World Traveling

Maria Lugones: Feminism and Existentialism

Overview

1. Born in Argentina
2. Came to America during the late 1960's
3. General interests:Ethics and Feminism
4. Specific Interests:
   a. Intersectionality
   b. The individual
   c. World Traveling
   d. Loving/Arrogant perception
5. End-game goals:
   a. Mutual-Respect
   b. Self-Identity

Intersectionality

- Multiplicity of characteristics (like being at an intersection)
  - Not just on the 405 or the 110 but both
- Influenced by Marxism (we will get there soon)
- A word which attempts to provide a nuanced view of oppressive social forces.
- A word which attempts to describe phenomena in society

Intersectionality

1. Cultural background, gender, nationality, age, physical ability or disability, mental ability or disability, finances, education, sexual preference, language fluency, etc
   a. ***Everyone* stands at the intersection of one or more of these factors.**
2. Lugones: There are multiple factors for why one person may have an *advantage* or a *disadvantage* over another
   a. Example: Being a native English speaker in the US

Intersectionality

- Lugones: These different factors act as oppressive forces against people.
  - These oppressive forces are not solitary
  - Marx claimed oppression was primarily based upon economics and financial standing
    - Lugones believes oppression is much broader
      - Economics is just one factor which works against people.
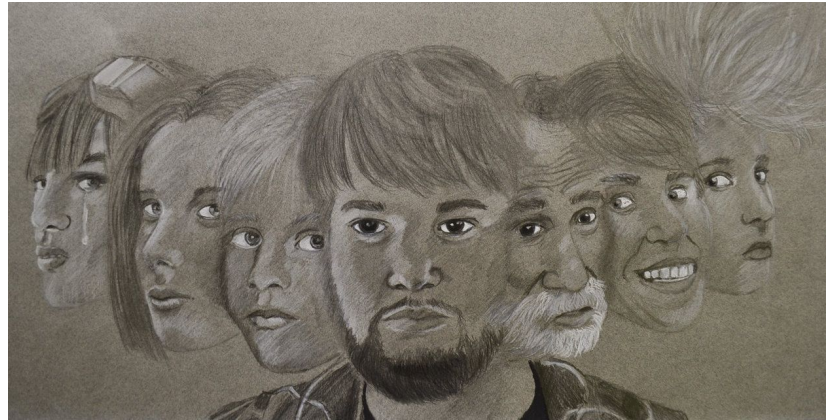- Lugones is primarily talking about the US, but her theory applies to all worlds.

Intersectionality

- Lugones: Ethics and Politics often get caught up on one factor instead of looking at the big picture

1. Problem/Issue: Sometimes different factors affect me depending on the world I am in
   a. Sometimes I feel contradicting forces or contradicting characteristics

Who am I?

- Lugones: The problem is that I seem to be different persons in different worlds.
- Lugones: A world is made up of two or more flesh-and-blood persons
  - Worlds are always under construction
  - Big and small worlds
- So everyone is multiple persons?

(This picture is actually a little misleading for Lugones)

Who am I?

- Answer - Lugones: There is no *default* me.
  - Though there is a *real* me. In fact, there are multiple *real* me's. But none of them are the *true* me.
- Example: I do something which I regret and say "You know that isn't *me*"
  - There is no "homebase" *me*

'Cause I'm Slim Shady, yes I'm the real Shady

Who am I?

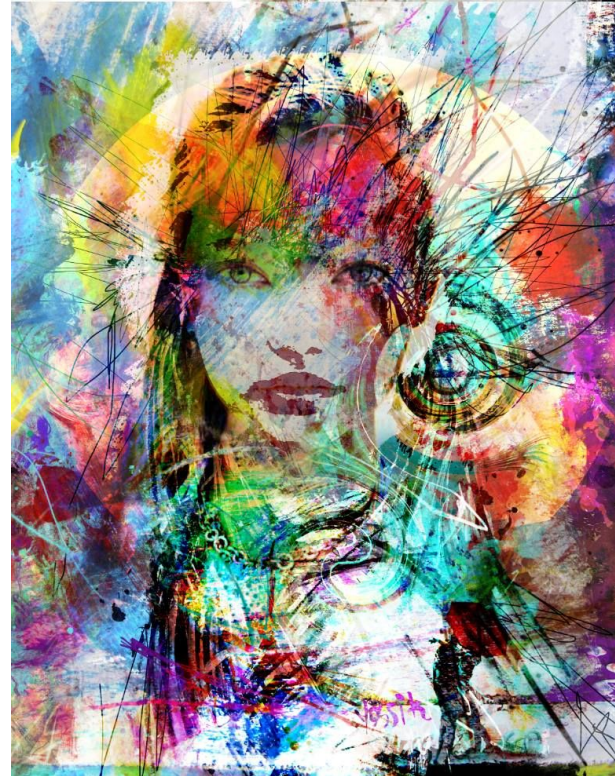| Just born at the Hospital	Work	Friend Group #1	Friend Group #2
Pre-school	The Basketball Court	Dinner with boyfriend	Dinner with parents
Dinner with boyfriend's parents	Driving on the freeway	Kindergarten	School
Sitting in the park	Caring for a loved one	Meeting someone for the first time	Seeing someone after a long time away

Who am I?

- Lugones: We don't always get to *paint* the picture of our social identities.
- Social Identity Construction:
  - Depends upon the world we are in
  - A mixture of what *we* want to express and what the public constructs us as
  - Sometimes we are allowed to have a bigger brush
  - Sometimes the public has a bigger brush

Who am I?

- In all worlds:
  - I am a mixture of who I want to be and who others see me as
- In all worlds:
  - I have a social identity
- In all worlds:
  - My social identity is constantly being altered, remixed, and revealed to me.
- Question: Who determines who gets the bigger brush?

Who am I?

- Some conclusions we can draw concerning identity:
- Conclusion #1: Social identity is multiplicative - I am multiple selves
  - Social identity just *is* identity
- Conclusion #2: There is nothing *objective* about my social identity
- Conclusion #3: Social identity does not exist outside of a world
  - No default "me"

Who am I?

- Some counter arguments:
    - Just because I take on different characteristics doesn't mean I am a different person
    - I have a soul, and my soul is the same regardless of what type of identity I am physically manifesting
        - This might be compatible with world travel
    - If I was a completely different person, how would I remember my past experiences?
- Lugones: Our intuitions tell us otherwise

World Travelling

- How do I world travel?
  a. Willingly (Want)
  b. Unwillingly (Don't want)
  c. Unawares (I don't know)
  d. Suspiciously (Maybe?)

World Travelling

- Lugones: Everyone is a world traveller.
  - Sometimes the worlds we travel to aren't very different
  - Some people are more familiar with world traveling than others
    - Lugones: Persons travelling constantly to very different worlds are going to be more familiar with world travel.
- Recall: I can be in multiple worlds at the same time.
  - Often, I am not aware of the fact I have been constructed in some world
  - World travelling is not necessarily a jarring or shocking experience - though it can be.

World Travelling

1. Roughly:
   a. **Neutral:** Some person or some group of people has constructed me in a world even if I don't know it
   b. **Negative:** When we travel to different worlds, we don't always get to determine our identity
      i. I'm not sure what my identity looks like
   c. **Positive:** I can learn about myself by figuring out who I am in certain worlds

World Travelling

- Lugones - Ethics of World Travel
  - It is very arrogant to believe:
    - You know how a person behaves in all worlds
    - Can predict how a person will be identified in all worlds
    - Know who a person is in all worlds
  - Examples of arrogant perception:
    - Teacher who believes that performing poorly in one subject relates to how they perform in other subjects
    - Employer who believes that a foolish employee is also a foolish parent
  - Lugones' relationship with her mother

Arrogant & Loving Perception

- Arrogant Perception
  - Arrogant perception treats people like objects
    - That they will react the same way and have the same properties in all environments
  - Psychologically easy and familiar
  - Recall: We are trying to fill in information about objects in the world.
  - Lugones: People are not objects

Arrogant & Loving Perception

- Loving Perception:
    - The prescription for arrogant perception
        - A remedy
    - Difficult to fully achieve
- Lugones: You should approach each person you meet *lovingly*
    - Question: What does she mean by this?

Arrogant & Loving Perception

- Recall: Everyone is a world traveller
- Loving Perception is a certain way to approach and interact with people:
  - Understand you are only seeing a person in one world (for a limited amount of time)
- To love someone:
  - Be aware you only know them in one world
  - Attempt to learn who they are in different worlds

Arrogant & Loving Perception

- Lugones: Loving Perception is the Ethical conclusion of World Travel
- Loving Perception is not the same as giving someone the benefit of the doubt
  - Understanding how a person acts in one world may or may not provide insight for how they act in another world
- Loving Perception requires vulnerability - it makes people mysterious
  - This is why arrogant perception is easy for us

Arrogant & Loving Perception

- Loving Perception:
    - Roughly: Don't judge a book by its cover

    - Lugones: There isn't any difference between the cover and the other pages. Try to learn about them all!

Arrogant & Loving Perception

- Lugones: Loving Perception will go a long way if we approach social circumstances lovingly.
  - Professor Klyng acts like this all the time
  - **BECOMES**
  - I don't know how Professor Klyng acts all the time.
  - Maybe professor Klyng acts way different on the basketball court than he does teaching Philosophy.