



University of Idaho

Women's Center

208-885-6616 Corner of Idaho and Line Streets Volume 24, Number 4 January-February 1996

ENTANGLED LIVES: FACING OUR SLAVEHOLDING PAST

by Susan Palmer

[Editor's note: This feature article introduces two special Women's Center Programs scheduled for the close of Black History Month, February 28, 1996. See listings for January-February Noon Programs inside this newsletter.]

By virtue of being the product of sociologist parents, I have been a student of sociology nearly all of my life, from dinner table discussions throughout my childhood to graduate school and beyond. It was C. Wright Mills who coined a term called the "sociological imagination" in his vigorous 1959 critique of mid-20th century sociological work. Opposed to the narrow, myopic empiricism that dominated the field of sociology, Mills vociferously advocated for a return to profound questions that challenged sociology's greatest early thinkers. He wrote that the sociological imagination "is the quality of mind essential to grasp the interplay of...biography and history, of self and world."

The sociological imagination had not fully come alive for me until several years ago when I accepted a temporary position at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, to teach sociology. While there, I met a historical sociologist, Dr. Ann Neel, whose vibrancy and unquenchable thirst for learning—or more precisely, for understanding (or *verstehen*)—was contagious for everyone within her reach. As a teacher and scholar, she had devoted her career to promoting "that quality of mind" C. Wright Mills extolled.

As a scholar, Dr. Neel practices what she preaches. For the past 15 years, Ann has been researching the social history of race, gender, and class relations of slave and slaveholding families in "Little Dixie," Missouri from the antebellum to post-reconstruction period (1820 to 1880). Her point of entrance and departure is

through her own genealogical investigation. Her study has focused on "how the lives of black and white women were entangled within the households of Randolph County, Missouri." The descendant of a slaveholding family, Ann documents social historical relations of ordinary people in that region without deceitfully glorifying history. With a critical eye and from a vantage point of realism, Ann, then, untangles and absorbs its contemporary relevance. In her research, she finds meaning for her own life.

"I started tracing these families," Neel explains in a recorded conversation, "and when I went there, I didn't know how to do this research at all because in sociology they don't teach you this. Actually, they don't even teach you this in history—you have to learn it through your own genealogy." She continued, "I first looked for letters and diaries. There were none. Half of them couldn't read or write, anyway. [So] I found the first census [in 1830], and I copied the whole thing—all men's names ...I traced the families that were there in 1830 that I could still find in 1840, '50, '60...and those were my study group...ninety-four families."

The material Ann unearthed was to become a book called *Women of Little Dixie*. But, she acknowledges, "I didn't have enough on the black women." "I studied whites for a long time," Neel explains, "and so I shifted...I started looking at which ones were slaveholders—which ones were big slaveholders, which ones were little [slaveholders]." Undaunted by official documents that recorded information solely under men's names, and only white families at that, she persisted. "I hand copied the slave schedules of 1850 because it's the first time they actually separate them out. I discovered, much later, probate-

records. In probate records...you get the names of the slaves."

Interestingly, this recorded conversation took place between Ann Neel and an equally remarkable woman, Ms. Pam Smith. Ms. Smith, a political communications consultant and Jesse Jackson's communications director during his presidential campaign of 1988, began researching her family's history in 1990 after viewing the television mini-series "Queen," based on Alex Haley's continuation of his earlier book, *Roots*.

"I remember watching 'Roots,'" Smith reflects, "[but] I was younger [and] you're ready for different things at different points in your life. At the end of [Queen], I wondered where our family came from." So, Smith began her own genealogical investigation to puzzle together her ancestry, first interviewing older family members, then viewing dozens of microfilm reels in Chicago's Newberry Library. When Pam inquired about the marriage records of her great great grandparents who were slaves in Moberly, Missouri, Ms. Smith was referred to Ann Neel. Although separated by over two thousand miles, Ann and Pam have shared their research findings and their enthusiasm. Together they have discovered some startling connections between their families.

"Why I think it's important for black people," Pam explains, "[is that] if you had a sense of 'I am a descendant of kings and queens ...and we're the builders of pyramids'...it just makes you feel so proud. I think that is all missing from our community and our culture, and I think without that, all we know is slavery. That's our beginning."

Pam recently returned from two years in Africa where she worked as a volunteer teacher and educational consultant. Through oral interviews and archival research, she studied the

continued on next page

U.S. slave trade while there. Pam visited slave ports in Ghana, Senegal, and Benin, in addition to traveling through Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, and Mali.

A vital component of family histories for both Neel and Smith is their striking use of a sociological imagination. They faithfully articulate the intersections and interplay of their own biographies and history, of their own selves and the world, remaining ever-aware of the social context then and now.

Summarizing why she engages in this pursuit, Neel says, "It reminds me of Toni Morrison and *Beloved*, and probably the whole meaning of *Beloved* is what she calls 're-memory'...if we lose the memory of people...that's when things are really gone...The people that have gone before...are part of what we've been. If we don't understand that, we don't know what we're doing half the time. Yes, we can function without memory, but what if all of a sudden you had amnesia? You could function, but you'd be only half there. I think that one of the things that is really true is that whenever people don't know anything about their past, they don't know half of why they do things. They don't understand each other. They don't understand themselves."

If you'd like to experience the sociological imagination come alive, I invite you to join Pam Smith and Ann Neel, descendants of slaves and slaveholders, respectively, in their first public address together on *Wednesday, February 28*, at the University of Idaho. For more information, see the Noon Program listings on the center pages of this newsletter.



THINK SNOW ! WOMEN'S CENTER CROSS- COUNTRY SKI WEEKEND

With patience, as this newsletter goes to press, we anticipate our long-awaited snowfall. Hoping that the real winter is merely delayed, this year's *12th Annual Women's Center Cross-Country Ski Weekend* is scheduled for the first weekend in March. We will return to Elk River's Main Street Cabins this year. We have reserved accommodations for the night of *March 2*. The cost will be approximately \$30. Registration details will be available in the March newsletter. However, you may stop by or phone the Women's Center to make your reservation during January and February.

ATHENA'S SECOND ANNUAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Gender Communication, February 16-17, 1996, University Inn-Best Western, Moscow, Idaho. Carolyn Desjardins, executive director of The National Institute for Leadership Development, will conduct a workshop to involve participants in improved gender communication. Over twenty regional professionals will address gender communication in education, politics, business, and not-for-profit organizations in panel sessions that run consecutively opposite Desjardins' workshop on gender team building. Bill Hall, author, and editorial page editor of the *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, will be the dinner speaker Friday evening. The registration fee is \$40 (student rate \$30), which includes Friday dinner and Saturday lunch. The preregistration deadline is February 5. To register, contact Kay Keskinen, Computer Services, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83844-3155, phone: (208)885-2076. fax: (208)885-7539, or e-mail: kay@uidaho.edu.



SAVORY MOMENTS WITH AUNTIE PASTO

Greetings My Culinary Cousins,

Recently, a subscriber requested a recipe for those who despise, that is DESPISE, to cook or bake. A bit of an Epicurean challenge for one, like me, who is serious about food, I decided to give it my best shot. Increasingly, cyberspace offers answers for everything. Auntie Pasto got out her surfboard on the web and hit a tidal wave of possibilities. Trusting that no one over-indulged in sweets over the holidays, my selection for those of you who despise to bake follows. Those of us who wear aprons unabashedly may also find it tasty.

Aunt Emma's Instant Cookies

1 cup sugar
1/2 cube of butter
1/4 cup of milk
2 tablespoons of cocoa
1/2 teaspoon of vanilla
1 1/2 cups oatmeal
1/4 cup chunky peanut butter

Mix sugar, butter, milk, and cocoa in a pan. Boil ONE MINUTE. Add vanilla, oatmeal, and peanut butter. Stir until thickened. Drop by the teaspoon onto waxed paper. Cool and serve.

You can find Auntie Pasto's recipe box on the web yourself. Surf to the UI Women's Center Home Page:
<http://www.uidaho.edu/~wcenter/>

To share your family recipes with Auntie Pasto, write to: Auntie Pasto, c/o Women's Center, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83844-1064.



THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO
WOMEN'S CENTER
PRESENTS

ENTANGLED LIVES: CONFRONTING OUR SLAVEHOLDING PAST

DR. ANN NEEL

HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGIST
UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND

&

MS. PAM SMITH

POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT
FORMER COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
JESSE JACKSON FOR PRESIDENT CAMPAIGN 1988

WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 28, 1996
7:00 P.M.

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO AUDITORIUM
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

RECEPTION FOLLOWING PRESENTATION

SPONSORS INCLUDE THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST, MULTICULTURAL PROGRAMS OFFICE,
STUDENT ADVISORY SERVICES, AND THE MARTIN PEACE INSTITUTE

January 1996 Noon Programs

Women's Center programs are open to all members of the community. We invite you to bring a friend, some lunch and join us! Programs begin at 12:30 p.m. in the Women's Center Lounge unless indicated otherwise.

January 23
Tuesday

KASHMIR: THE CONFLICT WITHIN Although news coverage of the disputed territory in Kashmir (bordered by both India and Pakistan) is dwarfed by attention to other conflicts such as Bosnia, the danger of the civil unrest in the region is underscored by the kidnapping of a Spokane resident, among others, and the U.S. State Department's warning that U.S. citizens avoid all travel to Jammu and Kashmir. *Anjum Sadiq*, a native of Kashmir and acting president of the International Women's Association, will discuss her observations of the conflict during her most recent trip to her homeland.

January 24
Wednesday

CHINESE OR TAIWANESE? ANALYZING THE NATIONAL IDENTITY OF THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN The National Republic of China (the island of Taiwan) and the mainland People's Republic of China, are habitually vying for global recognition. Taiwan, in particular, seeks full United Nations membership. *Sheila Schulte*, international student advisor, will provide an overview of the recent political and economic history of Taiwan to reveal an underlying story about the shaping of a national identity.

January 30
Tuesday

CHILDBIRTH CHOICES As the Palouse area examines possible enhancements to provide quality local health care, an opportunity opens for parents and parents-to-be to envision childbirth choices that are currently unavailable in the Palouse. Are you among those who prefer home births to hospital births? Or would you like to see a Birthing Center alternative? What considerations are there in selecting a physician as opposed to a midwife? *Lisa Litton*, certified nurse midwife, and *Pam Palmer*, childbirth educator at Pullman Memorial Hospital, will moderate this panel discussion of childbirth experiences and visions of our future.

January 31
Wednesday

DISTANCE PARENTING Geographic separation alters numerous parent-child relationships. *Ginna Babcock*, Ph.D. ☺, UI Sociology Department, compares the findings of her research projects *Fathers on the Outside* and *Long-Distance Mothers*. Are all long-distance fathers, "Disney Dads"? And are all non-custodial mothers, "lousy moms"? Join us to explore issues in non-custodial parenting ranging from the legal climate to current cultural beliefs about parenting.

February 1996 Noon Programs

Women's Center programs are open to all members of the community. We invite you to bring a friend, some lunch and join us! Programs begin at 12:30 p.m. in the Women's Center Lounge unless indicated otherwise.

February 6
Tuesday

STAFF POLITICS AND POLICIES What are the most significant issues for staff members? How much clout does the Staff Affairs Committee have with the administration? Can the Staff Affairs Committee address human resource and benefits problems? Are your concerns well represented? *Jane Baillargeon*, Staff Affairs Committee Chair, will discuss current issues and policy changes facing the Staff Affairs Committee, and will answer the myriad questions you bring to this noon program. Why not bring a co-worker?

February 7
Wednesday

THE MANY FACETS OF HARRIET BEECHER STOWE Harriet Beecher Stowe is best known as the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. *Barbara Howard Meldrum*, UI English Department, is currently writing a book on Stowe, a woman of many talents whose achievements were a tribute to her country, and an inspiration to others; her weaknesses were those of her era. In this presentation—illustrated with slides of people, places, and books—Meldrum explores the many facets of Stowe's life, including her abolitionist role. *This program is supported in part by the Idaho Humanities Council, a state-based program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Gifts from First Security Bank and The Steele-Reese Foundation also support the IHC Speakers Bureau.*

February 1996 Noon Programs *continued*

Women's Center programs are open to all members of the community. We invite you to bring a friend, some lunch and join us! Programs begin at 12:30 p.m. in the Women's Center Lounge unless indicated otherwise.

February 13

Tuesday

READING AND WRITING ACROSS GENDERS The 1996-97 Idaho Writer-in-Residence, the state's highest literary award, has been awarded to *Lance Olsen*, UI English Department, who will read selections from both male and female points of view in his own work. Olsen is the director of creative writing at UI and author of the novel, *Live From Earth*, and the short story, "Scherzi, I Believe." He also has two novels scheduled for publication this year, *Burn* and *Time Famine*. Treat yourself to lunch with this extraordinary local talent.

February 14

Wednesday

STONES FROM MY POCKET: NOTES ON COMPOSING A LIFE *Marti Mihalyi*, UI English Department, presents a reading or "concert" of strong pieces by contemporary authors whose work she admires and finds too beautiful to hoard. The presentation will close with a sampling of poems from her most recent book, *The Woman in the Glass House Speaks*. If you missed hearing this award-winning author read at the YWCA of the Palouse annual membership meeting, you do not want to miss her here. Bring a friend and relax in the Women's Center for this engaging program!

Susan B. Anthony's Annual Birthday Party Celebration!

February 20

Tuesday

"ONE WOMAN, ONE VOTE" (Part I) In commemoration of *Susan B. Anthony's* birthday (February 15, 1820), join us to view this widely-acclaimed *American Experience* PBS special which chronicles the early days of the women's suffrage movement, including the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, the abandonment of black suffragists by whites, the extraordinary friendship between Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, concluding with "Aunt Susan's" death in 1912. Narrated by Susan Sarandon, this *Civil War's*-style documentary includes illuminating interviews with numerous historians and biographers.

CAKE SERVED BOTH DAYS!

February 21

Wednesday

"ONE WOMAN, ONE VOTE" (Part II) Prior to passage of the 19th amendment in 1920, women gained the right to vote only on an individual state's rights basis. Progressive for its time, the Idaho legislature granted women the right to vote in 1896. This year we celebrate 100 years of women's right to vote in Idaho. (See *related article*.) Join us to view the second half of this stirring documentary which covers the last decade of the 72-year battle prior to women's enfranchisement, featuring Alice Paul's hunger strike, Carrie Chapman Catt's unwavering leadership, the "Petticoat Brigade," and the hoopla from the "Ladies Gallery."

February 28

Wednesday

12:30 p.m.

CONFRONTING SLAVE CASTLES OF AFRICA *Pam Smith* spent two years in Africa where she worked as a volunteer teacher and educational consultant. Through oral interviews and archival research, she studied the U.S. slave trade while there. Pam visited slave ports in Ghana, Senegal, and Benin, in addition to traveling through Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, and Mali. (See *feature article on front page*.)

Combined UI Roundtable and Women's Center Noon Program
Student Union Building, Ballroom. 12:30 p.m.



7:00 p.m.

ENTANGLED LIVES: FACING OUR SLAVEHOLDING PAST *Ann Neel* and *Pam Smith* each engage in genealogical research. They are descendants of Missouri slaveholders and slaves, respectively. In their first public address together, Pam and Ann will guide us through their personal journeys through history, describe how they discovered one another, and discuss the significance of their independent and collaborative work, as well as the meaning of their friendship. (See *feature article on front page*.)

University of Idaho Auditorium, Administration Building
7:00 p.m.

Reception following presentation

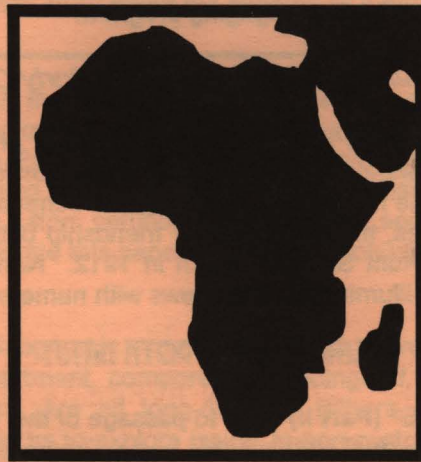
THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO ROUNDTABLE

AND

THE WOMEN'S CENTER

PRESENT

CONFRONTING SLAVE CASTLES OF AFRICA



MS. PAM SMITH

STUDIED U.S. SLAVE TRADE WHILE IN AFRICA.

RECENTLY RETURNED FROM VISITING SLAVE PORTS IN GHANA, SENEGAL,
AND BENIN. TRAVELED THROUGH KENYA, UGANDA, TANZANIA, TOGO,
COTE D'IVOIRE, AND MALI.

WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 28, 1996

12:30 P.M.

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

SUB BALLROOM

"NO REST FOR THE WICKED" by AUNTIE ESTABLISHMENT

Dear Sisters,

You may be surprised to learn that the Reformation is again upon us. Why, a new reform seems to lurk under every rock! The very air we breathe is charged with rumors of Medicaid/Medicare Reform, Political Lobbying Reform, Tax Reform, Social Security Reform--at one point, we were even going to have Health Care reform, but the patient opted for euthanasia. And now, here in Idaho, we have the Governor's Welfare Reform Advisory Council's 44 proposals. Now, as all of this reform is so very head-spinning, Auntie has decided to adopt a time-honored mathematical approach to deciphering how we might fare on this new diet of worms. (The Shakespearians among you will forgive me for stealing one of Hamlet's puns.) I have organized all 44 proposals into a simple flow-chart:

Option A Get a good job = housing, insurance, and you get to eat.

Option B Get a husband with a good job = housing, insurance, and you get to eat.

Option C Get parents with at least one good job between them = housing, insurance, and you get to eat.

What happens if none of these options currently applies to you? You had best make certain that one of them does. Sisters, what could be simpler? If you're a single mother, get married; if you're unemployed, get work. Just as Martin Luther downsized seven sacraments into only two, the range of social safety net programs currently in place is to be crunched into the magic words *personal responsibility*. (For those of you not fluent in governmentese, *personal responsibility* is Pig Latin for *hard cheese*.)

And speaking of hard cheese, it has come to Auntie's attention that several more of those interesting citizen's initiatives are circulating our fair state. Along with Mr. Kelly Walton's latest effort to have the state officially declare that homosexuals are icky, some Idaho militia members are circulating an initiative which would make it legal for the government to call them up alongside the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines in times of national emergency. Now, my dears, this is reformation indeed, but it just doesn't go far enough. Why, when the Russians come (armed with their Visa cards), I want our elected officials to summon up the Salvation Army, the Army-Navy Surplus, Navy Blue, Blue Velvet, Velvet Jones, Davy Jones, Alias Smith and Jones, Smith and Wesson, Wesson Oil, and well, you get the picture. It's all part of the Reformation Redux--from every man his own priest to every man his own standing army.

Strange days indeed, as Mr. Lennon would have said. Take care, sisters!

Yours in breathless anticipation,
Auntie Establishment

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN IDAHO: 100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE RIGHT TO VOTE

"They are going to make men of women, and when they do that the correlative must take place that men must become women. So I suppose we are to have women for public officers, women to do military duty, women to work the roads, women to fight the battles of this country, and men to wash the dishes, men to nurse the children, men to stay at home while the ladies go out and make stump speeches..."

--Representative John Reagan (D-TX)
opposing the admission of Wyoming to the
Union in 1890 because it had allowed women
to vote since 1869

Before ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920, only most of the Eastern, Midwestern and Southern states and New Mexico still denied women the vote. After Wyoming's pioneering breakthrough in 1869, the list of states allowing women to vote, for President at least, inched forward:

- 1893 -- Colorado
- 1896 -- Idaho, Utah
- 1910 -- Washington
- 1911 -- California
- 1912 -- Arizona, Kansas, Oregon
- 1914 -- Montana, Nevada
- 1917 -- New York
- 1918 -- Michigan, Oklahoma, and South Dakota

[from *The Washington Spectator*, vol. 21, no. 18 October 1, 1995.]

Prior to statehood, Idaho failed to enfranchise women in 1871, when Dr. Joseph Williams Morgan's (Malad City, Oneida County) House Bill 64 resulted in a tie vote on the

third reading, 11-11, which meant defeat. Although Idaho women gained the right to vote in *school elections* in 1885, enfranchisement failed again by a vote of 7-15. At the Idaho constitutional convention in 1889, the priority of statehood superseded voting rights, and many speculate that the fear of prohibition aided in Idaho's resistance to grant women the right to vote. Instead, Idaho waited until "a constitutional amendment would be required--two-thirds vote of both houses of the legislature, voting separately, and ratification by a majority of the electors at a general election."

The vote by counties was:

<u>County</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>
Ada	1128	701
Bannock	805	306
Bear Lake	599	213
Bingham	772	264
Blaine	397	354
Boise	403	283
Canyon	679	317
Cassia	455	87
Custer	151	176
Eimore	223	160
Fremont	986	219
Idaho	477	320
Kootenai	638	383
Latah	1112	582
Lemhi	429	274
Lincoln	224	70
Nez Perce	457	221
Oneida	841	264
Owyhee	395	328
Shoshone	625	582
Washington	380	229

[from *Idaho Yesterdays*, Spring 1972]

THE WOMEN'S CENTER NEWSLETTER is published six times during the academic year. It includes announcements and information about the many services and programs offered by the Center to the University and regional communities. There are also items of general interest about women's and men's issues. If you have announcements or information to include in subsequent issues, please let us know. Suggestions for changes, improvements, or additional items are always welcome. Disability access is on the north end of the building through the TAAC. A taped copy of the newsletter is available on request for the visually impaired.

WOMEN'S CENTER STAFF:

Director	BETSY THOMAS
Public Service Representative	JILL ANDERSON
Education Programmer	SUSAN PALMER
Sexual Assault Program Advisor	VALERIE RUSSO
TELEPHONE:	1-208-885-6616
FAX NUMBER:	1-208-885-9494
E-MAIL ADDRESS:	WCENTER@UIDAHO.EDU
OFFICE HOURS:	8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Monday-Friday

NOTABLES

- Birthdays: **Lucretia Mott**, Quaker minister, abolitionist, and suffragist, born January 3, 1793; **Carrie Chapman Catt**, suffrage leader, born January 9, 1859; **Alice Paul**, suffrage leader and ERA drafter, born January 11, 1885; **Rosa Parks**, initiator of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, born February 4, 1913; **Betty Friedan**, author of *The Feminine Mystique* and co-founder of the National Organization for Women, born February 4, 1921; **Frederick Douglass**, abolitionist leader, born February 14, 1817; **Susan B. Anthony**, strategist of the early women's rights movement, born February 15, 1820.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is January 15. Numerous activities are scheduled across campus during this week. Although details are unavailable as we go to press, *Dick Hill* is scheduled to speak on Wednesday, January 17, and *Eric Davis* will present Rap 101 on January 18. Look for announcements in local and campus media.
- Ramadan marks the month of fasting for over one billion Muslims worldwide. Ramadan is observed from January 21 to February 19 this year. It is a time of inner reflection, self control, devotion and worship.

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