

# feminist collections

women's studies library resources in wisconsin  
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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM 112A Memorial Library 728 State St. Madison, WI

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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.

WLW Journal: News, Views, Reviews for Women and Libraries. Quarterly.  
Subscriptions: \$12; \$15 (includes membership in Women Library Workers).  
Sample issue: \$2. Subscription address: WLW, P.O. Box 9052, Berkeley CA  
94709. Editor: Carol Starr. (Current issues examined)

WLW Journal is a quarterly magazine (slick format) of Women Library Workers, "a membership organization working to end discrimination against women in libraries and librarianship." (See the article by Nancy McClements in the Winter 1982 issue of FC for a report on the Madison and Wisconsin WLW chapters.) The largest portion of each 20-35 page issue is devoted to "Media Review," with separate sections on recent books, periodicals, films, records, and other resources. Reviews average 150-300 words, with a good mix of small press and trade publications among the books. Records are from women's music labels. As the subtitle indicates, WLWJ includes "news and views" in addition to reviews--e.g., reports on conferences, letters to the editor, personal statements on work--as well as a satiric column entitled "Medea Media's Hotterline." While the concerns of women library workers are evident throughout, WLWJ is a valuable reviewing source for a general feminist audience.

## ITEMS OF NOTE

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### "BY AND ABOUT WOMEN": WOMEN'S PROGRAMMING IN LIBRARIES

The Wisconsin Women Library Workers Newsletter has launched a new series of articles entitled "By and About Women." Articles in the series "describe specific methods of making information about women available through public, school, academic or special libraries. Emphasis is on the practical aspects of planning and developing resources, bibliographies, services, or programs about women." The first article (in v.VI, no.1, January 1982) described a possible program on woman suffrage, the second (in v.VI, no.2, March 1982) a program on women writing. Objectives of the program, intended audience, setting, publicity ideas, preparation, and description of the final product are all spelled out. The Newsletter is available from WWLW, P.O. Box 1425, Madison WI 53701; subscriptions are \$6 (individual); \$2.50 (student); \$10 (institution). Contributors are still being sought for future articles in the series.

### WOMEN'S INSTITUTE FOR FREEDOM OF THE PRESS: "HISTORIC ORIGINALS" PROGRAM

The Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press (WIFP) says of its "Historic Originals" program: "The goal of the Program is to make available to the public the early media of the current women's movement--those first published in the 1960s and early '70s--which have been collecting dust in the attics of their founders. We want to get them into libraries, archives, and individual private collections where they can be shared by women of the present and future. . . ." WIFP is currently making available four of the six issues of Paid My Dues: Journal of Women and Music (1974-76) and six issues of No More Fun and Games: A Journal of Female Liberation (1968-1973). For more information, write: WIFP, Historic Originals, 3306 Ross Place, N.W., Washington DC 20008.

## WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE EXCHANGE (W.I.R.E.) SERVICE

W.I.R.E. Service reproduces published and unpublished sources by and about women in the Third World and distributes them at low cost. The Service describes itself as "a women's collective whose work has shown us that confronting sexism, racism, and classism in the United States requires an understanding of women's struggles and gains in a global context." Topics of recent reprints include: the women's struggle in Iran; sterilization abuse; working women in India; women and war in El Salvador. For a complete list of reprints and prices, write: W.I.R.E. Service, 2700 Broadway, Rm.7, New York NY 10025.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### A RISING TIDE: A REVIEW OF SELECTED BOOKS BY AND/OR ABOUT BLACK WOMEN, 1970-1981 PART I: THE 1970S

Roseann P. Bell, Bettye J. Parker, and Beverly Guy-Sheftall, eds. Sturdy Black Bridges: Visions of Black Women in Literature. Garden City NY: Anchor Press, Doubleday, 1979. \$6.95, ISBN 0-385-13347-2. LC 77-16898.

Lorraine Bethel and Barbara Smith, eds. Conditions 5 (v.2, no.2), Autumn 1979: The Black Women's Issue. (Available from: P.O. Box 56, Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn NY 11215. Subscriptions: \$11/3 issues.)

Juliette Bowles, ed. In the Memory and Spirit of Frances, Zora and Lorraine: Essays and Interviews on Black Women and Writing. Washington: Institute for the Arts and Humanities, Howard University, 1979. LC 80-106219.

Toni Cade, comp. The Black Woman: An Anthology. New York: New American Library, 1970. \$1.95, ISBN 0-451-61868-8. LC 70-121388.

Sharon Harley and Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, eds. The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images. Port Washington NY: National University Publications, 1978. LC 78-9821.

Michele Wallace. Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman. New York: Dial Press, 1979. \$7.95, ISBN 0-8037-0934-X. LC 78-12850. New York: Warner Books, 1980. pap., \$2.50, ISBN 0-446-91262-X.

Ora Williams. American Black Women in the Arts and Social Sciences: A Bibliographic Survey. Metuchen NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1973; rev. ed. 1978. \$10.00, ISBN 0-8108-1096-4. LC 77-17055.

Hitherto only barely visible and mostly condemned to silence, black women have in the last decade begun to break through the boundaries of their forced confinement to assert an identity that will no longer be denied. They have responded to the short-comings of the Civil Rights and the Women's Liberation Movements, and have sounded a new voice within the camps of those who are bold enough to challenge the status quo.

The beginning of this breaking-of-silence, not unpredictably, was slow, but the momentum accelerated as the 1970s came to a close. In 1980 and 1981 there was nothing short of an abundance of new books (many by small presses) by and about black women--historical works, political theory, literary criticism, poetry, autobiography, bibliography. An important development along the way has been the beginnings of the kind of coalition between black women and other women of the Third World which has not existed before. These events underline a vitality and zest for life and liberty, born out of the exigencies of oppression and denial, which Third World women are bringing to Western culture in the closing decades of this century, even as the rest of our civilization seems determined to achieve self-annihilation.

In 1970, at the end of what may well have been the most politically meaningful decade for black Americans in a hundred years, Toni Cade published a volume of essays, short fiction, poetry and commentary entitled The Black Woman. This was a unique work at that time, bringing together American black women speaking about themselves and the meanings of their experiences. The Black Woman expressed the frustrations of, and delivered a bold social challenge from, women who had found that the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, for all of its achievements, did not address many of their most pressing needs and concerns. Black women in America, oppressed by race since the days of slavery, were becoming more aware of other facets of their reality--particularly of how profoundly different their situation was from that of white women and black men. The Black Woman, which includes titles such as "Black Man, My Man, Listen!", "Is the Black Man Castrated?", and "Who Will Revere the Black Woman?", was a prophetic herald of the thematic concerns of the black feminist movement that evolved through the 1970s, and which appears to have come into full bloom at the beginning of the 1980s.

Among other early works of note is American Black Women in the Arts and Social Sciences: A Bibliographic Survey by Ora Williams, published in 1973. This ground-breaking bibliography lists guides to research that can be done from collections, encyclopedias and reference books; black women's writings in all the literary genres, including works for young readers; and other works in historical and cultural studies. Williams's book made it clear that black women had been and were writing, had been and were publishing in all creative and intellectual areas. Others may not have been listening or seeing, but black women's writings were challenging the social presumption that they should be silent and invisible.

Five years later, in 1978, The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images appeared. Combining history, sociology, and literary criticism to describe black women's experiences, the book served as an early example of the desire for humanistic unity that underlies much of black women's writings. In her essay entitled "Discrimination Against Afro-American Women in the Women's Movement 1830-1920", Rosalyn Terborg-Penn confronted the tensions between white women and women of color in their individual and collective struggles for liberation, at a time when few scholars were willing to address this sensitive subject.

In that same year (1978), Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman by Michelle Wallace reached the public with a great deal of fanfare. Hitherto white women critics had either ignored or been both reticent and cautious in their public statements on black women's writings. With Wallace's book, however, a number of prominent white feminists deviated from their earlier stance, hailing it as the coming-of-age of black feminism, thus raising a controversy with many black feminists who disagreed with their evaluation of the work and their presumption in attempting to name black women's experiences. Black Macho is nonetheless an important and provocative work that gives us valuable insights into Wallace's responses to her experiences as a black women, as well as into her views and ideas on black male sexuality and sexism.

Three publications by black women in 1979 were direct forerunners of the kinds of work to come from the pens of black women as the decade came to a close: Conditions 5: "The Black Women's Issue," Sturdy Black Bridges, and In the Memory and Spirit of Frances, Zora and Lorraine: Essays and Interviews on Black Women and Writing. Conditions is a journal by women with an emphasis on writing by lesbians. Guest editors Lorraine Bethel and Barbara Smith dedicated the black women's issue to Mabel Hampton and Audre Lorde, black lesbians whose lives have been sources of strength and inspiration to others. Black lesbians, collectively, are a sub-group whose lives and writings have been doubly denied in the dominant culture. Conditions 5 brought together, for the first time, a substantial body of writings by black lesbians, and the skill and intellectual commitment of the editors guaranteed a place for the collection in the company of works deserving social and academic consideration. Conditions 5 did for black lesbians what Cade's The Black Woman had done for all black women a bare nine years earlier.

Sturdy Black Bridges: Visions of Black Women in Literature is divided into three sections: The Analytical Vision, The Conversational Vision, and The Creative Vision. In the first section, topics range from the image of women in Afro-American, African and Caribbean creative literatures, to black women's autobiographies, and discussions of individual black American women writers. "The Politics of Intimacy," an essay by Hortense Spillers that "suggest[s] a working model for a literary analysis of issues specifically related to the intimate life of Afro-American women" (87), is particularly noteworthy because it aims to create a theoretical framework for black women's criticism.

The Conversational Vision comes from interviews with well known black writers-- five women and three men--as well as from conversations with a group of five Southern women of "venerable ages and wisdom" (263). The inclusion of these conversations is indicative of the determination of black women scholars/critics to permit black women at all levels of society to name their experiences themselves. The vision of the section, as a whole, provides a "composite picture of past, present, and future Black motion, given life through the spoken word" (195).

The selections chosen for the Creative Vision offer positive images of black women in place of the stereotypes often found in the writings of whites and black men. The poetry, short stories, and plays included were done by well known as well as previously unpublished authors. African and Caribbean writers find a place here, and the result is an ample representation of affirming images and perspectives of different kinds of black women.



An extremely helpful part of this book is the bibliography which brings it to a close. This includes African-American, African, and Caribbean women writers, and a documentation of primary as well as secondary sources. The African and Caribbean sections are especially important because of the general unavailability of much of this material. Sturdy Black Bridges is one of those works that made a singular contribution to the writings of black women in the 1970s.

In the Memory and Spirit of Frances, Zora and Lorraine: Essays and Interviews on Black Women and Writing does, on a smaller scale, what Sturdy Black Bridges achieves on a wider scope. A combination of history and criticism, it comprises addresses, essays, lectures, and interviews by and about black women, that were part of a conference that took place at Howard University in Washington D.C. The title of the collection pays tribute to three earlier black feminists: Frances Watkins Harper, Zora Neale Hurston, and Lorraine Hansberry. Harper, a novelist, poet, teacher, lecturer and abolitionist, was a prominent voice in the nineteenth century; Hurston, now well known as a novelist, short story writer and anthropologist, was a twentieth-century black woman who never learned to stay in her "place"; Lorraine Hansberry made history as a playwright, essayist, and political activist in the middle of this century. In the Memory and Spirit of Frances, Zora and Lorraine pays fitting tribute to these women, and represents another strong link in the chain of the literary/critical tradition such women helped to establish.

As we review the achievement of contemporary black women scholars/critics/writers in the 1970s, we find much to applaud and celebrate. On-going research and scholarship continually provide new evidence that black women, throughout American history, recorded their deeds, words and experiences. Much of their writing has been lost, buried, and otherwise neglected because the lives and experiences of black women have been deliberately and consistently undervalued by the dominant culture. However, in the aftermath of the 1960s, there was a new coming-of-age of black American women, and the claiming of a new group identity. Black women have in particular fought for and exploited new opportunities in education, and research, writing, and the exchange of ideas inside and outside the halls of academe have been significantly affected by their efforts. It is important that a part of their work be directed towards evaluation and criticism of American culture as a whole; it is even more critical that black women writers and scholars research their own past, take control of their present, and pass on a heritage in which they have defined the quality of their lives and experiences. From Toni Cade's The Black Woman in 1970 to In The Memory and Spirit of Frances, Zora and Lorraine in 1979, the works of black women have made it decisively clear that the centuries of their enforced silence have come to an end.

-- Nellie McKay

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## LESBIAN CULTURE BEFORE 1940: SEARCH & RE/SEARCH

In 1982 it continues to be a challenge to find the materials of lesbian culture in the libraries of the University. I recently took up that challenge in order to construct courses on lesbian culture from the Amazons to the present, with a focus on literature and philosophy and an emphasis on materials before World War II. Professor Evelyn Beck reviewed a number of new books in lesbian studies in the Fall 1981 issue of Feminist Collections. In this article I will share some of my adventures in exhuming earlier material from the libraries of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I will also suggest some strategies and tools for such digging, and I will review one major tool, the new edition of The Lesbian in Literature, an indispensable bibliography edited by Barbara Grier.<sup>1</sup>

Prior to the early 1970's few of the materials of lesbian culture came labeled "lesbian." Before the founding of the Daughters of Bilitis in San Francisco in 1955, and its periodical, The Ladder (1956-72)<sup>2</sup>, even fewer works so identified themselves. Many pieces were deliberately disguised, even encoded, as, for example, Gertrude Stein's "Miss Furr and Miss Skeene," "As a Wife Has a Cow," and "Tender Buttons."<sup>3</sup> Thanks to myriad disguises and to the alertness of decades of librarians, who have ordered these works and dutifully catalogued them under other headings presumed to be of more general interest, the historical roots of lesbian culture are here today on the Madison campus, well-preserved under a multitude of labels in different libraries, from Art (Kohler) to Agriculture (Steenbock), and in a variety of media, from books and periodicals to slides, tapes, and sound recordings.

Fortunately there is help, in the searches and researches of others, with the project of identifying these materials. The Lesbian in Literature, the bibliography affectionately known to two and one half decades of happy readers as the "L.I.L.," is a pioneering work in this area, one of the few serious pieces of work to identify itself as "lesbian" before the recent Gay Liberation. Originally published in San Francisco by The Ladder in 1967 under the editorship of Gene Damon (pseudonym of Barbara Grier) and Lee Stuart, it has recently been reissued in a much-expanded third edition by Barbara Grier, with a cut-off copyright date of 1979. It is restricted to English-language materials, although several entries are translations. Periodicals are not included, although there are a few short stories that appeared only in periodicals early in this century.<sup>4</sup> While the emphasis is on fiction and poetry, there is also much biographical material. The new edition features a section of 89 photographs of authors whose works are listed, many taken by lesbian photographers whose works are also cited.

Of approximately 7000 entries (according to Barbara Grier's introduction) in the L.I.L., a little over 100 (my count) are materials published or written before 1900 (including several translations). Over half these are evidently by women.<sup>5</sup> (The translated works from before 1900 are almost invariably by men; I found four exceptions: Sappho, Catalina de Erauso, Louise Labé, and George Sand.) Over 400 entries (again, my quick count) are works published between 1900 and 1950. These 500 entries are not marked off in any way from the remaining 6500 items, which have appeared since 1950. In fact, the only principle of organization of the L.I.L. appears to be alphabetical by author, which is my main disappointment with the work (although I hesitate to record a disappointment, given what a

treasure this work has been in taking lesbian writing seriously). This makes the work overwhelming for a beginner. One might do well to read first the classic Sex-Variant Women in Literature by Jeannette Foster<sup>6</sup> or the more recent and highly readable Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present by Lillian Faderman<sup>7</sup> or, perhaps, Lesbian Lives: Biographies of Women from The Ladder, edited by Barbara Grier and Coletta Reid.<sup>8</sup> In any case, the L.I.L. should be used in conjunction with two other new English-language bibliographies of lesbian culture: (1) JR Roberts' Black Lesbians: An Annotated Bibliography<sup>9</sup>, which is skillfully organized and includes a fine chapter on music and musicians, and (2) Cherié Moraga's "Third World Women in the United States--By and About Us: A Selected Bibliography,"<sup>10</sup> which includes separate sections on Afro-American, Asian/Pacific, Latina, and Native American lesbian literature. There is, however, at present no comparably ambitious bibliography of lesbian culture to compete with the L.I.L.

A major delight of the L.I.L. is its dual rating system of letters and asterisks. The introduction informs us that "A" indicates "major Lesbian characters and/or action," "B" indicates "minor Lesbian characters and/or action," "C" indicates "latent, repressed Lesbianism or characters who can be so interpreted," and "T" is for "Trash," included (for the sake of bibliographic completeness) only under authors who also wrote relevant non-trash. (For trash fans, the first edition, available in Memorial Library, includes around 3000 trash titles permanently deleted in the second edition.) Asterisks (none, \*, \*\*, and \*\*\*, in order of progressing enthusiasm) indicate the rated quality of the A, B, or C-lettered lesbian content. Thus, an entry might bear the complex rating, "A\*\*, B\*, C\*\*\*," indicating that the major lesbian characters or events are handled very well, minor ones well, and the latent material, superbly. These ratings are not intended to indicate the literary quality of the work as a whole. For example, Shakespeare's As You Like It rates a "C\*\*" and Twelfth Night gets a plain "C." The introduction also cautions that it would be a mistake to pay attention to only "A\*\*\*'s" because the asterisk system is a much more important guide than the letter system, and a "C\*\*\*" may be as valuable a contribution to the literature as an "A\*\*\*."

One fundamental thing L.I.L. editor Barbara Grier does not discuss is by what criteria characters or action were judged to be "lesbian." As a philosopher, it was naturally with this sort of question that I began to organize my own searches and re/searches. What was I going to be looking for? I abandoned the attempt to formulate a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for applying the term "lesbian" in favor of the Wittgensteinian idea of looking for "family resemblances,"<sup>11</sup> in this case among the various women, relationships, styles, etc., that have been generally designated "lesbian" by women who so identify themselves. Combining the family resemblance idea with Nietzsche's idea of a "genealogy" (a history of the ancestors of the present concept), I went to work on the genealogies of three overlapping families of womancenteredness: the Amazonian, the Sapphic, and romantic friendships between women. Each has an ancient history. Each has also been identified by both feminists and anti-feminists as "lesbian"--rightly, I think, since each is, in its own womanloving way, defiant of patriarchal stereotypes of femininity.

A woman may be counted an Amazon if, like Medusa (a look at whose face is said to have turned her male enemies to stone), she is good at repelling male attackers, or if, like the Black Sea Amazons, she is good on horseback or wears pants or is skilled in the use of weapons. Romantic friendship has an ancient model in the story of Ruth, whose "whither thou goest" speech to Naomi became part of the Jewish heterosexual wedding ceremony. In modern times it is exemplified by the Ladies of Llangollen, who eloped from Ireland to Wales in 1779, where they lived their remaining 50 years and were visited by famous people of the day.<sup>12</sup> In the Sapphic model of the teacher, poet, and muse, the sexual passions become a focus (which is not to imply that they are absent in the other cases). Often they are aroused in an all-female environment, surrounded by a severely patriarchal one--a girls' school, a convent, a women's prison. They may unite women far enough apart in age to be mother and daughter or close enough in age to be sisters. Lesbian culture is made not only by such individuals and couples but also, occasionally, by communities forming counter-cultures, such as existed in Rome in the middle of the 19th Century, in Paris and in Germany at the turn of the century, and in Paris and London between the World Wars.

This approach to lesbian culture suggests a variety of places to search. I will mention a few and indicate some examples of what can turn up. Books on female adventurers, particularly on women in war and on women who passed as men, are rich sources of Amazon material and cultural heroes.<sup>13</sup> The romantic escapades of Deborah Sampson, for example, who fought in the American Revolutionary War and eventually received a pension for her services from the U.S. Government, can be found in Herbert Mann's The Female Review: Life of Deborah Sampson.<sup>14</sup> Not to be missed, also, is the hilarious picaresque autobiography of Doña Catalina de Erauso, a 17th-Century Spanish almost-nun who recounts her romantic adventures in her story of 15 years as a soldier in South America (translated by James Fitzmaurice-Kelley as The Nun Ensign and published with an untranslated Spanish play based on her life, La Monja Alferez, by Juan Perez de Montalban).<sup>15</sup> More women who passed as men are documented as curiosities in such works as Bram Stoker's Famous Imposters<sup>16</sup> (if his name is familiar, you may remember him as the author of Dracula), Oscar Paul Gilbert's fascinating chapter in French history, Women in Men's Guise<sup>17</sup>, and Isobel Rae's The Strange Story of Dr. James Barry.<sup>18</sup> At the University of Wisconsin-Madison the latter two works are found only in the Middleton (Medical) Library, in the Historical Collection. Dr. James Miranda Barry (ca 1795-1865) led a well-documented career as a British military physician and was only discovered to be a woman upon her death. Many current women's history books erroneously report that the first woman in modern times to receive a medical degree was Elizabeth Blackwell, who received hers in 1849 from Geneva College in New York. Dr. Barry received hers from Edinburgh University in 1812, already passing, however, as male. She became an activist reformer within her profession and also acquired a considerable reputation as a "ladies' man."

Daniel Defoe's General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates [sic], first published in 1724, includes short biographies of Ann Bonney and Mary Read, who were convicted of piracy in Jamaica in 1720 and narrowly escaped execution. Steve Gooch's play, The Women Pirates: Ann Bonney and Mary Read<sup>19</sup> does not take seriously the romance between them, however. On the other

end of the social scale there are Louise Labé of 16th-Century France, whose highly passionate sonnets<sup>20</sup> are dedicated to her womanfriend, Clémence de Bourges, and Queen Christina of Sweden, who abdicated the throne in 1654 under pressure to marry (see Margaret Goldsmith's Christina of Sweden<sup>21</sup>, the biography distorted in the 1933 film, Queen Christina, starring Garbo as Christina).

If Amazon history tends to come from the lowest and the highest social classes, Sapphic materials come from the entire social spectrum, frequently from educational institutions, from prisons, and from the worlds of the fine arts. The Criminal Justice Library in the basement of the Law Building has relevant works on women in prison, such as Rose Giallombardo's Society of Women<sup>22</sup>, a study of Alderson Federal Penitentiary documenting the practice of "familying," whereby prisoners enter into primary love relationships with one another and adopt each other's friends as mother, "father," sisters, "brothers," etc., complete with incest taboos. The main Law Library contains the recent Arno Press reprint of the transcripts of the Edinburgh trial, 1811-1819, Miss Marianne Woods and Miss Jane Pirie Against Dame Helen Cumming Gordon, in which the former two women, teachers in a girls' school, sued the latter for slander (and won, apparently because the judge could not believe that women of their social class could be lesbians). Lillian Hellman based her play, The Children's Hour (1932) on an account she had read of that event.

The Kohler (Art) Library, in the Elvehjem Museum building, houses much Sapphistry. See, for example, W. G. Rogers' Ladies Bountiful<sup>23</sup> on American ex-patriate women in London and Paris, many of them lesbians (including Natalie Clifford Barney, known as "the Amazon of Letters") who gave crucial support to a number of now-famous writers and artists (such as James Joyce) during the 1920's and 1930's. There are also reproductions of the art of well-known lesbian painters, such as Rosa Bonheur (1822-1899)<sup>24</sup>, who received permission from the French Government to wear pants, and Romaine Brooks (1874-1970)<sup>25</sup>, lover of Natalie Barney for over 50 years.

The Slide Collection of the College Library includes works of these and many other lesbian artists, such as Edmonia Lewis (1843-ca1900) and Harriet Hosmer (1830-1908), both American sculptors who studied in Rome, and the photography of Lady Clementina Hawarden (Scottish, 1822-1865) and Alice Austen (American, 1866-1952). The poetry of Emily Dickinson (some spoken, some set to music by composers, including Aaron Copland), the operas of Gertrude Stein (several with music by Virgil Thomson), and the lesbian blues songs of Bessie Smith and Gertrude ("Ma") Rainey can be listened to at the Tape Collection in the College Library and in Mills Music Library. Some sources helpful for identifying relevant works are: Chris Albertson's Bessie<sup>26</sup>, Germaine Greer's The Obstacle Race<sup>27</sup>, Our Right to Love, edited by Virginia Vida<sup>28</sup> (Chapter 11, "Lesbian Culture"), and the introduction to J.E.B. (Joan Biren), Eye to Eye: Portraits of Lesbians.<sup>29</sup> I found over 70 slides and over 30 tapes and sound recordings that are relevant in one way or another.

At present neither the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's film collection nor The Bureau of Audiovisual Instruction (BAVI) has the classics of lesbian film, such as Maedchen in Uniform (German, 1931, Leontine Sagan), Olivia: Pit of Loneliness (French, 1951, Jacqueline Audry), The Children's Hour (American,

1961, William Wyler, with Audrey Hepburn and Shirley MacLaine), or Queen Christina (American, 1933, Mamoulian, with Garbo as Christina). For a price, these films can be ordered through BAVI for classroom use. For recent discussions of more lesbian films, the following are worth looking into: Jumpcut #24/25 has a special section on lesbian film; Gays & Film, edited by Richard Dyer<sup>30</sup>, has an interesting essay, "Lesbians and Film," by Caroline Sheldon; and The Celluloid Closet: Homosexuality in the Movies by Vito Russo<sup>31</sup>, while mostly about men, has information about women, too, and includes a long filmography.

A body of work I have not mentioned--namely, that of the late 19th-Century and early 20th-Century male sex researchers, such as psychiatrists Richard von Krafft-Ebing and Havelock Ellis--has been readily accessible to academicians for decades. It tells more, however, about modern homophobia than about lesbian culture. Still, this body of work has left its mark on lesbian culture through such novels as Radclyffe Hall's The Well of Loneliness, banned in England in 1928 and "passed" in New York in 1929. This novel, managing to incorporate both the nature and nurture theories of the genesis of the lesbian, portrays the internalization of homophobic stereotypes and then, almost charmingly, pleads for tolerance, on the basis of incorrigibility. Until the early 1970's, it was almost the only lesbian novel widely known and read by several decades of lesbians in the United States. The other materials that I have mentioned above were there in the library stacks from coast to coast, but only the homophobic research was readily identifiable in the card catalogues as material ostensibly about lesbians.

-- Claudia Card

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#### NOTES

1. Tallahassee, FL: The Naiad Press, 1981.
2. Reprinted by Arno Press, New York City, in 1975 in nine volumes, including an index.
3. Gertrude Stein, Selected Writings. (New York: Random House, 1962).
4. For lesbian periodicals in the U.S., see "The Lesbian Periodical Index, 1947--," discussed in Feminist Collections v.2, no.1 (Fall 1980).
5. The evidence is simply first names, except cases I know to be pseudonyms, such as Michael Field, pseudonym of Edith Emma Cooper and Katharine Bradley who jointly wrote poetry and drama in 19th-Century England.
6. Originally published in hardback at the author's expense in 1956. Re-issued in 1975 by Diana Press, Baltimore MD. Indispensable for the serious scholar.

7. New York: Morrow, 1981.
8. Baltimore MD: Diana Press, 1976. Two other Ladder anthologies were also issued by Diana Press at the same time--The Lavender Herring: Lesbian Essays from The Ladder, ed. Barbara Grier and Coletta Reid, and The Lesbians Home Journal: Stories from The Ladder, ed. Barbara Grier and Coletta Reid--and one by The Naiad Press--Lesbiana: Book Reviews from The Ladder, 1966-72, ed. Barbara Grier (also 1976).
9. Tallahassee FL: The Naiad Press, 1981.
10. In This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color, ed. Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (Watertown MA: Persephone Press, 1981).
11. In Philosophical Investigations, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958), paragraphs 65-69, Ludwig Wittgenstein, philosopher of language, offers the idea of a "family resemblance" as an alternative to the Platonic search for a common characteristic possessed by things called by the same name.
12. See Colette's seventh essay in The Pure and the Impure (New York: Farrar, 1933) or Mary Louise Gordon, Chase of the Wild Goose: The Story of Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Sarah Ponsonby (London: Jogarth, 1936) or Mrs. G. H. Bell, ed., The Hamwood Papers of the Ladies of Llangollen (London: Macmillan, 1930), depending on how interested you are.
13. See bibliographies on women and war in John Laffin's Women in Battle (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1967) and Elizabeth Ewing's Women in Uniform (Totowa NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1975), the former available in Madison only at the Madison Public Library, and the latter at Steenbock (Agricultural) Library.
14. 1797, reprinted by Arno Press, New York City, in 1972.
15. London: Fisher Unwin, 1908. In the vault at Memorial Library.
16. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1910.
17. London: Bodley Head, 1932.
18. London: Longman, 1958.
19. London: Pluto Press, 1978.
20. Louise Labé, Love Sonnets (New York: New Directions, 1947).
21. Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1933.
22. Rose Giallombardo, Society of Women: A Study of a Woman's Prison (New York: Wiley, 1966).
23. New York: Harcourt, 1968.

24. See the recent Rosa Bonheur: A Life and a Legend by Dore Ashton and Denise Brown Hare (New York: Viking Press, 1981).

25. See Adelyn Breeskin's Romaine Brooks: Thief of Souls (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971) for reproductions of her paintings housed at the Smithsonian.

26. New York: Stein & Day, 1972.

27. New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1979.

28. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1978.

29. Washington DC: Glad Hag Books, 1979.

30. London: British Film Institute, 1977.

31. New York: Harper & Row, 1981.

#### FEMINIST FUTURES: SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY BY WOMEN IN 1981

Feminists often assume that science fiction and fantasy are all "rayguns and rocket ships" boys' literature and thus a worthless form of popular literature. This essay hopes to demonstrate the inaccuracy of that prejudice by focusing on the SF and fantasy published by women authors during 1981. As with all criticism, the evaluations in this review reflect my own personal preferences, which are for innovative writing styles, strong female characters, and unusual alternate worlds.

Since only a few of the works published in the last year can be discussed here, I have included a selected bibliography to alert the reader to the impressive scope of women's publishing in these genres. Almost all the writers listed are worth looking into both as feminists and as creators of contemporary literature. While most of the women writers currently in print have appeared in the last two decades, some women represented in the bibliography have a long line of previously published works--Marion Zimmer Bradley, Juanita Coulson, and Andre Norton come readily to mind. The 1981 publications of these long-established writers are not necessarily representative of their best work and therefore I have in some instances cited earlier titles which would provide a better introduction to their fiction. For example, for Bradley, I would recommend either The Shattered Chain or The Heritage of Hastur in preference to Sharra's Exile. For Norton, I would suggest The Beast Master or Daybreak 2250 A.D. rather than The Forerunner. A few authors who have not published in the last year should also be noted. Writers such as Octavia Butler, Anne McCaffrey, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, Doris Piserchia, Barbara Paul, Joanna Russ, and Ursula Le Guin--anthologized, for example, in the three volumes edited by Pamela Sargent (Women of Wonder, More Women of Wonder, The New Women of Wonder) and in another collection by Virginia Kidd (Millenia! Women)--are notable for their explorations of feminist theory through SF narratives.



As a genre, science fiction is often equated or confused with fantasy. Indeed, some of the publications under discussion here do not attempt to differentiate between the two genres. Definitions are sometimes useful, however; I will present one of the simpler ones. Science fiction often describes something that should happen, raising the question of how we get from here to there. Fantasy, on the other hand, neither raises our expectations by presenting the fantasy world as possible, nor raises the question of how we would get from here to there. Both of these genres have their attractions for feminist writers--fantasy because it allows women to invent any sort of context for their imaginative creations, science fiction because it encourages the creation of positive feminist futures which can serve as both experiment and goal. SF is exciting for feminists because it speculates about the future in ways which add to our understanding of where contemporary moral, intellectual, and social values may lead us.

Among the writers who have come to the forefront of SF and fantasy publishing during the last decade or two are women such as Suzy McKee Charnas, Marta Randall, James Tiptree, Jr. (Alice Sheldon), Cynthia Felice, Vonda McIntyre, C. J. Cherryh, Tanith Lee, Elizabeth Lynn, and Suzette Haden Elgin. These authors write on feminist themes such as personal freedom and responsibility, self-awareness and self-respect, and reproductive rights, as well as utopian and dystopian futures for women--and they write well. In the past year, excellent works by two of these writers (one SF and one fantasy) are interesting for their exploration of cultures in which female bonding is an important component. Charnas' "Scorched Supper on New Niger" is a rousing adventure story in the best SF tradition, but its subtle play on our expectations for male and female characters is both refreshing and startling. Elgin's Ozark Fantasy Trilogy has many science fictional elements. It takes place on another planet, involves alien contact and treats magic as a psychic science. Yet the extensive use of magic on this planet populated by several Ozark cultural analogs classifies the work most clearly as fantasy.

Cynthia Felice's The Sunbound and C. J. Cherryh's Downbelow Station call into question a current critical tendency to say that women's SF is social rather than technological. Both of these works involve highly technical explanations of the workings of space ships and space stations (as does Coulson's Tomorrow's Heritage), while putting female characters in positions of influence and power within intergalactic cultures which have radically different expectations of men and women. The Sardonyx Net, by Elizabeth Lynn, is a complex mixture of feminist themes, science fictional trappings (such as space stations and advanced technology) and social theory. Often disturbing for its portrayal of the personal weaknesses of individuals in positions of power, it has already been widely praised for its literary excellence.

Several promising young authors have surfaced in the last couple of years. Notable newcomers include Julian May, Juleen Brantingham, Eileen Kernaghan and Nancy Kress. Kress's The Prince of Morning Bells is a mold-breaking fantasy work which describes a fantasy quest made by a young princess searching for the heart of the world. On the way, she has a set of adventures which are also metaphors for scientific and psychological issues of current import. For example, she is enchanted by monks who are classified into groups according to

the names used for subatomic particles known as "quarks." The mature writing style and innovative story make this an unexpectedly good first novel. Patricia Wrightson is another 1981 addition to the American fantasy reader's bibliography. An Australian writer who uses aboriginal myth to create her fantasy works, Wrightson is well known to readers on that continent and to those versed in children's fantasy all over the English-speaking world.

A difficult question to answer for SF and fantasy initiates is how to get access to important recent works by women. The public library often has an SF collection in hardback, but this usually emphasizes the old standards who are, as you may have guessed, male. The Madison Public Library has a small paperback collection also, fortunate since many of the works mentioned are only published in mass-market format. Again, however, women writers are underrepresented. The same statement may be made about the UW-Memorial Library, although their collection of SF criticism in several languages is enviable. The Leisure Collection of UW-Madison's undergraduate library is relatively current. In general, however, one can expect a good SF collection only in libraries where there is an SF enthusiast on the staff--and then collections are often limited by budget considerations. In the last instance, your best source of recent SF and fantasy by women is a friend with a good collection (you'd be surprised how many of your female friends will turn out to be SF/fantasy readers) or a good used bookstore.

-- Janice M. Bogstad

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## II. Journals and Criticism.

[To my knowledge, Prof. Barr's work is the first collection of essays on feminism and science fiction. Periodicals and anthologies listed below have, however, included a number of essays by and about women in science fiction. --J.M.B.]

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Science Fiction Studies. Marc Angenot, C. Elkins, and R. Philmus, eds. McGill University, Arts Bldg., 853 Sherbrooke St. W., Montreal, Quebec H3A 2T6, Canada.

Solaris. Norbert Spohner, directeur. 565 Avenue de Provence, Longeuil, Quebec J4H 3R3, Canada.

\* Recommended

\*\* Highly recommended

# By new authors (usually with under five publications)