Carissa Turner Smith

Women's Spiritual Geographies of the African Diaspora: Paule Marshall's *Praisesong for the Widow*

Paul Gilroy's monumental 1993 work *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* has shaped our discussions about diasporic identity for more than a decade, despite the fact that many have found reason to critique it. I wish herein to question one of its assumptions that still holds sway in both academic and popular circles: Gilroy's association of both women and religion exclusively with static "roots," as opposed to dynamic "routes." In Gilroy's analysis of Martin Delany's novel *Blake*, he praises the protagonist's "scepticism and strictly instrumental orientation towards religion" and argues that these attitudes are particularly "important because African American religion is so often the central sign for the folk-cultural, narrowly ethnic definition of racial authenticity that is being challenged here in the name of rhizomorphic, routed, diaspora cultures" (28). Fiction by contemporary African American women writers disproves this simplistic formula. In works by Paule Marshall, Gloria Naylor, Toni Morrison, and others, we encounter narratives in which pure "origins" are impossible to reach, in which diasporic subjects are cut off from the land and the religion of their ancestors in Africa. Yet, in the diasporic spiritual geography of these African American women writers, "home" is still a possibility when the subject grounds herself in both the roots and the routes of the African diaspora.[1]

For Gilroy, "roots" represent an "ethnically absolute" form of "cultural kinship," based in a narrative of shared history and ancestors (and especially, I would add, a shared place of origin), whether or not this narrative is based in fact. "Routes," which for him are a much more complex way of speaking of black identity, refer to cultural exchange and hybridity, which Gilroy symbolizes through both ships and music (jazz and blues). Gilroy's critique of roots-based black identity emerges out of his frustration with African American identity politics in the 1970s and 1980s, and he provides a needed balance to forms of racial identity that exclusively emphasize ancestral origins. However, Gilroy pays insufficient attention to the gendered and the religious elements of diasporic experience, and his association of both with stasis is puzzling. African American religion, especially African American Christianity, is hardly a simplistic celebration of origins or "roots." After all, Christianity is not usually viewed as the original religion of African Americans' long-ago, pre-slavery ancestors (although many of the earliest Christian communities were in Africa, and Western Christianity needs to acknowledge its debt to African Christians, both past and present). Considering Christianity as a potential part of black identity, therefore, can never be a purely roots-oriented approach (though Christian belief and practice do emphasize rooting one's spiritual identity in God, the Creator). Rather, the inclusion of Christianity as part of the experience of many, though not all, African Americans necessitates a complex mixture of roots and routes, one that does not naïvely embrace either approach, but rather holds them in tension.

Like Gilroy's dismissal of the religious experience of African Americans, his pronounced lack of attention to black women's experience of roots and routes reveals some of the ways in which his argument needs to be expanded and more fully explored. He does acknowledge that "gender is the modality in which race is lived" (85), but his concern is almost exclusively with the construction of black

African American Review 42.3-4 (Fall/Winter 2008): 715-729
© 2008 Carissa Turner Smith

masculine identity (except for brief analyses of the Margaret Garner narrative and of Toni Morrison's use of it in *Beloved*—and, even in these sections, he analyzes women's identity only in comparison to men's). Clearly, in 1993, questions over the applicability and usefulness of travel metaphors for women were already flying in the critical atmosphere. One might question, then, why gender plays such a small role in *The Black Atlantic.* Conversations among feminist theorists (particularly feminist geographers) suggest ways in which Gilroy's idea of the Black Atlantic needs a deeper gendered component.

For example, ships, which are Gilroy's central metaphor, have multivalent associations for African Americans: they represent both the horrors of the middle passage and the opportunities for transatlantic exchange, as exemplified by Frederick Douglass's encounters with sailors in Baltimore. For much of history, however, women have not had access to the second mode of travel. To the women of the Black Atlantic, ships may be a more one-sided metaphor, representing only hardship and coercion, and seldom full citizenship in the wide world.[2] This distinction between the two kinds of travel depends on the role of choice, which is an issue that continues to divide feminist mobility theorists as well. Gilroy's emphasis on the possibility of agency (even for those who have not willingly undergone voyages) is a helpful addition to this conversation; however, both he and feminist mobility theorists could gain from acknowledging the agency and creativity of those who, by law or economics, have been forced to stay in one place.

What is needed is a gendered spiritual geography of the African diaspora, because black women's narratives of religion and place incorporate both roots and routes. In this article, I will explore the intertwining of roots and routes, as mediated by gender and religion in Paule Marshall's 1983 novel *Praisesong for the Widow.*

Mobility in the African Diaspora

Praisesong for the Widow takes place in many different physical locales. Though the main narrative traces a few days within sixty-four-year-old Avey Johnson's travels in the Caribbean, Avey's vivid memories take her from childhood summers in South Carolina to young married life in New York City to older adult life in the suburbs—not to mention the hints of Africa that some of these places contain. However, one central legend dominates the *spiritual* geography of Paule Marshall's *Praisesong for the Widow*: the legend of the singing Ibos. Avey Johnson's great aunt Cuney tells her of how, after the Ibos had been captured and brought to the shores of South Carolina, the Africans had taken a look into the future and, deciding they wanted no part of it, had marched back across the ocean to Africa, singing all the way. They, in spite of having been chained and transported against their will, are able to reclaim their authority over where they choose to go. The Ibos' ability to physically return to Africa makes the event one of crucial importance to Avey's ancestor Avatara, who claims to have witnessed, as a child, the Ibos' landing and departure. She could not follow them bodily, but she did so with her spirit: she "declared she just picked herself up and took off after 'em. In her mind. Her body she always usta say might be in Tatem but her mind, her mind was long gone with the Ibos . . ." (39). Thus, the original Avatara represents the spiritual agency that still remained strong in enslaved African Americans, in spite of their physical confinement.

The Ibos' geographical mobility and Avatara's spiritual agency stand in stark contrast to the social and economic injustice that traps Avey and her husband Jay/Jerome, as well as many other African Americans.[3] As Eugenia DeLamotte explains, Avey's memories of her life depict "contemporary African Americans' ostensible

mobility through labor in the American economic system as silencing African American voices, masking African American reality, and replacing meaningful journeys with empty, parodic journeys equivalent to stasis" (83-84). In spite of the geographical mobility characterizing the Great Migration, in which African Americans left the South for jobs in Northern cities, most African Americans' economic status remained static. Jay/Jerome Johnson's education profits him little, when potential employers in New York reject him on account of his skin color. Only by making himself a slave to the system in working three jobs and sacrificing his time with his family, can he advance—and, as *Praisesong for the Widow* clearly suggests, this kind of "mobility" brings spiritual entrapment rather than freedom.

For Avey Johnson, freedom from this racially unjust brand of capitalist striving comes through subverting the economics of geographical journeys. Avey abandons midway the Caribbean cruise she has already paid for, and for this "waste" she is scolded by Jerome Johnson's ghost. DeLamotte suggests that Jerome's

> anger that Avey has squandered money by deserting the cruise reveals one of the many ways in which her journey is being double-exposed on the Ibos'. The Ibos' goal in walking away from their ship, back across the water, was to wind up, as Avey will in many senses, back where they started, thus squandering the money paid for the voyage that was intended to turn them into objects. (95)

Avey learns that physical mobility powered by money really gets her nowhere, when at Grenada, she suddenly disembarks from the aptly named *Bianca* ("white" in Italian) *Pride*, not having finished her planned journey, thus risking apparent waste and immobility. At first, she plans to return to her house in North White Plains, the house that Jerome had built as a symbol of their growing economic status, a house that serves a similar symbolic function to the *Bianca Pride* (in other words, by going from the *Bianca Pride* to North White Plains, Avey's journey would have taken her nowhere spiritually because she remains trapped within white-dominated spheres). However, she misses her plane and remains stuck in Grenada. This apparent immobility leads Avey to trace both the routes and roots of her diasporic heritage. In short, money and travel are not always symbols of freedom—nor are they unequivocally symbols of entrapment, since both are necessary for Avey to arrive at the point where she is ready to begin real journeying.[4]

For black Americans, who bear the history of the forced exile of slavery *and* of restricted opportunity for travel during slavery and the Jim Crow years, metaphors of mobility may seem historically insensitive as well as perhaps undesirable, because those who have been taken from home, and have had to create a new one, are less likely to undervalue belonging to a place and a community. Yet Paul Gilroy's critique of modern black political culture is that it "has always been more interested in the relationship of identity to roots and rootedness than in seeing identity as a process of movement and mediation that is more appropriately approached via the homonym routes" (19). His statement is a valuable corrective to the romantic hope of tracing one's identity to a true origin, unmarked by the passage of time and by the world's power struggles. His rejection of rootedness, however, also dismisses the particular historical perspectives of diasporic women, women who have exhibited powerful agency in forging community ties, in the midst of great suffering.

Feminist theorist Janet Wolff argues that "just as the practices and ideologies of *actual* travel operate to exclude or pathologize women, so the use of that vocabulary as metaphor necessarily produces androcentric tendencies in theory" (224). While insisting that free-wheeling movement remains an exclusive image inapplicable to most women, Wolff acknowledges that some women, in the past, have managed to travel—especially in colonial situations, in which their racial and economic privilege overrode their inferior status as women: "As women travellers frequently pointed to the continuities and similarities with earlier European male travellers, the supremacy

of distinctions of race above those of sex allowed them to take little account of their one obvious difference from these forbears—the fact that they were female" (qtd. in Wolff 233). Thus, in a more complex way than Gilroy acknowledges, race and gender are interrelated in transcultural routes. This issue foregrounds the way in which some feminist mobility theorists have begun to question whether the traveler or the theoretical nomad, as opposed to the literal nomad, or the refugee, or the slave, is a metaphor available only to those with privilege, those who *have* a home to renounce.

In *Praisesong for the Widow*, the experiences of the ring-shout and the Carriacou Tramp take Avey back in time and place—not directly to Africa, but to the shared routed history of her diasporic people.

"Deterritorialization," as Deleuze and Guattari termed their idealized geography of nonbelonging, has a number of causes, and it is a grave mistake to ignore the particular circumstances that distinguish one woman's deterritorialization from another's. For as feminist geographer Caren Kaplan points out, "if I choose deterritorialization, I go into literary/linguistic exile with all my cultural baggage intact. If deterritorialization has chosen me—that is, if I have been cast out of my home or language without forethought or permission, then my point of view will be more complicated. Both positions are constructed by the world system but they are not equal" (191). In a similar vein, Janet Wolff suggests that "free and equal mobility is itself a deception, since we don't all have the same access to the road" (235). By privileging metaphors of routes over roots, Gilroy and some feminist mobility theorists have limited their scope to those with easy access to the road—and have, in the process, ignored feminist geographies arising from historically oppressed African American women or from third-world women. I do not wish to argue that African American women of the pre-civil rights era were completely barred from travel and from social mobility. There were certainly black women who managed to defy societal norms and achieve agency through mobility, and their achievements should be noted and celebrated. My point is that even these women are not "rootless"; again, I turn to Janet Wolff, who writes that "destabilizing tactics originate too from a place—the margins, the edges, the less visible spaces" (235). In other words, roots and routes cannot be easily separated. Moreover, we gain a more complex notion of a person's mobility when we keep in mind the particular circumstances that have formed her.

Gilroy, rather than tracing the interlacing of roots and routes, prefers to emphasize the under-acknowledged cultural agency demonstrated by male pre-civil rights African Americans; in doing so, however, he ignores roots-based forms of agency on the part of African American *women* during the same period. Determined to challenge the assumption that pre-civil rights African Americans lacked free mobility, Gilroy introduces the figure of the Pullman porter, a symbol who serves "to identify the folly of assigning uncoerced or recreational travel experiences only to whites while viewing black people's experiences of displacement and relocation exclusively through the very different types of traveling undergone by refugees, migrants, and slaves" (133). This historical perspective is a valuable corrective, and it reminds us that agency and mobility are possible even under injustice. Gilroy's Pullman porter, however, is undeniably male. Gilroy does not propose any equivalent female figure from history, nor does he seek to rectify this balance when he discusses the routes-type circulation of jazz and blues by male musicians. Until *The Black Atlantic*'s last chapter,

in which Toni Morrison appears, not once does a woman's name surface among the musicians and writers Gilroy notes for their exchange back and forth across the Atlantic. It is true that Du Bois, to whom Gilroy devotes a whole chapter, is significant—but what about Maya Angelou, who was also living in Ghana at the time of Du Bois's death there, and who so movingly recounts (in her 1986 memoir *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*) her attempts—both failed and successful—to find community and fellowship as a black American in Africa? Angelou carries within herself all the rich—as well as bewildering—cultural mixing that Gilroy attributed to ships, those "modern machines that were themselves micro-systems of linguistic and political hybridity" (12). She writes, "I knew that Africa had creolized me. I was neither meat not fowl nor good red herring. My native sassiness which had brought me from under the heels of brutes, had been softened by contact with the respectfulness of Ghanaians, yet, unlike them I did not belong to a place from which I could not be dislodged" (Angelou 173-74). Angelou here reveals that hybridity, while as complex and life-giving as Gilroy claims, also can be accompanied by isolation and loss. She does not have a home to reject, even should she wish to do so. Any account of Black Atlantic routes must also include the loneliness and longing found on both sides of the ocean.

Gilroy's Pullman porter, representing an African American who traveled because of his own choice of profession, yet whose opportunities were limited by his subordinate status, is indeed an important figure. Despite his limitations, he was nevertheless able to respond to his situation creatively as a full actor and participant. However, Gilroy surely could also have attributed this kind of creative agency to women's (and men's) root-building. Both roots and routes, men and women, African and American, are important contributors to the ever-shifting community of the Black Atlantic.

Gilroy, though not counting women in the more active forms of exchange—jazz, hip hop, sailors, ships, and Pullman porters—does accord them a position as memory-keepers and memory-transformers. Toni Morrison carries the lead in this role in Gilroy's last chapter. Notably, Morrison herself states, "From a woman's point of view, in terms of confronting the problems of where the world is now, black women had to deal with post-modern problems in the nineteenth century and earlier. These things had to be addressed by black people a long time ago: certain kinds of dissolution, the loss of and the need to reconstruct certain kinds of stability" (qtd. in Gilroy 221). That desire to reconstruct stability—and the celebration of the creativity and endurance involved in such efforts—is the missing piece from Gilroy's picture of the Black Atlantic. Moreover, he seems to associate memory, stability, women, and place together in one static whole, while his men participate in vibrant cross-ocean exchange. Part of the difficulty is that Gilroy seems to believe that place itself is static, rather than an ever-changing construction.[5] He writes, "It should be emphasised that ships were the living means by which the points within that Atlantic world were joined. They were mobile elements that stood for the shifting spaces in between the fixed places they connected" (16). In other words, the fixed, grounded points themselves do not, for Gilroy, represent sites of cultural change or exchange. Once again, in Gilroy's schema, the dynamic nature of place is ignored in favor of a masculinist vision of static, feminized place. As Doreen Massey points out, typically "the characterization of place as home comes from those who have left . . . and this characterization is framed around those who—perforce—stayed behind; . . . often the former was male, setting out to discover and change the world, and the latter female, most particularly a mother, assigned the role of personifying a place which did not change" (166-67).

In reality, because the "stability" of place must always be built to face changing situations, it is not static or monolithic, even for memory-keepers. Again, as Massey writes, "A large component of the identity of that place called home derived precisely

from the fact that it had always in one way or another been open; constructed out of movement, communication, social relations which always stretched beyond it" (170-71). The roots of a home place can also be routes, and both feminist mobility theorists and diaspora studies theorists could gain from incorporating those who work to create an ever-changing, ever-growing "home" for themselves and others.

Religion, like home places, can be based in movement, communication, and social relations, rather than on static fundamentalism or nostalgia. Moreover, religion is a major feature of the African diasporic experience, in part because religion itself is always necessarily a blend of roots and routes. Religious practices can be represented according to their origins *or* their pathways of exchange, depending on the purposes of the representer. African Americans or other blacks of the African diaspora who do not sing gospel music, who do not punctuate testimonies with "Amen," may feel alienated by this representation of "traditional" African American Christian worship. Then again, because these worship forms provide a strong sense of identity—political, cultural, and individual, not to mention spiritual—to many African Americans, completely denying their potential for cultural expression seems injudicious. In the midst of this dilemma, Paule Marshall's *Praisesong for the Widow* provides no easy solutions, but the novel does raise different possibilities of how roots and routes may be incorporated together in African American spiritual identity.

The Roots and Routes of Diasporic Place

After disembarking from the *Bianca Pride*, Avey Johnson finds herself in a hotel room in Grenada. Hotels, significantly, are transitional spaces, spaces providing a buffer zone between "home" and "away." In this hotel room, Avey begins her real journey. Overnight, she does battle with her memories of a life despiritualized by both injustice and material acquisitiveness. In the morning, however, she finds herself taking a small journey by foot across the beach, which in turn leads to her acceptance of Lebert Joseph's offer to take her by boat to the small out-island of Carriacou. Those born and raised on Carriacou make an annual pilgrimage back there from Grenada, and so it may accurately be claimed that their route takes them back to their roots. But this Carriacou "root" is a very particular one: Marshall does not claim that *all* African diaspora identity can be understood simply by taking a boat from the island where you live to the island where you were born. And yet, as the people of Carriacou dance out the dances of their "nations," returning home to Carriacou also connects them in some ways to Africa. In some ways, I say, because their dances do not represent a naïve belief that they have recovered their true origins and thus their true identities.[6] Rather, as Avey herself realizes, watching the dances:

> It was the essence of something rather than the thing itself she was witnessing. Those present—the old ones—understood this. All that was left were a few names of what they called nations which they could no longer even pronounce properly, the fragments of a dozen or so songs, the shadowy forms of long-ago dances and rum kegs for drums. The bare bones. The burnt-out ends. And they clung to them with a tenacity she suddenly loved in them and longed for in herself. (240)

What they have of their African heritage is fragmented, perhaps not "authentic" in the narrow sense of the word, but these fragments are what mark their identity as diasporic. Africa as a pure, ancestral place is unreachable, but they have put down roots in the shifting, routed ground of the diasporic place.

Avey's encounter with people who are rooted/routed in their diasporic identity also connects her to her nearer roots in Tatem, South Carolina, where, as a child,

she would visit her great aunt. It is to Tatem that her great aunt Cuney begins summoning Avey, through a dream, when she is still on the cruise ship. During the course of the novel, Avey does not physically return to Tatem. However, certain people, objects, actions, and elements of language so powerfully call to mind memories of Tatem (as well as memories of Halsey Street in New York, where she and Jay spent the first happy years of their marriage, and of childhood boat trips up the Hudson River) that she is almost transported to these places from the past. First, hearing Patois "had fleetingly called to mind the way people spoke in Tatem long ago. There had been the same vivid, slightly atonal music underscoring the words. She had heard it and that night from out of nowhere her great aunt had stood waiting in her sleep. . . . The vaguely familiar sound of the Patois might have resurrected Tatem and the old woman" (67). At first, this sound calls her back to a particular place. However, as Avey gathers a second time with those traveling to Carriacou, she recalls not only a place, but also the experience of anticipating a journey, a journey that begins to take on mystical overtones: "It didn't seem that they were just going on a day's outing up a river to a state park a few miles away, but on a voyage—a full-scale voyage—to someplace far more impressive. No one there could have said where this place was. No one could have called its name" (191). Here, those traveling up the Hudson and those traveling to Carriacou are linked by the diasporic experience of routes: travel becomes a central symbol of the displacement of diasporic peoples. Avey feels a connection to her fellow travelers—not just because their ancestors also came from Africa, but, even more importantly, because they have all been displaced from Africa. She experiences this connection in an embodied way:

> As more people arrived to throng the area beside the river and cool morning air warmed to the greetings and talk, she would feel what seemed to be hundreds of slender threads streaming out from her navel and from the place where her heart was to enter those around her. And the threads went out not only to people she recognized from the neighborhood but to those she didn't know as well, such as the roomers just up from the South and the small group of West Indians whose odd accent called to mind Gullah talk. . . . (190)

This kind of black diasporic identity is similar to a kind that Gilroy might embrace. It resembles the sort of community he sees in blues songs, which, according to him, exemplify

> a condition in which the negative meanings given to the enforced movement of blacks are somehow transposed. What was initially felt to be a curse—the curse of homelessness or the curse of enforced exile—gets repossessed. . . . it also represents a response to the successive displacements, migrations, and journeys (forced and otherwise) which have come to constitute these black cultures' special conditions of existence. (111)

In other words, displacement and a shared history of racial injustice create a kind of community that, to Gilroy, is more significant than a communal identity based in "Africa."

Avey Johnson's experience of growing diasporic consciousness ultimately goes deeper than Gilroy's, however, because she deals more fully with the spiritual and the embodied (which also includes the gendered) elements of diasporic identity. During her journey to Carriacou and on the island itself, rituals—embodiments of spirituality—find and secure their linkages between Avey's body and spirit and diasporic history. These rituals may be seen as connecting Avey to her roots in the African diaspora, but they also have a significant routed history in themselves. For example, the ring-shout is a circular dance originally used in worship by African American slaves, which Avey witnesses as a child on Tatem and later sees reconfigured in the "Carriacou Tramp." The ring-shout is a ritual connected to African forms of song and dance, and in the Americas, it served as a way for slaves to preserve some of these traditions. However, because there is no single "African tradition," and because slaves came from many different regions and cultures, the ring-shout

became a way of unifying these diverse backgrounds through a ritual based in diasporic identity. As Lawrence Levine remarks in *Black Culture and Black Consciousness*, "[c]ulture is not a fixed condition but a process: the product of interaction between the past and present. Its toughness and resiliency are determined not by a culture's ability to withstand change . . . but by its ability to act creatively and responsively to the realities of a new situation" (5). The ring-shout that Avey sees on Tatem has been adapted to a Christian context and made representative of resistance to oppression: "Even when the Spirit took hold and their souls and writhing bodies seemed about to soar off into the night, their feet remained planted firm. *I shall not be moved*" (Marshall 34; original italics). Though Cuney, as a young woman, experiences the prohibition on lifting feet too much from the ground as an unreasonable restriction, and it leads to her voluntary departure from the church, the shuffling style is embodied with a flexible, though no less significant, history of meaning. The ring-shouters may be cut off from the "original" intent of the ring-shout, but they have made it their own, just as they have done with Christian traditions.

The ring-shout, as well as other spiritual rituals depicted in *Praisesong for the Widow*, also serves as a way of collapsing time and space. When on Carriacou Avey begins to join in the circle of dancing elderly people, she "neither saw nor heard them clearly. Because it was a score of hot August nights again in her memory, and she was standing beside her great aunt on the dark road across from the church that doubled as a school" (248). Participation in the ring-shout-like dance does not just return Avey to childhood memories; it also links her to the other dancers and their shared diasporic past. She remembers how, standing with Cuney and watching the ring-shout, she

> used to long to give her great-aunt the slip and join those across the road.
>
> She had finally after all these decades made it across. . . .
>
> And for the first time since she was a girl, she felt the threads, that myriad of shiny, silken brightly colored threads . . . which were thin to the point of invisibility yet strong as the ropes at Coney Island. . . .
>
> . . . she felt the threads streaming out from the old people around her in Lebert Joseph's yard. From their seared eyes. From their navels and cast-iron hearts. And their brightness as they entered her spoke of possibilities and brightness in the face of the bare bones and the burnt-out ends. (248-49)

Again, these bare bones and burnt-out ends refer to the remnants of their pre-slavery roots, to which they have no full access. Yet the connection formed between members of the African diaspora speaks of hope as well as loss. Here, in *Praisesong for the Widow*, the experience of the ring-shout and the Carriacou Tramp take Avey back in time and place—not directly to Africa, but to the shared routed history of her diasporic people.

Two concepts, one from Toni Morrison and one from early Christian thought, may help to illuminate further ritual's role in enabling access to one's routed roots, both spiritual and geographical. "Re-memory," a term Toni Morrison uses in *Beloved*, "functions to re-collect, re-assemble, and organize [memories] into a meaningful sequential whole through . . . the process of narrativization" (Henderson 71). As one re-memories an event, one almost re-experiences it at the same time that one is constructing a narrative about it. "Re-memory" can also be compared to the ancient Christian concept of anamnesis—literally, "unforgetting," though Frank Senn suggests that "reactualization" may be a better translation for anamnesis in its religious sense—in which believers experience (in both their imagination and their bodies) events from sacred history. "This kind of remembering," according to Jay T. Rock, "involves not simply a return to past events, but the placing of the past into the present situation" (91). Unlike the Platonic idea of anamnesis, in which the ideal world to which we are trying to return is incorporeal, the Christianized version is fully incarnational. Anamnesis in Christian contexts most often refers to the Lord's

Supper or the Eucharist, in which believers not only remember, but relive Christ's last supper with his disciples. Thus anamnesis can also be used to describe the religious significance of the ring-shout ritual, which "often became a medium through which the ecstatic dancers were transformed into actual participants in historic actions: Joshua's army marching around the walls of Jericho, the children of Israel following Moses out of Egypt" (Levine 38). Through the ring-shout, the performers claim their place as part of sacred story.[7]

Anne Donadey, commenting on writings by Algerian writer Assia Djebar, has also used the term anamnesis to describe "a particular way of 'resisting amnesia' on the part of colonized or formerly colonized peoples" (111). Furthermore, Donadey argues, anamnesis is a "strategy especially embraced by women writers" as their personal story "is transformed into a piecing together of a collective history" in resistance to the colonizer's "official" history (111-12). Donadey's definition of anamnesis clearly combines features of Morrison's re-memory and Christianity's anamnesis, as does the presentation of rituals in *Praisesong for the Widow*. Rituals like the ring-shout connect Avey both to her diasporic identity and to sacred narrative of the Christian tradition. Indeed, the novel shows how these two components of Avey's "roots" are intertwined. Like the postcolonial subject, she must un-remember or dismantle the histories narrated by the oppressor (including religious narratives framed by white Christians to exclude African Americans from sacred story or to accord them lesser positions in the kingdom of God, and including the false narratives about economics that Avey has told herself in order to survive in a white-dominated world). As Avey re-memories fragments of collective diasporic past, she also narrates the story of Christ—particularly his incarnation, baptism, death, and resurrection—through her own body, thus reclaiming it for spiritual rather than economic significance.[8]

Significantly, Avey's initial transformation—a purging experience—occurs on the boat to Carriacou, a journey in which she recalls an Easter Sunday in her childhood church and in which she also re-memories the middle passage. That these two aspects are combined and layered with the literal journey to Carriacou is no coincidence. Tracing religious routes, perhaps without any hope of finding one's "original" religious roots, is a key component of diasporic experience. Any Christian of the African diaspora has to deal with the fact that slavery and conversion to Christianity were most likely linked in his or her ancestors' experience. In her portrayal of Avey Johnson, Marshall does not reject Christianity as the religion of the oppressors, nor does she take the accommodationist approach of giving thanks that she was taken from Africa so that she could be introduced to the Christian God.[9] Instead, Marshall's Avey experiences diasporic religion in more complex ways, mediated by maternal religious figures who exemplify both routes and roots.

Avey realizes with a "shock of recognition" that the older women on the boat are amazingly like

> the presiding mothers of Mount Olivet Baptist (her own mother's church long ago)—the Mother Caldwells and Mother Powes and Mother Greens, all those whose great age and long service to the church had earned them a title even more distinguished than "sister" and a place of honor in the pews up front. From there their powerful "Amens" propelled the sermon forward each Sunday. Their arms reached out to steady those taken too violently with the spirit. And toward the end of the service when the call went out: "*Come/ Will you come . . . ?*" and the sinners and backsliders made their shamefaced calvary up to the pulpit, it was their exhortations which helped to bring them through. (194; original italics)

Here, the Christian women of the church are a supportive community, those who help to birth new souls, as the old Carriacou women will help Avey to be reborn.[10] Avey's memory of the church mothers' role in the invitational part of the service hearkens back to her dream of her great aunt Cuney in South Carolina: "she [Cuney] was pleading with her now to join her, silently exhorting her, transformed into a preacher in a Holiness church imploring the sinners and backsliders to come forward

to the mercy seat. *'Come/ O will you come. . . ?'* The trees in Shad Dawson's wood gave voice to the old invitational hymn, speaking for her. *'Come/ won't you come. . . ?'* (42). The unspecified place of Mount Olivet Baptist Church (presumably somewhere in New York City) and the place of Tatem, South Carolina—both of which represent Avey's childhood spiritual "roots"—become conflated with her experience of a boat journey, a "route."

The boat upon which Avey remembers this Easter Sunday is named the *Emanuel C.* "Emanuel" means "God with us," and it is a name most often referring to Jesus Christ, God in a human body. Avey's own full name, "Avatara," is related to "Emanuel": an avatar is also the embodiment of a god. Avey's experience of the bodily humiliation of extreme nausea and diarrhea on the *Emanuel C* is what leads to her rebirth, her increased sense of connection with her own body—and with both its placed and its displaced heritage. Like Jesus, however, Avey must undergo physical suffering before resurrection. That suffering is actually part of what links her not only to her body, but also to the suffering that underlies the routes of blacks in the New World: the middle passage. After she becomes sick and is placed in the deckhouse, Avey

> had the impression as her mind flickered on briefly of other bodies lying crowded with her in the hot, airless dark. A multitude it felt like lay packed around her in the filth and stench of themselves, just as she was. Their moans, rising and falling with each rise and plunge of the schooner, enlarged upon the one filling her head. Their suffering—the depth of it, the weight of it in the cramped space—made hers of no consequence. (209)

Through her body, Avey gains a sense of her place in relation to the history of the African diaspora.

Avey's healing process continues to be mediated through her body. After she lands on Carriacou, Lebert Joseph's daughter Rosalie bathes her, in a scene also carrying associations with the Christian rite of baptism and with the "laying on of hands" (217), a biblical practice regarding healing but one given particular emphasis in African American Christianity. Rosalie is herself described as "an idea given flesh," a phrase reminding readers of the novel's recurring images of incarnational spirituality. However, like many of the people Avey encounters on Grenada and Carriacou, Rosalie's body also represents many "avatars," or embodiments, of maternal solicitude. To a half-conscious Avey, Rosalie's figure

> had been any number of different people over the course of the night: her mother holding in her hands a bottle of medicine and a spoon, the nurse in the hospital where she had had her children leaning over her spent body to announce that it was healthy and a girl: "a beautiful baby girl, Mother, and with so much hair!"; the figure had even grown to twice its height at one point to become her great-aunt beckoning to her in the dream. (217)

As in previous encounters, the conflation of disparate people within one body also leads to the association of many distinct places and times. Avey emerges from her bath feeling that the "island once again had solidity and form. Yet, with her mind continuing to swing like a pendulum gone amok from one end of her life to the other, she felt to be dwelling in any number of places at once and in a score of different time frames" (232). This confused mixture of times and places actually represents spiritual growth for Avey, for she is beginning to recognize how all these times and places have a home in her body.

Her bath also leads her to re-member her sexual pleasure from the early years of her marriage with Jay, and this period of her life becomes re-sacralized in her memory. Jay, before he had become jaded by the experience of the rat-race for economic success, had viewed his wife's body as a kind of sacred place: "He would lie within her like a man who has suddenly found himself inside a temple of some kind, and hangs back, overcome by the magnificence of the place" (127). He senses invisible presences like those of Erzulie, Yemoja, and Oya, "a pantheon of the

most ancient [female, African] deities who had made their temple the tunneled darkness of his wife's flesh" (127).

Praisesong for the Widow's celebration of embodiment—especially embodiment in *place*—as necessary to healing the wounds of slavery resonates with a similar theme in Toni Morrison's later novel *Beloved.* Baby Suggs, an "unchurched preacher," delivers her messages most powerfully in the "Clearing," a "wide-open place cut deep in the woods nobody knew for what at the end of a path known only to deer and whoever cleared the land in the first place" (Morrison 87). Because of its apparent uselessness, the Clearing has the power to subvert prevalent economies of worth. Here, Baby Suggs tells her assembled congregation of African American men, women, and children to love their own flesh, flesh that is unvalued and hated by whites. Slavery turned flesh into an economic commodity, and in post-slavery, this injustice continues. Sethe sells her body to pay for her child's gravestone; in *Praisesong for the Widow*, Jerome Johnson's economic assets are referred to as "the whole of his transubstantiated body and blood" (Marshall 88). As DeLamotte writes, "In this image of a man 'transubstantiated' into property, late twentieth-century capitalism performs the function of slavery" (96). The only way to reverse the process is to celebrate the body for its own worth, to fully inhabit it as a sacred place, to be fully incarnate. Incarnation leads, in turn, to a resurrection of the spirit within the flesh: "Slavery, like crucifixion, attempts to reduce the spirit to flesh; incarnation (Emmanuel, 'God with us') is the spirit made flesh; resurrection is the triumph of the spirit in the flesh. . ." (DeLamotte 96).

In his book *Faithful Vision: Treatments of the Sacred, Spiritual, and Supernatural in Twentieth-Century African American Fiction*, James W. Coleman argues that, through Baby Suggs's sermons in the Clearing, *Beloved* "critiques the biblical by showing how her words and acts address the reality of historical black oppression better than those of Jesus" (86). Though Coleman has a valid point, he misses the significance of incarnation in Christian theology and practice—including Baby Suggs's theology and practice. The fact that Jesus became incarnate in a particular body and culture gives value to all bodies and cultures as potential sites of divine activity. Because of that particularity, of course, Jesus' words and acts have a certain cultural limitation that keeps them from being easily accessible to other cultures—this again is where the theology of incarnation becomes important, because Christians are called to continue embodying Christ in the particularity of their own cultures. This is precisely what Baby Suggs does. Rather than revising the Bible, she helps people to incarnate its message in the daily circumstances of their lives.

"Here," says Baby Suggs, "in this here place [the Clearing], we flesh; flesh that weeps, laughs; flesh that dances on bare feet in grass. Love it. Love it hard. Yonder they do not love your flesh. They despise it. . . . No, they don't love your mouth. *You* got to love it. This is flesh I'm talking about here. Flesh that needs to be loved" (Morrison 88). This is the message that Avey Johnson's years of experience, reinterpreted in the light of her journey to Grenada and Carriacou, teach her. Like Baby Suggs, Avey Johnson determines to pass on this message. To be true to embodied diasporic experience, she must also describe the feelings of mind-and-body separation that often accompanied African Americans' experiences of suffering and slavery. As Barbara Christian argues, this separation functioned in the past "not as fragmentation but as a source of wisdom, stemming from a history of the forced displacement of blacks in the West" (150)—in other words, a survival tactic. Avey preserves the memory of this mind-body segregation when she plans to repeat, as part of her message, her ancestor Avatara's words: "Her body she always usta say might be in Tatem but her mind, her mind was long gone with the Ibos. . ." (254-55). Avey's own path is different, however, for rather than separating the locations of her mind and body, she learns to ground herself firmly in diasporic places like the Halsey Street apartment and Ibo Landing in Tatem, South Carolina.

Even before she leaves the cruise ship, Avey begins to recall the floor on which she and Jay danced together when they lived in poverty on Halsey Street: "And the hardwood floor which Jay had rescued from layers of oxblood-colored paint when they first moved in and stained earth brown, the floor reverberating with 'Cottontail' and 'Lester Leaps In' would be like a rich nurturing ground to which she could always turn for sustenance. . . . Avey Johnson hadn't thought of that floor in decades" (12). It should here be understood that a significant process is beginning. In fact, it is to memories of this floor, this "rich nurturing ground," that Avey returns after her journey to Carriacou. She knows, like Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, that she will tell her story to people she meets, including the hotel desk clerk in Grenada. It is a story specifically about place, "about the living room floor in Halsey Street: of how when she would put on the records after coming in from work, the hardwood floor, reverberating with the music, used to feel like rich and solid ground under her. She had felt centered and sustained then, she would tell him, restored to her proper axis" (254). The floor of the apartment on Halsey Street, then, along with the Landing at Tatem, are her roots, though she may also be connected to Africa by routes.

In fact, the Halsey Street rituals between Jay and Avey do also link them to each other by linking them to their shared heritage of the African diaspora:

> Moreover (and she only sensed this in the dimmest way), something in those small rites, an ethos they held in common, had reached back beyond her life and beyond Jay's to join them to the vast unknown lineage that had made their being possible. And this link, these connections, heard in the music and in the praisesongs of a Sunday: ". . . I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were/young . . .," had both protected them and put them in possession of a kind of power. . . . (137)

This is not a pure "return" to African roots, however, because these links to the past are mediated through their Christian heritage. They hear these connections in the "praisesongs of a Sunday," and even their "secular" music's importance is expressed in terms borrowed from Christian tradition, a tradition that is also their own. For Avey, in Jay's hands "the worn-out album with its many leaves became a sacred object, and each record inside an icon" (94). Icons are not a stereotypical part of African American Christianity, but the reference to them shows that, while Avey and Jay celebrate the particulars of African American Protestant Christianity, their rituals also bear the stamp of older Christian traditions and of older, non-Christian African religious traditions. Neither "root" has to be subsumed by the other. Instead, both of these heritages are expressed in the particularity of one couple's simultaneously sacred and profane rituals. Unlike Gilroy, who claims that "vernacular"/"profane" forms of black music are "especially valuable because they have supplied a means to think black sociality outside of patterns derived from either family- or church-based forms of kinship and community" (202), Marshall represents African American music, both sacred and secular, as capable of sustaining particular community through (though not exclusively because of) the vehicle of religious and ethnic tradition. The apartment on Halsey Street is transformed into a diasporic sacred place because of Jay's and Avey's ritualistic acts.

Avey's experience of diasporic place on Carriacou leads her to realize that Tatem, too, is a diasporic place, and she resolves to rebuild her great aunt's house there and to take her grandchildren and other young people to the Landing, to teach them about their roots in routes. She is led to claim the diasporic place of Tatem as her home. Avey's diasporic spiritual geography is particularly significant because it involves both northern and southern locations in the U. S., as well as the Caribbean, thus implying that these rooted sites are connected through routes. The inclusion of the U. S. South in Avey's spiritual geography reminds readers that going "home" is not always a nostalgic wish-fulfillment, for the South has a conflicted place in

African American spiritual geography, as many contemporary novels reveal. The South can be a "mecca, so to speak, toward which many African American writers turn in their search for a site that represents a home base for certain characters seeking grounding and stability" (Fultz, qtd. in Page 79). However, the South also is the site of slavery and of the most egregious segregation and other forms of racial injustice. Rather than excising the South from their spiritual geographies, many characters in recent African American fiction, particularly in the fiction of Toni Morrison, must first travel South, tracing the routes of their ancestors. Philip Page further explains this pattern in Morrison's fiction: "as characters in the urban North struggle to create healthy identities, they must come to terms with their own or their ancestors' rural southern pasts by somehow fusing past and present" (29).

Gilroy may see the U. S. South as a constraining force too powerful in defining black identity, but what he calls "an ethnically absolute and racially homogenous culture" is no such thing. In fact, it is fallacious to speak of a single African American South, as physical geography often affected practices of slavery (though by no means lessened its injustice). For example, the Sea Islands culture that is so important in Marshall's text is distinct from other African American cultures because, in part, of its separation from the mainland:

> Many scholars believe that because of the isolation of the island [St. Helena Island, South Carolina] and the marshy land . . . the majority of the African bondsmen were able to maintain many of their African customs. In addition, there was not always a large population of whites living on the island because the conditions of the area bred mosquitoes and disease that the whites could not tolerate. These conditions caused many whites to serve as absentee owners, and in many instances blacks were left to serve as overseers. (Thaxton 230)

Geography has caused the Sea Islands (or Gullah) culture to have distinct features setting it apart from other cultures in the African American South. The Sea Islanders' relative freedom from white interference also allowed them to fuse Christian belief with African diasporic cultural practices in a unique combination. According to Margaret Washington Creel, "[F]or many years, Gullahs heard of 'Christianity' mainly from black rather than white teachers, and this contributed to the persistence of African norms, thought, and ceremony" (231).

The diverse expressions of African American spirituality, in the South and outside it, demonstrate a flexibility that Gilroy refuses to attribute to roots. He is willing to claim, however, that black music, particularly the blues, represents "a *changing* rather than an unchanging same" (101). Naylor's *Mama Day*, through which a blues mood is well woven into the text, also represents for many African American women writers the twin senses of home and "roots" which are also a changing rather than an unchanging same. "Home," says Cocoa in *Mama Day*, is "being new and old all rolled into one" (49). Being home does not mean accepting one single, monolithic definition of racial identity, nor one single path of tradition.

African American women's narratives of spiritual geography significantly complicate our notion of "home." For diasporic peoples, home can be both the place from which they came and their current location; home can also be a concept representing their hopes for the future. "Home" can represent all these things in alternation or simultaneously; it is thus possible to share Eduardo Galeano's sentiment, "*Tengo nostalgia de un país que no existe todavía en el mapa*" ["I have nostalgia for a country that doesn't yet exist on the map"] (qtd. in McClennen 243). Paul Gilroy rejects the notion of "stable" home in favor of "mobile" ships, he loses sight of the transformative potential of home itself. Homes are not exclusively places of origin; they are also places of arrival, existing on the borders between past, present, and future. An appreciation of or longing for home does not necessarily indicate a simplistic or essentialist notion of origin-based ethnic identity. Iris Marion Young writes, "[H]ome as the materialization of identity does not fix identity, but anchors it in physical being that makes a continuity between past and present" (132). That physical

being, for Paule Marshall and the other African American women writers I have referenced herein, lies in the complex ground of diasporic space. Diasporic space can be in physical locations from New York to South Carolina to Grenada; its distinguishing feature is that it combines roots and routes, body and spirit, into one inseparable whole.

Notes

Special thanks go to Deborah Clarke and Iyunolu Osagie for their feedback on early drafts of this article.

1. I use "spiritual geography," a term drawn from Norris's *Dakota* to describe narratives that connect religion and place. Unlike an abstract "theology" or an airy, vague "spirituality," "spiritual geography" emphasizes religion as it is lived out in particular environments.

2. For example, as Anna Julia Cooper writes in *A Voice from the South*: "I purposely forbear to mention instances of personal violence to colored women travelling in less civilized sections of our country, where women have been forcibly ejected from cars, thrown out of seats, their garments rudely torn, their person wantonly and cruelly injured. . . . There can be no true test of national courtesy without travel" (93-94).

3. Avey uses "Jay" to refer to her husband before he becomes obsessed with climbing the social ladder and setting himself apart from other African Americans. As his transformation occurs, Avey "gradually found herself referring to him as Jerome Johnson in her thoughts. She couldn't account for the change in any conscious way" (Marshall 132).

4. In spite of the novel's critique of placing too much emphasis on money, Avey's journey is of course bought and paid for with some of the late Jerome Johnson's life-earnings (thus, his ghost feels angry over the "waste"). However, money is curiously de-emphasized—and almost rendered invisible—in Avey's transactions in the Caribbean. We never see her pay for anything. This one fact may disguise Avey's American-ness, but it also hides her position of privilege, which replicates that of the colonialist.

5. The notion of place as static has its roots in bourgeois capitalist notions of home. Simone de Beauvoir writes of how bourgeois domesticity allows for men to experience both change and continuity, while women exist literally as placeholders:

These two elements—maintenance and progression—are implied in any living activity, and for man marriage permits precisely a happy synthesis of the two. In his occupation and in his political life he encounters change and progress, he senses his extension through time and the universe; and when he is tired of such roaming, he gets himself a home, where his wife takes care of his furnishings and children and guards the things of the past that she keeps in store. But she has no other job than to maintain and provide for life in pure unvarying generality; she perpetuates the species without change, she ensures the even rhythm of the days and the continuity of the home, seeing to it that the doors are locked. (qtd. in Young 137)

6. As Olmsted explains, "Critics of Marshall's 'connective' politics have accused her of formulating a simplistic, arbitrary, or at the very least predictable and heavy-handed spiritual connection between Africa and the Americas (a connection others read as deep, complex, and subtle)" (249). My analysis of *Praisesong* argues for the latter characterization.

7. In *Praisesong*, Avey remembers how the ring-shouters on Tatem used to sing *"Who's that ridin' the chariot/Well well well . . ."* (Marshall 248; original italics), suggesting that they were re-enacting and participating in the story of Elijah, as he is taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot. The metaphor of Elijah and his chariot has a long history in slave spirituals, as it stood for the hope not only of reaching spiritual freedom in heaven, but also physical freedom on the earth. The ring-shouters' song thus has a particularly rich web of layered significance.

8. To "re-memory" fragments of the past carries a much more creative connotation than "recovering" them. "Re-memory" focuses on the subject's agency in crafting a narrative of the past, whether it portrays literal events or not. "Re-memory" thus does not imply simplistic return to cultural "roots" of the type that Gilroy decries.

9. For example, Phillis Wheatley's late-eighteenth-century poem "On Being Brought from Africa to America" begins with the lines,

'Twas mercy brought me from my Pagan land,
Taught my benighted soul to understand
That there's a God, that there's a Saviour too:
Once I redemption neither sought nor knew. (ll. 1-4)

10. Some critics find Avey's apparent return to a childlike state troubling. Susan Rogers argues that "the novel's portrayal of Avey's emotional and physical rebirth . . . is disconcerting in terms of the suggestion that it is possible to return to an unmediated state of being, to a tabula rasa of mind and body" (77). Alongside Rogers's perspective, however, I think that there can also be found the *mediating* influence of the maternal figures in the novel (the women on the boat to Carriacou, the church mothers, even Rosalie), who often appear in conjunction with Avey's key bodily experiences.

Works Cited

Angelou, Maya. *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*. 1986. New York: Vintage Books, 1991.

Christian, Barbara. "Ritualistic Process and the Structure of Paule Marshall's Praisesong for the Widow." *Black Feminist Criticism: Perspectives on Black Feminist Writers*. Ed. Barbara Christian. New York: Pergamon P, 1985. 149-58.

Coleman, James W. *Faithful Vision: Treatments of the Sacred, Spiritual, and Supernatural in Twentieth-Century African American Fiction*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 2006.

Cooper, Anna Julia. *The Voice of Anna Julia Cooper: Including* A Voice from the South *and Other Important Essays, Papers, and Letters*. New York: Rowan & Littlefield, 1998.

Creel, Margaret Washington. *A Peculiar People: Slave Religion and Community Culture among the Gullahs*. New York: New York UP, 1988.

DeLamotte, Eugenia C. *Places of Silence, Journeys of Freedom: The Fiction of Paule Marshall*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1998.

Donadey, Anne. "Between Anamnesia and Anamnesis: Re-Membering the Fractures of Colonial History." *Studies in Twentieth-Century Literature* 23.1 (Winter 1999): 111-16.

Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993.

Henderson, Mae G. "Toni Morrison's *Beloved*: Re-Membering the Body as Historical Text." *Comparative American Identities: Race, Sex and Nationality in the Modern Text*. Ed. Hortense J. Spillers. New York: Routledge, 1991. 62-86.

Kaplan, Caren. "Deterritorializations: The Rewriting of Home and Exile in Western Feminist Discourse." *Cultural Critique* 6 (Spring 1987): 187-98.

Levine, Lawrence. *Black Culture and Black Consciousness*. New York: Oxford UP, 1977.

Marshall, Paule. *Praisesong for the Widow*. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1983.

Massey, Doreen. *Space, Place, and Gender*. Minneapolis: U Minnesota P, 1994.

McClennen, Sophia. *The Dialectics of Exile: Nation, Time, Language, and Space in Hispanic Literatures*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue UP, 2004.

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. New York: Penguin Books, 1988.

Naylor, Gloria. *Mama Day*. New York: Vintage Books, 1988.

Norris, Kathleen. *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993.

Olmsted, Jane. "The Pull to Memory and the Language of Place in Paule Marshall's *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People* and *Praisesong for the Widow*." *African American Review* 31.2 (Summer 1997): 249-67.

Page, Philip. *Dangerous Freedom: Fusion and Fragmentation in Toni Morrison's Novels*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1995.

Rock, Jay T. "The Ongoing Creation of Loving Community: Christian Ritual and Ethics." *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 20 (2000): 90-92.

Rogers, Susan. "Embodying Cultural Memory in Paule Marshall's *Praisesong for the Widow*." *African American Review* 34.1 (Spring 2000): 77-93.

Senn, Frank T. "Anamnesis." *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship*. Ed. Peter E. Fink, S. J. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical P, 1990. 45-46.

Thaxton, Vanessa. "The Praise House Tradition on St. Helena Island, South Carolina." *Keep Your Head to the Sky: Interpreting African American Home Ground*. Ed. Grey Gundaker. Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1998. 227-43.

Wheatley, Phillis. "On Being Brought from Africa to America." *Phyllis Wheatley: Complete Writings*. Ed. Vincent Carretta. New York: Penguin, 2001. 13.

Wolff, Janet. "On the Road Again: Metaphors of Travel in Cultural Criticism." *Cultural Studies* 7.2 (May 1993): 224-39.

Young, Iris Marion. "House and Home: Feminist Variations." *Motherhood and Space: Configurations of the Maternal through Politics, Home, and the Body*. Eds. Sarah Hardy and Caroline Wiedmer. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. 115-47.

Copyright of *African American Review* is the property of *African American Review* and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.