

# feminist collections

women's studies library resources in wisconsin

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## FROM THE EDITORS

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One year ago, we used this space to announce a major new office project -- the compilation of a five-year supplement to Esther Stineman's Women's Studies: A Recommended Core Bibliography (Libraries Unlimited, 1979). With generous support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Cathy Loeb, Esther Stineman, and Susan Searing set out to cull the very best of the past half-decade's feminist scholarship.

What a year it's been! At the outset, we recognized the enormity of our task, but our enthusiasm was undamped:

It is all too easy to lose our perspective on the field of women's studies as a whole, as we grapple with myriad daily commitments and struggle not to be buried beneath the avalanche of new publications. We delight in the opportunity this project affords us to stand back and survey the many superb works which have appeared over the last five years.

(1)

Much of the time, work on the project is delightful. On a calm day, with few meetings or appointments, when the telephone is blessedly silent, nothing could be more pleasant than immersing ourselves in a pile of books and reviews, to skim, compare, and describe. But on more harried workdays, we fidget under the constraints all researchers face: books missing from the shelves, phantom citations, turgid or inconclusive reviews, and a nagging awareness of our own limitations in some of the newer sub-specialities of women's scholarship.

Despite occasional moments of panic, we are making progress. We'd like to share a brief overview of our method and some of our observations to date.

Selection is at least half the work in any bibliographic endeavor, and it is the central process in the creation of a core bibliography. We began identifying possible titles to include by examining our extensive files of reviews and publishers' announcements, and the early issues of New Books on Women & Feminism. We felt confident in choosing works by major authors, works that have been widely and favorably reviewed, and works on emergent themes. Meanwhile, we continued to scan the mainstream and feminist reviewing media to capture the very latest items. Our working list of titles numbered nearly 3,300 by March. Of this group, no more than half can realistically be covered in the bibliography, and many of those will merely be mentioned within annotations for other works.

As we performed the first round of selection, we tentatively assigned each title to a subject chapter. We also did rudimentary indexing to pull together topics that cross disciplinary borders -- for example, works on Third World countries that might belong in chapters on anthropology, politics, history, or economics. Then the second stage of selection began, concurrent with the examination and annotation of books.

We began to sweat, as the shelves of our workspace filled with volumes, and reams of reviews and printouts littered our desks. Selection became a far more painful process. We were forced to eliminate titles that represented excellent scholarship on worthy feminist issues, but failed to meet our strict criterion: all cited works must be essential to the support of an undergraduate women's studies curriculum. This rules out many well-written but narrowly focused monographs -- critical assessments of minor authors, ethnographies of single villages, historical studies of brief time periods, and the like. While we do include some exceptional works that treat a limited topic in the context of developing broader theoretical points, we have favored general surveys, anthologies, and works that synthesize the current thinking on their subjects. Likewise, although we recognize that students rely on their campus libraries for non-academic information as well as course-related materials, we can include only a sampling of self-help books.

Our basic approach is to tackle chapters one at a time. We've made significant progress on chapters devoted to anthropology, biography, literature, literary criticism, science, and reference materials. This strategy, however, inevitably draws us into cross-disciplinary areas, as we find it necessary to compare a reference work on, say, battered women, with related works in the chapters devoted to law, sociology, and feminist theory. Indeed, we acquire a renewed appreciation of how truly interdisciplinary women's studies is, as we examine works on such topics as lesbianism, dual-career families, abortion, and rural development.

One striking phenomenon -- a very encouraging one -- is the sizable number of books on women in other countries. Women's studies today has an expanded international focus, with particular attention to the changing lives of women in developing areas of the world. Many new books acquaint Western readers with women's struggles for equality around the world, and the idea of "global feminism" comes blazingly alive for us as we peruse them.

Also heartening are the many new sources that reflect the diversity of women's experience in the U.S. and abroad -- sources that highlight women of color, lesbians, Jewish women, women with disabilities, and the indigenous women of colonized regions everywhere.

Another impression we share is that primary sources, especially autobiographical works, are much more abundant than they were when the first volume of the core bibliography was compiled. Many of these works recount the lives of ordinary women -- pioneers, workers, middle-class community leaders -- while others single out women of unusual achievement. These works are fascinating, and it's difficult to choose among them.

Unlike the first volume, the supplement boasts a chapter on science and technology. This is proof that feminist scholarship is making inroads into the last bastion of male-defined academic pursuits. No longer merely concerned with increasing the numbers of women scientists, mathematicians, and engineers, feminist authors are exploring the political implications of scientific practice and the very structure of our knowledge of the natural and social worlds.

Content is one aspect of change, but we see progress in broader publishing patterns as well. As women's studies gains academic respectability, more and

more scholarly studies on women are produced by writers (both male and female) who claim no feminist perspective. Their work may nonetheless be quite useful in feminist research. Parallel with this development is the inevitable trend toward specialization. Whereas earlier works in women's studies sketched the outlines of a new conceptual landscape, current research and writing are filling in the terrain. Some recent titles selected for the second volume of Women's Studies supplement or even supersede works listed in the first volume. Others offer telling critiques of earlier titles, books that seemed the best available sources at the time the first bibliography was compiled. (Anthropological studies of native women are a case in point.)

And finally, work on the supplement has confirmed a point we've raised before in FC -- that despite the enormous growth in feminist publishing by commercial and university presses, the small women-run presses still play a central role in articulating issues and developing theory. Many titles from small publishers will be included in the bibliography, not because we have a soft spot for such publications, but because they represent the best (in some cases, the only) treatment of important topics.

We still look to a completion date in early 1986. We have a small supplementary grant from NEH, a tailor-made computer program to generate the final manuscript, a signed contract with Libraries Unlimited -- and several months of hard but rewarding work ahead of us. When the bibliography is finally in print, we know that those who use it will be as energized as we are to realize how widely the tentacles of feminist scholarship now reach.

-- S.S. and C.L.

#### NOTE

- <sup>1</sup> "From the Editors," Feminist Collections v.5, no.4 (Summer 1984), p.3.

## BOOKS TO CHANGE A WOMAN'S LIFE: A SURVEY OF SELF-HELP PUBLISHING \_\_\_\_\_

[Editor's note: This article mentions nearly seventy self-help titles for women, virtually all issued in the last five years. To save space, authors' and publishers' names are omitted from the text. A list of all titles with full bibliographic citations may be obtained upon request from the U.W. System Women's Studies Librarian, 112A Memorial Library, 728 State St., Madison, WI 53706.]

As a break from more academic pursuits, I recently undertook an informal, unscientific survey of self-help books for women. My curiosity was piqued by the sheer quantity of self-help manuals and do-it-yourself guides aimed at female readers. On almost any topic of compelling interest, several competing titles clog bookstore and library shelves.

What, I wondered, might these volumes reveal about women's lives in the eighties? About our information needs? About the publishers' image of us as consumers? About our image of ourselves?

Self-improvement guides and advice books are hardly a recent phenomenon. For generations, women have turned to printed resources for information on health, family care, child rearing, and self-education. In their highly readable study, For Her Own Good: 150 Years of the Experts' Advice to Women, Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English detail how self-help books reinforce stereotypical roles for women.

The current self-help boom began in the late sixties and early seventies in the quest for a self-sufficient, healthy alternative lifestyle. The Whole Earth Catalog was the progenitor of a long line of publications. The family quickly grew to include feminist guidebooks, including the pioneering Our Bodies, Ourselves and The New Woman's Survival Sourcebook.

Although originally coined to denote a reclaiming of responsibility for one's own health, diet, happiness, etc. -- aspects of life that seemed to be increasingly out of an individual's control -- the term "self-help" has lost its flavor of revolutionary righteousness. Too many so-called "self-help" books today are simply compendia of hints for playing the game of life by the traditional rules. By way of example, I quote from an advertisement for The Extra Edge: Success Strategies for Women:

Based on the working experience of savvy women MBAs from the Harvard Business School, this hard-hitting guide delves into - all the ingredients that can propel you to success in today's supercompetitive business world -- from day-to-day style (communicating ideas, performance at meetings, visibility on the job, corporate finesse) to handling challenging situations (office politics, business entertaining, travel, interviewing for new jobs and promotions) and the way you look (your wardrobe, hair, makeup, skin and overall physique). This book gives you "the extra edge" when you've learned that it takes women more than hard work and talent to get to the top.

Books like The Extra Edge take their place with the myriad paperback pep talks for working women. Along with the recent avalanche of diet and exercise books, they play on a woman's insecurities about her self-worth, and they perpetuate the idea that how a woman looks is more important than what she does or what she knows.

But some of the latest self-help books do address genuine needs of women. Generally speaking, such books fall into two categories. First, a number of books answer questions that primarily concern women -- queries about gynecological health, childbirth, and sexual assault, for example. Second, many books provide basic information that is equally useful to men and women, but which women have traditionally been kept from learning. Women may have less anxiety about tackling household repairs or making financial investments, for example, if they have at hand a guide written expressly for them.

Let's look at some recent books. Our survey will be far from comprehensive, but it will represent the types of books that pour onto the market each year. Their publishers run the gamut of major commercial houses, paperback-publishers, small presses, and feminist presses. Most, I must point out, are directed to an audience that is white, middle-class, and heterosexual -- women presumed to have both income and time to invest in self-improvement. To their credit, the authors of these books also assume that their readers are independent, self-aware, and motivated.

\* \* \*

Ever since the Simon & Schuster edition of Our Bodies, Ourselves demonstrated the tremendous market for information on women's health, other publishers have tried to cash in on OBO's success with derivative titles. There are a number of encyclopedic guides -- among them The A to Z of Women's Health, The Complete Book of Women's Health, and The Complete Guide to Women's Health. Thoroughness, accuracy, and style of presentation may vary, but the average consumer would be hard pressed to choose one over the others. The New Our Bodies, Ourselves will surely appeal to loyal users of the earlier editions, as well as to anyone seeking a prevention-oriented and forthrightly feminist source on physical and emotional health.

Many new books address specific health concerns. The Women's Pharmacy and Strictly Female: An Evaluation of Brand-Name Health and Hygiene Products for Women are guides to over-the-counter drugs and their side-effects. Other topics of current interest are covered in books like Dr. Susan Lark's Premenstrual Syndrome Self-Help Book, For Mothers and Daughters: A Guide to Good Nutrition for Women, Menopause: A Guide for Women and the Men Who Love Them, and A Woman's Guide to Safe Abortion. The aptly-titled How to Stay Out of the Gynecologist's Office, by the Federation of Feminist Women's Health Centers, emphasizes "wellness" and vaginal self-examination.

Workplace hazards are of increasing concern to women workers in all sectors of the economy, not just the factory. Office Work Can Be Dangerous to Your Health and the more concise Our Jobs, Our Health help women work safely and counsel them on ways they can pressure employers to eliminate hazardous conditions.

The legal rights of women have changed in the past decade, and with this a new generation of legal guides has been born. The Rights of Women, first issued by the ACLU in 1973, is now in its second edition, reflecting changes in credit laws, divorce and child custody, and marital property rights. Other new general handbooks include Everywoman's Legal Guide, What Every Woman Needs to Know About the Law, Womanlaw: A Guide to Legal Matters Vital for Women, and Woman's Counsel: A Legal Guide for Women.

Self-help materials also highlight special areas of the law. Yes You Can: The Working Woman's Guide to Her Legal Rights, Fair Employment, and Equal Pay provides important information to women in the paid labor force. A similar and less expensive guide comes from the Women's Bureau of the federal Department of Labor: A Working Woman's Guide to Her Job Rights.

Money matters create anxiety for many women, especially those whose husbands or fathers have always handled the family finances. Consequently, a

number of books meet women's needs for financial information. They range from The Money Workbook for Women to Getting Rich: A Smart Woman's Guide to Successful Money Management. One of the better titles, in my opinion, is The Women's Financial Survival Handbook, a comprehensive guide to everything from balancing a checkbook, to asking for a raise, to buying a car or house. Two new entrants are Every Woman's Guide to Financial Planning and Money Phases: The Six Financial Stages of a Woman's Life.

Often women realize their ignorance in money matters only upon divorce or widowhood, when they are suddenly thrown back on their own resources. Two titles speak directly to women in such situations: Facing the Future: A Financial Guide for Women Left Alone; and Count Your Change: A Woman's Guide to Sudden Financial Change.

Other new titles zero in on more narrow concerns. Among them are How to Get Money for Research, Taxable You: Every Woman's Guide to Taxes, Two for the Money: A Woman's Guide to a Double Career Marriage, A Woman's Guide to Buying Houses, Co-ops, and Condominiums, The Woman's Guide to the Stockmarket, and Staying Solvent: A Comprehensive Guide to Equal Credit for Women.

Few observers of the contemporary publishing scene could fail to notice the "baby book boom" -- the rash of new volumes on pregnancy, childbirth, and preschool child care. The Whole Birth Catalog is a monumental compendium of information and resource lists. Indeed, it serves as a guide to the whole genre. Woman-Centered Pregnancy and Birth deserves mention for encouraging women to choose modes of birthing that minimize medical intervention.

Advice books on child rearing have been popular for over a century; Dr. Spock's bible (newly updated) epitomizes the desire of mothers and fathers for expert guidance. Many new titles capitalize on increased involvement of fathers in parenting. Other recent additions to the literature have a new twist, appealing to a growing audience of single mothers. The Single Mother's Handbook emphasizes rebuilding self-esteem and reorganizing family life after divorce, while 2001 Hints for Working Mothers seems at points to be merely a trendy repackaging of basic household advice -- what to keep handy in one's glove compartment, how to cope with kids' rashes and tummy aches, and so on.

The yuppie ideal embraces physical fitness and has spawned a host of volumes, among which Jane Fonda's Workout Book is perhaps the most famous. I'll refrain from a full critique of recent diet and exercise books, many of which are crassly exploitative of women. There are a few works, however, that do stress the importance of general good health and fitness, not just the social benefits of trimming one's waistline or hips. The Outdoor Woman's Guide to Sports, Fitness, and Nutrition, for example, takes a holistic approach to physical conditioning. Other titles focus on particular sports or activities; Improving Women's Running is just one example.

Surprisingly, there are fewer books on technical subjects than I expected. The New Woman Driver: All a Woman Needs to Know About Cars to Buy One, Drive It, Have It Maintained, judging by reviews, compares poorly with the classic The Greasy Thumb Automechanics Manual for Women. The new information technology has inspired at least one handbook -- Computer Confidence: A Woman's Guide -- and more will no doubt appear.



Some feminists have questioned the value of women-focused self-help materials on technical subjects, arguing that they condescend and thus reinforce the stereotype that women cannot understand scientific/technological concepts. The compilers of the Women's Energy Tool Kit supply a strong, empowering response to the query, "Why a tool kit for women?":

We've prepared it because women can play a vital role in conserving energy within the home and in involving our neighbors, co-workers, and communities in the pressing energy issues that challenge our nation.... Women can make a big difference in energy use patterns. Women make 80 percent of all consumer purchases, manage family budgets, and, to a large extent, control energy use in the home.... Women also make up half of the work force, and because we have traditionally been excluded from higher-paying jobs, many of us are hardest hit by constantly rising fuel costs.

Women's mastery of technical skills is not merely for individual self-confidence, declare these authors, but has political, social, and economic implications.

Feminists have organized against rape and sexual assault since the seventies. Many early books and instructional pamphlets on self-defense are now out-of-print. The Rational Woman's Guide to Self-Defense, published in 1975, has been revised and issued under a new title, Every Woman Can: The Conroy Method to Safety, Security and Self-Defense. The guide is controversial; its realistic photographs strike some readers as too violent. The newest title to come to my attention is The Woman's Bible for Survival in a Violent Society. Surviving Sexual Assault revives the tradition of the concise pamphlet directed to the victim. Prepared by the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women, it is an excellent, easy-to-read resource.

For many women, violence is not just a random threat, but a fact of daily life. Getting Free: A Handbook for Women in Abusive Relationships is a much-praised self-help manual for battered women.

Work and career issues account for a large proportion of women's self-help books. There are hundreds of handbooks for working women and women looking for work. Some titles combine practical advice on assessing skills, options, and aptitudes with inspiring pep talks. I Can Be Anything: A Career Book for Women, To Work, A Guide for Women College Graduates, and What to Do With the Rest of Your Life: The Catalyst Career Guide for Women in the '80s are fine general titles.

Other volumes address special audiences -- for example, The Black Woman's Career Guide. The problems facing displaced homemakers are attacked in at least two recent titles: The Homemaker's Complete Guide to Entering the Job Market; and Every Woman Works: A Guide for Women Re-entering the Job Market or Changing Jobs.

Specialized resources for the woman who has already chosen her occupational field are now appearing. Examples include Careers in Marketing: A Woman's Guide, Invest in Yourself: A Woman's Guide to Starting Her Own

Business, and A Woman's Guide to Moving Up in Business and Government.

Still other books dispense advice for day-to-day survival and fulfillment on the job. From the author of The Managerial Woman comes Knowing the Score: Play-by-Play Directions for Women on the Job. As more and more women combine work and motherhood, handbooks such as Managing Your Maternity Leave will find eager readers. And to round out this discussion of work-focused books, I'll mention my favorite -- 9 to 5: The Working Woman's Guide to Office Survival. A well-written text enlivened by exercises, checklists, and true-life vignettes, it meets its important objective of educating office workers about their rights.

I've covered the self-help literature in several categories: health; law; money; motherhood; sports and fitness; technology; violence and self-defense; and paid work. I've deliberately side-stepped whole arenas of self-help publishing -- "dress for success" manuals, for instance, and "be your own therapist" guides. Still, there are some interesting titles I can't resist noting that don't easily fit the topics identified thus far.

Self-help guides are often guilty of ageism, speaking to an imagined audience of women in their twenties and thirties. Certainly women at other life stages also face choices and seek help in printed materials. The literature is growing in this regard. At opposite points on the spectrum are Options: The Female Teen's Guide to Coping with the Problems of Today's World and Growing Older, Getting Better: A Handbook for Women in the Second Half of Life.

Women's increasing participation in the public sphere -- be it business, politics, or cultural life -- brings new anxieties of many kinds. Reassurance can be sought in books such as Making It Big in the City: A Woman's Guide to Living, Loving, and Working There, Secrets of Successful Speaking: A Woman's Guide, and Survival Manual for the Independent Woman Traveler.

Finally, there's the book I could surely profit from but just haven't found time to peruse: Womanhours: A 21-Day Time-Management Plan That Works.

-- S.S.

## FEMINIST VISIONS

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### CRITICAL VIEWING: FILMS ON MENSTRUATION

Since the late 1940s, teachers and school nurses across the country have used the medium of film to teach young adolescent girls about menstruation. In 1946 Kimberly-Clark, makers of Kotex sanitary pads, sponsored the first of these films. Titled "The Story Of Menstruation", the film was produced by Walt Disney. Other manufacturers of sanitary products have sponsored similar films. Personal Products, manufacturers of Modess and Stay Free sanitary pads and O.B. tampons, has produced three films over the past thirty years, the first in 1964, a second in 1974, and the third in 1984. And the makers of Tampax tampons, Tambrand, Inc. -- while active in the "menstrual health education field" since the 1940s -- just recently released their first

menstruation film.

A sponsored film is one that is paid for by a particular company or organization. In addition to the production costs, the sponsor pays for advertising and distribution of the film. A sponsored film is rarely an explicit commercial for a particular product. Most local school boards frown on using a film in the schools that blatantly promotes a brand name product. Rather, a sponsored film is more likely to construct "positive images," hoping the viewer will associate them with the sponsor's product.

In menstruation films, sponsors construct positive images around topics like menarche, bodily changes during puberty, and becoming a woman (which is closely associated in these films with becoming a mother). Sponsors see themselves as providing a useful service by instructing young potential consumers about the multitude of sanitary products in the market place. Within the last ten years, this market has expanded considerably with the creation of "maxi" and "mini" pads in regular or super absorbencies, shaped pads, panty shields and liners, and varieties of tampon applicators. In the context of this growing market, three new films on menstruation have been made within the last two years by competing manufacturers. (See the list of films at the end of this article.)

Why do sponsored films on menstruation get into the classroom?. There are a number of reasons. First of all, these films are available free of charge, and at a time when school budgets are tight, this can be an attractive feature. In addition, the sponsors of these films are large profit-making corporations that can afford the sort of slick commercial production that appeals to an audience raised on Hollywood films and television. Moreover, the teachers or school nurses who use a particular film on menstruation are not always involved in the selection process. Very often films are purchased at the district level and then circulated among schools for a number of years.

But no matter how a sponsored film on menstruation gets into the school environment, I believe it provides students and teachers with a valuable opportunity for critical viewing. By critical viewing I mean looking at and discussing the film as a group in order to analyze how it constructs meaning. For example, after viewing a sponsored film on menstruation, the group could discuss what the consumer message is, how the message is created, and in what ways the sponsor of the film may benefit from that message.

Another issue for group discussion is how the film controls information, whether it constrains, limits, or silences certain topics. If the film deals with female sexuality, for example, are particular female organs -- the clitoris, hymen, or vulva -- left unmentioned or unnamed? Are changes that occur in the body during puberty, such as an increased interest in and capacity for sexual arousal and activity, omitted from the presentation? How does the film handle controversial topics such as toxic shock syndrome, or the unpleasant aspects of menstruation such as painful cramps?

There are alternatives to these commercially produced films on menstruation. Independent filmmakers must raise their own money to produce films; their films are therefore less likely to be associated with or intended to promote a product, an organization, or a company image. "Dear Diary" is one example. Made for classroom use by Debra Franco and David Shepard, the

film presents a view of female puberty that includes physical, emotional, and sexual changes. No consumer message is embedded in the film. Instead it focuses on issues of self-image, peer pressure, and the tensions girls may experience when confronted with the prescriptive messages of the media, the schools, their friends and family.

While independently-produced films on this topic are unlikely to have the hidden commercial agendas of sponsored films, they, too, should be subjected to critical scrutiny. They are still constructing one particular view of puberty, and the view they present may well conflict with those of young viewers.

The classroom is an ideal setting for critical viewing and discussion among students, whether in a mixed or single-sex group. Where shared experiences are valued as a legitimate source of knowledge, students can compare their own understanding to the information offered in the film. A uniformly positive view of menstruation, for example -- where all problems have easy solutions, and selecting the best sanitary product resolves the feelings of anxiety and insecurity that accompany changing bodies -- may make the girl who has painful cramps, heavy bleeding, or who feels moody and depressed around the time of her period feel she is unusual or even abnormal. Critical viewing and group discussion may empower girls to challenge problematic representations of menstruation, or received ideas about what it means to be a woman, and to affirm their own experience. Such discussion may even lead girls to imagine how they would make their own film on menstruation.

\* \* \*

#### Books for Young Adolescents on Menstruation and Puberty

Ruth Bell, Changing Bodies, Changing Lives: A Book for Teens on Sex and Relationships. New York: Random House, 1980. 242p. bibl. index. \$15.95, ISBN 0-394-50304-X; pap., \$9.95, ISBN 0-394-73632-X. LC 80-5298.

JoAnn Gardner-Loulan, Bonnie Lopez, and Marcia Quackenbush, Period. San Francisco: New Glide Publications, 1979. 89p. pap., \$6.00, ISBN 0-912078-69-3. LC 79-25897.

#### Reference Books for Teachers on Menstruation and Menarche

Carolyn Cooperman and Chuck Rhoades, New Methods for Puberty Education: Grades 4-9. Morristown, NJ: Planned Parenthood of Northwest New Jersey, 1983. 1v. (looseleaf). \$20.00, ISBN 0-9609366-0-2.

Janice Delaney, Mary Jane Lupton, and Emily Toth, The Curse: A Cultural History of Menstruation. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1976. 276p. bibl. index. LC 76-5461.

Sharon Golub, ed., Menarche: The Transition from Girl to Woman. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1983. 330p. bibl. index. \$30.00, ISBN 0-699-05982-X. LC 82-48105.

Papers presented at an interdisciplinary research conference on menarche. The book is divided into eight topical sections: physiological, psychological,

educational, sexual, literary, clinical, and psychiatric. All the work discussed is accessible to students and nonspecialists.

Paula Weideger, Menstruation and Menopause: The Physiology and Psychology, the Myth and the Reality. New York: Knopf, 1975. 275p. bibl. index. LC 75-8262. pap., New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1977. LC 77-151283.

Women and Health: The Journal of Women's Health Care v.8, no.2/3, Summer/Fall 1983: "Lifting the Curse of Menstruation: A Feminist Appraisal of the Influence of Menstruation on Women's Lives" (thematic issue). Sharon Golub, ed. Repr. New York: Haworth Press, 1983. 156p. bibl. \$19.95, ISBN 0-86656-242-7. LC 83-12723. pap., New York: Harrington Press, 1985. \$7.95, ISBN 0-918393-06-X. LC 84-19804.

#### Sponsored Films on Menstruation

Accent on You. (Walter J. Klein Co. 1984. Free loan for a short term.)

Produced for ages nine to fourteen, the first part is for a mixed audience of boys and girls and the second part is for girls only. Sponsored by Tambrand, Inc., makers of Tampax tampons.

Growing Up On Broadway. (Personal Products. 1984. Two day free loan or \$25 rental for one month.)

Produced for girls in grades five and six. Sponsored by Personal Products, makers of Stayfree sanitary pads.

Julie's Story. (Kimberly-Clark Audio Visual Library. 1984. Free for a short term.)

Produced for girls in grades five and six. Sponsored by Kimberly-Clark, makers of Kotex sanitary pads.

#### Independently Produced Films on Menstruation

Dear Diary. (Produced with the Boston Family Planning Project by Debra Franco and David Shepard. 1982. 25 min. \$45 rental. New Day Films.)

A funny educational film about female puberty, presented in a situation comedy format.

Linda's Film on Menstruation. (Produced by Linda Feferman. 1974. 18 min. \$15.55 rental. Michigan Media.)

Humorously dramatizes the experiences of a fifteen-year-old girl and her sixteen-year-old boyfriend during her first period. Includes an animated sequence on the physiological process of menstruation.

Period Piece. (Produced by Emily Culpepper. n.d. 10 min. \$50 or less rental. Distributed by Emily Culpepper.)

Calls attention to attitudes toward menstruation found, for example, in magazine ads assuring women that through technology "no one will know." In addition, the filmmaker explores what she feels is beautiful about

menstruation. May be more suitable for a high school group, ages fourteen to seventeen. Study guide available.

-- Margot Kennard Larson

[Margot Larson is a graduate student in educational media in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UW-Madison. She is currently working on her dissertation, "Menstruation Films for Young Adolescent Girls: A Partnership Between Education and Industry, 1946-1984." She has a special interest in film and video production, and hopes to continue making educational programs with a feminist vision after she finishes her degree.]

### Distributors

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64-R Sacramento St., Cambridge, MA 02138. (617) 547-0704.

Kimberly-Clark Audio Visual Library.

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## FEMINIST PUBLISHING

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### THE WISCONSIN WOMEN'S LAW JOURNAL

The First National Conference on Women and the Law was held in New York City in 1970. Fifty people attended. When the Sixteenth National Conference opened this past March, again in New York, more than three thousand people came -- attorneys, women's rights advocates, community activists, and law students. (1) During this same period, the percentage of law degrees granted to women rose from 5% to 32%. (2) It is clear that the political mobilization of women over the last decade and a half has triggered a tidal wave of interest in law and in legal remedies for sexual inequities.

Yet, to look at the traditional law reviews, one would never guess the magnitude of this movement. While an occasional article on a feminist topic is accepted by the largely male editorial hierarchies, these publications for the most part continue to reflect the "old-boy" mainstream of the legal profession.

Some law students at the UW-Madison Law School have been working over the last year and a half to create a new forum for feminist legal writing, the Wisconsin Women's Law Journal (WWLJ). I recently learned more about the publication from second-year student Trina Held, who has worked on the journal since she entered law school.

The idea for a new women's law journal originated with law students Debbie Katz and Jane Schraft. Both of them worked on the Wisconsin Law Review, and had seen interesting, well-written pieces on feminist topics rejected by the Review, with no reason given. Their experience was not unique, according to Held, whose general impression is that "the traditional law reviews don't seem to be publishing a lot of women's issues."

The WWLJ is not the first of its kind. Two journals -- Women & Law out of Hofstra University and Women's Law Journal from Los Angeles -- were launched in the '70s, only to cease before the end of the decade. Currently, the Harvard Women's Law Journal, an annual publishing since 1978, most closely approximates the traditional law review in format and editorial structure, but publishes writing on such nontraditional topics as premenstrual syndrome, pornography, battered women, and insurance equity. The Women's Rights Law Reporter, issued by the Rutgers Law School, and the Women's Law Reporter, out of Loyola, also publish legal scholarship on women's topics.

The founding editors of WWLJ intend their new publication to depart from the traditional law review model in a number of significant ways. To begin with, the masthead will reflect their nonconforming editorial structure, "We have four people who have different roles, but equal responsibility," Held informed me. "We don't have an editor-in-chief; we don't have a hierarchy. We basically all do many of the same things."

Secondly, the WWLJ hopes to expand the scope of issues defined as relevant to the legal profession, borrowing on the interdisciplinary approach of women's studies. They envision a forum for both the scholar and the practitioner, one which would, in Held's words, "encourage people from different disciplines to write for us. We don't want to limit the journal to just law and law professors."

Finally, the editors have made a very out-of-the-ordinary commitment to their writers and to the research and writing process. They do not have a grade requirement for writers, as does the law review. And they are much more likely to offer to work with an author on revisions than they are to reject a piece out of hand. When an author submits a paper to the journal, s/he is assigned an editor who will work with her/him until the article is published or abandoned. And this rule applies, Held says, regardless of the writer's discipline: "A woman just called up who had done a paper for a women's studies class, and wanted to know if we'd publish it. We'll give her as much attention as we'd give to somebody writing a strictly legal article.... So it's a lot of work." With the help of their faculty advisor, June Weisberger, and other sympathetic faculty, WWLJ staff have been able to obtain academic credit for the already overburdened law students who edit and write for the journal.

The WWLJ was launched with that magic combination of boundless enthusiasm and naive ignorance characteristic of many a small press venture. When work

began in the fall of 1984, Held recalled, the journal staff was "real excited and wanted to publish right away." But, she further confessed, "None of us had a whole lot of experience with publishing or journalism. So we ran into many obstacles, of course, that kept delaying us along the way -- like getting exempt status as a nonprofit -- all those mundane details. And so finally this spring we will publish our first issue."

The first issue will run 150 to 175 pages. June Weisberger is author of the lead article on the Wisconsin Marital Property Act. Jim Burr, a practicing attorney in Salt Lake City, contributes an article on theories used in tort cases for DES victims. Karen Morissey, an attorney from Pewaukee, Wisconsin, writes about artificial insemination and single motherhood. Rounding out the issue are a piece on gender and privacy in prisons by law student Penelope Hilleman, a review of the newly published three-volume collection of Margaret Fuller's letters, and a foreword by Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Shirley Abrahamson.

The journal staff intends to publish one general issue and one thematic issue each year. Though they hope that subscriptions will eventually pay for the publication, they are exploring other sources of funding as well. Start-up money was obtained from the Student Bar Council. And the journal has just received a \$6000 grant from the Evjue Foundation to cover the cost of a word processor -- a real boon.

The WWLJ has already received three to four hundred subscriptions. If you would like to join the ranks of subscribers, write the journal at: Wisconsin Women's Law Journal, University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School, 975 Bascom Mall, Madison, WI 53706. Subscriptions are \$8.00 for individuals, \$15.00 for institutions. If you have access to a mailing list that might further expand their readership, please share that, too. And, of course, if you're hard at work on a feminist article with legal ramifications, consider submitting it to the Wisconsin Women's Law Journal -- you may never have the opportunity for such attentive editing again!

-- C.L.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Women Lawyers Journal v.71, no.2, Winter 1985, p.3.

<sup>2</sup> National Center for Educational Statistics, Digest of Educational Statistics, 1983-84 (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1983), p.128 (Table I06).

## EDITORS' NOTE

Susan Searing is taking a break from her regular FC review of reference titles this issue. "New Reference Works in Women's Studies" will be back in the Fall issue of Feminist Collections.



## PERIODICAL NOTES

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[Editors' note: As readers may have noticed, we are much more successful in tracking new feminist periodicals than special issues of periodicals. Unless we receive an announcement from the publisher, or spot an ad in another source, thematic issues on feminist topics are likely to escape our attention. We would very much like to expand our special issue coverage, and invite our readers to help us. Please alert us to new feminist special issues as you discover them, and we in turn will publicize them in these pages.]

### NEW PERIODICALS

Ada James Women's Center Newsletter. 1985-. Ed.: Wendy Ho. Quarterly. 710 University Ave., Suite 202, Madison, WI 53715. (Issues examined: v.1, no.1, Spring 1985; v.1, no.2, Summer 1985)

Reports on the activities of the UW-Madison Ada James Women's Center, as well as other feminist news on the UW-Madison campus. Representative articles in the first two issues discuss a symposium on Chicana/Native American women, organizing for a child care tuition assistance program, women's history week, a lecture by Angela Davis, and Madison anti-apartheid demonstrations. Published in 8 1/2 X 11 inch format; 8 to 12 pages per issue.

African Women Rising. 1984-. Quarterly. International Council of African Women, P.O. Box 8676, Washington, DC 20011. (Issues examined: v.1, no.1, Summer 1984; v.1, no.2, Winter 1984)

The ICAW is a collective of women of African descent formed in 1982 "to promote the worldwide networking and development of African women." The collective defines as African "all peoples of African descent in Africa, the Caribbean, Australia, Asia, Europe, the Pacific Islands, and the Americas." The first volume of African Women Rising will feature information and plans for the World Conferences for Women to be held in Nairobi, Kenya in July of this year. Published in 8 1/2 X 11 inch-format; 4 pages.

The Ahfad Journal. 1984-. Ed.: Lee G. Burchinal. Semiannual. \$15 (indiv.); \$25 (inst.). P.O. Box 167, Ahfad University College for Women, Omdurman, Sudan. (Issue examined: v.1, 1984)

In the first issue of this new journal focusing on women in development are articles on women's education, and female circumcision in the Sudan. For the second issue, the journal plans articles on women, family, and Islam; the status of women in Sudan and other sub-Saharan countries; women, work, and development in the Sudan; Sudanese women's status and fertility; and the Sudanese women's movement.

Backbone: A Journal of Women's Literature. 1984-. Ed.: Backbone Collective. Semiannual. \$9. Single copy: \$4. P.O. Box 95315, Seattle, WA 98145. (Issue examined: v.1, no.1, Fall 1984)

"We wish to provide a literary forum for women who otherwise find it difficult to publish their work, not because their work isn't of quality, but because of circumstances such as geographical isolation, color of skin, and class and educational background" (Editorial Statement, p.9). This new literary journal grew out of the Seal Press's "Backbone Series," which

published Northwest women's writing and art. The first issue of the newly independent Backbone is beautifully produced, and offers poetry, stories, and essays. Among the contributors are Jo Cochran, Barbara Wilson, Vickie Sears, and Paula Gunn Allen.

The Beltane Papers: A News-Journal of Women's Spirituality & Thealogy [sic]. 1984?-. Ed.: Helen G. Farias. 8/year. \$8 (indiv.); \$13 (inst.). Single copy: \$2. P.O. Box 8, Clear Lake, WA 98235. (Issue examined: v.1, no.8, Eostre [sic] 1985)

"The Beltane Papers is a meeting place for all feminist spiritual women, emphasizing thealogy (Goddess-study), yet open to expressions and explorations of other Paths (Native American, Feminist Christian, Feminist Jewish, African/Black, etc.)." The eighth issue has a thematic focus on women's rites, and includes articles, rituals, a serialized children's story, an "Eostretide Goddess Calendar," recipes, and letters to the editor.

Labyrinth: The Philadelphia Women's Newspaper. 1984-. Managing ed.: Raelyn Harmon. Monthly. \$8 (indiv.); \$15 (inst.). P.O. Box 42614, Philadelphia, PA 19101. (Issue examined: v.1, no.12, May 1985)

"Because we believe that no one of us can speak for feminism or for women as a whole, we do not restrict ourselves to any one conception of feminism, but encourage a broad discussion of issues relevant to women." In the twelfth issue (twelve pages in length) are articles on violence against abortion clinics, feminism and Mother's Day, and Judy Chicago's "The Birth Project"; book and music reviews; news; and letters to the editor.

Lesbian Ethics. 1984?-. Ed.: Jeanette Silveira. 3/year. \$12 (indiv.); \$16 (inst.). Single copy: \$5. LE Publications, P.O. Box 943, Venice, CA 90294. (Issue examined: v.1, no.2, Spring 1985)

In the second issue of this new journal, Susan Cavin contributes an excerpt from her dissertation on female homosocial relations; Julia Penelope presents the second of three installments of her article, "The Mystery of Lesbians," a political analysis of feminism, the women's community, and lesbian separatism; Sarah Lucia Hoagland submits a commentary on Penelope's article; readers share their views on monogamy and non-monogamy; and Anna Lee writes on "The Tired Old Question of Male Children." The journal is beautifully produced, and the writing is of high quality.

Southern Rural Women's Network Newsletter. 1983?-. Ed.: Sharon A. Miles. Quarterly. \$7.50. P.O. Box 3548, Jackson, MS 39207. (Issues examined: v.2, no.2, July 1984; v.3, no.1, Spring 1985)

"The Southern Rural Women's Network is a regional association of rural women...founded on the premise that rural women working in concert can effect social change, and begin in a systematic way to develop the leadership potential of Southern rural women." Eight to sixteen pages in length, this newsletter includes news on the Network and regional events, editorials, announcements, portraits of community leaders, interviews, articles, and reviews.

Upfront: A Black Women's Newspaper. 1984?-. Ed.: The Upfront Collective. Quarterly. \$5. P.O. Box 2293, Washington, DC 20013. (Issue examined: v.1, no.4, Spring 1985)

The fourth issue of this newspaper is sixteen pages long, and offers articles on the daughter of Bishop Desmond Tutu, the National Political

Congress of Black Women, breast cancer, blacks in the Freeze Movement, lesbian motherhood, single parents, and the recent dethroning of the first black Miss America; plus an editorial, poetry, a letter to the editor, and announcements.

The Woman's Journal. 1985-. Ed.: Patricia Desmond. Monthly. \$9. 107 Wompatuck Rd., Hingham, MA 02043. (Issues examined: v.1, no.1, January 1985 - v.1, no.6, June 1985)

"The Woman's Journal was conceived as the vehicle for women to communicate about the political, social, cultural and economic events and thoughts here in Massachusetts." The first six issues of this newspaper, each twelve to sixteen pages in length, feature articles, reports, commentary, poetry, portraits, reviews, and news. Representative topics include abortion, the feminization of poverty, job hunting, insurance, success, and the martial arts.

### SPECIAL ISSUES OF PERIODICALS

Child Welfare v.64, no.3, May/June 1985: "Toward a Feminist Approach to Child Welfare." Guest ed.: Lela B. Costin. \$20 (indiv.); \$38 (inst.). Single copy: \$4.50. 67 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. (Issue examined)

Articles on: the role of mothers in father-daughter incest; child abuse, gender, and the myth of family independence; teenage parenting; the feminization of poverty; foster family care; child care services; gender discrepancies between delinquent behavior and control; a minority feminist perspective on child welfare issues; and women and men working in child welfare.

Room of One's Own v.8, no.4, 1984: "Tessera." Guest eds.: Barbara Godard, Daphne Marlatt, Kathy Mezei, Gail Scott. Single copy: \$3. P.O. Box 46160, Station G, Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4G5, Canada. (Issue examined)

"Tessera will appear once a year as a special issue of an already established magazine....we wish to offer a forum for dialogue between French and English women writers and among women across Canada interested in literary criticism" (p.2). This first issue presents articles in both English and French. English articles include: "Canadian Women Poets and the Syndrome of the Female Man," by Wendy Keitner; "Is Feminist Literary Criticism Becoming Anti-Feminist?" by Andrea Lebowitz; and "Double-Read: On Margaret Atwood's Bodily Harm," by Jennifer Waelti-Walters. Translations of French articles are provided. For more information about subsequent issues of Tessera, contact Kathy Mezei, English Department, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6, Canada.

### CEASED PUBLICATION

New Women's Times 1984-1985. 11/year. 804 Meigs St., Rochester, NY 14620. (Information from off our backs v.15, no.6, June 1985)

Many feminist readers will sorely miss the fine reporting of the New Women's Times, and the trenchant criticism of its Feminist Review, issued six times a year as a supplement. In the June 1985 issue of off our backs, the NWT women offer their farewell, attributing the paper's demise to Reaganomics, personal crises, staff burnouts, and diminishing support from the women's community. They write, "We regret that there is one voice less for women at a

time when woman-hating is rampant, and the feminist media is needed more than ever." off our backs is honoring NWT subscriptions and publishing reviews and essays scheduled for the New Women's Times Feminist Review in their June and July issues. Back issues of the NWT are available from the paper at its Rochester address.

## ITEMS OF NOTE

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THE OBJECT OF THE LAW IS JUSTICE: WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY is the title of a one-hour production on Wisconsin women judges that aired last December on Wisconsin Public Radio. Produced by Judith Strasser, the program features interviews with thirteen women judges, exploring why they entered the profession; their experiences as law students, lawyers, and judges; and whether they believe having women on the bench makes a difference in the application of law. A tape of the program may be purchased for \$7 from Vicki Nonn, WHA/WERN Radio, 821 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53706.

CRITICAL MATRIX is a series of working papers produced by the Program in Women's Studies at Princeton University. The papers originated as talks presented at Princeton, and are circulated in unfinished form in hopes that readers will contact authors directly to develop interdisciplinary dialogue. Three papers have already been published this spring, and three more are scheduled for Fall of 1985. Subscriptions are \$12 for six issues. Single issues are \$2 each. Contact Critical Matrix, Program in Women's Studies, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08544 (609-452-5430).

## BOOK REVIEWS

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### LESBIAN STUDIES: SELECTIONS FROM THE PAST THREE YEARS

Evelyn Torton Beck, ed., Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology. Watertown, MA: Persephone Press, 1982; repr. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984. 286p. bibl. \$19.95, ISBN 0-89594-138-4; pap., \$8.95, ISBN 0-89594-137-6. LC 82-152665.

Beth Brant (Degonwadonti), ed., A Gathering of Spirit: Writing & Art By North American Indian Women. Sinister Wisdom no.22/23, 1983; 2d. ed. Rockland, ME: Sinister Wisdom Books, 1984. 223p. bibl. pap., \$7.95, ISBN 0-317-13139-7.

Anita Cornwell, Black Lesbian in White America. Tallahassee, FL: Naiad Press, 1983. 129p. pap., \$7.50, ISBN 0-930044-41-X. LC 82-18945.

Margaret Cruikshank, ed., Lesbian Studies: Present and Future. Old Westbury, NY: Feminist Press, 1982. 286p. bibl. index. \$14.95, 0-935312-06-4; pap., \$7.95, ISBN 0-935312-07-2. LC 82-4972.

Margaret Cruikshank, ed., New Lesbian Writing. San Francisco: Grey Fox Press; distr. Eugene, OR: Subterranean, 1984. 200p. bibl. pap., \$7.95, ISBN 0-912516-81-X. LC 83-22603.

Trudy Darty and Sandee Potter, eds., Women-Identified Women. Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1984. 316p. bibl. pap., \$11.95, ISBN 0-87484-573-4. LC 83-62837.

Lillian Faderman, Scotch Verdict: Miss Pirie and Miss Woods v. Dame Cumming Gordon. New York: Morrow, 1983. 320p. index. \$17.50, ISBN 0-688-01559-X; pap., \$8.95, ISBN 0-688-02054-2. LC 83-8620.

Alma Gomez, Cherrie Moraga, and Mariana Romo-Carmona, eds., Cuentos: Stories By Latinas. Brooklyn, NY: Kitchen Table Women of Color Press, 1983. 241p. pap., \$7.95, ISBN 0-913175-01-3. LC 83-202778.

Judy Grahn, Another Mother Tongue: Gay Words, Gay Worlds. Boston: Beacon Press, 1984. 324p. bibl. index. \$19.95, ISBN 0-8070-6716-4. LC 83-45953.

Nym Hughes, Yvonne Johnson, and Yvette Perreault, Stepping Out of Line: A Workbook on Lesbianism and Feminism. Vancouver, B.C.: Press Gang, 1984. 207p. bibl. pap., \$12.95, ISBN 0-88974-016-X.

Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith, eds., All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies. Old Westbury, NY: Feminist Press, 1982. 401p. bibl. index. \$16.96, ISBN 0-912670-92-4; pap., \$9.95, ISBN 0-912670-95-9. LC 81-68918.

Human Rights Foundation, Inc., Demystifying Homosexuality: A Teaching Guide About Lesbians and Gay Men. New York: Irvington Publishers, Inc., 1984. 175p. bibl. index. pap., \$12.95, ISBN 0-8290-1273-7. LC 83-4369.

Jonathan N. Katz, Gay/Lesbian Almanac: A New Documentary. New York: Harper & Row, 1983. 764p. bibl. index. \$27.84, ISBN 0-06-014968-X; pap., \$16.30, ISBN 0-06-090966-8. LC 81-48237.

Susan Krieger, The Mirror Dance: Identity in a Women's Community. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983. 199p. bibl. \$19.95, ISBN 0-87722-304-1; \$8.95 pap., ISBN 0-87722-314-9. LC 82-19424.

Audre Lorde, Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984. 190p. \$16.95, ISBN 0-89594-142-2; pap., \$7.95, ISBN 0-89594-141-4. LC 84-1844.

Audre Lorde, Zami: A New Spelling of My Name. Watertown, MA: Persephone Press, 1982; repr. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1983. 256p. \$16.95, ISBN 0-89594-123-6; pap., \$7.95, ISBN 0-89594-122-8. LC 82-15086.

Barbara MacDonald with Cynthia Rich, Look Me In the Eye: Old Women, Aging & Ageism. San Francisco: Spinsters, Ink, 1983. 115p. bibl. pap., \$5.95, ISBN 0-933216-09-2. LC 83-82554.

Cherrie Moraga, Loving in the War Years: Lo Que Nunca Paso Por Sus Labios. Boston: South End Press, 1983. 152p. bibl. \$20.00, ISBN 0-89608-196-6; pap., \$7.00, ISBN 0-89608-195-8. LC 83-61474.

Lisa Schoenfielder and Barb Wieser, eds., Shadow on a Tightrope: Writings by Women on Fat Oppression. Iowa City, IA: Aunt Lute Book Co., 1983. 243p. bibl. pap., \$8.95, ISBN 0-317-02243-1.

Judith Schwarz, "Lesbians." In The Women's Annual no.4, 1983-1984, pp.107-123. Sarah M. Pritchard, ed. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1984. \$35.00, ISBN 0-8161-8703-7; pap., \$14.95, ISBN 0-8161-8725-8. LC 82-641994.

Judith Schwarz, Radical Feminists of Heterodoxy: Greenwich Village 1912-1940. Lebanon, NH: New Victoria Publishers, Inc., 1982. 110p. bibl. index. pap., \$6.95, ISBN 0-934678-05-7. LC 81-85702.

Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society v.9, no.4, Summer 1984: "The Lesbian Issue." pap., \$7.00, ISSN 0097-9740. Repr. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985. index. \$20.00, ISBN 0-226-26151-4; pap., \$10.95, ISBN 0-226-26152-2. LC 84-16246.

Barbara Smith, ed., Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology. Brooklyn, NY: Kitchen Table Women of Color Press, 1983. 337p. bibl. pap., \$10.95, ISBN 0-913175-02-1. LC 84-168087.

Jean Swallow, ed., Out From Under: Sober Dykes & Our Friends. San Francisco: Spinsters, Ink, 1983. 239p. bibl. pap., \$8.95, ISBN 0-933216-08-4. LC 83-50762.

In 1981, Feminist Collections featured a review of twenty-five texts in lesbian studies. The author, Evelyn Torton Beck, noted the increased recognition achieved by lesbian scholarship and writings, recognition not only within the lesbian feminist community but also within academic and trade publishing. During the past three years, this welcome trend has continued and reached particular high points with the publication in 1984 of the first lesbian issue of Signs and the first edition of The Women's Annual to feature a full chapter on lesbians. We have witnessed a profusion of texts that, taken together, now make it impossible to claim that there are not enough materials available to teach courses or build library collections in lesbian studies. Yet to celebrate the abundance of recent publications is also to admit the necessity, however frustrating, to be selective in a short essay. This review emphasizes nonfiction writings that represent the expanding scope of contemporary lesbian studies.

\* \* \*

The publication of Lesbian Studies: Present and Future edited by Margaret Cruikshank marked a milestone in the development of women's studies. Its purpose is threefold: to highlight the recent work of lesbian academics and cultural workers, and its significance for feminist education; to explore the consequences of lesbian invisibility and exclusion from the curriculum; and to record and preserve lesbian history. Personal accounts of lesbians in the academic world and investigations of classroom issues -- from curriculum content to sexual energy and homophobia -- are followed by "New Research/New Perspectives" and an appendix of resources. These last sections provide extremely useful materials, including bibliographies, indexes, and syllabi, as well as provocative analyses of lesbian history and biography, feminist

criticism, and heterosexist assumptions in women's studies.

Cruikshank extends her notable contribution to lesbian studies with New Lesbian Writing. Initially conceived as a text for lesbian and gay literature courses, the work also will be useful for women's studies, ethnic studies, or classes in contemporary culture. Cruikshank selects from several genres "writing by women who have not appeared in print before, who are not yet well known, unpublished work by established writers, and work from other countries new to American readers" (p.xi). Deserving of particular mention are the selections by four lesbian writers over the age of sixty-five and the impressive selected bibliography of recent lesbian literature published between 1980 and 1983. (1)

Teachers of lesbian studies often have difficulty finding easily accessible materials of any kind for the classroom, let alone an acceptable textbook. Women-Identified Women, intended to be "an interdisciplinary anthology on lesbians and lesbian culture that could be easily adapted for use in the college classroom" (p.xi), admirably fills this gap. Articles by academics and activists reflect the diversity and complexity of lesbian identity and existence; the struggle for self-definition and empowerment in the face of oppression; and the transformation of politics, literature and music in lesbian culture and community. Although the text would be strengthened by additional ethnic and cultural perspectives (the absence of Asian American lesbians is especially disappointing), it does offer a balanced selection of work by Native American, Black, Puerto Rican, and Jewish lesbians.

\* \* \*

An important companion volume to the above works, All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies provides pathbreaking analyses of black feminism and the politics of black women's studies. Moreover, the theoretical essays and practical materials gathered by Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith represent a model of how lesbian feminism can be included within a work of broader scope. This influential volume calls our attention to what is perhaps the single most important trend in feminism and women's studies: the recognition and celebration of difference among feminists -- difference of culture, class, race, age, and ability. Lesbians have been in the forefront of this struggle for the recognition of difference, and lesbian studies has been enriched by the addition of clear, strong voices of women who, until recently, have been ignored at best, and sometimes silenced, within the women's movement and women's studies. Black, Native American and Jewish lesbians have resolved to be "silent no more."

The collective voices of Evelyn Torton Beck's Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology echo the determination of Jewish lesbians to confront anti-Semitism among feminists as well as non-feminists, and to affirm the full diversity of their lesbian and Jewish identities -- a diversity which, encompassing Arabic Jews and Jewish lesbians of color, shatters stereotypes. This resolve to be "all of who we are" (p.xxx) also emerges in two other important works. Edited by Beth Brant, A Gathering of Spirit offers a landmark collection of stories, personal accounts, poems, articles, letters, and graphics by North American Indian women, many of them lesbian. Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology,

another volume compiled by black lesbian-feminist Barbara Smith, achieves a good representation of black lesbian writers and offers a separate section entitled "Black Lesbians--Who Will Fight For Our Lives But Us?"

The multi-cultural well-springs of lesbian experience and analysis are also underscored in Black Lesbian in White America, a collection of political and autobiographical writings by black lesbian activist Anita Cornwell, and in the recent work of Audre Lorde. Lorde's autobiography, Zami: A New Spelling of My Name, and the long-awaited edition of her collected essays and speeches, Sister Outsider, make significant contributions to the feminist transformation of language and culture. Zami fuses autobiography, history, and myth into a new genre which Lorde names "biomythography," and draws transformative power from her Carriacou West Indian name, Zami, which means "women who work together as friends and lovers" (p.255.). In Sister Outsider, Lorde goes beyond recognition of difference to urge that feminists confront our differences actively, even angrily, in order that they may be sources for change and empowerment. Difference must be recognized as "a crucial strength" and impel us toward change, she argues: "in our world, divide and conquer must become define and empower" (p.112).

Lesbian publishing has suffered one particularly painful loss in the last two years, the demise of the pathbreaking Persephone Press. Yet, at the same time, the establishment of Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press signifies an important new development. Cuentos: Stories by Latinas, one of the first publications from this press, pioneers the fictional portrayal of issues confronted by "Latina writers and activists who identify as U.S. Third World Women" (p.x). The third section of this collection, "Tres," deals with the intersections and tensions among sexual choice, race, class, and culture, as the authors struggle simultaneously with lesbian self-definition and allegiance to cultures which may interpret lesbianism as betrayal. In Loving in the War Years, Cuentos co-editor and contributor Cherrie Moraga pursues her uncompromising examination of this same dilemma and the multiple meanings of being a Chicana and a lesbian in contemporary America. With intensity and courage, her poems, stories, and essays combat the distortions of Chicana identity and sexuality, and forcefully claim "the right to passion expressed in our own cultural tongue and movements" (p.136).

Three other books, Sober Dykes and Our Friends, Shadow on a Tightrope: Writings By Women on Fat Oppression, and Look Me in the Eye: Old Women, Aging and Ageism, reflect the challenge of difference that exists apart from ethnic or cultural heritage. These collections provide personal accounts from alcoholic, fat, and older lesbians, confronting preconceptions and revealing the all-too-frequent isolation that difference imposes, an isolation that diminishes us all. These voices from the margins push us to new perceptions and understandings essential to feminist education, reminding us that our strength and potential lie in commonality and difference.

\* \* \*

Women's history reveals and reclaims our past in order that we may better comprehend and shape our present and future. Scholars of lesbian history and biography grapple with uniquely challenging questions of definition and documentation. In Gay/Lesbian Almanac: A New Documentary, Jonathan Katz marshalls convincing evidence that the strict dichotomization of "homosexual"



and "heterosexual" is a historical construct invented in the United States in the late 1890s and early 1900s. Weaving news reports and diaries, medical case records and trial testimony, laws, fiction and popular culture, Katz documents two distinct periods in American lesbian and gay history, the colonial "Age of Sodomitical Sin, 1607-1740" and the early modern "Invention of the Homosexual, 1880-1950." Katz's introduction, "Lesbian and Gay History--Theory and Practice," and his identification of entries "containing the most substantial references to women-loving women" (p.ix) increase the value of this work for lesbian studies.

In Scotch Verdict, Lillian Faderman combines historical fact and fictionalized autobiography to bring to life the "singular and unparalleled" case of two nineteenth-century boarding school proprietors, Jane Pirie and Marianne Woods. Pirie and Woods were libeled in 1810 by one of their students and her grandmother who claimed that the schoolmistresses "repeatedly lay together in indecent attitudes, and were guilty of lewd and indecent behavior to each other" (p.62). Best known through Lillian Hellman's The Children's Hour, this fascinating case is presented here with far greater complexity and authenticity. Faderman extends her exploration of romantic friendships begun in Surpassing the Love of Men and tackles, still without complete success, the nagging question of sexuality and ambiguity in lesbian lives of past centuries. Despite the frustrating lack of documentary evidence so often encountered by the researcher in lesbian history, Scotch Verdict is a welcome addition.

In the twentieth century, such "unorthodox women," including many lesbians, constituted the membership of the Heterodoxy Club, described by Judith Schwarz in Radical Feminists of Heterodoxy: Greenwich Village 1912-1940. Testimony to the diversity among feminists of a former era, Heterodoxy claimed stockbrokers and settlement house workers, socialists and Daughters of the American Revolution, actresses and social reformers. Lesbian couples were a strong presence in this group as well, and the descriptions of life-long relationships -- which included shared households, expenses and incomes, sexual enjoyment, and even childrearing -- open a unique view into early creations of lesbian family.

Another Mother Tongue: Gay Words, Gay Worlds exemplifies the kaleidoscopic sources which are the "stuff" of history. Judy Grahn brings her poet's pen and imagination to a skillful weaving of myth, occult, and tribal tradition, lexicons and slang, personal interviews and autobiographical experience and musings, as well as more traditional historical materials. The resulting cultural history of Gayness is readable as a novel, yet has all the beauty and power of poetry.

Yet another innovative approach is taken in The Mirror Dance: Identity in a Women's Community. Krieger paints an unusually sympathetic and revealing portrait of a midwest lesbian community, based on her participant observation case study. A successful blend of feminist methodology and traditional ethnography, this work offers many insights into social groupings, relations with the "outside" world (work, family, and society), and the common conflicts between identity and community. Krieger melds fiction with social science to present her findings, using the words of the seventy-eight women she interviewed to construct representative "stories" of individuals and the community. Her concluding essay, "Fiction and Social Science," outlines the

promise that feminism holds for research in the social sciences and for "alternative approaches to representing reality" (p.173).

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Reading and study can deepen awareness of the realities of lesbian existence, but they are often insufficient in and of themselves. Teachers and students who recognize the value of experiential learning will welcome two recent publications, Stepping Out of Line: A Workbook on Lesbianism and Feminism and Demystifying Homosexuality: A Teaching Guide About Lesbians and Gay Men. Both provide extremely useful guides for workshops and discussions designed to elicit greater understanding among lesbians and non-lesbians alike.

Lesbian studies can now claim a solid resource base for teaching and a distinctive body of scholarship. To expand lesbian representation in library collections and the curriculum, representation fully encompassing difference and diversity, is to strengthen feminist education and feminist collections.

-- Joan Ariel

[Joan Ariel is Women's Studies Librarian at the University of California, Irvine, and the founding chair of the Women's Studies Discussion Group of the Association of College and Research Libraries, American Library Association. She consistently derives personal and professional satisfaction from being a feminist lesbian librarian and constantly wishes she had time to read every new title in lesbian studies cover to cover.]

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> An updated version of Cruikshank's "Lesbian Literature, 1980-1983: A Selected Bibliography" has been added to the series, "Wisconsin Bibliographies in Women's Studies," and is available on request from the Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large, 112A Memorial Library, 728 State Street, Madison, WI 53706.

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#### GENDER GAP

Bella S. Abzug with Mim Kelber, Gender Gap: Bella Abzug's Guide to Political Power for American Women. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984. 257p. pap., \$6.95, ISBN 0-395-35484-6. LC 83-22854.

Ruth B. Mandel, In The Running: The New Woman Candidate. New Haven: Ticknor & Fields, 1981. 280p. bibl. index. \$12.95, ISBN 0-89919-027-8. LC 80-24190. pap., Boston: Beacon Press, 1983. \$9.95, ISBN 0-8070-6715-6.

Irene Tinker, ed., Women in Washington: Advocates for Public Policy. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1983. 327p. (Sage yearbooks in women's policy studies, v.7) index. \$25.00, ISBN 0-8039-2069-5; pap., \$12.50. LC 83-7761.

"Gender gap" has become a familiar, much-used term to convey the recognition that women and men view public policy issues from different perspectives and with different priorities. The differences have been noted for at least half a century, but the term itself was coined and given electoral expectations during the final push for ERA ratification in 1980. The three books chosen for this review form a fascinating trilogy that demonstrates the existence of the gender gap, analyzes its roots, illustrates its influence, and speculates about its potential.

While each publication has the unique focus suggested in its title -- women as voters, women as candidates and elected officials, and women as policy makers, respectively -- there is a great deal of common ground. All three works share a basic belief in the imperative of feminist leadership for the realization of democracy, and agree on the list of issues which most clearly illustrates the gender gap. Together, the books are a rich source of first-hand, real-life information on the growing political involvement of women, and on the contemporary women's movement.

None of the three titles under review here is more personal in orientation than Bella Abzug's Gender Gap. Written with her longtime friend and associate, Mim Kelber, it is largely a chronicle of political history in which Bella herself has been a principal actor.

Abzug's political agenda calls for, in her words:

...equal rights and opportunities for women and minorities, full employment, a national health-care system, preservation of Social Security, a national housing program, federally subsidized child-care centers, government planning to revitalize industry and develop new technologies with full participation by the people who labor in them, welfare programs for those who are unable to work and for their children; tax reform; restoration of Medicaid funding for abortion; a clean, safe environment in our neighborhoods and work places; decent public transportation, and much more. (p.240)

An impressive program. But -- a reader might well query -- where will the money come from? Abzug has an answer:

...it will come from the benefits of full employment, reforming the tax structure, and cutting the Pentagon budget, with the serendipitous side effect of enhancing the prospects for peace. (p.240)

Obviously, publication of Gender Gap was timed to encourage women readers to translate their position on these issues into votes against Reagan in November 1984. Always the quintessential politician, Bella would be unlikely to author a work lacking a clear political objective.

That the anticipated women's vote did not materialize in sufficient numbers to unseat the president has been commented on at length by friend and foe alike. For example, in the April 1985 issue of her newsletter, The Phyllis Schlafly Report, Schlafly dismisses the gender gap as a "phony hoax

that consumed the attention of reporters for so much of 1984 (until it ballooned into the Ferraro phenomenon, and then burst like a bubble on November 6)."

For many who view the notion of gender gap as a short-term phenomenon measured solely by voting behavior, it has been easy to cast aside the entire concept as rhetorical wishful thinking. It is true that a majority of women cast their ballots for Reagan, as did men. (1) Obviously women, along with farmers and union members, did not pull the Democratic presidential lever in numbers anticipated by gender gap exponents. Yet the gender gap was nonetheless responsible in November '84 for helping keep Reagan's coattails short.

In Congressional races, state legislative campaigns and several noted statewide contests, women's votes did make a difference. Senate races in Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan and North Carolina all reveal significantly larger percentages of women than men voting for the more progressive candidate. The National Women's Political Caucus also attributes the victories of Vermont Governor Madeleine Kunin, of Missouri Lieutenant Governor Harriet Woods, and of Mondale in Minnesota, the sole Mondale-Ferraro state, to the women's vote. (2)

In a brilliant piece of analysis entitled "The Gender Gap: Different Issues, Different Answers," political scientist Ethel Klein of Columbia University states:

It is not surprising that the landslide reelection of Ronald Reagan buried the women's vote. However, there was a gender gap in 1984 -- and any analysis of that election that disregards the women's vote will miss its significance for the future of American politics. (3)

Klein goes on to argue that the '84 election results

...make it clear that the women's vote cannot be captured simply by nominating women candidates. It is an issue vote and can be triggered only by policy discussions that incorporate women's perspectives. (4)

Day care, economic equity, and arms control might well have triggered gender-gap votes that the Democrats' focus on the deficit and a strong defense did not.

Ruth Mandel's In The Running is also concerned with the issues on which women campaign, win or lose elections, and base the substance of their legislative platforms. Her study is of course much more than that. It is a veritable political handbook of advice and caveats to cover all phases of the electoral process. It is further a historical analysis of the changes over the past fifteen years in the numbers and characteristics of political women, in women's campaign experiences, and in the responses they receive from political parties and the public. Each of Mandel's many thoughtful analytic comments is illustrated with concrete examples, always interesting and often colorful, from contemporary U.S. politics.

No one is more qualified to undertake this rather formidable study than Ruth Mandel. As Director of the Center for the American Woman and Politics, the Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, she has devoted her professional life to the study and encouragement of women's political participation. Her own knowledge is extensive, thorough, and sophisticated. And she writes in a style that proves once and for all that a carefully researched, well-documented study can also be exciting and readable.

In The Running enlarges the definition of the gender gap to encompass motivations of candidates and behavior of elected incumbents. While not all women elected to office are feminists, there are encouraging examples in this book of the precedence given women's issues by women officials of both the major parties, and there is telling evidence of growing support from women voters for women candidates. The common experience of being a woman in a male-dominated world is, after all, the heart and life blood of the gender gap.

In 1985 women still constitute a pathetically small proportion of our public officials. While the "invisible shield" we spoke of twenty years ago (the barrier above which women were neither expected nor permitted to rise in any field of endeavor) is still with us, it has since then at least been raised a few notches. One can anticipate, as does Ruth Mandel, that the slow but steady increase in numbers of elected women will not only continue, but will consistently nudge upward the ceiling of acceptable levels of office women may fill.

Mandel stops short of predicting what our country will look like if and when there is equal representation of women and men in positions of authority. She is, however, very clear about her deep respect for those women who are today pioneering their diverse routes to political success. And she leaves no doubt that our society can only benefit from the fullest participation of women in politics.

Irene Tinker's collection, Women in Washington: Advocates for Public Policy, demonstrates the enormous difference it makes when women occupy positions on the inside of the establishment, and in concert with active networks on the outside, have a voice in setting and implementing policy. Twenty authors, whose chapters were written expressly for this publication, give first-hand accounts of federal programs initiated and developed by and on behalf of women. The range of subjects is broad, though far from exhaustive.

Tinker's excellent introduction reminds us of the importance of recording this history that so personally affects all women. The story begins with Esther Peterson's account of the Kennedy Commission on the Status of Women (1961-63), followed by Catherine East's succinct overview of the achievements and significance of the Citizens' Advisory Council on the Status of Women and subsequent Presidential Commissions up to 1980. More specific issue areas are treated in the remaining chapters, set forth within the following major divisions: "Women Organize for Change," "Women Develop Strategies for Influencing Policy," and "Women Win Some, Lose Some--Case Studies." In actuality, each chapter treats its subject to some extent from all three of those foci.

The one chapter that deals with foreign policy, "Women in Development," strikes a particularly poignant note as we now come to the close of the UN Decade for Women. Employment, education, ERA, health, law, the military, science and technology, domestic violence, and business enterprise are the remaining topics covered. It is hard to read these excerpts from the Glory Years of the 1960s and '70s without fantasizing a national budget entirely designed and enacted by feminists.

Needless to say, much that was accomplished by the women whose stories make up this volume has subsequently been reversed under the Reagan administration. Several authors specifically remind us that the right-wing philosophy of patriarchal rights cannot tolerate economic equity, women's control of reproductive life, public intervention in family abuse, equal educational opportunity, or an agenda of programs that could halt the shameful feminization of poverty. That the hard-won achievements of the last twenty years can be discarded with such relative ease should be particularly instructive to those who believe the battle for women's rights already won.

Contributions to this collection are uneven in length and in quality. Yet with only a very few exceptions, they are a valuable addition to our understanding of current American political and social history. Successful strategies and major setbacks, alliances and opposition, persistence and disheartenment -- all come through vividly as the reader relives the experiences of these contributors and of the many who worked with them. The roster of authors constitutes a good beginning for a Who's Who (or Who Was Who) in feminist public policy.

All three volumes in this review contribute to the recording of contemporary U.S. women's history. Each author relates her experience as she sees it, providing insights into her own aspirations and values as well as offering a variety of views on the significance of programs and strategies. Any nostalgia one might feel in reading these accounts is overridden by a determination to strengthen and build on the foundations the books delineate. The gender gap is unmistakable.

-- Kathryn F. Clarenbach

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The Reagan majority was smaller, however, among women than among men: fifty-six percent of women voted for Reagan, as compared to sixty-two percent of men.

<sup>2</sup> Women's Political Times v.9, no.7, November/December 1984.

<sup>3</sup> The Brookings Review Winter 1985, p.33.

<sup>4</sup> The Brookings Review Winter 1985, p.37.

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