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Confronting the Concept of Intersectionality: The Legacy of Audre Lorde and Contemporary Feminist Organizations

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Abstract

Audre Lorde was one of many women to criticize second wave feminism for overlooking issues of intersectionality. This paper examines the ways in which Lorde introduced intersectionality into feminist discourse and how feminist organizations embrace this concept today. Five organizations are examined (National Organization for Women, Grand Valley State University Women's Center, Ms. Foundation, Third Wave Foundation, and Guerilla Girls) by interviewing representatives and/or evaluating websites to assess organizational mission, vision, values and practices. Analyses reveal that all five organizations have specific policy statements addressing intersectionality. This research can conclusively say that intersectionality is at least considered by all of the organizations. Determining whether or not the current intervention strategies are effective for women experiencing overlapping oppressions is beyond the scope of this study. The different rhetoric used by each organization to address the intersectional issue, however, suggests that intersectionality is "applied" or put into practice differently by different organizations.

KEYWORDS: Audre Lorde, Feminism, Intersectionality

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ABSTRACT

Audre Lorde was one of many women to criticize second wave feminism for overlooking issues of intersectionality. This paper examines the ways in which Lorde introduced intersectionality into feminist discourse and how feminist organizations embrace this concept today. Five organizations are examined (National Organization for Women, Grand Valley State University Women's Center, Ms. Foundation, Third Wave Foundation, and Guerilla Girls) by interviewing representatives and/or evaluating websites to assess organizational mission, vision, values and practices. Analyses reveal that all five organizations have specific policy statements addressing intersectionality. This research can conclusively say that intersectionality is at least considered by all of the organizations. Determining whether or not the current intervention strategies are effective for women experiencing overlapping oppressions is beyond the scope of this study. The different rhetoric used by each organization to address the intersectional issue, however, suggests that intersectionality is "applied" or put into practice differently by different organizations.

Introduction

Feminist organizations play a pivotal role in the survival of the feminist movement. They are central sites for creating activism and furthering feminist praxis (Baumgardner 2005). As such they can demonstrate to the researcher how important theoretical concepts, such as intersectionality, actually manifest when put into practice. This research defines intersectionality as a tool for analysis, advocacy and policy development that addresses multiple discriminations and helps us understand how different sets of identities impact access to rights and opportunities.¹ This brings us to the question at the center of this research: have feminist organizations confronted the concept of intersectionality within their work? In other words, do they account for the multidimensionality of women's lives while fighting for economic, political and social equality? Furthermore, has confronting intersectionality become a central tenet of feminist organizing? These are the guiding questions of this research because they help to assess whether this particular concept has gone from the margin to the center of the mainstream feminist radar. These questions also bring us closer to an understanding of how concepts deemed important by a small group can become permanently relevant within feminism and by extension within society.

Audre Lorde, perhaps better than anyone else, articulated an experience of overlapping oppressions and generated scholarship that helped make feminism pay attention to these issues. She was a self-defined Black, lesbian, feminist, mother and poet warrior who refused to live a single-issue life and therefore called for a multi-issued feminist movement (Lorde 1984). This research uses Lorde as a representative voice for



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¹ This particular definition was taken from the Association for Women's Rights in Development, *Women's Rights and Economic Change: Intersectionality a Tool for Gender and Economic Justice*, by Alison Symington (2004). After synthesizing many definitions of this concept, the above definition seemed to most accurately capture the concept as it is meant in this research.

all women who articulated comparable positions (such as Gloria Anzaldua, Cherrie Moraga and Barbara Smith) on the need within feminism to confront intersectionality. She is isolated because her life and works help to focus feminist discussion around the complexity of identity thus providing potent examples of why intersectionality is an important feminist issue.²

All of Audre Lorde's published materials are consulted to explore the ways in which she conceptualized her status as an "outsider" and critiqued feminism for overlooking intersectional issues. Additionally, important works about Lorde that are written or edited by other authors are examined. Next, the research attempts to assess Lorde's legacy on feminist organizing. The point is not to theorize an explicit nexus between current feminist practice and Lorde's influence. Instead, the point is to explore whether or not feminism has been responsive to critiques about the oversight in intersectional issues and to offer an example of someone who was among the first to purpose their significance in the late 20th century.³

The following feminist organizations were examined: National Organization for Women (NOW), Grand Valley State University Women's Center, Ms. Foundation, Third Wave Foundation, and Guerilla Girls. There is a specific logic to this sample that reflects a desire for diverse and esteemed representation while also being cognizant of time and resource constraints.⁴

Audre Lorde's Legacy

Black feminist scholar, Kimberly Crenshaw explains intersectionality as, "a means of capturing both the

structural and dynamic (e.g., active) aspects of multiple discrimination, thus affecting both theory and practice" (Morgan 2003 p46). This requires looking at interactive discriminatory structures that set the grounds for more active displays of marginalization. Or as Crenshaw puts it, "[h]ow discrimination is structured and how it works" (Morgan 2003 p46). For example, a Black, female, single, welfare-recipient is crippled by power hierarchies that privilege the White, male, married, middle class experience over hers. She is also vulnerable to specific policies that enforce and compound her domination. Using the metaphor of an intersection is useful in illustrating how these different oppressive identity markers are not mutually exclusive (Morgan 2003). Feminism as a truly inclusive and liberatory movement must reach the multiply oppressed and learn from them about the complexity of their circumstances. Crenshaw uses the specific example of a traffic intersection to explain the various dimensions of intersectionality. For example, she says,

Staying with our metaphor of intersections and traffic, it's crucial to understand that the 'ambulances' and 'EMS personnel' necessary to aid the victims of these collisions—constituent communities, liberation movements, progressive activists—often don't reach the collision victims on time, or at all, or may be insufficiently equipped to make the right diagnosis for full rescue and remedy. (Morgan 2003 p. 50)

Whether feminist organizations have learned to be effective 'ambulances'

and 'EMS personnel' is the purpose of this research.

Within the historical development of feminism, intersectionality is a concept that was deeply examined in the second wave (Kolmer, Bartkowski 2005). The second wave refers to an era of feminism occurring between the early 1960s to the early 80s (Pilcher, Whelehan 2004). It addressed issues like reproductive freedom, abortion rights, access to jobs, equal pay for equal work, and the personal as political. This era of feminism was largely seen as a suburban white women's movement. Women of color—Black, Latina, Native American and Asian women—were often very critical of what has commonly been referred to as the "mainstream, White women's movement" (2004).⁵ However, women like feminist scholar Benita Roth would kindly remind us that women of color had feminist movements of their own that were occurring simultaneously. So it was not as if women of color were begging entry into this mainstream movement. They were often participating in their own separate forms of feminism. Still, women of color did feel marginalized by the lack of attention paid to issues like race, class, and sexual orientation within the white women's movement.

One of the most prolific and important women to emerge as a second wave critic was Audre Lorde. It is important to isolate her from the chorus of women of color critics for four key reasons: 1) Lorde was a figurehead for Black lesbian feminism; 2) she left an accessible canon; 3) she explicitly celebrated difference; and 4) she was marginalized in multiple ways.

² Lorde was also selected because her identity markers are similar to those of the researcher and the personal has always served as an interesting and legitimate starting point for feminist scholarship.

³ Women like Sojourner Truth did this work in the 19th century (see Kolmar)

⁴ The logic of selecting each organization will be further explained later (see section on Methods)

⁵ It is important to note that the term "women of color" has recently come under scrutiny because it conflates all of these complex identities/histories into one and assumes that women of color belong together just because there is oppression in common. This is a point articulated by Analouise Keating in *Women Reading Women Writing: Self-Invention in Paula Gunn Allen, Gloria Anzaldua and Audre Lorde* (1996).

Audre Lorde was renowned as the figurehead for black lesbian feminism and by extension it is safe to say women of color lesbian feminism. For example, in 1983 when the National Coalition of Black Gays wanted to include a gay/lesbian speaker at the March on Washington for Jobs Peace and Freedom they turned to Audre Lorde (De Veaux 2004). Her name and image are inextricably woven with black lesbian feminism.

She also left us with an accessible and profound canon of poetry, an autobiography, and prose. As she might have said herself, she turned the silence surrounding intersectionality into language and action and left a rubric of articulate thought for future generations to follow.

Within her writings she put forth a theory of difference. This theory is most clearly articulated in *Sister Outsider*, a collection of her essays and speeches. Simply put, the theory explains a celebration of difference as necessary for a healthy society. For example, when referring to racism, sexism, heterosexism, and homophobia she says:

These forms of human blindness stem from the same root—an inability to recognize difference as a dynamic human force, one which is enriching rather than threatening to the defined self, when there are shared goals. (Lorde 1984 p. 45)

or later in the same book, different essay:

You do not have to be me in order for us to fight along side each other. I do not have to be you to recognize that our wars are the same. What we must do is commit ourselves to some future that can include each other and to work toward that future with the particular strengths of our individual identities. And in order to do this we must allow each other our differences at the same

time as we recognize our sameness. (Lorde 1984 p. 142)

Lorde argued that women needed to bring their whole selves to the movement and she believed that difference, diversity and inclusion should be the lifeblood of the feminist movement (and for that matter any movement).

The final reason for isolating Lorde is the extremity of her marginalization. She was *the* outsider. She was born in the 30s to Caribbean working-class immigrant parents, she was myopic and considered blind at birth, she was Black, woman and lesbian-identified. She made confronting these intersections a theme throughout her work.

For instance in the late 70s/early 80s there was a rash of brutal rapes and murders of Black women—mostly in the Boston area. There were thirteen total murders in a relatively short period of time. Black males in the community were framing this as a race issue (De Veaux). Lorde reminded us that people were not only victimized because of their race but because of their sex as well (De Veaux). In the following excerpt from *Need: A Chorale of Black Women's Voices* (Lorde 1997) she articulates the intersectionality of race and sex in the victim's experience:

Dead Black women haunt the Black
maled streets
paying the cities secret and familiar
tithe of blood
burn blood beat blood cut blood
seven year old child rape victim
blood
blood of a sodomized grandmother
blood
blood on the hands of my brother
blood
and his blood clotting in the teeth
of strangers
as women we were meant to bleed
but not this useless blood
my blood every month a memorial

to my unspoken sisters falling
like red drops to the asphalt
I am not satisfied to bleed
as a quiet symbol for no one's
redemption
why is it our blood
that keeps these cities fertile?

Lorde's poetry speaks to what it is like to belong to two groups that are victimized. She is talking about being Black and woman. Lorde, however, did not really feel like she belonged to any one group entirely. This is demonstrated, for example in a poem called *Between Ourselves* (Lorde 1997) where she muses on not belonging to the black community because of her sexual orientation:

Once when I walked into a room
my eyes would seek out the one or
two black faces
for contact or reassurance or a sign
I was not alone
now walking into rooms full of
black faces
that would destroy me for any
difference
where shall my eyes look?
Once it was easy to know who were
my people

Lorde stood on the fringes of society and was therefore able to see injustices more clearly. She also stood on the outskirts of the white women's movement and was able to critique it in a way that held it accountable and called it on its broadest and truest ideals - the thinking being (and in her own words), "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not lead single-issue lives" (Lorde 1984).

All of this is a synthesis of the literature review and the second part of the research attempts to look at how successful women like Lorde were in re-shaping feminism to include intersectionality as a central tenet.

Methods

Performing this research involved establishing criteria for determining what qualifies as a feminist organization. Feminist scholar bell hooks' definition of feminism was adopted for this project. She defines feminism as, "[a] movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation and oppression" (hooks 2000 p1). With this in mind, the research qualifies a feminist organization as one that adheres to all three dimension of hooks' definition. This means that, in this research, feminist organizations are defined as those that actively work to eliminate sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. Additionally, the organizations examined are all self-avowedly feminist. This method of defining separates organizations that may simply work with women or have "women" in their title from those that are grounded in feminist principles. After establishing this criteria, there was a specific logic to each organization selected.⁶

Logic of Sample

The logic of selecting The National Organization for Women (NOW) is that it is positioned as one of the oldest and largest feminist organizations in the country, and this allows it to set the feminist agenda in many ways. It also has a history of marginalizing women who were not white, straight, and middle-class. Seeing NOW addressing intersectional issues is pretty sound evidence that the feminist movement has been responsive to critiques by women like Lorde.

The logic of selecting the Grand Valley State University Women's Center (GVWC) is manifold. The GVWC is an example of a localized feminist action center and helps to embody the feminist ideal of allowing students/community members to think globally and act locally. It is housed within a mid-sized university

and is likely similar to hundreds of feminist organizations across the country. These centers are important because they help to sustain the movement by providing fodder for young activists to grow. Seeing intersectional issues confronted here could mean that it is a concept that emerging student activists will continue to keep relevant.

The logic of selecting The Ms. Foundation is that it is a major endowment source for many smaller feminist efforts. It helps to keep feminist movement alive financially. The importance of addressing intersectionality will be reflected in terms of who receives Ms. Foundation monies.

The logic of selecting The Third Wave Foundation is that it is a multi-issued social justice organization that mainly deals with grooming emerging activists between the ages of 15-30. As an organization built on dealing with third wave feminist issues, it is an important group for defining the third wave and creating a third wave agenda. The logic behind selecting this organization is that it allows us to determine whether or not confronting intersectionality is an organizing principle of the third wave of feminism. We can then say that women like Lorde were successful in bringing this issue into the forefront.

The logic of selecting The Guerilla Girls is that they are a group of activists that fight discrimination in the art world and represent the continuing legacy of giving voice to women artists like Audre Lorde. They are also the only organization founded explicitly on addressing the intersectional issues of race and gender representation within the art world.

Evaluations

To evaluate these feminist organizations an eleven-question interview was designed that asked general questions

about mission, vision, values and more specific questions about programming, services and funding. The intent of every question was to prompt the interviewer to discuss intersectional approaches and also to see how thoroughly the concept was integrated (assessing the integration of the concept had to do with gauging adherence to the mission, vision and values of the organizations). Through this method, one phone interview with the CEO of the Ms. Foundation, Sara Gould, was conducted and one person-to-person interview with Marlene Kawalski-Braun, director of Grand Valley State University's Women's Center was conducted. For the other three organizations, where representatives were not available, website assessments were performed. These assessments involved reading every available page and link and also doing additional Internet research to cross-reference some of the names and phenomena mentioned on these websites. Each analysis took between 3-15 hours of website perusal.

The original idea was to interview representatives from each organization in the sample. However, this proved impossible as some organizations did not respond to requests or denied them entirely.⁷ As a result, under the council of project mentors (Marshall Battani Ph.D. and Dennis Malaret Ph.D.), it was decided that website evaluations were a legitimate way to gauge the integration of intersectionality. While connecting with a representative helps to determine internal politics in a way that is impossible in evaluating websites alone, websites control for interviewer bias and provide similar information that interview questions attempt to access.⁸

Results

A blanket and uniform approach to confronting intersectionality did not

⁶ Ideas for determining the logic of the research sample came from *What Is a Case?: Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry* by Ragin and Becker (1992)

⁷ Some organizations seemed to view me as an agitator or interloper and would not grant an interview. I got the distinct feeling that my lack of credentials was a significant factor in at least one denied interview.

⁸ See Appendix 2: Website Evaluation Rubric

emerge in this research. Approaches are varied and distinct to the specific aims of each organizational mission. The findings lend themselves most readily to a qualitative interpretation.

National Organization for Women (NOW)
NOW's mission reads as follows:

Since its founding in 1966, NOW's goal has been to take action to bring about equality for all women. NOW works to eliminate discrimination and harassment in the workplace, schools, the justice system, and all other sectors of society; secure abortion, birth control and reproductive rights for all women; end all forms of violence against women; eradicate racism, sexism and homophobia; and promote equality and justice in our society (National Organization for Women 2006).

In another section of their website there is a statement that recognizes the interconnectedness of oppressive forces more explicitly and expresses a commitment to combating them. It reads:

NOW is one of the few multi-issue progressive organizations in the United States. NOW stands against all oppression, recognizing that racism, sexism and homophobia are interrelated, that other forms of oppression such as classism and ableism work together with these three to keep power and privilege concentrated in the hands of a few. (National Organization for Women 2006)

In adherence to the above statement, NOW takes a few important actions. They do political advocacy of candidates at the local and national levels who give attention to intersectional issues in their platform; for example, they

endorsed presidential hopeful Carol Moseley Braun in 2000. Also, they encourage and organize direct mass action that attempts to protest and otherwise dismantle racism, classism, and heterosexism. Lastly, they have policy statements like the one above that include acknowledgement of multiply oppressed peoples.

Grand Valley State University Women's Center (GVWC)

GVWC's mission statement reads as follows: "Creating a Grand Valley State University community that promotes and supports the present and future success of women students" (Grand Valley State University Women's Center 2006). There is also an emphasis on the importance of diversity reflected in the following excerpt from the GVWC's values statement (Grand Valley State University Women's Center 2006):

The GVSU Women's Center strives to create a place for women to achieve their full educational, personal and career potential in a safe and fun environment. This begins with recognition of the diversity among women (i.e. ethnicity, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, age, and socio-economic status) and the need for communication, learning, and equality among them.

To this end, the GVWC takes a few important actions. They have an annual program examining the impact of class and race on women's lives. They produce an annual unofficial publication called "In Our Own Words: A Journal About Women." The journal often deals with the impact of having multiple oppressive identity markers. For example, a poem entitled "Say It Loud... African-American Woman and Proud" by Harriet Singleton gives voice to the pressure Black women often feel

to create an identity hierarchy in terms of race and sex. She says,

"I never knew what came first,
Being Woman or Being Black at
Birth."

Additionally, they attempt to embed diversity into the overall atmosphere of the women's center. For example, library books by authors such as Gloria Anzaldua and bell hooks, art reflecting a multiracial women's perspective and furniture with upholstery from around the world. Lastly, they invite women who represent traditionally marginalized groups to an all-expense paid annual retreat.

Ms. Foundation

The mission of the Ms. Foundation as stated on their website reads as follows:

The Ms. Foundation supports the efforts of women and girls to govern their own lives and influence the world around them. Through its leadership, expertise and financial support, the Foundation champions an equitable society by effecting change in public consciousness, law, philanthropy and social policy (Ms. Foundation 2006)

Their beliefs and values speak more directly to the importance of confronting multiple oppressions:

Our work is guided by our vision of a just and safe world where power and possibility are not limited by gender, race, class, sexual orientation, disability or age. We believe that equity and inclusion are the cornerstones of a true democracy in which the worth and dignity of every person are valued (Ms. Foundation 2006)

In a phone interview with Ms. Foundation President, Sara Gould, various methods of exploring

intersectionality that coincide with their mission and value statement were explained. She mentioned that internal work on strategic diversity questions was being conducted in order to make the organization more able to embrace difference of all kinds. She also said that the organization injected the issue of gender into the race, class discussion surrounding Hurricane Katrina. Additionally the organization started the Katrina Women's Response, raised over one million dollars and granted these funds in an intersectional way. Gould also mentioned that the guidelines for various grant-making programs are always compared to the organization's mission, belief and value statements. Lastly the organization attempts to deepen the analysis of how to reach women who are marginalized the most.

Third Wave Foundation

An abbreviated version of the Third Wave mission statement, as it appears on their website, recognizes the interconnected nature of gender, race, social and economic oppression. It reads as follows:

The Third Wave Foundation is a feminist, activist foundation working nationally to support young women and transgender youth ages 15 to 30. Through financial resources, public education, and relationship building, Third Wave helps support and strengthen young women, transgender youth and their allies working for gender, racial, social, and economic justice.

Third Wave is led by a board of young women, men, and transgender activists striving to combat inequalities that we ourselves face as a result of our age, gender, race, sexual orientation, economic status, or level of education. By empowering

young women and transgender youth nationwide, Third Wave is building a lasting foundation for young women's activism around the countr[y] (Third Wave Foundation 2006)

The Third Wave value statements recognize the necessity for an intersectional analysis of feminist affairs. For example, one of many value statements reads "Third Wave Foundation's feminism is explicitly connected to issues of race, class, gender identity, heterosexism, and other justice movements" (Third Wave Foundation 2006). The organization takes a few important actions in adherence to their mission and values.

First, they provide a brief biographical sketch of each founder and each member serving on the board of directors. The sketch includes how privilege and oppression may overlap in their own lives; thus demonstrating the personal impact of the intersectional issues at hand and knowledge of the complicated interplay of oppressive forces. For example, the website says,

Board Member Beth George is a 24 year-old white lesbian who comes from a working-class family in South Carolina. She is currently at Fenton Communications, a national strategic communications firm, where she creates communications strategies for such human rights and social justice campaign, including women's rights and health care. George began her communications career by serving as the inaugural Public Education Fellow at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). She is a researcher and contributing writer for the book "Too High A Price: The Case Against Restricting Gay Parenting" (Third Wave Foundation 2006)

Next, they supply grants for young women working for racial, economic, social, reproductive, gender justice. Also, they provide resources, scholarships and fellowships to lesbian/gay and transgender youth of color. They also link all initiatives to broader social justice movements in an attempt to demonstrate the interconnected nature of oppression. Lastly, they promote multi-issue social justice events for young activists that deal with confronting intersectionality. For example, at the time of print there was a hip-hop conference that critically analyzed hip-hop and the intersections of gender and sexuality.

The Guerrilla Girls

The following quote from the Guerrilla Girl's website explains how the Guerrilla Girl's define themselves and their tactical approach to confronting the intersections of art, race, and sex:

We're a bunch of anonymous females who take the names of dead women artists as pseudonyms and appear in public wearing gorilla masks. We have produced posters, stickers, books, printed projects, and actions that expose sexism and racism in politics, the art world, film and the culture at large. We use humor to convey information, provoke discussion, and show that feminists can be funny. We wear gorilla masks to focus on the issues rather than our personalities. Dubbing ourselves the conscience of culture, we declare ourselves feminist counterparts to the mostly male tradition of anonymous do-gooders like Robin Hood, Batman, and the Lone Ranger. Our work has been passed around the world by kindred spirits who we are proud to have as supporters. It has also appeared in The New York Times, The Nation, Bitch and Bust; on TV and radio, including

NPR, the BBC and CBC; and in countless art and feminist texts. The mystery surrounding our identities has attracted attention. We could be anyone; we are everywhere (Guerrilla Girls 2006)

In order to confront the intersections of race, sex, and art etc., the Guerrilla Girls use several, often humorous, tactics. They distinguish between themselves while in costume by addressing one another by codenames. These codenames represent dead women artists (often women of color) and this is done to secure these women artists a historical presence and protect the anonymity of the actual Guerrilla Girls. For example, one Guerrilla Girl uses the codename Zora Neal Hurston.

Another tactic for confronting intersectionality is the use of humorous posters, billboards, and bus ads that often embarrass the people/institutions responsible for actively perpetuating racism and sexism. They also send letters to offenders within the art/entertainment world who devalue the work of women artists or don't include women and men of color in art shows. They send "apologist of the year" awards to women in positions of power within the art world who don't stand for up-and-coming women artists and artists of color. They encourage women to develop additional unconventional tactics to expose the racism and sexism in their own artistic communities/college campuses. Lastly, they publish books that attempt to re-write art history from a less White, male and western perspective (Guerrilla Girls 1998, 2004).

Discussion/Conclusion

It is clear that Audre Lorde helped to initiate dialogue about intersectionality

within feminism. The organizations I examined continue to participate in this discussion, and they have done work to incorporate more marginalized voices into feminist organizing. All of the organizations unquestioningly have a complex understanding of structural inequalities and how they play out in women's lives. However, given the limitations of this research, it is difficult to say whether the constituents/members of these organizations feel adequately supported. Future research will have to examine the responses of women who utilize the services of these organizations. This will have to be done in order to accurately gauge the success or failure of the policies and actions these organizations take to confront intersectionality. Until then, the conclusions must be drawn from the data.

Based on the data collected, every organization is making some attempt through policy and action to address the needs of women dealing with intersectional inequalities. Though intersectional approaches may differ from organization to organization, a commitment to confronting intersectionality is the common denominator. There is a set of nine discernable similarities that exist among the organizations. 1) Every organization has a policy statement that acknowledges overlapping oppressions and vows to act against them. 2) Every organization takes multiple and varied approaches to confronting intersectionality. 3) Every organization has members who personally experience overlapping oppressions serving in key leadership positions. 4) Four out of five organizations are multi-issued (NOW, Grand Valley Women's Center, Ms. Foundation and the Third Wave

Foundation).⁹ 5) Every organization supports external feminist efforts dealing with intersectionality (via funding, co-programming, scholarships, promoting community events, endorsing of political candidates, housing library books, selling merchandise, etc.). 6) Every organization has diversity initiatives. 7) Every organization has a structure that allows for the incorporation of marginalized voices into decision making (steering committees, all-expense paid retreats, leadership positions, collecting feedback on programming/services). 8) Three out of five organizations (Grand Valley State University Women's Center, Third Wave Foundation, and the Guerrilla Girls) were founded after women like Audre Lorde called for a more intersectional approach to feminist practice.¹⁰ 9) Every organization takes steps to ensure the continuation of intersectional analysis.

Given the above data, it is still difficult to make a direct connection between policy statements and supporting actions; this is especially so for organizations where website perusal was the only tool of analysis. How do policies translate *directly* into action? In recognizing that racism, homophobia, classism, ableism, etc. are all linked, what *specific* actions are taken to confront them all and to properly treat victims? These questions have not been made clear by this research. However, this research can conclusively say that intersectionality is being confronted by the examined feminist organizations. These findings suggest a correlative relationship between the work of Audre Lorde and current attention to intersectionality in contemporary feminist organizations.

⁹ The Guerrilla Girls deal specifically with the intersections of race, sex and art. Of the organizations examined they are the only one dealing explicitly with intersectionality.

¹⁰ The other organizations, NOW and the Ms. Foundation were founded in the second wave. They have adapted policy since inception to address intersectional issues.

Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Background questions

1. Would you consider this a feminist organization?
2. How is power within the organization set up?
3. How many people does the organization employ?
4. Is the organization classified as a non-profit?
5. Is there a board of directors or a steering committee? If so, who comprises it?
6. What are the organization's sources of funding?

Prompts

1. What would you say are the strengths and weaknesses of this organization?
2. What is the most recent success story?
3. What are the major programs/services offered? Has programming always been this way?
4. How do you think the organization's programs/services reflect the mission of the organization?
5. Does the organization have a measure for adherence to mission, vision, values?
6. What is the most often used service? What is the most highly attended program?
7. Do you have a way of collecting statistics on participants?
8. What are the biggest obstacles the organization faces?
9. Do you have any diversity initiatives?
10. Is there anything the organization does to deal specifically with issues like race, class, sexual orientation etc. or to otherwise reach out to groups who have traditionally felt marginalized by the women's movement?
11. What would the organization consider the most pressing issues facing the women's movement today?

Appendix 2: Website Evaluation Rubric

Steps

1. Read every page of website
2. Cross-reference content
3. Retrieve published literature mentioned on website when possible

Questions

1. Does the website explicitly mention the term "intersectionality?"
2. Does the website offer biographical sketches of the organizations leaders?
3. Does the website mention the elimination of multiple oppressions in the mission, vision and/or value statements?
4. Does the website mention diversity initiatives?
5. Does the website disclose the organization's funding sources?
6. Does the website disclose organization structure? How is power set up?
7. Does the website express the organizations main interests?
8. Does the website mention feminist influences such as Audre Lorde?
9. Does the website mention programs/services offered?

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