

Playfulness, "World"- Travelling, and Loving Perception

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A paper about cross-cultural and cross-racial loving that emphasizes the need to understand and affirm the plurality in and among women as central to feminist ontology and epistemology. Love is seen not as fusion and erasure of difference but as incompatible with them. Love reveals plurality. Unity—not to be confused with solidarity—is understood as conceptually tied to domination.

This paper weaves two aspects of life together. My coming to consciousness as a daughter and my coming to consciousness as a woman of color have made this weaving possible. The weaving reveals the possibility and complexity of a pluralistic feminism, a feminism that affirms the plurality in each of us and among us as richness and as central to feminist ontology and epistemology.

The paper describes the experience of "outsiders" to the mainstream White/Anglo organization of life in the U.S., and stresses a particular feature of the outsider's existence: the acquired flexibility in shifting from the mainstream construction of life to other constructions of life where she is more or less "at home." This flexibility is necessary for the outsider but it can also be willfully exercised by those who are at ease in the mainstream. I recommend this willful exercise which I call "world"-travelling and I also recommend that the willful exercise be animated by a playful attitude.

As outsiders to the U.S. mainstream, women of color practice "world"-travelling, mostly out of necessity. I affirm this practice as a skillful, creative, rich, enriching and, given certain circumstances, as a loving way of being and living. I recognize that we do much of our travelling, in some sense against our wills, to hostile White/Anglo "worlds." The hostility of these "worlds" and the compulsory nature of the "travelling" have obscured for us the enormous value of this aspect of our living and its connection to loving. Racism has a vested interest in obscuring and devaluing the complex skills involved in this. I recommend that we affirm this travelling across "worlds" as partly constitutive of cross-cultural and cross-racial loving. Thus I recommend to women of color in the U.S. to learn to love each other by travelling to each other's "worlds."

On the other hand, the paper makes a connection between what Marilyn Frye has named "arrogant perception" and the failure to identify with persons that one views arrogantly or has come to see as the products of

arrogant perception. A further connection is made between this failure of identification and a failure to love. Love is not used in the sense Frye has identified as consistent with arrogant perception and as promoting unconditional servitude. "We can be taken in by this equation of servitude with love," Frye says, "because we make two mistakes at once: we think, of both servitude and love that they are selfless or unselfish."¹ Rather, the identification of which I speak is constituted by what I come to characterize as playful "world"-travelling. To the extent that we learn to perceive others arrogantly or come to see them only as products of arrogant perception and continue to perceive them that way, we fail to identify with them—fail to love them—in this particularly deep way.

Identification and Love

As a child, I was taught to perceive arrogantly. I have also been the object of arrogant perception. Though I am not a White/Anglo woman, it is clear to me that I had early training in arrogant perception. I was brought up in Argentina watching men and women of moderate and of considerable means graft the substance² of their servants to themselves. I also learned to graft my mother's substance to my own. It was clear to me that both men and women were the victims of arrogant perception and that arrogant perception was systematically organized to break the spirit of all women and of most men. I valued my rural 'gaucho' ancestry because its ethos has always been one of independence in poverty through enormous loneliness, courage and self-reliance. I found inspiration in this ethos and made a commitment not to be broken by arrogant perception. I can say this only because I have learned from Frye's "In and Out of Harm's Way: Arrogance and Love." She has given me a way of understanding and articulating something important in my own life.

Frye is not particularly concerned with women as arrogant perceivers but as the objects of arrogant perception. Her focus is, in part, on enhancing our understanding of women "untouched by phallographic machinations."³ She proposes an understanding of what it is to love women inspired by a vision of women unharmed by arrogant perception. To love women is, at least in part, to perceive them with loving eyes. "The loving eye is a contrary of the arrogant eye."⁴

I am concerned with women as arrogant perceivers because I want to explore further what it is to love women. I want to explore two failures of love: my failure to love my mother and White/Anglo women's failure to love women across racial and cultural boundaries in the U.S. As a consequence of exploring these failures I will offer a loving solution to them. My solution modifies Frye's account of loving perception by adding what I call playful "world"-travel.

It is clear to me that at least in the U.S. and Argentina women are taught to perceive many other women arrogantly. Being taught to

perceive arrogantly is part of being taught to be a woman of a certain class in both countries. It is part of being taught to be a White/Anglo woman in the U.S. and it is part of being taught to be a woman in both places: to be both the agent and the object of arrogant perception. My love for my mother seemed to me thoroughly imperfect as I was growing up because I was unwilling to become what I had been taught to see my mother as being. I thought that to love her was consistent with my abusing her (using, taking for granted, and demanding her services in a far-reaching way that, since four other people engaged in the same grafting of her substance onto themselves, left her little of herself for herself) and was to be in part constituted by my identifying with her, my seeing myself in her: to love her was supposed to be of a piece with both my abusing her and with my being open to being abused. It is clear to me that I was not supposed to love servants: I could abuse them without identifying with them, without seeing myself in them. When I came to the U.S. I learned that part of racism is the internalization of the propriety of abuse without identification: I learned that I could be seen as a being to be used by White/Anglo men and women without the possibility of identification, i.e. without their act of attempting to graft my substance onto theirs, rubbing off on them at all. They could remain untouched, without any sense of loss.

So, women who are perceived arrogantly can perceive other women arrogantly in their turn. To what extent those women are responsible for their arrogant perceptions of other women is certainly open to question, but I do not have any doubt that many women have been taught to abuse women in this particular way. I am not interested in assigning responsibility. I am interested in understanding the phenomenon so as to find a loving way out of it.

There is something obviously wrong with the way I was taught to love and something right with my failure to love my mother in this way. There is something wrong with my being taught to practice enslavement of my mother and to learn to become a slave through this practice. There is something wrong with my having been taught that love is consistent with abuse, consistent with arrogant perception. But I do not think that what is wrong is my profound desire to identify with her, to see myself in her.

The love I was taught is the love that Frye speaks of when she says "We can be taken in by this equation of servitude with love."⁵ Even though I could both abuse and love my mother, I was not supposed to love servants. This is because in the case of servants one is and is supposed to be clear about their servitude and the "equation of servitude with love" is never to be thought clearly in those terms. But I could love my mother because deception is part of this "loving." Servitude is called abnegation and abnegation is not analyzed any further. Abnegation is not instilled in us through an analysis of its nature but rather through a heralding of it as beautiful and noble. We are coaxed, seduced into abnegation not through

analysis but through emotive persuasion. When I say that there is something obviously wrong with the loving that I was taught, I do not mean to say that the connection between loving and abuse is obvious. Rather this connection has to be unveiled. Once it is unveiled, what is obvious is that there is something wrong with the loving.

I did not learn my lessons about loving well. This failure necessitated a separation from my mother: I saw us as beings of quite a different sort. I abandoned my mother while I longed to love her, though, given what I was taught, "love" could not be the right word for what I longed for.

I was disturbed by my not wanting to be what she was. I had a sense of not being quite integrated, my self was missing because I could not identify with her, I could not see myself in her, I could not welcome her world. I saw myself as separate from her, a different sort of being, not quite of the same species. This separation, this lack of love, I saw as a lack in myself, not a fault, but a lack. *Love has to be rethought, made anew.*

There is something similar between my relation to my mother as someone I was not able to love and the relation between women of color in the U.S. and White/Anglo women: there is a failure of love. I want to note here that Frye has helped me understand one of the aspects of this failure, the directly abusive aspect. I think part of the failure of love includes the failure to identify with another woman, the failure to see oneself in other women who are quite different from oneself.

Frye's emphasis on independence in her analysis of loving perception is not particularly helpful in explaining this failure of love. She says that in loving perception, "the object of the seeing is another being whose existence and character are logically independent of the seer and who may be practically or empirically independent in any particular respect at any particular time."⁶ But this is not helpful, for example, in allowing me to understand how my failure of love toward my mother (when I ceased to be her parasite) left me not quite whole. It is not helpful since I saw her as logically independent from me. Neither does Frye's emphasis on independence help me understand why the racist or ethnocentric failure of love of White/Anglo women should leave me not quite real among them.

I am not particularly interested in cases of White/Anglo women's parasitism onto women of color but more pointedly in cases where the failure of identification is the central feature of the "relation." I am particularly interested in those cases in which White/Anglo women behave in one or more of the following ways towards women of color: they ignore, ostracize, stereotype, classify us as crazy and render us invisible. This behavior is exhibited *while we are in their midst*. Frye's emphasis on independence as key to loving is unhelpful because the more independent I am, the more independent I am left to be, the more alone I am left to be. Their world and their integrity have no use for me. Yet they rob me

of my solidity through indifference, an indifference they can afford and which often seems studied. This points toward separatism in communities where our substance is seen and celebrated; where we become substantive, solid, real through this celebration. But many of us have to work among White/Anglos and our best shot at recognition has seemed to be among White/Anglo women because many of them have expressed a *general* sense of being pained at their failure of love.

Many times White/Anglo women seem to want women of color out of their field of vision. Their lack of concern is a harmful failure of love that leaves me independent from them in the same way that my mother became independent from me once I ceased to be her parasite. But of course, because my mother and I wanted to love each other well, we were not whole in this independence. White/Anglo women are independent from me, I am independent from them, I am independent from my mother, she is independent from me, and we cannot love each other in this independence.

I am incomplete and unreal without other women. I am profoundly dependent on others without having to be their subordinate, their slave, their servant.

Since I am emphasizing here that the failure of love lies in part in the failure to identify, and since I agree with Frye that in perceiving others lovingly one "must consult something other than one's own will and interests and fears and imagination,"⁷ I will proceed to explain what I think needs to be consulted. Loving my mother was not possible for me so long as I retained a sense that it was fine to see her through arrogant eyes. Loving my mother also required that I see with her eyes, that I go into my mother's world, that I see both of us as we are constructed in her world, that I witness her own sense of herself from within her world. Only through this travelling to her "world" could I identify with her because only then could I cease to ignore her and to be excluded and separate from her. Only then could I see her as a subject even if one subjected and only then could I see how meaning could arise fully between us. We are fully dependent on each other for the possibility of being understood without which we are not intelligible, we do not make sense, we are not solid, visible, integrated; we are lacking. Travelling to each other's "worlds" enables us to *be* through *loving* each other.

I will lead you to see what I mean by a "world" in the way I proposed the concept to myself: through the kind of ontological confusion that we, women of color, refer to half-jokingly as "schizophrenia" and through my effort to make sense of this ontological confusion.

"Worlds" and "world"-travelling

Some time ago I was in a state of profound confusion as I experienced myself as both having and not having a character trait: the trait is

playfulness. I experienced myself both as a playful person and as a person who is not playful, a person who would be acting out of character if she were to express playfulness. At first I thought that the "multiple personality" problem could be explained away by lack of ease. Maybe my playfulness is very difficult to express or enact in certain worlds. So, it may be that in those worlds I lack the trait. But, of course, I need to explain what "world" means if that explanation is to be serviceable to me in my confusion as to who I am characterwise.

I can explain some of what I mean by a "world." I do not want the fixity of a definition because I think the term is suggestive and I do not want to lose this. A "world" has to be presently inhabited by flesh and blood people. That is why it cannot be a utopia. It may also be inhabited by some imaginary people. It may be inhabited by people who are dead or people that the inhabitants of this "world" met in some other "world" and now have in this "world" in imagination.

A "world" need not be a construction of a whole society. It may be a construction of a tiny portion of a particular society. It may be inhabited by just a few people. Some "worlds" are bigger than others.

A "world" may be incomplete in that things in it may not be altogether constructed or some things may be constructed negatively (they are not what 'they' are in some other "world"). Or the "world" may be incomplete because it may have references to things that do not quite exist in it, references to things like Brazil. Given lesbian feminism, the construction of 'lesbian' in 'lesbian community' (a "world" in my sense) is purposefully and healthily still up in the air, in the process of becoming. To be Hispanic in this country is, in a dominant Anglo construction purposefully incomplete. Thus one cannot really answer questions like "What is a Hispanic?" "Who counts as a Hispanic?" "Are Latinos, Chicanos, Hispanos, black dominicans, white cubans, korean-colombians, italian-argentinians Hispanic?" What it means to be a 'Hispanic' in the varied so-called Hispanic communities in the U.S. is also up in the air. We have not yet decided whether there are any 'Hispanics' in our varied "worlds."

So a "world" may be an incomplete visionary non-utopian construction of life or it may be a traditional construction of life. A traditional Hispano construction of Northern New Mexican life is a "world." Such a traditional construction, in the face of a racist, ethnocentric, money-centered anglo construction of Northern New Mexican life, is highly unstable because Anglos have the means for imperialist destruction of traditional Hispano "worlds."

Some of the inhabitants of a "world" may not understand or accept the way in which they are constructed in it. So, for example, a recent Latin-American immigrant may not understand how she is constructed in White/Anglo "worlds." So, there may be "worlds" that construct me in ways that I do not even understand or I may not accept the construction

as an account of myself, a construction of myself. And yet, I may be *animating* such a construction, even though I may not intend my moves, gestures, acts in that way.

One can "travel" between these "worlds" and one can inhabit more than one of these "worlds" at the very same time. I think that most of us who are outside the mainstream U.S. construction or organization of life are "world-travellers" as a matter of necessity and of survival. It seems to me that inhabiting more than one "world" at the same time and "travelling" between "worlds" is part and parcel of our experience and our situation. One can be at the same time in a "world" that constructs one as stereotypically latin, for example, and in a "world" that constructs one as latin. Being stereotypically latin and being simply latin are different simultaneous constructions of persons that are part of different "worlds." One animates one or the other or both at the same time without necessarily confusing them, though simultaneous enactment can be confusing to oneself.

In describing a "world" I mean to be offering a description of experience, something that is true to experience even if it is ontologically problematic. Though I would think that any account of identity that could not be true to this experience of outsiders to the mainstream would be faulty even if ontologically unproblematic. Its ease would constrain, erase, or deem aberrant experience that has within it significant insights into non-imperialistic understanding between people.

Those of us who are "world"-travellers have the distinct experience of being different in different "worlds" and ourselves in them. We can say "That's me there, and I am happy in that 'world'." The experience is one of having memory of oneself as different without any underlying "I." So, I can say "That's me in there and I am so playful in that 'world'." I say "That's *me* in that 'world'" *not* because I recognize myself in that person. Rather that person may be very different from myself in this "world" and yet I can say *without inference* "That's me." I may well recognize that that person has abilities that I do not have and yet the having or not having of the abilities is always an "I have..." and "I do not have..." i.e., it is always experienced in the first person.

The shift from being one person to being a different person is what I call "travel." This shift may not be willful or even conscious, and one may be completely unaware of being different than one is in a different "world." Even though the shift can be done willfully, it is not a matter of acting. One does not pose as someone else, one does not pretend to be, for example, someone of a different personality or character or someone who uses space or language differently than the other person. Rather one is someone who has that personality or character or uses space and language in that particular way.

Being at ease in a "world"

In investigating what I mean by "being at ease in a 'world,'" I will describe different ways of being at ease. One may be at ease in one or in all of these ways. A maximal way of being at ease, being at ease in all of these ways, is somewhat dangerous because people who are at ease in this way tend not to have any inclination to travel across "worlds" or tend not to have any experience of "world" travelling.

The first way of being at ease in a particular "world" is by being a fluent speaker in that "world." I know all the norms that there are to be followed, I know all the words that there are to be spoken. I know all the moves. I am confident.

Another way of being at ease is by being normatively happy. I agree with all the norms, I could not like any norms better. I am asked to do just what I want to do or what I think I should do. At ease.

Another way of being at ease in a "world" is by being humanly bonded. I am with those I love and they love me too. It should be noticed that I may be with those I love and be at ease because of them in a "world" that is otherwise as hostile to me as "worlds" can get.

Finally one may be at ease because one has a shared history that one sees exemplified by the response to the question "Do you remember poodle skirts?" There you are, with people you do not know at all. The question is posed and then they all begin talking about their poodle skirt stories. I have been in such situations without knowing what poodle skirts, for example, were and I felt so ill at ease because it was not *my* history. The other people did not particularly know each other. It is not that they were humanly bonded. Probably they did not have much politically in common either. But poodle skirts were in their shared history.

Given the clarification of what I mean by a "world," "world"-travel, and being at ease in a "world," we are in a position to return to my problematic attribute, playfulness. It may be that in this "world" in which I am so unplayful I am a different person than in the "world" in which I am playful. Or it may be that the "world" in which I am unplayful is constructed in such a way that I could be playful in it. I could practice, even though that "world" is constructed in such a way that my being playful in it is hard.

My description of what I mean by a "world" favors the first possibility as the one that is truest to the experience of "outsiders" to the mainstream. But that description also makes this possibility problematic because the "I" is identified in some sense as one and in some sense as plural (I am one and many at the same time). I identify myself as myself through memory and retain myself as different in memory. I can be in a particular "world" and have a double image of myself as, for example, playful and unplayful. This is a very familiar and recognizable phenomenon to the outsider to the mainstream in some *central* cases:

when in one "world" I animate, for example, that "world's" caricature or stereotype of the person I am in the other "world." I can have both images of myself, and to the extent that I can materialize or animate both images at the same time, I become an ambiguous being. This is very much a part of trickery and foolery. It is worth remembering that the trickster and the fool are significant characters in many non-dominant or outsiders' cultures.

As one sees any particular "world" with these double edges and sees absurdity in them, one animates the person one is in that world differently. Given that latins are constructed in Anglo "worlds" as stereotypically intense and given that many latins, myself included, are genuinely intense, I can say to myself "I am intense" and take a hold of the double meaning. Furthermore, I can be stereotypically intense or be the real thing and, if you are Anglo, you do not know when I am which *because* I am Latin-American. As Latin-American I am an ambiguous being, a two-imagined self: I can see that gringos see me as stereotypically intense because I am, as a Latin-American, constructed that way in their "world." I may or may not *intentionally* animate the stereotype or the real thing knowing that you may not see it in anything other than in the stereotypical construction. This ambiguity is not just funny, it is survival-rich. We can also make a funny picture of those who dominate us precisely because we can see the double edges, we can see *them* doubly constructed, we can see the plurality in us and in them. So we know truths that only the fool can speak and only the trickster can play out without harm. We inhabit "worlds" and travel across them and keep all the memories.

Sometimes the "world"-traveller has a double image of herself and each self includes as important ingredients of itself one or more attributes of the other self: for example being playful and being unplayful. To the extent that an attribute is personality or character central, the "world" in which she has that attribute would have to be changed if she is to cease to have it. For example, the "world" in which I am unplayful would have to be changed for me to be playful in it. It is not as if, if I were to be at ease in that "world," I would be my own playful self. Because the attribute is personality central and there is such a good fit between the "world" in which I am unplayful and my being constructed unplayful in it, I cannot become playful, *I am unplayful* in that "world." To become playful would be for me to become a contradictory being. So, lack of ease cannot be a solution for my problematic case. My problem is not one of lack of ease.

I am suggesting that I can understand my confusion about whether I am or am not playful by saying that I am both and that I am different persons in different "worlds" and can remember myself in both as I am in the other. I am a plurality of selves. This is to understand my confusion because *it is to come to see it as of a piece* with much of the rest of my experience as an outsider in some of the "worlds" that I inhabit and of

a piece with significant aspects of the experience of non-dominant people in the “worlds” of their dominators.

So, though I may not be at ease in the “worlds” in which I am not constructed playful, it is not that I am not playful *because* I am not at ease. The two are compatible. But lack of playfulness is not caused by lack of ease but lack of health. I am not a healthy being in the “worlds” that construct me as unplayful.

Playfulness

I had a very personal stake in investigating this topic. Playfulness is not only the attribute that was the source of my confusion and the attitude that I recommend as the loving attitude in travelling across “worlds” but also what I am scared to do without—ending up a serious human being, someone with no multi-dimensionality, with no fun in life, someone who has had the fun constructed out of her. I am seriously scared of getting stuck in a “world” that constructs me that way. A “world” that I have no escape from and in which I cannot be playful.

I thought about what it is to be playful and what it is to play and I did this thinking in a “world” in which I only remember myself as playful and in which all of those who know me as playful are imaginary beings. A “world” in which I am scared of losing my memories of myself as playful or have them erased from me. Because I live in such a “world,” after I formulated my own sense of what it is to be playful and to play I decided that I needed to see what other people had said about play and playfulness. I read two classics on the subject: Johan Huizinga’s *Homo Ludens*⁸ and Hans-Georg Gadamer’s chapter on the concept of play in his *Truth and Method*.⁹ I discovered, to my amazement, that what I thought about play and playfulness was in contradiction with their accounts. Though I will not provide the arguments for this interpretation of Gadamer and Huizinga here, I understood that both of them have an agonistic sense of ‘play.’ Play and playfulness have, ultimately, to do with contest, with winning, losing, battling. The sense of playfulness that I have in mind has nothing to do with those things. So, I tried to elucidate both senses of play and playfulness by contrasting them to each other. The contrast helped me see the attitude that I have in mind as the loving attitude in travelling across “worlds” more clearly.

An agonistic sense of playfulness is one in which *competence* is supreme. You’d better know the rules of the game. In agonistic play, contest, competition, there is risk, there is *uncertainty*, but the uncertainty is about who is going to win and who is going to lose. There are rules that inspire hostility. The attitude of *playfulness is conceived as secondary to or derivative from play*. Since play is agon, contest, then the only conceivable playful attitude is an agonistic, combative, competitive one. One of the paradigmatic ways of playing for both Gadamer and Huizinga

is role-playing. In role-playing, the person who is participating in the game has a *fixed conception of him or herself*. I also think that the players are imbued with *self-importance* in agonistic play since they are so keen on winning given their own merits, their very own competence.

When considering the value of "world"-travelling and whether playfulness is the loving attitude to have while travelling, I recognized the agonistic attitude as inimical to travelling across "worlds." The agonistic traveller is a conqueror, an imperialist. Given the agonistic attitude one *cannot* travel across "worlds," though can kill other "worlds" with it. So for people who are interested in crossing racial and ethnic boundaries, an arrogant western man's construction of playfulness is deadly. One needs to give such an attitude up if one wants to travel. Huizinga in his classic book on play, interprets Western civilization as play. That is an interesting thing for Third World people to think about. Western civilization has been interpreted by a white western man as play in the agonistic sense of play: he reviews western law, art, and many other aspects of western culture and sees agon, contest, in all of them.

So then, what is the loving playfulness that I have in mind? Let me begin with one example: We are by the river bank. The river is very, very low. Almost dry. Bits of water here and there. Little pools with a few trout hiding under the rocks. But mostly wet stones, grey on the outside. We walk on the stones for awhile, You pick up a stone and crash it onto the others. As it breaks, it is quite wet inside and it is very colorful, very pretty. I pick up a stone and break it and run toward the pieces to see the colors. They are beautiful. I laugh and bring the pieces back to you and you are doing the same with your pieces. We keep on crashing stones for hours, anxious to see the beautiful new colors. We are playing. The playfulness of our activity does not presuppose that there is something like "crashing stones" that is a particular form of play with its own rules. Rather *the attitude that carries us through the activity, a playful attitude, turns the activity into play*. Our activity has no rules, though it is certainly intentional activity and we both understand what we are doing. The playfulness that gives meaning to our activity includes uncertainty, but in this case the uncertainty is an *openness to surprise*. This is a particular metaphysical attitude that does not expect the world to be neatly packaged, ruly. Rules may fail to explain what we are doing. We are not self-important, we are not fixed in particular constructions of ourselves, which is part of saying that we are *open to self-construction*. We may not have rules, and when we do have rules, *there are no rules that are to us sacred*. We are not worried about competence. We are not wedded to a particular way of doing things. While playful we have not abandoned ourselves to, nor are we stuck in, any particular "world," We are *there creatively*. We are not passive.

Playfulness is, in part, an openness to being a fool, which is a combination of not worrying about competence, not being self-important,

not taking norms as sacred and finding ambiguity and double edges a source of wisdom and delight.

So, positively, the playful attitude involves openness to surprise, openness to being a fool, openness to self-construction or reconstruction and to construction or reconstruction of the "worlds" we inhabit playfully. Negatively, playfulness is characterized by uncertainty, lack of self-importance, absence of rules or a not taking rules as sacred, a not worrying about competence and a lack of abandonment or resignation to a particular construction of oneself, others, and one's relation to them. In attempting to take hold of oneself and of one's relation to others in a particular "world," one may study, examine and come to understand oneself. One may then see what the possibilities for play are for the being one is in that "world," one may study, examine and come to understand oneself. One may then see what the possibilities for play are for the being one is in that "world." One may even decide to inhabit that self fully in order to understand it better and find its creative possibilities. All of this is just self-reflection and it is quite different from resigning or abandoning oneself to the particular construction of oneself that one is attempting to take a hold of.

Conclusion

There are "worlds" we enter at our own risk, "worlds" that have agon, conquest, and arrogance as the main ingredients in their ethos. These are "worlds" that we enter out of necessity and which would be foolish to enter playfully.

But there are "worlds" that we can travel to lovingly and travelling to them is part of loving at least some of their inhabitants. The reason why I think that travelling to someone's "world" is a way of identifying with them is because by travelling to their "world" we can understand *what it is to be them and what it is to be ourselves in their eyes*. Only when we have travelled to each other's "worlds" are we fully subjects to each other.*

Knowing other women's "worlds" is part of knowing them and knowing them is part of loving them. The knowing can be done in greater or lesser depth, as can the loving. Travelling to another's "world" is not the same as becoming intimate with them. Intimacy is constituted in part by a very deep knowledge of the other self and "world"-travelling is only part of this knowledge. Some people, in particular those who are outsiders to the mainstream, can be known only to the extent that they are known in several "worlds" and as "world"-travellers.

*I agree with Hegel that self-recognition requires other subjects, but I disagree with his claim that it requires tension or hostility.

Without knowing the other's "world," one does not know the other, and without knowing the other one is really alone in the other's presence because the other is only dimly present to one.

Through travelling to other people's "worlds" we discover that there are "worlds" in which those who are the victims of arrogant perception are really subjects, lively beings, resisters, constructors of visions even though in the mainstream construction they are animated only by the arrogant perceiver and are pliable, foldable, file-awayable, classifiable. My mother was apparent to me mostly as a victim of arrogant perception. I was loyal to the arrogant perceiver's construction of her and thus disloyal to her in assuming that she was exhausted by that construction. I was unwilling to be like her and thought that identifying with her, seeing myself in her necessitated that I become like her. I was wrong. I came to realize through travelling to her "world" that she is not foldable and pliable, that she is not exhausted by the mainstream argentinian patriarchal construction of her. I came to realize that there are "worlds" in which she shines as a creative being. Seeing myself in her through travelling in her "world" has meant seeing how different from her I am in her "world." This is the form of identification that I consider incompatible with arrogant perception and constitutive of a new understanding of love.

From *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 2:2

Notes

1. Marilyn Frye, *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory* (Trumansburg, N.Y.: Crossing Press, 1983), 73.
2. Grafting the substance of another to oneself is partly constitutive of arrogant perception. See Frye, 66.
3. Frye, 53.
4. Frye, 75.
5. Frye, 73.
6. Frye, 77.
7. Frye, 75.
8. Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Emece Editores, 1968).
9. Hans-George Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975).