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Foundations,
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SHOUTING FROM THE BASEMENT AND RE-CONCEPTUALIZING POWER: A FEMINIST ORAL HISTORY OF CONTINGENT WOMEN FACULTY ACTIVISTS IN U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION (223 pp).

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This dissertation study grew out of several interrelated issues in U.S. higher education: (1) the corporatization of higher education; (2) the steady growth in the numbers of part-time and full-time non-tenure-track faculty, known collectively as contingent faculty, which has resulted in a two-tiered workforce in academe; (3) the disturbingly large numbers of women who often occupy these low-paying positions, especially in what have now become feminized disciplines; and (4) the rise in a hearty activist movement among contingent faculty, including union organizing and coalition building, that seeks to transform academic labor practices. The confluence of these factors has led some contingent women faculty members into activism, often at the national level, in hopes of reforming higher education teaching conditions and altering the narrative on contingent faculty. My study, a feminist oral history, seeks to understand their experiences. The epistemological and methodological stance for this study was qualitative and feminist; the study was shaped by emancipatory paradigms to raise awareness of the hierarchies that exist to marginalize contingent faculty, especially women in the humanities. Two research questions were explored:

First, how do contingent women faculty members describe their process of becoming activists, especially the personal and contextual factors that impacted this process? Second, how do the situations described by contingent women faculty activists align with feminist conceptualizations of power?

To address question #1, I turned to *bricolage*, using qualitative coding methods in conjunction with narrative analysis and feminist methodologies. Nine themes were identified in the findings which simultaneously point to the interviewees' development as activists and to their marginalization in academia. To answer question #2, I examined how situations described by the contingent women faculty activists line up with feminist modalities of power. Findings uncovered the deep structures in higher education institutions that contribute to a gendered and powered workplace environment for these contingent women faculty activists.