



40th Anniversary

Voices

for
MEDIA DEMOCRACY

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Summer 2012

40th Anniversary Booklet: Celebrating Forty Years in the Pursuit of Media Democracy

from the desk of Martha Allen



WIFP is celebrating its 40th Anniversary with the release of a new booklet. The information in this booklet is also available in an online version: <http://wifp.org/PeriodicalCompilation.html>

The new booklet is a compilation of print periodicals by and about women. This includes the earliest known print periodical in 1848 up to the present. While there are undoubtedly many that we are not aware of throughout the world, we are eager to share the over 2,500 that we do know about.

We define women's media as media owned and operated primarily by, and

about, women. We do not include men's "women's magazines" directed at women, even if they have a female staff. We do include academic media if women control the content and make up the leadership and staff. Inclusion of some men does not disqualify inclusion as women's media.

WIFP began publishing the *Directory of Women's Media* annually in 1975 and continues to do so, except for the decade of the 1990's when the National Council for Research on Women published two editions. In 2001 we began making a version of the *Directory of Women's Media* available free on the Internet on our

website (www.wifp.org). It has been exciting to see the growth and development of women's media over the decades. We utilized these annual print directories to compile this list, as well as research of earlier women's periodicals. More details about these women's media can be found in the individual annual print directories published by the WIFP over the years and in the History of Women's Media.

Women's Media and Media Democracy

There are approximately 2,500 print periodicals by, for and about women that we know about. Add to that all the women's Internet periodicals, publishers, media organizations, news services, film & video groups, radio groups and regular women's programs, music



Founder Donna Allen at WIFP's 4th Annual Conference, 1982

groups, women's bookstores, women's theatre, media blogs and email lists -- and it becomes clear how strong and extensive women's media has become over the years.

We are working for media democracy because we believe media should be available for communicating, not just making money and controlling the flow of information. Power is the number of people you can reach with your information and if huge interlocking corporations have the majority of the outreach, they can influence who is elected to office, if a war gets more backing or not, which injustices get exposed and which do not, and they determine what our future will be. Therefore we need to examine the whole structure of communications and work toward making the outreach more equal. We need to make sure everyone that wants one has a voice. And in the meantime we also increase our own means of communications.

People's media

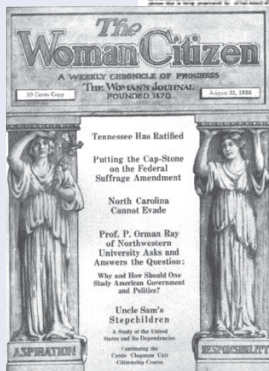
have grown in outreach significantly, particularly with the advent of the Internet, so that the mainstream corporate media no longer have the only say in how everything is portrayed. The mainstream media continue to consolidate

few, if any, working on media democracy, now there are many, many groups that are active and increasingly effective. Women have always been among the most active on this issue because we know that media democracy is crucial to our own lives, to justice for all people and living things, and for the survival of our planet.

Early Women's Media

Women began publishing reform periodicals in the 1840s. In 1848, Amelia Bloomer launched *The Lily*, a paper whose masthead declared itself "Devoted to the Interests of Women."

And two decades later, in 1868, *The Revolution* was founded by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony to cover the many concerns of women that the



and grow larger but at the same time the consciousness about this media structure and its effects are now known more widely. While in 1972, when the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press (WIFP) was founded, there were

male-owed press of the day failed to cover: healthier dress for women, the sexual double standard, marriage and divorce, prostitution and issues of particular concern to working women, such as equal pay for

equal work.

In 1870 Victoria Woodhull and Tennessee Claflin began publishing *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly* in New York City. Topics included abortion, venereal disease, prostitution, the occult, suffrage and women's restrictive clothing. Also in 1870 the *Woman's Journal*, a suffrage paper, appeared, edited by Lucy Stone and her husband Henry Blackwell, and Mary Livermore, who had given up her paper, *The Agitator*, to join them. Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin edited the New Era Club's *Woman's Era Magazine* in Boston. Ruffin, a woman of mixed ancestry -- African, Indian, French and English -- took the lead in calling on black women to organize a national organization since many white women excluded Afro-American women from their organizations.

The early 20th Century brought Margaret Sanger's *Woman Rebel* in 1902. She focused almost exclusively on the issue of birth control that she saw crucial to women's health and well-being. In 1917 *Woman Citizen* formed as a combination of the *Woman's Journal* and several smaller suffrage papers. Other

papers arose in the years before the birth of the current women's media movement in the 1960s, mostly connected to women's organizations.

From the 1960s onward, women forged extensive communication networks in diverse forms of media. Between 1963 and 1983 alone there were more than 1,380 periodicals by women publishing in print form. Women of color published more than 37 periodicals during this period. To see a history of women's media during these years, see [History of Women's Media](#).

In the 1960s, 70s and 80s to produce our own media, women were spending countless hours typing and typesetting, mimeographing, meticulously putting pasted-up copy onto

our layout pages and having our work printed. With the arrival of the 1990s and the 21st Century, technology changed tremendously, particularly with the advent of more widespread use of the Internet and desktop publishing. These developments made it much easier for more women of various means to get their ideas and information out. Young women increasingly lead this women's media movement. More voices and more diverse forms of media ensure that women will not be silenced again.

We are delighted to make this compilation of women's print periodicals available in a printed booklet form for libraries and the historical record as one way to celebrate our first 40 years!



Associate Highlight: Dorinda Moreno

By Martha Allen

As WIFP celebrates its 40th Anniversary, we introduce you to one of our earliest Associates. When we decided to form the WIFP Associate network in 1977, Dorinda Moreno was among the first four Associates! She has been with us for decades. Dorinda Moreno, came to Washington to participating in the 30th Anniversary Conference, "Psychology and the Occupy Movement: Synergies for Social Change."

When I first connected with Dorinda Moreno she had founded or directed cultural groups such as Las Cucarachas-Mexcla Teatral and Concilio Mujeres. Las Cucarachas was a performing arts group that provided

emerging Chicano actors, writers and poets a forum for their work. Concilio Mujeres served as an important center for Chicanas and Latinas.

She had already earned her B.A. at San Francisco State University while raising three children. She continued to study as she taught courses in philosophy, history, journalism, theater writing, and Chicana studies at Napa College, Ohlone College, and San Francisco State University. Dorinda Moreno was a founding member of the Raza Studies Department at San Francisco State University.

Hard work and serious responsibilities were not new to her.



As a girl, she had taken responsibility, as the third oldest in a family of eight brothers and sisters, helping her parents raise her younger siblings.

Her parents were migrant farm workers up until the time she was twelve. Afterward her father worked as a gardener in San Francisco for 28 years. Her father's work experiences were the basis for some of her short stories which she collected in her anthology, *La mujer: En pie de lucha, y la hora es ya* (The Woman: On a Footing of Struggle, and the Hour is Now). This book chronicles the solidarity efforts between women of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, a different narrative than was coming from politicians and male activists.

I'll mention a few of her other early poetry and prose books. *La mujer*, includes representative works by other authors and





denounces the oppression of indigenous women and people of color. The book *La mujer es la tierra: La tierra da vida* (The Woman Is the Land: The Land Gives Us Life, 1975) is partly autobiographical. The collection of prose

and poetry combines her experiences with the call to activism by women. *La mujer y el arte* (The Woman and Art) appeals to artists to depict women with more positive images and urges women's activism.

Dorinda Moreno continues to write. She is as active as ever. Over these decades I've always been somewhat in awe of her, not just because of all she's accomplished, but because she has been doing the kind of work that I think is so crucial to the changes I believe we need in the world. And she

inspires and mobilizes others. She is a connector.

This great grandmother, with the energy, determination and insight she uses to bridge movements, takes advantage of the new technology, seeking greater consciousness and social justice.

Dorinda Moreno is positive and loving while she takes on the injustices of the world – joining with others to overcome oppression and increase indigenous voices and leadership. We are proud to have her with us as we celebrate our 40th Anniversary.

Gmedia Center in Geneva

Media for Human Rights, Human Rights for Media

By Martha Allen

The Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press is partnering with the Gmedia Center, a Geneva based initiative to empower media "to further civil society goals on human rights and democracy." The mission is the kind we encouraged to see: "Gmedia Center will facilitate the necessary interaction between international actors and

the media to enhance journalists' capabilities in human rights reporting and maintain these connections through a global web community dedicated to furthering civil society goals."

Among our first involvement was to start a group on Gmedia: Human Rights for Women. Description: "Join with others who want to see women have full

human rights. Concerned about violence against women, female genital mutilation and trafficking in women and girls? Concerned about education rights? Let us share information and work toward eradicating abuses that face women. Support efforts to assure human rights for all women. Everyone welcome and encouraged to share concerns."

Join in the exciting efforts of the Gmedia Center: <http://www.gmediacenter.net/>




51%: Women and the Future of Politics

Speak Up, Speak Out!
Terri Spahr Nelson, Editor

An essay entitled "Media Democracy is Vital to Progressive Change" by Martha Allen is included in the book to be released this fall. It is part of a series of books "Reflections from Women."

There is also a website, Facebook page and blog all devoted to building a movement to include more women's voices and perspectives to lead our government and our nation. Everyone is encouraged to participate.



**51%:
Women and
The Future of Politics**
What Would Women Do?

We want to know what you think.
www.womenandpolitics.us
www.womenandpolitics.us/blog

Speak up, speak out!
every voice heard.
every woman counts.

Website:
<http://www.womenandpolitics.us/>

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/womenandpolitics.us>

Blog:
<http://www.womenandpolitics.us/blog/>

Reflections from Women:
<http://www.reflectionsfromwomen.com/>

Empowerment Radio

Written by Birgitte Jallo

Reviewed by Martha Allen

Radio is one of the most crucial empowerment media because radio reaches so many people – including rural and poor communities. Community radio allows people to speak for themselves and effect change, not just experience a one-way communication. As Birgitte Jallo writes, “Throughout my adult life, working with community radio and communication for development, I have seen that giving people a voice, and an opportunity to speak for themselves, is what – better than anything else – leads to the empowerment required to trigger an avalanche of positive personal and community change” (p. 5).

In *Empowerment Radio*, Jallo not only shows the benefits and potential of community radio, she describes how to develop and sustain that community radio. Examples are given of how communities are changed as a result of having a community radio station. Human rights issues

and defend them.” (p. 124) She provided the story of Naserian who experienced severe violence and abuse by her husband for standing up for justice for her young daughter. The court supported her husband. The community radio station assisted Naserian and was able to finally win in the court on appeal.

Women’s rights are human rights. Jallo sums this up well: “In many communities all over the world,

“Community radio empowers individuals and their communities and brings us closer to a world where people can speak for themselves.”

get dealt with.

Jallo writes, “In Tanzania, ORS FM, the Teerat Maasai community radio is one more example of a station being used as

the refuge and human rights defence during personal emergencies within its community, due to the full confidence it enjoys, where the community relies fully upon the solidarity and readiness by the radio to support

women and girls are suppressed and exposed to demeaning treatment. This is an important issue for all community radio stations all over the world to be alert to and to include in their programming: Which are the human rights violations against women and girls in the community? What is already being done to address these? Who/which institutions are responsible for the violations? What could be done to counter them? What could the role of the radio be?

Violations of



Jallo with Martha Allen, 1982



on the air. She includes a brief history of community radio. The book even includes a chapter on technical aspects. Yet the layout and organization of all the information she shares is provided in such a way that the book is very readable and interesting. It is a valuable contribution to media democracy efforts and radio specifically. Community radio empowers individuals and their communities and brings us closer to a world where people can speak for themselves.

Birgitte Jallof's book is a handbook that both provides crucial information for what we need to know now as well as records for

history the stories and specifics of the importance of community radio. At the same time it is an inspiring story of how people can utilize media to change their lives and the world around them.

Birgitte Jallof is a long-time Associate of WIFP (1982). She has a master's degree in mass communication and strategic communication as well as a bachelor in linguistics and civic movements, civil society.

Jallof began to focus on community radio in 1980 when she was involved in the budding community radio movement in Denmark. She started Empowerhouse to meet the needs in and around development of sustainable community radio.

women's and girls' human rights are, in many communities, expressed through violence in general as well as sexually through rape (including inside marriage), incest; lack of rights over one's own body for instance not being able to request protection against the risk of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases from infidel husbands or boyfriends. Violations of human rights can also be denial of the right to an education, to proper health attention including around pregnancy and childbirth, to land, to inheritance; and in general to live a life in dignity and peace" (p. 124).

Jallof shares insights that can help get a community radio off the ground and keep it



Jallof today

For more information, for valuable resources, or to order the book, go to www.empowerhouse.eu

How We Love Now: Sex and the New Intimacy in Second Adulthood

Written by Suzanne Braun Levine

Reviewed by Martha Allen and Flora Massah

I thought of the Beatles song “When I’m 64” when I reached this age earlier in the year. It is not at all what I thought it would be when I was young and the song was popular. I would never have imagined that in many ways I am not so different than I was back then. Yes, wiser. Yes, no longer fresh-faced. Yes, reached goals. Yes, less shy. And yes, continue to make errors of judgment. But I still explore many of the issues I did back then, just with more experiences behind me. I know more clearly where I am headed and the path I want to take. I am looking forward to some of my most engaging years, not winding down as I might have thought for someone aged 64.

Women in their fifties and beyond are actively involved in the world and are determining how, and with whom, they will spend the rest of their lives. This book by Suzanne Braun Levine tells the stories women share about these later years, what she calls “Second

Adulthood.” We have many more choices than earlier generations and we are taking advantage of it.

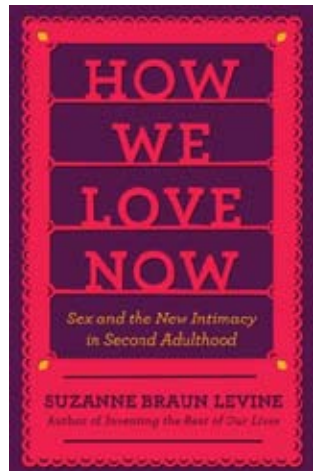
The stories and experiences shared in this book are diverse, as is how each woman feels about her life experience. An underlying issue that many of the women face is coming to terms and accepting any difficult circumstance in life. Stories in the book show that women are learning to let go of unrealistic expectations while at the same time, forge ahead living the life they are choosing for themselves.

“The Internet has had an impact on just about every kind of intimacy we are nourishing in our Second Adulthood,” writes Levine. “In fact, it is safe to say that the tools and experiences of connecting online make many of the dynamic and inventive relationships we are enjoying possible.” (p. 77) She describes how easy it is for women to connect with old and new friends. “The

Internet supports both the independence and the interdependence that are vital to the way we love now.” (p. 79) Levine’s chapter, “Cyberspace—Where the Action Is,” is full of examples of the impact of women’s involvement with social media and online connections.

Reading *How We Love Now* is a reminder that we can make the most of these valuable years. Levine writes that this time is about “finding a ‘peaceful place’ where the conflicts between past and present, love and work, who you are and who you thought you should be, are reconciled.”

- Martha Allen



Graduating from high school and beginning my college career, I remember being haunted by the advice I had heard from countless older peers to “enjoy college while you can,” as after these four years, there’s essentially “nothing to look forward to.” Now entering my senior year, I realize how absurd this message was, and I look forward to my post-graduate years as a new chapter in my life. However, there is certainly something to be said about the glorification of ‘youth’ in mainstream culture and the widespread view among my generation that once you hit 50, there really is nothing to look forward to. (Although 60 may be the new 50.)

It is for this reason that I found Levine’s book to be a refreshing counter against the prevailing discourse on aging. The personal stories she highlights provide an alternative narrative, where older women are not seen as ‘static’ but are dynamically engaging with life and new experiences, particularly in their love lives. Reading about these women’s triumphs as well as frustrations made me slightly ashamed to think of all the times I had recently thought

I was ‘too old’ or it was ‘too late’ to start something new.

Having recently read Naomi Wolf’s *The Beauty Myth*, I have become increasingly aware of the negative stigma attached to aging, particularly with women. While I was most likely not Levine’s primary audience in writing this book, the idea of ‘Second Adulthood’ sends a positive and hopeful message to my generation, as when we contemplate growing older, rather than images of sagging breasts and arthritis, we’ll think of how “more than ever before in history a midlife woman is mistress of her own fate” (43) and the great opportunities that await.

- Flora Massah

Suzanne Braun Levine was the first editor of Ms. Magazine and was also an editor of the Columbia Journalism Review. She is currently a contributing editor to More magazine. Levine is the author of Inventing the Rest of Our Lives and Fifty Is the New Fifty.



**WIFP is on
Twitter!**

**Follow us
@WIFP to
find out
what we’re
up to.**

Blood Stains

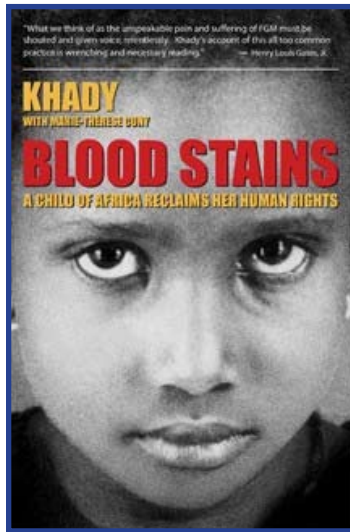
Written by Khady Koita

Reviewed by Elana Anderson

In a thought provoking, highly personal work that focuses upon the heretofore taboo subject of female genital mutilation (FGM) in the “modern” world, Khady Koita and Marie-Therese Cuny have presented readers with a first-hand account of this harrowing reality, still practiced today. African women generations removed from their ancestral homelands, born and living in the Diaspora, may be hard pressed to find a way to relate to the continued practice of FGM, forced/arranged marriage, or adolescent marriage. While historical experience, presented fictionally or no, can illuminate women’s shared suffering and powerlessness at the hands of men and the women who act as their agents, there is nothing that can impress upon a woman who has not undergone such a brutal betrayal of her personhood and sexuality the pain of a woman who has. *Blood Stains: A Child of Africa Reclaims her Human Rights* is a story of the

pain associated with the loss of childhood/adolescence through excision, forced/adolescent marriage and their subsequent psychological and physical effects.

Published in 2010, this book is one of the first in the growing corpus of work produced by UnCUT/VOICES Press, the only publishing enterprise



of its kind and the first to focus solely on work about female genital mutilation. Founded by Tobe Levin in Frankfurt am Main, Germany in September of 2009, this unique institution translates studies of FGM from French,

German and other languages into what is considered the world “lingua franca” – English. While such works may indeed be considered an indispensable resource whose provision is imperative in the struggle to educate more women about FGM, some readers may begin to wonder how those who do not read or write in the languages of the Western world may actually be included in the constituency of this publisher. The

mission and values of the organization are provocative, and, taken directly from its website, reads:

Mission: To promote abolition of FGM, thereby saving girls from genital torture, by creating a multi-media platform for dissemination of autobiographies, novels, poetry, plays, and other creative work as well as research, legislation, and histories of the movement · To translate from various languages into the lingua franca,

English, to advance knowledge among a broad audience and encourage activism · To give voice to victims, artists, policy-makers, academics, and others with a personal and professional interest in the

subject whose work finds no home in the established press Values · To cooperate in an ecumenical, democratic effort that includes women, men, old, young, all nationalities and languages · To encourage participation of all ethnicities and nations that practice FGM · To deploy professional managerial methods, adopt modern technologies, and strive towards financial independence (www.uncut-voices.wordpress.com, 01/20/2012). This is exactly the kind of organization that is fully supported by Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press and should be supported by any other media network that is focused upon the efforts, challenges and accomplishments of women.

Khady Koita, the author (this is an autobiographical account), is called a "gifted public speaker, trainer, and dedicated activist" who currently lives in Brussels, Belgium, but was born in Thies, Senegal (preface). As co-founder of EuroNet FGM, a consortium of European non-government organizations (NGOs) currently boasting 37 members, she has been the leading voice in the struggle for the abolition of FGM and

continues to lecture in Europe, Africa and the United States. She has been instrumental in the enactment of key legislation in Senegal and the United Nations against this practice. In ten chapters, titled according to the chronology of her experience, Khady introduces her readers to a world that men may think had better been kept secret. It is a world of betrayal, of pain, of suffering, of control and ultimate transcendence and triumph. It is also a story of courage.

Khady underwent a clitoridectomy at the age of seven at the hands of the mothers (Salindé) she trusted in her village, without anesthesia and without support. She made it through school up until sixth or seventh grade (Growing Up), when at the age of fourteen, she was married to her first cousin (A Blow to the Head). She was not even consulted about the decision, made for her by her father. In traditional societies it was thought that "from the moment a girl bleeds and her breasts show, her parents think she is ready to marry and they hope a bridegroom will appear on the double for fear she might get pregnant before tying the knot" (Khady, 43). At such

a young age, how is any girl supposed to be able to connect the dots between education, tradition and desire? Khady was a child who wanted what all of her girlfriends wanted, to be married, and she was happy that she would be the first. What she did not know, could never know until it happened, was what consummating her marriage would do. The pain was so excruciating that she blacked out!

Subsequently, Khady (pronounced Kah-Dee) was put on a plane to France to live with the husband who knew nothing about her and whom she knew nothing about (The Stranger). Readers are made privy to his illiteracy, and his ignorance as to the ways of love. Khady gives her readers a wholesale glimpse of the psychology of institutionalized patriarchy and the devastation it wreaks in the psyches of both men and women.

Joining Parisian society and adjusting to its lifestyle (Integration) was difficult only in that Khady bore three children before the age of nineteen with no support from her husband. At that time, welfare dictated that all funds be wired directly to the hus-

band's accounts, and he barely provided Khady with enough to support the appetites of their children. Unfortunately as well, her first two daughters were cut before they were a year old by a cousin who felt it was her "duty" to perform the act as part of the family and her role in Senegalese society as a member of the blacksmith caste. The procedure was performed while Khady was hospitalized due to complications with her third birth. She did not question it because of tradition, and had her third daughter cut at barely one month of age. Too, her marriage was a shambles due to the stress of childbirth and her reluctance to have sex with her husband.

tegration). Upon her return, she began to take control of her own life as well as work outside the home in an effort to make life easier for herself and her children. The fact that her father came for an extended visit made things all the more palatable, for she was able to convince her landlord to allow the family a second apartment across the hall. A fourth pregnancy yielded a son, and Khady thought it necessary to bring her sister from Senegal to help with the children. It also gave her more opportunities to work. She even found her husband a job when he lost his, but despite her efforts, marital strife increased. Birth control became the order of the day for

advising" her husband on how to make her submit (Khady, 117). Visiting a great uncle in Normandy four to five times a year became a welcome refuge for her and her children.

A fifth pregnancy and the birth of another daughter at the beginning of 1985 after forgetting to take the pill put Khady in the hospital; upon her release, she found that her husband had married a second wife (Polygamy). The second wife turned out to be fifteen years old and illiterate like her husband. They both made life miserable for Khady, who realized that polygamy as practiced by African men in France "ruins human relationships and destroys children" (Khady, 139). She needed to get out of the marriage and out of the home, as her husband became more and more violent toward her because of her independent nature and self-preserving attitude. Hiring a lawyer was her first step.

The following steps (The Great Leap) took her to the welfare office to secure that the payments would go to her own account, before a French divorce court for a legal restraining order, and

"Khady's story is one of endurance and survival, like the stories of countless women of color who have never found a voice for their suffering."

Khady and her husband became so enraged by the fact that she was progressing in life and he wasn't, that he sent her sister back to Senegal amidst accusations of ruining his marriage. According to Khady, "the entire masculine community was

Khady's first trip back to Senegal was bittersweet, and because "home" was so very rehabilitative for her and culturally significant for her children, she found herself at odds about returning to France (Disintegration/Rein-

back to Senegal to try to dissolve the marriage at the mosque. In Senegal, religion trumps the law. It is religion that is used to control women, to cut them, to marry them off too early, and to force them into patriarchal submission.

In the final chapters (A House of Tears, Combat), Khady reveals the depression, violence and brutality of life in her household and her fight to remove herself, finally being granted a new apartment for her and her children. The French finally granted her a civil divorce and her marriage was dissolved at the mosque. It is in these final two chapters as well that readers are introduced to her activism, beginning with the French organization

GAMS (Groupe pour l'Abolition des Mutilations sexuelles), a secular non-partisan NGO. Khady highlights all of the reasons that men use to continue the practice of FGM, from increased sexual pleasure for the man, to religion, to maintenance of social cohesion, all of which are lies.

Khady's story is one of endurance and survival, like the stories of countless women of color who have never found a voice for their suffering. Her story is also one of sisterhood that crosses cultures and generations, for the support that she found among her neighbors in France (both White and Black) and friends was unparalleled. This book is a must-read for every woman who

has ever suffered the physical, psychological and emotional effects of male domination and even for those who never have, that they may continue to raise women who will celebrate themselves, their lives, and their sex. Look out for other works published by UnCut/VOICES Press, such as that of Hubert Prolongeau, titled *Undoing FGM*. Pierre Foldes, *The Surgeon Who Restores the Clitoris* and *The Excisor: Hawa Greou Speaks Out* by Linda Weil-Curiel and Natacha Henry.

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Elana Denise Anderson is a PhD Candidate, Ryoichi Sasakawa Fellow at Howard University, Washington, DC. Elana works with WIFP and recently returned from Senegal.

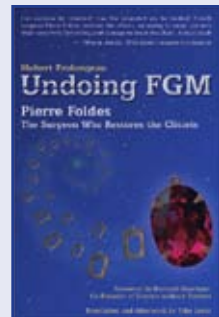
Announcing an UnCut / Voices Press New Release

***Undoing FGM:
 Pierre Foldes, the Surgeon Who
 Restores the Clitoris***

"Can excision be reversed? Can the wounded sex be healed? French surgeon Pierre Foldes restores the clitoris, returning to eager patients their sensitivity, femininity and courage to break the chain."

- Elfriede Jelinek, 2004 Nobel Laureate in Literature

Written by Hubert Prolongeau; Foreword by Bernard Kouchner (Co-Founder of Doctors without Borders); Translation and Afterword by Tobe Levin



\$10,000 Edna Award

For an Emerging Leader in the Social Justice Movement

The 2nd annual Edna recognizes the promise of our nation as reflected through the activism and vision of women leaders of tomorrow.

Nominations are being accepted through July 31 for the 2012 Edna, a \$10,000 award that will go to a young woman leader in the social justice movement. Young women making a mark in labor, women's and other social justice groups are eligible for the award, which will be presented in the fall.

The Edna is named after Edna Berger, a pioneer for women's rights who rose from a receptionist at the *Philadelphia Inquirer* to become a writer, editor

and the first woman organizer for The Newspaper Guild. The Berger-Marks Foundation was created by a bequest from the estate of her husband, "Tin Pan Alley" composer Gerald Marks ("All of Me") who sought to promote the memory and the work of his late wife.

The Berger-Marks Foundation established the Edna Award in 2011 to recognize "a woman who has made an extraordinary contribution to social justice early in her career. The recipient's outstanding achievements to date indicate that her ongoing work will significantly improve the lives of working women and men."

Ana Maria Archila, a Colombian immigrant who is director of a dynamic grassroots mobilization organization called Make the Road New York, won the initial Edna last year, and the caliber of entries prompted the trustees to award \$1,000 prizes to several other nominees. "We are excited to continue supporting the important work of young activists like these women," said Linda Foley, president of the Berger-Marks Foundation.

Nominations for the 2012 Edna will be accepted online only. In addition to the nominator, each nominee must have one additional letter of recommendation. Nominees may not nominate themselves. Nominees must be 35 years or younger on 12/31/2012. The online nomination form is available on the Foundation's website at www.bergermarks.org.

An independent panel of union, civic and activist leaders will judge the nominees and make the final selections.

CONTACT: Michael Byrne 703-501-9835

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Public Discussion: Literature Review of Research on Critical Information Needs and Market-Entry Barriers

Tuesday, June 26th | Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

By Flora Massah

With growing dependence on technology and the diversification of the American population, understanding the evolving ways in which we receive and process information has become increasingly important. This is the key realization presented by a coalition of scholars brought together by the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism. The purpose of the public meeting, hosted by the FCC's Office of Communications Business Opportunities, was to review the report drafted by the USC-Annenberg Coalition examining existing research on the critical information needs of the American public and market-entry barriers to participation in the communications industry. The research will inform the Commission's 2012 Report to Congress about barriers to participation in the communications industry, also known as the Section 257 Report.

Members of the Coalition presented what

they called the "critical information needs" every American should have access to, and how the media must be continuously adapted to this "moving target." Other key areas of discussion included the barriers to participation in the media and the need for new methods and forms of conceptualizing questions and concerns related to the media.



Inequalities within media ownership and employment, particularly regarding women and minorities, have long been linked to the content of the media produced. Coalition members pointed to three barriers to participation in media production and distribution: marketplace dynamics, such as access to capital; hiring practices and dispari-

ties; and the deinstitutionalization of media. One scholar stressed the need, however, to "dig deeper" in understanding this relationship between ownership and content, and to develop a concrete foundation for this research, such as with the concept of "critical information needs." Commissioner Mignon Clyburn, a longtime advocate of media democracy, summed up the importance of the Coalition's report for the FCC in her remark, "when we fail to insist that the critical information needs of all Americans are met, we send a message to those un-served or underserved communities, unintended or not, that they are not worth as much as those communities whose information needs are fully met, [further fueling] alienation and isolation."

A large focus of the meeting was on the new media platforms through which more and more people are receiving information (such as twitter and blogs), and how future policy relevant

research on the media must capture this “multi-platform digital ecology,” as current analytic methods were developed around traditional media outlets such as newspapers and television. The Coalition imagines future FCC policies and research as conceptualizing the union of increased diversification in communities and the way these communities utilize both traditional and new media.

An important criticism of the report, however, was how consumer analysis, what information is used by different people and why, is critical to keep in mind, pointing out that policies

must work to ensure not only access but also engagement with information in order to prevent a growing knowledge gap.

While the report did not say anything ‘revolutionary,’ if the FCC takes the findings seriously and implements specific policy changes regarding equal access to information, I found the hearing to be a very progressive step for this federal institution. The recognition of the media as an “ecosystem,” something living and transforming, and the need to change their approach to media, from a ‘one size fits all’ perspective to one of contextualization within individual communities, is

an important shift.

Particularly when considering the recent (or should I say ongoing) legislative ‘attacks’ on women’s reproductive rights, equal representation of women and minorities in mainstream media is not only important but a necessity to ensure the basic rights of all.

We will have to see what concrete policies the FCC plans to execute to address these issues, and continue to put pressure on media establishments to be more inclusive of women and minority groups, but I would say that we are one step closer to media democracy.

Both WIFP and Ms. magazine celebrated their 10th Anniversaries in 1982. WIFP Founder, Donna Allen, appeared on the cover of the Ms. 10th Anniversary issue, along with WIFP Associate Gloria Steinem.



Minority Media and Telecom Council's 10th Annual Access to Capital and Telecom Policy Conference

By Flora Massah

The Minority Media and Telecom Council (MMTC) has been advocating for the interests of minorities in media and telecom policy decisions for the last 26 years. The 10th Annual Access to Capital and Telecommunications Policy Conference, held July 18th-19th, brought together various key players in the industry - policymakers, venture capitalists, bankers, innovators, entrepreneurs and lawmakers - to discuss the latest developments in communications policy, telecom reform, and emerging business and financial opportunities in traditional and digital media.

At the conference's



opening luncheon, a theme that speakers and panelists emphasized was the changing landscape of technology, primarily broadband and spectrum, and the importance of equal access to information and having the critical information needs of all Americans being met. In his keynote address, José Mas of Mastec, ranked second in the "Top 500 HIspanic Businesses" of 2011, stressed striving for equal access to

new media technology, and spectrum as a new opportunity for increasing the involvement of minorities and women. FCC Commissioner Robert McDowell remarked how we are about to enter a "golden age" of empowering, low-capital media opportunities.

It is apparent that broadband availability has become a significant socio-economic factor, as what was once a "convenience" has now become "necessary for prosperity."

For more information on the conference and videos: <http://mmtconline.org/conference/> <http://mmtconline.org/conference/>



Looking back on our first 40 years: Afro-Hispanic Institute founder, Dr. Stanley Cyrus, and WIFP founder, Dr. Donna Allen, in shared office space. The Afro-Hispanic Review was also typeset and produced here in its first decade.

National Council of Women's Organizations July Meeting

By Flora Massah

On Tuesday, July 17th, members of the National Council of Women's Organizations gathered for a monthly meeting to update one another on their current and future projects.

I was surprised by the International AIDS Conference spokesperson's remark how women constitute 53% of the AIDS population, and was also not aware of the extent to which the epidemic is widespread here in Washington DC.

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) stirred up a vibrant conversation, the emphasis being on

raising awareness and continuing to pressure congress, as the House and Senate passed very different versions of the bill (the House version called 'racist, homophobic and exclusionary' by the National Association Against Domestic Violence), and the legislative process has been stalled.

Feminists for Obama urged the importance of this election in particular, considering the possibility of two supreme court seats opening up. One issue that was also brought up regarded the limitations of C3 organizations, which

are limited in terms of what they can do with their funds, and how the abundance of these in the women's movement may be a limiting force.

A new grass-roots organization, We Are Women, formed in response to the congressional 'war on women,' will be organizing a march on August 18th to demonstrate how women do in fact care about their rights.

For more information on these topics, visit the following websites!



Positive Women's Network: www.pwn-usa.org

4vawa.org

feministsforobama.org



wearewomen.us

Come as You Are?

Sexism in the Coming Out Process for Female Bisexuals

By Gabrielle Rajerison

One of the most valuable pieces of advice I've ever gotten as a feminist was to pick my battles. As painful as it was to come to terms with, I realized that it would be impossible for me to live in society without being a part of it in some way, even if that involvement meant unwittingly absorbing certain societal norms or finding enjoyment in problematic media, no matter how informed I was of their shortcomings.

This conscious effort to take into account the different stages of my awareness made me more sensitive to feminists who had done the same, whether they were aware of themselves as doing so or not. Many black feminists, for instance, have participated in romantic relationships with white men and women, despite the sordid history during slavery and the current state of both white and/or male privilege. Many feminists have entered into marital unions, despite the past and present-day complications marriage presents to women's autonomy and freedom

both financial and social. Yet these involvements do not preclude them from political discussions that might overlap with their personal lives but not necessarily define them. Simultaneously, however, there remain areas where a party line is clearly drawn and little to no space is provided for the nuances of daily life.

Take, for instance, the question of whether sexual orientation is due to nature or one's given environment. While many would argue that it is a combination of the two, with methods such as the Kinsey Scale offering a more complex way to view sexuality, there still exists a prevailing fear, driven mainly in response to homophobia, of allowing too much emphasis on situational influences on sexuality in order to avoid the idea that it is a choice. The widespread opposition to sexual reprogramming camps and programs imply a growing public belief in the biological foundation for homosexuality/bisexuality and a rejection of the idea that one can choose their sexual

orientation. Living as a heterosexual while homo-/bisexual is considered dishonest, as well as either repugnant or tragic, and the process of "coming out," or announcing one's non-heterosexual leanings, is celebrated by allies and members of the community alike.

While this is an important ideological stride towards ending heteronormativity and the homophobia that accompanies it, the theory does not match the practice. Innocuous sexism is only one of the things that marks the response to bisexual women who "come out" or question their sexuality, revealing the uncomfortable reality that even the LGBT+ community, which has fostered and interacted with feminist ideas and beliefs, cannot escape the misogyny of the rest of society, even absorbing some of it along the way.

The suspicion surrounding bisexuality is not itself unusual. While it might have once been considered normal to have relations with members of both sexes, the rise of homosexual identity

politics has created a more distinct division between heterosexuality and homosexuality.

Examples of this include the rise of phrases and concepts such as “no homo” or “bromances,” which serve as loophole for what one might call the contract of heterosexual masculinity, wherein men are allowed to show emotion towards other men so long as it is explicitly not homosexual, creating a familiar checks-and-balance system wherein the dominant group strives to define itself and its motivations by what it is not. This allows for the assumption that one’s sexuality can only be one or the other, with any divergence from that being more the “exception” than the accepted.

While it is true that both male and female bisexuals encounter the same sense of distrust from those around them, most of which is fueled by the belief that bisexuality is a pit stop towards “realizing” one’s heterosexual or homosexuality identity, it is also true that male

bisexuals, due to male privilege, are afforded a certain sense of trust, no matter how slight, that is not afforded to females embarking on the same journey. The implication is that because of how masculinity is structured, men who step outside of it have more to lose and almost nothing to gain by admitting that they are attracted to other men and should be more taken at their word than woman to claim an attraction to other women.

In a way, this is not itself surprising. Though the definitions of masculinity become more complex the more accepted homosexuality is in a given society, it is traditionally tied up in heterosexuality and a type of strength that often lends itself to domination, most often of women or any other group considered “lower,” though those groups are often coded with female, and thus insulting, language.

It would be unfair, however, to say that there is not a similar link between femininity and men or to mistake the subtly of the

link with absence. Just as the male gaze interrupts male sexuality by presuming a sexual interest in women, it provides the same sense of confusion and invasion for women discovering their own sexuality. Regardless of their sexual identity, all women must learn to compromise with the gaze in their everyday lives whether in the media they consume or their interpersonal relationships.

For women who find themselves attracted to other women, however, the gaze, and the fascination the gaze has with female-female sexual relationships, proves especially difficult. Whereas lesbians deal with most of the same issues of intrusion as bisexual women, their sexuality’s rejection of men as participants limits the extent to which the gaze can render them objects of male pleasure, though that is admittedly not saying much. Bisexual women’s retaining of men as sexual interests, on the other hand, when combined with the gaze, misogyny, and society’s general phal-



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locentricism, reads for many as an invitation to interpret their interest in women as part of an attempt to get male attention rather than a legitimate part of their sexuality, with the only way out of this alleged performance being more performance.

While it is true that sexuality is, on some level, itself a sort of performance—the performance of heterosexuality despite being homosexual and the performance of homosexuality once “out of the closet,” for instance—the conscious level of performance expected of bisexual individuals, whether male or female (though especially female), to prove themselves as truly bisexual is specific to the distrust they face.

The reason for this distrust varies. As previously stated, some of it is disbelief with the idea that bisexuality exists and cynically waiting out what they consider to be a phase on the road to monosexuality. Some of it is fear of what bisexuality could mean for heteronormativity (hence part of the reasoning for believing women who claim to be bisexual are doing it for attention—much like with men and “bro-mances,” this provides a loophole for women

to expand upon their female relationships while still working within societal norms, and thus averting the risk of becoming Othered).

Some of it is a perceived threat regarding bisexuality as a bastardization of sexuality and an expression of sexual greed as seen in many pervasive depictions of bisexuals as sexually insatiable and possessing a sexual appetite that, for the sake of the piece, is completely detached from human emotion or the capacity to love. Some of it is caution or resentment about a bisexual person’s ability to “pass” in society or to experience the privileges of a heterosexual life without having to deal with the complications and homophobia that homosexuals must deal with.

Almost all of these reasons are underlined with the question of choice, specifically that there is an element of choice associated with being bisexuality despite the idea being adamantly rejected in discussions of homo-/heterosexuality. Either way, there is often a conditional quality to the B’s inclusion in the LGBT+ community that seems to be dependent upon the bisexual person’s behavior.

Using this logic, a

bisexual person could only “prove” themselves as truly bisexual by being at least partially conscious of who they choose as their next sexual or romantic partner, rather than allowing it to happen naturally, with an equally partial understanding that their identity—and here it becomes tricky, since bisexuality has been denied an individual and community-recognized identity for so long, the performance becomes the identity, at least according to those on the outside looking in—can be undermined or discredited the second one sex seems to get more attention than the other.

Obviously this is not the journey that all bisexual women and men experience, nor is it a view that all homo-/heterosexual people hold. It is, however, a widespread problem both in and out of the community that is largely tapped on an individual level until the “coming out” process, which is meant to be a moment of liberation from society’s constraints but often opens the door not only for their sexuality to yet again be used as a tool of the patriarchy but also many expectations. One widely held belief is that once

one is freed from an expectation to act as a heterosexual, their future relationships will be almost exclusively homosexual, which is an expectation that might make sense for a homosexual person “coming out” but which is unfair to place on a bisexual person, especially one at the beginning of their journey.

The truth of the matter is that some bisexual people end up dating or settling down with people of the opposite sex and living what might, on paper, look like a conventionally heterosexual life. Yet they would never consider themselves any less bisexual than they previously were and would still identify as such. The problem, of course, is not with the desire for bisexuals to have the freedom to love and relate with whomever they desire but rather the lack of freedom present in the current discussions about sexuality.

Instead there are illusions of progress and acceptance, some bad (“I would go gay for...”) and others insufficient, such as the vague discussions of “sexual fluidity” that generally lead to nothing and which, more often than not, operate on a Kinsey Scale-like expression

of sexually, with the fluid individual usually still “predominantly” homo-/heterosexual, with the implication being that no matter how fluid one might be, there would always be an electric fence and label keeping them safely within a certain parameter rather than entertaining not only the idea of bisexuality but the idea that one can be bisexual without the scale necessarily being at equal weight for both sexes.

It is mainly for this reason that bisexuality remains a dual identity that, more often than not, asks to be presented one side at a time rather than simultaneously. This separate but equal mentality from both sides reveals a subconscious aim to replace heteronormativity with an equally safe and unchallenging monosexualnormativity instead of a genuine acceptance of sexuality and its varying complexities.

I wish I could say I knew what a possible solution would be that didn’t call for a complete reexamination of the movement and the unspoken trickle-down theory that seems to be in place. All I know is that I’m distressed that many have decided that this is not a battle worth picking up. While it

is undoubtedly and unbelievably important that things such as the repeal of DADT and the various legalizations of gay marriage occur, as they affect the entire community, it is equally important that the specific needs of the different sub-communities be met, even if the problems they’re facing do not necessarily affect the rest of the community or, sometimes more importantly, if their problems are with other members of the community. The privileging of a community at the expense of its individual members has been at the heart of most conflicts within social movements, one example being the early feminist movement and its struggle to accommodate the needs of women of color, non-Western origins, and the working class. The sooner movements acknowledge the presence of these ideological struggles and preemptively work to prevent them from taking root through honest discussions, the better they can serve the needs of all.

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Gabrielle Rajerison is a junior at Knox College studying Gender and Women’s Studies and English Literature.

Sex, Gender & Sexuality: Unraveling Transsexuality in Iran

By Flora Massah

In a well-known speech delivered in 2007 at Columbia University, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of the Islamic Republic of Iran proclaimed that there were 'no homosexuals in Iran.' While it became evident that Ahmadinejad meant to say that there is no overt 'homosexual culture' in Iran as there is in the West, Western media outlets pounced on this bold assertion, and LGBTQ rights organizations denounced the government's harsh policies towards sexual deviants, buttressing the public image of Iran as culturally backwards and oppressive. Subsequently, the surprising revelation that Iran has legally and religiously sanctioned sex reassignment surgery (SRS), with the second highest rate of operations in the world after Thailand, has been viewed as a confusing contradiction framed against the country's anti-homosexual rhetoric.

Yet a closer look at the interactions of sex, gender and sexuality

in Iran and the discursive shift in contemporary government policies reveals how the religious and legal sanctioning of transsexuality in Iran is not surprising at all. What is contentious, however, is the degree of autonomy and agency gender and sexual non-conformists in Iran are able to exercise, as well as the quality of their life.

First it is important to understand the recent historical events that led to changes in Iranian perceptions of sex, gender and sexuality. In her analysis of Qajar Iran (1785-1925), Afsaneh Najmabadi describes an era in which ideas of beauty were largely gender-undifferentiated; no categorizations of desire, such as 'homosexual,' existed; younger male-older male sexual relations were common both in everyday life and depicted in the arts; and obligatory homosociality was com-

bined with procreative heterosexuality.

As interaction with Europeans (both in Iran and in Europe) increased, however, significant changes are apparent in Iranian sensibilities. Iranians realized their same-sex practices were viewed negatively by the Westerners as a sign of backwardness and began to distance themselves from it. When the Islamic Republic

(IR) was established in 1979, "cultural markers of the old regime" were targeted, and as part of the "purification" movement men and women were recommended and compelled, respectively, to visibly differentiate their gender - beards for

males, veils for women - according to state-sponsored notions of masculinity and femininity¹. Thus the heteronormative and gender dimorphic so-



Portrait of Fat'h Ali
Shah (1772-1834)

ciety of Iran today was established, and we will see that government policies towards transsexuality reflect these binaries. The support for SRS in the IR is largely a result of the “convergence” of seemingly “conflicting paradigms of science and religion,” a marriage between the Ayatollah and Freud². Supreme religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini’s fatwa, a religious order sanctioning sex change operations, become part of the legal system in 1986. Transsexuality is not expressly forbidden in the Quran, but in classical Islamic discourse, there are only two genders, male and female, each with its own script of behaviors and identity.

Yet there is also recognition of intersex or ambiguous persons, towards which religious officials adopted a body-soul approach, in which one’s soul and body are in disharmony, rendering use of modern technology to change the body permissible as it is impossible to alter one’s soul.

The combination of the Islamic concept of a ‘true sex’ and psycho-medical literature’s assertion on the ‘truth of sex’ as a “natural biological entity,” has formed a religio-scientific discourse which made transsexual into

“an acceptable category of personhood and embodiment”³. However, this discourse has also led to the formation of two distinct categories of “gender troubled” patients - those who suffer from a medical condition and thus can reach certain degree of ‘normalcy,’ such as transsexuals, and those who are sexually or morally perverse and criminalized, such as homosexuals⁴.



The lived experiences for transsexuals in Iran is strongly linked to the state-sponsored bureaucratic process for acquiring a sex change, in which genital surgery is mandated by the government in order to receive new legal papers, a requirement most Western countries do not impose. One major debate is the relationship between transsexuality and homosexuality, the two often being conflated in the histories of both Western and

Iranian medical discourses. While homosexuality has legal and socio-cultural penalties in Iran, the assumption that an individual would “choose to become a transgender because they could not live freely as a homosexual” is “flippant,” as such a decision would be unfulfilling and does not reflect a far more complex lived reality⁵.

Some scholars, such as Raha Bahreini, argue that the government-sponsorship of SRS and the transition process reflect the enforcement of an “oppressive apparatus of gender,” rather than an appreciation for difference. Specifically, a powerful “state-society-family triad” gender apparatus is in place, where gender and sexual policing follow both written and unwritten codes⁶. This begs the question of whether the normative framing of transsexuality by the Islamic Republic has acted to “choke” queer identities among Iranians, particularly in their self-perceptions of possible gender and sexual existences.

Yet feminist historian Afsaneh Najmabadi views bureaucratic ambiguities and gray zones as areas of potential creative agency. Her ethnographic work

with transsexuals in Iran in the early 2000s reveals the “paradoxical effects” of the IR’s discourse in the “explicit framing of transsexuality as linked with, yet distinct from, homosexuality and other sexualities that are rendered deviant”⁷. We see the fine line between ‘true transsexuals’ and ‘opportunistic homosexuals,’ in which the former may be characterized by having the slightest same-sex desire (‘symptomatic homosexual’) while the latter’s same-sex desires are labeled as morally deviant, and the potential personal agency of the individual to navigate this porous boundary between the categories of transsexuality and homosexuality, as the medical establishment largely relies on psychiatric sessions and personal narratives to distinguish between the two.

Such a process of ‘filtering’ has, paradoxically, resulted in a proliferation of gender and sexual expression rather than reinforcing the normative binary, as those who do not conform to the sexual/gender norms are often able to begin the process for receiving legal recognition as the opposite sex, and receiving some of the

benefits (such as official papers authorizing cross-dressing in public and exemption from military service) while avoiding the surgery, at least for a period of time.

Even with this sense of agency, however, it is still important to consider the effects of the pathologizing discourse of the governmental and medical institutions. Though using diagnosis as an instrument to achieve self-expression is an empowering view of transautonomy, it is difficult to say that one does not internalize any of the psychomedicalized notions of oneself as ‘abnormal’ and ‘diseased.’

The filtering process is largely reliant on personal narratives, indicating the possibility, as in the US, that many gender/sexual deviants in Iran have learned the ‘script’ of transsexuality; however, such a discourse “denies the language [they] might use to describe who [they] are,”⁸ a language already suffused with norms, in order to pass the various psychological tests. While acknowledging the agency of queers in Iran is certainly important and useful, what such a notion of ‘productivity’ does not reflect is the potentially devastating effects of

engaging in this pathologizing discourse.

Analyzing sex, gender and sexuality in any society has always been a difficult task, as one must navigate through countless theoretical thickets of cultural variation. Butler, in *Undoing Gender*, offers a provocative unraveling of the dominant notions of identity, questioning what it means to “be” a gender or “have” a sexuality, and how the historical construct of ‘human’ includes some while excluding others. How to apply Butler’s analysis cross-culturally, or whether applying it would be considered a Western imposition, is a significant theoretical quandary.

Consider how linguistically the root word for both ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ in Farsi (the official language of Iran) is *jins*, or *jensiat*. The fact that both sex and gender are represented with one word connotes a lack of distinction between the two. Additionally, *jins* also means ‘type,’ further supporting the notion of sex/gender as materially based.

The word for ‘transsexuality’ in Farsi is *taghir-e-jensiat*, which translates to ‘sex/gender change,’ conveying a binary in contrast to its English counterpart, which carries the

connotation of 'transcending' sexual lines. It is possible, then, to see *jins* serving as a linguistic tool "making meaning about, and representing, ourselves and others," a constant "social reiteration" of the materiality and blending together of sex and gender". Yet, while the idea of '*jins*' perpetuates sexual dimorphism in a way, Farsi is a gender-neutral language, in which there is no 'he' or 'she,' which allows for a great deal of ambiguity - both in literary translation and the social sphere.

The possibility that Iranian subjectivities are uniquely shaped by the dual nature of the word *jins*, conveying both sex and gender, is important to consider when trying to understand sex, gender and sexuality within the Iranian cultural context. While Butler says one 'becomes' a gender, it is important to keep in mind that such a 'process' or the vocabulary in which it is articulated is culturally contingent. Sex, gender, sexuality (and, I would add, the body), weave together and form a complex web surrounding transsexuality in Iran. Transsexuality in Iran is a largely under-studied topic, and a great deal more ethnographic research

must be done before any clear understanding of Iranian sensibilities regarding sex, gender and sexuality can emerge.

What is most interesting about the concept of transsexuality is how it brings to the forefront the question of what social conditions are necessary in order for we as humans to freely recognize ourselves. The difficulty lies in that there is no 'clear' answer of how any individual should or should not be, where the limits reside in what 'he' or 'she' can embody. Depending on how it is framed, transsexuality can either challenge normative views on sex, gender and sexuality, or support them, thus highlighting the importance of an (cross-cultural) awareness of power relations and discursive forces.

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Flora Massah is a senior at Princeton University studying anthropology and gender/sexuality studies.

Footnotes

1. Najmabadi, 2005: 69
2. Bahreini, 2008: 1
3. Najmabadi, 2011: 540
4. Bahreini, 15
5. Shakerifar, 334
6. Bahreini, 14
7. Najmabadi, 2008: 29
8. Butler, 91
9. Valentine, 31

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First 40 Years of WIFP... A Few Memories Since 1972



Martha, Donna, Andrea 1975 - with Media Report to Women shirts



Donna and Dana (1977)



1976



WIFP Founder Donna Allen at the 4th Annual WIFP Conference



Paula Kassell,
WIFP Vice President



Andrea Dworkin



Dr. Susan Kaufman



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Founder Donna Allen (above) and
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