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Great Men, Little Black Dresses, & the Virtues of Keeping One's Feet on the Ground[1]

By Babette Babich

***In Memoriam*: Mary Daly**

I was born the year that Hazel Barnes' translation of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* first appeared, which means that I was not quite 12 when the events of '68 galvanized the intellectual worlds of Europe and the United States. In fact, as I am fond of saying, the 'sixties' as we think and speak of that generation, really took place in the following decade, that is: in the 1970s, years I spent in high school, in college, including a hitchhiking trip cross country, alone and at grievous personal risk, especially because I was so out of step with the sexual freedom of the times that I refused to sleep, just on principle, with any one of the many drivers who stopped to give me a ride. I didn't consider the danger at the time but mostly fumed, outraged, that in more than 3000 miles (some drivers took one not quite in the direction one wanted to go, and hitchhikers can't be choosers), there was not *one* of the men (and they were all men) who stopped to pick me up, who did *not* proposition me, some more violently, some more off-handedly than others. As one guy, himself nice enough, explained, you just had to assume that if a woman was out hitchhiking she was *really* interested in finding an erotic adventure.

Not true for me: what I was really interested in was hitching a ride back to New York from San Francisco. I was hitching, as one did in those days, because, in my case, with no family to help out, I had no other recourse. As I said, I did not sleep with any of them, but that option did not go without saying. Hence at the extremes, I got shot at, I jumped from a moving car (my judo roll worked) and otherwise endured, just in order to say 'no', the array of insults that were common during the liberated hey-day of the sexual revolution: for whenever a woman turned a man down, the reason never had anything to do with him, but her: she was uptight or frigid, and always, always, after all, was not good looking anyway, sort of the precursor theme to the anti-female sentiment of the current runaway hit, in book and movie form: he's just not that into you.

So there was a double-standard, i.e., the so-called sexual revolution was different for women. So hitchhiking is stressful and sometimes dangerous. So what?

What has any of this to do with philosophy? A lot, actually: everything.

And in 1979, when I went to my first APA meeting in New York City, I was struck by two things in addition to the presidential address by Richard Rorty whose

[1] This is a radically shortened version of a talk on the status of women in philosophy given at the invitation of the graduate students at the New School, April 8, 2009.

Mirror of Nature[2] had seemed a beacon of hope in the faculty and grad student reading group I had been part of devoted to reading Rorty's book in the very rigorously continental but not less pluralistically idealistic department at Stony Brook where I took my undergraduate degree. Susan Bordo, who later went on to write a bit on Rorty's Cartesian vision,[3] but also on body-image as a feminist philosopher,[4] was part of that reading group and had (at the time) a distinct resemblance to Brenda Starr: red hair, looks, and the habit of combining the convenience of battle clothes and army boots with the striking inconvenience of complete make up. I, who have never worn make-up in my life as a time-saving choice (my sisters did, so I have a good sense of the time investment involved), found the combination cognitively jarring but stylistically fitting at the end of a decade of cultural transformation.[5] To talk about Bordo's appearance is gratuitous but I remember it while and by contrast there was nothing to say about Rorty's appearance: he looked ordinary, not yet as portly, though one could not tell that then, as he would come to be. I will later return to the point that not commenting on a man's appearance (one way or another) seems to go without saying.

Two things have remained with me since that first APA. Both concerned the dissonant role of women in the academy.

Firstly, there was the overwhelming masculinity of the profession. Hotel meeting rooms filled to the gills with almost completely male audiences listening to what seemed universally to be male lecturers (who just happened to be delivering analytic and stunningly boring talks).

Neither aspect of this first detail has changed much in the interim, the one difference being that most of the speakers today tend to be grad students, still male, still talking analytic philosophy, but grad students. Then, in the olden days, older profs came to talk and to debate and students came to listen; now the older profs stay home (because they are not on the program) and the students talk (assuming they are on the program) and listen to themselves (provided they go to anyone else's talks at all — and at recent conferences there has been an increasing trend towards empty rooms: the speakers speaking amongst, i.e., *only* to the speakers themselves).

The second experience was more specific. One of my professors from Stony Brook helpfully pointed out various luminaries at the smoker or evening APA

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[2] Richard Rorty, *The Mirror of Nature* (Princeton University Press, 1981).
[3] Susan Bordo, *The Flight to Objectivity: Essays on Cartesianism and Culture* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1987).
[4] See, for example, Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body, Tenth Anniversary Edition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).
[5] Bordo herself has written on such constellations, albeit in a different context. See her *Twilight Zones: The Hidden Life of Cultural Images from Plato to O.J.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

reception, filled with masses of academics who were at the time furiously smoking.[6]

There were few women among the luminaries but there, however, was Ruth Barcan Marcus, described – and it was this description I took away with me – by my otherwise amicable and jovial teacher as a "battle-axe."

The first sight (of mostly men listening to mostly men) did not faze me. How could it? It characterized my experience at Stony Brook both in the department of biological sciences, where I began, as it also characterized the department of philosophy which I turned to in a rage of idealistic impatience with the explicit prohibition against defining "life" in the life sciences.[7] What got to me was the description of a famous Yale professor of logic described not in the way other famous professors might be described but as a "battle-axe," that is, in sex-specific terms, entailing that one could damn a woman for a character trait that would have been described with other terms had she been male.

To this day I have not ceased to think about it.

Now we all know Bertie Russell's charming conjugation of what he named (upsetting linguists and grammarians everywhere) "irregular verbs"

I am firm.
You are obstinate.
He is a pig-headed fool.

Let's try it with "battle-axe" and pretend that English has, as it does have, gender differences or linguistic shadings as they might be applied to, say a well-known male philosopher, let's take Michael Dummett or you can substitute someone else you know:

[6] Today, although the reception is still called a smoker, there is, of course, no smoking but the appellation is not simply an anachronism for the prohibition contra smoking also provides one with the chance to hang out around the hotel entrances and look cool, in both senses of the term, ergo a lot of people smoke 'opportunistically' at conferences.

[7] And not a great part in protest against a research assignment which would have involved guillotining hamsters for their ovaries. I went into biology *because* I liked animals. "Sacrificing" them, even for science much less for my lab leader's convenience, was out of the question. Very few books engage or take up this question. A rare exception, still not bettered, reflecting on the moral issue of science, is the book by the (post-biologist) Catherine Roberts in her *Science, Animals, and Evolution: Reflections on Some Unrealized Potentials of Biology and* Medicine (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1980). A Berkeley trained biologist, Roberts set aside her research and turned to theoretical reflection at the beginning of her career for expressly ethical reasons. For a more politically and sociologically attuned discussion of the epistemological implications of experimentation, see Shiv Visvanathan, "On the Annals of the Laboratory State," in: Ashis Nandy, ed., *Science, Hegemony, and Violence: A Requiem for Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 257–288. I also address this issue in the concluding chapter of Babich, *Words in Blood, Like Flowers: Philosophy and Poetry, Music and Eros* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006).

I am spirited.
You are aggressive
He is dominating.

But, for Ruth Barcan Marcus, it would be:

I am spirited.
You are aggressive.
She is a battle-axe.

It is not my claim that it is cool or a good thing to be dominating as "he" is merely that it is word-worlds away from being a "battle-ax" as "she" is.[8] This characterization framed the beginning of my academic career as I went to study at Boston College, ruining my career prospects by neglecting other opportunities (failing to apply, failing to accept acceptances) just because Hans-Georg Gadamer whose *Truth and Method* and *Philosophical Hermeneutics* I was reading at Stony Brook happened to be teaching there in the 80 year old flesh. It did not occur to me to hold his age against him.

I mention Boston College not to tell you the history of my life (and I assure you I am not doing that – I have left out all the good and the bad bits) but because it was there that I also met one of the least appealing, that is one of the most annoying and thus one of the most creative or radical feminist theologians of our time, the late Mary Daly. We did not get along but Mary Daly got along with no one and I did not take it personally. I did make an effort to understand the phenomenon.

Now Daly, who was always introduced numerically, that is by counting her PhD's (she did this herself, as anyone who has met her in person can attest) and noting the provenance of the same (Fribourg and therefore and by implication that serves to square the PhD achievement by emphasizing that it would be gotten in Swiss German with a fair admixture of Latin and no less Greek and Hebrew/Aramaic), has achieved far more fame or notoriety from her classroom restrictions than her books, *The Church and the Second Sex*, *Beyond God the Father*, *Gyn-Ecology*, etc.[9] And this was as true 30 years ago as it is today. In the

[8] There is a wide literature on this topic but see the very forthright Julia Penelope, *Speaking Freely: Unlearning the Lies of the Fathers* (London: Pergammon, 1990). For a discussion of the very politically correct but often oppressive cooption of the political impetus of feminist critique of language, Tania Modelski, *Feminism Without Women: Culture and Criticism in a 'Post-Feminist' Age* (New York: Routledge, 1991). One may assume that one is "past" needing Modelski's critical readings. I would argue that we have hardly caught up to them.

[9] Mary Daly, *The Church and the Second Sex* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985 [1973]), *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990 [1978]); *Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press 1984), etc. For an alternative example of a mainstream and leading feminist theologian in the Catholic tradition, see the works of Elizabeth Johnson, notably and very linguistically: *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992).

theology and philosophy departments at BC, colleagues disapproved: how dare she, they asked, ban men from her classes? Yet Daly had good pedagogical reasons for such a ban, reasons concerning women in the classroom, and she was not the only one with such concerns. Thus it is relevant that at the same time as Daly instituted her notorious ban, the so-called academic "climate" for women was beginning to attract scholarly attention, research that continues to this day, with still-sobering results.[10] As a grad student representative on a Boston College committee (this was one of my first and unfortunately not the last of my committee experiences) entitled "Gender Differences in Classroom Learning Situations," the issue of the learning climate for women dominated our discussions, with social scientists arguing with epistemologically impeccable just because numeric or statistical backing that the scholarly climate was then (as it, alas, continues to be) a "chilly" one for women. As in the natural sciences, the prospects for advancement and recognition in philosophy remain so dismal that recently the *New York Times* bothered to wonder about it in an article entitled "A Dearth of Women Philosophers."[11]

At the time, in the heyday of Mary Daly's banning men from her classes, the chilly climate contingent argued that women suffered *more* from taking academic risks than men did; that when speaking, they were not judged as favorably for the same content as men were. In particular, and this is why it mattered on the university level, women in the classroom found themselves far too aware of and thus needing to take account of supposed or anticipated or recollected responses from the men around them, such that they felt inhibited to say the least, and, so the studies seemed to suppose, this inhibition worked on them whether they spoke out in class or not. The same concern for the possible adverse or positive

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[10] See R.M. Hall & B. R. Sandler's 1982 "The Classroom Climate: A Chilly One for Women?" in the "Student Climate Issues Packet," available from the Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American Colleges, 1818 R St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009. See further, Chilly Collective, eds., *Breaking Anonymity: The Chilly Climate for Women Faculty* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1995). See too: Virginia Valian, *Why so Slow? The Advancement of Women* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998) as well as the Hunter College Gender Equity Project reviews edited by Valian and Vita Rabinowitz for 2006 and 2007, as well as for an overview and listing of recent literature, Joan C. Williams, Tamina Alon, and Stephanie Bornstein, "Beyond the 'Chilly Climate': Eliminating Bias Against Women and Fathers in Academe," *The NEA Higher Education Journal* (Fall 2006): 79-96. And see, because promotion and tenure often depend on student evaluations, the range of studies of student gender bias, e.g., J. Miller, & M. Chamberlin, "Women are Teachers, Men are Professors: A Study of Student Perceptions." *Teaching Sociology*, 28 (2000): 283-299.

[11] *New York Times*, October 2, 2009. The *Times* article responded, in part, to Sally Haslanger, "Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy: Not by Reason (Alone)," *Hypatia* 23/ 2 (2008): 210-223. But see too Julie van Camp, *Tenured/tenure track faculty women at 98 U.S. Doctoral Programs in Philosophy*. http://www.csulb.edu/~jvancamp/doctoral_2004.html. Updated 4/14/08. Accessed, 9:34 PM, February 23, 2010, New York City. See more recently, Miriam Solomon and John Clarke, "The CSW Jobs for Philosophers Employment Study," APA Newsletter: *Feminism and Philosophy*, 8/2 (Spring 2009): 3-6 and as a background perspective, written from a mainstream feminist perspective, van Camp's "Female-Friendly Departments: A Modest Proposal for Picking Graduate Programs in Philosophy," *American Philosphical Association Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy*, 3/2 (Spring 2004): 116-120.

reactions from members of the opposite sex did not seem to be a factor in male performance — which did not of course mean that men were unaware of the presence of women in the class rooms, just that that presence did not seem to handicap the kinds of questions asked, especially the kind of questions most essential for learning: the questions that can seem foolish and not less, the other important academic kind of question: the question that shows the depth and reach of one's own learning. It was her solicitude for this same circumstance that framed Daly's exclusion of men. This solicitude did not make her the soul of openness or tolerance.

Stony Book, like most philosophy departments, offered only a few courses in medieval philosophy. So, although this was not required for my studies at BC, I took the opportunity to make life hard for myself by filling the gaps in my historical background by taking courses in medieval philosophy which was how I found myself in the theology department in the first place. Thus I also took courses with the Canadian Jesuit and Thomist philosopher, Bernard Lonergan, someone even more formidable in every regard than either Ruth Barcan Marcus or Mary Daly. What struck me were the similarities between Lonergan and Daly. Where Daly refused comparisons — a Hegelian as I was at the time, pre-Nietzsche as I was, I sought to situate her approach to theology with reference to Hegel. But Daly would have none of it. And not just Hegel. Rather than mentioning Augustine or Tillich or Altizer (all of whom and others she cites in her own work) or indeed Kierkegaard or any of her Boston or Cambridge colleagues: Daly insisted that her thought was unique to her. I demurred and smiled at that (Hegelians are always right).

I had the same experience in a course that was in every other respect utterly different. Raising a similar query (as was my Hegelian wont) about Lonergan's own Hegelian schematism, I got the same insistence in a reply even more indignant than Daly's on the singularity of Lonergan's thought. Coming from a man whose method of teaching theology was to read, out loud, and without taking questions, from his book *Method in Theology*, the pattern was patent.[12]

Let me explain this just a bit more.

When Daly who, like Lonergan, focused on her own books in her classes, told her class that there were *no* Hegelian influences whatever in her thought her

[12] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1972). Lonergan was known to me for his masterwork, *Insight*: *A Study of Human Understanding* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957) as well as for his helpfully clear *Verbum*. Of course that there is a Hegelian connection also goes without saying and had been the subject of a then-recent monograph: Jon Nilson, *Hegel's Phenomenology and Lonergan's Insights A Comparison of Two Ways to Christianity* (Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain, 1979) and including, for all the good it did me, Lonergan's own 1980 lecture "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion," which he gave at the August 1980 meeting of the International Association for the History of Religions in Winnipeg, Canada.

refusal of comparison echoed Lonergan's analogous refusal.[13] The class responded to Daly with either awed indulgence (her followers) or else with amused indulgence (like me) and those who would have been non-indulgent were, owing either to self-selection or else to her class restrictions, simply not there. I was hardly the only student to smile at Daly's reply and when I mentioned this to friends I got all the indignation one might imagine. This did not happen when I reported that Lonergan made a similar claim. Of course, the true believers concurred: Lonergan is *sui generis*, utterly unique.

But when Lonergan made his declaration, it wasn't just the true believers: the entire class nodded in response, almost including me and I would have gone along as I liked Lonergan personally and admired the sheer scope and systematic achievement of his thought but I was distracted by the sudden insight that Lonergan exemplified the "Great Man Syndrome." Socrates had already explicated this syndrome to the Boule of Athens assembled to hear his self-justification or *Apology*. Socrates was not speaking of *himself* but rather of the tendency for those reputed to have wisdom to be nonetheless limited in that wisdom when it came to insight into their own accomplishments.

Beyond the limitations of self-knowledge, a limitation that, I think, applies to every one of us, the point to be made is that both Mary Daly and Bernard Lonergan were enthusiastic victims of the same Great Man Syndrome. The issue for me is and has been that where Bernard Lonergan got away with it and was admired for it, Mary Daly did not.[14] But that is to say that what is ordinary and understandable for a great man of thought, whether in philosophy or theology, is not ordinary or understandable or even tolerable for a woman.

Lonergan was a great man, that is to say, he was great with all the strengths and weaknesses that go along with that. Mary Daly's greatness, by contrast, did not go without saying and continues to be a sore point — one she embraced by calling herself, as she did in a perfect provocation and as a fearless model of reclamation,[15] a "Positively Revolting Hag,"[16] using a model some feminists still

[13] I would later study in Germany myself and would learn from my own experience that her insistence (like Lonergan's) was more than a little unlikely if I also learned enough to leave Hegel for the sake of a better reading of both Heidegger and Nietzsche: Hegel an intolerant task master, is like an old testament divinity, brooking no competition from others in spite of the seductive language of the dialectic which suggests otherwise.

[14] Although Daly was able to resist pressure to admit male students into her classes (and offered to tutor them individually), she was, indeed, ultimately forced to resign from Boston College, a resignation she resisted until negotiating a final settlement in 2001. After her death on January 3, 2010 she drew considerable vitriol — still.

[15] I thank Jolie Mandelbaum for kindly reminding me of this terminus as well as the complex theoretical issues concerned. My worries in this regard are only small ones from this broader perspective.

[16] See the back cover of Mary Daly with Jane Caputi, *Webster's First New Intergalactic Wickedary of the English Language* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987). Daly defines a "positively revolting hag" as: "a stunning, beauteous Crone; one who inspires positive revulsion from phallic institutions and morality, inciting Others to Acts of Pure Lust."

follow and I find worrisome for simple empirical reasons: cheap ontic, details. The theory seems to be that if you yourself call yourself rude and misogynistic names those names will cease to be harmful, becoming "good things" in the end. Thus some feminist comics like Margaret Cho and Kathy Griffin, to name only two names, can name themselves "sluts."[17] In the same way, some social theorists argue that prostitution is "powerful" and propose to re-write history in this mode from Athens and Rome to Madame Pompadour and the sex-workers of our day.[18] A similar tactic has been used in Buddhist thought to call dishwashing good, or housework a joy, diaper changing great or getting up when the baby cries an exercise in mysticism (and note that I am not arguing that it is not).[19] Rather the ontic or real-life problem will always be that calling a garbage collector a sanitation engineer leaves the job to be done the same as it ever was. I cannot begin to address the complex issues of prostitution here — indeed: there is enough trouble where only the usual exchanges of capital are involved as in dating, marriage, and the like. But on the matter of housework, I vote (as if voting were an option) for dividing the chores, not at all equally but fairly, assuming as I do that for the sake of reparations men might take the greater share of said chores, given the work that has already been done by women on the domestic side, not collectively and not in history, but in their own lives, since their mothers, as Virginia Wolf rightly reminds us, first gave them all the peace and calm in the world, a calm that could not but permit a certain level of inattention to the details of what Michel de Certeau calls "everyday life."

Thus if Daly insisted upon insisting upon her own greatness, her efforts often backfired — and given the very nature of the great man culture, not so named by oversight, such insistence could not but backfire, or be turned against her. Thus I read the negative comments published on the internet in the wake of her death as signs of the persistence of this same culture. There are exceptions like Simone de Beauvoir (but only in part) and Hannah Arendt and one can arguably

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[17] See for a popular culture feminist analysis, Jessica Valenti, *He's a Stud, She's a Slut and 49 Other Double Standards Every Woman Should Know* (Berkeley: Seal Press, 2008).

[18] See Nils Johan Ringdal, *Love For Sale: A World History of Prostitution* (New York: Grove Press, 2005) as well as Jill Nagle, ed., *Whores and Other Feminists* (London: Routledge, 1997) and for an overview the readings in Drucilla Cornell, ed., *Feminism and Pornography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), as well as Rosie Campbell and Maggie O'Neill, eds., *Sex Work Now* (London: Willan Publishing, 2006) but see too Mary Beard and John Henderson, "With This Body I Thee Worship: Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity" in M. Wyke, ed., *Gender and the Body in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 56-79 as well as Stephanie Budin, *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008) and more generally James Davidson, *Courtesans and Fishcakes: The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens* (New York: Harper, 1997).

[19] See Thich Nhat Hanh, *Present Moment Wonderful Moment: Mindfulness Verses for Daily Living* (Fitchburg: Parallax Press 1990). For a recent theoretical discussion, see Londa Schiebinger and Shannon K. Gilmartin, "Housework is an Academic Issue," *Academe*, Vol. 96, No. 1 January-February 2010.

say the same for Luce Irigaray or Judy Butler but I also think it worth noting how quickly the personal becomes relevant to laying claim to such exceptionality.[20]

Thus we complain that de Beauvoir was critical of and even "mean" to women and thus "not nice" and Arendt not enough of this or that, and that Irigaray, like Sarah Kofman, was difficult to get along with (meaning not sufficiently "nice" to her interlocutor) and so on. Nor, which was the point of the above cited *New York Times* article, "A Dearth of Woman Philosophers," do we have such a heck of a lot of names.

To put it in other words, far more male scholars with a certain level of achievement can be called super-scholars without adverting to personal qualities in the process, plus or minus, as I began above by mentioning few words about Richard Rorty's 1979 looks or temperament. For the great men, think of Alasdair MacIntyre or, perhaps Simon Critchley unless you are Brian Leiter in which case some think of someone in a Leiter-ranked department) or think of Alexander Nehamas or Stanley Cavell or Daniel Dennett, or, just to be radical and a touch continental, think of Slavoj Žižek, etc. The problem is that a woman's name is not to be had among the super-scholars of philosophy, no matter whether analytically or continentally defined. Female philosophers tend not to be ranked (or regarded as being) at the top of the profession and it is significant that of those fewer female scholars their achievements tend to be restricted to fields like political philosophy, like ethics or feminism, and that in spite of the achievements of a Ruth Barcan Marcus.[21] Or, like Martha Nussbaum, pearls and all, they can be very good little girls indeed. Failing that, this we know, they are horrid.

Feet on the Ground

I have sought with the above reflections to argue that the promises of the 1960's and 1970's, especially the women's movement, have yet to bear significant fruit in the academy. A handy-dandy wiki-check on the net yields the claim that "U.S. Department of Education reports indicate that philosophy is one of the least proportionate, and possibly the least proportionate, fields in the humanities with respect to gender,"[22] with a rather dismal addendum reporting that in "2004, the percentage of Ph.D.s in philosophy going to women reached a record high

[20] Thus Haslanger reminds us that "Philosophy departments often are socially dysfunctional places. It is afamiliar joke that (male) philosophers are poorly socialized." Haslanger, "Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy," p. 217. Her recommendation, be it noted, is that one change the "climate" (ideology, culture) for women in philosophy departments by making men more polite, more socialized, etc. and not by suggesting that women who have the traits men have be thought of as one thinks of men, that is with respect. See for an extended note on this, my comment, "Hey, Can't You Smile?" *Radical Philosophy*, 160 (March/April 2010): 36-38.

[21] Of course there are exceptions and I would hardly deny this. My concern here addresses the rarity of the same.

[22] Michael T. Nettles, Laura W. Perna, and Ellen M. Bradburn. *Salary, Promotion, and Tenure Status of Minority and Women Faculty in U.S. Colleges and Universities*, NCES 2000–173. U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. [1993 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF:93)] Project Officer: Linda J. Zimbler. Washington, DC: 2000.

percentage: 33.3%."[23] In 2007, according to the NCES report, 54% of all doctorates went to women.[24] What is significant is that, despite this numeric advantage at the starting gate, women have continued to be represented by a much smaller proportion in their respective professions, especially including philosophy, a percentage that diminishes as one goes up the academic ladder. And I am here to tell you that when you get to the top there is no top there, not unless you are deferential and polite, have good social skills, and bat your eyes.

Until you age of course. Then you will be either a battle-axe or a mindless biddy (even niceness will not help you here) and nothing in-between.

If the women's liberation movement sought equality in general, that is: not to be judged on the basis of sex (which includes gender-bias and among other things lookism, ageism, freedom of sexual orientation, and this includes but is not only a right to same-sex- or trans-orientation), and I mean this as a lamentable minimum, more than forty years later we are nowhere near such equality.

At best we have might have equal opportunity for jobs, yet we do not have even that, (and it is still more absurd to say, as one has to say, that we do not have equal pay: junior males in my department are paid more than I am) and at best we might have child-care at the work place and yet we do not have even that. I say "at best" with reference to the last just because the example of child-care alone exemplifies how far we have not come: the issue of child-care is meant to facilitate women in the work place, including the university and yet it is a non-issue for men. The idealist in me insists on believing that it should be a non-issue for women, the empiricist in me knows just by taking a look that it is not so.

In my department, in every department I have worked at, as in any department I know of, the majority of my philosophical colleagues are men and when I stop to think about it, I am at the time of this writing and have been for some time now, the only female full professor in philosophy at Fordham, not that I have any credit for this achievement in my department and the rank, although I value it, offers me little, in fact: *no* power by contrast with my colleagues. And the only point of power is by contrast with one's colleagues. We are primates and power, to be power, is about respect.

But that could be me. Note that as a woman, I have learned to assume that whatever limitations I confront in the profession are probably personal rather than endemic, rather than political. And to say that I myself am inclined to think in this fashion, although it is objectively *incorrect*, is fairly remarkable as I began by

[23] Thomas B. Hoffer, Vince Welch, Jr., Kimberly Williams, Mary Hess, Kristy Webber, Brian Lisek, Daniel Loew, and Isabel Guzman-Barron. *Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities: Summary Report 2004*. Chicago: National Opinion Research Center, 2005.
[24] Vince Welch, Jr., *Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities: Selected Tables 2007.*Chicago: National Opinion Research Center, 2008. (The report gives the results of data collected in the Survey of Earned Doctorates, conducted for six federal agencies, NSF, NIH, USED, NEH, USDA, and NASA by NORC.), p. 5.

underscoring that I grew up at the tail edge of a generation that emphasized that the personal was always the political. Indeed, my own research emphasizes the importance of adverting to political influences where one does not always see them in academic philosophy in the case of analytic versus continental philosophy[25] and my ongoing work examines the role of politics in both science and the philosophy of science.[26]

Here: I am interested in the judgments we make that inform our positive and negative assessments of who is socialized and who does the "socializing," just to use Sally Haslanger's terminology.[27] Along the way I raise the question of men's clothes (and women's shoes) in order to pose the question of who gets to look at whom. And this is where real life phenomenology comes in.

Dress and Undress: Guerilla Phenomenology

Philosophy in the grand (aka: old) tradition of Thales is the tradition of distracted philosophers. If we include the Cynics, we one can also lose the clothes and every other kind of social grace.[28] Some literalist scholars argue that Socrates shows symptoms of what today we call Asperger's syndrome or a mild autism, or worse, if we take Plato's word for it (and Plato's ironic style makes this dangerous), Socrates was quite genuinely catatonic from time to time. In the *Symposium*, a social dialogue if there ever was one, Socrates is presented as a poster child for Haslanger's "poor socialization" — joining the other guests only when the meal is half over, a point stylistically highlighted by earlier sending someone to call him, and when he refuses to respond, by explaining his behavior on his behalf.[29] Alcibiades, who comes in even later than Socrates, offers us the image of Socrates, in the midst of battle, frozen in thought in spite of the cold, throughout the night to the morning,[30] Socrates, true to his nature, was so detached from the goings on that when everyone else fell exhaustedly asleep, departed unfazed to attend to the day.

The first philosopher, Thales, had the right (he claimed it, suffered or enjoyed the perspective it gained for him) to *be* the one who falls into the well. Women, it seems, then and now, have only the right to be practical, i.e., not philosophical: they have the right not to "want" to be the one in the well. They can play the role

[25] See Babich, "On the Analytic-Continental Divide in Philosophy: Nietzsche's Lying Truth, Heidegger's Speaking Language, and Philosophy," in: C. G. Prado, ed., *A House Divided: Comparing Analytic and Continental Philosophy* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2003), pp. 63-103.

[26] See "Paradigms and Thoughtstyles: Incommensurability and its Cold War Discontents from Kuhn's Harvard to Fleck's Unsung Lvov," *Social Epistemology*, 17 (2003): 97-107 and Babich, "Early Continental Philosophy of Science," in: Alan Schrift, ed., *The New Century Volume Three: History of Continental Philosophy* (Chesham, UK: Acumen Press, 2010), pp. 263-286.

[27] Haslanger, "Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy," p. 217ff.

[28] Of course, Diogenes was a male and that made all the difference both in his expression of his defiance of social convention and his success.

[29] Plato, *Symposium*, 175 a-b.

[30] Ibid., 220c-d.

of the Thracian milkmaid, laughing at Thales (and doubtless they will be told that that will be the "better part" for them to emulate) but they can't (and shouldn't want to) trade place with Thales.[31]

Thus and to this day, only the men have the socially problematic (*pace* Haslanger) yet, so I would argue and so Daly's pedagogy also underlined, philosophically *indispensable* right to fall, as it were, into the well. Thus today's women still, it seems, have the option of being the passing milkmaid and one can imagine women academics of two kinds, the Marthas and the Marys, that is the ones who tease or else those who avert their eyes when Saul Kripke or some other male philosopher has his fly undone or shirt/hair/face unkempt, as indeed this can also apply (although he does indeed favor bowties) to Jean-Luc Marion, thereby and neatly covering the profession *both* analytic *and* continental by pointing to a range of sartorially insouciant or incompetent professors on *either* side and by naming such names I mean to underscore the point that such incompetence is to their credit. Simon Critchley himself, a t-shirt and jeans guy from way back, takes insouciance so far that both undergraduates and journalists can get carried away by his style.

Why does it seem to be pushing things a bit to talk about Simon Critchley's clothes or, just to add a positive note, Alexander Nehamas' rather impeccable shoes, not to mention the distracted fall out of Kripke's couture? My point is that Kripke's messiness is part of his reputation and that that is part of his reputation for *genius*. Do we have women philosophers of this kind? Maybe we do, my point will be that we do not think of them in the same way.

Think again of Mary Daly, attacked in life for her style of writing and not less for her style of dress and personal demeanor and audacity for blocking men from her classes (at a university that, be it noted, only became coeducational as Boston College did in 1970). Women who buck the trend suffer.

This dyadic difference is arguably a matter of sex not gender and the detail is not limited to the academy. If you pass a man of ordinary middle age wearing a casual shirt and a casual pair of pants you will not even notice the detail of his attire. What do clothes have to do with it? Put a jacket and tie on the guy and he's dressed for the finest restaurant, and these days, he can even skip the tie. The phenomenon stands out in contrast with what can be observed of a Friday evening in New York (or because this is NY, any day or evening will do).

Go and do a little ad hoc phenomenology, using your observations and your own variations, and hence with and on yourself and your judgment, as you wander down the street on such evenings (assuming you are not part of the phenomenon yourself, as you might well be). Look for the well-dressed young women out for the night, whether with or without a date, but a comparative observation, if you mean to make one, can only be made when you can check out her companion.

[31] Plato, *Theatetus*, 174a.

She may be wearing a little black dress or the equivalent, high heels, stockings, have newly polished nails, newly coiffed hair, and underneath taken more care with her undergarments than even her mother would have recommended in the case of an accident, If her companion is her own age, almost invariably he will be dressed as he was the whole day (though the more fashion-conscious young fellow may have switched the day's t-shirt for a t-shirt for the evening, etc.). If he is an older man, he may well be wearing a suit, an article of "dress clothing," which even including one of the more complicated of the limited styles of knotting a tie, never takes more than ten minutes to don, shoes and all, or he may have the Euro, I-am-still-young look just described.
What is important is that however casually or formally he is dressed, he will get to have his feet — every last inch of his feet — on the ground.

Men are not objectified on the street, and this is so despite the commercial success of metrosexual products (which I am all for, you will have noted my enthusiasm for men's haberdashery and in general *anything* to do with male beauty). I have in the past encouraged women in the courses I rarely, but occasionally, give on feminism to follow up their own readings of Sartre's discussion of phenomenology, in terms of perception and consciousness (but not less with reference to de Beauvoir) by a similar kind of practice or phenomenological free variation on the street, using one's own glance or "look" to do so.

Just as Sartre's account of intentional consciousness — the subject-objectifying consciousness and its reciprocal subjected modality — describes a man on a park bench in order to reductively note the phenomenon of *being seen* as opposed to having only the transparent sense of himself as the one who has a regard for what he looks at, that is, qua conscious subject rather being reduced to — and it is essential to note that is a reduction *to* the status of — an object *for* another consciousness. As Sartre who was a marvelously consequent Hegelian as much as a Husserlian/Heideggerian, "'Being-seen-by-the-other' is the *truth* of 'seeing the other.' He is that object in the world which determines an internal flow of the universal, an internal hemorrhage which bleeds in his direction." [32]

Consider what a difference it makes to be a female, not as a subject of desire be it in Hegel's or in Butler's genitive subversion/inversion, but as a Sartrean consciousness, as a conscious subject for whom there is a still subjected world of objects that can turn the tables on the observer, in the case of other subjects of consciousness, simply by being there: "*I am seen*,"[33] as Sartre has it.

To see this, it can help to experiment by varying, indeed by inverting the example Sartre suggests. Instead of Sartre's male subject gazing around the park as he

[32] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Objectivity*, Hazel Barnes, trans. (New York: Washington Square, 1956), p. 345.
[33] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 347.

does as a sovereign subject, objectifying all he surveys until he is seen by another (man), try varying the phenomenological exercise by varying not the object but the observer.

The experiment is simple, one need only walk down the street and consider the men passing by. *Just look directly at them.* For most women raised in an Anglo-European culture (and I am not talking about other cultures for simplicity's sake), this will not be easy, inasmuch as most women are attuned to worry about their looks, and thus are concerned with how they might be seen rather than with looking at others (an exception, de Beauvoir is smashing on this,[34] is made in the case of other women: there one notices every flaw in what one revealingly calls her "looks," meaning, of course, how she looks to men).

Thus one might have a bit to do to check one's own consciousness in the process: at issue is not at all a matter of aesthetic judgment, at issue is not whether you like/dislike the men in question as this so often and very quickly can become a desire to look for a look, as Sartre would speak of it, that is, to look for a response to your own appearance or presence or being and the possibilities of the same in the process. Checking one's own consciousness in this way corresponds to the routine matter of the suspension of judgment or bracketing that Sartre speaks of, this is the epoché as Husserl speaks of it, as Nietzsche too speaks of it, both echoing the ancient Stoics. Thus bracketing your usual assumptions, and exactly without smiling, simply look over the men you pass on the street: look them up and down: check them out without inviting them to do the same. Look at them directly, in other words, as they might look at you (not out of the corner of your eye).[35] You can practice looking at men straight on after they have passed you (men often look at women this way, since the whole point of the action is appraisal rather than invitation) and then try looking at them head on as they pass.

When students of mine tried this, they reported that the *reactions* of men were the most striking. Men were confused, discomfited, checked to see if their flies were undone, their jackets misbuttoned or spotted, looked around to see who else might be the possible object of such "inspection." In some cases, so I was told, men even lost their footing, stumbling on the sidewalk, so off-putting was the experience of being looked at in this way.[36]

Sartre himself describes the equivalent of such stumbling when he seeks to exemplify what is meant by being an object for consciousness by using the

[34] See in general the latter portions of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*.
[35] For primates a direct gaze is a sign of aggression, looking to oneside or obliquely signals subordination.
[36] A note for real-world phenomenologists and other stripes of experimental, hands-on, eyes-open philosophers: *Be careful!* Like the drivers mentioned at the start in speaking of my cross-country misadventures, some men, indeed more than a few, will assume that a look is a sexual invitation, hence one is advised to limit such a phenomenological experiment to wide-open spaces, in broad daylight, say, in midtown, or on open boulevards, etc.

example first of projecting one's consciousness (the usual directionality of intentionality) by using the example of looking through a key hole. All of one's consciousness is ecstatic to oneself and in such a circumstance one is pure transcendence. In such attentiveness to what may be going on the other side of the key-hole, Sartre's point is that one's consciousness of one's own bodily being along with its discomfort, volatizes as one's awareness of one's own body disappears into a sheerly objective instrumentality for a consciousness that is now and utterly outside oneself: the whole of one's consciousness is absorbed by the object attended to. In this, nothing about the awkwardness of such a situation has anything self-referential or self-aware about it, one crouches thus and so: the position is wholly instrumental, thus one adjusts one's face to the side, squashing it without feeling it, squinting into the key hole just so: "But all of a sudden, I hear footsteps in the hall! Some one is looking at me!"[37] Being seen, the very possibility that one may have been seen in just this way, just *this* bodily disposition (the very same position heretofore matter of inattention, one way or the other), all one's consciousness crashes back instantaneously, not only bringing to instant awareness one's bodily awkwardness or discomfort but one (body, conscious intentionality) is just as suddenly reduced to being no more than an object for an other, an object for the gaze — judgment, presumptions, conclusions — of the other. Thus Sartre reflects *that* when I recognize that someone sees me, *that* someone is looking at me: "What does that mean? It means that I am suddenly affected in my being and that essential modifications appear in my structure…I see *myself* because *somebody* sees me…" [38] And our only concern, our anxiety in such situations will be all about determining, as well as we can, whether (or not) the other person, was in fact (or only seemingly) looking at us? We have a great many devices to pretend that the rare occasions where we fail to see someone are more common than they are. We affect disconcern, disinterest, inattention. But we only have to do so because of the extraordinary sweep and world-collapsing power of the gaze.

To turn the gaze around a bit, it is precisely relevant that a naked woman represents (conveniently enough for the heterosexual male spectator) the erotic signifier par excellence. When naked men *are* depicted, the stylizations or signifiers attending that representation make it plain that such represented images are intended not for the appreciation or admiration of heterosexual women but and rather for homosexual men. The subjects of sexual desire are men when it comes to male objects of desire and men and women, heterosexual and homosexual alike, must desire what heterosexual men desire. Thus it makes a difference that heterosexual men seeking pornographic images are offered a wide and seemingly inexhaustible range of beautiful women where supposed pornography for women is not only limited but often represents, as if this were a good thing, images of ordinarily and no more than ordinarily attractive men,

[37] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 284; 349.
[38] Ibid., p. 284. This reading can and should be compared to Lacan's discussion of the gaze and the Imaginary. See further, Debra Bergoffen, "The Look as Bad Faith," *Philosophy Today* 36, 3 (1992): 221-227.

sometimes accompanied with helpful glosses explaining that women, unlike men, are not interested in male beauty and are disinclined to celebrate male bodies (this is often coupled with the nauseating repetition of the claim that penis size, in whatever direction, is irrelevant to a woman's pleasure) and are so unmoved by male youth that they find old men attractive. Thus contemporary love stories in film and on television almost always show beautiful women (let us consider the model and the geek shows, and note immediately that one has already assumed the model to be female and the geek to be male) passing over beautiful or even just attractive men for the awkward and, seemingly so universal is this, the obligatorily unattractive male hero, who is described as 'sensitive' (a code-word for self-preoccupied). Woody Allen's films are comic depictions of the indefatigable allure the unattractive and older man is supposed (that's just the way women are) to hold for smart, beautiful, younger women, and there are many other such films – indeed films following this model have increased in recent years, think of Adam Sadler or Will Ferrell and still others.

There is, of course, much more to say on this but to conclude I turn briefly to Austrian novelist, Elfriede Jelinek's reflections on power and desire in order to raise the question of how this power dynamic denominates an established tradition of theological and philosophical love affairs.

Jelinek on Women and Power

The problem of Eros, as already suggested above, is also the problem of sexual desire and that is in the case of women often less, and this is no indictment but a lament, a matter of desiring than it is a matter of, that is, that it is *about* being desired. Luce Irigaray has written on the difference it makes to write on the matter of eros and love as on the body and on perception as a woman and thus explicitly in contrast with the perspectives that predominate in the literature.[39]

But what this means in real life practice, as Elfriede Jelinek, author of the novel *Women as Lovers*,[40] has explained, turns upon nothing but the issue of the status of women as such and in society and that means as compared with men. What is at stake as Jelinek explains it reflects the dynamics of "a Hegelian relationship between master and slave."[41] With respect to desire, that is to say of desiring, and hence and also with respect to desirability — who is desired, who gets to desire — Jelinek makes the inherently provocative observation that "as long as men are able to increase their sexual value through work, fame, or wealth, while women are only powerful through their body, beauty and youth, nothing will change."[42] But this is not what one wants to hear, it is not what one wants to believe. For the ordinary woman, sure, one can agree, but for a woman distinguished by her creativity, her fame, even her wealth, surely that must

[39] Luce Irigaray, *To be Two*, M. Cocito-Monoc, trans. (New York: Routledge, 2001).
[40] Elfriede Jelinek, *Woman As Lovers*, Martin Chalmers (London: Serpent's Tale, 1995).
[41] Deborah Solomon interview with Elfriede Jelinek, "A Gloom of Her Own," *New York Times*, Nov. 21, 2004.
[42] Ibid.

change everything? So it can't be true that "nothing will change" — surely, things have already begun to change? Surely by the time one gets to be Jelinek's age or attain her status, that age and status must make a difference? Thus Jelinek's surprised interviewer corrected her — surely, she asked such a claim could not be said to hold for famous women such as Jelinek herself. Not to be misunderstood, Jelinek again emphasized in reply that a "woman who becomes famous through her work reduces her erotic value. A woman is permitted to chat or to babble but speaking in public is still the greatest transgression."[43]

This was manifestly not what her interviewer wanted to hear, ergo the interview featured the hostile title, "A Gloom of Her Own." It is probably as impolitic to repeat this in the current context but it remains the case that Jelinek would not be the only celebrated woman literary artist one to have made such observations or suffered from them.

Indeed, one can read Anne Carson's later poems after her lover/husband rejected her, published after the extraordinary success of Carson's *Eros the Bittersweet*[44] for an extraordinarily honest and not less painful articulation of the same lived ramifications of the same phenomenon to which Jelinek refers.

About herself, in her own lyric voice, Carson writes:

> Loyal to nothing
> my husband. So why did I love him from early girlhood to late middle age
> and the divorce decree came in the mail?
> Beauty. No great secret. Not
> ashamed to say I loved him for his beauty.
> As I would again
> if he came near. Beauty convinces. You know beauty makes sex
> possible.
> Beauty makes sex sex.
> You if anyone grasp this – hush, let's pass.[45]

The poem is extraordinary and I am not "reading" it here except to note its ontic content. What Jelinek does not do in her writing, what Carson does not do except between the lines of her poems, Jelinek does clarify clarifies when pressed by Solomon's lack of sympathy no less than her Solomon's unquestionably good journalist's insistence or investigative instinct, Jelinek repeats: "A woman's artistic output makes her monstrous to men if she does not know how to make herself small at the same time and present herself as a commodity. At best people are afraid of her."[46]

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[43] Ibid.
[44] Anne Carson, *Eros, the Bittersweet* (Dalkey Archive Press, 1998). Originally published in 1986.
[45] In Carson, *The Beauty of the Husband* (New York: Random House, 2000).
[46] Elfriede Jelinek, *New York Times*, Nov. 21, 2004.

If literary or artistic fame does not, as Jelinek argues, enhance a woman's erotic value, it makes a difference of a negative and still more dismal kind that women tend not to be highly ranked in the academy to begin or to end with. Thus such valuation turns out to be anything but unconflicted and in this is so even in exceptional cases. And what about those love affairs?

The Life of the Mind as Love Affair: Héloïse, Hannah (Arendt), and Lou (Salomé)

Love has been part of the substance of philosophy from the start, just to speak of Empedocles but also of Plato, that is to say, as he attributes such a discourse to Socrates, as he attributes such a discourse to Diotima, the Mantinean hetaira. And love and inclination, as every one of us knows is the same familiarity that absorbs us in our reading of Carson on Eros or in Jelinek's and de Beauvoir's reflections on love.

Love as Carson has also underlined it for us, is and *can only be* an erotic figure as a mark of loss. And we are used to the power of figures of lack or loss. Thus Hannah Arendt focuses her doctoral dissertation on love in St. Augustine and reviewers and commentators muse that the theme was inspired by the erotic by its loss in and her personal life.[47] For Arendt's problem was that her lover — she had others then and since, and more than one husband, but we only care about the most famous of her lovers — Martin Heidegger was a married man.
But if Arendt is condemned for this, How could she love him? Is her dissertation any good? Is it anything more than a response to him? Where Arendt is diminished or loses face — How could she love him! — Heidegger too is condemned for the liason. Curiously, the condemnation lends Heidegger a bit more depth.

Thus Giorgio Agamben writes that so far from *lacking* a reference to love as is typically argued by those who complain that *Being and Time* focuses solely on death and anxiety, one can argue that *Being and Time*, simply given their love affair, was framed by or conceived "under the sign of love."[48]

So too, according to the Fullbrooks, Ed and Kate, was the writing of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*.[49] Indeed, the Fullbrooks argue persuasively that without de Beauvoir's philosophical influence, on every level that mattered, philosophical, conceptual and writerly compositional, there would be no Sartre as we know him. We could add the importance of Ilsetraut Hadot for Pierre Hadot's research and for many others here to remain unnamed names. But such parallels lack the enduring fascination of Heidegger and Arendt.

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[47] See among other reviews, Brooke Allen's "The Banality of Eros," *The Hudson Review*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (Summer, 2004): 317-324.
[48] Giorgio Agamben, "The Passion of Facticity: Heidegger and the Problem of Love" in Agamben, *Potentialities*: *Collected Essays in Philosophy* (Stanford; Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 185. Agamben cites Karl Jaspers, *Notizen zu Heidegger* (Munich: Piper, 1978), p. 34.
[49] Edward Fullbrook and Kate Fullbrook, *Sex and Philosophy: Rethinking De Beauvoir and Sartre* (London: Continuum, 2008).

What about Arendt and Heidegger? Politics? Well, the relationship preceded and survived Nazism. Anti-Semitism? Also complicated. Perhaps their age difference? And perhaps and for me arguably, and this is what I take from George Steiner, though to be sure this is not the point Steiner means to make, it is the power differential that surrounds a relationship between student and teacher? It is also just where we write ourselves into the imaginary, vicariously lived constellation. In other words, when we think of Hannah and Arendt we are not thinking of their meetings in restaurants and café's, as older friends, as indeed, and this is what upset Elfriede: old lovers.

In the context of that love affair at its inception, in the most important place of all, literally so, for memory and time, writing in the very first letter to pass between them, Heidegger tells Arendt that a "good girl," that is, that Hannah herself, must be careful of the risks of attending to higher things — noting "the forced academic activity of many" of her sex, remembering as must also have been present to Arendt's own mind that Heidegger's had met his wife Elfriede likewise as his student — and thus be sure to avoid sullying her pure "girlish" soul.[50] This complex encouragement, preserved in the first letter of their correspondence, may well be among the reasons Arendt always declined to be identified as, to be titled a philosopher.[51]

Steiner who, when speaking of Heidegger and Arendt, refers to neither Agamben nor Irigaray (or anyone else for that matter), installs Heidegger in the place of Peter Abelard in the lover's square, an installation unmanning Heidegger and writing Hannah Arendt into the nun's position, with Héloïse.[52] As a set construct, Steiner's assemblage reminds us of the old claim that philosophy begins in gossip (another way to translate the famous first line of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*). And because we are here talking about gossip, or love affairs in Heidegger's case, Heidegger, it should be underscored, instigates the high erotic move of

[50] This urging constitutes the heart of Heidegger's first letter to Arendt, where he writes: "'Be happy' that is now my wish for you. Only when you are happy will you become a woman who can give happiness, and around whom all is happiness, security, repose, reverence, and gratitude to life. …For it is at the point where individual intellectual work begins that the initial preservation of one's innermost womanly essence becomes decisive. …I cannot and do not want to separate your loyal eyes and dear figure from your pure trust, the honor and goodness of your girlish essence. … Be happy, good girl!" *Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger. Letters, 1925–1975*, trans. Andrew Shields (New York: Harcourt, 2004), p. 4.

[51] In a 1964 television interview with Günter Gaus, published as "Was bleibt? Es bleibt die Muttersprache" in Gaus, *Zur Person* (Munich: Piper, 1965), Arendt emphasizes this distinction in the context of her interviewers' efforts to highlight her status as a women 'in the circle of philosophers." Arendt responded by deflecting the focus on the feminine by making a distinction, the traditional philosopher's gambit: "I am afraid I have to protest. I do not belong to the circle of philosophers. My profession, if one can even speak of it at all, is political theory." Arendt, "'What Remains? The Language Remains': A Conversation with Günter Gaus," *Essays in Understanding: 1930-1954. Formation, Exile Totalitarianism* (New York: Shocken Books, 1994), p. 1.

[52] See George Steiner, *Lessons of the Masters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005). I discuss this further in Babich, *Words in Blood, Like Flowers*, Chapter One.

evasion. But perhaps it was Heidegger's refusal of Arendt precisely as his student — Heidegger would hand Arendt off to his friend Karl Jaspers for her doctoral work — a move that seemingly worked as the master's move that like Socrates, so Lacan will tell us (here following Nietzsche),[53] assured his enduring erotic allure. Deferral works in the way consummation never does.

Steiner presents his own "lessons" beyond the cheap, ontic reality of sexual harassment — Steiner has no patience with the language and imputations of unwanted attentions (how could there be anything but mutuality here, albeit on a clearly unequal level, Steiner seems to ask?), nor does he have any time to consider the possibility of less than spiritual, less than gentle consequences of such mismatched seduction (again, on both sides).

The masters, be it noted, never *want* to be masters at this level. Here is the chance to return to the Shropshire of their remembered, or unremembered, fulfilled or unfulfilled youth. And to be sure, for such literal minded thinkers of the old school, sexual harassment would be and is in fact a woefully inadequate term for the student's intellectual betrayal, for the frustrated hope and for the wronged innocence that teachers of a past generation can never imagine.

Never, never ever.

Teaching, to paraphrase Nietzsche, is so erotic. But for whom? Whose eros if not the master's erotic ideal: for we are not talking about a student playground, youth on youth.

Nietzsche himself was in this regard no outsider but stood full in the company of the masters — professors, teachers.

For his own part Nietzsche himself did not, so he assured Lou Salomé in a disarmingly innocent protestation of his "intentions," merely or only want someone to act as his secretary and practical assistant in household affairs, he wanted a — she could be *his* — pupil. She, of course, never wanted to be so lucky.

Why do we persistent in calling Lou Salomé by her first name, "Lou" countless commentators write, just where we do not refer to Nietzsche as Friedrich (forget Fritz or Freddy)?

Why is Arendt almost always emphatically *Hannah* Arendt even for those who write about her political thought. Heidegger is never called Martin, save in the context of a love story?

[53] See further, Babich, "On the Order of the Real: Nietzsche and Lacan" in: David Pettigrew and François Raffoul, eds., *Disseminating Lacan* (Albany. State University of New York Press, 1996), pp. 48-63.

It is significant that the paradigmatic love story for academic masters is that of Héloïse and Abelard. Peter Abelard was an unusually gifted troubadour, exceptionally successful with all the women who heard him, as Héloïse would remind him in one of her later letters, was the teacher and by 22 years the senior of Héloïse. Heidegger, the teacher, this is the point of Steiner's figuring, was 17 years older than Arendt, the student, who would years later, just like Héloïse and despite separation in distance and long silences, would still remember Heidegger as a hidden king. Nor am I saying that she was wrong on any level. I am only talking about the way we speak of Heidegger, the way we speak of Arendt.

The figuration of the names of Héloïse and Abelard, i.e., named by first and last names, exemplifies a pattern we know and use still in daily life. The woman we call by her first name, as if we ourselves were on intimate terms with her, the man only by his last name: Héloïse and Abelard, never called Peter. Did Héloïse even have a last name? Of course she might have had, but it has never been used when speaking of her. She was the niece of one Canon Fulbert, who arranged Abelard as her tutor (the same Fulbert who would ensured Abelard's castration following his seduction and marriage of his neice).

Perhaps we are all of us vicarious masters, to take over Steiner's phrase, and perhaps it is thus that we, male or female, assume the right of speaking on a first name basis whenever we speak of women.[54]

If Nietzsche was correct to upbraid or criticize philosophers for what he diagnosed as their "lack of love,"[55] his point was directed less to the philosophers' innocence or their deficiencies in matters erotic (as sex-manual mad or just gender scholars have assumed)\[56] than the philosophers' lack of critical concern with the "question" of love.

Love in the process, this is the legacy of what Heidegger names formal indication, obscures the character of this solicitude. Failing the exigent reticence of love, the castrated lover embraces the life and the values of a monk but the philosopher runs the risk of becoming what Nietzsche called a "grey" scientist, a mere scholar, a joyless aspirant to wisdom. Worse still, and this is the failure of philosophy itself for Heidegger, the philosopher can become no more than a man of science, dedicated to the calculation of practical knowledge, a calculation of security that is for Heidegger as it would also have been for Nietzsche no different from the calculation of the man of faith.

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[54] We even extend this intimacy to women we are not supposed to like, like Nietzsche's sister, Elisabeth, like Heidegger's wife, Elfriede, or Wagner's wife, Cosima, etc.

[55] "Ach dieser Mangel an Liebe in diesen Philosophen, die immer nur an die Ausgewählten denken un nicht so viel Glauben zu ihrer Weisheit haben. Es muss die Weisheit wie die Sonne für jedermann scheine: und ein blasser Stahl selbst in die niedrigste Seele hinabtauchen können" Friedrich Nietzsche, *Kritische Studien-Ausgabe* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1980), Vol. 7, pp. 720-721.

[56] See further on this question Babich, "Nietzsche and Eros Between the Devil and God's Deep Blue Sea: The Erotic Valence of Art and the Artist as Actor — Jew — Woman," *Continental Philosophy Review*, 33 (2000): 159-188.

And love always leaves us back where we began.