

**“GEOGRAPHIES OF DIFFERENCE:
‘Race,’ Language, and Imagination”**

Alexis De Veaux

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Thank you. Thank you very much, and welcome to Buffalo. I am honored to be here this evening, to deliver the Keynote Address of the 2008 North East Modern Language Association (NEMLA) Conference. I thank the leadership of NEMLA for extending this invitation to me. I especially thank Professor Carine Mardorossian, Department of English, University at Buffalo, for initiating the conversation that led to my participation and presence here tonight. I am also deeply grateful to the former and current students in my graduate seminar, “Black Women Writers and the Re-imagination of American Culture;” and to the wider community of poets –living and ancestral-whose imprint marks me. My talk this evening, “Geographies of Difference: “Race, Language, and Imagination,”” begins with a mapping of memory:

A decade and a half ago, I was a newly-minted Ph.D.; being considered for a position as assistant professor in the Department of American Studies, University at Buffalo. During the hiring process, I was interviewed by an administrator whose decision about me would weigh heavily. He informed me that I would have to choose now between being an artist and a scholar. *Being a poet, being an artist,*

was my life, had been, for many years before I entered the academy. Becoming a scholar was akin to having an extension cord, another electrical outlet; a way to mature *as artist*. The notion that artists were not scholars, that creative work was not deeply intellectual, was foreign to me; and posed a binary I found both constructed and false. “The role of the artist,” I blurted quoting James Baldwin, “is exactly the same as the role of the lover. If I love you, I have to make you conscious of the things you don’t see.” On an obvious level, my response couldn’t have been more inappropriate. The administrator seemed confused, his white face, flushed. I had disrupted his comfort zone, the power dynamic between us. I had not shown the proper deference to his authority, by accepting, in that moment, that he alone had the power of language, choice, imagination. I had trumped his authority *over* my life with the authority *in* my life of a history that was “black,” female, spiritual, built on activism, based on difference. I knew in that moment that my “life as a scholar” was to be defined as my life had always been: by racialized binaries, by spoken and unspoken discourses on “whiteness” and white supremacy.

Speaking the Impolite: “Race:”

Forty years ago this month, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, as he tried to re-imagine America. At the time, King had returned to the Mississippi river town

of Memphis, to lead a protest march in support of the black sanitation workers union; which was on strike demanding better wages and better working conditions. King's support of black sanitation workers signaled an expansion of the civil rights agenda;¹ one that had already embraced the issue of poverty, as it was linked to his stance against the Viet Nam War and embodied in the planned "Poor Peoples' Campaign." Today, the corporate "tagging" of King's legacy obscures the historic significance of the holiday for the American working class; for the thousands of black, Latino, white, and Asian American workers who-for fifteen years after King's death in 1968-risked their jobs, refused to work on King's birthday, and demanded the right to honor him as a working-class hero.² Forty years ago, the public discourse on race devolved from a multi-racial struggle. Ultimately, that activism shaped the national movement-led by Coretta Scott King, Congressman John Conyers, Stevie Wonder, and scores of middle-class white Americans-to make King's birthday a national holiday. Andrew Hacker elaborates the geography of white middle-class guilt as it applies to King: "One reason why many white Americans worked to have his birthday made a holiday was to ensure that this honor would go to someone with whom they could feel comfortable."³ Not only is King's pro-labor activism that fateful April all but forgotten, annual celebrations of Martin Luther King Jr. Day have become non-threatening, unimaginative "feel good" events; after which, integrated audiences go home and tuck themselves into

the martyred “dream” of racial progress, if not equality; because of our national amnesia, because we have forgotten that King’s civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, while appealing to the moral character of Americans, was subversive in centering a discourse on “white supremacy.” Legal scholar Frances Lee Ansley offers a useful definition of “white supremacy:”

I do not mean to allude only to the self-conscious racism of white supremacist groups. I refer instead to a political, economic, and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-white subordination are daily reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings.⁴

We are waiting for the elevator of the university building we both work in. She works in the development office down the hall from my department. She is someone’s assistant. A nice woman; ebullient, and chatty. “I always see you,” she says as the elevator doors open, “but I don’t know who you work for.” I don’t work for anyone,” I overstress the word, “I am the Chair of my department.” We

are silent the rest of the way. I exit the elevator, fuming. What part of me looks like a maid? Is this a “black” thing? Am I being racially paranoid?

Was her comment innocent, as a colleague, a Hispanic woman, suggests the first time I tell this story? I mull over this possibility, in light of my colleague’s ethnicity. How is my colleague’s subjectivity positioned vis a vis the white black binary in America, in relation to notions of (her) light and (my) dark skin? Is she more like “white” in the academy but not “white” and not “black” walking down any street, in any store, in any community? How does being other than “black” position one in and outside of these racialized encounters? Or, given differing historical realities as Hispanic and diasporic black, how is “race” real to me, for me, in ways that are, perhaps, different to, and for, her?

Nevertheless, over the course of my life, I have experienced some iteration of the elevator incident countless, countless, times. And I have come to this conclusion: there is no innocence in a racist society. There are far too many “white” people who interact with “black” people, with people of color, daily, who cannot or do not imagine the “Other” as powerful. In academe, the discourse of the “Other” has become over-theorized, stale, absent of imagination; both in the scholarship of those who represent dominant sociopolitical identities and those whose identities

are “multiply determined.” The discourse of the “Other” leaves in place existing discourses of domination; and the historic is deeply contemporary.

The unexamined belief in the superiority of “whiteness,” and of the “white race.” The belief in the hierarchical birthright of “whiteness,” of entitlement; of a history of conquest, imperialism, empire; the permutations of racism. This is what I hear: students who identify as “white” saying, “I’m confused. I’ve never had to do this before. I’ve never had to think about race.” Or, “I took a course on race. The course was ‘Black women in U. S. History.’”

This was the language of white supremacy in America back in King’s day: Private Pool/Members only. City Café Colored Entrance. Furnished Apartments/White. Colored Dining Room/in Rear. Hotel Clark The Best Service/for Colored Only. White. Colored. White Only.

In the public arena, the only conversation on race we do *not* have as Americans is a conversation on “whiteness.”

To expose “whiteness,” as “ a practice of exclusion [...] a hidden norm” (Mutua 2005) that operates in full view and is, as cultural critic Richard Dyer argues, for most “whites” in the West, “the human condition” that “both defines normality and fully inhabits it” (*White* 9).

To be frank and honest, in the face of a “global war on terror” and the certainty of more war, about “whiteness” and “white supremacy” as the global becomes the local; as we careen through time, through a matrix of technologies that disconnect us from spirit; as world instability becomes normalized. To be impolite, because “whiteness” and “white supremacy” are antithetical to the human project.

Antithetical to the survival of even those who identify as “white.”

To recognize specialized discourses on “whiteness,” such as “critical whiteness studies” and “critical race theory.” But to instigate a public discourse on race that turns the “white” gaze on itself, becomes an anthropology of correct relationship to wealth, power, justice, a meaningful, creative, life. One that is not afraid to speak against the overwhelming “silence and evasion.”⁵ “Evasion,” Toni Morrison suggests,

...has fostered another, substitute language
in which the issues are encoded, foreclosing open debate.

The situation is aggravated by the tremor that breaks into discourse on race. It is further complicated by the fact that the habit of ignoring race is understood to be a graceful, even generous, liberal gesture.⁶

It is understood to be polite. To exist, according to the rules of the “civilized,” of “civilization.” To be obedient. To accept the social order as is. And give into the view that change, that which is creative, is neither necessary nor possible. To be polite is to be without hope. Was that not what Adrienne Rich had in mind when she advocated that women should be “disloyal to civilization?”⁷

To be impolite. To risk standing here, plunging “blackness” down the elevator shaft of (“white”) liberal thought. And, sense eyes, over there perhaps, close, like wooden slats of window blinds, blocking out an impolite light; “an unpleasant, even painful, sensation.”⁸ Or there, possibly, in the middle row, an ally, someone expressing “an unease within...stirred by distress over what this country has made of race.”⁹ What this country has made of human beauty, the geographies of difference, has made us ugly. And “race is,” one of the producers of the film, *Crash*, reminds us, “nothing if not ugly.”¹⁰ And, over here, someone who is white-skinned, and someone who is a person of color who is someone polite, is agitated,

“[h]ence the tendency to turn, often angrily, on [a speaker] who stir[s] us in this way,”¹¹ and is mentally putting the kids to bed now, or making love later tonight, or shopping for food tomorrow at the co-op; someone polite is not here now because this is not, perhaps, what was expected. And what is to be expected of a transformative politics?

The comedian Dave Chappelle responded not long ago, to the idea of the artist crossing the line: a fan critiqued a skit aired on Chappelle’s former cable television comedy show as too controversial. The skit featured Chappelle as the “Negro” milkman of a classic 1950s television program, delivering milk to a “white” family, a *Father Knows Best* version of the “typical” American nuclear family that television modeled as “normative” back then. Chappelle addressed them as “niggers,” as if the term was not only an acceptable but familiar salutation; and his antics as likeable “darky” contrasted his subversion of their supremacy as “white.” As “niggarized” characters, the “whites” in the skit virtually had no dialogue; their muteness a metaphor for living subordinate, powerless, meaningless, lives.

Allowing that his comedy did indeed cross the line on occasion, Chappelle, who authored the skit, defended it stating that ‘crossing the line is the only way sometimes to force change.’¹² “Of course there is the question of crossing the line,” the poet Kathy Engel intones, “but also the question of *who makes the line to*

be crossed?”¹³ In Martin Luther King Jr.’s time, the exposure of “white supremacy,” whether polite or impolite, forced seismic changes in the geography of American race relations; and resonated, ultimately, with global struggles against racial domination in India, Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Pacific. To quote King, the poet, “Everything that we see is a shadow cast by that which we do not see.”¹⁴

We see “terrorists” abroad, but we do not see “the terrorist” at home. We still do not see the Ninth Ward in New Orleans. We do not see the defective FEMA trailers that are uninhabitable now, that made the homeless of every racial stripe, more homeless. We do not see the broken bonds between the land and the generations, between store front churches and the will to survive. We do not see what has been crushed beneath what was crushed, washed away by a flooding of biblical proportions. We do not see those who cannot bear to, and have not, come back.

Or say it another way: the ideology of a “normative” that holds Europe’s descendants superior to those who look, act, sound, or believe differently, perpetuates the stratification of class, race, religion, sexual orientation, and gender;¹⁵ within the United States and across the globe.

Searching for a Geography of Language:

In *Race Matters*, Cornell West warns against a “black nationalist obsession with white racism”¹⁶ as a kind of “paralysis” that “precludes any meaningful coalition with white progressives because of an undeniable white racist legacy of the modern Western world,”¹⁷ and “often comes at the expense of more broadly based alliances to effect social change.”¹⁸ In its most extreme forms, West counsels, this obsessive viewpoint bares the mark of xenophobia, mirrors white supremacist ideals, and prevents the elimination of black social misery through “substantive measures and human affirmative efforts,”¹⁹ of which affirmative action initiatives are only one goal. I am not a black nationalist. Nor am I absent of “white” progressive extended family and allies. I am a poet, searching for a geography of language, one that disavows “whiteness” as normative, equated with the signs, systems, and tropes of power-both in terms of the quotidian and the historic- as a hierarchical identity. I am searching for a language that demythologizes “whiteness,” that doesn’t trap us, as writer Toni Cade Bambara used to say, “in a fiction;” that reads “whiteness” as marked rather than unmarked; that situates “whiteness” *inside* rather than outside discourses of difference. Here is the poet

Adrienne Rich, on her refusal to accept a National Medal for the Arts at a White House ceremony during the Clinton administration; using her multiple locations as “white” (specifically, Jewish), lesbian, and mainstream, to disalign with representations of white male power, wealth, approval:

Anyone familiar with my work from the early sixties on knows that I believe in art’s social presence-as breaker of official silences, as voice for those whose voices are disregarded, and as a human birthright [...]. There is no simple formula for the relationship of art to justice.

But I do know that art-in my own case the art of poetry-means nothing if it simply decorates the dinner table of power that holds it hostage. The radical disparities of wealth and power in America are widening at a devastating rate. A president cannot meaningfully honor certain token artists while the people at large are so dishonored.²⁰

This is the language of “white supremacy,” now: globalization, family values, homeland security, democracy, the “war on terror,” minorities.

I am in need of a geography that recognizes that in the marketplace of ideas and cultural practices, the language we speak currently is not race neutral; nor is it without “the insidious effects of the durative quality of noncatastrophic [black or ethnic] suffering;”²¹ wherein the effects of language do not dissipate after a short period of time, but are *felt* in a transgenerational fashion.²² I want to speak in poem that hierarchical “whiteness” produces material and psychological benefits for many of those who identify as “white,” while extracting a heavy, life-long price from the majority of those who are identified as people of color; assuring most “whites” of greater resources, a wider range of personal choices, more power, and more self-esteem than would normally be their human share.²³

I want to speak into the architecture, the “deep space,”²⁴ of this poem:

...we shall never not
hear your slave ships
this is what you do
not see:
we who are determined
walk

with Oya and Oshun

when the loam of morning yawn

we have black magic

to brand the new day

these are only masks

we conceal what we let

you see²⁵

And so for me, the moral vision of Cornell West's eloquent book falls short of specific language for "white supremacy" that is unabashedly "obsessed" with historicizing it in the foundations of this democracy, in the rhetoric of racial extremists who have "tap[ped] into the prejudices of...white [America]...noticeably influencing public [and foreign] policy concerning central issues of racism [and race as global realities], poverty, crime, reproductive rights, [human] rights for gays and lesbians, the environment, immigration, and more,"²⁶ and in the conscious and unconscious acts, everyday, of liberals and conservatives alike.

More than a century ago W.E.B. DuBois used this language: "the problem of the Twentieth century is the problem of the color line."²⁷ Katherine McKittrick conceptualizes this "color-line" as "material, philosophical, and an analysis of what it means to know and re-imagine 'place:' it draws lines, separates,

criminalizes, wavers, and disappears,”²⁸ it suggests “the displacement of difference.”²⁹ In her poem, “Cross That Line,” Palestinian-American poet Naomi Shihab Nye asks “What lines should we all/be crossing?;” the question both signals the poet’s challenge that we accept “human connection as an alternative to cultural and political divisions³⁰ and the challenge to those of us who identify as “white” to make comfort with “white supremacy” obsolete, traitorous to the very human connections that fashion language, behavior, change.

Ursula Le Guin offers a vision of human connection. In her novel, *The Left Hand of Darkness*,³¹ Le Guin troubles our notions of “human” and “humanity,” embedding these in the relationship between two characters from differing planets; each is “human” and differently human. In this “interplanetary sociological portrait,”³² we are invited to consider the possibility of multiple worlds on which humans reside, evolve, seek connection across the universe; and across difference as “human.” As Erika Milo points out, “[t]his is the alchemy at which Le Guin excels: First to create difference-to *establish* strangeness-then to let the fiery arc of human emotion leap and close the gap”³³ Le Guin’s philosophy of art as “a social act” inscribes its social function, which “is to affirm community-the human community, and the wider household of being.”³⁴

It is time to cross the line.

I am a poet searching language, searching its geographies, toward another. An archeologist, digging through the buried remains of words, the effects of human activity, for a history and a future. I am excavating tongues, James Baldwin's humanistic vision of love + consciousness=sight. Searching for a more useful vernacular of "difference." Now, as we stand at the precipice of the death of "Other." As "Other" has come to standardize and categorize difference beneath a surface of institutionalized words: race, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, religion, the global north, and the global south. Audre Lorde once wrote:

Institutionalized rejection of difference
is an absolute necessity in a profit economy
which needs outsiders as surplus people.
As members of such an economy, we have *all*
been programmed to respond to the human differences
between us with fear and loathing....But we have no patterns
for relating across our human differences as equals.³⁵

I am searching for a geography that is vernacular, an incantation; at once every day and, as Adrienne Rich has noted, a human birthright, like art.³⁶ A language of the art of equals, one that does not require me to educate, to become object, devoid of humanity, “drain[ed] of energy which might be better used in redefining ourselves and devising realistic scenarios for altering the present and constructing the future.” I am listening for a grammar of equals, its sounds/phonetics, the meaningful combination of these sounds into words or parts of words, morphemes; the arrangement of morphemes into phrases and sentences/syntax. A theoretic conjugation of planetary consciousness. Use it in a sentence:

I am earthling.

You are earthling.

They are earthlings.

We are all earthlings; looking for a new, a libratory, paradigm of the human condition.

The Imagination of A Photograph:

Imagine that I am not a “black woman.” Imagine that I am not binary, oppositional.

Imagine that I am not imagined “blackness” my whole life. Imagine that I have had

to imagine subjectivity. Skin. Diaspora. Body. History. Face. Intellect. These are my geographies.

There it sits, atop one of my bookcases, amongst a kinship of other photographs. A black and white 4x6. Taken, I remember now, with my camera shoved quickly into someone else's hands. Twenty odd years ago, October 1985, on the campus of the University of Michigan. We were at a black women writers conference. Audre Lorde on the left, Octavia Butler towering in the middle, and me-the shortest-on the right. They were both among the living then. Audre imagined "the creative uses of difference." Octavia Butler imagined difference as evolutionary. There are book bags on the ground near each of us. No doubt filled with new books we acquired at that afternoon's book fair. There is a parking lot and a horizon of trees at our backs. These facts are artifacts.³⁸ This is a photograph of black women's spirit, difference, resistance; of the artifacts of imagination.

What has imagination to do with Elizabeth Cady Stanton's understanding, in 1822, of "the solitude of self?"³⁹ The existential notion of the "solitary self," Cady Stanton came to believe in her later years, "is the reality of our nature...compel[ling us] to create a society that will help us fight the worst in ourselves."⁴⁰ To merge the "solitary self" to a shared politic. To imagine the "solitary

self” as necessary to a *democracy* of equals. Wasn’t that, ostensibly, the project of Cady Stanton’s life-long engagement with feminist action, coexisting as it did, with the worst in her-that, in public and private, referred to black men, especially, as “sambos,” when it was clear the Fourteenth Amendment would grant black men the vote before white women?⁴¹ Imagine the wounding of our common humanity today, under an historical white supremacy. Imagine if we did not react as if we were living in a Pavlovian experiment. If we were not constantly conditioned to believe in a scarcity of democracy; and to choose, therefore, our own right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” over someone else’s.

We are solitary, yes, but we are not alone. This is the human paradox.

The “subversive function of the imagination”⁴² is key to that paradox. The author of twelve novels, Octavia Butler was a major literary figure, before her death two years ago, a pioneer; the first black woman writer to insert complex black female characters-and therefore, analyses of the intersectionality of race and gender-into the constituent elements of science fiction writing; achieving, in the process, singular recognition in the still largely male-dominated field of speculative fiction. Butler was the speculative fiction writer to have received a coveted MacArthur “genius” fellowship. She died unknown to many who’ve consigned speculative fiction to the realm of “low” art. But her novels are subversive, poetic, deeply intelligent universes in which the hierarchical in humans is *always* contested; and

race, sex, and gender discourses “push[ed] the limits of humanity.”⁴³ Not only did Butler embrace the idea of characters with extrahuman abilities who lived amongst every day humans, but she explored the idea of “aliens transforming humans into new, enhanced beings. She looked at those takeovers and the genetic flaws they produced as opportunities for exploration, even improvement [...arguing] the necessary compromises were no worse than what already exists.”⁴⁴ Thus the “alien” in Butler’s work was a metaphor for the erotics of difference, an opportunity to explore-and be transformed by-the meanings of humanity. As an adult, she lived alone, believing that solitude helped her interact better with other humans when she emerged from her seclusion. And although she chose a solitary life, the theme of human community was uppermost in her work and world view.⁴⁵ This is her legacy, as artist: imagine subverting the hierarchical in our world. Imagine being disloyal to comfort. Imagine that “art is crucial to the democratic vision.”⁴⁶ The poet Muriel Rukeyser wrote, “[i]f there were no poetry on any day in the world [...] poetry would be invented that day. For there would be an intolerable hunger.”⁴⁷ Imagine, an absence of difference creating an intolerable hunger in the world.

Thank you.

NOTES:

¹ Kathy Engel, telephone conversation with the author, 15 March 2006.

² [http://sanfrancisco.tribe.net/listing/Working-Class Hero](http://sanfrancisco.tribe.net/listing/Working-Class_Hero)

³ Andrew Hacker, *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1992), p. 63.

⁴ Frances Lee Ansley, "White Supremacy (And What We Should Do About It)," in *Critical Whiteness Studies, Looking Beyond the Mirror*, ed. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefanic (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997), p.592.

⁵ Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992), p.6.

⁶ Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, p.9-10.

⁷ Adrienne Rich, "Disloyal to Civilization," in *On Lies, Secrets, and Silence, Selected Prose 1966-1978* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1979), pp. 275-309.

⁸ Hacker, *Two Nations*, p.60.

⁹ Hacker, *Two Nations*, p.59.

¹⁰ Bobby Moresco, writer and producer. *Crash*. Dir. Paul Haggis. Lions Gate Films, 2004.

¹¹ Hacker, *Two Nations*, p. 60.

¹² “Dave Chappelle.” *Inside the Actors Studio*. Host. James Lipton. Bravo, New York. 12 Feb. 2006. During the discussion, Chappelle didn’t identify the race of the fan.

¹³ Kathy Engel, telephone conversation, 15 March 2006.

¹⁴ citation?

¹⁵ Loretta J. Ross and Mary Ann Mauney, “The Changing Faces of White Supremacy,” in *Critical Whiteness Studies*, p. 552.

¹⁶ Cornell West, *Race Matters* (New York: Vintage Books/Random House, 1995), p. 98.

¹⁷ West, *Race Matters*, p.98.

¹⁸ West, *Race Matters*, p. 99.

¹⁹ West, *Race Matters*, p.99.

²⁰ Adrienne Rich, “Why I Refused the National Medal for the Arts,” 28 Mar. 1998, <http://www.barclayagency.com/richwhy.html>

²¹ William R. Jones, “Theodicy and Racism,” quoted in Clarice J. Martin, “Black Women’s Spiritual Autobiography,” in *A Troubling in My Soul: Womanist Perspectives on Evil and Suffering*, ed. Emilie Townes (New York: Orbis Books, 1993), p.22.

²² Martin, *A Troubling in My Soul*, p.22.

²³ Ansley, “White Supremacy (And What We Should Do About It)”, in *Critical Whiteness Studies*, p. 592.

²⁴ For a fuller discussion of “deep space,” see Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds, Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle*

²⁵ Alexis De Veaux, “Harlem Walking/1995,” *Spirit Talk* (Buffalo, New York: Palace Press, 1997).

²⁶ Ross and Mauney, “The Changing Faces of White Supremacy,” in *Critical Whiteness Studies*, p.552.

²⁷ W.E.B.Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Signet Classics, 1969), xi.

²⁸ Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds, Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle*, p.22.

²⁹ McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds*, p.23.

³⁰ Nicole Ungier, “The Long Stroke of Hope,” in Poets and Writers (September/October, 2005), p.38.

³¹ LeGuin, Ursula, *The Left Hand of Darkness* (New York: Ace Books, 1969).

³² Nick Gevers

³³ Erika Milo

³⁴ Erika Milo

³⁵ Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider, Essays and Speeches* (Trumansburg, New York: The Crossing Press, 1984), p.114.

³⁶ Adrienne Rich, “Why I Refused the National Medal for the Arts,” 28 Mar. 1998, <<http://www.barclayagency.com/richwhy.html>>

³⁷ Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, p.115.

³⁸ See Phyllis Rose, “Confessions of a Burned-Out Biographer,” in Civilization (Winter 1995), 72-74.

³⁹ Vivian Gornick, *The Solitude of Self* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005).

⁴⁰ Gornick, *The Solitude of Self*, p.8.

⁴¹ Gornick, *The Solitude of Self*, p.102-103.

⁴² Adrienne Rich, "Interview with Adrienne Rich," WBFO-FM, Buffalo, New York, 30 Mar. 1998.

⁴³ Dream Hampton, "Parable of the Writer, Octavia Butler, science fiction visionary, 1947-2006," 7 Mar. 2006 <<http://www.villagevoice.com/generic/show>>

⁴⁴ Hampton, <<http://www.villagevoice.com/generic/show>>

⁴⁵ Hampton, <<http://www.villagevoice.com/generic/show>>

⁴⁶ Rich, "Why I Refused the National Medal for the Arts," 28 Mar. 1998, <<http://www.barclayagency.com/richwhy.html>>

⁴⁷ Quoted in Rich, "Why I Refused the National Medal for the Arts," 28 Mar. 1998, <<http://www.barclayagency.com/richwhy.html>>

