



NEWSLETTER

No. 4 JANUARY 1991

Judging by the contents of our postbag, it seems that most SWIP members are quite satisfied with the way things are going as far as the newsletter is concerned. We the outgoing editors would like to thank you for your support and heartily wish a happy New Year to all our readers!

Arrangements for the next meeting of SWIP are given overleaf. The last meeting was held in Glasgow and by all accounts, was not as successful as it might have been. Only a handful of women were able to attend (distance from the South, where most of our membership is clustered, being a factor here), and many who were supposed to lead workshops withdrew and no replacements could be arranged. Looking on the bright side, lessons might be learnt - incentives to attend could be offered explicitly when an 'away' meeting is arranged, in the form of contributions towards travel expenses (these were available for Glasgow and had this been known, more might have attended); joint meetings with other organisations may not work at present as a format (SWIP's concerns are submerged); standby arrangements in case of contributor's cancellations should be made as far as possible.

Anyone who has any ideas for developing or improving the newsletter, or has material which could usefully be included in it (eg. information about conferences, books, journals, events, new groups, awards and posts, calls for papers, etc.), please send to: Soran Reader, New Hall, Cambridge CB3 0DF or to Maureen Eckersley, Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge CB3 0BU, to ensure inclusion in the next issue.

All those (including ourselves!) who have not yet renewed their subscriptions, will they please do so on or before the 2nd March, 1991 - Application form attached.

Soran Reader & Maureen Eckersley

S W I P M E E T I N G

Date: March 2nd, 1991

Venue: The Reading Room,
London Women's Centre,
Wesley House,
4, Wild Court,
London WC2B 5AU Tel. 071 831 6946

Access: By tube (Holborn on Central & Piccadilly lines); by bus (stopping 50m away on Kingsway, nos. 5, 68, 77a, 168, 172, 501); by car (parking nearby - 50m away - or NCP in Drury Lane); disabled parking available immediately outside, please let us know **in advance** if required; wheelchair access available)

Programme :

10.00 - 10.30	Arrive, coffee, chat.
10.30 - 12.00	'Feminism and Logic' paper and discussion introduced by Fiona Campbell
12.00 - 1.00	Business meeting (see over for organisational proposals for discussion)
1.00 - 2.00	Lunch (no facilities in Wesley House or very nearby, so probably best to bring a packed lunch)
2.00 - 4.00	'Human Nature/Male Nature ' paper and discussion introduced by Moya Lloyd
4.00 - 5.00	Tea, talk, networking.

Cost: Free to members (membership form attached)
Non-members £5 (waged), £2.50 (Unwaged)

Creche available if required. **Please** let us know by **Friday, February 15**, if you need to use the creche.

Papers will be circulated beforehand to all those who contact Cei Tuxhill, 99 Hunterhouse road, SHEFFIELD, S11 8TX, **by Friday, February 15**.

ORGANISATION of SWIP

As the aims of SWIP are inclusive rather than exclusive, it would be ideal if all women working in philosophy, whatever their theoretical orientation, felt that they could participate in the organisation if they wanted to. Accordingly, I should like to propose for discussion at the next SWIP meeting the following organisational framework.

Each year, we need to organise one or two meetings and put out at least two newsletters. I suggest a rotating Steering Committee, to take on this basic organisation, consisting of four to six people, which would include 2-3 women who have already been involved (for continuity) and 2-3 new volunteers (for innovation). At the end of each year (in practice at the March meeting), 2-3 would withdraw and 2-3 others would take their place. (Up to 4-5 is a good number - more than that and it gets unwieldy; 2 or less and it can be too much to take on.)

This would stop SWIP solidifying into a single philosophical outlook and ensure that no one need feel they would never get a turn. The Steering Committee would have a free hand to organise the meetings as they saw fit. I suggest that the Treasurer remain in post for at least 5 years, as there are advantages in continuity here. At the moment I think there is probably no need to vote; it is more a question of arm-twisting! However, we could at a later stage vote people on to the Steering Committee if it looked as though we were going to be swamped by volunteers (at present an unlikely scenario).

In addition, I should like to propose myself as reviews editor (given my commitment to this section of the newsletter over the past two years). My function would be to centralise the at present rather ad hoc system of sending for books. Women wishing to review books should let me know. I will have cards printed, with a SWIP heading, so that I can contact publishers on a more official basis. I could also request reviews from SWIP member. The point would be to encourage publishers to feel that the newsletter was something worth being reviewed in. Since the review section of the newsletter seems to have been fairly popular, it seems a good idea to build this up.

Margaret Whitford

CALL FOR PAPERS

"We are planning a collection of **Feminism and Epistemology** and would welcome proposals from anyone who would like to contribute. Graduate students are especially encouraged to submit. These are some of the issues we hope might be addressed in the volume, and we expect your proposals will alert us to other issues currently being formulated.

- (1) Identity and Difference : What is a significant epistemological category?
- (2) The Knowing Subject
- (3) The Possibility of Objectivity
- (4) Problems of Legitimacy
- (5) Ideology versus Discourse
- (6) Knowledge and Power
- (7) Feminist Perspectives : The Applications

We hope to include papers from a variety of feminist approaches.

Timescale

Proposals as soon as possible to:

Kathleen Lennon, Department of Philosophy, The University, Hull, HU6 7RX

and

Margaret Whitford, Department of French, Queen Mary and Westfield College,
Mile End Road, London, E1 4NS

Completed papers: December 1991

We can arrange translations from French, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Swedish."

EXPERIENCES OF PHILOSOPHY

An American Perspective

As an Undergraduate at Harvard University, I 'majored' (the U.S. term for one's subject, since one takes exams in a smorgasbord of other subjects as well) in Social Studies, which was not even nominally one subject but rather a conglomeration of history, political theory, economics and anthropology. These were threaded together by a vague relativism about other cultures, and an historicist approach to texts; an approach shared both by the Left, for whom philosophy was only the history of philosophy, and a prelude to Marx, and by the Right, to whom the canon was a private conversation intended solely to exclude the masses. The most sustained intellectual apprenticeship which I served, studying Rousseau with Prof. Judith Shklar, did manage to escape both horns of that dilemma and to teach me to read for the overall shape of a theory, attending to the preoccupations, fears, aversions of the author as they contributed to shaping the text. However, Rousseau being such an anomalous figure in philosophy, this education did little to give me a sense of the metaphysics or epistemology that underlie political theory : I had no idea how to 'go on' from there.

I arrived at King's College, Cambridge last year determined to fill in these philosophical gaps, and was convinced that the best way to do it was to read for Part II of the Tripos despite already having a B.A. degree. What bewildered me at first was the tangible assumption that philosophy mattered and could be done, in contrast to the demise-of-industrial-capitalism school of social theory which had strangled my theoretical training at Harvard. (In fairness I was not a philosophy major as such there, though I did attend lectures by Rawls and Cavell, so my perspective is inevitably skewed.) The relative lack of pomp and theatricality in lectures, the sink-or-swim method of preparing for supervisions, the exam questions asking for conclusions rather than just summaries of the debate -- all this did and continues to impress me enormously about philosophy in Cambridge and as far as I can gauge, in Britain. So does the down-to-earth approach to doing philosophy in conferences and conversations, rather than orating about it. At the same time I imagine that without any other training, reading philosophy in a British university must be a very strange experience : I would find it difficult to care about meaning or reference without the grim familiarity of how many theories in social science or literature are ruined by lack of clarity about them.

In terms of feminism I find it hard to get a grip on the comparison. On the one hand, U.S. universities have been more thoroughly permeated than British ones by programs in women's studies, gender, etc, and the greater fluidity between faculties means a broader-based consciousness of progress in feminist approaches. On the other hand, neither philosophical culture seems to be making great strides at doing feminist philosophy which is not peripheral or meta- to 'real' philosophy. I find personally that the rigor I've acquired, or at least come to appreciate, in Britain sometimes makes me impatient of arguments based on un-

argued assumptions about how gender matters. But I am as guilty as anyone of retailing the complaint that feminist philosophy isn't quite good enough, while continuing myself to work squarely in the mainstream. No answers here for that one; knowing their limitations better than they did themselves is one reason I find it satisfying to study male philosophers from the standpoint of gender, but knowing the truth -- both here and in the States -- still seems most of the time to involve knowing how it has been seen by people who were mostly men.

Melissa Lane

How to Teach Students the Meaning of Life in 9 Thursday Afternoons

One of the things I'm going to miss most about Oxford Poly is the teaching. I have become particularly fond of two of the philosophical courses I teach : Self-identity and the Education of a Person, and Introduction to Philosophy. Both of these courses are for students who may not have any previous knowledge of philosophy, and who may have no more formal philosophy teaching in their academic lives. None of them have to take the course : there are no conscripts. I get an enormous pleasure from enticing these students into philosophical thinking, and then watching them develop, and all in the space of the 9 weeks that makes up a module on the undergraduate course.

Of course some of them drop out straight away. Some come to the self-identity course looking for an encounter group, and students come from every area of the poly to the introductory course, with all kinds of ideas about what a philosophy course might be. Overall though, most students stay, for one reason or another, and more and more come every year. So we must be doing something right.

Each course follows much the same pattern. And I watch the students' feelings follow the same pattern too. I begin by telling them that they will have the opportunity to sort out their own philosophical problems. At this point they regard me with a mixture of fear and skepticism. They are thinking (1) they don't have any philosophical problems and (2) that if I find this out I will think they must be stupid. But of course since the first of these ideas is wrong the second is wrong too. Pretty soon they are surprising themselves. By the end of the course, I am learning from them and enjoying the variety in their assignments - so far as it is possible to enjoy marking!

How they begin to uncover philosophical puzzles they want to untangle is different on the two courses, but there are things we do on both courses which seem to help. First, I put a lot of emphasis on teaching them to read. They need to know that reading philosophy is slow and that they will find it hard. Most of all they need to know that if they are finding it hard that they are not being stupid...and if they find it easy they have probably missed the point. For

students coming from a variety of other disciplines, this is crucial. Social science and humanities students find it especially hard to believe that they do not need a long bibliography at the end of each piece of work. Once they do believe it, of course, it is liberating: time to really chew an idea over and think about it is a luxury.

Second, they do most of the work, and lectures from me are kept to an absolute minimum. But it is very difficult to talk up in seminar groups, especially with the 'expert' listening. So I arrange that they are to prepare subjects/papers that interest them, and these are presented to very small groups of students (maybe to just one other, maybe to as many as four) - and they have the choice whether to do this by themselves or with one or two others. My role is primarily organisational - together with visiting each small group and asking difficult questions, to move them on in their thinking and arguing.

All this is about making philosophy accessible and democratic rather than esoteric and hierarchic. It means that students have the opportunity to follow through problems of real importance to themselves : self-esteem and body image, as well as free will, ethics and relativism. It also means that I have the pleasure at the end of these short courses of knowing that these students have been able to move from feeling like beginners to reading and doing real philosophy.

Morwenna Griffiths

BOOK REVIEWS

Words of Power : A Feminist Reading of the History of Logic, by Andrea Nye,
New York : Routledge, h/b \$45.00, p/b \$14.95

This book could be subtitled : Logicians and their social responsibility. By all accounts, they did not have very much. Nye does not accept logic's account of itself (the history of logic has no 'logic' unfolding throughout its history). She looks for the motivations underlying logic. She starts from the premiss that all human communication is motivated. What are the underlying passions of the desire for logic? (this is an Irigarayan-influenced analysis, although the end result is quite different and utterly readable). Following Benveniste, Nye takes logic as a human utterance. There is no such thing as a feminist logic, she says. The point, for feminists, is not to try and out-reason the logicians in their own

terms, but to respond to them, to reintroduce the subjects of enunciation (the 'I' and the 'you').

Do women want to be logicians? Should they compete on equal terms? Aspire to become latter-day Freges? Given Nye's analysis of the historical complicity of logic with power, this is tantamount to asking, should women become oppressors?, and the answer has to be in the negative : 'The relations between speakers that logic structures are alien to feminist aims' (p179). The point of logic is to frame a discourse in which there is no speaker and no dialogue; there is just truth speaking. The alternative which Nye proposes is to respond to the logician's desire (the project of domination and control) rather than to his arguments. Again it is not simply a question of rejecting power and assuming helplessness; that would be to accept the terms of logic again. The response should be to reconnect logic to a speaker, positioned in space and time. 'If logic teaches us to ignore the circumstances in which something is said, reading asks us to consider it carefully, if logic teaches us to forget who says something and why, this is precisely what we need to know' (p 183).

I'm not sure what to make of some of the suggestions - about the relation of Ockhamist logic to witch-hunting, for example, or the complicity of Fregean functionalist logic with wife-beating and patriarchal marriage - but I read this book with the enthusiasm with which I devoured the feminist writing of the early 70s. I hope it won't be long before Routledge publishes it in Britain.

Who Knows? From Quine to a Feminist Empiricism, by Lynn Hankinson Nelson, Philadelphia : Temple University Press, h/b \$34.95

This is an interesting and substantial book. Joining in the debate which Sandra Harding and Alison Jaggar and others have initiated on the question of empiricism and its usefulness for feminist science criticism, Nelson offers a way of dealing with the problems of empiricism. She bases her theory largely on the possibilities opened up by Quine's non-foundationalist position, while going on to point out some shortcomings in Quine's theory, notably the fact that he retained a distinction between science and values (which can be argued to be untenable in the light of one of his other presuppositions, the non-autonomy of science as a body of knowledge and its connections to other things we know or believe).

Values, Nelson argues, are inherent in all science, both 'good' and 'bad', and it would be mistaken to fall back on a notion of 'objectivity' as 'value-free' to distinguish the two. This would inevitably lead, among other things, to locating feminist science criticism outside science (rather than being a part of the scientific project) where it could safely be ignored by other scientists.

One of the most important chapters concerns the rejection of individualism. Nelson argues not only that empiricism is incompatible with individualism, but also that it can only be understood if we posit epistemological communities rather than 'knowing individuals'.

Her accounts of the inadequacies of positivism (Hempel, Nagel) and Kuhnian theory; her careful positioning of her theory in relation to other feminist work; and her lucid exposition throughout (which lives up to its introductory claim to

be intelligible to readers unfamiliar with Quine, feminist science criticism or philosophy of science), all make this a valuable course book.

The Conceptual Practices of Power : A Feminist Sociology of Knowledge, by Dorothy Smith, University of Toronto Press, p/b

This book uses a version of 'feminist standpoint theory' to discuss sociological knowledge. Sociology, Smith says, does not examine the conditions of its own existence. She makes a case for 'situated knowledge', arguing that standpoint does not necessarily invalidate knowledge. 'If to be situated as such entails ideology, then we can't escape it'. She argues against Sandra Harding that standpoint theory does not lead inevitably to multiple knowledges : 'We want to be able to have arguments about how things work that refer to an ontological ground in the world we have in common, and we want therefore, to be able to arrive at an agreement on the basis of what there is for both of us. Harding would deny us this project; but if this project is denied, then so is the point and meaning of inquiry, the project of discovering, of finding out, of seeking to know' (p34).

So Smith wants feminist sociology to become simply sociology, not just an ideological branch of it. Her project for an alternative and materialist sociology, which does not exclude subjectivity, take The German Ideology as its key text, and attempts to develop the ideas beyond Marx. What she is interested in is the production of 'facts' - the processes and transformations whereby the brute lived experience is inserted into different kinds of narrative which awards factual status, and the processes of exclusion and elision which take place. Ideology is located in the organisations themselves (states and institutions) rather than in individuals.

It's an essential text for anyone interested in the possibilities of feminist standpoint theory.

Mill and Sexual Equality, by Gail Tulloch, Boulder, Colorado : Lynne Rienner Publishers, h/b \$26.50 [also available from Harvester]

This book does two things : 1) it present an apologia for Mill as a feminist; 2) it argues in the final chapter for the implementation of modern Millian liberal feminism. In its first aspect the book is both helpful and unhelpful. Helpful in that it carefully traces and assesses Mill's arguments in The Subjection of Women in the context of his work as a whole, showing the points of tension etc., and the arguments that are still valuable for feminism now. But unhelpful in that it is determined to show that Mill was a feminist, and in a sense this is of mainly biographical/historical interest if we do not share Mill's utilitarian and perfectibilist assumptions.

This leads to a curiously inverted argument for (2), which Tulloch's own defence of Mill might have made her sensitive to. She quotes Mill on divorce : 'I do not think that the conditions of the indissolubility of marriage can be properly

determined until women have a voice in determining them' - and so he doesn't say much about divorce. It is then odd to find in chapter 11 that Tulloch is measuring modern feminism against its coherence with Mill, rather than the other way around.

What do feminists think about Mill's enlightenment perfectibilism, or his account of ideal marriage? We don't hear that side of the story. And crucially, although points out at an early stage (p13) that the 'patriarchal division between private family and the public civil society has always been a central structural principle of liberalism', she does not, in her final assessment in chapter 11, return to this possibly 'fatal fissure' in liberal theory, but argues instead that 'Millian liberal feminism has not yet been fully implemented' (p 178).

So in one way, its quite a useful book- in that Mill's positions are set out clearly and related to his thought overall - but from the point of view of feminist theory, it doesn't follow through the implications anything like far enough.

The Other Side of Language : A Philosophy of Listening, by Gemma Corradi Fiumara, London : Routledge £30

This book is not explicitly feminist, but its themes are absolutely vital to feminist epistemology : the model of listening, instead of that of cognitive 'grasping'; the emphasis on the importance of the relationship, or the listener, rather than the fixity of the object to be known; the transformation of the listener in the process of listening, rather than the fixity or stability of the knower etc.; the ecological links ('there must be some problem of listening if we only hear from earth when it is so seriously endangered that we cannot help paying heed'); rationality's neglect of 'heeding' or 'hearkening' and its suppression of inadmissible forms of otherness.

Fiumara stresses dwelling and coexistence, rather than grasping or mastering, an attention to the whole ('ecological') rather than just to the parts ('logical'). A lot is said nowadays about dialogue, she remarks, but nothing about listening as an active process; yet concepts such as 'rigour' are deeply rooted in the exclusion of listening, and indicate a rather primitive and poverty-stricken logos.

Our epistemology is predatory, territorial, colonizing; and we labour under the illusion that we can speak to others without being able to listen. Fiumara accords priority to listening: 'we are inclined to believe that an individual can speak only if he is listened to'; similarly, 'an inability to listen to the answer render the question useless'. She does not recommend an alternative knowledge, exactly, and does not wish to make 'cognitive' claims (p 40). It is more of a challenge to what she calls 'cognitive fragmentation' - the proliferation of competing monologues - or to the 'severed head' of cognitive functioning.

She emphasises that listening is risky - it puts the listener constantly into question, and is also extremely exacting, in that the speaker might try to expel what is unbearable and put it into the listener - this can damage the listener's own ability to think (pp 177-8). She is offering a model of philosophy which attempts to take Socrates' maieutic in its most faithful form : philosophy not as

an adversary method (which is doomed to repetition of the same), but as holding the other person's thought in one's mind, so as to enable the expression of the as-yet-unthought, unexpressed or unborn. It is a model which is 'agricultural' and 'pastoral' (like Heidegger's 'shepherds of being') rather than predatory.

Language and "the Feminine" in Nietzsche and Heidegger, by Jean Graybeal, Bloomington : Indiana University Press, h/b \$24.50; p/b \$10.95

Graybeal sets out to read Nietzsche and Heidegger through the prism of Kristeva's work, in particular the concepts of the subject-in-process, the semiotic and the symbolic, *jouissance*, 'the feminine' in language, and abjection, and the notion of *la mere qui jouit* (a term coined by Graybeal to refer to a feminine that is not split between the maternal and the sexual).

Graybeal argues that Nietzsche's and Heidegger's attempts to get beyond metaphysics drove them into a relation with the 'feminine' in language. They share with Kristeva a preoccupation with what it means to live on after the death of God (the Father). Graybeal reads them as postmodern religious thinkers who are 'all drawn by the possibility of a *jouissance* that would do something other with the human drive for meaning than turn it into another 'religion' '(p 4). Their 'style' serves as 'a clue to the placement and displacement within language of a subject in process' (p 14). The book aims to examine 'Nietzsche's and Heidegger's confrontation with 'the feminine' '(p 22), by looking for the appearance of the feminine both in imagery and in the irruption of the 'semiotic' in their texts.

I would have liked to see a fuller discussion of Graybeal's relation to other similar discussions. Derrida, for example, only gets 8 lines in the introduction. And there are some curious omissions from the bibliography (eg Graybeal has read Krell on Heidegger, but not on Nietzsche; she points out that Derrida is probably the only person to note explicitly the conspicuous absence of overt references to women or sexuality in Heidegger's work, but does not mention his 'Geschlecht'; Irigaray's feminist work on Nietzsche (*Amante marine*) and Heidegger (*L'Oubli de l'air*) is not in the bibliography; Sarah Kofman's *Nietzsche et la scene philosophique* is mentioned, but not her *Nietzsche et la metaphore*, though it would seem equally relevant here).

If at times Graybeal's interpretations seem a little mechanical, a little forced, at others the insights are subtle, ingenious and illuminating. I found particularly thought-provoking the analysis of Heidegger's notions of authenticity and inauthenticity in terms of Kristeva's symbolic and semiotic respectively, with the anxious *Dasein* as a kind of subject-in-process, and *Care* as an early version of *la mere qui jouit*. (Cf. Irigaray's more critical account of *Care* in *L'oubli de l'air* as the unacknowledged maternal body.) There is a resemblance between Heidegger's *Care* (*Cura*) and Kristeva's *chora*, which Kristeva does not notice, Graybeal suggests (p 127).

The strengths of this reading lie in its detailed attention to the language of certain selected passages. Anyone doing serious philosophical work on Nietzsche or Heidegger will need to take this book into account, even if they end up disputing some of Graybeal's interpretations.

Althusser and Feminism, by Alison Assiter, Pluto Press h/b £17.50

This book goes against the whole trend of modern poststructuralist theory. It is explicitly naturalist, realist, 'biologistic' and economicist.

For the first half of the book, Assiter supports Marx against Althusser. Insofar as Althusser is a structuralist, she claims, he is not a Marxist. Marx's theory was naturalist and economicist - and his theory was also 'true'. In the second half of the book, however, classical Marxisms are criticised for their inability to respond to feminist critiques. At the same time, radical feminisms are equally criticised for their inability to respond to Marxist critiques. The first relegate sex to a subsidiary role; the second have an inadequate account of class. Irigaray, to whom a whole chapter is devoted, is rejected because she is an anti-realist (realism being the 'correct interpretation of meaning' - p.103).

Assiter argues that sex is a Marxist issue. When she comes to propose her own 'integrated' theory in chapter 6, she turns to the Althusser she rejected earlier and argues that his theory can provide us with an account of one of the three necessary conditions - ideology - for women's oppression. (The other two are biology and class - p.122). The Freudian family is read as an Althusserian ISA; this interpretation provides us with a 'true theory' (p.124) about the acquisition of gender identity.

Assiter boldly attempts to provide an integrated (Marxist and feminist) account of women's oppression. I am impressed by her firm rejection of the post-modern critique of epistemology, and rejection of the idea of theory as progressively linear (i.e. that the most modern theory is also the most progressive). I feel sympathetic to the view that linear narrative and teleological periodisation are inadequate as a description of feminist theory. Certain debates simply have not been left behind; they are still live in feminism, and they will need to be live for some considerable time to come. As someone said: isn't it odd that men have started throwing subjectivity into question at the precise moment when women are entering into the social arena to claim co-subjectivity? And isn't it odd that we should be told by Foucault that discourse on sexuality is a mode of subjection, at the precise moment when women are beginning to speak in their own name, and their own right, about their sex(uality)? Similarly, the appeal to 'true theory' and 'correct interpretations' - while it may offend the ears of the (post)modern theorist - seems to me to have a political function, i.e. I am paradoxically defending Assiter in terms she would reject.

Margaret Whitford

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS



PfJ (formerly the *Warwick Journal of Philosophy*), is published at The Department of Philosophy, University of Warwick.

Feminist Philosophy Edition

Volume 3, No. 1, Spring 1990

This edition includes articles by: Luce Irigaray, Margaret Whitford, Alison Ainley, Susan Kozel, Christine Battersby, Dee Reynolds, Deborah Fitzmaurice, Alison Martin, Alex Klaushofer

Future editions will be dedicated to Kant's *Critique of Judgement* (volume 3, no. 2, Autumn 1990) in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of its publication, and *Economies in Philosophy* (volume 4, no.1, Spring 1991). These will be available at a cost of £3.99 (plus 40p p&p.) per copy.

The Feminist Edition and other back numbers are available from *PfJ*, c/o David Webb, Department of Philosophy, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, at a price of £3.50 (plus 40p p&p.).

Luce Irigaray : Philosophy in the Feminine, by Margaret Whitford : Routledge, due out March 1991.

CONFERENCES

MERLEAU - PONTY SYMPOSIUM

'Perception, Corporeity & Subjectivity'

26 - 27 April, 1991

French Institute,
17, Queensberry Place,
London SW7 2DT
Tel: 071 589 6211

Organised by : **The British Society for Phenomenology**

Enquiries to: **French Institute**

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**feminist
theory
where
next?**

Dr Sandra Kemp, Department of English Literature, University of Glasgow,
Glasgow G12 8QQ, Scotland. Tel - 041 339 8855 Ext 4164, Fax - 041 330 4601

***Feminist Theory Where Next?
An International Debate***

to be held in

Glasgow, Scotland

on

March 23 - 26 1991

To give an idea of papers already offered, the areas for plenary discussion could include:

Method

- is there a feminist science?
- social theory and women's time
- women and theology

Subjectivity

Expressing the subject

- feminism and psychoanalysis
- biography, history, memory
- performance, aesthetics, the body

The position of the reader

- spectatorship and the gaze: feminist film theory
- reading representation: feminist art history
- 'personal criticism': feminist literary theory

Ethics and Politics

- the 'essentialism' debate
- feminist organisation and women's action
- collectivity and difference - issues of class and ethnicity

Organized around three thematic areas (Methodology - Theories of Subjectivity - Ethics and Politics), the conference aims at a reconsideration of feminist theory, and of the forms it has taken in different countries over the last twenty years, in order to identify trends, map divergencies and analogies, and trace directions for future research.

It is hoped that the conference will provide a truly international and interdisciplinary forum, bringing together feminists from the most varied backgrounds. Feminism has always been interdisciplinary in its theoretical approach, and international in its political commitment; the conference's purpose is to promote a more direct confrontation between thinkers coming from different traditions in terms both of their national-cultural backgrounds, and of their specific intellectual trainings (as historians, scientists, literary critics, etc.)

We are putting out a general call for papers, and we are also inviting speakers whose work seems to us to have made significant contributions in the field.

PROGRAMME

The Plenary sessions last for 2 hours: They will include papers each 35 minutes long, followed by 50 minutes discussion. The panels following the plenary sessions last for 1 hr 20 mins: They will include 3 papers, each 15 minutes long, followed by 40 minutes general discussion.

Saturday 23 March

8.00 - 10.00 pm
Opening plenary session *The Situation to-date*

Sunday 24 March

9.00 - 11.00 am
1st plenary session *Methodology*

11.00 - 11.30 am
Coffee Break

11.30 - 1.00 pm
Panels on Methodology

1.00 - 3.00 pm
Lunch

3.00 - 5.00 pm
2nd plenary session *Theories of subjectivity*

5.00 - 5.30 pm
Tea break

5.30 - 7.00 pm
Panels on Theories of subjectivity

Monday 25 March

9.00 - 11.00 am
3rd plenary session *Theories of subjectivity*

11.00 - 11.30 am
Coffee break

11.30 am - 1.00 pm
Panels on Theories of subjectivity

1.00 - 3.00 pm
Lunch

3.00 - 5.00 pm
4th plenary session *Ethics and Politics*

5.00 - 5.30 pm
Tea break

5.30. - 7.00 pm
Panels on Ethics and Politics

Tuesday 26 March

9.00 - 11.00 am
5th plenary session *Ethics and Politics*

11.00 - 11.30 am
Coffee break

11.30 am - 1.00 pm
Closing session *General discussion*

Please publicise this conference!

Women and Philosophy

Conference call for papers on

Women, Power and Knowledge

The Conference will be held at Beechwood Co-operative Conference Centre, Leeds, from Thursday, 26 September 1991 to Sunday, 29 September.

We will seek to avoid the usual structure of stars and listeners by circulating the papers beforehand, and then meeting in groups to discuss the issues they raise.

Short papers of about 2,000 words are invited on the following topics:

1. *Women, Knowledge and Oppression:* ideology, false consciousness, knowledge as a social product, women and education, power and fantasy.
2. *Women, Knowledge and Empowerment:* liberating and subversive knowledge, disillusionment, the knowing subject, changing sides, the imagination, women and education.
3. *Women and Epistemology:* women's ways of knowing, knowledge?, democratic epistemologies.
4. *Women, cross-cultural challenges and gifts:* dilemmas of development, international movements, integrity and respect.

- None of these categories should be taken to imply that there is a perspective common to all women.
- Contributions from women who regard themselves as marginal to British academic philosophy will be especially welcome.
- Papers need not fall under these categories.

Dead-lines: Please send abstracts on one sheet, double spaced A4, to:
Alison Assiter,
119, Haringay Road,
London, N15.
by *March 29, 1991.*
Include your name and address.

Conference details: The conference will run from after lunch on Thursday to after lunch on Sunday. Accommodation will be in shared rooms, cost £94 per person, including meals. A creche will be available, 14 days notice needed. People wanting single rooms or more luxurious accommodation can book at neighbouring hotels, and pay a conference fee of £55, including lunch and dinner, or £25 without meals. There are 41 places available at the Conference Centre, and priority will be given to those sending papers.

As space is limited, please let Alison Assiter know if you intend to come and whether you will be resident or non-resident, preferably by end of January, and by 29 March at the latest.

Conference Organising Committee
Alison Assiter, Caroline Bailey, Anne Charlton, Morwenna Griffiths,
Judith Hughes, Kathleen Lennon, Anne Seller.
Queries: ring Mo Griffiths on 0602 484848 ext 2277

Send to: Alison Assiter, 119, Haringay Road, London N15

I would like to come to the conference on Women, Power and Knowledge.

NAME:
ADDRESS:

INSTITUTION (IF ANY)
Delete as applicable:
I will / will not be sending in a paper.
I will / will not be wanting residential accommodation.

A SOCIETY FOR WOMEN IN PHILOSOPHY - SWIP

Application for Membership 1991- 1992

NAME :

ADDRESS :

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Annual Subscription Enclosed (Waged: £10; Student/Unwaged: £5)
Cheques should be made payable to : **Women in Philosophy**

I do not wish to join this year, but would like to remain on the mailing list. I enclose £1.00

Names and Addresses of other women I think would like to receive the newsletter:

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Subscription entitles you to receive the newsletter and to attend two one-day meetings per year. Non-members pay £1.00 for 2 newsletters and £5.00 (£2.50 Student/Unwaged) per meeting.

Please send completed form to :

**Paula Boddington,
Dept. of Philosophy
University of Bristol,
9 Woodland Road,
Clifton,
Bristol BS18 1TB**

RESEARCH DETAILS FOR NETWORKING

Please give, in 50-100 words, details of the research you are engaged in and regarding which you would like to hear from others working in the same field:

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Please send this information to **Morwenna Griffiths**, at **Dept. of Education, University of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD**, who will store it and put people in touch with each other.