

The University of Wisconsin System

# Feminist Collections



A  
Quarterly of  
Women's  
Studies  
Resources

WOMEN'S  
STUDIES



LIBRARIAN

Volume 25, Number 4, Summer 2004

Published by Phyllis Holman Weisbard

Women's Studies Librarian

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## A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources

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A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources

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## FROM THE EDITORS

*January 7, 2005.* This issue—officially the Summer 2004 one, despite the date on which it goes to press—completes the twenty-fifth volume of *Feminist Collections: A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources*. Twenty-five years is a long or a short time, depending on how you look at it—and, no doubt, on how old you are when you look.

Will *FC* make it to a fiftieth volume? What will that look like? How many of us will be around to contribute to or read it? I'll be turning 73; I'd like to imagine myself semi-retired by then, but who knows? Will I wear trifocals (I got bifocals during my first year as editor here), or will laser vision correction be universal? Will *FC* publish the issues of Volume 50 on schedule? I wonder what topics we'll be covering in these pages, what books we'll

review, and how many of them will be digital rather than paper (and what of the journal itself?). What media will make both VHS and DVD obsolete, and what will the Internet be like? Will zines still matter when the daughters of today's zine-makers have children of their own? Will the artifacts stored in the back room of the Office of the Women's Studies Librarian still be there? Will "women's studies" be considered an outdated term for this discipline?

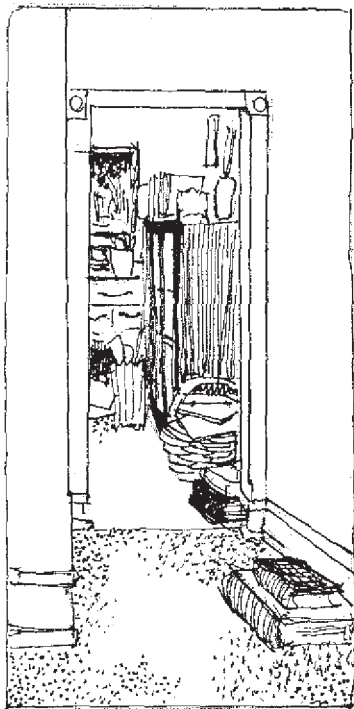
This line of pondering leads to other, sobering questions. Who will be in the White House in 2029? How will American civil liberties hold up by then? What will the most acute environmental crises be? How will the U.S. be viewed from elsewhere? Will the political map of the world look very different than it does now? How will women fare here and around the world?

Of course, we don't know the answers; we can't. We do know some things about the present, though, and lots of us believe there is plenty of work to do in the next twenty-five years.

Those whose lives and livelihoods were shattered by the December 26 tsunami in the coastal areas of South and Southeast Asia are probably not focusing on the next twenty-five years, but on "the now" and the immediate future. Most of us in the West are aware of worthy international charities collecting donations for relief efforts. USAID offers a lengthy list of such organizations at [http://www.usaid.gov/locations/asia\\_near\\_east/tsunami/ngolist.html](http://www.usaid.gov/locations/asia_near_east/tsunami/ngolist.html)

There are also some direct ways to help grassroots groups in the regions that were hit by the tsunami. I'm intrigued by efforts to help fishing communities that were devastated by the disaster—for instance, through Sri Lanka's National Fisheries Solidarity (NAFSO). For information about donating to groups like NAFSO or to read about sustainable fishing culture, including the situation of women in fisheries, visit the website of the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) at <http://icsf.net/jsp/english/index.jsp>. ICSF is "an international non-government organization that works towards the establishment of equitable, gender-just, self-reliant and sustainable fisheries, particularly in the small-scale, artisanal sector."

○ J.L.



Miriam Greenwald

# **STRONGER STUDENTS, BETTER RESEARCH: INFORMATION LITERACY IN THE WOMEN'S STUDIES CLASSROOM**

*by Carroll Wetzel Wilkinson*

**I**n 1997, in a Women's Studies Center Curriculum Committee meeting at West Virginia University, our founding director, Dr. Judith Stitzel, observed that the students in the capstone course of the women's studies curriculum were not yet ready to meet the expectations for critical thinking of this final stage of their undergraduate work. For some time I'd been pondering strategies to strengthen the curriculum and contribute to the development of critical thought.

Dr. Stitzel's observation led me to conceive of a two-part solution: (1) creation of a program of integrated, sequential, active learning exercises about research that could be used by interested faculty throughout the curriculum's four years; and (2) development of a three-credit course for advanced undergraduates, addressing the feminist research process in a context of scholarly and non-scholarly communication and dissemination. During the course of a professional development leave, I began to implement that solution by creating a course entitled "Women's Studies Research in the Information Age" (WS 493). Four students successfully completed the requirements of the course this past summer. I hope to offer it again in Spring 2005 to a larger audience.

The new course addresses the power of learning through the research process in women's studies. It aims to be an antidote for "Google overload," brushes with plagiarism, and papers that only skim the surface of a subject.

While developing the course, I tried to balance the traditional intellectual foundation of scholarly (and non-scholarly) communication in women's studies with the constant flow of dazzling technological innovations. The course intertwines women's studies information dissemination with the tenets of contemporary information literacy.

In this article I will first set out the problem I saw: Students are often unable to grasp research as an important process because it is rarely, if ever, presented to them in a meaningful way. I will note how this problem connected with some of my own professional frustrations, and how I addressed both matters. Finally, I will share the results of my creative and research process essential to the realization of the course's objectives, as well as an assessment of the initial outcomes for the students and their instructor.

**B**eyond wishing to strengthen the undergraduate University Libraries' and women's studies curricula, one motivation for my work was my own dissatisfaction with visiting classes once a semester as a guest to talk about research before students start a research project. While the "one-shot" visit is a step in the right direction, it is not enough to ensure that students have rewarding experiences with the research process, or that more effective papers, exhibiting critical thought, result. Furthermore, I have not seen evidence that many fac-

ulty colleagues are preparing even their advanced undergraduate students for the realities of serious research. Many seem to assume that students have acquired research skills when in fact they have not. Since, as Mary Catherine Bateson observed, "Lifelong learning is not optional," and since many faculty do not appear to be providing adequate preparation, it is up to academic librarians to teach as many students as possible about in-depth information skills they can use throughout their lives.<sup>1</sup>

**I**nstructional collaboration between librarians and teaching faculty has been widely discussed, and programs to promote information literacy have been implemented on many campuses.<sup>2</sup> In Wisconsin, for example, there are many excellent examples of information literacy initiatives, most notably at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Similar programs exist at the University of Rhode Island, the University of California at Los Angeles, and the State University of New York at Albany. The West Virginia University Libraries sponsor a one-credit course in basic library skills that reaches large numbers of students, many "one-shot" visits to courses in a variety of disciplines, and now my three-credit course for advanced undergraduates in women's studies. We do not have a comprehensive information literacy campus initiative as yet; many other

academic libraries are also at this stage of instructional development.

### Early Study and Preparation

I want to promote students' awareness of the information environment of women's studies and the affective stages of research, including students' hitherto unacknowledged anxieties and fears concerning the ways of scholarship and information technology. I wish to increase their familiarity with controlled vocabulary, Boolean searching, the variety of sources they may encounter, and the knowledge construction they must pursue in order to communicate their new knowledge effectively. Such work takes *at least* a semester.

The Association of College and Research Libraries has established national standards of information literacy, including the ability to recognize an information need, know how to satisfy it, evaluate information sources critically, and use information ethically and legally.<sup>3</sup> In order to understand the significance of these standards, students must experience the information environment around topics that have meaning for them. The challenge has been to figure out how to create those experiences.

During my leave, I reviewed much of the literature of teaching information literacy in the context of women's studies. "Women's Studies Research in the Information Age" did not turn out to be simply tool-based. Its intellectual foundation is a *mélange* of research from the literature of feminism, information services and literacy, and education. I developed a conceptual framework for the course, emphasizing authentic experience. I decided to introduce feminist and non-feminist reference sources through "orchestrated improvisation." Though the students were expected to do traditional reading

throughout the course and to use relevant print and electronic sources, I also presented active learning assignments as a key part of the pedagogy.

*Students are often unable to grasp research as an important process because it is rarely presented to them in a meaningful way.*

### Intellectual Foundation

The research supporting "Women's Studies Research in the Information Age" appears in writings published over the last thirty-five years that address the education of library users and the unique aspects of the information environment of women's studies. What emerged from the literature was the outline of a developmental process by which students would begin to experience research as a problem-solving process. This included rigorous thought about problem definition, critical reading and analysis of source materials, and drafting and revision of reports of their findings. Although students may know something about parts of this process, they may never have seen it presented as a tightly integrated and clearly structured research protocol. Space does not allow explication of the ideas on which I based the course, but my online bibliography lists all of my sources.<sup>4</sup>

### Course Objectives and Assignments

I sought, within the framework of the course, to enable students to understand that intellectual foundation and research protocol through active learning. Eight of the assignments I developed to cultivate such an understanding appear below.

1. Do the Curiosity Inventory provided (a series of questions about things you may have wondered about but not yet had time to explore) and see what answers you give to the questions. Discover whether you already have a topic on women that you wish to explore that you have been discouraged from exploring in the past.
2. Review the requirements of the four-part research process essay and annotated bibliography throughout the course.<sup>5</sup> Parts include: a statement of your subject and how you chose it, your reasons for picking it, and your expectations for the directions it may take you. The first and second drafts and the final research process essay with supporting annotated bibliography complete the assignment, and relevant parts will be due at four points through the course. At each stage you will get feedback from the instructor.
3. Read the Kulhthau ISP (Information Search Process) model<sup>6</sup> and do self-diagnosis to determine where you are in the six stages of the process. Maintain a research journal to keep a record your progress through the stages, noting the thoughts, feelings, actions, strategies, and moods you experience as you continue to work through your project. Be ready to hand in this journal from time to time through the course.
4. Read the 26-page "Library of Congress Subject Headings on Women" handout provided in class. Discuss in class their helpful applications as well as their drawbacks in searching. Using the

headings in searches on topics provided by the instructor in class, practice subject searching. Share findings with class. Use the handout to determine relevant headings for your topic, once you decide what it is. Do more subject searching using your own subject and review the results.

5. Study the Mann "methods of searching model" and his defense of the book.<sup>7</sup> Go over the seven types of searches noted and practice using them on a topic of interest in class, making use of the instructor as a guide as you work. Try these various methods outside class as well throughout the course. Find at least four books to include in your bibliography.
6. Do the in-class "Hierarchy of Knowledge" assignment by going over the definitions of fact, opinion, data, information, knowledge, and understanding with the instructor, and then break up into groups of two to find examples about women of each level of information in the *New York Times*.<sup>8</sup>
7. Visit the class community information stations and examine the publications you find there and visit the websites on the handout at Station 1. Using the evaluation sheets provided, write up your assessment of the quality and authority of each publication or site and be ready to come back to class and report on your findings.
8. For extra credit in this course, maintain a "Research Portfolio" throughout the semester. Over and above the required research journal, the portfolio may contain ex-

amples that illustrate your "mess of research scrapbook," which will be very individual to you and your area of interest and topic of choice. There may be cognitive maps, drawings, photographs, photocopies of articles and books, screen prints of bibliographic records you find that are particularly interesting to you, interview notes from talks you had with friends, faculty advisors, or others during your research process, interlibrary loan requests, stills from films, clips from video, quotations of particular meaning, and anything else that has spurred your creativity and encouraged your research process and improved its quality and diversity.

Though the students are expected to do traditional reading throughout the course, class time was spent on active assignments such as the ones described above—assignments carefully crafted around ideas and objectives of information literacy, key developments in women's studies, and the students' own research subjects. To illustrate these processes, I introduced a variety of topics related to women, such as breakthrough publications in global women's studies, friendships of women over the lifespan, the suffrage movement in West Virginia, and class issues in the workplaces of women in male-dominated fields.

All of the assignments aimed to encourage the students to do the following:

- Understand the process of inquiry in the interdisciplinary environment of women's studies.
- Find a women's studies subject and use search techniques demonstrated in class.
- Analyze the subject: state it in a sentence and ask at least three

questions about it; then turn it into a research problem.

- Learn about subject language and controlled vocabulary concerning women.
- Understand the Mann "methods of searching" model.
- Understand the social, political, and economic components of the information environment and the special differences for women and women's studies.
- Understand the hierarchy of knowledge and find examples in a daily newspaper on subjects about women.<sup>9</sup>
- Understand the publication sequence flow,<sup>10</sup> and find examples of changes in information over time through use of the women's history timeline.<sup>11</sup>
- Expand publication awareness: experience exposure to an array of publication types about women.
- Evaluate sources of all kinds, including print and electronic genres.
- Organize and present evidence.
- Write responsibly from sources.
- Cite sources and avoid plagiarism.

Central to the course were the following questions: What does it take to select a workable topic for exploration in women's studies research? What are students' experiences searching for information? What is an effective model that addresses the process of searching for information based on student experience? What can be done to incorporate that model into teaching about research? How do the students feel at various points during their searches for information? Do their views of the information environment change as they work on their research and complete the expectations of the course?



## Student Assessment

The students all took a pre-test at the beginning of the course that, not surprisingly, revealed spotty familiarity with both basic and advanced research skills. They could identify indexes and abstracts and access sources on the Libraries' online catalog. All had written at least five to ten papers within the last two years; however, they used random searching, depending on Internet search engines as their primary search mechanism. Boolean searching and the use of formal subject headings were unknown. Even the basic notion of having a plan for gathering information was new to these students. Asked whether their curiosity about any subject had ever been fostered or encouraged by a college or research instructor in their past, they all answered "no." In fact, the two graduate students taking the course volunteered that they elected it because they were both starting master's theses and felt overwhelmed with the lack of guidance they had received from their advisors.

At the end of the course, in an assessment cognitive map,<sup>12</sup> one student commented, "Curiosity is investigation into knowledge, not claiming to know or acquiring more knowledge to control a subject." This observation came after completion of the final project and reflected a good grasp of the process orientation that I had hoped to get across.

As noted, the course's final project was a research process essay to be accompanied by a sixteen-item annotated bibliography adapted from Susan Beck's "Meta-Learning Research Project."<sup>13</sup> Based on the results of that four-part assignment, I know that the students learned to acknowledge and respect the steps of information gathering, the difficulty (and necessity) of focusing on a smaller subject than, or implication of, the one they initially chose to work on,

the need to read at different levels to help the process of self-teaching during research, and the reality that they had little idea of the wealth and sophistication of the information environment available to them through the Libraries and the invisible Web. Two students also bashfully admitted in their course evaluations that there were quite a few library services they had never realized were available to them.

## What I Have Learned

Summer school enrollment tends to be small on our campus. I anticipate a larger enrollment when I teach the course in the spring semester. The students and I all agreed that the class sessions in summer school were too long. They would have benefited from the extended time of a regular semester to

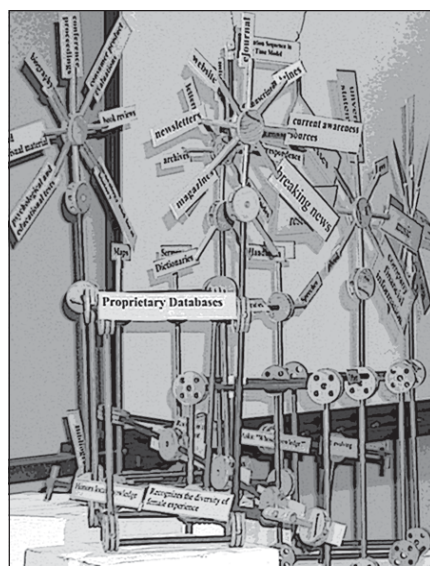


photo by Janet Robbins

absorb and apply the ideas of the course. The next time I will not only assign out-of-class readings, but also expect students to report on the content of the readings in class. This will ensure that they do the readings at least when they are responsible for a report.

Some students found evaluation of websites and many varieties of print publications beneath them; others liked the exercises. This has not, however,

*What does it take to select a workable topic for exploration in women's studies research?*

shaken my resolve to present criteria for website and other publication assessment. I have learned that cognitive mapping can be used effectively as an assessment tool near the end of the course to determine what themes the students actually grasped. The annotated bibliography, no matter how thoroughly explained and how many examples of it are given, is still a difficult genre for some students to create correctly. Finally, the class involved more consciousness-raising than I expected. One student chose to work on the subject of the wage gap for women in employment. She assumed that a level playing field for women in the workforce had by now been achieved. Although she did grasp the concept of sex-based discrimination by the end of the semester, I am unsure that she accepted how widespread it still is.

## Remaining Questions

With four students, the first offering of WS 493 was a small beginning but a good start. Will my hybrid classroom, with its community information stations stacked with examples of feminist publications and URL lists, catch on as an immersion method? Will my process approach to teaching research have staying power? Did mixing the theoretical with active learning applications from issues and trends from women's studies work? Did the students become more effective researchers, and will they craft enriched re-



search for the body of writing and study that they do in the future? Will they actually be life-long learners because of the experience in my class? These are the questions I hope to answer as I repeat the course next spring and over the next few years.

I am indebted to Phyllis Holman Weisbard for inviting me to share this work with the readers of Feminist Collections. The course syllabus and outline are posted online at [www.libraries.wvu.edu/instruction/classes.htm](http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/instruction/classes.htm) (Library Course MDS WS SPTS 493G; MDS SPTS 493P: Women's Studies Research in the Information Age). Readers are welcome to send comments and questions to me at [cwilkins@wvu.edu](mailto:cwilkins@wvu.edu). I am also grateful to Phyllis, Sheridan Harvey and Janice Ruth of the Library of Congress, and the librarians of the Schlesinger Library for the History of Women in America for their support and encouragement during the early stages of my own study.

#### Notes

*The illustration on the opposite page shows a small portion of the information environment model the author constructed to use as a point of reference in class.*

1. Mary Catherine Bateson, "Lives of Learning," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 25, 2003, p.B3.
2. Rosemary Young & Stephena Harmony, *Working with Faculty To Design Undergraduate Literacy Programs* (New York: Neal Schuman, 1999).
3. *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (Chicago: American Library Association/ Association of College and Research

Libraries, 2000). Online at <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.htm>

4. The bibliography appears online at <http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/presentations/wilkinson/2004/sources.pdf>. Knapp, Westbrook, Searing, Beck, Kuhlthau, Delamont, Jacobson & Gatti, Mann, Birks & Hunt, Bruce, Grassian & Kaplowitz, and Reichel & Ramey, among others, all contributed to the intellectual and practical foundations of the course.

5. See Susan Beck, "Meta-Learning Research Project," in Trudi Jacobson & Timothy Gatti, eds., *Teaching Information Literacy Concepts: Activities and Frameworks from the Field* (Pittsburgh: Library Instruction Publications, 2001).

6. Carol Collier Kuhlthau, *Seeking Meaning: A Process Approach to Library and Information Services*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2004).

7. Thomas Mann, *Library Research Models* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); "The Importance of Books, Free Access, and Libraries as Places—and the Dangerous Inadequacy of the Information Science Paradigm," *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, v.27, no.4 (July 2001), pp.268–81.

8. See Gerald T. Burke, "Defining, Identifying, and Understanding the Difference Between Data, Information, and Knowledge," in Jacobson & Gatti, eds., *Teaching Information Literacy Concepts: Activities and Frameworks from the Field*.

9. Burke, in Jacobson & Gatti, eds., *Teaching Information Literacy Concepts:*

*Activities and Frameworks from the Field*.

10. Sharon Hogan, "Flow of Information" (conceptual approach to library instruction), 1980. (Adapted by Diane Zwemer, UCLA Libraries; confirmed in email correspondence between Sharon Hogan and Esther Grassian, September 18, 1998.)

11. National Women's History Project, *Timeline of Legal History of Women in the United States, 1701–1998*, at [www.legacy98.org/timeline.html](http://www.legacy98.org/timeline.html)

12. See Jacobson & Gatti, eds., *Teaching Information Literacy Concepts: Activities and Frameworks from the Field*.

13. In Jacobson & Gatti, eds., *Teaching Information Literacy Concepts: Activities and Frameworks from the Field*.

[Carroll Wetzel Wilkinson is Women's Studies Bibliographer, Department Head for Access Services and the Depository, and University Librarian at West Virginia University Libraries in Morgantown, West Virginia. She holds an M.L.S. degree from Rutgers University and a B.A. from Wells College (Aurora, NY). In July 2003, supported by a professional development grant from West Virginia University and a fellowship from the WVU Stitzel Endowment for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Women's Studies, she took a six-month leave to create the new three-credit course described in this article. "Women's Studies Research in the Information Age" will be taught for the second time in the Spring 2005 semester at WVU.]

# GENDER STUDIES FOR A CIVIL SOCIETY: A RUSSIAN EXPERIENCE

by Elena Yakushkina

The terms “civil society,” “gender,” and “gender studies” have become part of contemporary social-political and cultural lexicons as well as tangible forces shaping the modern world. In different world regions, civil society arises under different conditions and has varied political characteristics. The institutionalization of gender issues in academia also differs across regions and can depend on a host of factors, including political culture, behavioral norms and traditions in the academy, and cultural expectations. Although they develop in different ways and in different situations, civil society and gender evidently influence and foster the development of one another. There appears to be a connection between the teaching of gender issues and the creation of civil society. The widening of educational borders to include gender undoubtedly stimulates the creation and development of social consciousness necessary for civil society.

The classical model of civil society is based on the Greek political philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. The concept of social contract and the concept of rights were developed during the Enlightenment by Bacon, Hobbs, Locke, and Grotius. Their theories emphasized the principle of personal freedom and the ideas of the self-worth of every person, respect for private property, and economic activity.

In the nineteenth century, the idea of civil society became a political reality

in Europe. The theory of civil society was developed by Hegel, who considered civil society as a part of a civil state.<sup>1</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville enriched the theory, presenting civil society as a network of independent associations or organizations that exist parallel to the state.<sup>2</sup>

The question of the existence of civil society is still debated. Some theorists currently see civil society as synonymous with market economy and private property; others (on the orthodox left) consider the idea of the division of civil society and state as negative; and a third group deems civil society to be an autonomous structure, an early liberal stage in the development of capitalism. The representatives of liberal and moderate conservative traditions believe that civil society and state complete one another.

Beginning with Locke, theorists often posited private property as the basis of personal freedom. Private property creates many centers of economic power, excludes the centralization of power by one person or group, and balances the power of the state. (This theory only applied to men, however; women’s claim to own property was not deemed legitimate.) If the state does not possess a monopoly on economic opportunity, society is guaranteed a certain degree of economic and political freedom.

The existence of alternative resources as means of subsistence guarantees freedom of choice in different

spheres of social life. Therefore, the criteria for the real existence of a civil society are the division of private property and state power and the division of economic and political issues. Because of this tendency, individualism, proclaiming personal freedom and privacy, is the main theoretical resource of the concept of civil society and the stimulus for social development and the creation of democracy. Personal freedom can exist only with free economic choice, which assumes the limitation of state power in the economic sphere.

History suggests that there is no single road map to civil society. Indeed, even states with a long-lasting democratic tradition do not have the unique model of classic civil society. The diversity of forms of civil society mirrors the diversity of its civil initiatives according to the peculiarities of its political and cultural traditions. The range of social initiatives in modern society is very wide, and the entities that foster such initiatives can include social welfare organizations, ecology activists, defenders of justice, youth movements, ethnic groups, special interest clubs, sports associations, and women’s movements. Such nongovernmental organizations, independent of official power, are the building blocks of civil society. Their primary merit is that they function independently of government and express concrete social interests. Thus, modern political theory (derived from classic theories) becomes reality as the property of ordinary consciousness.<sup>3</sup>

There are two distinct approaches to the discussion of the civil society in current Russia. The first is political. According to this vision, the primary features of civil society are independence from state power; a stable system of social institutions; and the ability of social institutions to influence state policy. This approach is shared by many researchers in Russia, including G. Diligensky,<sup>4</sup> T. Zaslavskaya,<sup>5</sup> Z. Golenkova,<sup>6</sup> and others, the majority of whom think that civil society in Russia is in its early stages of development and point to numerous obstacles blocking the positive process. Some, on the other hand, believe that civil society in Russia is rather developed. T. Yarygina, for example, President of the Academy for "Civil Society," assumes that in the Russian case, development has moved from the realm of theory into the realities of everyday political and social life.<sup>7</sup>

The second approach to understanding civil society is existential and dates back to the anti-Marxist ideas of the famous Russian philosopher Berdyaev. Supporters of this point of view (B. Koval', for example<sup>8</sup>) argue that the individual is the only subject of politics and of all social evolution. As Berdyaev said, "It is not the person who is part of society, but it is the society that is part of a person." In this view, civil society is composed of creative independent individuals.

The second approach is used in analyzing the influence of gender studies on civil society and understanding the importance of teaching gender in creating independent individuals. At the same time, it is important to note that the political and existential approaches supplement each other.

The institutions and norms of contemporary geopolitics also influence the development of civil society—for example, the integration of economics

and education, the ecological movement, and globalization in all spheres. Civil society assumes that citizens have awareness of the law and a high level of political culture.

Education plays a critical role in the development of legal and political culture. The program documents of UNESCO<sup>9</sup> emphasize the leading role of education in the formation of individuals with modern political consciousness. The creation of civil society is impossible without increasing the level of political culture of the students. Higher education could be one of the main factors in the creation of civil society. We should preserve the traditional basis of education, but, at the same time, the modern model of education must include the new series of innovations stimulated by the development of modern society.

One of the vivid examples of the transformation of the classical model of education is the emergence of gender studies in higher education. Gender studies has become the main discipline able to approach the classic subjects with modern methods and new understanding of the personality in the system of socio-cultural relationships. Gender studies is an educational strategy that can render a breakthrough in consciousness and knowledge and can transform society to make the world more equitable for women and men.

The process of institutionalizing gender studies as a discipline in Russia began in the 1990s. Sociology in particular became the basis for incorporating gender understanding in academia. Even during the Soviet era, sociologists included sex stratification in quantitative methods involving the problems of family, occupations, etc. But the concept of gender and gender inequality

was overlooked in these studies due to the ideology of the period, which implied that equality of the sexes was achieved in Soviet society. Beginning in the early 1990s, however, more and more Russian researchers started using Western concepts of gender inequality in their work.

The first university courses on gender were initiated by university professors. Their courses were characterized by the introduction of new gender terms and categories. This curriculum revision became possible because the general crisis in the educational system of Russia involved the closing down of some ideological disciplines as well as the need to introduce new ones. A variety of gender courses are now offered at different institutions in Russia, especially at universities in Moscow and St. Petersburg. As for the provincial universities, it is too early to speak about gender studies as a separate discipline, as it is often incorporated into other subjects (such as history, sociology, psychology, philosophy, and cultural studies).

Unfortunately, many efforts at institutionalizing gender studies, especially in the provincial cities, are hampered by university administration. Students are not allowed to select their own disciplines; instead, strict course requirements are imposed on them. Gender studies can occupy only a small place in the curriculum of a system in which humanities courses are being eliminated, faculty compete for lecture hours, and a conservative, all-male administration wields the greatest influence.

Gender studies has more support in private colleges that have connections with foreign institutions and

foundations. For instance, the most complex program of gender studies is taught by the faculty of sociology and political science at the European University—a private independent institute for postgraduate students funded by three U.S. foundations (Soros, MacArthur, and Ford) in St. Petersburg.<sup>10</sup>

The practical goal of teaching gender studies in Russia is first of all to change the attitudes and self-perceptions of the female students and to improve their status and respect for themselves and other women. Other goals are to awaken women's social self-consciousness and encourage social activity, as well as to help male students realize their place in the world and understand new and old gender relationships.

Gender studies makes it possible to analyze different women's activities in the process of creating a civil society. On the one hand, gender studies gives women the tools to evaluate their role and status in private life and the family. On the other hand, gender awareness also enables women to be more flexible in new economic situations, including the challenge of the market economy (especially in small and medium-sized businesses). Gender studies, and women's awareness of their status in current and historical terms, makes women more likely to create new forms of political and cultural organizations.

Currently in Russia, gender studies exists as a "school" for teaching the basic principles of citizenship and democratic participation in affairs of the state. One of the basic methodological tasks of teaching gender studies is to create democratic ways of thinking and behavior among students and en-

courage tolerance and respect for other people. These qualities will foster the widening of the social base of civil society in Russia. Because of the recent dramatic changes in the social, political, economic, and cultural spheres in Russia, the relationships between the individual and the society are also transforming. As the importance of the individual increases in contemporary Russian society, the problem of gender relationships is becoming one of the most important facets of the post-Soviet period.

Women have the opportunity to transform modern Russian society. Gender studies allows them to analyze different aspects of women's activity in the process of creating civil society. First, gender studies incorporates a focus on the political and legal status of women. Women realize their new situation in the rapidly changing and sometimes unstable world where the frames of gender stereotypes sometimes rapidly change. Problems that were formerly ignored, shunned, or thought not to be urgent have become real.

It is important to recognize that teaching gender is not limited to female issues. It includes solving philosophical, sociological, psychological, and economic problems connected with gender. During the last ten years, such spheres of gender studies as gender economics, gender politics, gender law, and gender sociology have emerged. Now we can and should look at traditional social sciences through gender glasses. Traditional political theory was based on the assumption that women would not participate in the political process. A woman was not recognized as a citizen and was denied the right to own property; her dependence on family and her non-indi-

vidual status were not considered problematic, because women were believed to be naturally—biologically and metaphysically—inferior. A great transformation has taken place in this sphere, however, thanks to frequent, active discussions of the role and status of women as political subjects. The start of a women's movement is visible in the modern Russian political process, and the issues of men's comprehension of gender roles, relations between the sexes, the body, sexuality, and reproduction have emerged as topics of discussion in academic classes.

Civil society in turn influences the development of gender studies. Nongovernmental women's and feminist organizations also make an impact on the theoretical discourse of gender. Civil society provides a nongovernmental-based arena where issues regarding women's status as social and political actors are played out. The institutions of civil society—for example, nongovernmental organizations of women—provide access to information, including data about women's real situation in Russia, that can set the terms of the debate.

In contemporary Russia, gender problems are exacerbated by the social problems of transition, particularly in the large cities, where unemployment, violence against women, and other social problems are more large-scale and diverse. Gender studies must work out theoretical instruments and adequate practical methods for solving these current gender problems.

In my experience of teaching gender studies at Voronezh State University and analyzing the syllabi for many other gender courses in Russia, I have discovered that the discipline here is limited to political, social, and economical issues, and that gender studies courses are usually highly theoretical.



The failure of a number of topics – e.g., sexuality, the body, health, and reproduction—to gain wide recognition can be partly explained by traditional taboos, which have their roots in the Russian Orthodox religion and have become part of the cultural archetype.

Interactivity, the basic method for teaching gender, is new in Russian higher education, where the Soviet tradition was for lectures to be monologues and seminars to be repetitions of the instructors' words. Interactivity has great potential for intellectually engaging students, and it is essential for leading them to discover practical solutions to the gender problems that have arisen in Russia in recent years. American researchers Myra Marx Ferree, Valerie Sperling, and Barbara Risman, who have conducted Russian seminars on the women's movement, consider "a culture of conversation [to be] a more radical and important step in a post-totalitarian society than it might appear at first glance."<sup>11</sup>

Comparative analysis as a method is also very important in teaching gender. The "dialogue of cultures" is becoming very important in the era of globalization. Cross-cultural analysis has special meaning in Russia, because of the country's geographical position between the West and the East with their corresponding influences.

Civil society in Russia is in its early stages of development. To facilitate this development, Russian colleges have to educate free and independent individuals—the central figures of the civil society. The Russian system of education must be seriously restructured if colleges are to fulfill their responsibility to create such a culture for their students. This sort of change can be accomplished through the teaching

of gender issues. Gender education prepares students for life in a global culture and helps to develop individuals who can function successfully in civil society.

#### Notes

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# FEMINIST VISIONS

## VIDEOS SCREENED AT “WOMEN IN THE MIDDLE: BORDERS, BARRIERS, INTERSECTIONS”

Instead of an in-depth, comparative review of two or three films on a single topic, this “Feminist Visions” column offers brief synopses of all the videos shown at the 2004 National Women’s Studies Association conference, held in June in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Phyllis Holman Weisbard and Frances Kavenik co-chaired the committee that selected these videos and coordinated their showings at the conference. With help from committee members Marilyn Gottschalk and Stephanie Rytlahti, they amassed descriptions of hundreds of videos, previewed about a hundred, and finally selected the thirty-five described here. Phyllis explained that the committee’s criteria for including a video were that it be “recent; suitable for women’s studies classes and various organizations—preferably serving multiple purposes; technically well-done; and available through some sort of distribution.” For the series overall, the committee aimed to “cover a range of topics and treatments—narrative and experimental, personal through global,” and tried to include some that would “highlight the Midwest, its filmmakers, or the conference theme ‘Women in the Middle: Borders, Barriers, Intersections.’”

“We were especially conscious that today’s students are visually oriented,” Phyllis reported, “and that videos are vital tools in teaching about ‘others,’ whether those others are in different cultures within the U.S., in other countries, or genders, including transgendered. Most of the videos we selected were by/about ‘others.’” The series at the conference was a tremendous success, with good attendance even during competing events.

*Feminist Collections* readers looking for films in women’s studies should also be sure to browse the **WAVE (Women’s AudioVisuals in English)** database maintained by the Office of the Women’s Studies Librarian at <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/WAVE>. We also maintain a webpage with contact information on distributors, at <http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/distribs.htm>

**ALICE WALKER: A STITCH IN TIME.** *Produced and directed by Bruce R. Schwartz. Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2004, 23 min.*

The author discusses her short story “Everyday Use” with her official biographer Evelyn C. White. Over the course of the interview, Walker talks about the autobiographical aspects of the story, the significance of quilting to African American women, the perception of class differences, and the important life lessons she explores in the story.

**ANGRY LITTLE ASIAN GIRL.** *Directed by Kyung Yu. NAATA, 2003, 30 min.*

Lela Lee, creator of the underground comic and website *Angry Little Girls*, works against stereotypes of Asian women, while also enjoying a successful acting career in film and television. The same fiery attitude and unyielding principles that distinguish her graphic projects fuel her on-screen pursuits, testifying to the ambitions and hopes of a Korean American woman expressing her identity.

**COVERED GIRLS.** *Filmed by Janet McIntyre and Amy Wendel. Filmmakers Library, 2002, 22 min.*

Opens a window into the lives of a colorful and exuberant group of Muslim-American teenaged girls in New York, and challenges the stereotypes we have about them. This film documents their daily experiences coaching basketball, practicing karate, and rapping, as well as praying and speaking out about their faith in the post-9/11 world.

**EARTH AND WOMEN.** *Directed by Lyndol Michael. Cinema Guild, 2002, 23 min.*

Shows how environmentally sensitive women are designing and building their own homes, using straw bale walls coated with mud plasters. The empowering nature of the process connects family members, friends, and neighbors. The use of straw, normally a waste product, reconnects women with the earth and expresses women’s traditional roles as caregivers.



**FAIR PHYLLIS.** Directed by Beth Portman. National Film Board of Canada, 2003, 10 min.

Animated short celebrates the resiliency of females faced with multi-tasking lives. In an eighteenth-century pastoral countryside, Fair Phyllis the shepherdess struggles with romance in her chaotic woolly world.

**FREEDOM IS CONTAGIOUS: THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND STUDENTS FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.** Produced and directed by Helen Garvy. Shire Films, 2003, 40 min.

Explores the early history (1965–1969) of the emergent women's movement, focusing on the interconnections with SDS. Based on a larger oral history project on SDS, it contains interviews with a dozen women and a few men who were active in the organization in the 1960s, including Bernadine Dohrn.

**FURY FOR THE SOUND: THE WOMEN AT CLAYOQUOT.** Moving Images, 2003, 25 min.

Shelley Wine updates her award-winning 1997 documentary on the feminist peace camp in British Columbia, where women protested clearcut logging of old growth forests and over 800 were arrested. The new film shows this protest in the context of women's civil disobedience and worldwide environmental activism.

**JOAN OF ARC.** Directed by Kate Gillen. Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2000, 49 min.

Part of the series "Mystic Women of the Middle Ages," filmed in Orleans and Joan's native village of Domremy. The video uses voiceover readings of her letters and her responses before the Inquisition as a corrective to her appropriation by many groups and causes.

Images of Joan over the centuries complement the narration.

**THE KIDNAPPING OF INGRID BETANCOURT.** Made by Karin Hayes and Victoria Bruce. Women Make Movies, 2003, 76 min.

In February 2002, in the midst of her controversial campaign for president, Senator Ingrid Betancourt was kidnapped by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and became one of the thousands of victims of Colombia's forty-year-old civil war. Using voiceovers from radio interviews taken before she was abducted, footage from the campaign trail, and a chilling proof-of-life video released by her captors, this video allows Betancourt to narrate her own story. Shows a woman's dedication to freeing her country from political corruption and the dedication of her family to her survival.

**LOOKING FOR COMMON GROUND: ONE SCHOOL'S STRUGGLE FOR GAY AND LESBIAN RIGHTS.** By Julie Akeret. Filmmakers Library, 2000, 29 min.

Enactment of a Massachusetts anti-discrimination law establishing the rights of gay and lesbian high-school students polarized the citizens of Westhampton. The film gives voice to the gay and lesbian students who talk about their struggle for acceptance along with articulate and passionate testimony from all sides of the controversy.

**MERCURY 13: THE SECRET ASTRONAUTS.** Directed and produced by Robert Lihani. A&E/The History Channel, 1998, 45 min.

Originally shown in 1998 as part of the television series "In Search of History." In 1961, just as NASA

launched its first man into space, a group of women underwent secret physical testing in the hopes of becoming America's first female astronauts. Although they passed the same battery of tests at the legendary Lovelace Foundation as did male Mercury astronauts, they were summarily dismissed by NASA as unqualified for space exploration. The film contextualizes the women's experiences with those of other women aviation pioneers throughout the twentieth century.

**THE NATURE OF LOVE.** Moving Images, 2003, 5.5 min.

Ingrid Alesich made this as part of the collaborative video project "I Can See Queerly Now." A teenager says, "I always wanted a fairy tale wedding, and I guess I haven't decided yet if I'm going to be the bride or the groom," while bisexual women describe their experiences in this exploration of the nature of love.

**PLAYING UNFAIR: THE MEDIA IMAGE OF THE FEMALE ATHLETE.** By Kenyon King and Loretta Alper. Media Education Foundation, 2002, 30 min.

Provides an in-depth critique of the sexism and homophobia that pervade media representations of female athletes. Sports media scholars Mary Jo Kane, Pat Griffin, and Michael Messner examine the disparity between the authentic success of female athletes and sports journalism's often trivialized and (hetero)sexualized coverage of them.

**THE PRICE OF FREEDOM.**

*Filmmakers Library, 2003, 26 min.*

Part of the series "Fearless: Stories from Asian Women," produced by Matthew Kelley, Peter Du Cane, and Samantha Kelley. In 1994 a young poet from Bangladesh, Taslima Nasrim, plunged the country into a wave of general strikes and mass protest. Her crime: to write her thoughts about how religious fundamentalism has consigned women to a secondary role in modern society. She now lives in exile in Sweden and continues to write about the forces of oppression despite attempts to silence her.

**RAPE IS...** *Directed by Margaret Lazarus and Renner Wunderlich. Cambridge Documentary Films, 2002, 34 min.*

Explores the meaning and consequences of rape from a global and historical perspective, including rape as genocide, but focuses mainly on the domestic cultural conditions that make this human rights violation the most underreported crime in America. Includes interviews with Eve Ensler and other survivors and commentators.

**A RED RIBBON AROUND MY HOUSE.** *By Portia Rankoane. California Newsreel, 2001, 26 min.*

This is volume 13 of "Steps for the Future," a twenty-five-cassette series on AIDS in Southern Africa. Explores the conflict between a daughter and her HIV-positive mother due to the mother's openness about her HIV status in a South Africa that discourages such disclosure. The mother is shown talking to mine workers about condoms and teenagers about AIDS prevention. Her activism embarrasses her daughter.

**REFRIGERATOR MOTHERS.**

*David E. Simpson, J.J. Hanley, & Gordon Quinn. Fanlight Productions, 2002, 54 min.*

From the 1950s through the early 1970s, the American medical establishment, following the lead of noted psychologist Bruno Bettelheim, thought it had found the cause of autism: poor mothering. Labeled "refrigerator mothers," these women suffered the twin effects of guilt and shame while struggling to raise their children. Thirty years later, seven of them share their personal experiences along with commentary from Robert Coles and other contemporary experts.

**RICH WORLD, POOR WOMEN.** *A Bill Moyers NOW program that aired in September 2003, produced and directed by Sherry Jones. PBS, 2003, 60 min.*

Examines the female face of poverty in the global economy, in three segments. Part One shows seamstresses in Thailand whose factory closes without warning. They stage a sit-in at the Ministry of Labor demanding that their government apply its own law requiring worker notification before closures. Part Two focuses on women in Senegal and how the local fishing industry has been decimated by the government selling off fishing rights. In Part Three, Moyers interviews environmental activist Vandana Shiva on the effects of globalization.

**RUTHIE AND CONNIE: EVERY ROOM IN THE HOUSE.** *By Deborah Dickson. Women Make Movies, 2002, 56 min.*

A film about love, friendship, passion, and politics. Long-time friends and community leaders Ruthie Berman and Connie Kurtz left their husbands and children in 1974 to live with each

other. Twenty years later they made history in a landmark lawsuit winning domestic partner benefits for all New York City employees. They celebrate their twenty-fifth anniversary together in their synagogue, surrounded by loving family and community.

**SEX, POWER, AND THE WORK-PLACE.** *By Robert Dean. KCET Video/Lumina, 1992, 60 min.*

It is estimated that 40-80% of working women will be subjected to sexual harassment during their working lives. Though prohibited by federal law since 1964, sexual harassment is too often tolerated. This video provides a brief history of sexual harassment awareness and legislation, and includes segments on the women who spoke out and provoked landmark legal precedents: Anita Hill, Jackie Morris, Dr. Frances Conley, Kerry Ellison, Patricia Kidd, and Brenda Berkman. Other segments show psychological studies about why sexual harassment persists, and how some supervisors and business owners train male employees to avoid harassing behavior.

**SPEAKING OUT: WOMEN, AIDS, AND HOPE IN MALI.** *Fourth installment of JoAnne Burke's "New Directions" series on women's empowerment in developing countries. Women Make Movies, 2002, 56 min.*

This film presents a compelling case on the impact of AIDS on women in Mali and the devastating effects the epidemic is having in Africa today. Profiles a remarkable HIV and AIDS support project in Bamako, Mali, and three brave Mali women who tirelessly work on behalf of the infected community, risking social ostracism and family rejection but gaining a support network.

**THE SPIRIT OF ANNIE MAE.** Directed by Catherine Anne Martin. National Film Board of Canada, 2002, 73 min.

The story of Annie Mae Pictou Aquash, a Nova Scotia Micmac, and her involvement in the American Indian Movement (AIM) in the 1970s. Her execution-style murder on the Pine Ridge Reservation in 1975 remained unsolved at time of filming. The film interviews those closest to her: her daughters and other activists, including Buffy Sainte-Marie.

**STACEYANN CHIN: A POETRY SLAMMER.** By Ulrik Wivel and Mette-Ann Schepelern. Filmmakers Library, 2002, 27 min.

A slam is the “athletics of poetry,” where poets compete against one another in a public forum, with the audience as judge. Staceyann Chin is a major American slam poet at age twenty-nine, a talented writer and a compelling performer, whose poems are a reflection of her turbulent childhood, her mixed race background, and her lesbian identity.

**STANDING ON MY SISTER'S SHOULDERS.** By Joan Sadoff, Robert Sadoff, & Laura J. Lipson. Women Make Movies, 2002, 61 min.

An award-winning documentary that tells the grassroots history of Mississippi women, black and white, who played a crucial role in the U.S. civil rights movement. This film has the women give testimony about their history and achievements and shows why women were able to take certain risks in the movement.

**TRADING WOMEN.** Directed by David A. Feingold; narrated by Angelina Jolie. Documentary Educational Resources, 2003, 54 min.

This film investigates the trade in girls and women from the hill tribes of Asia into the Thai sex industry. Filmed on location in China, Thailand, and Burma, it enters the worlds of brothel owners, trafficked girls, voluntary sex workers, corrupt police, and anxious politicians, and explores the international community's response.

**TRANSAMAZON: A GENDER QUEER JOURNEY.** Produced by Joelle Ruby Ryan & Peter Welch; featuring Ruby Ryan, a self-identified transgender warrior. University of New Hampshire Health Services, 2003, 41 min.

This film explores evolving definitions of trans, genderqueer youth, the bathroom bugaboo, radical challenges to the gendered binary, passing, violence and hate crimes, bigotry, and the possibility of uniting for cultural transformation.

**VENUS BOYZ.** By Gabriel Baur. First Run/Icarus, 2001, 104 min.

An odyssey to transgendered worlds where women become men — some for a night, others for their whole lives. The Drag Kings of New York meet in clubs where they change into their male alter egos, parodying male archetypes and power strategies while exploring male eroticism.

**VOICES IN TIME.** Directed by Salome Chasnoff. Beyondmedia Education, 2003, 36 min.

A window into the lives of women who have served time in prison. It features the Voices in Time exhibition, a life-sized artistic re-creation of a prison cell, and interviews with women sharing their experiences with the criminal justice system. Also featured is Echoes

of a Caged Soul, written and performed by former prisoner Pamela Thomas.

**VOICES OF CHOICE: PHYSICIANS WHO PROVIDED ABORTIONS BEFORE ROE V. WADE.**

Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health, 2003, 25 min.

Based on an oral history project that interviewed twenty-two physicians and others who witnessed the effects on women's lives and health of illegal abortion and acted to provide safe, accessible abortion services. The recent politicization of abortions specifically and reproductive care generally have made it essential to recall and honor the legacy of these courageous individuals.

**WAR BABIES.** Produced by Ramonde Provencher/Macumba International, Inc. Filmmakers Library, 2003, 55 min.

This film focuses on the women survivors and the children conceived through the violence of wartime rape in Bangladesh, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Nicaragua. The women and children tell their own stories, making this documentary a powerful indictment of this crime of war.

**WOMEN AT THE INTERSECTION OF RACISM AND OTHER OPPRESSIONS: A HUMAN RIGHTS HEARING.** Edited by Rita Raj, in collaboration with Charlotte Bunch and Elmira Nazombe. Center for Women's Global Leadership, Rutgers University, 2003, 30 min.

Personal testimonies and speeches given at a hearing that was part of the U.N. World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenopho-

bia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. The video also celebrates the organizing strategies used by women's groups to work against intersectional discrimination.

**WOMEN IN CLASSICAL GREEK DRAMA.** *Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2003, 37 min.*

The presentation of powerful women in Medea, Antigone, and Lysistrata is contrasted with the circumscribed role of women in Athenian society by six academic and theatrical professionals. Film clips from notable productions illustrate the discussion.

**WOMEN OF HULL HOUSE: HARNESSING STATISTICS FOR PROGRESSIVE REFORM.** *Produced by John C. Sorenson. Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 2002, 18 min.*

At Chicago's Hull House, Julia Lathrop and other activists not only provided outreach services to the poor and uneducated, but pioneered in data collection and the application of statistical analysis to social problems, paving the way for far-reaching reform.

**WORKING WOMEN OF THE WORLD.** *By Marie France Collard. First Run/Icarus, 2000, 54 min.*

Focusing on Levi Strauss & Co., this film examines the relocation of factories from Western countries to na-

tions such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Turkey, where low wages are the rule and employee rights are limited. Filmed in Belgium, France, Indonesia, Turkey, and the Philippines, with extensive interviews with women workers, the video shows how everyone is exploited in the race to the bottom that characterizes globalization.

**XXXY.** *By Porter Gale and Laleh Soomekh. University of California Berkeley Center for Media and Independent Learning, 2000, 13 min.*

A portrait of two individuals born with ambiguous genitalia that calls into question the medical practice of gender assignment surgery of intersex infants and children.

**WAVE: Women's Audio Visuals In English**, a database created and maintained by the Office of the Women's Studies Librarian, contains close to 3,100 descriptions of films, videos, and DVDs by and about women. Search **WAVE** by keyword, title, filmmaker, and more at <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/WAVE>. In addition, our office maintains an associated up-to-date file on distributors of women-focused media at [www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/distrib.htm](http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/distrib.htm). For further information, read "About **WAVE**" at <http://webcat.library.wisc.edu:3200/WAVE/About.html> or contact our office.



# E-SOURCES ON WOMEN & GENDER

Our website ([www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/](http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/)) includes all recent issues of this column (formerly called "Computer Talk"), plus many bibliographies, core lists of women's studies books, and links to hundreds of other websites by topic.

Information about electronic journals and magazines, particularly those with numbered or dated issues posted on a regular schedule, can be found in our "Periodical Notes" column.

## WEBSITES

NARAL Pro-Choice America Foundation is the sponsor of **EM & LO'S SEX ED FOR GROWNUPS**, a road tour with a related website at [www.prochoiceamerica.org/sexedforgrownups/](http://www.prochoiceamerica.org/sexedforgrownups/), featuring writers Emma Taylor and Lorelei Sharkey, "the self-proclaimed Emily Posts of the modern bedroom." The tour, full of skits, humor, games, and serious sex education—including information about threats to reproductive rights—came to Madison's Cafe Montmartre in October, but alas, your E-Sources correspondent missed it. Thank goodness for the website, complete with tour blog and video footage of the "on-the-street game show that tests your sexual IQ."

**GIRL-MOM**, at [www.girl-mom.com](http://www.girl-mom.com), offers "support, community, and education for young mamas." The site is published by now-33-year-old Bee Lavender, who co-edited the books *Breeder* and *Mamaphonic* and also publishes the *HipMama* website. Nineteen-year-old Allison Crews (a contributor to *Breeder*) is the editor of *girl-mom.com*. "Young" in this e-community often means "teen." And Crews is ready with a response to any automatic gasps and raised eyebrows about that: "Girl-Mom in no way encourages teen pregnancy, as some critics have implied. Girl-Mom encourages mothers... We do not encourage childless teens to follow our path; face it, it's a tough path. But we encourage all teens that wake to the call of 'mama!' before dawn breaks, to do all that they can to empower themselves and nurture their children... The girls who frequent this site are intelligent, strong, compassionate, socially aware, politically active, and eternally nurturing. Together, we will change the face of 'teen parenthood.'"

In August 2004, *The Guardian* reported on the dire situation of lesbians and gay men in Jamaica (see Diane Taylor's "If You're Gay in Jamaica, You're Dead," at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,,1274067,00.html>), where homosexuality, although not technically illegal, is ill-tolerated socially and often reacted to with violence, and women suspected of being lesbian have been publicly gang-raped. **J-FLAG: JAMAICA FORUM FOR LESBIANS, ALL-SEXUALS AND GAYS**, which maintains a site at [www.jflag.org](http://www.jflag.org), aims "to work towards a Jamaican society in which the Human Rights and Equality of Lesbians, All-Sexuals, and Gays are guaranteed [and to] foster the acceptance and enrichment of the lives of same-gender-loving persons who have been, and continue to be, an integral part of society." The site—which offers legal information, a chat forum, an "events" page (which, tellingly, currently lists no events because past ones have resulted in violent harassment), and personal stories—includes phone numbers and a post office box for the organization, but does not list J-FLAG's exact address in Kingston, "due to the potential for violent retribution."

The **NATIONAL WOMEN'S BUSINESS COUNCIL (NWBC)** describes itself as "a bi-partisan Federal advisory council created to serve as an independent source of advice and policy recommendations to the President, Congress, and the U.S. Small Business Administration on economic issues of importance to women business owners" ([www.nwbc.gov](http://www.nwbc.gov)). The Chair is appointed by the President; of the remaining fourteen positions on the Council, four must be filled by small business owners who are members of the President's political party and four by small business owners from outside that party; six Council members must represent women's business organizations. The NWBC website offers several fact sheets on women business owners in the U.S. at [www.nwbc.gov/keyfacts/keyfacts.html](http://www.nwbc.gov/keyfacts/keyfacts.html); the most recent (dated November 2004) is "Native American/Alaska Native Women and Entrepreneurship."

[Note: On July 22, 2003, Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA) introduced S.1442, a bill "to preserve the political independence of" the NWBC by amending the Women's Business Ownership Act of 1988 to specify how partisan balance is to

be maintained on the Council. The bill was referred that day to the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, of which Landrieu and also John Kerry are members. Nothing has come of it since. See <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d108:s.01442>.]

#### **VETERAN FEMINISTS OF AMERICA (VFA),**

[www.vfa.us](http://www.vfa.us), is an organization and website for and about feminists who rode the Second Wave of the women's movement in the U.S. The site is graphically poor, with a jumble of incompatible and distracting fonts and design elements, flashing and scrolling banners, and too many exclamation points, but there's good content on the site, including bios of such "veterans" as Jo Freeman, Shere Hite, Judith Kaplan, Sheila Tobias, Dell Williams, Sonia Pressman Fuentes, and twenty-one others. "The goals [of VFA]," according to the site, "are to enjoy the camaraderie forged during those years of intense commitment, to honor ourselves and our heroes, to document our history, to rekindle the spark and spirit of the feminist revolution and act as keeper of the flame so that the ideals of feminism continue to reverberate and influence others." VFA is also the sponsor of the **PIONEER FEMINISTS PROJECT** ([www.edouglass.org/PFP/](http://www.edouglass.org/PFP/)), a searchable database (and future book), "documenting the contributions of early Second Wave feminists active in 1975 or earlier," that will be based at Smith College.

The Women's Programme of the **WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR CHRISTIAN COMMUNICATION (WACC)** (with origins in the World Council of Churches, *not* the world of religious fundamentalism) "seeks full and equal participation of women in public communication so that their distinctive needs, insights and experiences become part of the public agenda, leading to the elimination of oppressive structures and practices of discrimination." WACC's Women's Programme will sponsor the third Global Media Monitoring Project in February 2005, "when hundreds of people in 100 countries will monitor gender portrayal and representation in the news on television, radio and in newspapers." For more information and to read an 80-page report on the 2000 media monitoring project, go to <http://www.wacc.org.uk/> and select "Women" under "Themes."

## **BIBLIOGRAPHIES/DATABASES**

The **DIRECTORY OF WOMEN LEADERS FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH** at [http://](http://www.learningpartnership.org/profiles.php)

[www.learningpartnership.org/profiles.php](http://www.learningpartnership.org/profiles.php) (on the website of the Women's Learning Partnership) "seeks to increase the visibility of women leaders and help connect individuals, organizations, and networks who focus on women's human rights, democracy and civil society, peace and conflict resolution, information and communication technologies, and international development, among other issues." The database, searchable by name, organization or profession, nationality, area (or country or region) of expertise, and spoken languages, contains eighty listings so far and invites nominations of other women leaders "from the Global South who [are] working at the grassroots, national, or international level to improve the rights of women and children."

Mev Miller (of the Feminist Academic Press Column and the website [litwomen.org](http://litwomen.org)) has created an online bibliography of the **HERSTORY OF INDEPENDENT FEMINIST, WOMEN'S, LESBIAN BOOKSELLING AND PUBLISHING** on the **WOMEN IN PRINT** website: <http://www.litwomen.org/WIP/> (scroll down to HERSTORY). Twenty-six sources and counting (additional entries encouraged), ranging from Virginia Woolf's 1929 classic, *A Room of One's Own*, to a recent Punk Planet article, to a new book by Simone Murray titled *Mixed Media: Feminist Presses and Publishing Politics*.

Reference and online librarian Mark Jackson has developed the **WILLA CATHER BIBLIOGRAPHY DATABASE**, with citations to (so far) nearly 1300 works—including journal articles, dissertations, conference proceedings, and other resources—about this American author, at [www.willacatherbib.org](http://www.willacatherbib.org). Users are invited to add citations or edit existing entries.

## **LISTSERV**

For women's studies doctoral students and interested others, **WSPHD-L** "will focus on the Ph.D. from students' perspectives." To subscribe: send a message with the words SUBSCRIBE (YOUR FULL NAME) WSPHD-L in the subject, and an indication of your status (e.g., "student in women's studies Ph.D. program") in the body, to [carimc@verizon.net](mailto:carimc@verizon.net).



## ONLINE PUBLICATIONS

The **HUMAN RIGHTS FOUNDATION OF MONLAND (HURFOM)** is a nongovernmental organization started ten years ago by minority citizens displaced from the southern region of Burma (Myanmar). HURFOM sponsors a Woman and Child Rights Project (WCRP) that seeks to empower women and children in this violence-ravaged country, monitor violations of their human rights, and bring their situation to the rest of the world's attention. WCRP reports such as *THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN BURMA*, presented in rough but graspable English, can be found on HURFOM's website: [www.rehmonnya.org](http://www.rehmonnya.org) (some links don't work or lead to mysterious destinations, but selecting "Special Issue" from under "Woman and Child" in the left-hand menu will lead to a "Report" button, which, when selected, brings up a long list of such reports).

From the **CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH** (associated with the Women's Health Bureau of Health Canada): online versions of *CEWH's RESEARCH BULLETIN*, 2000 to 2003, at [www.cewh-cesf.ca/en/publications/RB/index.shtml](http://www.cewh-cesf.ca/en/publications/RB/index.shtml). Articles include "A Gender Analysis of the Stress Experience of Young Mi'kmaq Women," "Violence and Self-Harm Among Women in Conflict with the Law," "Queer Women's Health Research: Methodological Questions," "Mothers Caring for Children with Cancer," "Blurring the Boundaries: Women's Caring Work and Manitoba Health Care Reform," "Out in the Cold: Lesbian Health in Northern BC," and "Empowerment in the Context of Poverty: Low-income Mothers in Saskatoon."

The **INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S POLICY RESEARCH** posts its *RESEARCH NEWS REPORTER ONLINE* monthly at [www.iwpr.org/rnr/rnr.htm](http://www.iwpr.org/rnr/rnr.htm) and also maintains an online archive of past issues. The Reporter's purpose is "to highlight inventive, informative, innovative, and sometimes controversial research relating to women and their families. Each selection includes a short description of the research and either a link to the report itself or a citation. We sometimes include short pieces in their entirety." The No-

vember 2004 edition reports on such studies as "The Children Left Behind: Deeper Poverty, Fewer Supports," "The Gender Wage Ratio: Women's and Men's Earnings," "Working Women Speak Out," and "Health Care and the 2004 Elections: Women's Health Policy."

From the **NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER: SLIP-SLIDING AWAY: THE EROSION OF HARD-WON GAINS FOR WOMEN UNDER THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND AN AGENDA FOR MOVING FORWARD** (73p., April 2004), at [www.nwlc.org/pdf/AdminRecordOnWomen2004.pdf](http://www.nwlc.org/pdf/AdminRecordOnWomen2004.pdf). Among the ten such erosions described under "The Bush Administration Record" are "Rolling Back Policies That Guarantee Equal Opportunity for Women at Work," "Shortchanging Child Care and Other Supports Women Need to Maintain Self-Sufficiency," "Increasing Retirement Insecurity for Women," "Sabotaging Policies That Protect Women's Health and Reproductive Rights," and "Failing To Support Our Women in Uniform."

The U.S. Department of Education's **NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS (NCES)** has published *TRENDS IN EDUCATIONAL EQUITY OF GIRLS & WOMEN: 2004*, by Catherine E. Freeman. The publication, numbered NCES 2005-016, "assembles a series of indicators that examine the extent to which males and females have access to the same educational opportunities, avail themselves equally of these opportunities, perform at similar levels throughout schooling, succeed at similar rates, and reap the same benefits from their educational experiences." A PDF version of the 116-page document can be downloaded from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/2005016.pdf>. This edition, released November 19, 2004, updates a report by the same title prepared for Congress in 2000.

○ Compiled by JoAnne Lehman

# NEW REFERENCE WORKS IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

by Phyllis Holman Weisbard, Deirdre Joyce, and Mary Pfotenhauer

## AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN

Janus Adams, *SISTER DAYS: 365 INSPIRED MOMENTS IN AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S HISTORY*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1999 (2000 for paperback and e-book). 432p. \$22.95, ISBN 0-471-28361-4; paper, \$19.95, ISBN 0-471-39526-9; e-book, \$19.95, ISBN 0-471-43702-6.

*Sister Days* is the third book in an Adams trilogy that began with *Glory Days: 365 Inspired Moments in African-American History* (1996) and continued with *Freedom Days: 365 Inspired Moments in Civil Rights History* (1998). Each volume follows the same format: 365 one-page entries—one for every day of the year—that detail an event, relating to the book's specific topic, that happened on that day at some point in history. For example, the entry for August 7 in *Sister Days* (one of the more entertaining entries in this book) contains a portion of a letter written on August 7, 1865, from an escaped slave to his former master, who had tracked the ex-slave and his wife to the North. The letter explains that the couple will gladly return if their former master can prove he will treat them kindly and pay them both what they should have earned for their decades of service (with interest, of course). "Say howdy to George Carter," the letter ends, "and thank him for taking the pistol from you when you were shooting at me."

In addition to the entries, the book contains a helpful bibliography that includes a short listing of archives, libraries, and private collections. The book also includes a general index, index of subjects, and index of inspirational themes. A few of the themes in this last index are a little confusing, such as "Assumptions" and "Self-portraiture," but overall the indexes are helpful for finding specific topics.

*Sister Days* could possibly be used for research, if the reader is looking for a short entry about a specific person or subject or for an event that happened on a particular day in history. This book, however, like *Glory Days* and *Freedom Days*, is meant for the general public mainly as an inspirational text. Some entries celebrate "moments" that seem less powerful than others (for example, Oprah Winfrey's cruise on April 15, 1998, in honor of Maya Angelou's birthday), and some do not correspond to a specific event at all (the May 4 entry is labeled simply "Spring 1905"). Some, however, are truly moving, such as the account of Ruby Bridges entering a Louisiana elementary school on November 14, 1960, as the only black student, escorted by U.S. marshals, and stopping to say a prayer for the angry mob that surrounded her.

*Sister Days* is an entertaining and educational read overall. It is also refreshing to have an entire book dedicated to the telling of women's stories in African-American history, since these stories are so often overshadowed by those of white men in mainstream American history.

## CHICANA/LATINA LITERATURE

Kathy S. Leonard, *BIBLIOGRAPHIC GUIDE TO CHICANA AND LATINA NARRATIVE*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003 (Bibliographies and Indexes in Women's Studies, no.31). 290p. \$74.95, ISBN 0-313-31987-1.

Kathy S. Leonard, who also wrote *Index to Translated Short Fiction by Latin American Women in English-Language Anthologies*, has compiled an extensive list of works in her latest reference, *Bibliographic Guide to Chicana and Latina Narrative*. This guide lists more than 2,750 individual works of all forms of narrative (not just those printed in anthologies, as in the previous book), including short story, autobiography and biography, novel, and novel excerpt, dating from the early 1940s to 2002. Children's literature is omitted (though adolescent literature for ages 12+ is included), as are dissertations and narrative pieces published in periodicals or journals. The *Bibliographic Guide* includes works by "authors of Mexican-American, Cuban-American, Dominican-American, and Puerto Rican-American descent as well as other writers of Hispanic descent who were either born or raised in the United States" (p.xii). The works included are written in Spanish or English, or, in many cases, both.

*Bibliographic Guide to Chicana and Latina Narrative* is made up of five indexes: Author/Title; Title/Author; Anthology; Novel; and Autobiography/Biography. Also included at the end of the book is a list of "Other Useful Resources," containing other bibliogra-

phies and books of theory or analysis of Chicana/Latina literature. Each indexed book is given its own letter/number code, making cross-reference between indexes easier. There is considerable overlap among the indexes as well, which cuts down on flipping among them.

This guide, as Leonard explains in her preface, “was created to allow scholars, university instructors, students, and other interested readers quick, easy, and complete access to the narrative work by Chicana and Latina authors” (p.ix). While casual readers might find it helpful to browse this book to locate works for recreational reading, the sheer comprehensiveness of this guide makes it an essential tool for students and scholars of Chicana and Latina literature.

*[Mary Pfotenbauer, who wrote the two preceding reviews, was a student assistant in the Women's Studies Librarian's office for several years. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin—Madison in December 2004 with a B.A. in Music History, but plans to continue writing reference reviews for Feminist Collections (for which we're grateful).]*

## HISTORY

Teresa A. Meade & Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, eds., ***A COMPANION TO GENDER HISTORY***. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004. 676p. bibl. index. \$124.95, ISBN 0-631-22393-2.

Once upon a time, women's experiences were largely missing from written history. Then came the discovery that some women had in fact been present, and the history stew was peppered with the names of individual women. They provided more flavor to history, but didn't change the basic

recipe of great men, politics, and wars. But, close to forty years ago, feminist historians began doing more than adding women and stirring. They started to apply gender as a wider analytic category, understood by the editors of *A Companion to Gender History* as “a culturally constructed, historically changing, and often unstable system of differences” (p.2). They created whole new meals consisting of thousands of articles, dissertations, and books that re-examined historical concepts and events through the lens of gender, particularly with respect to American and European history.<sup>1</sup>

The latest advance in gendering history is the recognition that it applies globally. And that's the smorgasbord Meade and Wiesner-Hanks took on in *A Companion to Gender History*. It's a tall order. As they say in their introduction, “There is no aspect of human existence—labor and leisure, family and kingroups, laws, war, diplomacy, foreign affairs, frontier settlement, imperialism, aggression, colonial policy and the resistance to it, education science, romance and personal interaction, the construction of race and ethnicity—that is untouched by gender” (p.6).

One can clearly see the impossibility of covering all those ingredients, across all time periods and locales, in a one-volume work. Meade and Wiesner-Hanks made some wise choices to deal with the problem. They recognized that not all eras and places have received the same level of attention and that the resultant essays would therefore vary in their sophistication. They saw this as an opportunity for readers to “see how a new historical field is developing and assess the ways in which insights in one area can challenge received wisdom and standard generalizations in another” (p.2). They also decided to feature both

thematic essays (on sexuality, family, religion, law, race, education, images in the visual arts, revolution/nationalism/anti-imperialism, and feminist movements) and those that take a chronological-geographical approach. Meade and Wiesner-Hanks also gave their contributors leeway to explore their topics as they saw fit, using a variety of approaches, yet hoped that the overall impression the essays convey is that “from the earliest human cultures until today, the process of defining societies, ruling them, settling them and building them has been a gendered task, one done by both men and women, but likewise one motivated by and carried out according to gendered principles” (p.6.)

The chronological-geographical part begins with Marcia-Anne Dobres's article summarizing the scant evidence available from prehistory, which she defines as from about 40,000 years ago to 4,000 years B.P.<sup>2</sup> She cautions that research on prehistory depends on material artifact interpretation, which is susceptible to the “concerns, agendas, and wishful thinking” of contemporary researchers (p.212). The next section examines classical and post-classical societies in Africa, the Far East, Middle East, Europe, and the Americas through 1400. The section on the development of modern society (1400–1750) considers Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe and Russia, Western Europe, and the Spanish and Portuguese empires in the New World. Julie Hardwick's “Did Gender Have a Renaissance: Exclusions and Traditions in Early Modern Western Europe” plays off Joan Kelly Gadol's influential article from the 1970s, “Did Women Have a Renaissance?,” in which the very

periodization of history, once women were introduced, is challenged. Where Kelly Gadol looked at the contributions of aristocratic women to literature (particularly courtly love) and politics, Hardwick examines Renaissance views of the family, science, and religion, and changes that affected the peasantry as well as the elites. Household patriarchy all too often served as a template for Renaissance understandings of the social and political order.

The next section analyzes gender and the modern world (through 1920). South Asia makes its first sustained appearance in the book in Nupur Chaudhuri's contribution, "Clash of Cultures: Gender and Colonialism in South and Southeast Asia." Although there are scattered references to India and Hinduism in other essays, most notably in Barbara Molony's on twentieth-century Asia, this is a huge topic that needs more attention. The final section, on gender in the contemporary world, includes Molony's essay, plus others on Africa, Eastern Europe and Russia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. The volume ends with a general look at equality and difference in the West, written by University of Melbourne historians Charles Sowerwine and Patricia Grimshaw, with reference to North America, Western Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. They end optimistically with this:

[W]omen have profited and continue to profit from the achievements of feminists in gaining a speaking voice. First- and second-wave feminisms, combined with structural changes in the economy and society, opened a path which

pointed humanity towards equality between men and women and for people of different sexual orientations.

There is a long road to travel still on this path, and beyond it lie other paths of social and racial justice, but Western society came a great distance during the twentieth century. It will travel further in the twenty-first century and feminists will remain in the vanguard. (pp.607–8)

The insights collected in *A Companion to Gender History* will be critical to that task by helping women and men understand our interactive past.

#### Notes

1. The research in American history is very ably summarized and contextualized in the earlier Blackwell volume *A Companion to American Women's History*, edited by Nancy A. Hewitt, 2002, reviewed in *Feminist Collections* v.24, no.2 (Winter 2003).
2. Her use of B.P. for "before the present" is a welcome change from the Christocentric terms B.C. and A.D. or the slightly better B.C.E. and C.E.

Doris Weatherford, gen. ed., ***A HISTORY OF WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES: STATE-BY-STATE REFERENCE***. Danbury, CT: Grolier, 2004. 4v. illus. bibl. index. \$399.00, ISBN 0-7172-5805-X.

When this set came in, I eagerly picked up Volume 4 to read the entry on Wisconsin and see how well the state-by-state reference had done at summarizing the history of women in

the state. I am happy to report that the Wisconsin essay (written by Weatherford herself) is a very good one. Since it follows the pattern employed for all the state essays, I'll use it to illustrate the format. The essay opens with a quotation about a cook in the logging camp from *Come and Get It*, by Edna Ferber, who grew up in Appleton, Wisconsin, and whose first jobs as a journalist were in the state. A map on the first page displays cities and towns important in Wisconsin history, including tiny Belmont, home to the first territorial legislature in 1836. An inset map sites Wisconsin within the United States. A boxed sidebar lists facts such as the percentage of women in the state legislature (23.5% in 2003) and the number of females enrolled in colleges in the state in 1999 (170,000, or 55.7% of the total student body). An introductory paragraph correctly mentions both that the Wisconsin legislature was the first to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment (granting suffrage to women) and that it had rebuffed earlier suffrage attempts. Then Weatherford launches into a history of women in Wisconsin, interwoven with events in general history of the state, from prehistory through the present. According to the preface, the narrative is divided into periods that roughly correspond to eras outlined in the U.S. history school standards. Wisconsin's "prehistory" is the life of the peoples native to the area: Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Ojibway, and other American Indian nations. Weatherford highlights the tasks of women in their societies, including drying fish, butchering game, tanning hides, weaving baskets, and constructing dwellings.

White explorers came to the area from 1634 onward, and thus the second era covered is from 1634 to statehood in 1848. The explorers returned to Europe, but they were followed by



French fur-trading men who stayed and took native women as common-law wives. Weatherford reminds readers that the native women were valuable to their husbands because they spoke the local language, knew the land and its resources, and had contacts with “trustworthy business associates” (p.230). Some of the daughters of the wealthier unions were tutored or were sent to eastward or to Canada for schooling. The first European woman to live in the state was probably the wife of a French soldier named Cardinell. Together they settled in Prairie du Chien in 1726. Weatherford then charts the passing of the area from French to English to American hands, mentioning how in 1824 prosecutor Henry Baird tried to require formalization of common-law marriages, causing an uproar over the illegitimacy of the offspring, the role of missionaries, and growth in white settlement, particularly in the southern part of the state. Teaching was an occupation open to women—though at lower salaries—and by the mid-nineteenth century, Wisconsin had more female schoolteachers than male. This section ends with the astonishing fact that the population of Wisconsin jumped tenfold from 1840 to 1850, from 30,945 to 305,391.

The next period is from statehood through the Civil War and its aftermath. Now Weatherford can begin to speak about women reformers, educators, and feminists, many of them immigrants from Germany or Scandinavia. They included Margarethe Meyer Schurz, who founded the first kindergarten in America (1856), temperance leaders, abolitionists, and suffragists. Women also assisted the Union during the Civil War as fundraisers, nurses, and, in the case of Cordelia Perrine Harvey, as founder of a hospital to treat the troops. Students will latch

onto the two Wisconsin women Weatherford names who disguised themselves as men and served as soldiers (Sarah Collins and Belle Peterson). If they read on, they’ll discover plucky Henrietta Colt, who secured an Army contract for uniforms and hired 475 women to sew them.

The section on the Civil War era through 1900 charts the failed attempts at full suffrage, but success at allowing women to be elected school officials and to vote in school elections, and, after some reversals, the admission of women lawyers to the state bar association. During the era of the Progressives (1900–1920), Wisconsin women finally achieved suffrage. Weatherford uses the period from the 1920s through World War II to discuss the differing experiences of rural women, whose household tasks were performed for many years before the Rural Electrification Act without the benefit of electricity, and their sisters in the cities, who had the advantages of electricity and telephones. She says that Wisconsin women were not as affected by the Depression as were women elsewhere, in part because the drought conditions in the West and South did not prevail in Wisconsin. On the other hand, urban women found it more difficult to obtain employment, as the few jobs available more often went to men, and even the Wisconsin Art Project (run under the Works Progress Administration and the Federal Writers’ Project) put few Wisconsin women to work. When the United States entered World War II, Wisconsin women found employment in ammunition and ordnance plants. The last chronological section traces developments from the post-World War II years through the present. Weatherford mainly uses this section to discuss women who achieved statewide

office or election to Congress.

Several sidebars give some flavor to the Wisconsin story. One is an antisuffrage poster from 1912 that reads, “Danger! Woman’s Suffrage Would Double the Irresponsible Vote. It is a MENACE to the Home, Men’s Employment and to All Business” (p.239). Another is a discussion of women in the beer business, and a third is a photograph of Tammy Baldwin at the annual Gay Pride Parade in July 1998, during her successful campaign for Congress. A timeline sets out U.S. and Wisconsin events parallel to each other.

Three Native American Wisconsinites are discussed together in a sidebar (Ada E. Deer, Laura Minnie Cornelius Kellogg, and Roberta Hill Whiteman), and profiles of several other prominent Wisconsin women (Mathilde Franziska Anneke, Tammy Baldwin, Olympia Brown, Catherine Taft Clark, Nancy Dickerson, Zona Gale, Margaret Newell H’Doubler, Lorena Alice Hickok, Jessie Annette Jack Hooper, Lizzie Black Kander, Louise Phelps Kellogg, Belle Case La Follette, Helen Parkhurst, Vel R. Phillips, and Ellen Clara Sabin) follow the narrative section. Information on museums in the state with material on women’s history, a listing of selected organizations and institutions (archives and some of the women’s studies programs in Wisconsin), and a bibliography of print and Web resources complete the entry.

The Wisconsin entry isn’t perfect. The narrative points out that Wisconsin lagged behind in electing a woman to Congress until Tammy Baldwin won a seat in 1998, which is true enough, but neglects any mention of Justice

Shirley Abrahamson, on the bench since 1976 and Chief Justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court since 1996. And though it rightly credits Kathryn Clarenbach as chairing NOW's founding meeting, it might also have pointed out her major role in keeping the organization afloat for several years thereafter and her activity connected with the National Conference for International Women's Year (1977)—and spelled her name correctly in the bibliography. The video *Step by Step: Building a Feminist Movement, 1941–1977* (produced by Joyce Follet for Wisconsin Public Television in 1998 and focusing on Wisconsin and other Midwest women leaders of the women's movement) would have been an excellent, accessible addition to the bibliographic section. No statement in the narrative is footnoted, which means that users will need to sort through several of the references listed should they need to pin down a specific statement (same problem for all the state essays). But all told, it is quite a creditable piece.

There's a lot more in the set than the state essays. The first volume contains introductory chronological and thematic essays, including "Women and the Settlement of the West," by Katherine Benton-Cohen, and "History of American Feminism," by Myra Marx Ferree, each with accompanying bibliographies. Volume 4 has several appendices, including a chronology; a selection of primary documents (several suffrage speeches; the Equal Rights Amendment as passed by Congress in 1972 and Alice Paul's original wording, 1923; Frances Willard's address before the Second Biennial Convention of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1893; Amelia Bloomer's

"Dress Reform," 1853; Emma Hart Willard's "Education and the Weaker Sex, 1819; and others); state-by-state historical statistical tables on population, marriage and divorce, employment, and figures for women in state legislatures; a general bibliography; and a subject index.

Weatherford states in the preface that most states lack a comprehensive history of women in the state. Consequently, contributors had to synthesize from a wide range of sources, including books, reports, articles, oral histories, etc., with their work often rising to the level of original research. She hopes that this set remedies the situation. If the essays on the other forty-nine states are as good as "Wisconsin" is, as I suspect they are, then *A History of Women in the United States: State-by-State Reference* is a real substantive achievement. It will be a boon to K-12 teachers (and the librarians they consult) who are teaching units and courses on the history of their state and wishing to include the history of women there. And in the spirit that "all history is local," women's history classes and women's history enthusiasts alike will also find the information on the lives of women in each state useful.

## MUSLIM WOMEN

Aisha Bewley, *MUSLIM WOMEN: A BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY*. London: Ta-Ha Publishers, 2004. 221p. pap., £7.00, ISBN 1-842000-53-5.

Bewley's aim is to counteract the viewpoint that Muslim women have been confined to their homes throughout the history of Islam. She has entries for numerous women scholars of Islam,

as well as Sufi devotees, poets, singers, rulers, and others from the time of Muhammad (seventh century) through the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Bewley laments the decline in the number of women from more recent periods. She attributes this to Western influences:

There is ... a field of study yet to be explored concerning how much the current status of women among Muslims is due to the influence of Western attitudes towards women—and in particular, towards Muslim women—which the Muslims have unwittingly assimilated, amounting to an adoption of the Western preconception of how Muslims viewed women. Historically, with the exception of earliest accounts of journeys, Westerners really started to write about Islam in the colonial period, a period in which the Western attitude towards women was that they were the weaker, inferior sex. We find French colonial authorities excluding women from teaching in the mosques—and I have spoken to older women who remember this happening—and objecting to women holding positions of authority. Hence the lens through which the West viewed Muslim women was already a distorted one—and once imposed or implanted among the Muslims, this viewpoint gradually became an established norm. (Introduction)

This is an interesting, if unproved, theory that, as Bewley points out, needs more study.



The entries are short, but tantalizing. Wouldn't you want to know more about these women?

- Bija Munajjima, a tenth/sixteenth-century Sufi from Herat, Afghanistan, who was also an expert in astronomy, a poet who engaged in rivalry with a famous male Sufi poet, and a founder of a bath-house, *madrassa* (study house), and mosque.
- Fatima bint Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Faqiha (died 840/1437), a scholar of *shari'a* (Islamic law), who knew so much that she was allowed to give legal judgments, at first in conjunction with her father and later on her own. Her father would consult her when he was teaching and needed an answer to a question.
- Shuhda bint Abi Nasr Ahmad (574/1178), known as al-Katiba (the writer) because of her calligraphic talents. She had an excellent education and she taught *hadith* (reported speeches of Muhammad) and other subjects to students at the University of Baghdad. Bewley says that "she was one of the most significant scholars of her time and because of her great reputation some people even falsely claimed to have been her students" (p.147).

There are many more women scholars in the book. Most were *hadith* transmitters, though Bewley says these are but a sample, with more than 800 known others whom she did not include. Unfortunately she gives no further explanation as to why she chose some and not others. Another large category consists of companions of Muhammad. Bewley's sources are various classical biographical collections (many of which have a section on

women), biographical references in other works, and the five-volume set *A'lam an-Nisa'*, by 'Umar Rida Kahhala, all on notable women. Because she does not provide citations in the entries, the volume does not function as an index to biographical sources on Muslim women.

The book is arranged in alphabetical order. The women are identified as rulers, scholars, Sufis, or companions or wives of Muhammad, by the abbreviations "ru," "sc," "su," "com," and "umm," respectively, in the entries. An appendix listing the names by category would have helped, since there is also no overall index in the book. There is, however, a section called "Women Listed as Having Given Allegiance to the Prophet (Without a Larger Entry)," and there is a glossary, which will be of great help to users who are unfamiliar with Arabic or Islam.

In summary, *Muslim Women* is a handy reference to biographical information on a selection of Muslim women.

Note

1. Bewley actually provides dates according to the both the Christian and Islamic calendars. The latter begins with the *hijrah*, Muhammad's emigration from Mecca to Medina in 622; therefore, the nineteenth century corresponds to the thirteenth century A.H., or *Anno Hegirae*.

[Phyllis Holman Weisbard, who reviewed *Muslim Women: A Biographical Dictionary as well as the two History titles, is the Women's Studies Librarian for the University of Wisconsin System.*]

Suad Joseph, gen. ed., **ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN & ISLAMIC CULTURES, VOL. I: METHODOLO-**

## **GIES, PARADIGMS AND**

**SOURCES.** Boston: Brill, 2003.

\$249.00, ISBN 90-04-11380-0 (vol.I); ISBN 90-04-13247-3 (set).

The greatest challenge to the interdisciplinary researcher always seems to be the weaving of the disparate disciplinary threads into a coherently fabricated whole. As research on both women and Islamic cultures has moved, separately, to the forefront of scholarship in a variety of fields, Suad Joseph and her team of editors offer us a comprehensive encyclopedia that is at the intersection of both disciplines.

The *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Culture (EWIC)* is an ambitious project that brings together the essays of more than a thousand scholars on myriad subjects relating to women, both Muslim and non-Muslim, who live or have lived in any one of the Islamic cultures scattered around the globe. In this first volume of the six-volume set, *EWIC* provides a strong referential basis for the underlying historical and methodological themes that have driven scholarship in this area. As such, Volume I is divided into two sections representing (1) the historical background of women living in Islamic cultures and (2) the disciplinary—or interdisciplinary—methodologies that interpret their experience.

Organized chronologically and regionally, the first section is not only an excellent historical reference tool, covering the junction of women and Islam from the sixth century to the present, but also an invaluable historiographical tool for any beginning researcher interested in finding out where and to what extent the primary and secondary sources exist. The sec-



ond section offers a critical examination of various methodological themes and their usefulness to the study of women and Islamic cultures. These twenty-two themes include but are not limited to economics, folklore, orientalism, political science, sexualities and queer studies, and oral history.

In addition to these two major categories, the editors have compiled a bibliography that is arranged by region and cross-referenced by both author name and subject matter. This is particularly helpful to a beginning researcher putting together her or his own bibliography. In fact, for academics in the early stages of research, the entire volume provides an invaluable wealth of information and scholarly stimuli. General readers will also find

this volume an essential starting point in understanding the complexities of issues informing the woman's experience in Islamic culture.

Finally, while many readers may be inclined to skip the introduction of a work such as this (preferring to go directly to the entries), I would advise them to resist that inclination here. The introduction provides a fascinating look at the *EWIC* project as a whole and the editorial challenges it faced. On a more practical level, the introduction also serves as a very useful guide to the structure and organization of the volumes, thereby accelerating the researcher's search for relevant information.

We are promised, in Volumes II–V, an additional 341 topics, grouped both

regionally and as general overviews (Volume VI is the index). This mammoth project purports to tell us both anything and everything there is to know about women and Islamic culture. As the field grows, the shortcomings in these volumes will undoubtedly be discovered and their usefulness will wane. Nevertheless, my suspicion is that the growth of the field will be greatly augmented by the hard work of the *EWIC* project's authors and editors.

*[Deirdre Joyce, who wrote this review, recently completed an M.A. in History at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and is currently working toward a second master's degree in Library and Information Sciences.]*

# PERIODICAL NOTES

## NEW AND NEWLY DISCOVERED PERIODICALS

**EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY WOMEN: STUDIES IN THEIR LIVES, WORK, AND CULTURE.** 2001—. Ed. Linda Veronica Troost (Washington and Jefferson College). 1/yr. ISSN 1529-5966 (hardcover). Price: \$94.50/volume/year. AMS Press, Inc., Brooklyn Navy Yard Bldg. 292, Suite 417, 63 Flushing Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11205; fax: (212) 995-5413; email: [amsserve@earthlink.net](mailto:amsserve@earthlink.net) (Issue examined: Vol. 3 (2003).)

This 350-page, indexed scholarly journal delivers exactly what the no-nonsense title promises. Here's a small sampling of the article titles in Volume 3: "Catherine Clive's Media Relations: The State as Media and the Page as Performance" (Cami Agan); "Prophetic Daughter: Mary Fletcher's Narrative and Women's Religious and Social Experiences in Eighteenth-Century British Methodism" (Candy Gunther Brown); "The Gambling Woman's Revolution: An Alternative Gender, an Alternative Epistemology" (Hope Cotton Dixon); "Some Notes on the Hellenism of Mary Robinson's Odes" (Sandro Jung); "Politics, Exile and Authorship: Charlotte Smith's *The Emigrants*" (Amy Garnai); "Method to This Madness: 'Fragmented Discourse in Mary Wollstonecraft's *Maria*' (Gloria Shultz Eastman). Also includes book reviews.

**POEMMEMOIRSTORY (PMS).** 2001—. Ed.: Linda Frost. 1/yr. ISSN 1535-1335. Subscriptions: \$7.00/yr; sample copy: \$5.00 plus "appropriate postage." The University of Alabama at Birmingham, Department of English, HB 217, 900 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street, 1530 Third Avenue South, Birmingham, AL 35294-1260; website: [www.pms-journal.org](http://www.pms-journal.org) (Issues examined: No.2 (2002), No.3 (2003), No.4 (2004).)

A wonderful find, with more than a hundred pages per issue of writing by women, *PMS* is the re-incarnation of the former literary journal *Astarte*, transformed into "something different, but just as vital."

Editor Linda Frost writes, "[W]e hope to keep our focus broad, documenting what and how women write. We think *PMS* offers a pretty good sample of what matters to women writing today from satisfying sex to personal liberty. We think you will enjoy our *PMS* much more than what you might normally associate with pms but we also hope that ours is equally as commanding of your attention."

The memoir section always includes one piece by a woman "who has experienced something of historic and national significance [but] would not necessarily consider herself a 'writer'": in Issue 2, Nancy Johnson-Oberwanowicz, who was showing her family around her office in Tower Two when the World Trade Center was attacked on September 11, 2001; in Issue 3, Carolyn McKinstry, who, as a young teenager in Birmingham in 1963, became active in Civil Rights protests and survived the racist bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church; and in Issue 4, poignant diary entries by soldier Mary Eila Smothers, who is serving in Baghdad.

The poems (thirty or more per issue) include "Inventory: Jewelry Box" (Lynne Burris Butler), "On Getting a Dog and Being Told What I Really Wanted Is a Child" (Paisley Rekdal), "Not a White Girl" (Allison Joseph), "Imbalanced Meal" (Dandrea V. James), "Pondering the Death of My Only Daughter" (Carla Baku), "Somnia" (Janet McCann), and "Beauty and the Beast" (Gail White, beginning evocatively with, "I disliked children, even as a child—those vexing, nattering, excluding things").

Short-story titles are also intriguing, among them "How To Dance in America" (Emma Wunsch), and "Sheila's Deposition, 1997" and "Noreen's Phone Calls, 1999" (both by Judith Arcana). Issue 4 ends with a sweet story about a woman who inexplicably grows a tail.

**SWIVEL: THE NEXUS OF WOMEN & WIT.** 2004—. Publ. & Ed.-in-Chief: Brangien Davis. 2/yr. Price: \$9.00 per issue, plus shipping; orders accepted online only, with credit card; also available at some independent bookstores. Website: [www.swivelmag.com](http://www.swivelmag.com) (Issue examined: Vol.1, No.1 (2004).)

Another welcome new literary journal for women, *Swivel*, like *PMS*, includes poetry, memoir, and fiction, but this new, somewhat-zinelike publication—"showcasing women writers of wit"—also offers photography, essays, and "comix." This first issue includes a (yes, witty) piece by Kate Lake about being atheist, a coming-of-age story called "Shuffling Toward Womanhood in Wedge-Heeled Sandals" (by Heather Cochran), some "spontaneous poetry from a trio of performance typists," two comics by Amanda Crichton and one by illustrator/writer combo Christine Olsen and Nancy Pearl ("My Life as an Action Figure:...the true story of how Seattle librarian Nancy Pearl became immortalized as a toy"), and

lots of other poetry and prose. Interestingly, none of the prose pieces are categorized (e.g., as the "fiction," "memoir," or "essay" of the above list).

**WORLD PULSE: WOMEN AND CHILDREN TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD.** 2004—. Exec. Ed. & Founder: Jensine Larsen. Publ.: J.C. Dalin; World Birth Forum ("a US-based nonprofit dedicated to bringing the voices of women and children to the forefront of our global problem-solving dialogue"). 6/yr. ISSN: 1549-6678. Print subscriptions: \$23.00/yr. in U.S.; \$35.00/yr. in Canada/Mexico; \$45.00/yr. other international. Web subscriptions: \$20.00/yr. 5935 NE Skidmore, Portland, OR 97218; phone: (503) 331-3900; email: [publisher@worldpulsemagazine.com](mailto:publisher@worldpulsemagazine.com); website: [www.worldpulsemagazine.com](http://www.worldpulsemagazine.com) (Issue examined: Premiere issue, 2004.)

"When I took my first tentative steps to start this magazine," writes the founding editor in the premiere issue of World Pulse, "I had a hunch that something huge was going on globally with women. Now, two years later, I am con-

vinced that there is a potent and sophisticated global movement rising from all corners of the earth...

"Women and youth are at the forefront of this unstoppable and vibrant worldwide activism. They are risking their lives on the frontlines to create peace communities where peace was not thought possible. They are designing successful models to end child sexual abuse, standing naked on oil wells to demand a safe environment and jobs for their communities, and swelling the streets with marches to advocate for stricter gun controls. They are writing human rights reports and exposing genocide, forming new independent media, standing up against the practice of female genital circumcision, and designing models that create islands of health in some of the poorest nations. They are holding ambitious international conferences to bring together women and youth leaders, banding together as mothers in political action groups, and inventing sustainable economic policies that benefit children and the environment.

"These points of light are often hard to see through the fog of newspapers and television networks that rely on a language of conflict and crisis. But these rays of hope exist and

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## SPECIAL ISSUES OF PERIODICALS

**ECONOMY AND SOCIETY** v.31, no.4, November 2002: “Feminism and the Political.” Special issue eds.: Angela McRobbie, Celia Lury. ISSN: 0308-5147 (print); 1469-5766 (online). 4/yr. Subscriptions: in US, \$297.00 for institutions (includes print and online versions), \$88.00 for individuals (print only). Single issues: inquire. Routledge Journals, Taylor & Francis Inc., 325 Chestnut St., 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19106; phone: (800) 354-1420; fax: (215) 625-2940. Also available online to licensed users through Ingenta and MetaPress.

Partial contents: “The Presence of Feminism in the Future of Welfare” (Fiona Williams); “The Dilemmas of Pendulum Politics: Balancing Paid Work, Care and Citizenship” (Ruth Lister); “Feminist Thought and the Totalitarian Interloper: On Rhetoric and the Fear of ‘Dangerous Thinking’” (Vikki Bell); “From Diversity to Heterogeneity: A Feminist Analysis of the Making of Kinds” (Celia Lury); “Reinventing Cyberfeminism: Cyberfeminism and the New Biology” (Sarah Kember).

**JOURNAL OF CANNABIS THERAPEUTICS** v.2, nos.3/4 (2003): “Women and Cannabis: Medicine, Science, and Technology.” Special issue eds.: Ethan Russo, Melanie Dreher, Mary Lynn Mathre. Published simultaneously as a monograph by the Haworth Press. \$39.95, ISBN 0-7890-2100-5; paper, \$24.95, ISBN 0-7890-2101-3. Website: [www.HaworthPress.com](http://www.HaworthPress.com); email: [orders@HaworthPress.com](mailto:orders@HaworthPress.com) (Note: The journal ceased publication in 2004.)

Partial contents: “Cannabis Treatments in Obstetrics and Gynecology: A Historical Review” (Ethan Russo); “The Consequences of Marijuana Use During Pregnancy: A Review of the Human Literature” (Peter A. Fried); “Cannabis and Harm Reduction: A Nursing Perspective” (Mary Lynn Mathre); “Crack Heads and Roots Daughters: The Therapeutic Use of Cannabis in Jamaica” (Melanie Dreher); “Cannabis in Multiple Sclerosis: Women’s Health Concerns” (Denis J. Petro).

○ Compiled by JoAnne Lehman

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# ZINE AND TASTED: YUM

by M.L. Fraser

Each of the publications reviewed in this column is delicious, and each is remarkable in its own way: which one pleases your palate most will just depend on what you're looking for in a zine. There's not a baddie in the bunch, so pick and choose, knowing you're on the right track.

*Before the Mortgage* (no.4, no.5, both undated)

Christina Amini and Rachel Hutton produce this little morsel out of Ross, California. Intellectual without being pompous, it verges on social satire. It is pointed, yet "everygirl" funny. A few of the excerpts made me laugh—in particular, Rachel's description of terrible fashion sense ("Getting Dressed") and Christina's account, in "Soon, I'll Succeed in Business," of pretending to know a gender-unspecified acquaintance of someone she's having a job interview with (she later discovers that the mystery acquaintance (male) is the interviewer's best friend). I also loved the remarks on "fake-dating" by Tim Gihring (of Minnesota Monthly fame). So that's what I've been doing all this time; it's nice to know others are in my boat and have my sensibilities. I laughed very hard at the social gaffe committed by Dave when he exclaimed "San Francisco!" in response to a social nicety from his boss's boss's boss ("B<sup>3</sup>") (only realizing later that B<sup>3</sup> had said, "How you doing today?," not "Foggy day today"). What I like best about this zine is that it is feminist-friendly without being overtly political. It speaks to the everyday feminist in us, despite the gender of the reader or the writer. Yet it still retains the "just trying to get my voice out there" feel of a true zine.

*Before the Mortgage* is a great example of the thirties grrrl or guy who has not chosen the "spouse, kids, and home in the suburbs" route. (Hence, its title.) There are three sections in every issue—"Part of the Problem," "Part of the Solution," and "On the Fence" (could be good, could be bad)—a great idea that examines the politics of the alternate lifestyle. I am amused at some of the material that goes into the "problem" section of the zine—everything from post-it notes found around the office to overheard commentary at a poetry reading, to a piece about bus schedules ("Ahhhh, Ski Week"),

and then a bit about living with parents, which many in this generation find themselves doing ("My Roommates, My Parents"). This kind of writing could get bitter and snarky, but instead it pokes gentle fun at the absurdities of life—a tricky line to ride, but the authors seem to do it, in both issues of the zine. Some stuff is a little incongruous, like the odd home photos combined with the slick writing. A list of emails that the authors thought were silly (but aren't really, just unimaginative) falls into the "Hmmm" category. If you ignore that and concentrate on the voices and the writing, *Before the Mortgage* is a must-get.

Christina Amini, P.O. Box 68, Ross, CA, 94957; website: [www.beforethemortgage.com](http://www.beforethemortgage.com). PayPal, credit cards, and checks accepted: \$3.95 per issue; one-year subscription (three issues) for \$10.00.

*Chloe Likes Olivia* (unnumbered & undated, but with buried reference to January 2004)

A true riot grrrl, Lizzie lets loose about bands and feminism. I love her opening paragraph: "I am one of those annoying people who refuses to believe that the radical potential of the zine became obsolete in 1994." (We don't believe it either, Liz!! And given the number of zine fests popping up all over the country, many others don't either; so buck up, Little Camper.) She then goes on, a sentence or two later, to say that "the cut-and-paste revolution will only die if we let it. so keep reading." (Rock ON, sister-friend.) I also like the title, which comes from Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. But then she mostly talks about music, not literature, which I found a little ironic.

So, for the content of the zine: I would have liked more variety. This is mostly band reviews, which I always like, providing that I have a chance to see the bands discussed. But it's hard to wade through write-ups on band after local (for Lizzie) band before coming to reviews of such amazing headliners as Le Tigre or Maple (always worth the wait). The reviews are well written and have some insightful, though sarcastic, commentary on the cool scene at Oberlin. The opening interview with photographer Megan Holmes in Chicago is accompanied by grainy



reproductions that look like they could be interesting if I could just see them better. I did get some good scoop on little-known foreign bands that are really good. I am glad for that, because I might have missed some cool tunes. Finally, there is a diatribe by Josh Goodman about “emo” music and feminism, which in my opinion is the best thing about the zine. This issue of Chloe Likes Olivia would be good to have, yet okay to miss. I’ll bet Liz comes up with better stuff next time.

Lizzie Ehrenhalt, 215 W. Lorain St., Oberlin, OH 44074; email: Elizabeth.Ehrenhalt@oberlin.edu. Free.

### *Emma Goldman* (no.1, undated)

Written by a first-year graduate student at Temple University, this zine is titled as a tribute to (obviously) Emma Goldman. Rebekah offers little snippets of information about the legend and promises more next time. Interspersed throughout are photographs of Mount Moriah, a 150-year-old Philadelphia cemetery that has fallen into ruin. The photos of fallen headstones remark upon how easily we lose our history. (Rebekah was a humanities scholar for a community group working on documenting the mess and cleaning it up. More photographs appear in a smaller—and lovely and inspirational—zine called Mount Moriah Cemetery, also by Rebekah.)

Already I groove on Rebekah—she hates Bush’s policies on education and gives the ten top reasons they are stupid. Her biggest fear is four more years of “W,” and she rants quite the feminist rant about his idiocy. We like her. I also love the inner-city version of what earning a Ph.D. means (having the “Players Haters Degree”). Having one myself, I grinned, because yeah, I know some people who would fall into that category, too.

Overall this is a good first zine, and I’m looking forward to what Rebekah puts out next. You should support this one just to keep her writing. (And get Mount Moriah Cemetery too, because we should recognize the beauty of our fallen ancestors in their finality. I like that Rebekah realizes this.)

For Emma Goldman: \$1.50, or \$1.00 + two stamps. For Mount Moriah: \$.50, or \$.25 + one stamp. Rebekah Buchanan, 428 N. 13<sup>th</sup> street 5I, Philadelphia, PA 19123; email: rebekah@temple.edu; informational website (not an e-zine): www.emmagoldmanzine.com;

Rebekah’s livejournal: [www.livejournal.com/users/emmagoldman](http://www.livejournal.com/users/emmagoldman)

### *Leap* (no.1, no.2, undated)

What a charming little perzine. The first issue seems to have been done a year or so ago, while the second seems to be from the summer of 2004. This woman suffers, albeit intelligently, from many things we all go through, like the fear that we are not “doing it right” even though from all outward appearances we are. She also endures bipolar disorder, and writes with wit, irony, and familiarity about this strange and haphazard illness. I think Louise named her zine Leap because she feels like she has to leap into the light—that is, from the crazy world she could so easily stay in, to the world of pizza every Friday and clean laundry.

In Issue 2 there’s an inspirational journal of Louise’s first triathlon, as well as a touching commentary by a stepdad (Louise’s husband?) about seeing movies with an awesome 15-year-old girl. I thought both issues could have been better without the recipes or “Kibbles and Bits” (which should have stuck to the really good stuff like the link to her husband’s politically astute webzine and info about a military grrrl’s zine).

Leap’s covers are great: Issue 1’s is tissue paper with a glued-on, rubber-stamped image of a hand; Issue 2’s cover has purple handmade paper and a beaded (!) spine (both issues have hand-sewn bindings). The vote: A good little perzine that shows the age range of the Third Wave feminist. Even if this effort doesn’t directly further the field of women’s studies, it offers another eloquent voice in the wilderness. Go Louise.

\$2.00 per issue. Louise Pohle-Bjolin, 605 Greenfield Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15207; email: loupbj@yahoo.com

### *My Mother’s Fashion: Not Just for the Ladies* (undated)

This is a great set of writings based on the author’s relationship with her mother. Tara starts with a voyeuristic trip into her mother’s closet and returns occasionally to the concept of clothes and identity. I wish she’d stuck with this idea all the way through, as I think a small girl exploring and remembering her mother through the clothes she wore is a fascinating image. I would like to have seen more pieces around

this idea, but those might be a different set of writings for another time. Fashion does get mentioned often, and in interesting ways, but it is not always in keeping with the title.

Sometimes the complex relationships between mothers and daughters can only be told in vignettes, and Tara does a wonderful job of this with her short pieces. Mothers and daughters will understand and resonate with the intricacies of Tara and her mother. But while this “zine” does remark upon the experience of being female and is a fabulously sophisticated read for the literary-minded of us, it strikes me as slicker and more “McSweeney’s” (a very “hip lit mag rag” that was spawned, along with the likes of Zadie Smith and Sarah Vowell, by a glossy circle of writers out of San Francisco) than the fresh cut-and-paste grrrl zines we adore. The verdict: get if you like the more polished voice; don’t if you like it a little more raw.

\$2.50. Tara Moyle, P.O. Box 5504, Richmond VA 23220; email: [taramoyle@hotmail.com](mailto:taramoyle@hotmail.com)

*Radical Cheerleader Handbook* (no.3, undated)

An interesting idea that originated in 1996, this radical movement takes cheerleading to the streets as a form of radical resistance. As the movement has grown, it has produced handbooks (this one is the third) of cheers that have been performed all over North America by chapters of Radical Cheerleaders, who are devoted to harmless but engaging activism. Apparently there are more than thirty squads in the U.S. and Canada. Kinda cool. It’s also cool that a convention of pom-pom waving feminists decided inclusiveness was the order of the day in recruiting members and creating cheers. Always a good idea.

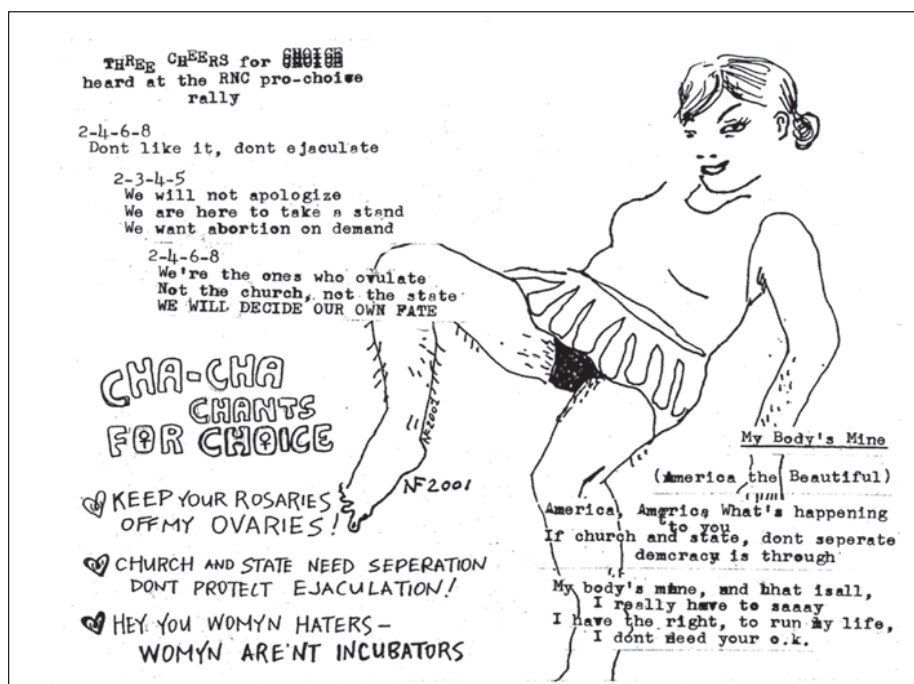
These cheers are wonderfully sincere and angry. Some are a bit vulgar, some quite violent, and some charming in their simplicity. All messages are feminist and egalitarian and promote grassroots social activism. One of my faves is a

simple count-out cheer performed at the RNC Pro-Choice rally (“2-3-4-5—We will not apologize... We are here to take a stand—we want abortion on demand... 2-4-6-8—We’re the ones who ovulate—not the church and not the state...”). I especially like that there are cheers in Spanish and French, showing that activism is not restricted to “mainstream” America. As a former cheerleader and current activist, I find this booklet energizing and a good grin. Even if you’re not familiar with cheerleading or the possibilities of this fun and creative form of expression, you can figure it out and have a great time yelling and shaking your pom-poms. Cheers for Cara, Aimee, and Coleen for getting this thing going—Sis Boom Bah, Grrrls!

\$2.00 per handbook “if you got it, \$0 if you don’t.” Cara and Aimee, Box 961, Lake Worth, FL 33460. All proceeds go to the R2K Legal Collective (<http://www.r2kphilly.org/r2klegal/>) to help the 400 people who were arrested while protesting the 2000 Republican National Convention defend themselves. (*Image below is from page 27 of handbook.*)

*Slither* (no.1, June 2003; no.2, March 2004; no.3, July 2004)

Wow. This is a great thing. Kelly Froh’s comic is well-written, well-drawn, and funny (not funny in the



sense of Archie or Bazooka Joe, but in a smart-in-the-world way). I don't understand her title (although "slither" is fun to say, very "Harry Potter"), and she never really explains it, but she doesn't need to: Issues 1, 2, and 3 could just as easily have been called "Kelly goes to art school," "Kelly at her parents' house for the summer," and "Kelly goes back to art school," respectively. I can relate to the story in Issue 1 of roommates who were always stoned, as well as the one about finally making good friends (Martin and Manfred). Issue two painfully recounts a story of misplaced love (a bit "Gilmore Girls"), yet also has one about Kelly's dad getting drunk and Kelly's humorous response to him. Issue 3 (about Year 2 of art school) has a great drawing of a friend's Halloween costume and describes Kelly's first Canadian date with a real Canadian (who turns out to be a boor to end all boors)—quite comical, as is the wryness directed at a fellow art student who is working out Oedipal issues.

These are grrrl comix at their finest. The "senior" portraits in Issue 1 are hilarious and poignant. Kelly draws young folks, then draws them again when they're older (seniors in the non-high-school sense)—clever, and a good use of her skill. I could have done without such features as "The Looks We Cultivate To Attract Our Soul Mates" in Issue 3; that one is titled well, but the humor does not present easily. The few missteps are small ones, though, and Slither is a runaway good time. Support Kelly and get her grrrl comix.

\$1.00 per issue (a bargain). Find ordering info at [http://www.221colab.org/kelly\\_froh/](http://www.221colab.org/kelly_froh/). Issue 4 is out now, too.

*You Are Here* (nos.1–5, 2003–2004)

A self-described sarcastic punk cartoonist, Jen Michaelis lives in Davis, California, creating vignettes based on her life. Some of the cartoon shorts are memoirs, like the one many of us can relate to about

the ex-boyfriend who now lives with his wife and kid while we're off being fabulously underground in some cool city. Some are about things that happen in the ridiculousness of right now. My favorite is the piece about the co-worker who advised Jen to have children because "it's just like having little cats you can dress up and everything." Jen's response is the only possible one: "...umm..." I prefer the hand-drawn cartoons to the collages, because I think they more authentically convey Jen's sense of the absurd. I also would like to see more of Jen's underlying feminist philosophy spelled out. The feminism that is exposed is subtle, yet funny, as if we all have sort of been there, and the expectation is that we all sort of understand the journey facing feminists in the world. We are lucky enough to have been sent all five issues of this zine to date. My advice: this one is a "way get."

\$2.00 per issue (there are also stickers promoting the zine). Jen Michaelis, PMB 299, 1411 W. Covell Blvd., Ste. 106, Davis, CA 95616; email: [jenm@fastmail.fm](mailto:jenm@fastmail.fm); website: [www.youareherecomic.com](http://www.youareherecomic.com)

*[M.L. Fraser lives in California, where she does not grow tomatoes, order things from L.L. Bean, or miss a chance to see her goddaughter. She is very happy reading zines in the sunlight (even in December) and wearing shorts to work, where she teaches Women's Studies and Psychology.]*



*Edited by Brenda Daly*

*NWSA Journal*, an official publication of the National Women's Studies Association, publishes the most relevant, interdisciplinary, multicultural feminist scholarship of the day. *NWSA Journal* features intriguing and important essays, balances social science and the humanities, textual criticism and oral history, and provides reviews of books, teaching materials, and films, as well as invaluable sections such as "Women Re-Collected" – progressive portraits of less recognized women in history, and "Voices from the Economic South."

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# ITEMS OF NOTE

**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: THE HEALTH SECTOR RESPONDS**, a 2003 report by Marijke Velzeboer, Mary Ellsberg, Carmen Clavel Arcas, and Claudia Garcia-Moreno, is listed as Pan American Health Organization Occasional Publication No.12. It focuses on gender-based violence and its “effects on women’s and girls’ physical and mental health,” and offers strategies for women victims of violence and for the decision-makers who deal with it. The 114-page publication (ISBN 92-75-12292-X) is available for \$22.00 from Pan American Health Organization, Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Regional Office of the World Health Organization, 525 23<sup>rd</sup> Street NW, Washington, DC, 20037; phone: (202) 974-3086; website: [www.paho.org/English/DPM/GPP/GH/VAWhealthsector.htm](http://www.paho.org/English/DPM/GPP/GH/VAWhealthsector.htm)

A new guide entitled **A CURRICULUM FOR THE TRAINING OF TRAINERS IN GENDER MAINSTREAMING** is being released by FEMNET: African Women’s Development and Communication Network. Written by Rose Chege and edited by Alpana Patel, the paperbound publication is intended as a guide to FEMNET’s “training of gender trainers” workshop and is set up accordingly, including estimated durations (from a few hours to a few days) and handouts for each section. The sections are titled “Gender and Development Concepts”; “The Social Construction of Gender”; “Gender Analysis Frameworks and Tools”; “Mainstreaming Gender in Programmes and Projects”; “Practical Training Skills”; “Plans of Action/Follow-up Activities”; and “Workshop Evaluation.” The goal of this training is to provide “participants with information and skills to plan and develop gender responsive programmes and to mainstream gender in their programmes.” The guide is in French and English (the two forty-five-page parts are bound back to back). For more information, contact FEMNET, Off Westlands Road, P.O. Box 54562, 00200 Nairobi, KENYA; phone: 254-20-3741301 / 20; fax: 254-20-3742927; email: [admin@femnet.or.ke](mailto:admin@femnet.or.ke); website: [www.femnet.or.ke](http://www.femnet.or.ke)

**BEYOND VICTIMS AND VILLAINS: ADDRESSING SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR**, a fifty-four-page report by Judith Mirsky, was published in May 2003 by Panos Reports. The report deals with sexual violence in educational institutions worldwide, touching on issues such as safety rights and proposing potential solutions. Available from Panos London, 9 White Lion Street, London N1 9PD, UK; phone: 44-207-278-1111; fax: 44-207-178-0345; email: [info@panoslondon.org.uk](mailto:info@panoslondon.org.uk); website: [www.panos.org.uk](http://www.panos.org.uk)

The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) is preparing **POLICY REPORT ON GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT: 10 YEARS AFTER BEIJING** in connection with the “Beijing Plus Ten” assessment of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995). It will be released in New York in March 2005 at the Forty-Ninth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The report focuses on four areas: “the changing political economy of development”; “livelihoods, entitlements and social policy”; “governance, democratization and civil society”; and “armed conflict, violence and social change.” For information, visit [www.unrisd.org/research/gender/report](http://www.unrisd.org/research/gender/report) or contact Caroline Danloy, Associate Information Officer, [danloy@unrisd.org](mailto:danloy@unrisd.org). For review copies of the publication (available by mid-February 2005), contact Sylvie B. Liu, Dissemination Assistant, [liu@unrisd.org](mailto:liu@unrisd.org). To contact the Institute: UNRISD, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; phone: 41 (0)22 9173020; fax: 41 (0)22 9170650; email: [info@unrisd.org](mailto:info@unrisd.org); website: [www.unrisd.org](http://www.unrisd.org)

○ Compiled by Mary Pfotenhauer



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