

mental influence on women's ability to mother with authenticity and tenacity. Given the novel's structure, Pauline's relationship with her mother Wunmi exists mostly in the background, but it still provides complex and troubling insights into the immigrant mother's experience, and would richly reward class discussions. *Borrowed Body* demands a prominent place on reading lists devoted to the child's experience, black British fiction, and explorations of women's mothering practices under the pressures of immigration, postcolonialism, and racism. Pauline's voice envelops the reader who enters her world, richly rewarding her/his sojourn in her borrowed body.

References

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Unearthing Venus: My Search for the Woman Within

Cate Montana.
London: Watkins Publ., 2013.

REVIEWED BY YVONNE RB-BANKS

Montana's *Unearthing Venus* delivers an insightful rendering of what is revealed along a journey that allowed her to look deeply into what shaped her as woman. She shares stories about barriers she faced as a female in building relationships. Each of the eleven chapters highlights a specific time span and allows readers to consider Montana's stage of development at the time of certain events. This book is an excellent resource for teaching in the academy as it offers readers a chance to see what Montana learned about her social development over a span of 47 years from 1957-2010. The work provides a foundation for discussing how gender in some societies may impact decision making, power distribution, or influence.

The underlying thread that holds the chapters together come from the weaving of a single question asked by Montana: “Where are the women?” (7). In her writing she shares her notion of womanhood, romance, identity, and intelligence as a woman. Her style of dialogue is open and integrated. The construction of her work infers that there are ways of being in Western cultures that can, at times, knowingly or unknowingly silence women. With some stories she explores messages from other women as mothers and how those messages shape women as daughters. In other stories she expresses an awareness of loss that she previously had not experienced. She learns to see herself through the eyes of the woman she never knew.

Prior to asking herself where the women are in Western culture, Montana believed that she had a voice, and that she was successful by the standards of Western culture. However, as a sojourner, she gained new eyes to see what can happen under the “power, possessions, and profits” for progress model (286). She makes key points about how cultural paradigms, political ideologies, and religious strongholds are some of the places that can subvert women’s thinking in some societies. She covers in-depth one story to demonstrate her point regarding “the shattering violation [that] sequestered me from feeling the ancient feminine soul wound it had ripped open” (73). Her message pushes forth the plight of women around the world living in tolerated horrors. Montana’s voice is unfiltered in some stories and her aerial perspective is a reminder that women often exist in hostile territory.

Montana’s work resonates in ways that allow the text to speak without imposed barriers regarding gender, class, age, or race. Her last chapter hits hard the polarity in which both men and women are confronted by social norms related to gender in Western societies. The work reflects her personal narrative.

The organization of the writing offers a sense of continuity with the use of one question about the role of women in society. If there is a flaw in her work it relates to the irregularity found in the conclusion of some chapters. Some chapters end with key points about her self-discovery; while other chapters have a feeling of stopping mid-point. Overall, a relevant piece of work that allows the reader to think about what influences social development.