined many issues affecting Black women, sex, race, class and feminism. The ultimate aim of the study, however, was to explore how Black women conceptualized their work and its impact on their lives. K. T. Anderson also took an historical look at Black women's employment during World War II. In the Journal of American History, Anderson probed this theme in the article "Last Hired, First Fired: Black Women

Workers During World War II." Leith Mullings explored many of the same themes as Jones. Her article "On Women, Work and Society" was published in Freedomways (Volume 20, First Quarter 1980).

In other areas of employment and labor, Judy Scales-Trent focused on a contemporary problem, comparable worth, and its impact on Black workers. Her study, "Comparable Worth: Is This A Theory for Black Workers?" was published in the Winter issue (Volume 8, 1984-85) of the Women's Rights Law Reporter. The Wellesley College Center for Research on Women has published the research of Phyllis Wallace (Black Women in the Labor Force, 1981) and Jacqueline Fields (Factors Contributing to Nontraditional Career Choices of Black Female College Graduates, 1981), contributing to the body of literature on the economic issues of Black women. Further, the Mental Health Research and Development Center, Institute for Urban Affairs Research at Howard University has also published a study conducted by Roberta Morse, The Black Female Professional, 1983.

Other studies in the area of economics have addressed the financial challenges facing Black women in the 1980s (Shirley Better, Black Scholar, September/October 1983) and poverty (Diana M. Pearce, "The Feminization of Ghetto Poverty," Society, Volume 21, November/December 1983).

There is also research being undertaken relative to crime and criminal behavior. Llad Phillips and Harold Votey connected economic disadvantages to the criminal behavior of Black women. Their article, "Black Women: Economic Disadvantage, and Incentives to Crime," can be found in The American Economic Review

(Volume 74, May 1984). The treatment of Black women in the criminal justice system was the focus of Coramae Mann in the International Journal of Women's Studies (Volume 7, March/April 1984). The article is entitled "Race and Sentencing of Female Felons: A Field Study."

Feminism and the dynamics of race, sex, and class is an area of Black Women's Studies that has become increasingly thematic. With much of the women's movement being characterized by racism and Black Studies focusing on racism, Black women were continually being victimized and peripherally acknowledged. Hence, social science scholars, through their research and teaching in the field of Black Women's Studies, have sought to re-educate both Women's Studies faculty (mostly white women) and Black Studies faculty (mostly Black men) in an effort to have courses in these areas taught from a nonracist and nonsexist perspective.

In the past few years there has been much research done to eradicate racist and sexist biases. Additionally, scholars have incorporated the class question and a Black feminist perspective. Like many other topics, the approaches have stretched the gamut from historical to theoretical. Following are some of the topics that have been researched.

Elizabeth F. Hood has sought to analyze the different perspectives taken by Black and White women to women's liberation. Her article, "Black Women, White Women: Separate Paths to Liberation" can be found in The Black Scholar, Volume 14, 1983. Phyllis Palmer also takes a comparative approach to her article,

"White Women/Black Men: The Dualism of Female Identity and Experience in the United States" (Feminist Studies, Volume 9, Spring 1983). Of note also is the study done by Virginia Blansford, Black Women and Liberation Movements, Institute for the Arts and Humanities, 1981. The development of Black feminist theory can be found in many works. Among them are Bell Hooks' Ain't I A Woman?: Black Women and Feminism (1981) and Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center (1984). Notable also is Gloria I. Joseph's and Jill Lewis' Common Differences: Conflicts in Black and White Feminist Perspectives, 1981.

Issues of race, sex, and class and feminism are the point of departure for studies conducted by Bonnie Thornton Dill ("Race, Class and Gender: Prospects for An All-Inclusive Sisterhood," Feminist Studies, Volume 9, Spring 1983), P. T. Reid ("Feminism versus Minority Group Identity, not for Black Women Only," Sex Roles, Volume 10, Fall 1984), Yvonne Flowers ("On Never Quite Being Good Enough: Legal Institutional Racism, Sexism and Elitism," Heresies, Volume 2, 1979), Elizabeth V. Spelman ("Theories of Race and Gender: The Erasure of Black Women," Quest, Volume 5, 1982), and, in an historical study, Erlene Stetson ("Black Feminism in Indiana, 1893-1933," Phylon, Volume 44, December 1983). Integrating these same themes are Paula Giddings' When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America, 1984. LaFrances Rodgers-Rose, The Black Woman, 1980, and Sex, Race and the Role of Black Women in the South: Essays, published by the University Press of Mississippi, 1983.

A number of journals have devoted entire issues to the questions of sex, race, class and feminism. Included among these publications are the Journal of Social Issues (Volume 39, number 3, 1983, "Racism and Sexism in Black Women's Lives"), The Black Scholar (Volume 16, March/April 1985, "Black Women and Feminism"), and Heresies (Volume 2, 1979, "Third World Women: The Politics of Being Other" and Volume 3, 1980, "Power, Propaganda and Backlash"). Topics in these journals are diverse, focusing on, inter alia, economic issues, education and poverty.

Research efforts have also been centered on comparative sex-roles in an attempt to connect race and gender to sex-role perceptions. Edward Rausford and Jon Miller follow this approach in their study "Race, Sex and Feminist Outlooks" in the American Sociological Review (Volume 48, February 1983). D. G. White took an historical approach in an analysis of status and sex roles among women slaves (Journal of Family History, Volume 8, Fall 1983).

Finally, it is safe to say that many issues involving Black women can be placed in a political context. However, there are many studies that fall under the general rubric of political science. Among these are Sandra Baxter's and Marjorie Lansing's Women and Politics: The Invisible Majority (1981). Shelby Smith, editor, Black Political Scientists and Black Survival: Essays in Honor of a Black Scholar (articles by Mae King and Samuel D. Cook), 1977; Marianne Githens and Jewel Prestage, A Portrait of Marginality: The Political Behavior of the American Woman

(articles by Prestage and Orum/Cohen/Grasmuch/Owen), 1977; Jewel Prestage, "The Political Behavior of American Black Women: An Overview" in LaFrances Rodgers-Rose, The Black Woman, 1980; Laurely Epstein, editor, Women in the Professions (article by Prestage, "Black Women Officeholders: The Case of State Legislators"), 1975; and Pauline Stone, "Ambition Theory and the Black Politician," Western Political Quarterly, Volume 33, 1980. These books and articles address various political issues related to officeholding, voting, sexism and racism, sex socialization, and the politics of sexual stereotypes.

As can be seen from the above, there is a variety of research being undertaken in the social sciences focusing on Black Women's Studies. Interdisciplinary works as well as individual disciplines have continued the trend begun approximately ten years ago to integrate Black Women's Studies into Women's Studies and Black Studies curricula.

Beyond individual efforts, research on Black women has also been the focus of women's research centers throughout the United States. Of the many such centers there are two at predominately Black institutions: the Women's Research and Resource Center at Spelman College and the Africana Women's Center at Atlanta University. At both of these centers research is being conducted and workshops are held in an effort to develop Black Women's Studies. Of particular importance is the emphasis on curriculum development. The Africana Women's Center has held summer institutes and various workshops geared toward the development of courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The Women's Research and Resource Center at Spelman was the site for a National Endowment for the Humanities summer seminar for college teachers, June-August 1985. The seminar's topic, "Black Women in Literature: A Life Cycle Approach," had an interdisciplinary approach, integrating the social sciences and the humanities to the life cycle experiences of Black women. The Center also serves as the home base for SAGE: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women.

The Center for Research on Women at Memphis State University has also been instrumental in emphasizing the importance of women of color in American society. In June 1983, the Center, in conjunction with the Inter-University Research Group on Gender and Race, sponsored an institute on "Teaching, Researching, and Writing About Women of Color in the United States." There were three research groups devoted to African-American women in which ideologies, research issues, qualitative methodology, and interdisciplinary issues were among the various topics discussed. The Center published its results based upon discussion and recommendations.

In addition to the work being done at the women's centers, a number of conferences have also been held in the past few years highlighting the research and teaching of Black Women's Studies. The Association of Black Women Historians sponsored a research conference (funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities) in June 1983. This conference, "Women in the African Diaspora: An Interdisciplinary Perspective," covered many areas of concern,

from developing theoretical and conceptual frameworks to research priorities for Black Women's Studies. (The National Endowment for the Humanities also awarded a grant to Purdue University for a pilot project (1983-1985) designed to collect, catalogue and preserve materials on Black women in the midwest).

There have been many other conferences focusing on research, teaching, problem areas, and general concerns of Black women. Although too numerous to mention here, a few others are worth noting. In 1980, a conference was held in Washington, D.C., called the "First National Scholarly Research Conference on Black Women" (see New Directions for Women, Volume 9, January/-February 1980, for additional information). Hampton University sponsored a conference entitled "Concepts of Self and Race: The Black Woman From a Global Perspective" in 1982. The Women's Educational Equity Act Program, U.S. Department of Education, has sponsored a number of conferences focusing on Black women and education. The National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) addressed the issue of Black Women's Studies at its 1984 annual meeting (see issues of the NWSA Newsletter, 1984). These are but a sample of the work being conducted on African-American women in the area of research in the social sciences.

Teaching and Funding

Since the 1970s there have been many courses offered on Black women, exploring their historical and socio-political experiences. These courses have been offered in a variety of departments: history, Black Studies, Women's Studies, literature and English. The courses have covered a wide range of topics, women's rights, education, writers, the sex/race/class dilemma, and feminism. Some have been integrated into the college/university curricula while others must be offered under the general heading of "topics".

Many of these courses are being taught at predominately white institutions. For example, in the list of selected course syllabi in But Some of Us Are Brave, only one course had been taught at a predominately Black institution (by Rosalyn Terborg-Penn at Morgan State University, 1980). Although the list included was by no means exhaustive, it is indicative of the areas and places where the teaching of Black Women's Studies was taking place.

With the development of the women's centers at Spelman College and Atlanta University and the women's programs at these two schools and Bennett College, courses are being taught to predominately Black audiences. Through the Africana Women's Center there have been several courses developed at historically Black colleges and universities. These courses cover a broad comparative perspective on Black women and are opening the doors for curricula changes for many departments.

Furthering the development of courses in Black Women's

Studies have been workshops devoted to curriculum development. Again, the Africana Women's Center has been instrumental in the development of courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, as stated earlier. In the social sciences, political science, sociology, and psychology have benefitted from the Center's efforts. And, as indicated above, the women's research center at Memphis State University and the Association of Black Women Historians have sponsored conferences addressing both the areas of teaching and researching Black Women's Studies.

Teaching guides have been published as resource guides for Black Women's Studies. The Model Sex Fair Training Program in Educational Psychology and Guidance at the University of Tennessee published The Black Female Experience in America: A Learning/-Teaching Guide in 1979. Nancy Faires Conklin is the author of The Culture of Southern Black Women: Approaches and Materials, published by the Archives of American Minority Culture and Women's Studies Program, University of Alabama, 1983. Also, Rosalyn Terborg-Penn's piece "Teaching the History of Black Women: A Bibliographical Essay" (History Teacher, Volume 13, February 1980) is a useful guide to developing courses in Black Women's Studies.

Obviously, there is a need for the further development of Black Women's Studies courses. More importantly is the need to integrate these courses into the curricula of institutions. This appears to be a stumbling block in those colleges and universities where Black Studies and Women's Studies are considered to be "fads". Also, where the trend is geared more toward business

schools and the sciences receiving funding, Women's Studies and Black Studies are competing for limited funds in limited areas. It appears that the major sources of funding for these programs are the National Endowment for the Humanities, Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education, National Institute of Education, and the Rockefeller Foundation. Beyond various organizations' funding specific research areas (e.g., the National Organization for Women Legal Defense and Education Fund's "Black Women in the High Tech World," December 1982), there are limited funds available for research and/or curriculum development on Black women. The funding provided by the above organizations has assisted in the development of Black women's research centers, thereby providing avenues for research and teaching, primarily in the humanities, but also in the social sciences.

Conclusion

There are many challenges ahead for Black Women's Studies. It is a growing field, one that is becoming stronger despite obstacles. There is a core of committed women and men who have the wherewithal and determination to provide the American social sciences with scholarly works needed to fill the void left by mainstream research and teaching. The conferences, workshops and seminars must be continued to provide the framework for further research and teaching in Black Women's Studies. It is only through continued exposure that Black Women's Studies will evolve as an autonomous academic discipline worthy of the attention and devotion of social science scholars.

THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

Research

Before 1975, the beginning of the United Nations Decade for Women, very little social science research focused on African women. Some of the very earliest works included two basic historical accounts, a 1939 book by Sylvia Leith-Ross, African Women: A Study of the Ibo of Nigeria and the 1952 study completed by Phyllis Kaberry, Women of the Grasslands: A Study of the Economic Position of Women in Bamenda British Cameroon. Both books, published in London, were valuable in that they represented the first attempts to present knowledge about African women's rights and responsibilities in traditional society and the influences of contact with the Europeans. They also represent earlier attempts to show the importance of women in the economic and political process as well as (although possibly not intended) those ways in which their contributions have been limited by the social structure within which they must function. Writing in 1939, Leith-Ross stated,

> Judging from my own experience among various people of Nigeria, I am inclined to believe that their women, because of their economic importance both as mothers, farm cultivators, and traders, have rather more power than is generally thought and that therefore they must be taken into account in the framing of new legislation, or the introduction of new methods of trade or husbands, or the creation of new social or economic situations.

She depicts these West African women as having inherent vitality, independence of views, courage, self-confidence, desire for gain and worldly standing.

Phyllis Kaberry's book represents one of the first detailed

empirical studies to provide statements relative to the impact of the patrilineal land tenure system, organization of work on the farm, primary agricultural activities, attitudes towards work and leisure, time allotments for both control of crops, and etc.

Most of the recent research in the social sciences has grown out of a concern for a lack of available data on African women. The fact that although African women were integrally involved in the economic and social development of their societies but have been ignored when development plans were established, overlooked when international projects were developed, and severely limited from participation because of responsibilities in the home, has played a prominent role in promoting further research on women. Western influence and domination dictated the conceptualization of the nature of development problems and therefore determined that implementation of development plans would follow those established for the industrialized economies of the west.

In 1970, Ester Boserup, a Danish anthropologist, wrote a book entitled Woman's Role in Economic Development, that is credited with having marked a turning point in the kinds of research questions being asked about women in Third World countries. Drawing on examples from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, Boserup argued that economic and social development would unavoidably entail the disintegration of the division of labor among men and women as had been established traditionally. As such she called for a "radical shift" in sex roles in agriculture. She was also

among the first social scientists to relate women and development to the colonial legacy. This alone was enough to encourage many researchers to engage in additional research about the patterns of labor for women and the impact such a radical shift in existing societal institutions would evoke. Thus, there was a preoccupation with gathering information, noting differences and commonalities in the social, economic, cultural and political status and role of women (and men). Thus, what has occurred since the mid-1970s is a proliferation of research on all women of the world.

African women appear not to have been researched to the extent of Asian women, but somewhat more than Latin American women. Caribbean women have been least researched of all. Sociologists and anthropologists have dominated research on African women. In a limited survey, I conducted for this paper, this fact continues to hold true with political scientists and economists having conducted the least. Historians have faired a little better. Prior studies in the social sciences have not been as concerned with questions of development, colonialism, subordination, the impact of the world capitalist economy, and the relationship between women's productive and reproductive labor. In short, before 1970, there was little attempt to place the status of women within an overall framework of race or class. Still, many studies treat these major concerns in a very superficial manner and continue to ignore and downplay the overwhelming impact of capitalism and colonialism.

Most of the social science research completed on African

women falls within four broad categories: Rural Women, Urban Women, The Family, and Political Activities. Within these broad categories, recent research has concerned itself with primarily productive activities, reproductive activities, the household and educational training. Many of these studies deal with practical situations within which women find themselves, focusing on rural development projects, problems faced within the wage economy, particular historical periods, equality of distribution, and women's perception of their status and role.

What follows will be a brief discussion of some of the most noted social science works completed primarily since 1975. (Some other studies before this date will also be included.) This date is significant because the World Conference on Women held in Mexico City signalled the beginning of a world-wide focus on the examination of economic, political and social issues concerning women and the recognition that women in fact have the right to fully participate as equals in societies that they helped to develop and sustain. Many credit the United Nations Decade for Women as providing the catalyst for the proliferation of studies on women. Mid-way through the Decade, Ilsa Schuster, writing a 1982 review article on women's research, noted that

> . . . an interdisciplinary field of 'Women and Development' has emerged. Action-oriented, it considers how to involve women in development strategies at the local levels, and to equalise life chances between the sexes.[3]

Not only has Women Studies moved significantly into consideration within the curriculum, but there have been attempted changes (although in some cases only verbal) in governmental policies, the establishment of many international and national projects

designed to enhance women's contribution and a general overall quest to seek knowledge concerning the status and role of women in society.

Theoretical Studies on African Women

The area in which one finds the least research is that which focuses on the theoretical. This has proven to be a critical problem and serves as a primary reason why many studies have proven to be futile, contributing very little to correct the many misconceptions, and remains a primary reason why many studies have resulted in improper assessments and promoted uncritical acceptance of western influence and domination.

Shelby Lewis, contributing an article to a 1980 collection of essays on Third World women, provides a very valuable conceptual view for analyzing the status and role of women in Africa.[4] Maintaining that the position of women must be viewed within the over-all context of the politico-economic structure within which they find themselves, she asserts that scholars must develop a conceptualization of development that does not conform to the western notion of capital formation and industrialization. Rather, they must employ a conceptualization that would allow them to see the development process as an everchanging interaction between all sectors of the economy and its population. Of critical importance is the consideration of the dependency status of developing nations and the total rejection of the western interpretation of how a developed society ought to function. This western definition of development is seen as an overriding factor in the continued oppression and discrimination of women in Third World

societies.

Depending on this western analysis, much social science research has been purely descriptive in nature. Many studies completed by international and national governmental agencies (for example, by the United Nations and the Women in Development Office of the United States Agency for International Development), have simply presented descriptive data on aspects of social life which affect their economic performance.[5]

Other studies have been written largely from a male perspective, describing women in terms of their relationships to men and as such, portraying women's lives as being totally centered around men's expectations. Thus, these studies have focused on the social role of polygamy, prostitution, mistresses, and sex.[6]

Other social scientists have attempted to move away from the western analysis. Barbara Rogers, in a 1979 publication of the book, The Domestication of Women, has an analytical chapter assessing the status of women;[7] Beverly Lindsay's Comparative Perspectives of Third World Women includes an introductory chapter on conceptual views and the declining status of women.[8] A more recent 1984 publication by Sue Ellen Charlton, Women in Third World Development, has devoted the entire first section of her book to a theoretical discussion of the Meaning of Development for Women and also emphasizes the need to develop a non-Western frame of reference.[9]

Also one could look at the introductory chapter in Filomina Chroma Steady's edited volume, The Black Woman Cross-Culturally in which she presents several unifying themes which are considered

significant in the experience of the majority of Black women, prominent among these is that of economic exploitation and marginalization manifested through neocolonialism in Africa, the Caribbean, South America and the United States.[10]

Kathyrn Ward, in an attempt to show the interrelationship between the world economic system, women's status and fertility behavior, focused on the internal structure of nation-states. As explained in the foreward by Nadia Youssef, Women in the World System became significant as it helped to explain the

> . . . qualitative contingencies that surround economic transformations at the internal nation-state level--in this case foreign investment from the trade dependency on core nations.[11]

She maintains that this must also be taken into account to fully understand what is happening to women in the process of development.

A book edited by Iftikhar Ahmed, a development economist, entitled Technology and Rural Women is also critically important because the study attempts to fill the gap between the myriad of empirical studies and the lack of coherent conceptual and analytical frameworks. The studies included in this volume make several very important illustrations: 1) that macroeconomic theories of technological change, which have been primarily concerned with analyzing technological change on class distribution of income, are inadequate in providing a framework for analyzing the question of technological change and rural women, 2) prediction of the impact of technological change is made difficult by the intricacies of the labor process itself (within the household and at times, outside) and the institutional basis of female labor use, 3) at least conceptually women cannot be treated as a single homogeneous

group. The groups identified by this volume included women from: landless households, small cultivator households, large cultivator households, tenant households, and female-headed households. Women in all five categories perform common roles of reproduction, childrearing and household maintenance, but the impact of technological change (on both unpaid and income-earning activities) varies between these groups, requiring different policy solutions, 4) treating the household as the basic unit for data collection and policymaking has institutionalized sexual discrimination because a) the intra-household effect of technological change is not analyzed by sex and b) subsidized modern agricultural inputs and government extension services are channelled to the male head of the household, 5) that women are displaced in certain activities in three principal ways: a) mechanization of sectors previously using female labor, b) male takeover of activities traditionally performed by women as soon as they are mechanized, and c) male takeover of female tasks following commercialization.[12]

It appears that some recent social science research is attempting to raise questions that have been ignored in the past. This is in part due to the fact that more researchers have raised the question of the meaning of development and are beginning to relate the condition of women in Africa to the realities of colonialism and capitalist penetration within society.

Rural Women in Africa

Recent research on rural women (and I would say that much more work has been completed in this broad category) has focused on women who belong to agricultural families. Studies have

described the work women do in production, distribution of farm products, marketing and reproduction. Studies such as Judy Bryson's "Women and Agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa";[13] Jeanne Henn's "Women in the Rural Economy: Past, Present and Future";[14] and Emmy Simmons' Economic Research on Women in Rural Development in Northern Nigeria"[15] are good examples.[16]

Other studies on rural women have focused on the impact of development projects on organizational and managerial consideration. These works have included studies by Nici Nelson entitled "Mobilizing Village Women", Jennie Dey's study on the impact of rice developments on Gambian women; Audrey Wipper's essay on Women's voluntary associations[17]; Barbara Lewis' article on Market Women in Abidjan; Margaret Strobel's article on Women's Associations in Mombasa, Kenya[18]; and Patricia Lapido's "Developing Women's Cooperatives: An Experiment in Rural Nigeria".[19]

Urban Women

Research in the social sciences has also focused on the African woman as she has moved from the rural to the urban economy. One of the earliest studies examined women's adaptation to the modern city. Kenneth Little's 1973 study, African Women in Towns, was highly criticized for placing too much emphasis on the sex roles of urban women, describes the urban woman as fraught with ambiguity and paints a picture of her as a 'city girl' generally able to hold her own. He states:

> . . . irrespective of how their traditional roles are construed, African women are now on the march. They wish for themselves a significant place in the new society taking shape . . . The women have often more to gain and less to lose by urban residence and experience.[20]

Since 1973, studies on urban women have done much to refute and offer more critical assessments of African women as they have attempted to move into the urban economy. For example, Christine Obbo, a Ugandan anthropologist, focused on how the urban woman sought economic independence and looks at women as a force for change as they migrated from the rural to the urban areas. This study is significant in that it provides data relative to women in the process of transformation from the traditional village to the more permissive city life. Obbo does not depict the urban woman as having more to gain (as Little did) but concluded that the forces of urbanization and international influences have imposed rapid changes upon East African societies, yet men expected women to be politically conservative and non-innovative. Obbo would agree with Little's assertion that urban women wanted to be able to decide their destiny. She states:

> Women wanted power, status and wealth, just as men did. . . Both single and married women felt that economic independence was a basic requirement if they were to [correct] social conditions."[21]

Two studies have focused on urban women in Accra, Ghana and make significant contributions because of the political-economic questions that they pose. The 1977 study by Deborah Pellow, an anthropologist, poses one central question: Why do the women of Ada braka not do more to seize the possibilities for change? Pellow disagrees with Little who maintained that African urban women share the desire for independence. Pellow's objection was that to be independent, the individual must not only have options but must be aware of them. She concluded that women become more dependent on men in the new urban setting both for

status and for subsistence and are further limited, not liberated, by the continuation of traditional bonds and accepted mores.[22]

Claire C. Robertson, an historian, has completed a number of studies on women in the urban economy. In a recently published book, Sharing the Same Bowl, Robertson details a socioeconomic history of women and class in Accra, Ghana. The most comprehensive work completed on the urban African woman to date, the study explores change in women's access to the means of production through the analysis of shifting socioeconomic structure in the last nineteeth and twentieth centuries.[23] In examining changes in the organization of trade, residence, marriage, inheritance, fertility, education and support of dependents, a pattern emerges of increased autonomy for women but decreasing power through lack of access to resources. Defining the relationship between women and class formation, she concludes that an important determinant of the direction of these changes is participation in the shift from a corporate kin to a capitalist mode of production, creating a basic change in the nature of women's subordination.

Other studies focusing on women in the professions, in junior level positions, urban middle-class house-wives, traders, have also made valuable contributions to the wealth of social science research.[24] However, research in the urban areas also appears to be mainly descriptive, but on the other hand there have been attempts to view the women's position in the class system as separate from men's and attempts to discuss some of the limitations of the widely used concepts of labor force or "economically active" population.[25]

Political Activities

Defining political activities as participation in both the formal and informal sectors in order to influence the allocation of resources, some social science researchers have conducted studies on women and various political movements. One of the most researched political movements among women in West Africa deals with the 1929 Ibo Women's War in Nigeria. In her 1939 book on Ibo women, Sylvia Leith-Ross documents the 'Aba Riots' of 1929 from information derived from the reports of the two Commissions of Enquiry. The women were angered and dismayed over the speculation that the recently British-imposed income tax on men would be extended to them. The women engaged in a violent protest which led to what amounted to a full-scale war throughout all Ibo divisions. Covering six thousand square miles and involving about two million people, Leith-Ross comments,

> When the character of the riots themselves is viewed, the overwhelming impression is of the vigor and solidarity of the women. Men occasionally make a flickering appearance in the background, but they seem with few exceptions, to have stood completely on one side, passive, if consenting parties, to the extraordinary behavior of their wives.[26]

Judith Van Allen has written several articles in an attempt to help explain the process by which the British administration tax reform changed the nature of female authority.[27] Providing an excellent example of the impact of colonialism on Ibo women, other social scientists have also provided useful insights into this women's war and the assertion that Nigerian women in traditional times were active political animals.[28]

Other social scientists have written about the consequent loss of women's political power over village affairs and this has

been well documented but as Okonjo argues, male chiefs benefitted from their association with colonial power. The British gave salaries to the male Obi and dismissed the female Omu, thus shattering the dual sex political structure of pre-colonial times.[29]

One of the few studies completed on women within the formal political process has been completed by Mae C. King-Akesode, a political scientist.[30] Noting that only three women were elected to a 450-member House of Representatives and none to the Senate, she states that this is a reflection of societal constraints on female participation in political life. She focuses on constraints to political participation in Nigeria and does an assessment of women and electoral politics during the 1976 local elections in Bende State and the Federal elections of 1979. She concludes that since the technological context in which Nigerian women are entering politics is quite different from that which existed when Western women made their entry; one can expect to see some important differences in the pattern and quality of female participation with respect to these two groups.

The most comprehensive study published to date is a historical account of women's political activities in the Eastern and Western regions of Nigeria. The book examines mass movements organized by women of the 1929 Women's War; the involvement of women's organizations; leadership in the crisis over University Primary Education in mid-1950; the independent political activities of Lagos market women and their involvement in the Lagos Town Council; and the role of women's organizations and individu-

al women in political parties.[31] Mba's book is important to social science research. Much of the material is derived from primary sources, private papers, archival records, and personal interviews. The book is based on an analysis of the motivations, and self-images of women and the objectives, organizational leadership, and effectiveness of their protest movements and political associations.

In recent years, social science research has also focused on women's roles in resistance and nationalist movements in Southern Africa. The most recent publications have been based on actual interviews with Black South African women and were written by white journalists. One of them is entitled, Cry Amandla!: South African Women and the Question of Power.[32] The book is based on interviews with Black South African women who explained the impact of apartheid and their strategies for coping with life and methods of opposition. She also interviews Afrikaner women in order to get their views as the wives, sisters, and daughters of the men who govern South Africa. The other is entitled We Make Freedom and presents many shocking accounts from many South African women from urban and rural areas, in trade unions, students, and women in politics who convey the content of daily life under apartheid. Beata Lipman writes:

> Black women in South Africa who live their daily lives within framework of apparently immutable laws, have said, for hundreds of years, that if you are both Black and female, you may not aspire, you are not equal and you have no rights. But those who spoke to me so frankly do not accept their status: they are neither passive nor victim. They certainly do not sit with their hands folded listlessly in their laps.[33]

Teaching

Although I was unable to conduct an extensive survey on the teaching of African women's courses, I am led to believe that teaching in the area has been somewhat limited. From what I was able to ascertain, most of the teaching in the social sciences has been "limited" to the teaching of African women's history.

Iris Berger, writing about her course on African Women's History at the State University of New York at Albany, states that an essential problem she had was one of intercultural communication. She, a white feminist who considered herself a socialist, was attempting to teach an all-Black urban female class with varying degrees of acquaintance with feminist ideas or analysis. Teaching about the rural life of African women without providing the proper feminist social analysis, drew analysis from the students who tended to bolster their own concept of how liberated they themselves were. This was not the intended teaching objective.

Concluding that African history course teachers must begin to look more closely at how to understand the various aspects of women's daily existence in historical perspective and at how to incorporate this knowledge into their courses, Berger indicates three areas that need further exploration: 1) the need for more historical research on the woman's position in pre-capitalist modes of production and not simply research that sees this area as a static starting point for more contemporary social change; 2) the need for much greater effort to understand the personal, family, and community aspects of women's lives; and 3) the need

to work on understanding more fully the relationships between the areas of personal and family life and the political and economic questions already covered more extensively in the literature.

Another course, taught in the Fall 1985 at Southern University, Baton Rouge, dealt primarily with African women and work. The primary objective of the course was to help students understand the roles and contributions that African women have made to the development of their economies. The basic units of the course included: 1) conceptualization of women and development; 2) rural women; 3) urban women; 4) household and family concerns; and 5) development alternatives. Where possible, comparisons were made with Black women in the United States and the Caribbean. The course was taught in seminar fashion with students making major oral presentations on course topics. The course enrollment included four males and three females.

The course presented the students with information that they were surprised to hear. They reacted enthusiastically and provided personal examples here in America that helped them to better understand the position of African women. In all phases, students related examples of female farmers in Louisiana, problems of motherhood, working conditions and hours of women, childcare and household concerns for their personal experiences. This helped in terms of developing the course from a comparative perspective as well as allowing the students to understand that Third World women have more similarities than differences. This is true regardless of where they may live in the world.

dissemination. This would perhaps encourage some who are uneasy about organizing such a course and give them the model that is needed to operationalize objectives and teaching approaches.

Funding

A study completed by Rosalind Harris in 1977 noted a growing desire among international agencies to include women in their programs. All agencies included in this survey showed an increased awareness that women must be included in development programs, although relatively few actually had the stated purpose of improving women's rights and opportunities. Furthermore, the survey revealed that U.S. foundations, bilateral aid donors, multinational agencies, and non-governmental organizations spent a small part of their total expenditures directly on women. Harris notes that the largest number of grants for women's programs was made by non-governmental agencies.

Programs receiving priority by most agencies were those of an integrated nature, for example, integrated rural development. These programs included training and job opportunities, but were limited to women's traditional role with very little funding for women who operated small businesses or the establishment of cooperative and credit facilities. Rural advancement in the less-developed countries became the major concern but no programs included women in the modernization of agriculture. Agencies ignored the constant statistics which showed the dominant role of women in agriculture.

According to the Harris survey, in 1976 eighty-eight

It is my belief that most of the teaching on African women is occurring through the integration with other courses on women. How much integration is actually occurring is very difficult to predict. However, in examining the course syllabi for social science courses in Black Women's Studies published in the book . . . But Some of Us Are Brave, none of them included sections on African women.[35] A quick look through the 1974 publication, Who's Who and Where in Women's Studies,[36] reveals one course entitled "Women in Africa" being taught by Sunday Anozie at the New York State University, New Paltz within the African Studies Department. Another course entitled "The African and Afro-American Woman" was being taught by V. Shackeford at Fordham University. Other women's studies courses listed which probably included sections on African women, number approximately twelve.

"Women of the Third World", taught by June Nash with Constance Sutton at New York University, and "Women in Traditional and Modernizing Society", taught by Norma Diamond at the University of Michigan, were the two courses that clearly indicated they dealt with Third World women and probably included sections on African women. Earl Picard at Atlanta University taught a course during the Fall 1984 entitled "Third World Women and Development". Perusal of his outline clearly indicates that African women received a significant amount of attention.

It is very apparent that research is needed to determine where courses on African women are being taught as well as those courses where African women are integrated into the subject matter. A compilation of the course syllabi is necessary for

percent (88%) of all international grants were made by only seven foundations, with the Ford Foundation accounting for 50 percent of them. Four grants were given to women's programs. Only the Ford Foundation and the German Marshall Fund had a definite policy of making international grants for projects relating to women. The single largest grantee in 1976 was the Overseas Education Fund of the League of Women Voters.

Other agencies funding international women's programs in 1976 include bilateral agencies such as the Canadian International Development Agency, the Swedish International Development Agency, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

USAID involvement began in 1973 with the passage of the Percy Amendment which was attached to the 1973 foreign aid bill. The Amendment called for the agency

> . . . to give particular attention to those proposals, projects, or activities which tend to integrate women into the national economics of foreign countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development effort.

The Office for Women in Development was established in order to administer AID programs for women and has funded a significant number of projects for African women.

Other U.S. government granting agencies in 1976 included the National Science Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Institutes of Mental Health, National Institutes of Health, Office of Education, and the Social and Rehabilitation Services. The grants, ranging from $2,000 to $548,000, went mostly to American universities: the University of California, Columbia University,

Cornell University, the University of Michigan, and the University of Connecticut.

Multilateral agencies within the United Nations funding women's projects include: the International Labor Organization; the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organizations, Food and Agricultural Organization; and, the World Health Organization. Non-governmental organizations include: the World Council of Churches, Oxford Committee on Famine Relief (OXFAM), the World YWCA, International Planned Parenthood Federation and the International Cooperative Alliance.

The Harris study concludes that each agency should not find it necessary to conduct its own basic research. The problem, she maintains, is not so much a lack of information as inadequate means of retrieving and using it. Harris believes that despite agreement that women must be integrated into everything, the actual policies of the agencies tend to segregate "women's affairs" and pass everything along to the lone women's advisors.

No current data was found relative to the amount of funding actually going to African women. However, a publication of the African Training and Research Centre for Women, an arm of the United Nations' Economic Commission for Africa, presents an excellent cataloging of funding sources of the United Nations, various governments, private agencies, and multinational corporations. The book, entitled Information Kit for Women in Africa, also outlines projects on women noting the name of the project, organization, participants, location, external funding agencies, and contact person.[38] For example, it lists the Association of

African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD) indicating the participants as African women interested in research on women and development; that it was established in 1976 and its Secretariat is located in Dakar, Senegal with membership spread throughout Africa. It receives external aid from the Swedish Agency for Research Corporation with Developing Countries; the African Institute of Development and Economic Planning; CODESRIA; and the Ford Foundation. The project's objectives, description and contact person are indicated also.

The Kit's section on women's projects is particularly useful as it provides information about projects on agriculture, development planning, education, income-generating skills, legal aid, and research. The manual also provides information on projects dealing with management and credit, small scale industries, and training of trainers.

A perusal of the Information Kit for Women in Africa would indicate that there is a significant amount of research and training going on that is being funded by various agencies. However, there is a need for a more systematic type of study that would look at the funding priorities and determine the extent to which funds have contributed to the enhancement of the overall status of all African women. Of critical importance is the extent to which these projects consider the education and training of African women.

According to a panel of Black scholars participating in the 1983 meeting of the Association of Women in Development,

there is a significant amount of research being funded at predominately Black universities. Another critical need then, would be to determine the nature of this research, the funding source and the funding level. Assuming a prominent role in research on women and development in Africa would be a goal that predominately Black universities would do well to begin to strive toward.

THE CARIBBEAN EXPERIENCE

Research

Caribbean women have been the least researched of Africana Women. The bulk of the existing social science research is on Jamaican women and investigates the structure and organization of the family and the household. Chief among these are George W. Roberts and Sonja A. Sinclair's Women in Jamaica which examines the daily lives of Jamaican women and sheds light on the West Indian family structure in general. The

> West Indian family has been described by social scientists as characterized by 'unstable unions' with high rates of 'illegitimacy', 'marginal parenthood', and households headed by women with visiting males in husband/father roles."[39]

The book attempts to examine this belief providing objective information relative to the distinctive features of social organization in Jamaica and other Caribbean societies.

Other studies have focused on the female heads of households. A 1983 study by Jocelyn Massiah aims to identify relationships between socio-economic development and demographic trends so as to analyze how women's roles influence family organization, their participation in the labor force, and migration and fertility patterns.[40] Gloria Joseph discusses the different types of women one finds in the Caribbean while challenging one major hypothesis: the concept that those who experience the severest of triple jeopardies are more conscious of their oppressed state which provides the greatest impetus for uniting with others in similar circumstances to work for the improvement of their common condition.[41] Joseph found this

concept to be untrue of Caribbean women and concluded that the degree of political consciousness among the women showed as much variance as did color, complexion and income. The essays prove very useful in revealing the differing political perspectives and levels of awareness among Caribbean women. Also, Filomina Steady includes an entire section of the book The Black Woman Cross-Culturally on Caribbean women. Included are essays examining the family and household, women's economic role and survival strategies, and the centrality of the mother.[42]

Jamaican women in the labor force have also received some specific attention from social science researchers as well. Guy Standing in this 1981 publication on unemployment and female labor, maintains that

> . . . one of the social features of Jamaica most associated with its history and economic structure is the loose or informal family structure.[43]

This, he continues, has had a close bearing on the pattern of labor force participation, being associated with low levels of labor force commitment among men and a desperate need for employment among women. With job and income insecurity plus a weak labor force commitment, family work roles have been flexible. As such, Standing asserts, they encourage a high rate of female labor force participation, even among those women with young children. Most women remain under strong pressure to earn income because of the unreliable financial support from their partners.

West Indian women in the labor force in the diaspora is the subject of an essay by Annie Phizacklea. Writing in 1982,

she focused on the West Indian woman in Britain and considers whether and in what way they occupy a distinct position within the British working class.[44] She then goes on to examine the industrial and political consciousness and action of West Indian women in one geographical area, Harlesden in northwest London.

Funding

Funding for research on Caribbean women has, no doubt, not been as large as some other projects in the U.S. or Africa. But a couple of the studies discussed above were published by various United Nations agencies. The Roberts and Sinclair Study was financed by the American Association for the Advancement of Science under a grant from USAID and the United Nations Fund for Population Studies. Another study completed by Elsa Chaney, "Women of the World: Latin America and Caribbean" (1984) was funded by the Office of Women in Development, USAID. This publication examines population distribution and change, literacy and education, economic activities, marital status and fertility.

CONFERENCES ON AFRICAN WOMEN

A number of conferences have been held on the African continent focusing on African women. Although I am not aware of an all-African conference being held, individual countries have explored women's issues on various levels. The conference proceedings have been published and can be obtained by contacting the sources indicated, if shown:

1976. Conference on Nigerian Women and Development in Relation to the Changing Family Structure, April 26-30, 1976, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria, published by the Abadina Media Research Center, University of Ibadan, 1982.

1980. National Conference on Integrated Rural Development and Women in Development, September 22-26, 1980, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria, organized by the Center for Social, Cultural and Environmental Research, edited by Fred Omu, P. Kofo Makinwa, and A. D. Ozo.

1983. 2nd Annual Women's Conference of Nigeria, April 20-22, 1983, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, organized by Women in Nigeria, P. O. Box 253, Samaru, Zaria, Nigeria. This organization has completed a comprehensive study on the condition of women in Nigeria with policy recommendations to 2000 A.D., $15.00 including postage.

1984. Women's Projects Workshop, May 30 - June 2, 1984, Danish Volunteer Training Centre, Arusha, Tanzania, organized by the Danish Volunteer Service, P. O. Box 2519, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

1985. Women's Rights in Zambia, March 22-24, 1985, Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, Kitwe, Zambia.

Other published conference proceedings on African women include the following:

1975. The African Woman in Economic Development, Washington, D.C., African-American Scholars Council.

1978. International Conference on Women and Food, January 8-11, 1978, University of Arizona, Consortium for International Development, Tucson, Arizona, edited by Ann Bunzel Cowan, Pima Community College.

1980. The Household, Women and Agricultural Development, January 18-20, 1979, Agricultural University, Wageningen, the Netherlands, edited by Clio Presue Lou and Saskia Spijker-Zwart, published by H. Veenman and Zonen B.V.

1981. Responding to the Needs of Rural Women, May 5, 1981, Kentucky State University, Frankfort, Kentucky. Proceedings published by the Southeast Consortium for International Development, 1901 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 300, Washington, D.C.

1982. Development Nations: Challenges Involving Women, published by Texas Tech University, International Center for Arid and Semi-Arid Land Studies, Lubbock, Texas 79409.

It is my recommendation that a proposal be set in motion to sponsor a Conference on African Women, preferable at a predominately Black University with many African female researchers and activists from all the disciplines.

CONCLUSION

Drawing on the suggestions made by two social scientists in the Introduction of this paper, research on and for Africana women should be by Africana women. A survey of the literature examined reveals that the bulk of the research has been conducted by women but not by Africana women. Although it is not always possible to determine the race of some authors, African-American researchers appear to have assumed leadership in the publication of primary works on African-American women. Major works like All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave (Hull, et al., 1982); Ain't I A Woman?: Black Women and Feminism (Hooks, 1981); The Black Woman (Rose, 1980); Black Women in the Labor Force (Wallace, 1981); Tomorrow's Tomorrow's Tomorrow (Ladner, 1972); Beautiful Also Are the Souls of Our Black Sisters: A History of Black Women in America (Noble, 1978) have all been completed by African-American women. On the other hand, major works discussed above on African women were completed primarily by white Americans and Europeans. The two primary exceptions would be Filomina Chroma Steady and Christine Obbo. I was unable to determine whether Caribbean female social scientists had also made contributions to the literature, but it is my belief that they have.

Not only is there a need for Africana women to get their research on their experiences published more widely, but there is an even greater need for more funding. Of critical importance is that these publications clearly indicate that they have been completed by Africana women. It becomes necessary, then, to call

upon Africana social scientists to begin to become more centrally involved in discovering what it is we need to know about Africana women and how to proceed to restructure the history, and knowledge about their experience of social reality. Social science would then include the experiences of African women which have been researched and taught using the conceptual framework, methodology and models drawn from their own reality.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Liz Stanley and Sue Wise, Breaking Out: Feminist Consciousness and Feminist Research (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983), p. 12.

[2]For further discussion, see Ellen Carol DuBois, et al., Feminist Scholarship: Kindling in the Groves of Academe (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), Part 1.

[3]Ilsa Schuster, "Review Article: Recent Research on Women in Development," The Journal of Development Studies 28 (July 1982): 512.

[4]Shelby Lewis, "Africana Women and National Development," in Comparative Perspectives of Third World Women, edited by Beverly Lindsay (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980), pp. 31-54.

[5]See, for example, Judy Bryson, Women and Economic Development in the Cameroon (Washington, D.C.: Women in Development Resource Center, USAID, 1979) and Louise Fortman, Women's Involvement in High Risk Arable Agriculture: The Botswana Case (Washington, D.C.: Office of Women in Development, USAID, 1980).

[6]See, for example, Remi Clignet, Many Wives, Many Powers (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1970); Alastair Scobie, Women of Africa (London: Cassell and Co., 1960); or Kenneth Little, African Women in Towns (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973).

[7]Barbara Rogers, The Domestication of Women: Discrimination in Developing Societies (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979).

[8]Beverly Lindsay, ed., Comparative Perspectives of Third World Women: The Impact of Race, Sex, and Class (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980).

[9]Sue Ellen Charlton, Women in Third World Development (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984).

[10]Filomina Chioma Steady, ed., The Black Woman Cross-Culturally (Cambridge, Mass.: Schnekman Publishing Co., 1981).

[11]Kathryn B. Ward, Women in the World System: Its Impact on Status and Fertility (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984).

[12]Iftikhar Ahmed, ed., Technology and Rural Women: Conceptual and Empirical Issues (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985), pp. 327-341.

[13]Judy Bryson, "Women and Agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa: Implications for Development" in Nici Nelson, ed., African Women in the Development Process (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1981), p. 29.

[14]Jeanne K. Henn, "Women in the Rural Economy: Past, Present and Future," in Margaret Jean Hay and Sharon Stichter, eds., African Women South of the Sahara (New York: Longman, 1984), p. 1.

[15]Emmy Simmons, Economic Research on Women in Rural Development in Northern Nigeria (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1976).

[16]See also David Hirschmann and Megan Vaughan, Women Farmers of Malouie (Berkeley: University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1984) or Tomi Cayo O. Adeyokunnu, Women and Agriculture in Nigeria (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 1981).

[17]All of these articles are found in Nici Nelson, African Women in the Development Process (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1981).

[18]Both of these articles are found in Nancy J. Hofkin and Edna G. Bay, ed., Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1976).

[19]Nelson, Ibid, pp. 123-136.

[20]Kenneth Little, African Women in Towns: An Aspect of Africa's Social Revolution (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 179.

[21]Christine Obbo, African Women: Their Struggle for Economic Independence (London: Zed Press, 1980), p. 144.

[22]Deborah Pellow, Women in Accra: Options for Autonomy (Algonac, Michigan: Reference Publications, Inc., 1977).

[23]Claire C. Robertson, Sharing the Same Bowl: A Socio-economic History of Women and Class in Accra, Ghana (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

[24]For examples, see: Beverly Lindsay, "Issues Confronting Professional African Women: Illustrations from Kenya," in Beverly Lindsay, ed., Comparative Perspectives, pp. 78-95. Ilsa Schuster, New Women of Lusaka (Palo Alto, Calif.: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1979); Ellen T. Ismail, Social Environment and Daily Routine of Sudanese Women: A Case Study of Urban Middle Class Housewives (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag Berlin, 1982); or Niara Sudarkas, Where Women Work: A Study of Yoruba Women in the Marketplace and in the Home (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 1973).

[25]See, for example, selected articles in Edna Bay, ed., Women and Work in Africa (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982); Maria Rosa Cutrufelle, Women of Africa: Roots of Oppression (London: Zed Press, 1983), Chapter 3; or Eleanor R. Fapo Hunda, "Women at Work in Nigeria: Factors Affecting Modern Sector Employment" in Ukandi Damachi and Victor Diejomaoh, Human Resources and African Development (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1978), pp. 220-241.

[26]Sylvia Leith-Ross, African Women: A Study of the Ibo of Nigeria (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1939), p. 30.

[27]One such article is "Sitting on Man: Colonialism and the Last Political Institutions of Igbo Woman," Canadian Journal of African Studies 6 (#2 1972): 165-181. See also "A Reply to Judith Van Allen" by Caroline Ifeka-Moller, Canadian Journal of African Studies 7 (#2 1973): 317-318.

[28]Others include: S. O. Esike, "The Aba Riots of 1929," African Historian 1 (#3 1965): ; Harry Gailey, The Road to Aba (London: London University Press, 1970); J. C. Onwuteaka, "The Aba Riot of 1929 and Its Relation to the System of Indirect Rule," The Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies (November 1965).

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THEMES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN

Charlyn A. Harper

> We (Black women) have had no one to tell us stories about ourselves. I realize that Black women are an important presence in my life. Only they know my story. It is absolutely necessary that they be permitted to discover and interpret the entire range and spectrum of the experiences of Black women and not be stymied by preconceived conclusions.
> (Washington, 1975, p. xxxii)

As a Black and female psychologist whose primary research interests are various aspects of the African-American female psyche, I have discovered that much of the psychological and sociological literature is replete with very circumscribed analyses of African-American women. Thus, I have often turned to literary analyses for reflections and evaluations of the complex matrix of African-American womanhood. As Black women writers "told me stories about myself", certain recurring themes emerged; themes which, directly or by implication, challenged the prevailing psychological and sociological images of the African-American woman as strong, bold, resilient, and indestructable. Rodgers-Rose (1980) attributes this imbalanced portrayal of African-American women to racist social science.

> For the most part, these social scientists have been white, they have not lived the experiences of Black womanhood, nor have they made an earnest effort to be introspective learners and observers. Thus, in trying to grasp the understanding of Black women and their history, we are left with one-sided characterizations of them as matriarchial, domineering, aggressive, permissive, superstrong, overly religious. Very rarely have we seen research or theory that presents a balanced picture of the Black woman. (p. 11)

Over the last two decades there has been an outpouring of Black family research intended to correct prevailing racist images of the Black family. This "corrective" research has served to identify, enumerate, and document the strengths, unique aspects, and virtues of Black families; characteristics which would not be regarded as axiomatic to Black family life in a racist framework. Additionally, the corrective Black family research has provided a historical connectedness, in that uniqueness and strengths are considered as African cultural retentions.

While the corrective Black family research has served a necessary purpose, it has been limited in focus and analysis. For the most part, this research has merely catalogued and reported on selected aspects of Black family life regarded as strengths while ignoring, avoiding or being silent about increasing problems endemic to contemporary Black family life. Some of the most neglected areas of investigation are issues directly related to Black women. For example, "Black on Black crime", as an important research issue, has traditionally connoted Black-male-on-Black-male homicide; violence against Black women has seldom been addressed. Indeed, when rape is examined, it is usually in the context of debunking the myth of the Black male rapist attacking white women. Additionally, articles do appear

which examine the "historical, yet overlooked" sexual violation of Black women by white males. Davis (1981) views this overemphasis on the Black-male-as-rapist and the underemphasis on the white-male-as-rapist as a reflection of racist ideology. Although studies reveal that rape is overwhelmingly an intraracial violent crime (e.g., LeBeau, 1984; Reynolds, 1984) Davis, like other researchers, fails to systematically address Black-male-on-Black-female sexual violence and exploitation.

The Hull and Smith (1982) critique of Black Studies and Women's Studies offers further insight into the neglect of Black women's issues in Black family research:

> Because of white women's racism (in Women's Studies) and Black men's sexism (in Black Studies), there was no room in either area for a serious consideration of the lives of Black women. And even when they have considered Black women, white women usually have not had the capacity to analyze racial politics and Black culture, and Black men have remained blind or resistant to the implications of sexual politics in Black women's lives. (p. xxi)

Some Black women researchers have attempted to systematically address issues of Black womanhood, but have fallen into the same trap as the corrective Black family life researchers. The seminal work Tomorrow's Tomorrow exemplifies this flaw.

> Approaching the subject with a wider perspective than narrow cultural definitions afford, Ladner is able to present the ways in which Black women adapt to their environment. Such an approach presents their strengths rather than focusing on their weaknesses. . . The zealousness with which Ladner demonstrates the women's adaptability to their harsh reality does not give enough attention to the sheer pain of living lives with few options. In our eagerness to counteract the negative stereotypes, we (Black women researchers) must not create a different one, which also fails to reflect

accurately the varied lives of Black women. . . Focusing on resourcefulness and adaptability cannot overshadow the fact that most Black women have difficult environments to contend with--with resultant stress. [Emphasis mine.] High rates of hypertension, poor health records, and increasing rates of suicide have to be discussed within the context of poverty, racism, sexism and other barriers. Only through addressing the varied lives of Black women can we approach a view of womanhood which is inclusive. Furthermore, we can pinpoint the areas where change is needed. (Higginbotham, 1982, pp. 96-97)

A review of Women's Studies Abstracts (1972-1985), Psychological Abstracts (1983-1985), and Social Science Index (1980-85) reveal the following themes in the psychological and sociological literature on Black women and the respective scholars who address these themes:

I. Establishing a non-sexist and non-racist approach to the study of Black women. This theme is one the most current ones. While there are several researchers attempting to bring this theme to the forefront of social science research, more needs to be done with respect to debate and publications of articles in this area. Sub-themes include:

   A. Black Feminist Ideology (Jean Cooper, Bonnie Dill, Brenda Eichelberger, M. Bailey and W. E. Perkins, Linda Gordon, Nathan Hare, Theresa Lewis, Maureen Lopez, M. C. King, H. E. Ransford and J. Miller, Pat Bell-Scott, Loretta Ross, Demetria Royals, June Jordan, Barbara Smith)

   B. Black women and white women/White Feminist Ideology (Raya Dunayevskaya, Nancy Hoffman, Elizabeth Hood, Paula Kassell, Pauli Murray, P. M. Palmer, June Torrey)

II. The historical place and part of Africana women in their

ecosystem. Limited research is in this area. Sub-themes include:

   A. The African heritage (Juanita Browne, Iva Carruthers, M. Dobert, Joyce Ladner, L. Rodgers-Rose, N. Sudarkasa, M. Strobel)

   B. The Slavery Experience (F. Beal, Junita Browne, Angela Davis, Jacqueline Jones, Deborah White)

   C. Contemporary African women (Margaret Dobert and Nwangango Shields, Donatus Owuamanum)

III. The African-American woman in a pathological environment. This theme refers to research on the ideology, values, and behaviors in the larger society and in the Black woman's immediate context which negatively impact upon her. Paralleling theme I. A., the sub-theme addressing the intersection of race, class and gender, has received the most attention.

   A. The Double/Triple Jeopardy--Racism, Sexism, Classism. (LaRue Allen and David Britt, F. Beal, Willa Bryant, C. F. Epstein, Carol Hogan, Joyce Ladner, M. Briton Lykes, Diane Lewis, Mae C. King, M. Gatz, Gerda Lerner, Linda Myers, Althea Smith and Abigail Stewart)

   B. Poverty and African-American Women (Elizabeth Almquist, C. Allen Haney, Joyce Ladner, Diana Pearce)

IV. Psychosocial development (Growing up Black and female)--Interest in Black female adolescent sexuality, pregnancy and parenthood accounts for the abundance of research in this area. Issues regarding Black female adult sexuality are under-represented. However, within this area, the

topic of lesbianism has received much attention.

A. Black female adolescent issues--Pregnancy, career development, alienation, sex roles (Kathryn Dietrich, Algea Harrison, Joyce Ladner, Pearila Nameron and Susan Philliber, G. J. Powell, Shirley Brown, Tiffany Field, Mary Fuller, A. Morales, J. Yammamoto, Nia Chester)

B. Sexuality/Heterosexual Development/Reproductive Behavior (Adult and Adolescent) (Wendy Baldwin, C. Broderick, S. E. Brown, M. M. Bracken and S. V. Kasl, Jill Clark, Lloyd Campbell, Carolyn Eberhardt and Thomas Schiel, Phyllis Ewer and James Gabbs, Frank Furstenberg, Seymour Fisher, William Graves and Barbara Bradshaw, C. Allen Haney, Joyce Ladner, D. T. Moseley, Julian Roebuck and Marsha McGee, James Robbins, Anita Washington, G. Wyatt, Naeemah Shabazz, Melvin Zelnick and John Kanter)

V. Family issues and the African-American woman. When the Black woman has been examined in psychological and sociological literature, the centrality of "motherhood" is overwhelming. An extremely under-represented sub-theme in this area is aging and the Black woman.

A. General family organization--structure and function (B. E. Aguire and W. C. Parr, Richard Ball, Robert Hill, Wade Nobles, R. Jean Simms-Brown, Robert Staples)

B. As Mother/Myth or Reality of the Black matriarchy (T. F. Hartnagel, Bonnie Dill, Janice Hale, Aileeen Hernandez, Joyce Ladner, Jacqueline Jones, D. R. Nobers, Sonya Rowland and Karen Smith, B. Yorburg, J. White)

C. Attitudes toward family role--marital satisfaction, role strain (Walter Allen, Richard Ball, E. Crovitz and A. Steinmann, Mitchell Katz and Chaya Piotrkowski, J. H. Fichter, Michlene Malson, W. Knoelsky and A. Abordo, Algeo Harrison and JoAnne Minor, W. E. Philliber and D. V. Hiller, A. Steinman and P. J. Fout)

D. Sex roles (Janice Gump, V. E. O'Leary and Algea Harrison, V. Prakas Rao and Steven Overman, Michelene Mason, B. Rhodes, Raye Rosen, Karen Mason and Larry Bumpass, Jane Sell, A. Steinmann and D. J. Fox)

E. Male/female relationships (Noel Cazenave, L. Benjamin, Prudence Brown, Lorraine Perry and Ernest Harburg, C. W. Franklin, Audre Lorde, D. Mack, Y. Moses, A. M. Jaggar, A. M. Toure, S. A. Williams, W. Parker, L. Rodgers-Rose, T. Whitehead, Lois Shaw, E. V. Spelman)

F. Declining Sex Ratio (Jacqueline Jackson, R. M. Malina, Leachim Semaj)

G. Social Roles (Sandra Rice Murray, J. B. Rohrbaugh, P. G. Dansby)

H. Aging Issues (P. B. Bart, D. N. Alston and N. Rose, Jacqueline Jackson, D. W. Wolf)

VI. Identity/Personality Development/Achieving Womanhood (Bonnie Dill, Delindus Brown and Wanda Anderson, Melba Lemieux, Irving Bartlett and C. Glenn Camber)

Most of the research in this area has centered on the psychological phenomenon called "fear of failure". Very little has been done regarding personal identity development.

A. Self-esteem/self-concept (E. E. Baughman, R. E. Bridgette, J. J. Christmas, Joyce Ladner, Victoria Fu, Dennis Hinkle and Mary Korslund, M. M. Wendland, M. Rosenberg and R. Simmons)

B. Motive to avoid success/fear of failure (Jacqueline Fleming, Sandra Gonsalves, Gwendolyn Puryear and Martha Mednick, P. J. Weston)

C. Internalizing images of Black womanhood (Jean Bond, Liz Grant, Maureen Honey, Dedra DeLaney, Sandra Murray, Mary Washington)

D. Beauty/Colorism/"Hairism" (Alvin Poussaint, Elliott Liebow, Trellie Jeffers)

E. Cultural Nationalism (Kathryn Adams, Adelaide Hayford, Linda LaRue)

VII. Mental health issues--Dominating this theme is research on mental health services for Black women and strategies for

coping with a pathological environment. Recommendations for changing the environment, rather than merely coping with it, are seldom discussed. Likewise, research on self-destructive reactions to the pathological environment, for example, drug abuse, alcoholism, depression, etc., as well as forms of physical and psychological abuse directed at Black women, is grossly lacking.

A. Service Needs/intervention strategies (Elaine Copeland, Pat Bell Scott, Janet Helms, Richard Page and Larry Kubiak, E. J. Smith, D. Baskin, Doris Jeffries, Barbara Hanson and Annette Boer, Robbie Naymar, M. Briton Lykes, Colleen Ward, L. M. Lothstein and Howard Roback)

B. Strength/Coping/Adaptation Strategies (D. Azibo, C. Edwards, Harriett McAdoo, Joyce Ladner, Dorothy Parrish, Patricia Kane, Doris Wilkinson, C. Neverdon-Morton, E. Redding, G. Wilson, Lena Meyers)

C. Alcoholism (Jerome Carroll)

D. Depression and suicide (D. Aldridge, C. Carrington, D. Peck)

E. Rape and other forms of physical abuse (Angela Davis, Yusef Salaam, L. Williams)

F. Drug Abuse (Barbara Kail and Irving Lukoff)

G. Black women and the criminal justice system (Coramae Mann, Judith Bissell, Leslie Mullin, Assata Shakur and Joanne Chestemaid, Laurence French, L. Phillips and H. L. Voley, P. D. McClain)

H. Psychotherapy (D. Jongeward and Dru Scott)

VIII. Abilities/Achievement/Motivation (E. E. Baughman, W. G. Dahlstrom, J. J. Kirkpatrick, C. B. Thorpe, P. Gurin, E. G. Epps, D. Katz, Martha Mednick and Gwendolyn Puryear, B. F. Turner, Carol Hobson Smith, Carolyn Dixon Altenon, Jacqueline Fleming, N. B. Obleton, Linda Perkins, L. N. Houston, V. G. Thomas, Suki Hinman and Brenda Bolton,

Walter Allen, Ardan Altenon, Patricia Bell Scott, Sandra Rice Murray, William Kuvlesky, Amy Reeder and Rund Conger, L. Benjamin)

From this outline it can be seen that some of the most neglected areas of psychological and sociological research on Black women include:

1. A critique of Black family research by Black scholars for evidence of the subtle exploitation of Black women by denying, ignoring or conceding to the reality of sexual oppression.
2. The development of a theoretical perspective which seeks to reveal, analyze, and interpret the complexity and meaning of Black life--both the positive and negative aspects. Such a theoretical perspective would avoid the

> 'trap' which is analogous to the 'trap' which many battered women find themselves in; . . . the trap of silence. . . . Disclosure is so easily confused with treason." (Richie, 1985, p. 41)

3. A systematic exploration of the myths and realities of Black feminist ideology and sexual oppression.

> Denying that sexual oppression exists or requiring that we wait to bring it up until racism, or in some cases, capitalism, is toppled, is a bankrupt position. A Black feminist perspective has no use for ranking oppressions, but instead demonstrates the simultaneity of oppressions as they affect Third World Women's lives. (Smith, 1985, p. 6)

4. An assessment of Black male and female sexual attitudes, beliefs and behaviors and the effects and implications of internalizing such, for both the Black male

and female.

5. An assessment of Black male and female attitudes regarding violence against women and the acceptance of rape myths.

6. An assessment of the incidence and prevalence of female battering in Black families.

> This is a controversial subject because, unlike other aspects of the subjugation of Black women, which target racism and economic exploitation, the burgeoning problem of battered women at first appears as an individual problem: a man beating a woman. Too many Blacks still think this is a divisive issue which should not be aired in public. However, the problem of battered women is a social phenomenon, not an individual one and combating this expression of social malaise must be approached with as much vigor as those rooted in the vagaries of a racial and class society.
>
> (Richie, 1985, p. 40)

7. An assessment of the myth or reality of "legendary" beliefs regarding sexual violence in Black families.

8. A critical exploration of the physical and psychological price paid by Black women for their legendary strength.

9. The effects of internalizing negative images of Black womanhood on personal identity development.

10. The effects of internalizing suffering and abuse and the consequent vulnerability to further victimization and the inability to resist.

11. Black women's attitudes toward gender-specific responsibilities.

12. The growth and retarding effects of gender specific responsibilities.

13. The goals of Black womanhood: coping and acquiescence

vs. self-determination and empowerment.

What is needed, then, is a reconceptualization and reformulation of research questions which would challenge psychologists and sociologists to engage in a more comprehensive investigation of Black family issues, in general, and Black women's issues, in particular. Indeed, a reconceptualization would offer social scientists, like Black women writers, the opportunity to "tell us stories about ourselves . . . to discover and interpret the entire range and spectrum of the experiences of Black women and not be stymied by preconceived conclusions."

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SECTION FOUR

CASE STUDIES OF AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES IN HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES

COURSES, RESEARCH AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES FOCUSED ON AFRICANA WOMEN AT SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY-BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

Jewel Prestage

Southern University-Baton Rouge offers several courses which focus on women, with special attention given to Africana women. Since October, 1984 there has been an increase in course offerings, research and sponsored activities in this general area. This increase is, in part attributable to the special attention given to the area by Southern University faculty members involved in the Atlanta University Africana Women's Project.

I. The academic courses are listed below:

A. Education

Black Women in Educational Administration. This course is designed to investigate factors that affect the ascendance of African women in the hierarchy of Education. Through research, utilizing a variety of resources, students will identify the impact of several factors on the number of black women and level of responsibility of those women in Educational Administration.

B. English

Africana Women: Mother-Son Relationships. The purpose of this course is to examine the mother-son relationship in works of fiction by and about Africana women, together with the social, cultural, and interactional forces that define the relationship.

C. History

History of Women in America. An examination of the shifts in the perception of women's roles from a social, political, economic and intellectual perspective.

496. Black Women in America. A study of the history of the black female in America from the Colonial period to the Civil War.

497. Black Women in America. A continuation of History 496, with emphasis on the black female in America from Reconstruction to the present.

D. Political Science

420. Women in Politics. This course is designed to survey involvements of women in the American political process with selected studies from other political systems.

532. Seminar in Comparative Politics -- Africana Women and Economic Development. This course is a study of the political economy of African women and work. Although primary emphasis will be placed on women and work in Africa, adequate attention will be given to black women in the United States and the Caribben as well. The course has been designed for students who may or may not have had a previous course in politics in developing nations generally or Africa specifically.

000. Africana Women in Politics: A Comparative Examination. This course is designed to examine theoretical frameworks and historical and empirical findings on the study of Africana women in politics. Political systems of African countries, the United States and the Caribbean are examined. Both traditional and nontraditional political participation are included. Can be offered under different course titles (Seminar in Political Science; Independent Study).

E. Psychology

370. Psychology of Sexuality. This is a comprehensive course designed to familiarize students with aspects of sexuality from biological factors responsible for gender developments through human sexual behavior, sex roles and contemporary issues will be covered.

F. Sociology

330. Social Institutions. This course looks at the institutionalization of sexism in American society.

410. Women's Issues. Course deals with historical and contemporary issues related to women. Special attention is given to Black women.

II. Special Programs Focusing on Women

A. Annual Symposium on the Status of Women in the American Political System. This program, sponsored by the Department of Political Science, has been conducted for well over a decade. Funding has come from various university sources (Student Government Association; Lectures Committee, etc.). Featured speakers have included prominent women from education, politics, public service, community service and volunteer agencies.

B. Statewide Conference on Black Women in Politics featuring former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm in Summer 1985 under a grant from the Women's Vote Project of the Voter Education Project (Atlanta, Georgia).

C. The Association of Women Students usually conducts a program each year with a focus on women.

D. Professors Eva Fields and Jewel L. Prestage have received a grant to conduct a project to inform teen single parents about nontraditional careers under the Carl Perkins Vocational Rehabilitation Act, State Department of Education of Louisiana.

E. Association of Women in Science (AWIS) is an organization of women in the various science disciplines at educational institutions in the Baton Rouge area. Monthly meetings, scientific conferences and other activities are conducted.

F. Local campus chapters of national sororities hold periodic programs (convocations, forums, seminars) on the role and status of women.

III. University Committees and Organizations

A. The University has a Committee on the Status and Concerns of Women, which serves under the auspices of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. This Committee is in its third year of existence and is chaired by Professor Princess Bowen, Department of Geography.

B. The University has a Committee on Re-Entry Women, appointed in Fall, 1984 chaired by Jewel L. Prestage, Dean of the School of Public Policy & Urban Affairs.

C. The Southern University Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa has sponsored several projects focusing on women, funded by grants from the Louisiana Committee for the Humanities.

IV. Individual Activities

University faculty, staff and administrators have been engaged in research, teaching, writing and lecturing in the area of women's studies.

THE STATUS OF AFRICANA WOMEN'S STUDIES: THE ATLANTA JUNIOR COLLEGE CASE

Charlyn A. Harper

The status of Africana Women's Studies at Atlanta Junior College must be assessed from both an institutional point of view and an individual point of view. The "institutional status" refers to the five courses developed in 1984 - 1985 by the Africana Women's Studies Developmental Team. The five included: a) two social sciences courses -- "The Psychology of African-American Women" and The Social World of Older Black Women"; b) one natural science course -- "Health Issues of Africana Women"; and c) two humanities courses -- "Intimacy and the African-American Woman" and "Beauty, Myth and Fantasy: African-American Women, 1920 - 1960".

Units from these courses were piloted, evaluated by students, and reviewed by the developmetnal team. The team's general feeling was that the units were well received by students. Of major concern, however, was the sequence in which course content was presented. For the most part, students were either uninformed or misinformed regarding concepts and issues intrinsic to the courses. Thus, a critical awareness, and in some cases a cursory familiarity, of commonly used terms (e.g., racism, sexism, feminism) could not be presumed. Indeed, consistent with freshman and sophomore level introductory courses, we needed to regard the developed courses as "first exposure" courses. This predicted lack of

awareness and exposure was initially used to justify the need for Africana Women's Studies courses at Atlanta Junior College.

Although institutional support was given at the outset for the idea of courses in Africana Women's Studies, incorporating the courses into the curriculum in an "uncontaminated form" has not received enthusiastic institutional support. A "winning-the-battle-if-not-the-war" strategy was recommended. That is, the various Africana Women's courses would have to be couched with other listings under proposed courses entitled "Special Topics" in each division. It was felt that the University Curriculum Committee would not approve such specific courses on the junior college level. Additionally, it was felt that the merit of courses specifically about Black women would be questioned. Reminders abounded of the struggles around approval of such "specialized" courses as "Black Psychology" and "Afro-American Experience". Indeed, the Africana Women's Studies courses would have to be incorporated into the curriculum "through the back door".

Steps have been taken to integrate these courses into the curriculum via "Special Topics". Those steps are at different success points for different courses. The "Health Issues of Africana Women" course, as part of the proposed "Special Topics in Biology" course, has mastered the greatest number of steps. "Special Topics in Biology" was accepted by the Natural Science and Math Division and the Educational

Policies Committee. It is presently being reviewed by the Executive Committee.

The proposal for "Special Topics in the Social Sciences", which would incorporate "The Psychology of African-American Women" and "The Social World of Older Black Women" courses, has received divisional acceptance and is under consideration by the Educational Policies Committee. The proposed "Special Topics in the Humanities", which would incorporate "Intimacy and the African-American Woman" and "Beauty, Myth and Fantasy", is still under consideration by the Humanities Division.

Fundamentally, then, the institutional status of Africana Women's Studies at Atlanta Junior College is non-existent at this point in time. However, the vision is much brighter on an individual faculty level.

Four Black female faculty are avidly engaged in various research in Africana Women's Studies:

-- Dr. Beverly Head is engaging in primary research, the result of which will be a poetry anthology on the experiences of African-American women.

-- Dr. Janis Coombs is investigating two related themes: "The trend of women empowered: African-American fiction writers" and "The disappointment of romantic love in works by African-American women writers".

-- Prof. Theresa Lowery has an ongoing project on stereotypical standards of Black female beauty as projected in the media.

-- Prof. Charlyn Harper is examining the psychosocial

antecedents and consequences of Black family violence. Of major concern is a) the identification of those beliefs, attitudes, values, and social roles which are associated with the female-as-victim and -as-perpetrator of family violence, and b) a description of the outer-and-inner-directed acts of female family violence.

Although some faculty have made individual commitments to Africana Women's Studies, the institutional commitment appears bleak. The tenor of the society being both racist and sexist makes it almost impossible for Africana Women's Studies courses to be incorporated, with integrity, into the currriculum of a southern state junior college.

AFRICAN WOMEN STUDIES AT JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY

An Evaluation Report

Velveyn B. Foster

That women studies should be an integral part of the curriculum of any college or university is today an accepted axiom. Specific and separate emphasis upon Africana women (Afro-American women, Caribbean women and African women) is less accepted however. Geneva Gray, curriculum specialist and advocate of multi-cultural education, points out that "School curricula which do not include multi-cultural content and multi-cultural perspectives in teaching are unrealistic and incapable of providing qualitative educational experiences for all American youth. Such curricula ignore the fact that ethnic and cultural differences have always been a part of America." Nathan Glazer in his book Ethnic Dilemmas 1964-1982 acknowledges that if we want a true account of the past and present "considerably more attention must be given to race and ethnicity than has been received in our curriculum." Africana women do indeed have cultural distinctiveness and have made valuable contributions to the development and culture of their homelands. Thus, they deserve fair and equitable curricular emphasis.

To place in perspective the present state of Africana Women's Studies at Jackson State, it is necessary to look retrospectively at where we come from and assess how we reached this point. Jackson State's efforts to highlight the achievements of Africana women began in a significant way as early as 1973. Under the direction of Margaret Walker Alexander, then director

of Jackson State's Institute for the Study of History, Life and Culture of Black People, the University hosted a Phillis Wheatley Poetry Festival. This international festival was in commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the publication of Phillis Wheatley's book, POEMS and featured twenty prominent black women poets including Nikki Giovanni, June Jordan, Sonia Sanchez, Alice Walker, Malaika Ago Wongara and Margeret Walker Alexander. Also on hand at the festival to give the "significance and critical reputation" of Phillis Wheatley were several nationally known Afro-American women scholars including Paula Giddings, editor of Howard University Press, Margaret G. Burroughs, Director, du Sable Museaum of African History of Chicago, Illinois and Ida Lewis, editor and publisher of Encore.

The Phillis Wheatley Poetry Festival holds significance not only because it illuminated and applauded the genius of Wheatley, America's first black published poet, and showcased the talents of more than forty present day Afro-American women artists and scholars as important, it ushered in an urgency on the part of a segment of Jackson State's faculty to more systematically and formally address the contributions of and concerns of women, especially black women. This latter issue emerged out of a growing realization that while Black studies was enjoying a degree of success in the early and mid 1970's, Africana Women's Studies remained sequestered in the closet. Those pioneers further understood that Black Studies could not reach its ultimate goal of bringing about a more equitable society unless black

women took their place along side black men in the annals of history and culture.

The approach to Women's Studies at Jackson State was three fold: sponsorship of special activites emphasizing contributions of individual women, curricular revision and research. Several special events undertaken during this period are worthy of note. In the 1970s Jackson State established the Jane Ellen McAllister Lecture series in professional tribute to thirty years of exemplary service by one of its renouned faculty educators, Jane Ellen McAllister. Dr. McAllister, the first black woman to receive the Ph.D. from Columbia University, is an internationally known author, lecturer and authority in teacher-education. Through this series the pre-eminence of McAllister is used as a standard for excellence in teacher education at Jackson State. It brings to the university distinguished scholars to address current issues in education and it recognizes and encourages outstanding teaching.

Similarly, the Fannie Lou Hamer Lecture Series sponsored by the Department of Political Science was established in commemoration of Fannie Lou Hamer, a stalwart of the civil rights movement and the spiritual leader of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. The lecture series began in 1984 with a national conference which focused primarily on the life and times of Fannie Lou Hamer and the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer. From throughout the nation, scholars and activists, blacks and

whites, women and men, the lettered and the unlettered assembled at Jackson State to pay homage to the daughter of a Delta sharecropper and to assess her impact upon Mississippi, the South and the nation. Scholars and grass-root activists provided insight into the life of this remarkable black woman through an exploration of these questions:

> What were Fannie Lou Hamer's strengths and weaknesses as a grass-roots leader? What were her political accomplishments? Did Mrs. Hamer's gender afford the Movement an asset that is still too little understood and undervalued as a civic resource? How did she inspire other women to become involved in the Movement? What particular impact did she have upon white women in Mississippi and the rest of the nation? As a female organizer what tools did she use and which were most effective as bargaining instruments? How was Fannie Lou Hamer able to place the demands of the poor and dispossessed in the concrete arena of politics?

The Phillis Wheatley Poetry Festival, the Jane Ellen McAllister Lecture Series and the Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial Lecture Series help to provide a greater understanding of these personalities as well as a general appreciation of black women's roles and contributions in our society. Additionally, both the Wheatley Festival and the Hamer Conference generated valuable data on and by black women that are available to students, faculty and scholars for research and curricular purposes.

Also available to Jackson State students and the scholarly community are the Margaret Walker Alexander papers housed at Jackson State University's H. T. Sampson Library. This growing collection, presented to Jackson State by Margaret Walker in 1981, includes: the author's published works; a collection of

her unpublished speeches, papers and letters; and an almost complete folio of resources and data collected during her fifteen years as director of the Black Studies Institute at Jackson State.

The theoretical framework for these and other activities relating to Africana women is provided in curricular offerings at the University. Africana women are addressed both in separate courses devoted to women in general and/or specifically to Africana women and in units incorporated into general content courses. However, the number of courses devoted solely to Africana women is minimal. Between 1973 and 1984 five undergraduate courses on women were added to the curriculum at Jackson State with only one of those addressing Africana women exclusively: Sociology-420, Black, Female and the Family. The remaining four courses, English-215, Women in Literature, History-383, Women in America, Sociology-318, Women in Contemporary American Society and Sociology-451, Women and Employment-Selected Topics of Concerns, all have substantial units devoted to Afro-American women with lesser emphasis given African and Caribbean women.

A wider spectrum of curricular emphasis is given African women in general courses. A survey of Jackson State's faculty in the social and behavioral sciences, the humanities, Mass communications, Curriculum and Instruction and tne School of Business and Economics reveals that fifty-one percent of those returning questionnaires stress contributions and concerns of

women in their courses while eleven percent include materials specifically on Africana women. Of the women in the survey, eighty-one percent indicate that they incorporate women into course content and thirty-one percent say they emphasize Africana women. Of all those in the survey who include material on Africana women, sixty percent deal only with Black American women, twenty percent with African women, ten percent with Caribbean women and ten percent address all three groups.

Perhaps greatest interest in Africana women is reflected in research efforts at Jackson State. Forty-one percent of those faculty members responding to the survey are conducting research on women, sixty percent of the female respondents and thirty percent of the male respondents. Thirty-one percent are examining issues directly affecting Africana women with an overwhelming majority of the research (80%) addressing Black American women. The survey also shows that female faculty members most often pursue research on Black American women (51%) and men most often address the issue of women in general (80%). Ten percent of the male respondents and ten percent of female respondents are researching African women with only one respondent indicating a research interest in Caribbean women. Thirty percent of men surveyed indicate no female oriented curricular or research efforts while only ten percent of the women indicate such. One male respondent provided this unsolicited comment with his questionnaire: "In each case my courses, research, publications and units have not been sex specific, both women

and men were included." Another responded "I am beginning to be interested in this topic. The issue of women seems to be important."

From this study, several conclusions can be drawn about Africana Women's Studies at Jackson State. First, there is an obvious dearth of courses specifically addressing Africana women. Secondly and just as obvious, there is an interest in and concern for the inclusion of Africana women's issues into the instructional program. Thirdly, the most successful approach to the subject at Jackson State has been through research efforts, infusion of curricular modules into traditional course offerings and through special instructional support activities such as lecture series and forums. And finally, while make faculty members display a creditable interest in general Women Studies, women exhibit the greatest interest in Africana women.

Several explanations can be given for the apparent dearth of courses addressing Africana women. The one most often given is the pressing need to include in departmental curricula those courses most essential to satisfy graduate school requirements and to adequately prepare graduates for job options. In what they consider practical moves, academic departments and indeed career oriented students opt for statistical courses or offerings in technical fields such as computer science, even as electives, over humanistic courses stressing equality and conscience. When this argument is added to growing budgetary problems and the constant plea for cost effectiveness, at Jackson State and

other predominately black institutions, the prospect for significantly increased course offerings in minority studies appears bleak.

This attitude and predisposition toward curricular offerings have implications for institutionalizing four Africana women's courses developed by a team of Jackson State University Faculty in association with Atlanta University's Africana Women's Studies Project. These courses, developed and piloted during the 1984-85 academic year are at different stages of institutionalization. The course, African Women and Political Development, designed by Curtina Moreland-Young, Associate Professor of Political Science, has been reviewed and accepted by the departmental Curriculum Committee and is awaiting review by the University's Curriculum Committee. Likewise, African Women and the Media, developed by Doris Saunders, Department of Mass Communications, received departmental review and the decision was made to infuse its content into an existing course, Minorities and the Media. Accreditation requirements, insufficient number of faculty members to handle additional course offerings and a limited number of elective options were given as reasons for this decision. No action has been taken on the courses, Black Professional Women developed by Gwendolyn Prater, Associate Professor of Sociology and Africanism: Africana Aesthetics in Folk Literature developed by Doris Ginn, Department of English. We are confident, however, that content development through these courses will reach stu-

dents either in separate courses or through integration into existing courses.

While the developers of Africana women's courses and other faculty interested in creating a balanced multi-cultural curriculum at the undergraduate level, must continue to push for separate and distinct courses, other means of reaching this goal must also be vigorously pursued. Toward this end the following recommendations are offered:

I. Efforts should be increased to sensitize faculty to the need for a multi-cultural approach to instruction in all courses. There exist already a predisposition at Jackson State to integrate women studies into existing courses, with fifty one percent of the faculty surveyed indicating at least a beginning in this direction. However, only eleven percent of those surveyed stress Africana women, thirty one percent of the females and one percent of the males. Additionally, since a significant number of men faculty (30%) failed to deal with women's issues either in their courses or in their research, it seems essential that special attention be given to raise their consciousness. Integrating Africana women into existing courses means reaching a larger number of students and lessening the chance of courses being eliminated.

II. Efforts to provide learning experiences outside the classroom for both students and faculty through forums, workshops,

lecture series and films should be continued. During the Fall, 1985 two South African women activists, Elizabeth Sibeko, National Congress and Leah Tutu, wife of Bishop Desmond Tutu, were featured at the University. Elizabeth Sibeko spoke primarily to students in a half-day seminar explaining black South Africans' goals and progress in their fight for self determination and her role in that revolution. Mrs. Tutu, speaking on the same subject, addressed an audience of more than one thousand students, faculty and community leaders. Both these dynamic women vividly demonstrated that African women are contributing in a significant way to the black struggle in South Africa.

III. Support services must be made available to faculty interested in integrating materials on Africana women into existing courses or in developing new ones. The most serious problem encountered by those faculty designing courses is a lack of research and curricular material on women of color. The problem is exacerbated when addressing Caribbean women and African women. To help alleviate this problem Jackson State's Library is compiling a comprehensive list of its holdings on Afro-American women, African women and Caribbean women. As possible, the Library's collection will be increased.

IV. Clearly, Jackson State is making significant strides in women related research. Forty-one percent of those surveyed are examining issues related to women and thirty-one percent are

exploring African women's issues. However, efforts to bring about greater sharing of this research is needed. Below is a partial listing of research relating to Africana women being conducted by Jackson State University faculty.

Name	Research Title	Description
Azevedo, Mario (History) with Prater, Gwendolyn (Social Work)	"The Changing Status of Women in Cameroon." "The Changing Status of Women in Chad."	Follows the progress of women in both Cameroon and Chad from pre-colonial terms to the present.
Brookins, Geraldine (Psychology)	"Dual Careers of Black Families-Strengths, Stress and Coping."	Analysis of interface of careers and family life.
Fletcher, Bettye (Sociology)	"Socio-cultural Correlates of Alcohol Use and Mental Health Services Utilization by Black Females."	Descriptive baseline data on alcohol use among Black women and reasons for using or not using mental health resources.
Ford, Cynthia (Psychology)	"Fear of Success in Women"	This study entailed a comparison of scores on an instrument to assess fear of success in black and white females and variables associated with the manifestation of fear of success.
Foster, Velvelyn	"The Historical Development of the Black Family in Hinds County, Mississippi."	Special attention is given to female headed households.
	"Women in Higher Education in Mississippi."	A look at the status and roles of women in public and private institutions of higher learning in Mississippi through 1979.

Name	Research Title	Description
Goree, Joe (Music)	"Females Blues Styles."	An investigation of blues styles found among Afro-American women living in Mississippi Delta.
Hayes-Anthony, Elaine (Mass Communication)	"Women in Television Management."	An analysis of attitudes toward women in television management.
Idleburg, Dorothy	"An Exploratory Study of Treatment Outcomes in a 12-year Follow-Up of Black and White Female Alcoholics."	
Jackson, Anita (Music)	"A Status Comparison of JSU Department of Music and Female Graduates 1950-1980."	A comparison of educational, financial and social status.
Moreland-Young,	"The Powerful Oppressed - A Study of Black Informal Activism in Mississippi."	This study examines the impact Black female activists through several pivotal periods in Mississippi Political History, e.g. Reconstruction and Civil Rights.
	"Women and Political Development in Tanzania," Politics in the Third World, Western Press, 1986.	

Name	Research Title	Descriptio
Myers, Lena	Black Women: Do They Cope Better? Prentice Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1980 "Black Women and Self Esteem," in Another Voice: Feminist Perspectives on Social Life and Social Science, Anchor/Doubleday Publishers, New York, August, 1975. "On Marital Relations: Perceptions of Black Women," The Black Women, Sage Publications, 1980. "Stress and Black Families," Family Violence in Minority Communities. "Mothers from Families of Orientation as Role Models for Black Women," North West Journal of African and Black American Studies, Vol. 2, (Winter 1974) Black Women: Selectivity Among Roles and Reference Groups in Maintenance of Self Esteem," Journal of Social and Behavioral Sciences, (Winter, 1975) Vol. 21, No. 1. "Elderly Black Women and Stress Resolution: An Exploratory Study," The Black Sociologists - Transaction Periodicals Consortium, Vol. 8, Numbers 1-4, Fall, 1978/ Summer, 1979.	

Name	Research Title	Description
Neal, Janice (Speech Communication)	"A Rhetorical Study of Coretta Scott King's Commencement Address of June, 1971."	The study determines the credibility of Mrs. King in terms of how she relates to man and society.
Nichols, Otis C. (Psychology)	"Ethnic Distance Among Black Students." College Student Journal Vol. 17, Summer 1983.	Ranked preferences in terms of abilities, education, possessions, physique and skin color by JSU students. Also tested is the homogeneity preference hypothesis.
Rao, Prakasa V. (Sociology) and Rao, Nadina V. (Sociology)	"Determinants of Life Satisfaction Among Black Elderly," Activities, Adaptation and Aging, 3 (Winter) 1983; 35-48. "Perceived ERA Consequence on the Family and Occupations" Free Inquiry in Creative Society, 12 (May 1984) 30-34. "Gender Differenes in the Familial Help Patterns of Older Blacks in Jackson, Mississippi, 1978," The Journal of Minority Aging, 1985, 10: 16-24. A number of articles related to Black family comparing males and females have also been published.	

Name	Research Title	Description
Rao, Prakasa Rao, Nandini and Overman, Steven (Physical Education)	"Sex Role Perception Among Black Female Athletes and Non-Athletes," Sex Roles: A Journal of Research, 1984.	
Saunders, Doris (Mass Communications)	"Black Women and the Black Religious Experience."	
Staten, Frances	"A Longitudinal Study of Family Size Expectation Among Young Blacks and Whites," Sociological Spectrum, 1984.	
Thomas, Russell	"Women in Jazz"	
Williams-Burns, Winona	"Jane Allen McAllister: Pioneer of Excellence in Teacher Education."	A biography of Dr. McAllister and her efforts in developing predominantly Black Colleges.

FOOTNOTES.

[1]Geneva Gray, "Curriculum Design for Multicultural Education," Multicultural Education: Issues and Applications, Carl Grant, Ed. (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) 1977, p. 96.

[2]Nathan Glazer, Ethnic Dilemmas, 1964-1982 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983) p. 124

[3]Taken from a proposal "A National Conference on the 1964 Mississippi Summer Project and the Life and Times of Fannie Lou Hamer," Submitted to the Rockefellow Foundation by Mary Coleman and Leslie Burl McLemore, Jan. 1984., p. 2

[4]A survey of Sixty Jackson State University Faculty Members in the Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Mass Communications, Curriculum and Instruction and the School of Business and Economics, November & December, 1985.

SECTION FIVE

IN AFRICAN LITERATURE: THEMES BY WOMEN AND THEMES ABOUT WOMEN

IN AFRICAN LITERATURE: THEMES BY WOMEN AND THEMES ABOUT WOMEN

David Dorsey

The following comments are the subjective overview of a reader, primarily of works available in the English language and accessible to Americans. It should be noted that any scholar who attempts exhaustive study of women as authors or as subjects of African literature will quickly develop alternative forumulations of both current trends and historical developments. That inevitability is a result of the fortunate complexity and fecundity of our subject. This subjective view may be, however, useful as a schema to which readers may compare their own observations.

Trends in the Literature: Current Themes

In any discussion, I believe, a basic distinction must be made between the works produced by women and the works produced by men. The two worldviews are remarkably different in emphases, focus, and even didactic intent. But in contrast to Black United States output, women authors in Africa are still a minuscule minority, and most of those who do publish receive only local attention. Thus, when speaking of African fiction, drama and poetry generally, we are speaking of work by men.

Too briefly, one may say that male recognition of the special, distinct forms of injustice that women suffer as women is only in incipient stages. This literature generally tends to

define social issues in a-sexual terms. Women suffer or prosper as members of oppressed or oppressive social classes, as Africans exploited by the West, etc. In works by a few pre-eminent authors such as Ayi Kwei Armah, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Mong Beti, Nurruddin Farah, and others there are occasional explicit demands for equality between the sexes. These are presented both as a corrective to the undervalued contributions of women in history, and as indictment of current oppression of women.

But even in the most "progressive" authors there is rarely any genuine consciousness of sex-based inequity. The essential inequity inherent in patriarchy and in the very definition of family and family-roles goes on, unconsciously defended. Heroines, for example, are always physically attractive in sexual terms, and always interested in eventual marriage and child-bearing. For heroes, none of these elements is a necessary component of character. A heroine is never the ideological or strategic leader of a fictional liberation movement. Subordination of one sex to the other is explicitly deplored, but within the plot and characterizations it is subliminally maintained. Furthermore, because focus is usually on panoramic social groups, rather than homely, familial issues, the fundamental ideological premises and the practical consequences of sexism go unchallenged, unexplored, unexposed.

Nowhere is this irony more evident than in the prostitute heroines, so common in literature by males, so rare in literature

by women. Regularly the sympathetically presented prostitute is simply a salient example of class exploitation, not exploitation of women by men.

This assessment, even if correct, is encouraging. Consciousness is an accretive process. It is necessary and valuable for the literature to focus on the inequities which are simultaneously the most undeniable, the most understandable, the most oppressive, and the most reparable. The evils in which we all, oppressed and oppressors alike, participate must await our growth to recognize, to regret, and then to correct. Such growth evolves directly, and perhaps only, from efforts to fight the injustices we do recognize.

Today's women's literature in Africa has a different thrust. Whether the theme is as abstract and universally comprehensive as Bessie Head's Question of Power itself, or as immediately specific as divorced, middle-class widowhood in Mariama Ba's So Long a Letter, current themes in women's fiction have a firm grounding in direct experience. The novels center on the real experiences of private lives, and leave the abstractions about causation to be inferred (sometimes explicitly) from the realities that the characters experience. (In women's narratives a woman is almost always the central character and the central intelligence. Predictably, male authors more often take the liberty of assuming that they can penetrate and report a woman's mentality.)

What are the topics which predominate in fiction by women?

Above all come the incredible burden of work, duty and social ideals women are expected to bear, and the myriad factors beyond their control which limit their capacity to conform successfully. Infertility is a common example to this. In many cultures and circumstances the next most common example is the difficulty of financially supporting offspring when the husband's contributions are inadequate or nil, whether by default of means or of will. Polygamy is a receding issue, perhaps primarily because it is such a luxury in modern economies. But divorce and males' extra-marital affairs which reduce family income are still commonly discussed. Maintaining continuity of the social order in the absence of males is a major theme in South Africa and other societies where males are away at war or at work. Urban stresses of marginally employed, or underpaid, or sexually-harrassed women remain common themes. To Americans, however, it should be emphasized that rape (in contrast to sexual extortion and bribery) and other physical abuse - in the astounding forms endemic here - are virtually unknown in African literature, except as inflicted in warfare or by Afrikaners.

Problems of the urban woman, especially the educated and relatively financially secure minority, are far more prevalent in the literature, and far more incisively presented than the lives and feelings of the rural, the poor, and the uneducated vast majority of women. Romantic love in the Western mold is not absent from the literature, but when it occurs, it is usually an explanatory prelude to the action, that is, the subsequent

issues and problems on which the narrative concentrates. Usually, however, courtship is founded on more practical factors: shared goals, values, ethnicity and experiences. Stresses between generations are usually inextricable from stresses between "traditional" and "Westernized" life styles. But emphatically the Westernized life-style retains fundamental traditional metaphysics (ancestral Presence, communal social pressure and rituals, primacy of child-bearing, uxorial submission, etc.).

Whether the cause is internalized or externally imposed censorship, few women writers address seriously and directly the ideological premises upon which social inequity is based. The evils inherent in modern capitalist economic structures, the abusive dictates of ensconced religions, and obligations and privileges which prevail between disparate classes, the bureaucratic devastation of the countryside to subsidize the cities, the world economic order which impinges so painfully on the lives of their characters, all these are treated glancingly or ignored. (Ama Ata Aidoo, and abstractly, Bessie Head are notable exceptions.)

The above overview has focused on fiction because women poets are even more rare and obscure than the novelists. However, it should be noted that the more fundamental issues do appear a little more often in the poetry.

This overview has also focused on Sub-Saharan literature. Readers should be aware that there is a suddenly blossoming field of Islamic literature by women, including especially north-eastern African writers. The position of women in Arabic societies is profoundly different from that of Sub-Saharan women even when the latter are Muslims. To oversimplify, one may say that all issues mentioned here are more intense and more intransigent in North Africa.

Past Themes

Conventionally, modern African literature is divided into three overlapping periods: Defense and idealization of the pre-colonial past; Indictment of colonialism; and Lament of post-colonial failures. Paralleling the current women's perspective, women writers of the past did not compose much literature directed toward challenging or condemning colonial administration. But the idealized portraits of traditional societies, like most current writing, implicitly accepted the ethos in which quite basic sexual inequities abound. The second period, which treated colonial society in transition, like the third and present one treating neo-colonial society, focused on the domestic consequences of social transition.

In all these periods one can observe characters who may be regarded as having a feminist consciousness, if that means an

awareness of unfair constrictions and obligations placed upon a central character, as a woman. Individual women show a determination to challenge or circumvent some such regulations. Americans, however, should hesitate to equate this with feminism as it prevails in our past and, especially, our present. There was, and is, no suggestion of a "war between the sexes", no endorsement of hostility to the male sex *per se*, no demur from the proposition that child-bearing is essential to a woman's self-fulfillment, nor from the notion that communally defined marital duty must take precedence over any career. Furthermore, especially in obsolete settings, but even in present ones, the independence, self-direction, and initiative of female characters may seem the more extreme because of our own exaggerated and erroneous notions of women's dominated place and limited power in traditional African societies.

Needless to say, rural society predominated over urban in past writing, when traditional, agricultural life was the social setting. For the same reason, when in most societies class differences were not great, the fiction shows no imbalanced attention to the most privileged members.

In sum, women's literature has paralleled men's in choice of social setting described, and also in a conscious and unconscious commitment to what may be called an African world-view, however varied and changing that may be. But it has differed mainly in its more immediate, delimited focus, and in

its avoidance of controversial religious, political or economic ideologies.

Directions: Probable Future Trends

What may be expected in the future? There can be no doubt that both men and women will direct more attention to specifically women's problems in the social order. The worldwide recognition of these concerns, the very intensification of burdens and inequities which recent decades have imposed on African women, the growing numbers of university-educated and other professional women, and the increasing devastation of Africa imposed by the world's economic order, all these factors will force African intellectual life to give even more incisive attention to the ideals and values governing women's roles in society. To date African men and women have consistently eschewed any notion of a utopia based on subjugation or alienation of one sex from the other. We may, therefore, presume that the stress of reality itself will lead the literature by both men and women to more constructive analysis and prescription for the social order.

Current Trends in Research

Only recently has there been a sufficient body of well-known fiction by women to invite scholarship directed toward African women's writings as a discrete and coherent body of literature. The most basic efforts have been in the collection of the data. These bibliographies reveal a far more copious

corpus than is commonly supposed.

Secondly, certain individual authors have begun to receive more crtical attention than they or their forerunners were formerly accorded. Typically they are studied for their themes and their perceptions of society. Arguably this is indeed the most important priority. In comparison, formal analysis of their works is sparse and often superficial. Inadequate attention to form often leads to inadequate or erroneous interpretations of the meaning of individual works. Bessie Head's A Question of Power must be cited as a pre-eminent example of a work devalued and misunderstood because, it appears, critics are unwilling to grapple with its complexities of form so intimately related to its ontological and ethical statement. Women's fiction, I believe, is still largely approached as if it were but social commentary, rather than as "literature" in the way that critics consistently treat the works of Soyinka, Armah, Ngugi, Achebe, etc.

Following the ground-breaking efforts of Lloyd Brown and Kenneth Little, a body of generic criticism has been developing. So new is this that much of it exists as unpublished dissertations or as journal articles with limited scope. Nevertheless the reader and critic do now have secondary sources which generalize about what African women are writing. Most of the critics are male, and hence with undisputed, honorable intent at "objectivity", the criticism reflects a male perspective, which as indicated above in discussion of the literature itself, is generally concerned with broad ideological considerations. This often

leads to dissatisfaction with the level of clarity about political and other abstract values which a work demonstrates. it often also leads to complaints when works do not seem to conform to the critics pre-existing canons of narrative form.

Most needed is research into popular literature, the aesthetics and the works written for the ordinary African public. These works are least available in the United States, and thus our impression of African literature has a distorting emphasis on material addressed to a university-educated, international, even inter-continental audience. We will not have a more balanced picture of African written literature until we have more knowledge about what the ordinary African who can read does read.

For whatever reason, critics seldom elect to make direct comparisons of men's and women's treatment of specific topics or culture, or conditions. Without such controlled comparisons, however, one can never hope to define securely the contributions of feminine sensibility to the communal understanding of the essetial tragedy which human existence is.