

# feminist collections

women's studies library resources in wisconsin  
vol. 1, no.3 june 1980

## FROM THE EDITORS \_\_\_\_\_

"What do Random House, Knopf, Ballantine Books, Modern Library, Pantheon, L.W. Singer, and Beginner Books all have in common? Answer: They are all the same company. These eight houses are the different publishing imprints owned by RCA, the \$6-billion-a-year conglomerate.... *The fact is that a handful of large companies controls almost all the books published in the United States....* As New York publishing is taken over by a core of merchandisers who simply push 'units' from printer to shredder by the fastest route possible, a need for something else is created. It is called the small, alternative, Independent Press."

As we move into the 1980s, feminist publishing is facing an era of economic retrenchment, as well as of what Celeste West terms Conglomeritis.<sup>2</sup> Feminist presses, like all alternative presses, are acutely vulnerable to recession. Their vulnerability has increased substantially with the 1979 demise of Women in Distribution (WIND), a distributor of small press feminist and lesbian books. WIND folded despite the increase in its distribution list from 30 titles in 1975 to 600 in 1979. This past fall, our office decided to create a current file of feminist press catalogs by writing to all presses listed in Joan and Chesman's *Guide to Women's Publishing* (Dustbooks, 1978).<sup>3</sup> The response to our inquiries was encouraging. However, seven envelopes were returned to us stamped "Not Deliverable." Seven presses lost in two years is matter for concern.

We see urgent need to catalyze awareness of the risks faced by our

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EDITORS: Linda Parker, Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large and Catherine Loeb, Women's Studies Specialist. Graphic Artist: Catharina Schimert.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM 112A Memorial Library 728 State St. Madison, WI

feminist presses in the next decade, and to make every attempt to insure their preservation. In line with this, our office has been investigating the possibility of convening a national conference on feminist publishing, bringing together feminist presses and bookstores, women's studies faculty and authors, librarians. Our hope would be to make possible a collective teach-in and strategy session on the future of feminist publishing, with a focus on the potential role of libraries in sustaining feminist presses.

We recently attended a Madison conference on "Alternative Literature in Libraries" sponsored by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Library School and the Alternative Acquisitions Project (Temple University Libraries). There the Alternative Acquisitions Project reported on the results of its two-year study of acquisitions practices at 316 representative college libraries across the U.S. and receptivity to alternative acquisitions. What they found "was that while only a small number (5 percent) of the respondents actively acquired any alternative and small press materials there was a great interest in the area; an interest coupled with a lack of usable information."<sup>4</sup> Over two-thirds of the librarians stated that *women* was an area in which they would like to add alternative publications.

Our plans for a conference on feminist publishing are still in the exploratory stages. We would like to take this opportunity to invite reactions and suggestions from our readers. Please write to us at: 112A Memorial Library, 728 State Street, Madison, WI 53706.

1. Celeste West, "The Literary-Industrial Complex," *Chrysalis* No. 8 (Summer 1979), pp.95-103.
2. West, p.96.
3. This file is open to the public.
4. "Report of the First Year of the Alternative Acquisitions Project, 1978-1979," *Collection Building* 2, no.2 (1980), pp.70-89.

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The American Library Association will hold its annual conference in New York City June 28-July 4. At the conference, the ALA Reference and Adult Services Division Discussion Group on Women's Materials and Women Library Users will be meeting to discuss the topic, "Information Services to Women." Panelists Jane Williamson of Women's Action Alliance, Gurley Turner of Catalyst, and Linda Parker, Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large for the University of Wisconsin System will describe their collections and their special services to women. The discussion group will meet on Monday, June 30, from 9:30 to 11 a.m. in the John Jacob Astor Salon of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

## CONTRIBUTIONS INVITED

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We invite all our readers to consider contributing to *Feminist Collections*. Articles on women's studies activities in the state, feminist collection development, issues affecting women in libraries, summaries of on-going or completed women's studies research, books reviews, letters--any of these would be welcome and would help to establish the state-wide communication network we are working toward. A copy of our editorial guidelines is available from the Office of the Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large, 112A Memorial Library, 728 State Street, Madison, WI 53706. We reserve the right to edit and/or revise manuscripts as needed, in consultation with the author.

## NETWORKING: W.E.E.C.N.

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The Women's Educational Equity Communications Network (WEECN) is a two-way communication system and information service established in 1977 and operated by the Far West Laboratory for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, U.S. Office of Education, under the auspices of the Women's Educational Equity Act. Through its communication system, WEECN facilitates contact among individuals, groups, and agencies who are working on behalf of women's educational equity; participates in national and regional conferences; and publishes *Network News and Notes*. In its role as an information service, WEECN provides information on projects, materials, and activities in women's educational equity; collects, screens, classifies, and stores resources; publishes bibliographies, information guides, directories, information packets, and an abstract journal; and conducts computer searches of educational data bases. WEECN's information resources cover all educational levels from pre-school through reentry and continuing education. Its services are available to teachers, administrators, counselors, curriculum specialists, preservice or inservice trainers, researchers, students, parents, librarians, and concerned citizens. WEECN's past publications have included:

- \* *Resources in Women's Educational Equity*. v.1, 1977-
- \* Annotated bibliographies on women's educational equity, reentry women, nonsexist career counseling, Hispanic women and education, and rural women and education.
- \* "Resource roundup" bibliographies on black women and education, older women, disabled women, and sports.
- \* Information packets on women and mathematics, women and vocational education, women and science, and Title IX.

For additional information, write: Matilda Butler, Director, WEECN, Far West Laboratory, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103; or call: (415) 565-3032.

## MEDIA: WHERE ARE THE WOMEN? ---

*Where Are the Women? Resources for Women's Studies* is the name of a series of four slide/tape presentations produced in 1979 by Esther Stineman, former Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large, in collaboration with Joseph Hagaman, Instructional Development Consultant at UW-Stout. The slide/tape modules provide bibliographic instruction in the following areas: 1. *Overview* (time: 20'50"); 2. *Literature and the Arts* (22'26"); 3. *History* (12'57"); and 4. *Social Sciences* (17'29"). Intended for a broad audience--undergraduates, librarians, college and university administrators, faculty, women's studies programs, community women's groups--the presentations give a survey of book, periodical and other resources available for the study of feminist issues, suggest research strategies appropriate to feminist interdisciplinary research, and direct the viewer to specific locations in the UW System where resources may be found. The presentations are consistently pleasing to look at and listen to. The color slides include pictures of artistic works, new feminist books and periodicals, and women's studies classes, as well as of card catalogs and other library basics. Each module is accompanied by its own bibliography detailing all resources visually represented in the slide/tape, a complete script, and instructions for use of the presentations. Wisconsin and out-of-state borrowers may obtain the slide/tape modules from:

Karrmann Library  
University of Wisconsin-Platteville  
Platteville, WI 53818  
Attention: Polly Myers, Interlibrary Loan  
Phone: (608) 342-1648

Teachers planning to use any of the slide/tapes in their fall 1980 courses are advised to reserve them well in advance. For more information, or sample copies of the slide/tape bibliographies, contact: Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large, 112A Memorial Library, 728 State Street, Madison, WI 53706.

## PERIODICAL NOTES ---

With this issue of *Feminist Collections*, we begin a new column, "Periodical Notes." This column will provide reviews of new feminist periodicals as they surface, call attention to recent special issues of periodicals, and note the publication of substantive articles or bibliographic essays of particular importance. In this first column, we look at special issues on lesbian history, black women, women and education, occupational safety, and sexuality, as well as at a bibliographic essay on feminist theater.

*Frontiers* v.IV, no.3 (Fall 1979): "Lesbian History Issue." Guest Editor: Judith Schwarz. Available from: *Frontiers*, Women Studies Program, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado 80309. Subscriptions (3 issues): \$11 (individuals); \$18 (institutions). Single copies: \$3.75 (indiv.); \$6 (inst.).

With this issue, *Frontiers* has made a significant contribution to the

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development of the new field of lesbian history. Judith Schwarz's "Questionnaire on Issues in Lesbian History" prints the responses of 24 scholars and writers (including Adrienne Rich, Elsa Gidlow, Barbara Grier, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Barbara Smith, and the Buffalo Lesbian Oral History Project) to questions about their current projects in lesbian history, their working definition of a lesbian, sources for lesbian history, censorship and self-censorship, and funding of projects. Many of these same themes are further developed in the 14 other papers, which include: biographical essays; papers on lesbian biographical method; writing by Jan Clausen; a vignette from "An Oral Herstory of Lesbianism" (an experimental theater art work); a critical piece on Djuna Barnes's *Ladies Almanack* (by Susan Sniader Lanser, of UW-Madison Women's Studies); a brief memoir by Elsa Gidlow; and articles on the ideology of companionate marriage and the view of lesbianism within it, on power relations in contemporary lesbian-feminist communities, and on the submersion of lesbian history. Finally, there is a short bibliographic essay on lesbianism and American History.

*Conditions: Five; The Black Women's Issue.* Co-edited by Lorraine Bethel and Barbara Smith. Available from: *Conditions*, P.O. Box 56, Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11215. Subscriptions (3 issues): \$8.00 (indiv.); \$6.00 (hardship rate); \$15.00 (inst.). Single issue: \$3.00.

Barbara Smith and Lorraine Bethel are guest editors of this special issue of *Conditions*, a lesbian/feminist journal of poetry, short fiction, drama, and feature articles. Smith and Bethel worked on the project for over a year, going to great lengths to contact as many black writers as possible. The issue they produced is a landmark in feminist publishing, at once challenging the invisibility of black feminist and lesbian writers in the feminist press, and anti-feminism and homophobia in the black community. Gloria Hull, Lorraine Bethel, Becky Birtha, Pat Parker, Audre Lorde, Barbara Smith, and Ann Allen Shockley are among the recognized writers represented in this collection of poetry, prose poems, fiction, autobiographical fiction, essays, song lyrics, and book reviews. Other contributors are being published here for the first time. Topics addressed by the essays are the life and poetry of Angelina Weld Grimké, Toni Morrison's fiction, black feminist therapy, black feminism, and an overview of the black lesbian in American literature.

*Harvard Educational Review* v.49, no.4 (1979) and v.50, no.1 (1980): "Women and Education" Parts I and II. Available from: HER Business Office, Longfellow Hall, 13 Appian Way, Cambridge, MA 02138. Subscriptions (4 issues): \$17 (indiv.); \$23 (inst.). Single issue: \$5 (indiv.); \$6 (inst.).

Topics covered in these two special issues on women and education include: sex differences in educational attainment; women in school administration; sexism in the university; success anxiety in women; women and mathematics; feminist medical education; feminist criticism of the social sciences; and the employment and education of Mexican-American women. The two issues also include essay reviews and book reviews.

*Radical History Review* 20 (Spring/Summer 1979): "Sexuality in History." Available from: MARHO: The Radical Historians' Organization, John Jay College,

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445 West 59th St., New York, N.Y. 10019. Subscriptions (3 issues): \$12.50 (indiv.), \$9 (unemployed); \$20 (inst.). Single issue: \$3.50.

This issue represents a creative foray into a field "still in process of construction"--sexuality in history. In the first section, a number of authors critically evaluate recent historical treatments of women's oppression ("victimization" theories), of the family (Lawrence Stone's *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*), of sexual ideology in fascist Germany, and of lesbianism and homosexuality. Blanche Wiesen Cook's review of the recent *Miss Marks and Miss Woolley* by Anna Mary Wells is a particularly clear statement about "The Historical Denial of Lesbianism," and addresses issues also raised by the *Frontiers* special issue on lesbian history. The remainder of the *Radical History Review* issue is divided between discussions of sources for the study of sexuality in history (including Nancy Sahli's essay describing documents on 19th- and 20th-century American sexuality and Liz Phillips' piece on the Feminist Press series "Women's Lives/Women's Work"), and a series of historical studies utilizing some of the new perspectives of the field. Topics for these studies include mass market romances for women, homosexual identity, sexuality and women's status in the Oneida Community, and sociobiology and capitalist patriarchy. The forthcoming (Summer 1980) issue of *Signs* will also focus on sexuality, presenting articles by Irene Diamond on pornography, Adrienne Rich on lesbianism and compulsory heterosexuality, and Sheila Rothman on abortion.

*Feminist Studies* v.5, no.2 (Summer 1979): "Workers, Reproductive Hazards, and the Politics of Protection." Available from: Managing Editor, *Feminist Studies*, Women's Studies Program, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742. Subscriptions (3 issues): \$10 (indiv.); \$16 (inst.). Single issue: \$4 (indiv.); \$6 (inst.).

The papers in this special issue raise fascinating theoretical and political questions about women's complex relationship to production and reproduction in contemporary U.S. society. Rosalind Petchesky points out in her introduction that reproductive hazards of the workplace represent both a straightforward and serious health issue, demanding immediate action for the protection of both women and men workers, and also a political issue concerning challenges to women's rights to work and bear children. Ann Corinne Hill presents a legal case history of protection of women workers; Vilma R. Hunt summarizes the history of hazards to women workers; Carolyn Bell discusses implementation of safety and health regulations for women; Michael J. Wright indicts discriminatory applications of protection from reproductive hazards; and Wendy Chavkin presents a review essay and annotated bibliography on reproductive hazards. Readers with a continuing interest in this topic will want to be aware of the Women's Occupational Health Resource Center (directed by Jeanne M. Stellman, author of *Women's Work, Women's Health* [1977]). Address: Columbia University School of Public Health, 60 Haven Ave., B-1, New York, N.Y. 10032.

Curb, Rosemary, et al. "Catalog of Feminist Theater" (Parts I and II), *Chrysalis: A Magazine of Women's Culture*: no.10, pp.51-75. Available from: 1052 W. 6th St. #330, Los Angeles, CA 90017. Subscriptions (4 issues): \$15. Single issue: \$4.50.

In the last issue of *Feminist Collections* we mentioned the regular

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*Chrysalis* feature on feminist publishing. The current issue's "Catalog of Feminist Theater" is a first--and a must, too, for anyone interested in this under-documented and under-researched field. Part I is introduced by Phyllis Mael's brief essay on the seeming absence of women from drama as a genre and the explosion of feminist drama in the last two decades. This is followed by an annotated bibliography of contemporary drama by women, including anthologies, published plays, plays which have been produced but remain unpublished, and alternative theater productions. The authors note that hundreds more might have been included in an exhaustive list. "Sources for Additional Information on Plays and Playwrights" concludes Part I. In Part II, Rosemary Curb reviews the first decade of feminist theater in the U.S., appending a list of recently published articles on feminist theater. Curb's article is followed by an annotated list of feminist theaters, and a brief listing of theaters dormant for a year or more. This catalog is an indispensable reference source on feminist drama.

-- C.L.

## NEWS FROM U.W.-MADISON

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The Women's Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is now offering an undergraduate Certificate in women's studies. Any student, including graduate students and special students, is eligible for the Certificate Program. Response has been very strong to the Certificate Program in its first year. There are many students who have enjoyed taking as many women's studies courses as possible and want a Certificate registered on their transcript. In addition, many Certificate students have combined their knowledge in and commitment to women's studies with the expertise represented by their majors. Many plan a career which will incorporate women's studies into their future fields--such as a law degree with an emphasis in sex discrimination; or a clinical psychology degree with a concentration on women and gender issues; or a health-related degree with a focus on women's health issues.

The Certificate requires 15 credits in women's studies. Students must meet with the Certificate Advisor to determine if they have completed the following requirements for Certificate courses:

- (1) 15 credits of coursework in women's studies.
- (2) at least 12 credits of Women's Studies Program courses.
- (3) at least three humanities credits, three social studies credits, and three natural science credits in the Certificate courses.
- (4) no more than six credits at the elementary level.
- (5) grade point average for Certificate courses at least 2.75.

For more information, call (608) 263-4703 or write 209 N. Brooks Street, Madison, WI 53706.

## BOOK REVIEW

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Terris, Virginia R. *Woman in America: A Guide to Information Sources*. Detroit: Gale Research, 1980. \$26.00. ISBN 0-8103-1268-9. LC 73-17564. (American studies information Guide Series, v.7) 520p.

With 2,495 entries, separate author, title, and subject indexes, and a broad subject focus, this partially annotated bibliography would seem at first glance to be a major new contribution to women's studies bibliography. Unfortunately, it fails to live up to this expectation. We review it here, nonetheless, to let our readers know what usefulness it may have, as well as to warn them of its considerable weaknesses.

Terris sees her intended audience as both "the skilled researcher and...those who are only beginning to familiarize themselves with the subject." However, if a novice is the targeted user, clear explanations are needed on how to use the bibliography, on its scope, and on criteria Terris used for selection of material. Terris fulfills none of these requirements. Most serious among these oversights is the lack of information on how to use the book -- how the book is structured, how to interpret the categories into which the book is divided and the amount of overlap among the categories, how the cross-references are set up, how to use the indexes, and how to distinguish between primary and secondary materials.

Chapter 1, "Introduction to Sources," will not serve as the roadmap to the literature needed by users. This introduction lists only the traditional periodical indexes and bibliographies whose inadequate coverage of women and feminist topics created the need for specialized women's studies bibliographies in the first place. Are these the main sources used by the author to compile her 500+ page bibliography? Terris gives us no clues; she doesn't state why this section is included, nor does she relate it to the other sections listing feminist sources.

Terris also fails to give sufficient priority to the accessibility of sources. She cites many pamphlets and mimeographed papers unavailable to the average user, while omitting dissertations which can be acquired by libraries from University Microfilms in the majority of cases.

Inadequate subject indexing further hampers efficient retrieval of information from this book. For example, I noticed that a work on the image of women in literature was listed in the main text under the category, "Role, Image, Status" -- with no cross reference to the literature section and no listing in the subject index under "Literature." Furthermore, Terris includes no cross references from the subject heading "Literature" back to "Image" or "Fiction."

Most subjects are not treated in any depth. In the "Education" section, for example, the ERIC system is briefly mentioned, but WEECN (Women's Educational Equity Communications Network; see article page three) is not. The bibliography is only selectively annotated, and annotations are often so brief as to convey nothing of substance about the work in question.

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Despite these major weaknesses, a library may still want to purchase *Woman in America*. Broad in scope (from suffrage, religion, and mental health, to literature and dance), it can give the student an idea of the range of possible topics for a term paper. A graduate student may find ephemera not mentioned in other sources. The majority of books cited should be available in medium to large size libraries. *Woman in America* will be most appropriate for the undergraduate; an advanced user will certainly have to consult additional sources -- e.g., Stineman's *Women's Studies; A Recommended Core Bibliography* (Libraries Unlimited, 1979), Krichmar's *The Women's Movement in the Seventies* and *The Women's Rights Movement in the United States, 1848-1970* (Scarecrow Press, 1977 and 1972), Haber's *Women in America: A Guide to Books, 1963-1975* (G.K. Hall, 1978) or Hughes's *The Sexual Barrier: Legal, Medical, Economic, and Social Aspects of Sex Discrimination* (Hughes Press, 1977).

Recommended for comprehensive collections in women's studies.

--L.P.