

# feminist collections

women's studies library resources in wisconsin  
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## FROM THE EDITORS

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"INCREASING THE AVAILABILITY OF WRITING BY WOMEN WHOSE VOICES TRADITIONALLY HAVE BEEN SUPPRESSED"

(--subtitle of workshop on "Racism and Classism in Feminist Periodicals, Bookstores, and Publishing Organizations" at the Women in Print Conference, Washington, D.C., October 1981)

In these times of economic crisis and political backlash, one fears the potential of increasing fragmentation and alienation among the different peoples of our nation. It is all the more heartening, then, to observe path-breaking new developments within the women's movement: women of different races, cultures, sexualities, and classes coming together in an unprecedented way to examine the differences among us and the possibilities for greater unity. Continuing to articulate their own feminisms, women of color--black, hispanic, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific American women--have begun to explore what they might learn from each other and how they might strengthen one another. Heterosexual and lesbian feminists are reopening discussion of the variety and meanings of women's sexuality. Disabled women are attempting to educate able-bodied women about the realities and politics of disability.

These new discussions and tentative coalitions have helped spark the recent explosion of exciting feminist publishing and archiving ventures--creating "an increased availability of writings by women whose voices traditionally have been suppressed." A few examples will suffice. Persephone Press has recently published anthologies of lesbian poetry and fiction (with good representation from women of color), the landmark collection This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color, and Michelle Cliff's Claiming an Identity They Taught Me to Despise. They will soon add to their impressive publication record an anthology of writings by Jewish lesbians. Naiad Press made available in the last year a unique bibliography on black lesbians. All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave--a text for black women's studies--is finally out from The Feminist Press. In 1980, the University of California's Chicano Studies Research Center published Mexican Women in the United States: Struggles Past and Present. Off our backs recently produced an impressive special issue on women and disability. And this past fall saw the birth of Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press and the Third World Women's Archives, which--with enough support--will significantly amplify the voices of nonwhite women in our society.

Feminist Collections has a continuing commitment to increasing the visibility of these resources. In volume 2, number 1, we reported on the Lesbian Periodicals Index, and in volume 2, number 4, we described the scope and mission of New York's Lesbian Herstory Archives. In our Fall 1981 issue, we published an extensive review of new sources in lesbian studies by Evelyn Beck of the UW-Madison. In this issue, we are pleased to be publishing Claudia Card's report on her searches for pre-1940 lesbian materials, Nellie McKay's review of books by and/or about black women, 1970-1981 (Part I), and Pat Hansen's article on The Naiad Press. In future issues, we will be publishing Part II

of Nellie McKay's review, an article on the private archives of Naiad Press's Barbara Grier, a descriptive account of archival sources for the study of Winnebago women, and a review of the literature on Appalachian women. We welcome your comments on these reviews and articles, and invite your suggestions for future articles.

-- C.L.

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# FEMINIST PUBLISHING

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## THE NAIAD PRESS

"One part of our philosophy," declared Barbara Grier of the Naiad Press, "is bringing joy. I have always thought that being Lesbian was being born blessed. It is something for which I am always humbly grateful and glad. The only thing that stops me from turning cartwheels down the street is the fear of being hauled away and locked up." Barbara punctuated this last remark with a laugh. "The Naiad Press hopes to bring as much joy into the lives of Lesbians as we possibly can through our books. All our stories are stories about happy, successful people that provide positive reinforcement to the Lesbian lifestyle."

The Naiad Press began in 1973 as a woman identified, Lesbian owned business, publishing Lesbian fiction. In the preceding year, 1972, the Lesbian magazine, The Ladder, which had been in existence for sixteen years, failed. Barbara Grier had worked on The Ladder all of those sixteen years, and had served as editor and publisher the last four. Two women backers of The Ladder approached Barbara and Donna J. McBride with the idea of starting a Lesbian publishing company. Both backers were retired and on disability and offered their disability income to start Naiad.

One huge advantage Naiad had in the beginning was access to an extensive distribution network, The Ladder's mailing list. The list started with 3,000 names, grew to 13,000 and last year, through a "cleaning process" of sending out a first class mailing which returned all undeliverable letters, the list shrunk down to just under 10,000 solid entries.

In 1974 Naiad came out with its first book, The Latecomer by Sarah Aldridge. In 1975 they came out with two titles, including another Aldridge, Tottie. Now they have twenty titles, and by the end of 1981 they will have twenty-four.

In the very beginning, Naiad made the decision to recycle its profits back into the production of more books. The women at the Press also found it necessary to expand the scope of their subject matter. These were important publishing decisions requiring that they keep their full time jobs.

"If we had decided to publish fewer titles and go for the best seller," Barbara explained, "we could've begun to support ourselves long ago. But it became apparent that Lesbian fiction was not going to fulfill all of our needs, so we branched out into other areas of Lesbian literature."

One area includes writings of historical importance, such as Lesbian/Feminism in Turn-of-the-Century Germany by Lillian Faderman and Brigitte Eriksson. Naiad also saw the opportunity to preserve a portion of the writings of Renée Vivien, a member of the famous Natalie Barney circle, a lover of Barney, and one of the best lyric poets during the turn of the century. Naiad published translations of A Woman Appeared to Me and At the Sweet Hour of Hand-in-Hand, as well as The Muse of The Violets, which is a selection of poetry from each of Vivien's books of poetry.

"It would be a shame," reflected Barbara, "to lose such beautiful lyric poetry. But, of course, poetry has never been much of a money maker. However," she was quick to add, "we have never had an unsuccessful book. No book has sold less than 4,000 copies and three of our titles have sold over 10,000 copies."

Naiad has made some other important but unusual publishing decisions. For instance, all of their books are in print and remain in print unless an author requests otherwise. This is a benefit to the author, who can continue to receive royalties, as well as to the ever growing community which can continue to have access to Naiad's books. Of course, from a business stand-point, this means more of Naiad's money goes into paper, printing and ink than into anyone's pocketbook.

Another singular publishing decision on Naiad's part was to use nothing but women and women owned businesses in the production of their books. "We could publish our books cheaper by using straight male-owned presses, but this would ultimately be defeating our purpose. One of our major goals is to free Lesbians from the patriarchy, and that includes financially. Therefore, although we at the Press are not supported by Naiad, we in turn directly support thirteen women who produce our books. Catherine Nicholson and Harriet Desmoines, founders of Sinister Wisdom, and the women of Duck Type, who are part of the Inciter collective, do our typesetting. Iowa City Women's Press does our printing, and A Find Bind does our binding." Barbara goes on to say, "We are also one of the first publishers to pay a percentage of profits to a book illustrator."

Another major publishing decision concerns authors. Unlike many large publishing companies, Naiad treats their authors as resources to be nurtured, not exploited. "We regularly, and with joy," commented Barbara, "pay royalties to our authors."

When the women of Naiad find themselves in a position where they cannot afford to publish a book, they distribute it. Such is the case with Lesbian Primer by Liz Diamond, Eye to Eye by JEB, The Notebooks That Emma Gave Me by Kady Van Deurs, The Lesbian Path, edited by Margart Cruikshank, Something Not Yet Ended by Jane Gapen and Remembering Who We Are by Barbara Deming.

"This way," Barbara says, "we appeal to a wider audience and keep the money in the community. We help women support themselves and others. For several thousand years we have been feeding others. Now it's time to feed ourselves."

This year has been busy for Naiad. They have been publishing one book every six weeks, a phenomenal schedule for a small press, especially if you consider a few women do all the work, on a part-time basis. So far this year they have published Jane Rules' Outlander, Tee Corinne's Labiaflowers, Victoria Ramstetter's The Marquise and the Novice and JR Roberts' Black Lesbians: An Annotated Bibliography. Prism by Valerie Taylor will be in the stores by July, Lesbian Writer: Collected Work of Claudia Scott, edited by Frances Hanckel and Susan Windle by August, Anna's Country by Elizabeth Lang by September, and a much expanded and revised third edition of The Lesbian in Literature by Barbara Grier herself, is due out in October.

For 1982 Naiad will bring out their fifth Sarah Aldridge title, The Nesting Place. They will also publish To the Cleveland Station, by Carol Ann Douglas who is a D.C. area resident and a member of the off our backs collective. Faultline by Shelia Ortiz Taylor will also appear in 1982, as well as one or two Black Lesbian anthologies or collections of work.

1982 may also be the year Naiad starts paying its editorial staff. "I knew the time had come," mused Barbara, "when, instead of a handful of letters in the P.O. box there was a note to go to the window, where they handed me a mail bag full of letters." So Barbara will start phasing out her "other job" to start working on Naiad full time. "I just know if I could have all my energy to give to this, that there is no limit to what we could do."

"I think," Barbara concluded, "that we, Lesbians, can change the world. We have to, to survive."

The Naiad Press is located in Tallahassee, Florida. For more information write The Naiad Press, Inc., P.O. Box 10543, Tallahassee FL 32302, or call (904) 539-9322.

-- Pat Hansen

[Pat Hansen is a D.C. area freelance media Jill-of-all-trades. Besides writing, she has recently formed her own company, Crone Productions, Inc. She is working towards making the film version of Sally Gearhart's The Wanderground. This article first appeared in slightly different form in the Washington Blade, v.12, no.14, July 10, 1981.]

## CHINESE WOMEN LIBRARY WORKERS \_\_\_\_\_

On June 30, 1981, I had the opportunity to meet with ten Chinese women library workers, as part of a month-long tour of the People's Republic of China. The two-hour meeting (the Chinese term translates literally as "Tea and Talk Gathering") took place in the city of Nanjing, Jiang Su Province. I had submitted to the women the following list of questions for discussion:

- I. Are the salaries of women library workers commensurate with those of men library workers in China?
- II. What is the sex ratio in key library administrative positions?
- III. Are women treated equally in promotions, salary increases, etc.?
- IV. Are there any provisions at the national level insuring equal treatment of women?
- V. Is women's studies being established as an academic discipline? Are materials about women--especially historical documents--systematically collected and preserved?

The women were at first quite reticent and formal, but they soon relaxed and opened up. They all expressed surprise at questions I and III since they take equality so much for granted. They could not understand, for instance, why a woman library director should not be paid the same as a man library director. Although the search and screen process is controlled by the library administration, library workers' input is always sought when a vacancy occurs. For example, a Nanjing Provincial Library director's position was filled by a woman from within after feedback was sought from the grassroots by the administration. The women did not feel that sex mattered at all in recruitment: ability, service attitude, experience, and organization acumen are the desired qualities for a leadership position.

The women estimated that there are two women to every three men administrators in key positions. They attributed this to the fact that the liberation of women only began with the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949. They were confident that equalization would come soon since women have continued to gain ground and show interest in furthering themselves in education. One woman library director in the group stated that women are specifically encouraged to take advantage of continuing education opportunities: she herself had just sent a woman to the University of Beijing (Peking) to study foreign languages.

They told me with considerable glee that they believe women in China are treated more than equally by the law. For example, women are entitled to three months' maternity leave with pay and up to a year if they are in bad health. In addition, mothers are allowed an hour off both in the morning and the afternoon for nursing during a baby's first year. Library administrations are also instructed to reduce a pregnant worker's load during the later months of her term. Laughter broke out when they told me that on International Women's Day they all had half a day off, while the men had to hold down the fort!

Women's Bureaus have been established at local, provincial, and national levels. These Bureaus deal with women's affairs and coordinate women's activities; they also collect and disseminate documents on women. They have published documentaries and collections of essays on and about women in history. Special illustrative and commemorative studies of famous Chinese women are issued periodically. The women librarians with whom I met felt they did not need to treat women's studies as a separate discipline to stimulate research and study. One of the women--a science librarian--pointed out to underscore this point that women astronomers were given equal attention in an astronomy encyclopedia. The women also mentioned that journals such as Chinese Women have been published for years.

The "Tea and Talk Gathering" ended very amicably with Polaroid picture-taking. The Chinese women librarians seemed to find our exchange as fruitful as I did.

-- report filed by  
Tina C. Fu

[Tina C. Fu is Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and has served as the Assistant Director for Public Services in the University library since 1977. She has served as a member of the Advisory Panel for the Women's Studies Librarian-at-Large since 1980.]



## DATABASE SERVICE UPDATE

In the last column (FC, vol.3, no.1, p.8), I noted the tremendous time-saving advantage of database searching over manually searching the printed resources. In this column, I will discuss some other criteria used by database librarians in helping patrons decide whether to invest in a database search.

Complexity of topic. Searching the printed resources for citations on complex topics with two or more variables can be difficult or even impossible. Since women's studies is an interdisciplinary field, a database search often is the only way to pinpoint the most relevant articles. The sample search on "the psychological effects on girls of stereotyping in children's literature," published in my last column, illustrates the focusing power of online searching for multivariate topics. The sample search topic was broken down into four component search terms: psychological effects; girls; stereotyping; and children's literature. There were literally thousands of articles retrieved for each concept, so that manually noting and combining all of the citations would have been next to impossible. The computer, however, was able to narrow the list quickly to a manageable number of highly relevant citations.

Availability of subject indexing. Subject indexing is not provided for some printed resources, such as Management Contents. To search manually the topic of "management perceptions of affirmative action," one would have to page through the entire publication. Subject indexing is provided, however, for the online version, MANAGEMENT CONTENTS.\*

Adequacy of subject indexing. Even with subject indexing available, retrieval of women's studies materials can be very difficult for two additional reasons: 1) indexing of women's materials often is inadequate; 2) an index, by definition, can provide only a planned, limited number of access points. Database searching, however, can circumvent these two problems by a method known as "free-text searching." In free-text searching, virtually all words in the online information can become access points. Free-text searching does not rely merely on assigned subject headings (which can be arbitrary), but also uses the actual words appearing in the title and abstract of the material. So, for example, the specific concept of "natural childbirth" is not directly indexed in Social Sciences Citation Index or in the ERIC resources -- printed or online -- but the concept still can be searched online, using the free-text method in which all words are scanned.

Availability of printed resources. There are a few resources which are available only in an online format, such as the massive database produced by the National Institute of Mental Health. Also, some libraries do not subscribe to all printed resources.

\*Capitalized titles indicate online rather than printed resources.

Convenience, scope and timeliness. Some online resources are more convenient to use than are their printed equivalents, e.g., THE MAGAZINE INDEX and THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER INDEX. Sometimes the online version of an index is significantly more comprehensive than is its printed counterpart. MEDLARS, for instance, contains not only Index Medicus but other resources such as the International Nursing Index, Cancerlist and Family Medicine Literature Index. MEDLARS also is more current, with citations added to the online database at least one month prior to the time that its printed counterparts arrive at the library.

A database search may not be necessary for a researcher with a very general topic or for one whose research can be handled with a few easily located sources. Database searching, of course, cannot produce citations if nothing has been published yet on a certain topic -- although some researchers hope that nothing has been published and try to confirm this with a database search.

In most cases, the decision of whether to request a database search also must include weighing available time against available funds. The researcher with enough time to dig through the printed sources may not need a database search, if materials are easy to find. But if a topic is difficult to search (because of complexity, inadequate indexing, etc.), a database search can be a very worthwhile investment.

-- Carolyn Platt

## PERIODICAL NOTES

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In addition to the usual sections on new periodicals and special issues of periodicals, this issue's column adds three titles to the list of feminist review media published in the Summer 1981 issue of Feminist Collections.

-- C.L.

### New Periodicals

The Blatant Image. 1981- . Annual. Subscriptions: \$10; \$16 (inst.).  
Subscription address: 2000 King Mt. Trail, Sunny Valley, OR 97497. (Reviewed in Bread & Roses Winter 1982)

This nearly 100-page publication prints the varied work of women photographers, along with essays on 19th-century women photographers, black women in film, lesbian filmmaking, legal aspects of photography, and resources and uses for photographs.

Diplomat Magazine. 1980- . Monthly. Subscriptions: \$9 (indiv.); \$15 (inst.).  
Subscription address: 4867 N. Winthrop, Chicago, IL 60640. (Issue examined: v.1, issue 9 [1981])

The Diplomat is published by and for the Third World Lesbian/Gay community. Volume 1, issue 9 has short articles on sex gender identity; negative images

of the Third World community in the media; why Afro-Americans should oppose paying taxes destined for the military; the Second Annual Lesbian and Gay Film Festival; and the Second National Third World Lesbian and Gay Conference.

FAMW [Federation of African Media Women] Newsletter. October 1981-  
Quarterly. Subscription address: Editorial Office, Interim General Secretary:  
ZIANA, P.O. Box 8166, Causeway, Salisbury, Zimbabwe. (Reviewed in Media Report  
to Women v.10, no.2, Feb. 1, 1982)

The Federation of African Media Women was formed during the African Women Features Service workshop held in Zimbabwe in October 1981, with the goal of "increas[ing] the flow of news and information on women in society, . . . promot[ing] professional excellence on the part of women communicators and . . . monitor[ing] the media's response to women concerns and the response of women to media . . . ." The first issue of the newsletter had articles on the Federation and on media and women in Kenya, site of the 1985 UN World Conference of Women.

Spirale: A Woman's Art and Culture Quarterly. Summer 1981- . Subscription address: 359 Dundas St., London, Ontario N6B 1V5 Canada. (Reviewed in Resources for Feminist Research November 1981)

First issue "contains interviews with Heather Bishop and Marion Barling, a bulletin board, listing of resources in Canada and internationally in [sic] women and the arts, a description of the Womanspirit Art Research and Resource Centre (London, Ontario), an excerpt from Sasha McInnes-Hayman's forthcoming report on 'Women in the Visual and Literary Arts in Canada', and an account of the planning for Festival '82, a celebration of women in the arts in Canada." The quarterly intends to offer a feminist perspective on the art and culture of Canadian women.

### Special Issues

Counseling and Values v.26, no.2, February 1982: "Values Issues in Counseling Women." Guest Editor: Mary Jo Meadow. Available from: Subscriptions Manager, APGA, Two Skyline Place, Suite 400, 5203 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church VA 22041. Subscriptions: \$10. Single copy: \$3. (Issue examined)

Among the articles: "'True Womanhood' and Women's Victimization" (Mary Jo Meadow); "Women at Midlife" (Rachel Siegel); "Principles of Practice for Treating Older Women" (Eloise Rathbone-McCuan, et al.); "Counseling Implications of the Housewife Role" (Karen Smith Wampler); "The Working Woman and Self-Concept: A Growing Ambivalence" (Jean Wellington).

Genesis 2 March 1981: special issue on Jewish women. Available from: 233 Bay State Rd., Boston MA 02215. Subscriptions: \$8. (Cited in Lilith issue #8, 1981)

Includes articles on the 1909 New York City shirtwaist-makers' strike, Sephardic women, the Israeli feminist movement, the concerns of Jewish lesbians, Jewish feminist spirituality, and an interview with Lilith editor/publisher Susan Weidman Schneider.

Hysteria: A Feminist Magazine from Southwestern Ontario Spring 1982: "Sexuality." Available from: Box 2481, Station B, Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6M3, Canada. Single copy: \$2.50; \$4.50 outside Canada. (Publisher's flyer)

Topics include: bisexuality, multiple relationships, sexuality for the disabled, life after hysterectomy. Articles, fiction, poetry, reviews.

Magazine v.12, no.2, Fall 1981: "Southern California Women Writers." Editors: Alexandra Garrett and Joeclyn Fisher. Available from: Beyond Baroque Foundation, P.O. Box 806, Venice CA 90291. Single copy: \$1. (Issue examined; reviewed in Small Press Review February 1982, pp.9-10)

Poetry and fiction by Southern California women writers. Poets include Terry Hunter, Laurie Anne Fox, Martha Ronk Lifson, Nancy Hall, and Rosella Pace. Fiction writers are Donna Beckman, Nancy Bird, Danell Jones, Saralyn Daly, and Cris Mazza.

### Feminist Review Media

The Lammas Little Review. v.2, no.1, May 1981- . (Formerly From Lammas: The Little Review 1978-1979) Quarterly. Subscriptions: \$4. Available from: Lammas, 321 Seventh St., S.E., Washington DC 20003. Editor: Susanna J. Sturgis. (Issues examined: v.2, no.1, May 1981; v.2, no.2, August 1981; v.2, no.3, November 1981)

Lammas is a Washington, D.C., women's bookstore. The Lammas Little Review offers readers and bookstore browsers a guided tour of recent feminist books, journals, and records. Around 13 reviews averaging 400 words in length appear in each attractively produced issue. Directed to a general feminist audience, the reviews are well-written, interesting and to the point. Among works recently reviewed: Lifetime Guarantee (Alice Bloch); Common Lives/Lesbian Lives (new periodical); XXAlix (record by Alix Dobkin); This Bridge Called My Back (Cherrié Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa); Surpassing the Love of Men (Lillian Faderman). Small press and trade publications are reviewed in approximately equal number. Editor Susanna Sturgis writes a substantial number of the reviews, but is clearly eager to receive more reader contributions.

The Radical Reviewer. 3/year. Subscriptions: \$5 (indiv.); \$10 (Inst.); \$50 (sustainer). Subscription address: P.O. Box 24953, Station C, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Editors: Barbara Herringer; Cy-Thea Sand. (Issue examined: issue 5, Winter 1981-82)

The Radical Reviewer sees itself as part of the feminist print movement, with a Canadian lesbian/feminist identity. In issue 5 (16 pages, newspaper format), 12 books (5 small press, 7 trade) and 4 journals are reviewed. Also included in this issue are some poems, a report on a conference on feminist literary criticism, and an interview with Mary Meigs, author of Lily Briscoe: A Self-Portrait (Talonbooks). Excellent reviews (average: 500 words) discuss both new and recent works--e.g., The Marquise and the Novice by Victoria Ramstetter (Naiad Press, 1981); Periods of Stress by Irena Klepfisz (Out & Out Books, 1977). Contributors include poets, activists, academics.





































