1990

Hypatia Reborn: Essays in Feminist Philosophy

Azizah Y. al-Hibri

University of Richmond, aalhibri@richmond.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarship.richmond.edu/law-faculty-publications

Part of the Women Commons

Recommended Citation

HYPATIA REBORN

Essays in Feminist Philosophy

EDITED BY
AZIZAH Y. AL-HIBRI
AND
MARGARET A. SIMONS

INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS
Bloomington and Indianapolis
Only a decade ago the possibility of bringing *Hypatia* into being was becoming increasingly remote. The market for new journals had soured, and publishers decidedly viewed the launching of a feminist journal as a risk. But some of us feminists simply did not get the message. Pooling our resources and energies, we were able to devise an innovative approach to publishing *Hypatia*. The centerpiece of this approach was a “piggyback” publishing arrangement worked out with Dale Spender, editor of *Women’s Studies International Forum* (WSIF). Under this approach, Pergamon Press would absorb *Hypatia*’s publishing and advertising costs. In return *Hypatia* would appear, first annually and later more frequently if so desired, as a special issue of WSIF.

The arrangement, which was viewed by all concerned as temporary, provided *Hypatia*’s Editorial Board with a unique opportunity to prove to future publishers that it was capable of producing a scholarly feminist journal with a sizable audience and a market niche. In negotiating this novel arrangement, I had the firm conviction that once given the opportunity, *Hypatia* would rise to the challenge and readily attract publishers’ attention. This, in fact, is what transpired.

Producing the first few issues, however, required additional creativity. The journal had no budget, no staff and no headquarters. Earlier, I had not concerned myself with this aspect of the problem, since I expected the university I was teaching at to provide me with at least some of these items. But my agreement with Pergamon Press was reached just as I was heading to law school at the University of Pennsylvania. Hence I turned to that university’s Department of Philosophy and Women’s Studies Program. Their combined efforts provided *Hypatia* with a home, an operating budget, a work-study student and many graduate and undergraduate student volunteers. Of these, Donna Catudal edited the first issue and Ruth Schwartz the second.

Nothing came easy, despite the nationwide surge of support. We were but a handful of committed women, mostly novices, working against all odds to bring to life SWIP’s decade-old dream. The pressure at times was unbearable, the work too demanding. There were tears, but there was also laughter. Then the *Hypatia* staff evolved into the *Hypatia* family, and the office metamorphosed into a home. As the first issue was completed there was joy, pride and relief. The issue was well received, but the *Hypatia* family did not await the market response. Preparations for the second issue began even before the first issue was out, for we had faith that if we did our best, *Hypatia* would succeed. By the third issue, the journal was achieving broad academic recognition and was well on its way to prosperity and independence.

Our modest resources were being outstripped by the new demands of a growing *Hypatia*. Concurrently, various parties with greater resources were contacting us to inform us of their readiness to house, edit and finance the
The *Hypatia* family decided that it was time to let *Hypatia* go. In consultation with us, the Board of Associate Editors of *Hypatia* chose *Hypatia*’s second editor and second home. As *Hypatia*’s files were being packed and mailed, sadness was mixed with the joy of achievement and with satisfaction. The new editor, Margaret A. Simons, was someone who had worked closely with us during the difficult early days. We had asked her to edit our special issue on Simone de Beauvoir. *Hypatia*, we felt, would be very much loved in her new home—and, at last, independent.

With this publication of selections from the first three issues of *Hypatia*, I would like to thank all those who helped bring *Hypatia* into being. Among them are Elizabeth Flower (Department of Philosophy) and Joan Shapiro (Women’s Studies Program); both are faculty members at the University of Pennsylvania who supported our cause, carried it to their colleagues and translated the support into office space and a budget. I would like also to thank Dale Spender, who sold Pergamon Press on the “piggyback” arrangement, and Phyllis Hall (Pergamon Press), who made the transition to *Hypatia*’s second publisher and this book possible. Also, I would like to thank members of SWIP and the original Editorial Board, who gave us our national grass roots and reservoir of energy. But most of all, I would like to thank the students of the University of Pennsylvania—Donna Sernia-Catudal, Ruth M. Schwartz, Melissa Marmalstein, Susan Feathers, Pat Carroll, Ralph Murray, Sylvia Hernandez, Lori Klein, Sally Fowler and Ann Dibble—for their selfless commitment and the numerous hours they expended making a dream come true.

Azizah Y. Al-Hibri