



FEMINIST COLLECTIONS

A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources

Women and the Social Imagination in Medieval Europe

Book review by Catherine Peyroux

Medieval Women and Texts

Book review by Bonnie Duncan

Working-Class Activism Meets Feminist Scholarship: Is There Common Ground?

Book review by Jan Levine Thal

Our Bodies, Our Cells: Feminist Ethics and the New Reproductive Technology

Book review by Laurie Zoloth-Dorfman

Feminist Visions: The Lives of Women in Africa

Jo Ellen Fair looks at some films on African women

Plus

Reviews of websites on reproductive rights and on medieval women

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Periodical notes: new feminist periodicals and special issues of other journals and magazines

Items of note: a guide to mentoring science students, a survey on adolescent girls' health, reports on welfare reform, a directory of women and publishing in Africa; and more

Computer talk: new websites to look over

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FROM THE EDITORS:

The more things change. . . .

So goes the old saying, and how true it turns out to be sometimes. When The Modern Library (an imprint of Random House) recently produced its list of "the one hundred best twentieth-century novels in English," it was more of the same. Only eight women authors made the list. Sure, it was a marketing ploy by the publisher (fifty-nine of the books on the list are published by the Bertelsmann group of Germany, which recently bought Random House), and the list was compiled by an "unbiased" Modern Library editorial board (yeah, right, with one woman among the ten). Yet one has to wonder, in the 1990s, at how little progress we seem to have made, at least in the established literary world.

Going far back in time, as Jane Schulenberg writes in *Forgetful of Their Sex* (reviewed this issue by Catherine Peyroux), we find that the early Middle Ages "seemed to encourage more fluid or flexible roles for the sexes" and that once the idea of saintliness changed, around 800, women became lauded more for their domestic virtues than their learning. At stake, Schulenberg argues, was the Church's "exercise [of] social control through the promotion of a new female image." In Bonnie Duncan's review of *Women and the Book*, edited by Jane H.M. Taylor and Lesley Smith, she details Kate Lowe's essay on women in the Benedictine Convent of Le Murate, in Florence, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For awhile, it seems, the nuns were able to gain some measure of self-sufficiency through their scriptoria's publication of manuscripts. "Scribal activity for profit by nuns was later outlawed in the gloomy patriarchal years of the Counter-Reformation," Lowe notes. "Instead, nuns were to revert to their long-standing passive role as recipients of charity rather than generators of income."

Clearly, as Duncan notes, there were strong (though few) female voices all through the medieval period, some of which are only now being brought to light for serious study. We also know there were many popular women authors during the nineteenth century whose work was all but lost until its recovery during the "second wave" of the feminist movement, just over the past thirty years or so.

It's an ongoing struggle. Every time an "unbiased" list such as the Modern Library's top one hundred tries to re-establish some type of hierarchy, largely ignoring the work of women and people of color, we have no choice but to protest. Sometimes it scarcely seems worth the effort. Yet the nuns of Le Murate would tell us we must, especially because at this point in time we have the wherewithall to do so. As African American activist Florynce Kennedy once said in her book *Color Me Flo*, "What we don't understand about a liberation struggle is you never win it, any more than you 'win' clean dishes. As soon as you eat on them, the dishes are dirty again." Carry on.

⌘ L.S. and P.H.W.



NEXT ISSUE:

Book reviews on:

Grassroots activism
Autobiography as a genre
Feminists in academe

**A look at conflicting cultures in
distance education classes**

**Web reviews on Third World
women and on domestic violence**

**plus all the regular columns:
New Reference Works, Com-
puter Talk, Periodical Notes,
Items of Note, and more.**

BOOK REVIEWS

Women and the Social Imagination in Medieval Europe

by Catherine Peyroux

Barbara Hanawalt, *'OF GOOD AND ILL REPUTE': GENDER AND SOCIAL CONTROL IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. 208p. bibl. index. \$39.95, ISBN, 0-19-510948-1; pap., \$19.95, ISBN, 0-19-510949-X.

Jane Tibbetts Schulenberg, *FORGETFUL OF THEIR SEX: FEMALE SANCTITY AND SOCIETY, CA. 500-1100*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. 562p. bibl. index. \$34.95, ISBN 0-226-74053-6; pap., \$19.95, ISBN 0-226-74054-4.

Does society make the woman? Among historians, the answer is ambiguous: society surely shapes the person, but the socially transgressive figure can hardly be explained by a socially determinist theory. Yet historians' desire fully to understand the lives of people in the past necessarily involves historical attention to the social context in which individuals acted and events occurred. Even – or perhaps especially – when the person in question is as singular a case as was Joan of Arc, historians are bound to explore the surrounding terms on which women lived their lives, if only in order to make sense of an exceptional woman's historically specific transgressions (such as the preeminent anxieties raised for her captors by Joan's insistence on wearing men's clothes). Accordingly, the constructivist account of gender, which understands a gendered identity to be both mutable over time and from society to society, has long been naturally consonant with general historical practice; after all, scholars interested in change over time should be well able to absorb the notion that gender is yet another

temporally situated facet of human behavior. But of course, because the dimensions of gendered existence are so intricately implicated in the background of everyday life, it is a daunting task to recover the rules both explicit and unwritten, boundaries both marked and invisible, that ordered relations between the sexes in the long-dead communities of medieval Europe. Indeed, the task of recovery is arguably the more daunting for medievalists, who work within an economy of comparative documentary scarcity. So the topic of gender remains a challenge for medievalists endeavoring to tease out an elusive but powerfully pervasive reality of the gender system: the social imagination of women's and men's right – and wrong – behavior. In these two volumes Jane Tibbetts Schulenberg and Barbara Hanawalt present the fruits of their respective investigations into the horizons of expectation that defined the scope of women's experience in medieval Europe.

Schulenberg's *Forgetful of Their Sex* is a long-awaited, monumental

study of women in the religious life in early medieval Europe that employs a marvelous variety of sources but centers on hagiography, the biographical writings about holy figures called simply the "lives" of the saints. The book consists of a set of interrelated essays, of which nearly half have been previously published, on the conditions of women's sanctity between the sixth and twelfth centuries. Schulenberg is especially interested in the period before 950 C.E., the era of European history that produced societies characterized by small-scale political units and a decentralized church. Such factors encouraged the promotion of many local saints, of which a comparatively high proportion were noblewomen; the ratio of female to male saints was never remotely so high again in the Middle Ages (see table on p.63). Schulenberg undertakes to explain this phenomenon and to explore what can be learned about the surrounding societies by examining the models of behavior by which female sanctity was measured. She finds that the early Middle Ages "seemed to encourage more fluid or flexible roles for the sexes, a certain symmetry in male and female experience, and an atmosphere in which the distinctions of gender were somewhat blurred" (p.403), in a social environment in which aristocratic or royal family position played an overwhelming part in the promotion of any person, male or female, to sainthood. As Schulenberg notes, saints are by definition exceptional and often transgressive beings, but the ideals they embody extend across a society's hopes and anxieties about the gender category the saint represents. Thus when styles of sanctity changed for women – once praised for the holiness of their ascetic trials or wide learning, but after 800 increasingly lauded for domestic virtues

such as weaving or housekeeping – Schulenberg suggests that what was at stake was the church's "exercise [of] social control through the promotion of a new female image" (pp.118-20).

Social control is a preoccupation of Barbara Hanawalt's *Of Good and Ill Repute*, but Hanawalt examines life on the other end of the social spectrum, in a period (the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries) when the richer documentary record, and especially the thicker legal evidence, makes possible a more reliable reconstruction of everyday life for ordinary women in rural and urban space. While women appear throughout this volume (which, like Schulenberg's book, is comprised of separate essays, many published previously), feminist scholars are likely to be most directly engaged by chapters five through eight. These sections deftly comb sources as disparate as coroners' rolls and poetic narrative to expose the contours of daily existence. Records of accidents suggest that in the village, women's space was typically confined to the home and the village itself, where men's activities normally included the fields and forest (p.77). A comparison of the real and fictive anxieties of separation that faced urban artisans and their wives shows that women's real narratives revolved around the problems of managing the family business in the absence of a spouse and the uncertainty

surrounding their distant husbands' fates, while 'folktale' or popular narratives evinced both male concerns over the chastity of an unsupervised wife and, in an extraordinary version, women's delight in outwitting male challenges to female chastity and business acumen (pp.88-103). Stunningly, in this most stereotypically class-bound and socially static society, Hanawalt finds evidence that gender trumped class in the fictive space created by the poem (p.99). In one redaction, a carpenter's wife dupes three suitors, one of them a lord, who had propositioned her in her husband's absence; she takes their money but gives them nothing in return and forces them to do the women's work of preparing flax. When the lord's wife arrives, the two women mock the men for having assumed female roles and the lady even tells the carpenter's wife to keep the money (p.100). It is a fantasy narrative set in the very real world of cloth production and housewifery. The research in this collection takes the reader directly to the texture of the ordinary person's ordinary day, no small achievement for a society half a millennium away from our own.

Specialists should welcome these essay collections for the cumulative interweaving of their arguments as well as for the masses of hard data they contain. Students and interested generalists could hardly do better in

each case than to start with the work presented here. Both scholars frame their topics with due attention to the literature in which the articles intervene, making many of the pieces mini-introductions to the issues they address. Perhaps equally welcome is each author's determination to compose jargon-free prose; the refreshing lucidity of the writing guides the reader gracefully through the often obscure and technically difficult documents from which the evidence is drawn, making these essays a pleasure to read. Schulenberg and Hanawalt, both historians for whom the question is not *whether* but *how* society shapes the woman, invite us to develop our own imaginations of gender systems at once temporally distant but now and again familiar to our modern world.

[Catherine Peyroux is an Assistant Professor of Medieval History at Duke University. She is currently completing a book on gendered religious authority and dual-sex monasticism in the early medieval West. Her research interests include the christianization of Europe from Late Antiquity through the Middle Ages, the history and historiography of medieval Ireland, and the intersection of poverty and leprosy in the medieval European imagination.]



Miriam Greenwald

Medieval Women and Texts

by Bonnie Duncan

Joan M. Ferranté, *TO THE GLORY OF HER SEX: WOMEN'S ROLES IN THE COMPOSITION OF MEDIEVAL TEXTS*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997. 295p. bibl. index. \$39.95, ISBN 0-253-33254-0; pap., \$19.95, ISBN 0-253-21108-5.

Jane H. M. Taylor and Lesley Smith, eds., *WOMEN AND THE BOOK: ASSESSING THE VISUAL EVIDENCE*. (The British Library Studies in Medieval Culture) Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996. 287p. bibl. index. \$75.00, ISBN 0-8020-4216-3; pap., \$29.95, ISBN 0-8020-8069-3.

Monica Brzezinski Potkay and Regula Meyer Evitt, *MINDING THE BODY: WOMEN AND LITERATURE IN THE MIDDLE AGES, 800-1500*. (Twayne's Women and Literature Series) New York: Twayne/Macmillan, 1997. 238p. bibl. index. \$28.95, ISBN 0-8057-8981-2.

Developed by contemporary women about medieval women, these three books have interest as a group. When I first became a medievalist, I found myself simultaneously searching for voices in the literature that authenticated parts of myself: the poet drove the medievalist, and the person (whoever she was/is) drove the poet. As a woman in my fifties, I'm finding those selves merging a bit more smoothly, but only a bit, and it is for that reason that I read the work of the scholars discussed below with excitement and passion, and more than a little appreciation.

Joan Ferrante has produced a stunning book, at once impeccably researched and written in smooth, clean, well-reasoned prose that is a delight to read. The book is divided into three sections: "Women in Correspondence," "Women in Collaboration," and "Women in Control." Perhaps the most useful is the section on correspondence, not only because this area of scholarship has too long been underrepresented, but because it

insists upon a focus on relationality, which continues to be developed throughout the book.

Ferrante notes that, "when medieval men write theoretically about the female sex, they may condemn it or relegate it to subordinate roles, but when they – even the same men – deal with individual women, they treat them as colleagues or even as superiors. Whatever they may think of the *idea of women* [my emphasis] in such a position, they accept the fact" (pp.6-7). And what of the ideas women have of themselves?

"What is particularly striking in the letters and in texts commissioned by women," Ferrante notes, "is how much women, even those playing male roles in secular government or rising above sex in their religious lives, are aware of themselves as women and identify with powerful or effective, not oppressed women in history. . . . Such models are evoked by friends and counselors not only from biblical and ancient history but also from contemporary history, sometimes from the women's own families" (p.7).

The strength of this book, then, is its focus upon women's giving voice to themselves, providing a powerful range of vocalities and dimensions for and as women. What it provides to us as readers, as women placed within our own time and with our own need (a recurring one in every age) for textual authenticities, is a carefully reasoned history of strong medieval female voices. By way of example, consider a bit of Ferrante's treatment of the countess of Dia, who

can also suffer for love, but she sees no good reason to and prefers not to: *A chantar m'er de so q'ieu no volria, tant me rancur de liu cui sui amia*, "I have to sing about what I would rather not, I am so distressed by him whose lover I am." She deserves and expects joy in love, having all the requisite qualities: . . . "my prestige and my rank, my beauty and more my true heart should avail." . . . She does not worry about what is fitting for her, but tells him how he should behave. . . .

The problem is in him; he does not love as she does and she takes pleasure in conquering him in love, though he is more valiant She expects him to treat their love with the same respect she does, but she implies that unless he does, she will not either. . . . he owes her love, both because she is the most deserving and because he made a commitment to her. (p.194)

Strong women, strong voices. The kinds of voices I want my daughter to grow up knowing have always existed, must always exist. Literature we need to be reading and discussing not just in literature classes, but women's

shelters. As always, Ferrante deserves our full attention and respect. With time, we can only hope that our society will deserve hers.

I must admit to a particular loathing for bound conference "proceedings." Thus, I was delighted to discover *Women and the Book*, a splendid work whose contributors have produced strong articles that blend well into a cohesive whole. The text, arising from St. Hilda's Conference on Women and the Book in the Middle Ages (1993), includes strong graphics (9 color plates and 103 black-and-white prints) that make the text clear and exciting to follow.

"An image," the authors note, "can never be a 'simple record' of the artist's world. We are too knowing ever to use a term like *cinéma vérité* without an edge of irony or self-regard. Images, too, are constructions, whether conscious or not, of the artists who make them, and in turn they may be *constructors* [original emphasis] of the worlds they profess to record. This dual role of image as construction and as constructor must be particularly borne in mind when the images are of a largely disempowered group such as medieval women. . . ." The book "combines visual evidence with the text it supports or illustrates," (pp.16-17) centering on gender and mirroring.

Kate Lowe's "Women's Work at the Benedictine Convent of Le Murate in Florence: Suora Battista Carducci's Roman Missal of 1509" examines the work of a particular named nun (quite rare at the time). Investigation into the handwritten text and named nun provided a glimpse into the scriptoria at Le Murate, which existed well into the sixteenth century. Before the unlocking of Suora Battista Carducci's identity, no copyist at Le Murate could be ascribed a name, and no manuscript could be ascribed a copyist" (p.143) –

reason enough to undertake this very carefully researched study. Lowe notes that

The gap between permissible self-sufficiency and a not-to-be-countenanced successful and skillful cash economy, not based on barter, was crossed by the nuns of Le Murate in Florence in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, with serious consequences. Scribal activity for profit by nuns was later outlawed in the gloomy patriarchal years of the Counter-Reformation. Instead, nuns were to revert to their longstanding passive role as recipients of charity rather than generators of income. (p.143)

This and the success of the printing press moved Le Murate out of the publishing business.

Virtually all of the articles in this book are as carefully researched, clearly written, and generously illustrated as Lowe's. Taylor and Smith are to be commended for its integrity.

Minding the Body: Women and Literature in the Middle Ages, 800 - 1500 would seem to have been designed for inclusion in undergraduate and public libraries. To what degree does it meet those needs? In fact, general lack of focus becomes the book's greatest disappointment. Far too often and rather too predictably it becomes yet another text discussing gender/textuality while drawing from predictable materials in shallow detail, at a time when educators are moving away from general survey courses skimming the "full corpus," preferring instead a tighter focus that produces greater depth and detail.

The book also contains troubling gender assumptions. When discussing the Old English text *Elene*, for instance, the authors suggest that "Like Mary, Elene manifests spiritual truth. Her task is always the *maternal one* of revealing what before was secret and unknowable." Similarly, "*Adornment is traditionally the province of women* [in both cases, my emphasis], as we're reminded when Elene appears as 'the war-queen bedecked with gold'" (p.38). In fact, royalty were expected to be so arrayed, as the spiritual and physical representatives of their lands, and it was instead moments when royalty deliberately divested themselves of such symbols – going barefoot in their undergarments, for example – that were worthy of note. In readings of this sort, the authors reify gender stereotypes (maternal=spiritual, on the one hand, while woman = vanity, a clothes horse, on the other) which certainly existed, but are unnecessary here.

In spite of such frustrations, I did find myself caught up with the book. I enjoyed being reminded that a central role of Germanic noblewomen was 'peaceweaver.' The authors' argument is at once powerful and taut when they say that

Grendel's mother is not the antithesis of the other women in the poem but an icon of their status – she is 'in the likeness of a lady'. . . [which suggests that] she is a *likeness* in the sense of a symbolic representation. For all of the human women are mothers and, as peaceweavers [traded in marriage to bind otherwise warring tribes together], exiles from their native lands. And no one is more maternal or outcast than Grendel's mother, who lives alone with her son in the boggy marshes outside civilization. (p.45)

Unfortunately, the author suggests that "using women to peaceweave marginalizes them – and demonizes them as well" (p.46). This pushes the argument too far, focusing on gender rather than the more general human tragedy of those who fail to extend the weave of light and peace around the gift-stool and mead cup to include a broader humanity, but instead choose to walk (and swim) with those (of whatever gender) they exclude, and in so doing, name, and thus create, monsters and demons.

Demons can be and are created in both directions, and the authors' perspective, as expressed in their

epilogue – that "A remarkably unchanging image of women appearing and reappearing in texts through the eighteenth century and even beyond is due partly to how powerfully that image, created by men, worked to control women" (p.192) – too often reinforces exactly the case the authors work to demolish.

Overall, these books lay to rest far more demons than they raise, and do so with clean, crisp prose and careful scholarship. Renaissance/reformation propagandists handed us a much curtailed arena for female aspirations that maintained itself well

into our own time, and as a result, high quality recovery and redefinition are to be greatly valued.

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Working-class Activism Meets Feminist Scholarship: Is There Common Ground?

by Jan Levine Thal

Pat Mahoney and Christine Zmroczek, **CLASS MATTERS: 'WORKING-CLASS' WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL CLASS**. London; Bristol, PA: Taylor and Francis, 1997. 210p. bibl. index. ISBN 0-7484-0540-2; pap., \$24.95, ISBN 0-7484-0541-0.

Rosemary Hennessey and Chrys Ingraham, eds., **MATERIALIST FEMINISM: A READER IN CLASS, DIFFERENCE, AND WOMEN'S LIVES**. New York: Routledge, 1997. 430p. bibl. \$75.00, ISBN 0-415-91633-X; pap., \$24.95, ISBN 0-415-91634-8.

Elizabeth Higginbotham and Mary Romero, eds., **WOMEN AND WORK: EXPLORING RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CLASS**. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997. (Women and work, v.6) 269p. bibl. index. \$55.00, ISBN 0-8039-5058-6; pap., \$24.95, ISBN 0-8039-5059-4.

To a feminist activist, feminist scholarship often seems far afield from the demands of daily life. Activists who struggle to read scholarly work purportedly written to support them can be frustrated and bored by the

seemingly overdressed angels dancing on obscure heads of the ivy-covered pins. Thus, it is gratifying to find work that attempts to straddle both town and gown.

One book that successfully seeks common ground is *Class Matters: 'Working-Class' Women's Perspectives on Social Class*, edited by Pat Mahony and Christine Zmroczek. The book includes sixteen essays by British women academics from working-class backgrounds who describe their own and sometimes others' personal histories as a means to theorize class/gender meanings. Characterized by "confusion and ambivalence in locating themselves as 'working-class'" (p.3), several describe their class circumstances as "fluid," noting "sometimes overlapping, sometimes contradictory experiences" (Bogusia Temple, p.85).

The intended audience for *Class Matters* seems to be other scholars – particularly those who do not share the class experiences of its writers. Meg Maguire writes: "For those who construct class in a relatively 'closed' manner, all women in the academy can only ever be middle-class. Those of us who inhabit a more messy, sometimes incoherent social world are at times situated in a place with no border" (p.90). Val Walsh states baldly, "For marginals in society, there is no value in the stance of the critical onlooker"

(p.168). Hearteningly, Walsh goes on to clarify that she does not oppose scholarly inquiry but favors activism. "My hybrid identity and liminal sensibility provide a vantage point on the world which provokes in me political anguish and perseverance; aesthetic and spiritual exhilaration; laughter and hope (still)" (p.168).

It is gratifying to find that many of the volume's contributors question the value of working-to-middle-class transformation. Diane Reay laments, "We are the tokenistic edge of elitist policies We stand for a triumph of individualism over community, proof that equal opportunities work." She adds, "It is not a comfortable place to be" (p.20). Similarly, Kim Clancy intones, "The denial of this language, this body, this self, is one cost to the working-class woman of entering the middle-class world. She becomes a Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane, exchanging her class heritage for ten pieces of silver" (p.49).

In the Anglo-Indian community of Shani D'Cruze's youth, her father "had come to Britain perceiving himself as a middle-class professional citizen and found hostility, racism and low-paid clerical work which would only buy damp, cold, crumbling rented housing" (p.73). Yet her parents distinguished their own community from that of Afro-Caribbeans, whom they disparaged. D'Cruze describes this as "inept attempts to negotiate the competing discourses of class, race and family" (p.74). She and others in this volume acknowledge that such negotiation is crucial not only for theoretical clarity but to effect desired social change. Thus, the book's audience may be their middle-class academic colleagues, but the writers do not see theory as an end in itself.

Women and Work: Exploring Race, Ethnicity and Class, edited by Elizabeth Higginbotham and Mary Romero, offers less personal work but could easily be considered a companion volume to *Class Matters* and shares some of its strengths as a

reference work for organizers. A mixed bag of scholarly forms, *Women and Work* addresses race, ethnicity, and social class in the United States, exploring women's jobs and considering the relationship between work, community, and activism.

The volume opens with "An Economic Profile of Women in the United States," by Bárbara J. Robles, who closely considers economic conditions for various subsets of U.S. women, sadly concluding, "We cannot claim equality in gender or ethnic/racial economic well-being for women in the United States as we approach the 21st century. It appears we are not yet beyond the need for affirmative and proactive policies for all female communities" (p.25). Key to her analysis is a caution against common misuses of statistics about socioeconomic characteristics. "It is essential," she writes, "that no one group be held up as 'the model'" (p.24).

The emphasis on practical lessons threads through most of the book. In a powerful discussion of racism, Lynn Weber and Elizabeth Higginbotham sort out the responses of two hundred women interviewees concerning their experiences with workplace racial and gender biases. Both Black and White women thought they had been mistreated because of gender. However, though many Black respondents described experiencing racism, White coworkers tended not to validate those experiences, or to explain them away. The lesson is clear that:

the largest obstacle to achieving White women's support for Black people's struggles against racism is the pervasive belief in a 'color-blind' ideology and practice. It is a set of beliefs that minimizes the importance of race by not seeing it or by recognizing race while denying power differences among races and thereby treating any observed differences in stereotyped negative attitudes or behaviors

as 'balancing out,' as unimportant. (p.169)

Similarly, organizers who work with volunteers may find it useful to read Mary Pardo's exploration of the class basis of volunteer work among Mexican American women in a poor Catholic community. She found that they were not "volunteers" in the traditional middle-class definition, but were instead much-needed unpaid workers who had no choice but to participate as free labor in their children's school.

Sandra Morgen summarizes a series of painfully contradictory documents and interviews among a group of working-class and professional women who cofounded a women's health clinic in the 1970s. When the clinic failed, the women generally divided along class lines in blaming one another for the demise. Morgen finds that poor communication as well as structural power imbalances were key to the acrimony. She concludes that the lessons of that experience are still meaningful in the 1990s.

Feminist theorists and activists may be more aware today of how class (and racial and ethnic) differences and conflicts divide women and undermine their political organizational efficacy than was commonplace in the middle and late 1970s. . . . However, until scholars, activists, and women at large more fully understand how class works in our every day lives, we will undoubtedly continue to experience difficulties in forging cross-class relations and alliances in our workplaces and our shared communities. (p.151)

Ironically, these lessons are harder to find in *Materialist Feminism: A Reader in Class, Difference, and Women's Lives*, edited by Rosemary Hennessy and Chrys Ingraham.



Miriam Greenwald

Granted, the purpose of the book is to consider theory, not practice. It offers three decades of selected essays, beginning with Margaret Benston's 1969 piece, "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation," and concluding with current scholarship that specifically attacks the systemic basis of the oppression and exploitation of women.

The editors write, "If a shared commitment within feminism to the improvement of women's lives exists, there is no shared agreement that feminism necessarily involves combatting capitalism's class system" (p.9).

Part of the non-agreement arises from a misunderstanding of the value of the Marxist analysis, according to the editors. The premises of Marxist feminism have been "persistently misread, distorted, or buried under the weight of flourishing postmodern cultural politics" (p.5). Carole Stabile blames postmodernism for a "depoliticization and apathy among academics" (p.406), whom she fears are interested in "the political" and "the social" as "an apologia for learning to live with the status quo" (p.407). Urging politicization, passion, and opposition to the status quo upon

scholars is fine and good, but for a non-scholar, the discussions of post-modernism are the least clearly relevant to the day-to-day struggle of women's lives. It was Karl Marx who said that the point is not to analyze the world but to change it.

The volume is not, however, simply a polemic against post-modernism. It also criticizes the ways in which Marxism itself has thus far failed women. "Materialist analyses of women's condition, to the extent that they constitute an attempt to transform marxism, constitute also a move toward the construction of a marxist feminism," wrote Annette Kuhn and Ann Marie Wolpe in 1978.¹ In just such a materialist analysis, Rose M. Brewer finds a "qualitative difference in the lives of African-American women through the simultaneity of oppression and resistance." (p.247) For scholars, the tracing of the development of this stream of feminist theory is no doubt valuable. For activists, its value is less apparent or perhaps simply less accessible.

Marxism's criticism of capitalism is an essential and fundamental part of understanding why women face con-

tinual attacks upon our lives and our advances. If the problem is that no-one gets it because we're misled by post-modernism, it is unfortunate that in this case, at least, Marxism is no more accessible than the theory it is criticizing.

Scholars may not find it acceptable to consider academic work on the basis of whether it is useful for activists. I wouldn't know. Surely, though, any hope for progress depends on finding ways to speak with one another on neutral turf, and some scholars seem to be searching for that terrain.

[Jan Levine Thal has been the managing editor of *The Journal of Human Resources* since 1985. In the same period she has also been a radio interviewer for WORT-fm in Madison, Wisconsin, and has written for numerous publications.]

NOTES

1. *Feminism and Materialism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), pp.8-9.

Our Bodies, Our Cells: Feminist Ethics and the New Reproductive Technology

by Laurie Zoloth-Dorfman

Martine Rothblatt, *UNZIPPED GENES: TAKING CHARGE OF BABY-MAKING IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997. 201p. index. \$49.95, ISBN 1-56639-522-4; pap., \$18.95, ISBN 1-56639-554-2.

Laura Purdy, *REPRODUCING PERSONS: ISSUES IN FEMINIST BIOETHICS*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996. 257p. bibl. index. \$45.00, ISBN 0-8014-3243-X; pap., \$17.95, ISBN 0-8014-8322-0.

Rosemarie Tong, *FEMINIST APPROACHES TO BIOETHICS: THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1997. 280p. bibl. index. \$69.00, ISBN 0-8133-1954-4; pap., \$22.10, ISBN 0-8133-1955-2.

Valerie Hartouni, *CULTURAL CONCEPTIONS: ON REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND THE REMAKING OF LIFE*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997. 175p. bibl. index. \$39.95, ISBN 0-8166-2622-7; pap., \$16.95, ISBN 0-8166-2623-5.

Susan Wolf, ed., *FEMINISM & BIOETHICS: BEYOND REPRODUCTION*. New York: Oxford Press 1996. 398p. bibl. index. \$55.00, ISBN 0-19-508568-X; pap., \$29.95, ISBN 0-19-509556-1.

It was the first insight of the women's movement – that personal knowledge of a woman's life empowers the writer to understand and to write from a truthful perspective, and that such a stance would at last enable women to both describe and then control the events in our lives that are central. Of all the events in a woman's life, the complexities of reproduction surely are key. The ability to know and control one's reproduction and sexuality animated nearly all the early discourse in women's groups. Of course, in the early 1970s what we wanted to control was access to abortion, and what we collectively feared was the burden of too many children too early. We had big dreams to pursue.

How times have changed. In the latest rush of feminist scholarship, what is at stake is control over the making of babies, and, as the technology has grown exponentially, how to slow the biological "clock" for hundreds of women. What now draws our scholarly attention is the goal, purpose, and meaning of this technology. Yet in this next generation of reproductive issues, how is feminist scholarship responding?

Several collections and single-authored texts have emerged that attempt to create a heretofore critically absent feminist ethics of reproduction in particular, amidst a more general feminist bioethics. These texts range from rather panicked responses to the

extraordinary power of reproductive research and therapy to careful, magisterial work toward a definitive theory to illuminate our response.

The fact that reproductive technology has developed so dramatically has depended at least in part on the very women's movement that has produced such fine women's studies departments. As women postponed childrearing, fertility decreased and reproductive choices were altered. Americans also began to expect that choices, so important to a self-definition, would include positive as well as negative ones: hence the expectation was raised, far beyond the right of access to abortion, that the decision to have a child would translate into the fact of a perfect, healthy baby, an expectation that would have been ludicrous in an earlier era, or seen as a matter of faith, prayer and community. Astonishingly enough, medical science was eager to try, and the field of advanced reproductive technology quickly expanded to meet the rising expectations, and the emerging marketplace that supported them.

Now that the desire, the industry, and the technology are in place, the ethical questions begin to emerge. When we are making babies, what is it that we are doing? Who really has the power to control this technology? Are there limits to what medical science ought to strive for, and who should set the limits? What conception of the female body are we constructing by the use of the parts of the body (cell-by-cell) to make new life? How far ought we go in a search for motherhood – is the use of other women's bodies permissible? Lurking just below the surface of such questions is the problem of what we meant when we spoke of freedom to choose. Ought it mean that women should be able to do whatever they want with their bodies and the fetuses they carry within them, including act as surrogates, or sell their eggs, or buy any aspect of the reproductive cycle they need? Or are there

externally derived ethical standards and what might those be? Does having these standards in the hands of women necessarily protect against abuses of power?

Now we never said it would be easy, but such questions can seem nearly intractable. For scholar Rosemarie Tong, good ethics begins with careful categorization of all the available responses. Her book is divided into two sections, one that describes both the "non-feminist" and the range of feminist responses to standard epistemological issues in philosophy and ethics: method, politics, ontology, principlism,¹ virtue theory, and duty. Here the reader will find a thoroughgoing analysis of how feminist theories differ from theories developed by men in the literature (from Aristotle to contemporary bioethicists) and from one another. Tong has explored how such stances as essentialism, the ethics of care, and socialist feminism can enhance our understanding of the maternal-child relationship, or of the problems of utility. The second section is devoted to the practical applications of the theory, yet the issues addressed are all about reproductive events – abortion, conception, and genetic therapy.

If all this leaves one wondering what other issues feminist bioethicists think about, one need look no further than Susan Wolf and her co-authors (Tong is among them in what is essentially a reprise of the early chapters of her book) in *Feminism & Bioethics: Beyond Reproduction*. For the reader who wants an in-depth and nuanced view of the issues Tong addresses, this book will provide a strong, serious beginning. Of particular interest is Wolf's review of feminist discourse on the issue of genetic counseling. Here we see the problems of a mature feminism engaged with the realpolitik of

non-binary choices. Should genetic therapy and abortion be used to select against gender, or disabilities? If so, what is implied about our relationship to the disabled?

It is in these ontological questions that the work of feminist scholar Laura Purdy is located. Purdy, who in addition to being a formidable scholar has been central in the practical organization of feminist bioethicists, offers a convincing argument about the problem of constructing an ideology of choice in a society marked by such desperate choicelessness. All yearning, Purdy would remind us, including the yearning for children and the willingness to submit to any intervention, is culturally framed by a social understanding of what is "natural" and appropriate for women. Purdy spends a full chapter of her work responding to a classic theory in the bioethics literature best articulated by legal scholar John Robertson. Robertson's rights-based argument serves as the interlocutor for Purdy to examine how poverty, limited life choices, and the marketplace itself can shape the purchase, sale, and use of the various pieces of the reproductive process, all of which rely on the compliant female body as the only available location for the technology itself and all of which make the ideal of "inalienable rights" suspect.

Valerie Hartouni, in her riveting and complex book on reproductive technologies, deepens Purdy's critique. The body, Hartouni tell us, has become "open to the public," especially the interior space that is the womb, in which the developing fetus is then seen as "housed." It is this visualization of the body that allows us to see (to read) the body as a social text, even when it appears to be the most natural or "objective" of objects. The social nature of reproductive technology is

made everstarker by the hearing of contentious cases in courts of law. Here, where reproductive practices enter the legal discourse, we see how notions of property and contract then shape our understandings of who "owns" embryos and babies born of surrogacy arrangements. For example, the surrogacy cases that gave legal parameters to the discourse were decided on the basis of contract laws. What was seen as critical was how the money changed hands, what the deals had been, and what had been spelled out in writing. For such confusions, the remedies suggested are better contracts and tougher deals – the definition and naming of the problem as a legal one directs us to legal solutions. Hartouni's insight is that even this primary ordering or arrangement is freighted and, not tangentially, based on a view of women that names them as "fetal containers." Like the very act of vision itself (and here Hartouni uses the work of Oliver Sacks to remind us of how the ability to see is only in part physiological, and in part linguistic,) claims are plausible if they make logical sense within the terms of this legal discourse. Hence the claims of surrogate mothers who change their minds and become attached to the baby they carry are seen as incomprehensible, and then dismissable, since they violate a contract which "sees" a baby as merely a type of purchase, payable in advance, rendering the process and the meaning of pregnancy itself invisible.

New reproductive technology will only intensify the basic ethical challenges. Like most of the books noted, Hartouni's ends with a chapter about that most captivating of technologies, human cloning. Cloning is the most profound example, of course, of a discourse about the crossing of borders we had seen as natural and God-given, identities and relationships long mediated by religion, culture, and



family duties, and Hartouni clearly sees it as one more social yearning to control the whole disruptive act of women's reproductive capacity.

For such an excursion, for such a "dangerous time," as Hartouni reminds us, the reader needs a skilled guide. Yet such care and thinking are not inherently the case for feminists writing about reproductive ethics. One reads, for example, the work of Martine Rothblatt with a sense of growing unease. Rothblatt is worried about the Human Genome Project and about reproductive genetic interventions; in fact she has given us "a manifesto" about the "coming Holocaust of sex." Now this reviewer does not approve of using the historically specific term Holocaust to describe anything that a writer thinks is very upsetting, but that is the least of the problems one encounters in this volume. Here one will find a clear example of what feminist ethicist Karen Lebacqz told her student ethicists never to do in graduate school: "you cannot simply tell me, oh golly it's awful!" Yet this book goes even

further than describing the genetic material as "the seeds of sex" terribly mis-handled by sinister forces; it proposes a solution called "inoco-seeding," which would have (someone) banking all men's semen and performing a vasectomy on each, and using the "seeds of sex" to then make babies. ("See how logical?," one can almost hear the author cry.) Such a book might find a use in a course about the workings of the popular imagination, but the serious reader who wants to know what issues in genetics will confront feminist

scholars in the next several years ought to refer instead to Julie Gage Palmer and Leroy Walters' book² on ethical issues in genetic intervention. Palmer gives a clear and lucid account of how genetics works that will ground any discussion of what moral meaning we will need to make of it.

In the late 1800s, Americans headed out for the borders, for the frontiers, full of certainty and armed not only with police power, but with the ideology for mastery of the environment and of the people they found there. It was a time of frontier logic, a linguistic discourse, Hartouni might have observed, in which moral rightness had most to do with property ownership and the means to protect it. Reproductive technology is in its cowboy years, during which much is justified by a logic of the manifest destiny of medical science – a shootout in which, once again, girls don't have the guns. The social order, however, that will be needed to organize the project, the treatment of those persons whose bodies are the terrain of the

project, and even the naming of the project as a discourse of illness and cure rather than a faith journey, a call for community, or a feminist challenge, is still not decided. These scholars lead us to the considerations of how such a discourse might be constructed and might be ascendent.

NOTES

1. A set of ethical principles to be used when considering bioethical cases, proposed by Tom Beauchamp and James Childress in *Principles of Biomedical Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).
2. Leroy Walters and Julie Gage Palmer, *The Ethics of Human Gene Therapy* (New York: Oxford Press, 1997).

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FEMINIST VISIONS

The Lives of Women in Africa

by Jo Ellen Fair

BECOMING A WOMAN IN OKRIKA. Dir.: Judith Gleason and Mereghetti Tesser. 1990. 27 min. Filmmakers Library, 124 E. 40th St., New York, NY 10016. Telephone: 212-808-4980; email: info@filmmakers.com

FEMMES AUX YEUX OUVERTS (Women With Open Eyes). Dir.: Anne-Laure Folly. 1994. 52 min. In French with English subtitles. California Newsreel, 149 Ninth St./420, San Francisco, CA 94103. Telephone: 415-621-6196; email: contact@newsreel

FIRE EYES. Dir.: Soraya Mire. 1994. 60 min. Filmmakers Library.

NYAMAKUTA (The One Who Receives). Dir.: Chris Sheppard. 1989. 32 min. Filmmakers Library.

WARRIOR MARKS. Dir.: Pratibha Parmar. 1993. 54 min. Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, Suite 500E, New York, NY 10013. Telephone: 212-925-0606.

A WIFE AMONG WIVES. Dir.: David and Judith MacDougall. 1981. 68 min. University of California, Berkeley, Extension Media Center, Berkeley, CA 94704. Telephone: 510-642-0460.

For many Americans, Africa remains the "dark continent" of Joseph Conrad's novel, *Heart of Darkness*. American understanding, or perhaps really misunderstanding, of the diverse countries, peoples, and cultures in Africa is based on a long history of recounting explorer, traveler, and missionary experiences in novels, popular magazines, and travelogues. Today, old stereotypes persist of Africa as a remote and primitive place and of Africans as savage and alien peoples. They have been refined and updated, but still make their way into newspapers, magazines, movies, and television. Whether discussing movies such as *Tarzan*, *Congo*, *Ghost and the Darkness*, or news about U.S. intervention in Somalia or lack of involvement

in Rwanda, Africa and Africans usually serve as little more than backdrop to the stories in which powerful Westerners (most often white, middle class, and male) are at the center.

Long exoticized on the pages of *National Geographic* or represented in news stories as helpless victims of one crisis or another, African women, particularly, are seldom depicted (or allowed to portray themselves) in contemporary U.S. media in all their fullness. As a consequence, many media consumers do not see, hear, or learn much about the lives and views of women in the many countries on the African continent. The six videos reviewed here redress the invisibility of African women. Each of the videos

invites viewers to understand the complexity and richness of the lives and experiences of the African women shown. While some of the videos are more successful than others, the intention of each is to allow African women to be subjects of their stories rather than objects of the viewer. That intention is worlds apart from the kind of one-dimensional images that appear in much of the U.S. media. In these videos, viewers see and hear African women describing, explaining, agreeing, and disagreeing on issues such as family planning, female genital cutting, polygyny, women's struggles for equality, and the tribulations of daily family life. The videos show how certain systems of thought and practice continue to restrict women politically, economically, and culturally. Yet the videos also demonstrate how women sometimes circumvent or co-opt oppressive systems. At the most basic level, what is common to the videos is that the women who appear are thinking and feeling people, rather than glamorous exotics or passive victims.

Femmes aux Yeux Ouverts, produced and directed by Togolese filmmaker Anne-Laure Folly, is the most general of the six videos, demonstrating how women whose eyes are open can see their conditions and thus take control of their lives. The documentary, set in four West Africa countries – Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Senegal – portrays women of diverse backgrounds who address issues such as female genital cutting, AIDS, women's entry into politics and grassroots organizing, and economic survival. By allowing women to talk about their experiences and by showing how women live and work, Folly

makes a compelling argument that the continent's political and economic development hinges on the well-being of women.

Nyamakuta, Becoming a Woman in Okrika, and *A Wife Among Wives* are all more specialized videos, but each looks at the interaction between practices of the past and present. *Nyamakuta* explores the life and work of a traditional midwife in Zimbabwe. The midwife, Mai Mafuta, tells her own story through translated voiceover. Though the viewer can see that she is a skillful practitioner, she describes how her skills were inadequate to save the life of her own daughter. A few years after her daughter's death, she decides to enroll in a program designed to train midwives in Western birthing techniques. The video is at its best when it allows Mafuta to comment on the clash of ideas about how birthing "ought" to occur. She is grateful for the additional training, but remains skeptical of many tenets of Western medicine. As she reminds viewers, "People die too in hospital."

Set in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, *Becoming a Woman in Okrika* explores a coming-of-age rite called *Iria*. By passing through this rite — one which involves the public display of painted bodies, the fattening of bodies, and the teaching of "womanly" responsibilities — young women release their childhood fantasies and in doing so prepare for marriage and childbearing. As the video shows, in contemporary society, not all young women want to go through the rite. Some refuse because it is seen as too "traditional" and outdated. Others, who consider themselves otherwise "modern," consent because it is "traditional" and will give them respect in the community. Though the video does a good job in explaining a complex rite, it primarily uses voiceover by the Western filmmakers, thereby projecting

a certain distance between subjects and viewers.

A Wife Among Wives is the second work of a trilogy by Judith and David MacDougall set among seminomadic Turkana herders in northwestern Kenya. Turkana society allows polygyny, and this video explores what Turkana women think about the practice. What viewers may find interesting, and perhaps surprising because it contradicts Western conventional thinking, is that women describe many social advantages to polygyny. Indeed, as the senior wife of one family notes, she asked her husband to take another wife and helped him in the search to ensure that the new wife would be a goodworker. Fortunately, the video does not romanticize polygyny. It does treat the personal disadvantages of the practice, for example, instances when a girl is promised to an old man. It also explores threats to this practice as young people ("who act like Westerners," as one older man decries) begin to assert their own decisions about marriage. Because the MacDougalls were interested in allowing viewers to see and hear the Turkana herders as much as possible, there are some long stretches where not much is said or done. In showing this video, it may be best to use segments rather than the whole.

The last two videos, *Warrior Marks* and *Fire Eyes*, deal with the sensitive topic of female genital cutting. Of the two, *Fire Eyes* is far superior. Made by Somali filmmaker Soraya Mire, who underwent cutting when she was thirteen years old, *Fire Eyes* shows the complexity of the practice. Mire interviews women who know the pain of the practice, yet would have their daughters go through it so they will be marriageable. She talks with African women who are organizing efforts in Africa and in the

West against the practice. Additionally, she interviews African men, some of whom support and others who oppose cutting. What *Fire Eyes* does well is to show that a diversity of opinion among women and men exists and that Africans themselves can and have organized to halt the practice. Mire makes two strong points: (1) solutions to female cutting are cultural and economic; and (2) solutions must come from the societies in which the practice is embedded. Combined with *Femmes aux Yeux Ouverts*, this video provides a good starting point for discussions about how African women (or women generally) may work to change social practices that harm them.

By contrast, *Warrior Marks* recreates the tired stereotype of "African-woman-as-victim." For a production that calls itself feminist, *Warrior Marks* is paternalistic. Replicating old "development" models, Westerners have all the right answers here. African anti-cutting activists are interviewed, but through a series of voiceovers in which Alice Walker reiterates and then adds her own thoughts on the topic, the message coming across is that Westerners know best how to stop female genital cutting. Moreover, by completely neglecting the cultural and economic reasons for the continuation of female genital cutting, the video leaves viewers with a caricature of African women as either good or bad depending on how they think about the practice. In the end, Walker manages to put herself, rather than the women she is ostensibly trying to help, at center stage.¹

Each of the videos assumes a certain base of knowledge about the countries, peoples, and cultures of Africa. Yet because many Americans' knowledge of Africa and Africans is based on popular media images, providing a context for these videos is

imperative so that what is seen is not simply dismissed as "too different" to be meaningful to American viewers. Explaining the cultural, economic, political, and historical reasons for how and why African women live as they do would help viewers see the importance of certain practices, discover similarities among peoples and cultures, and fight long-held, and certainly racist, stereotypes of peoples in Africa.²

NOTES

1. For a fuller critical review of "Warrior Marks," see Stanlie M. James, "Warrior Marks," *American Historical Review*, v. 102 (April 1997), pp. 595-596.
2. For further information on films and videos about and/or by African women, see Emilie Ngo-Ngudjol, "Focusing on Women in African

Cinema: An Annotated Bibliography" in *With Open Eyes: Women and African Cinema*, ed. Kenneth Harrow (Atlanta: Rodopi, 1997), pp. 191-218.

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WORLD WIDE WEB REVIEWS

On the Trail: Reproductive Rights Legal History on the Web

by Beth Fredrick

The extent to which major legal decisions affecting reproductive rights are beginning to fade from public consciousness is astonishing. Test it yourself. Ask anyone to name the decade in which the provision of contraceptive methods to unmarried Americans became legal nationwide. Few people - particularly those who came of age after the 1972 Supreme Court decision in *Eisenstadt v. Baird* - can even guess. At a time when nine in ten women who are at risk of an unintended pregnancy say they use a contraceptive method, such government involvement seems out of the realm of possibility. Test it on the World Wide Web and you will be similarly stymied, since a historical perspective is missing from many of the reproductive health sites where one might most likely be expected.

Nonetheless, as the constitutional notion of privacy is being reinterpreted as a result of new technologies and electronically shared personal data, *Eisenstadt v. Baird* as well as the more landmark cases of *Griswold v. Connecticut*, *Doe v. Bolton*, and *Roe v. Wade* are worth pursuing on the Web. Interestingly enough, they can be found through a few sites that are remarkable and useful for other reasons as well. (Note: in all cases, the URL is given for the exact

location of the court case, but the full sites are also worthwhile.)

Women of the World

URL: <http://www.echonyc.com/~jmkkm/wotw/us.contraception.html>

Developed/maintained by: Joshua M.K. Masur and the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy

Last updated: 8/23/95

Date of review: 3/15/98

A terrific site, clearly put together for the 1995 United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing and, unfortunately, not updated since. Nonetheless it hints at the potential for a more complete website for the Center on Reproductive Law and Policy so that this valuable information could be updated and added to - a plan now in the works. In the meantime, the site is a quick and easy way to orient oneself to reproductive law and policy in the United States and to compare it with Brazil, China, Germany, Nigeria, and India. The history is there, not only on contraception, but on sexually transmitted disease, abortion,

violence, and a number of other topics. Without links (except to its webmaster), it is nonetheless an attractive site worth visiting.

National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League

URL: <http://www.naral.org/home.html>

Developed/maintained by: The National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League

Last Updated: 3/12/98

Date of review: 3/15/98

In addition to a wealth of practical information for prochoice advocates, this easy-to-navigate site provides a straightforward introduction to reproductive rights history. Under "Publications," then "NARAL Factsheets" is a page called "Supreme Court Decisions," where relevant cases are presented in clear, plain English, chronologically, facilitating a quick grasp of the issues under consideration in each, as well as the outcome.

Findlaw/Law Crawler

URL: <http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/casecode/>

Developed/maintained by: Northern California Law Librarians

Last updated: 3/15/98

Date of review: 3/15/98

This site became an instant bookmark. An easily searchable site maintained by the Northern California Law Libraries, it provides access for lawyer and non-lawyer alike to the key details of Federal Circuit Court and Supreme Court cases (including the recently dismissed Clinton v. Jones). Search for such terms as "abortion" or "contraceptives" or a particular case. Though burdened by advertising, the site does present each full-text decision with links to related cases and websites. Also available on the site are law review articles and links to state law information.

Oyez, Oyez, Oyez-A U.S. Supreme Court Database

URL: <http://court.it-services.nwu.edu/oyez/cases/>

Developed/maintained by: Jerry Goldman and Northwestern University

Last updated: 3/14/97

Date of review: 6/6/97

A link from Findlaw to a project supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Science Foundation enables one to hear digital recordings of the actual arguments in a case. Created by political scientist Jerry Goldman and colleagues, it is fascinating in its capacity to bring not-so-ancient history to life.

Pro-life Activist's Encyclopedia

URL: <http://www.all.org/plae/contents.htm>

Developed/maintained by: Brian Clowes, Steve Frezza and the American Life League

Last updated: unknown (Copyright 1995) [Copyright 1998]

Date of review: 3/15/98

Finally, for an alternate and exhaustive history of the maelstrom of issues surrounding reproductive rights, the Pro-life Activist's Encyclopedia provides detailed information in 140 chapters on everything from Supreme Court decisions to "Sex Selection Abortions" to "The Media's Pro-Sodomite Bias." Although the full-text presentation makes one scroll-weary and the site is generally graphically uninteresting, quotes interspersed throughout and thorough, linked footnotes provide additional appeal. Unlike the sites of the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy and the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (both organizations with a clear prochoice agenda), the Encyclopedia site is much more opinionated in presenting the facts, and the information here seems not to be updated regularly. Yet, as a comprehensive catalog of the debate on reproductive health, it should not be missed.

Only twenty-five years have passed since Eisenstadt v. Baird changed Americans' lives. For all intents and purposes, however, government intrusion in an individual or couple's contraceptive decisions has become ancient history in this country. Nevertheless, for those searching for guideposts on how the courts and we as a society once worked to recognize and expand reproductive rights, these cases and the websites that feature them are an invaluable resource.

[Beth Fredrick is Director of Communications and Development and Director for Program Operations with The Alan Guttmacher Institute, a nonprofit organization conducting reproductive health research, policy analysis, and public education (<http://www.agi-usa.org>).]

Medieval Women Websites

by Cynthia Ho, Amelia Washburn, and
Tim Gauthier

It might seem ironic that one of the first academic subjects in the humanities whose practitioners showed a keen interest in computers, multimedia, and the Web was medieval studies. Actually, it is congruous, since the encyclopedic impulse and the interest in textual mutability are both central medieval concerns. Now, the number of sites devoted to medieval studies in general, and to medieval women in particular, is stunning. The majority of the sites do not necessarily provide information missing from a good library, but they nevertheless provide a needed service to the general, interested public and to the academic community. The study of medieval women has been a fully legitimized academic subject for only the last ten years, so many libraries do not have the primary or secondary materials that have recently become available in abundance. The following divisions I use to differentiate sites are not discrete because many sites significantly overlap.

Although notable information exists on the Web concerning women in other cultures contemporary with the European Middle Ages, the discussion below is limited to European women.

GENERAL REFERENCE WEB SITES

Medieval Women

URL: <http://www.georgetown.edu/labyrinth/subjects/women/women.html>

Developed/maintained by: Martin Irvine, Deborah Everhart, Stefan Zimmers

Copyright: 1997

Women Writers of the Middle Ages

URL: <http://www.det.mun.ca/dcs/courses/ms3351/intro.html>

Maintained by: Catherine Innes-Parker

Last updated: 1997

Women Writers of the Middle Ages

URL: <http://www.millersv.edu/~english/homepage/duncan/medfem/medfem.html>

Developed/maintained by: Bonnie Duncan, English Department, Millersville University

Last updated: August 12, 1997

The Labyrinth at Georgetown was the first important and comprehensive medieval website, highly promoted in the early 1990's at academic meetings by its developers, Martin Irvine and Deborah Everhart. The "Medieval Women" title page, linked through Labyrinth's main page,

organizes links in four categories: Individual Lives and Works of Medieval Women; Women Rulers and Creators; General Resources; and Bibliographies. In part, the site reflects the contents of Everhart's course by the same name, but in a larger sense it indicates the important general categories of web-knowledge concerning medieval women. Within each of the groups, the links are selective and scholarly.

Innes-Parker's page also serves as a resource for a course; whereas the Labyrinth page is one of the oldest, Innes-Parker's is the most extensive. Although it is a full website with one of the largest funds of links to various other sites, its straightforward design makes it easy to use. The headings under which material is listed are the following: Education and Literacy, Woman as Image, Daily Life, Women Religious, Women and Power, and General Resources.

"Women Writers" is one example of Bonnie Duncan's numerous projects connected with computers, pedagogy, scholarship, and medieval literature. This well-organized site has four primary categories: Secular Women Writers, Saints and Women in Religious Vocations, Materials Concerning Women, and Secondary Hypertexts on general medieval topics. The approach of this site varies from the previous two, which provide only links; here, the first two sections are organized around original essays or source documents with extensive links to other sites. Although all the essays are by students at Millersville University, the work is well-documented, and links to hypertexts and other sources are extensive. The last two sections offer a breadth of links and connections - its collection of links to electronic texts, arranged by category, is especially large and helpful.

TOPIC-SPECIFIC SITES

Hildegard of Bingen websites

The Hildegard of Bingen Resource Page

URL: <http://www.bison.com/hildegard/index.html>

Maintained by: Bison Publishing

The Hildegard of Bingen Page

URL: <http://www.trinityvt.edu/hildegard/biohist.htm>

Developed by: Bill Davis

Maintained by: Trinity College of Vermont

Last updated: July 23, 1997

The Life and Works of Hildegard von Bingen.
URL: <http://tweedledee.ucsb.edu/%7Ekris/music/Hildegard.html>
Created by: Kristina Lerman
Last updated: Feb. 12, 1998

Numerous smaller sites dedicate themselves to one specific woman or topic. I take as an example the sites for Hildegard, which reflect three different agendas: the first is devotional, presenting the timelessness of Hildegard and her teaching; the second and third are academic, focusing on texts and biography, respectively. All three excellent sites illustrate the plethora of specific information that exists for the study of individual medieval women. Most are easily accessed through the reference sites listed earlier.

Experimental and developing specific sites

The Matrix Site
URL: <http://matrix.divinity.yale.edu>
Developed by: Mary McLaughlin and other medievalists
Maintained by: Katherine Gill and Lisa Bitel, eds., Marilyn Dunn, Managing ed., and Editorial Board

Sybils! An Interactive Exploration of Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance
URL: <http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~mmedia/mw2.htm>
Developed/maintained by: McMaster Working Group on the Middle Ages and Renaissance, McMaster University
Last updated: September 1997

As exciting as the offerings are on the Web now, the next generation of medieval women's sites is moving in a new direction, proposing materials that cannot be found in a library collection. This relocates feminist study into a new level of primary source investigation. Matrix is a developing, refereed site specific to the resources for the study of women's religious communities 500-1500. Eventually it will hold graphics, maps of abbeys (interior floor plans), architectural features of women's religious communities, in-depth profiles, collections of documents online, bibliographies, glossaries, and online articles. While the information now available is slim, the projected impact of this project when completed is immense. "Sybils!" is a program developed for teaching about women of the Middle Ages using the collection at the McMaster University library related to these topics.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Medieval Feminist Index: Scholarship on Women, Sexuality, and Gender

URL: <http://www.haverford.edu/library/reference/mschaus/mfi/mfi.html>

Developed/maintained by: Margaret Schaus. Numerous other individuals work on the Web pages, and an advisory board consists of scholars from universities around the country.

Last updated: [Feb.28, 1998]

Selected Sources in Women's History, 1400-1700 C.E.

URL: <http://www.haverford.edu/library/4Bibs/WomensHistory1.html>

Maintained by: Margaret Schaus

Last updated: June 27, 1997 ?

The Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship began with the *Medieval Feminist Newsletter*, which has rapidly expanded into a number of projects including the online bibliography. A scholarly index covering more than three hundred journals and essay collections dealing with gender and sexuality, this database includes some twenty-two hundred records with more than one hundred added each month. The years covered include 450 C.E. to 1500 C.E., with regional listings dealing with Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. The index includes, and is expanding to add, publications in English, French, German, and Spanish, and the developers hope to include Italian in the future. This site is extremely useful for research purposes since the database can be searched by author, geographical location, subject, title, or other criteria. Schaus's "Selected Sources in Women's History" is an excellent, easy-to-use index site for finding printed material on medieval women. The hyperlinked table of contents is divided into Biographical Sources, Women's Writings, Women's Achievements in Various Fields, and Women's History.

This short review only surfs the surface; good luck searching for your chosen topic.

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COMPUTER TALK

Remember that our website (<http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/Women'sStudies/>) includes electronic versions of all recent "Computer Talk" columns, plus many bibliographies, core lists of women's studies books, and links to hundreds of other websites.

Note that final punctuation is often left off sentences in this section that list electronic addresses, for purposes of clarity, since Web addresses do not end with a "dot" or period. This listing is also clearly a very partial list of the numerous websites of interest to women and women's studies teachers and researchers.

World Wide Websites

The **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND DIVERSITY PROJECT** maintained by Carl Gutierrez-Jones at the University of California, Santa Barbara, includes substantial information on California and its recent Proposition 209, but also a good number of more general articles, documents, and a bibliography, all covering various sides of the issue. The address: <http://humanitas.ucsb.edu/aa.html>

A disturbing but significant collection of resources on **AFGHAN WOMEN** resides at a Mining Co. website. From the Revolutionary Association of Women in Afghanistan, Amnesty International, Peace Magazine, and other sources comes a picture of strong women battling a series of repressive regimes. Web address: <http://women3rdworld.miningco.com/msub30.htm>

AFRICAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS is the focus of the Africa Policy Information Center's excellent home page on women. A plethora of documents available online and a number of key Internet links make this page a good information source on African women. Address: <http://www.africapolicy.org/action/women.htm>

AGENDA, the ten-year-old South African feminist journal, has a website that offers contents of the current issue, full-text of several current and past articles, subscription information, and a number of links to related groups. Check their webpage at: <http://www.oneworld.org/agenda/>

The Library of Congress's **AMERICAN MEMORY PROJECT** is comprised of "multimedia collections of digitized documents, photographs, recorded sound, moving pictures, and text from the Library's Americana collections." Some collections are entirely on women (such as

"Making Do: Women and Work," featuring interviews with three women from the 1930s), while others include many sections on women. A search on "women" at the basic level of the American Memory website brings up 2,460 items. This is a must-see, at: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/amhome.html>

ISIS International's **ASIAN AND PACIFIC WOMEN'S WEB SITES** listing provides links to such groups as the Tibetan Women's Association, Engender (engaged in environment and sustainable development issues), ARROW, the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, and the Philippine Women's University. The listing is at: <http://www.sequel.net/~isis/links.html>

AUNT LUTE BOOKS, a "not-for-profit multicultural women's press," has a new Web page that includes a book list with description and ordering information, selected links, and submission guidelines. Check their site at: <http://www.best.com/~auntlute/index.htm>

A summary of the **BEIJING DECLARATION and PLATFORM FOR ACTION**, adopted unanimously at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China, is available on the UN's Dept. of Public Information website. For each of the twelve "critical areas of concern" there are strategic objectives and specific actions to be taken by nations around the world. Website address: <http://www.undp.org/fwcw/plat.htm>

BLACK LIVING is the home page of Black Women in the UK and is "about lifestyles, having fun and dealing with issues that we all face." It includes features on education, health, fun, and money. Web address is: <http://www.blackliving.com/>

BRAVE GIRLS AND STRONG WOMEN BOOK-STORE (in association with Amazon.com Bookstore) offers a list of forty books, from smaller presses whose publications can get overlooked, that portray strong girls and women in action. The selected books are "chosen not only for their positive messages, but also for their engaging, high-quality writing," according to the Web introduction. Check the site at: <http://members.aol.com/brvgirls/>

The **BRIDGES FOR WOMEN SOCIETY** of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, offers a Web page describing its resources for women with a history of abuse who are making to transition to job placement. A Survivor's Handbook includes a wealth of information (a good model for other programs?), and there are connections to employment listings and other resources. Address: <http://www.vvv.com/~careers/>

The **CENTER FOR WOMEN & RELIGION** has a new website with information about its activities and staff as well as links to denominational sites, lesbian and gay religious websites, home pages for young feminists, and more. Try them at: <http://aquinas.gtu.edu/Centers/cwr/>

A **CHICANA FEMINIST HOMEPAGE** titled "Making Face, Making Soul..." offers "one Chicana's efforts at providing an introduction to Chicana and Chicano culture and issues in Chicana feminisms through a collection of educational and cultural resources." There are definitions, chicanas chingonas ("really cool Chicanas" with photos and brief biographies), amigas and allies, literatura, academica, and more. Check the site at: <http://chicanas.com/>

The **CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR'S LANDMARKS FOR WOMEN** page includes a "timeline" that offers tidbits from women's history beginning in 1848, the year of the convention in Seneca Falls. The first of a series of five articles to appear in the paper (this one on equal pay) can be found at the same URL. The address: <http://csmonitor.com/durable/1998/07/17/p7s2.htm>

DOMESTIC GODDESSES (or Scribbling Women), maintained by Kim Wells, is dedicated to six women writers of "domestic fiction": Louisa May Alcott, Willa Cather, Kate Chopin, Sarah Orne Jewett, Harriet Beecher-Stowe, and Edith Wharton. For each writer there is a fairly extensive biography, at least one paper of literary criticism, a bibliography, and links to other websites of related interest. Web address is: <http://lonestar.texas.net/~kwells/dg1.htm>

THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN: 1860-1920, compiled by John Simkin, is a Spartacus Educational website with a bounty of information on British suffragists. Biographies with portraits, a database of primary source materials, a visual database, and a bibliography of relevant books provide good study material for school projects or background on the movement to gain women the vote. Address is: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/resource.htm>

EMILJA is the Baltic and North-West Russian Database for Women's Studies and Gender Research, searchable on the World Wide Web. Located on the NIKK (Nordic Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Research) Web page, the address is: <http://www.esst.uio.no/nikkdb/baltic/emilja.html>

EUROPEAN DATABASE: WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING is a searchable database on women in political leadership in European Union nations. Searchers can look for name, type of participation, member state, or governmental institution. The basic Web page (available in English or German) is: <http://www.db-decision.de/>

FEMINIST VOICES, the free Madison area news journal by and for women, has a website complete with a goodly sample of its content, and also offers a new discussion list on

women's issues, intended for women everywhere. To join the list, email the staff at feministvoices@hotmail.com and to see the website, find the URL: <http://members.spreed.com/feminist/voices.html>

GAY AND LESBIAN HISTORY is a site full of information, compiled and run by Paul Halsall. Divided into sections that include the Ancient Mediterranean, Medieval Worlds, Europe, North America, and Africa, Asia, Latin American, and Oceania, plus themes and bibliographies, the site is quite content rich. Check it out at: <http://pwh.base.org>

A **GAY AND LESBIAN STUDIES SYLLABUS** available on the Web includes a course outline. The address is: <http://www.conterra.com/jsears/syl383d.htm> Other introductory GLBT syllabi are included at the Women's Studies site at University of Maryland: http://www.inform.umd.edu/EdRes/Topic/Diversity/Specific/Sexual_Orientation/Syllabi/

GENDER & SEXUALITY IN THE CLASSICAL WORLD is the title of a course offered by Professor Laura McClure at the University of Wisconsin-Madison that includes a syllabus, a rather extensive bibliography, links to related sites, and paper topic suggestions. You can visit the site at: http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/classics/CLAS_351/gender.html

GENDER INN offers a searchable database of some 5,000 items on feminist theory, literary criticism, and gender studies in the realm of English and American literature. Gathered since 1987 at the English Dept. of the University of Cologne, the database includes primarily monographs and essay collections, with occasional journal articles. Try a search at: http://www.uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/englisch/datenbank/e_index.htm

GIFTS OF SPEECH website offers the complete texts of some seventy-five women leaders' speeches. A variety of women is included, from Hillary Clinton to Margaret Thatcher, Denise Levertov, Andrea Dworkin, and Elizabeth Dole. The URL is: <http://gos.sbc.edu/>

GIRLS NEED MODEMS!: CYBERCULTURE AND WOMEN'S EZINES is a master's paper by Krista Scott of the Women's Studies program, York University. Scott's table of contents includes such intriguing chapter titles as "Speaking Cyberian," "Women and Children First: Mythos and Metaphor," and "Chicks, Flicks, Politicks." The entire text may be found at: <http://www.netrover.com/~cdixon/mrp.html>

The **GLOBAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH FORUM** from Harvard University "aims to encourage the proliferation of critical, democratic discussions about reproductive health, rights, and gender." Information-rich and nicely designed, this site's multiple pages focus on HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, contraception, abortion,

family planning, and maternal health in addition to gender and reproductive rights, and there's even a "teenzone." Address: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/organizations/healthnet/>

Among the **HYPERTEXTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA** American Studies Program are several by women authors. Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), Charlotte Lennox's *Life of Harriot Stuart* (1750), Bessy Conway, *Or, The Irish Girl in America* (1861) by Irish immigrant Mary Anne Sadlier, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), and Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig* (1857) are all available in full text on the following website: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/hypertext.html>

INDIATIME WOMEN offers a "who's who" of Indian women in philosophy, politics, religion, film, and other areas, plus links to organizations, health and beauty information, women's issues, and basic statistics on Indian women. Address of the website: <http://www.indiatime.com/women/women.htm>

INSTRAW (International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women) launched its Web page this year in celebration of International Women's Day and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women. The website offers information on INSTRAW's programs (which include training in economic and political development, environment, and media and communications); publications, financial resources, and organization. The Web address is: <http://www.un.org/instraw/>

KIDS HELP PHONE website offers an 800 number that young people can call for all sorts of information on eating disorders, drugs, birth control, sexual violence, and other health-related questions. Forums are also available for discussion and the site itself carries limited print information. (In French or English.) Site address: <http://kidshelp.sympatico.ca/>

LATIN AMERICAN RESOURCES on women and gender studies is a LANIC/University of Texas collection of useful websites both general and by country. The address: <http://www.lanic.utexas.edu:80/la/region/women/>

MADGRRRLS Web page carries information on the Madgrrls forum, "designed to meet the needs of women who have mood swings, voices, fears and visions." For more description and information on how to subscribe, check the website at: <http://members.aol.com/madgrrls/index.html>

MOUSY is an online magazine focused on young women (and originally on tech and computer-oriented ones, hence the name) that takes on all types of topics, from NPR's smooth "alternative" line to Superfan Sisterhood to the finales of TV series and organizing an online boycott. The editors promise new content weekly and a new issue every

few months. Site address is: <http://www.mousy.com/mousy-weekly/fg-fin-ales.html>

If Disney's version of **MULAN**, the legendary Chinese woman Hua Mulan, has you wondering about the movie story's authenticity, suggested resources are: 100 Celebrated Chinese Women (<http://www.span.com.au/100women/55.html>); The Mulan FAQ Page (<http://www.geocities.com/Hollywood/5082/mulanfaq.html>); or The Ballad of Mulan (<http://www.chinapage.com/mulan.html>)

The **MUSEUM OF MENSTRUATION** is an actual museum whose interesting site carries information on a variety of topics, from early commercial tampons to menstrual cups to humor. Check this one at: <http://www.mum.org/>

The **NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS ARCHIVE** housed at Miami University in Ohio includes on its website a directory of Native American women playwrights, a bibliography of their work, a description of its programming, and related links. The homepage is at: <http://www.lib.muohio.edu/nawpa/>

NORTHERN FEMINIST UNIVERSITY (or Kvinneuniversitetet Nord), based in northern Norway, was founded in 1991 to be a "centre of knowledge where women's experience and knowledge is made visible, recognized, further developed and documented." Activities include courses, conferences, the Femina Borealis network, and projects such as "twinning" for gender advocacy in South Africa. See their website at: <http://www.kun.nl.no/>

The **OREGON MENOPAUSE NETWORK** and its newsletter *HEALTH FORUM FOR MIDLIFE WOMEN* now share a website that offers basic information about their work. Try it at: <http://www.menonetwork.org/>

PIMPS, TRICKS AND FEMINISTS is the title of Kelly Holsopple's informed section of the Plenary at this summer's National Women's Studies Association conference. The text is available on the website of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women: <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/catw/khnwsa.htm>

The National Park Service's **PLACES WHERE WOMEN MADE HISTORY** takes Web travelers through 74 properties in New York and Massachusetts. There's the Susan B. Anthony House in New York, and Villa Lewaro, the home of Madame C.J. Walker, America's first Black millionaire, as well as the Massachusetts setting where Edith Wharton wrote much of her work. Tour starts at: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/crweb1/nr/travel/pwwmh/>

The **ROSA LUXEMBURG INSTITUTE** is an interdisciplinary women's studies institute intended for "engagement, research and praxis from a feminist perspective" in such fields as history and theory of science, genetic engineering, development, ecology, global patriarchy, and networking.

The English website address is: <http://iguwnext.tuwien.ac.at/~rli/Seiten/english/englwelc.htm>

RUSSIAN FEMINIST RESOURCES is the ambitious project of Australian Elena Leonoff, who has gathered a wealth of Internet material on Russian women, in English and Russian, from the arts to politics to academic resources (including syllabi) and health information. Check the multiple Web pages starting at: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/2533/russfem.html>

"The SANS-PAPIERS - A Woman Draws the First Lesson" is the English translation of an enlightening essay (originally in French) by Madjiguene Cisse on the struggle of African women living as illegal immigrants in France as they build communities, battle colonialism and sexism, and learn to deal with the political system to help their predicament. An interesting read, at: <http://www.bok.net/pajol/madjiguene2.en.html>

SELECTED SOURCES - WOMEN, ENVIRONMENT, AND DEVELOPMENT is a lengthy, annotated listing of resources compiled by Marlene Roy of the International Institute for Sustainable Development, Winnipeg. Includes books, reports, papers, and conference materials. Unfortunately, not updated since Fall 1995. Site address: <http://iisd1.iisd.ca/ic/info/ss9509.htm>

SHATTER THE GLASS CEILING is a bi-weekly webzine by Judi Lewis that carries regular columns: editorials, The Looking Glass, Current Events, Health & Medicine, Business, 9-5 Life, H for H (Hubby for Hire or household fix-it tips), and Supermoms. Address: <http://www.theglassceiling.com/shatter.htm>

SONGS COMPOSED BY AMERICAN AND BRITISH WOMEN ca. 1890-1930 is a searchable Web page listing some 2,700 titles by 435 women composers. Compiler Christopher Reynolds notes this era was the "zenith" of women's song composition. Address is: <http://musdra.ucdavis.edu/FMPro/women.html>

TEACHER EDUCATION AND GENDER EQUITY by Jo Sanders is a new document from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education that discusses the importance of equity training for those now in teacher education programs. Address: http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed408277.html

THEORIZING: FEMINISM AND POSTMODERNITY offers an interview with Canadian feminist theorist Linda Hutcheon by Kathleen O'Grady of Trinity College. (Reprinted from Rampike.) Address: <http://bailiwick.lib.uiowa.edu/wstudies/hutcheon.html>

THIRD WAVE is a "member-driven, national non-profit organization devoted to young feminist activism for social change," says the opening page of this website. Offering statistics, articles in its online newsletter, as well as links to a number of other informative pages, this project of [feminist.com](http://www.feminist.com) seeks to reach and support young women just learning how unequal the opportunities out there can be, how much violence there is, etc. Check out the Third Wave site at: <http://www.feminist.com/3dwave.htm>

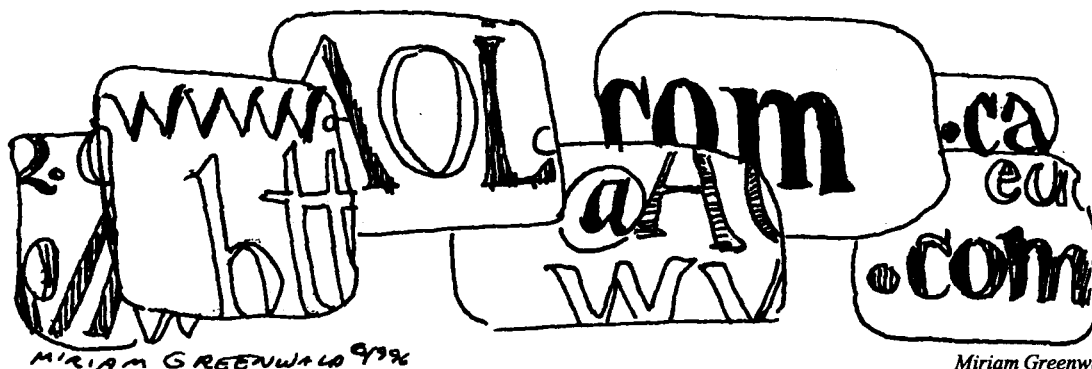
Information on the **TRIANGLE SHIRTWAIST FACTORY FIRE** in 1911 in New York City is available on a website put up by the Kheel Center at Cornell University. The site is intended to help students locate historical information on the tragedy in which 146 workers, mostly young immigrant women, died. Photographs, political cartoons, oral histories, background on sweatshops, links to related websites, and more comprise this excellent Web page. The address: <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/>

UNITED LESBIANS OF AFRICAN HERITAGE (ULOAH), a sisterhood founded in Los Angeles in 1990, has a Web page with basic information about the organization and its annual international SISTAHfest, an "On the Table" commentary section, and more. Check the site at: <http://members.aol.com/uloah/home.html>

VIOLENCE AND RESPONSES TO VIOLENCE is a section of Australian Michael Flood's massive Men's Bibliography that includes an extensive listing of feminist writings on violence. Domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment, child sexual assault, and anti-violence education for men are among the topical groupings for the resources listed. The URL: <http://online.anu.edu.au/~e900392/mensbiblio/MensBiblioMenu.html>

VOICES OF GIRLS IN SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, AND TECHNOLOGY is a project of the Appalachia Educational Laboratory focusing on enhancing girls' participation in science activities in particular schools and offering stories, articles, curriculum materials, and research papers that have developed from the project. There's also a good page of related links to equity-oriented resources. Website address is: <http://www.ael.org/nsf/voices/>

WELFARE REFORM IMPACTS ON THE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAM: A PRELIMINARY FORECAST is an online document from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that "projects the impacts of welfare reform on tenant incomes and resulting rent revenues at eight public housing authorities (HAs) in four states" (Exec. Summary). See the details at: <http://www.huduser.org/publications/publicassist/welreform.html>



WISCONSIN WOMEN'S NETWORK is "a coalition uniting individuals and organizations from across the state of Wisconsin who share a concern for equality and justice for women." The Network's new Web page describes the component organizations, gives action alerts on pending legislation, a calendar of upcoming events, and news from the legislative task forces (on such areas as child care, domestic violence, economic issues, and sex equity in education). Web address is: <http://www.execpc.com/wiwomen/>

WOMEN ABOARD, an organization providing "a network for women boaters," carries on its Web space (shared with Watermark Publishing) some of the "Best Tips" from its newsletter over the years 1994-1997, such as making your boat your home, maximizing limited storage space, living aboard in cold climates, and the like. Check the site at: <http://www.cruisingguide.com/wmaboard.html>

WOMEN AND GIRLS LAST: FEMALES AND THE INTERNET by Janet Morahan-Martin is available as part of the proceedings of the IRISS (Internet Research and Information for Social Scientists) Conference 1998 held in March 1998 in Bristol, UK. See Morahan-Martin's comments at: <http://sosig.ac.uk/iriss/papers/paper55.htm>

The **WOMEN AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (WID) PROGRAM** at Michigan State University includes on its Web page a listing of the program's publications, a "Resource Guide" of links to websites from different developing regions, and information on MSU programs. Site address is: <http://www.isp.msu.edu/wid/>

A WOMEN & SOCIETY "TELEWEB" COURSE SYLLABUS, offered by instructor Sonja Millbourn of Butler County Community College, includes an online discussion group. Address is: <http://www2.southwind.net/~smilbour/wsyll.html>

WOMEN AND THE HOLOCAUST is a Web project that pays special attention to the struggles of women who were mothers, resistance fighters, camp organizers, rescuers, survivors. Personal reflections, letters, tributes, articles, an

annotated bibliography, and more are part of this multi-page historical collection. View it at: <http://www.interlog.com/~mighty/>

The **WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT** section of the United Nations' ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) agency offers basic information on its "developing" website about women's programs, such as literacy initiatives, technology transfer, sanitation workshops, and the like. Site address is: <http://unesap.org/wid/index.htm>

The **WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF LOS ANGELES (WLALA)** appears to be an extremely active group of professionals who seek to "promote the interests of women attorneys and judges, to further understanding of and support for the legal rights of all women, and to promote equality and equal opportunity for all people. A bibliography (of mostly non-legal books) with lengthy annotations is included. You can find their website at: <http://wlala.org/Index.htm>

The **WOMEN'S ART LIBRARY** of Britain has a website with information on library hours, how to get things published in its journal **MAKE**, how to borrow one of the 141,000 slides in the library, and answers to lots of related questions. Check it out at <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/womensart.lib/home.html>

The **WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER** is an interactive business website "dedicated to helping entrepreneurial women" gain the "information and expertise they need to plan their economic independence through owning a business of their own." Based on the vision of the Small Business Administration's Office of Women's Business Ownership, the website offers such detailed help as "Book-keeping and Accounting: From Start to Finish," "Success Stories," marketing tips, and much more. The main address is: <http://www.onlinewbc.org/>

The **WOMEN'S CYBRARY** includes more than 1,000 links to women's writing online. Books, reviews, authors' pages, magazines, links to many other collections of links,

and more are available at: <http://www.womenbooks.com/cybrary.html>

WOMEN'S HEALTH INTERACTIVE includes three "health centers" on its Web page: for midlife, gynecologic, and infertility concerns. Each offers a variety of information related to the particular life stage. A "quality of life study" on perimenopause/menopause conducted in conjunction with Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Harvard Medical School invites participation, as do several online discussion groups. The URL is: <http://www.womens-health.com/>

The **WOMEN'S PRESSES LIBRARY PROJECT** works toward cooperation with libraries in increasing the visibility of small press titles in library collections. A list of presses, the titles they produce, a search mechanism, and more are on the WPLP website at: <http://www.litwomen.org/wplp.html>

WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES is a course offered by Dr. Nicola Denzey at Bowdoin College, whose syllabus is available on the Web. The course outline includes wonderful graphics and many links to full-text primary documents and other relevant websites. See it at: http://www.bowdoin.edu/~ndenzey/syllabus_232.htm

The **WOMEN'S VOTING GUIDE**, a nonpartisan Web project of the Women Leaders Online Fund, began with the voting records of incumbent U.S. Senators, now includes the votes of the U.S. House of Representatives, and will follow the positions of candidates for the 1998 general election in both House and Senate races, providing women with "easy access to specific and meaningful information on the positions of candidates." Keep an eye on this one at: <http://womenvote.org/>

WORKPLACE SOLUTIONS is a project of Wider Opportunities for Women intended to help unions and employers "Successfully Recruit and Retain Women in Nontraditional Occupations." There's a resource clearinghouse, an online forum, a self-assessment form, and even a "success gallery" of companies/unions who have helped women move into higher-paying nontraditional jobs. Site address is: <http://www.WorkplaceSolutions.org/>

ZAPATISTA WOMEN/MUJERES ZAPATISTAS website is in the process of building a resource for information about the struggle of women in the Chiapas region of Mexico, including full text of the book *Chiapas, And the Women?* by Rosa Rojas, a discussion forum, the beginnings of a bibliography, and links to related websites. The address: <http://www.actlab.utexas.edu/~geneve/zapwomen/>

Other Electronic Resources

Joan Korenman recently announced establishment of the **CENTER FOR WOMEN AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** at University of Maryland, Baltimore County, to "encourage women's and girls' involvement with information technology, both as users and as IT professionals, and to encourage and support research concerning the relationship between gender and IT." Joan will relinquish her duties as director of UMBC's Women's Studies Program to become director of the new Center. Congratulations, Joan!

A European woman is gathering the names and addresses of women's groups around the world. As of last report Denise Osted had 1,000 groups and hopes to reach 4,000. She wants to include "women's studies departments, women's resource centers, shelters, religious groups, magazines, rape crisis lines, political activism groups, health organizations, journals, professional associations, women's bookstores and publishers, feminist libraries, research groups, economic and racial justice groups, etc." Once compiled, she will make the information available free to anyone. Send her email at: fullmoon@euronet.nl

As part of a five-year project by the Finnish government toward the prevention of prostitution, Nordic researchers in areas such as gendered power, societal sexual contracts, marginalization, stigmatization and control, and women's studies have developed an email network. Coordinator is Marjut Jyrkinen, STAKES, and email contact is marjut.jyrkinen@stakes.fi

Compiled by Linda Shult

FEMINIST PUBLISHING

There's yet another publishing anniversary to celebrate (slightly belatedly), following on the heels of last issue's announcement of three feminist press birthdays. **WOMEN'S PRESS/CANADA** has for twenty-five years now been putting into print a wide variety of work by women from diverse communities. The oldest and largest feminist publishing house in Canada (founded in 1972), Women's Press early on published the first Canadian book on sexual violence as well as, more recently, the first book on the history of Black women in Canada (*No Burden to Carry* by Margaret Merrifield). Structural and goal changes in the 1980s have led to more diversity in staff and publications, emphasizing publishing by Black, First Nations, Asian and other authors of color. Among the press's more than one hundred titles are these: *Writing as Witness* (Brant, 1994); *The Faraway Hills Are Green: Voices of Irish*

Women in Canada (Conway, 1992); *Fireworks* (ed. Silvera, 1986); *Double Day, Double Bind: Women Garment Workers* (Gannage, 1986); *Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel* (Maracle, 1990); *More Than a Labour of Love: Three Generations of Women's Work in the Home* (Luxton, 1983); *Private Lives, Public Policy: One Hundred Years of State Intervention in the Family* (Ursel, 1992); and *Iskwewak - kah'ki yaw ni wahkomakanak: Neither Indian Princesses nor Easy Squaws* (Acoosel Red Sky Woman, 1995)

To help recognize the importance of small presses, writer Dorothy Allison, author of such bestsellers as *Bastard Out of Carolina* (Dutton, 1992) and *Cavedweller* (Dutton, 1998), has recently established the **ASTREA INDEPENDENT SPIRIT AWARD**, which carries a cash prize of \$5,000 each year. (Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation is a grantmaking foundation that for twenty years has promoted political and social justice.) The 1998 recipients are Carol Seajay, founder and publisher of *Feminist Bookstore News*, a long-standing resource for the women's publishing

community, and Nancy Bereano, founding owner, publisher, and editor of Firebrand Books. In establishing the award, Allison explained, "My life as a writer has been made possible by the feminist and alternative presses and small bookstores." Her first work was published in a small feminist magazine; her first reading in a small bookstore; her first book of poetry published by Long Haul Press, fiction and essays by Firebrand.

Sadly, we hear confirmed by Mev Miller of the Women's Presses Library Project that the venerable **KITCHEN TABLE WOMEN OF COLOR PRESS** is truly out of business. Few of the press's groundbreaking books are still in print, though Barbara Smith is trying to get *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology* (ed. Smith) republished by another press and there's talk of *Seventeen Syllables* (Yamamoto) and *Camp Notes* (Yamada) being picked up by a university press. Among other Kitchen Table titles are: *Cuentos: Stories by Latinas* (ed. Gomez, Moraga, and Romo-Carmona); *I Am Your Sister: Black Women Organizing Across Sexualities* (Lorde); *A Comrade is as Precious as a Rice Seedling* (Aguilar); *The Combahee River Collective Statement* (Combahee River Collective); and *Healing Heart: Poems, 1973-1988* (Hull). The second and longest-running edition of *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (Moraga and Anzaldua) also came from Kitchen Table.



NEW REFERENCE WORKS IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

BIOGRAPHY

THE GROLIER LIBRARY OF WOMEN'S BIOGRAPHY. Danbury, CT: Grolier Educational, 1998. 10v. bibliogs. ill. indexes. \$319.00, ISBN 0-7172-9124-3.

The children's reference shelf of women's history and biography is getting bigger. Joining such works as the one-volume *Scholastic Encyclopedia of Women in the United States*, by Sheila Keenan (1996) and *Herstory: Women who Changed the World*, by Ruth Ashby and Deborah Gore Ohrn (Viking 1995), and the multivolume *Young Oxford History of Women in the United States* (1995) [in particular its volume 11: "Biographical Supplement"], *The Grolier Library of Women's Biography* offers middle-school readers a place to look up many historical and contemporary figures – some 1,850 to be exact.

Entries are arranged alphabetically, which makes for interesting juxtapositions for the child tempted to read sequentially. Oprah Winfrey is preceded by the Duchess of Windsor and followed by Jeanette Winterson, a British novelist born in 1959 whose autobiographical first novel *Oranges are Not the Only Fruit* drew on Winterson's "eccentric upbringing and her family's horrified reaction to her lesbianism" (p.109), skater Katerina Witt, and eighteenth-century Irish actress Peg Woffington. Coverage begins in ancient times (Cleopatra), is current into 1997 (revelation about the Jewish origin of Secretary of State Madeline Albright's family; death of Princess Diana), and there are several better-known women from outside North America and Europe (Chinese author Ding Ling and politician Jiang Qing; Imelda Marcos and Corazon

Aquino of the Philippines). The largest categories in the subject index (repeated in each volume) are performing arts and writing, with good representation under art, education, medicine, music, science, social reform, and sport as well. Each entry is about one page long, including a black-and-white photograph. There are also twenty two-page thematic essays throughout the set on topics such as "education and women" and "suffrage for women."

Two criticisms: First, the definition of a good reference work is twofold. It should provide accurate information and point to further sources. The *Grolier Library of Women's Biographies* does alright with the first criterion, but misses on the second. Not once does it refer eager young readers to any biographies written for children about many of the women in the set. A quick check of *Books in Print* yields almost three hundred biographical works on women for children, and libraries hold numerous others that are no longer in print. Our library catalog lists eleven books for children about Sojourner Truth and twenty-two on Harriet Tubman, but their entries in the set list none. Second, how long will it be before the contributions of contemporary women's studies scholars are deemed worthy of inclusion with the likes of Meg Ryan and Michelle Pfeiffer? A few sneak through, like Angela Davis, for her association with the Black Panthers, but where are essayist bell hooks, historian Gerda Lerner, legal scholar Catharine MacKinnon, literary scholars Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, thinker on issues of science and gender Evelyn Fox Keller, and Feminist Press of the City University of New York publisher Florence Howe? Just as feminist

scholarship has moved beyond the "add women and stir" level of history, works for children should go beyond the well-known entertainers, sports figures, and novelists, and incorporate women who have been changing the face of academic fields for over a generation.

Should school libraries acquire *The Grolier Library of Women's Biographies*? Sure, it will demonstrate that many women have led interesting and productive lives. Could it have been better? Yes, and perhaps a second edition can address the criticisms raised in the paragraph above.

FILM

Amy Unterburger, ed., **WOMEN FILMMAKERS AND THEIR FILMS.** Detroit: St. James, 1998. 573p. ill. indexes. \$110.00, ISBN 1-55862-357-4.

Film enthusiasts will be surprised to find entries for *Bonnie and Clyde*, directed by Arthur Penn, and Martin Scorsese's *Raging Bull* in a book on women filmmakers, but that is because we (I'm one) are unfortunately much less aware of film editors, screenwriters, and other crucial behind-the-scenes filmmakers than we are of directors. The critical acclaim for these two films was due in part to the superb editing of Dede Allen for the former and Thelma Schoonmaker for the latter. One of the strengths of *Women Filmmakers* is that it analyzes the editing of such films so readers can gain an appreciation of their women editors. In *Bonnie and Clyde*, the characters are loners, cut off from society and sometimes from each other. Allen supports this by showing the two main characters in brief, disjointed shots, often alone. Violent deaths are

marked by fast, disconnected shots lasting only a few frames. According to contributor Audrey F. Kupferberg, "Allen's manner of editing the violent robberies and shoot-outs was so effective that it became the basic cinematic language of future crime films" (p.42). The energy in alternating shots of two boxers in *Raging Bull*, says contributor Rob Edelman, is derived "not only from the physical movements of the actors but the manner in which the contrasting pieces of film are edited" (p.344).

Women Filmmakers has more than 190 entries on women directors, producers, editors, writers, animators, and others as well as about 60 entries for important films. Each biographical entry includes a brief biography, a complete filmography, a selected bibliography of works by and about the entrant, and an essay by one of the many film critics, professors, and freelancers who contributes to this excellent guide to women and filmmaking. Entries are two to four pages long, many with photographs. Included are writers Betty Comden and Anita Loos, animators Joy Batchelor and Lotte Reiniger, directors Diane Kurys, Agnes Varda, Alice Guy, and Barbara Hammer, several women like Barbra Streisand and Jodie Foster who appear in two or more categories, and many others. Entries for films include production information, cast and crew, a selected bibliography of works about the film, and an essay. They were chosen to represent "the wide range of interests within North American and European film scholarship and criticism" (Editor's note, p.vii). In essence, that limited the book to commercial and to a lesser extent independent filmmaking in North America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

In addition to the entries, there are introductory essays on "The Evolution of the Woman Filmmaker," by

Gwendolyn Audrey Foster and "The Status of Contemporary Women Filmmakers," by Katrien Jacobs, a chronology, a selected list of distributors of films by women filmmakers, and four useful indexes (nationality, occupation, awards, and film title). I would have liked to see a somewhat longer general bibliography/filmography on women and filmmaking than the eleven items at the end of Foster's essay. It might have included Foster's own documentary on the subject, *Women Who Made the Movies* (Gwendolyn Foster Dixon and Wheeler Dixon, Nebraska Educational Television, 1991) and Ally Acker's series of *Reel Women Videos* (10 tapes, 1991-1993).

One film I was surprised not to find in *Women Filmmakers* is *Thelma and Louise*, written by Callie Khouri. Perhaps Khouri needs more credits to qualify, but the impact of the film on feminist film history cannot be denied.

This is a wonderful addition to the reference works available on women and filmmaking to date, which include Annette Kuhn's *Women in Film: An International Guide* (Fawcett, 1990) and Gwendolyn Foster's *Women Film Directors: An International Bio-Critical Dictionary* (Greenwood, 1995).

GIRLS' BOOKS

Alison Cooper-Mullin and Jennifer Marmaduke Coye, *ONCE UPON A HEROINE: 450 BOOKS FOR GIRLS TO LOVE*. Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1998. 349p. index. pap., \$16.95, ISBN 0-8092-3020-8.

If someone asked you to name your favorite book from childhood, what would it be? If you are a middle-aged or older woman, you'll probably say *Little Women*, *Little House on the*

Prairie, *Pippi Longstocking*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *Madeleine*, *Eloise*, or the Nancy Drew series. Heroines of these books are mentioned repeatedly by the successful women contacted by Cooper-Mullin and Coye whose replies are included throughout *Once Upon a Heroine*. If you wanted a book with a female protagonist, there wasn't much else before the 1970s. There were the Cherry Ames nurse books (actually mentioned by Christine Todd Whitman) and others like them that took their heroines from student days through romance and marriage, but not much else. The situation is radically different today, with scores of really good children's books appearing each year among the thousands published. What will girls raised in the 1990s name as their favorites twenty years from now? Probably these same "classics" will be on the list, along with others reflecting the diversity of girls' lives – the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison says that "naming a book as a classic is dependent as much on one's background as what someone may have read to you when you were young."¹ These will be joined by a whole raft of newer books that girls are drawn to because friends pass them on as "must reads" or adults suggest them.

Once Upon a Heroine is the newest resource among several that guide parents, teachers, librarians, and young readers to books that champion strong, independent, spunky girls. Other guides reviewed of late in *Feminist Collections* are *Gender Positive! A Teachers' and Librarians' Guide to Nonstereotyped Children's Literature, K-8*, by Patricia L. Roberts, et al. (McFarland, 1993), *Great Books for Girls: More Than 600 Books to Inspire Today's Girls and Tomorrow's Women*, by Kathleen Odean (Ballantine 1997), and *Let's Hear It for the Girls: 375 Great Books for Readers 2-14*, by Erica Bauermeister and Holly Smith (Penguin, 1997). All the guides

are useful. Some books will appear in all or most of them, others are unique. What sets *Once Upon a Heroine* apart are the reminiscences from business-women, athletes, performers, writers, and activists, often set in sidebars alongside Cooper-Mullin and Coye's description of the book they recall.

Once Upon a Heroine is divided by age group and includes an index of titles, authors, and contributors as well as a subject index. The authors also solicit suggestions for future editions.

HISTORY

Wilma Mankiller, et al., *THE READER'S COMPANION TO U.S. WOMEN'S HISTORY*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998. 696p. ill., index. \$45.00, ISBN 0-395-67173-9.

If you wanted someone to write an entry on the history of "misogyny," wouldn't it be great to have Andrea Dworkin do it? Who better than Evelyn Torton Beck could you find to define "Jewish lesbianism," or Barbara Haber to write on "cooking," Carol Seajay on "feminist presses, publications, and bookstores," or Sara Evans on the "Vietnam era." The editors of *The Reader's Companion to U.S. Women's History* have snagged them all, plus made their own substantial contributions to this spirited, emphatically multicultural work. Editor Gloria Steinem analyzes talk shows, defines womanism (with Diana L. Hayes), and traces the history of the term "Ms." back to 1767. Steinem and coeditors Wilma Mankiller and Marysa Navarro begin a long section on "Feminism and Feminisms" by reviewing the history of the meaning of "feminism" for different ethnic groups and eras. Editors Barbara Smith and Gwendolyn Mink enlarge the topic by introducing the concept of "Feminisms," which is followed by no less than seventeen separate entries on feminist flavors from American Indian to working-class. Mink has six other contributions, while her mother, Congresswoman Patsy Mink, author of the Women's

Educational Equity Act (1974), describes that legislation herself. Mankiller also discusses the Iroquois Confederacy, while Navarro covers "international feminism," and Smith both "Black feminism" and "Black lesbians."

The editors strive to tell an inclusive story in *all* entries. Thus, an entry that might be "image of women" in another book is here "images of women," and contributor Lois W. Banner includes images of women of various ethnicities, ages, and sexual preferences in addition to the virgin/whore dichotomy. She also covers the history of the popularity of tanning for well-off white women. While it maximized the distinction between them and pallid factory workers, it also may have resulted from the popularity of Black singer Josephine Baker and other Black entertainers during the 1920s.

In addition to topics specifically on women, *The Reader's Companion to U.S. Women's History* has many entries that would be part of any general American history ("Puritanism," "Labor Unions," "Civil Rights Movement," etc.), but addressing the relationship of women to these topics.

A disappointment is that there are no biographical entries at all. Since there are more than six hundred pages to the text already, presumably entries about individuals would have pushed this to a two-volume work. One can find references to individuals through the index, but that does not guarantee basic facts about their lives. Another weakness as a reference tool is that only some of the entries provide bibliographic citations. Even though the intended audience is clearly general readers, it would have been nice to let them know somewhere (in addition to the page of illustration credits) that women's history sources are preserved in libraries and archives. There could have been an entry for the principal repositories or a more general entry on historical preservation. Despite these negatives, the work as a whole is a positive, women-affirming reference tool that will be an

informative and often entertaining guide for all readers.

MATHEMATICS

Charlene Morrow and Teri Perl, eds., *NOTABLE WOMEN IN MATHEMATICS: A BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1998. 302p. ill. index. \$49.95, ISBN 0-313-29131-4.

"What a pity you're a girl; you're so good at mathematics, and it seems you won't be able to use it." How many potential mathematicians have been discouraged by statements like that? We'll never know, but we can learn from *Notable Women in Mathematics* about women like Gilah Vanderhoek Leder, who upon hearing the above from a high school teacher redoubled her determination to pursue a degree in mathematics in college. She is one of fifty-nine women whose significant contributions to mathematics have garnered them a place in Greenwood Press' newest *Notable Women...* book. Greenwood has several types of biographical reference works on women, variously subtitled "bio-bibliographical sourcebook," "bio-critical sourcebook," and "biographical dictionary." The bio-bibliographical and bio-critical works, including L.S. Grinstein and P.J. Campbell's *Women of Mathematics* (1987), are aimed at the academic community and provide a critical assessment of each woman's body of work. The biographical dictionaries of *Notables* have general readers in mind, describing early influences, career pathway, and other interests, yet also attempt to describe the field of study the subject is known for and her place in it.

This is an especially daunting task, say editors Morrow and Perl, in mathematics – a discipline where many professors claim they "cannot transmit any idea of their research, even to undergraduates who have already begun to study more advanced mathematics" (Introduction, p.viii) – and they are to be commended for trying.

Some essays succeed spectacularly. Louise Roslansky Grosslein, for example, uses a wonderful extended visualization patterned on *Flatland*² of a little girl fishing from a dock over a lake to explain the work of Alicia Boole Stott on dimensions. Elsewhere, the explanations leave the nonmathematician still confused. Morrow and Perl suggest that readers seek out people with greater mathematical training or consult reference works if terms are unclear or undefined. I doubt, however, that someone who does not understand a sentence like the following could get much further using those strategies: "Her [Cora Sadosky's] research over the last twenty years has centered on developing, in collaboration with Mischa Cotlar, an abstract extension theory for operators that commute with evolutions in scattering structures" (p.207). Most readers will, I'm sure, be satisfied to read Charlene Morrow and Lynn Benander's additional explanation that this is important because "such operators model many transformations occurring in several engineering fields..." and that the control system of the space shuttle is one application of the theory.

The notables range from Hypatia of Alexandria (c. 360-415) and four women born in the eighteenth century to Andrea Bertozzi, a tenured professor at Duke University who is only 33. The vast majority have been employed at academic and research institutions in the United States, though many were born elsewhere. The essays – by mathematicians, teachers, and other contributors – are five to seven pages long, and each includes a black-and-white photograph. The entries on contemporary women are largely based on interviews, often spiced with quotations from the biographees. In addition to supplying biographical information and a toe-dip into the mathematical work, each essay lists selected works by and about the biographee.

Many of the women recall particular individuals who noticed their ability and mentored them. There were no books like *Notable Women in*

Mathematics to show them that women can spend their days entranced by the elegance and challenge of higher mathematics and have family lives as well. High school girls today still need encouragement from individuals, but they also have this excellent collection of biographies to inspire them to pursue mathematical careers.

POETS

Pamela L. Shelton, ed., *CONTEMPORARY WOMEN POETS*. Detroit, MI: St. James Press, 1998. 400p. bibl. index. \$90, ISBN 1-55862-356-6 (Contemporary writers series).

It is always risky to assemble the "contemporary" when it comes to literary criticism and history, where hindsight is all. The primary virtue of this compilation is in the fullness of the annotations on the poets included (giving biographical data, bibliographies, poet's commentary, and critical commentary) rather than the selection itself, which might be more appropriately titled "Most Prominent Living . . ." than "Contemporary Women Poets," as the editor is quick to announce in the first sentence of her "Editor's Note." Even so, we are not given the criteria for selection, beyond the listing of advisors and contributors, or intended scope, beyond "... nearly 250 of the most prominent women poets currently writing/and or publishing in the English language today." Why 250 and not 50 or 350? The editor also gestures to the inclusion of "several important new women poets just gaining widespread critical attention" (xiii), but does not let on what the criteria for "critical attention" is. Why Vicki Feaver, Lisa Jarnot, Honor Moore and not Alta, Mary Crow, Cherrie Moraga, Chrystos, Anne Carson? Given the great difficulty of gaining any critical attention for poetry in today's mainstream culture, a difficulty compounded by the current proliferation of alternative presses training primary attention on women and by the

consequent thousands of women poets now publishing, inclusion itself, in such a bibliography as this, in fact, constitutes "critical attention."

Some of the more prominent writers selected are better known for their work in genres other than poetry. For example, in view of the many contemporary women poets not included, it is difficult to justify the inclusion of Janet Frame, who is well-known for her novels but has only one published volume of poetry (1967). On the other hand, Margaret Atwood, who may also be better known as a novelist, yet has continuously produced books of poetry (24) since 1961, clearly warrants inclusion. Some "significant" poets writing in other languages have also been chosen for inclusion in this collection when their "works are of current academic interest" (xiii), but, again, the criteria for such is left vague. Quite aside from the selection of these foreign language poets, not every English-speaking nation is even represented (for example, there are no entrants from South Africa). Above all, the absence of a clear and definitive editorial statement renders the term "contemporary" highly problematic. While no major contemporary women poets have been left out, and many "new" poets are presented here, a considerable number of lesser-known but important emerg-ing poets are not included. Most of the advisors to the collection have experience as consulting poetry editors and/or academic literary critics (i.e., Rita Dove, Marjorie Perloff, Judith Rodrigues, Anthony Thwaite, Diane Wakoski), yet the contributors are overwhelmingly educators – professors of English, mainly – with a fair scattering of poets and writers, but very few editors of poetry publications, and these few are mostly men. The women poets left out of this collection may simply be better known to readers of the literary and feminist small and independent presses than to mainstream academics. Thus the comprehensiveness of this compilation might



Miriam Greenwald

have been substantially improved with the addition of advisors and consultants who are women editors and/or publishers firmly grounded in the small literary and/or feminist presses, such as Glenna Luschei (*Café Solo*), Marion K. Stocking (*The Beloit Poetry Journal*), Hilda Raz (*Prairie Schooner*), Judith Johnson (*13th Moon*), Elana Dykewomon (*Sinister Wisdom*), Sue Ann Martinson (*Sing, Heavenly Muse*), or many others.

These misgivings aside, the entries for the poets listed are very complete and quite readable. Both Elizabeth M. Mills and Diane Wakoski have written forewords to the edition. There is a nationality index, a book title index, and an annotated listing of advisors and contributors. Full individual entries may include nationality, date of birth, education, family information, career information, awards, literary agent and address (including email and website addresses), as well as listings of publications, bibliographies, manuscript collection holdings, and critical studies (though not every entry supplies all this information). It would have been good had significant journal publications been listed as well, as these signal much about a poet's background and milieu. A perhaps feminist touch is the inclusion of personal statements by the entrants. The critical commentaries accompanying each entry are informative and, thankfully, tend to focus on the poetry. Apparently, the bibliographies were provided by the poets, and may not

have been double-checked (I found a minor error, listing my press as located in Oshkosh).

Contemporary Women Poets is, to my knowledge, the only such reference book in print giving full biographical and bibliographic data. On the other end of the scale is *A Directory of American Poets and Fiction Writers* (New York: Poets & Writers), updated and published every two years, which compiles the names and a brief listing of publications of some 7,200 contemporary writers – but not much else (although it does list periodical publications). While there are a good many substantial studies covering major women poets of the twentieth century up to the present, like Jean Gould's *Modern American Women Poets* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1984), and numerous bibliographies and works on women poets of other time periods, places, and themes, there's really nothing comparable to this collection. *Contemporary Women Poets* will undoubtedly serve as a valuable research tool for both students and the general public now and in years to come.

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ture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A new book of poetry, *Poems in the Dream Time*, is in progress.]

STATISTICS

United Nations. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Statistical Profiles series. Reviewed: **WOMEN IN CHINA: A PROFILE** (92p., Statistical Profiles, no. 10, ST/ESCAP/1763, UN Pub. Sales no. E97.II.F.17, ISBN 92-1-119754-6, \$19.95), **WOMEN IN FIJI: A COUNTRY PROFILE** (64p., Statistical Profiles, no.11, ST/ESCAP/1764, UN Pub. Sales no. E97.II.F.18, \$15.00, ISBN 92-1-119755-4), New York: 1997.

Any researcher trying to get accurate, current statistics on the situation of women in countries in the developing world will confirm how difficult a process it has been to obtain such figures. S/he may have had to settle for data from the mid-1980s and/or gross estimates from international organizations removed from the reality of the numbers. Add a desire for comparable indicators from two or more countries and the researcher has no doubt begun to daydream about the advantages of qualitative studies. The situation improved greatly with the appearance of *The World's Women* from the United Nations (1991, second ed., 1995). Data were merged from numerous sources and presented in tabular form, offering

a basis for comparisons, although footnotes still showed variation in date and sometimes definition of the item being counted. With respect to currency, the U.N. Statistics Division is providing an excellent service by updating the statistical tables in *The World's Women* on the Web at <http://www.un.org/Depts/unsd/gender.intro.htm>.

The World's Women and the website statistics are at the regional or country level only. They are not designed to provide information on provincial, ethnic, rural/urban variation, or other factors significant within a particular country. Yet that degree of specificity is critical for understanding actual conditions for women and assessing progress in raising their economic and social standing. In 1994, the United Nations Secretariat initiated a project on improving statistics on women in the region covered by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). With funding assistance from the Government of the Netherlands, the project commissioned experts from nineteen countries in the region to prepare detailed country profiles on gender factors in the family, at work, and in public life. The first two country profiles, on China and Fiji, are reviewed here. Others in the series are Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and several island nations.

Each country profile follows the same pattern. An introduction briefly summarizes the history of the status of women in that state, followed by highlights of findings in the profile. The next section describes general conditions in the country, starting with its geographical setting, and discussing its government, economy, demographics, and social infrastructure. The rest of each volume profiles women's lives, beginning with population data, then

examining marriage, fertility, and other family matters, gender differences in a host of labor-force measures, and the political participation of women using various indicators. While these categories provide a structure, as one would expect, the two books on vastly different countries have different emphases. Fiji, population 771,104, is a parliamentary democracy with two main ethnic groups: indigenous Fijians and Indians who are descendants of indentured laborers. Tables throughout reflect differential rates for Fijians and Indians. The People's Republic of China is the most populous country in the world, estimated at 1.16 billion (1993), including a dominant Han group and 55 minorities, spread over 22 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, and 3 municipalities. Many tables in *Women in China* present information at the provincial level or offer rural/urban distinctions. The volume discusses at some length the reported differences in official sex ratio at birth, which varies from 92.5 males for every 100 females born in urban Qinghai province to a high of 136.2 in urban Hainan.

Even though China and Fiji are opposites in many ways, it is interesting that some aspects of the status of women are similar. Males outnumber females in the overall population of both countries (97 females for every 100 males in Fiji, 94 females for every 100 males in China). Formal labor force figures significantly undercount working Chinese women and Fijians because most women are employed in the informal sector. Few women have been elected to the Fijian parliament, and in China, the percentage of female members of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist party is only 6.3 percent (1992), and the proportion female representatives in the National People's Congress hovers around 21 percent (1993).

These profiles of the status of women in countries of Asia and the

Pacific will be useful aids to policy makers, area studies, and women's studies researchers.

THIRD WORLD

Nelly P. Stromquist, ed., and Karen Monkman, asst. ed., *WOMEN IN THE THIRD WORLD: AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CONTEMPORARY ISSUES*. New York: Garland, 1998. 683p. annot. bibl. index. \$135.00, ISBN 0-8153-0150-2.

An overarching desire of the editor and contributors to this timely encyclopedia is to provide the intellectual wherewithal for women in industrialized countries to make the "journey to solidarity" with women in the Third World. In order to accomplish this goal, *Women in the Third World* goes quite beyond what would be expected in an encyclopedia on this subject, such as a variety of statistics on demographics, health, violence against women, etc., or essays on particular countries. *Women in the Third World* adds essays on many topics only now emerging as women's issues, such as the gender consequences of ecological deterioration and the critical role educating women plays in the development of countries. This is also overtly a feminist work. One of the first articles is "Feminist Epistemology and Research Methods," by Margaret Sutton, and throughout the book, contributors keep the relationship between gender and power in the forefront, make connections across disciplines, countries, classes, and races, and cite feminist research.

There are other differences from more traditional encyclopedias, too. One is simply length of entries. Contributors were allowed thirty pages, double-spaced, for topical entries (twenty for the geographic entries), and this gives them leeway to address

distinctions among countries or regions in more than a superficial way and to develop several sub-topics. Gale Summerfeld and Nahid Aslanbeigui's essay on "The Impact of Structural Adjustment and Economic Reform on Women," for example, opens with common components of economic reform, whether mandated by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank or due to a decision to move from a centrally-controlled economy to one that is market-based. Reform elements include reduction in government spending, privatization of state firms, more emphasis on economic efficiency, and trade liberalization (p.332). Next Summerfeld and Aslanbeigui turn to examples of different restructuring policies in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. These set the stage for understanding the impact of restructuring on women in different regions. In Latin America (especially Mexico) many women joined the workforce in *maquiladoras* (export factories). Although the numbers in *maquiladoras* have fallen since the mid-1980s, women remain in the labor force, yet continue all their household tasks, too, since the Mexican family structure remains virtually unchanged. In the sub-Sahara, where women had a long history in subsistence agriculture and trading, the reforms have pushed them into low-paying, informal-sector work. In China, city women have found some new opportunities to work in businesses and/or be self-employed. Regardless of region, women are working longer and harder, and underlying traditional forms of discrimination seem to be exacerbated.

The article on "Refugee and Displaced Women," by Sima Wali, is another example of depth of coverage. She discusses forced migrations in the 1990s affecting millions of people (eighty percent of whom are women and children), gender-based persecutions, the role of the media, and the special problems of the status of Muslim women in their societies (often overlooked by Western relief agencies). Wali recommends that Western donors

interested in the establishment of democratic processes in Muslim countries work with local Muslim women's organizations to shape "culturally appropriate strategies" and fund U.S.-based nongovernmental organizations that have experience with refugee women. This essay also illustrates another feature that sets *Women in the Third World* apart from other encyclopedias. Wali and many of the other contributors are not simply descriptive of the current situation. They offer advice to policy makers for future actions.

With the increasing emphasis in women's studies programs on global women's issues, this book can provide an excellent resource for students exploring any of the topics covered. Each article includes bibliographic references for further research. Those, plus an annotated bibliography of general work at the end of the book, will be invaluable to academic libraries checking how well they cover Third World women in their collections. What about the advice for policy makers? Will any ever see this book? If not directly, at least the ideas embodied in it can be a resource to activists in dealing with funding and governmental agencies, and perhaps in that way, the book can influence women's lives in Third World countries.

WOMEN'S ISSUES

Lauren Hartman, *SOLUTIONS: THE WOMAN'S CRISIS HANDBOOK*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. 670p. bibl. index. pap., \$25.00, ISBN 0-395-70739-0.

My first questions, looking at the variety of crises covered in this book – from being fired to dealing with a disabled child, domestic violence, or a life-threatening illness – are who should buy this book, and when? Let's start with "when." While it would be more expedient to have such a volume on hand should a crisis develop, its

information could be quite out-of-date before the need arises. However, while some of the facts and resource information will need updating, there's so much good advice about managing each crisis and pointers to well-established organizations that I think *Solutions* will be a useful guide well into the future. The section on being fired, for example, covers legal rights and steps to be taken to negotiate severance pay, maintain health insurance, and decide whether to take accrued payment from the pension fund as a lump sum or to leave it invested and receive it as an annuity after retirement. Psychologically, it is good to have something to reach for, too, should a crisis develop, rather than have to face browsing libraries and bookstores in an emergency. Hartman also suggests that many sections of the book can be used for prevention. What about the "who?" My fear here is that someone experiencing any one of the crises covered would want more information on that particular problem than can be provided in a general handbook. That concern was allayed in large measure by the author's wise statement that crises rarely come singly. The loss of an infant could lead to depression, a stroke to a need for home health care, etc., and sometimes more than one unrelated bad thing strikes at the same time. So, unless you are the type of person who wants a raft of advice manuals on hand for dealing with divorce, a gay teenager, facing an unexpected pregnancy, being stalked, and picking a nursing home, it would be useful to be prepared in a general way with this sensible guide. After absorbing what Hartman writes on a subject and contacting the relevant organizations she describes in a hundred-page resource directory, one could then look for further information if needed.

The Resource Directory section itself makes *Solutions* a useful addition to library collections.

WOMEN'S STUDIES

Eleanor B. Amico, ed., **Reader's Guide to Women's Studies**. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997. \$125, ISBN 1-884964-77-X. 732p.

The academic field of women's studies is relatively young, having its genesis in the late 1960s. It is therefore timely - these thirty years on - for a comprehensive reader's guide to this interdisciplinary and burgeoning field to appear. The *Reader's Guide to Women's Studies* is a solid one-volume reference work designed to reflect the book literature generated thus far in women's studies. It is a large book - physically as well as intellectually - and one capable of handling inquiries from novices and sophisticated researchers alike. Being entirely unfamiliar with Julian of Norwich, for example, I found in the essay about her a general idea of who she was and what she wrote, concise summaries of major academic works about her life and work, plus plenty of material to pursue should I wish to learn more. I then read the essay on "Dual Career Families" - a topic much more familiar to me - which updated my knowledge, broadened it by including more international comparisons, and included discussions of problems that have a stubborn persistence in the third decade of women's studies. This work will be of particular use for a researcher needing a quick summary of the major titles published over the last thirty years on a wide range of topics, events, and people - and how the authors of these books responded to one another's work. The contributors place the books within a continuum and do an excellent job of explaining their importance.

Nearly two hundred contributors/experts were enlisted to compose signed essays on more than five hundred subjects ranging from "mass"

culture (beauty pageants) to "high" culture (literature) to sociology (dual-career families). This book is aptly named a "reader's guide," for each essay/entry is prefaced with a bibliography of titles, including publisher and date of publication. These bibliographies are not extensive (from three to fourteen items) but do identify the major books (no articles) published on each topic. Of course there is much variation in the amount of literature generated from topic to topic. Broad topics such as "Feminism" or "Literature" have been subdivided into finer distinctions and are represented by multiple essays. The limits to this type of reference book are hard to establish, but the editorial decision to make this a benchmark of the book literature published in English is a good one, bringing focus to such an ambitious project. The emphasis is on text as there are no photographs nor illustrations.

As with any reference book, the design for accessibility of information is of primary importance and this book is very user-friendly. A two-column alphabetical list of entries is included in the front matter of the book, followed by a thematic list of entries arranged into broad categories so a reader may easily identify related topics of interest. Essays appear in straightforward alphabetical order. Such a text-heavy work runs the risk of being hard on the eyes, but the typeface is well-sized and spaced and the essays are arranged in double columns. Helpfully, last names of the authors of books discussed in each essay are capitalized, making them easy to pick out of the text. Some use is made of cross-referencing, particularly with "see also" references following an essay, but these could have been employed more liberally. It is certainly browseable and the reader will move from topic to related topic with ease.

There are several appendices in

addition to the traditional "General Index" at the rear of the book. A lengthy "Booklist Index" arranged by author/editor lists books discussed in the essays, enabling the reader to find discussions of a particular text. Much longer than the "General Index," this booklist provides a unique access point to the material. Finally, a "Notes on Contributors" section provides details about the essayists, including their current position, major works (if applicable), and the essays for which they are responsible. This reviewer would have preferred the "General Index" be the final appendix, for ease of use, but this is a mere quibble.

Priced at \$125.00, this reference book likely won't be purchased by the casual reader, but will be affordable for library and research collections. Because it is comprised of topical as well as biographical information, smaller collections will get double service from it - but it is somewhat limited as a biographical research tool in terms of coverage. It is an excellent record of the published book literature in the field thus far.

[Susan Barribeau is a Reference Librarian at Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison. She particularly likes to write reference reviews for Feminist Collections.]

WRITERS

George Soule, **FOUR BRITISH WOMEN NOVELISTS: ANITA BROOKNER, MARGARET DRABBLE, IRIS MURDOCH, BARBARA PYM: AN ANNOTATED AND CRITICAL SECONDARY BIBLIOGRAPHY**. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998. 520p. \$62.00, ISBN 0-8108-3505-3.

These four popular contemporary women writers offer critics much to ponder. Critics probe their settings

(urban and rural), humor (in Drabble and Pym), cooking motif (common to Brookner and Pym), philosophical influences (particularly in Murdoch), class issues, relationship to feminism, and especially their female protagonists. Soule has done a worthy job of collecting and describing this criticism.

The section for each author begins with general or thematic works of criticism, followed by studies on individual novels. The novels are in order of publication, while the critical studies are arranged alphabetically. Other bibliographies are then listed, along with a paragraph summarizing the writer's work in other genres. Arrangement of the novels in publication order helps readers understand how critics have viewed the progression of the author's themes, where they see shifts in emphasis, and how they've judged the quality of each novel or group of novels. Perhaps for general works, as well as older novels that have received criticism over a long time period, a sub-arrangement of the critical studies by date would have been more useful than one by critic's last name.

Soule's annotations are long enough to get a good sense of the critic's main contentions, and he frequently offers his own reasoned evaluation of the critical works. He cites books, essays in anthologies, and periodical articles, but not dissertations, most book reviews, or other short pieces. He makes exceptions for reviews in *The New York Times Book Review*, *The New York Review of Books*, *London Review of Books*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, and occasionally other publications. Unfortunately, *The Women's Review of Books* and *Belles Lettres* do not seem to be among them. One hopes that if Soule does a new edition, or takes on other women authors (he hints at this in the Introduction, saying he regrets having no room to include such writers as Muriel Spark, Angela Carter, A.S. Byatt, and Fay Weldon), that he will add reviews from these feminist sources.

Book-length reference works exist for three of the four writers (all except Brookner): Joan Garrett Packer on Drabble (Garland, 1988), John Fletcher and Cheryl Bove on Murdoch (Garland, 1994), and Dale Salwak on Pym (G.K. Hall 1991), but *Four British Women Novelists* will be a good purchase for public libraries that might not acquire a bibliography on a single author. Academic libraries will also want it for the coverage of Brookner and because the citations extend through 1996.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Irene M. Franck and David M. Brownstone, *THE WILSON CHRONOLOGY OF WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENTS: A RECORD OF WOMEN'S HISTORY FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE PRESENT*. New York: H.W. Wilson, 1998. 507p. bibl. index. \$55.00, ISBN 0-8242-0936-2.

If you missed the authors' *Women's World: A Timeline of Women in History* (HarperPerennial, 1995) upon which this edition is based, and are in need of a factual march through women's achievements, pick up this updated and lightly revised edition. The new edition adds information for 1994, 1995, and 1996, plus a "Select Bibliography." Like the other available chronologies of women's history (including *The Women's Chronology*, by James Trager, and the *Chronology of Women's History*, by Kirstin Olsen, both issued in 1994), however, it is impossible to tell which source provided the information for individual statements in the timeline. At 507 pages compared to the earlier 654, this edition is more compact, having removed the occasional illustrations and using a smaller font, and it follows the same arrangement as the prior work. Within each year, the entries are divided into categories: politics/law/war, religion/education/everyday life, science/technology/medicine, and arts/literature. Occasional sidebars add

quotations from the women and excerpts from significant documents. The subject index extends the usefulness of the timeline by making it possible to look up individuals and topics.

Sylvia Glickman and Martha Furman Schleifer, *WOMEN COMPOSERS: MUSIC THROUGH THE AGES*. New York: G.K. Hall. Each volume: \$100.00.

Volumes three through five of this careful resource of performance scores cover women composers born in the eighteenth century. Volume three offers examples of keyboard music by twenty-two women composers, including Maria Teresa Agnesi and Maria Szymanowska. Volume four has vocal music by twenty-three musicians, such as Madame Louis and Margaret Essex. The fifth volume concentrates on instrumental ensemble pieces by Amélie-Jule Candeille, Maria Szymanowska, and Maddalena Lombardini Sirmen. Each volume includes biographical essays on each of the composers, including a list of her works.

1. Kathleen T. Horning, Ginny Moore Kruse, and Megan Schliesman, *CCBC Choices 1995* (Madison: Cooperative Children's Book Center, 1996), p.9. Each year the CCBC publishes *Choices*, with recommended children's titles of all sorts. To order the latest edition, *Choices 1997*, send \$6.00 (\$3.00 for Wisconsin residents) to Friends of the CCBC, P.O. Box 5288, Madison, WI 53706. Indicate that your check is for *Choices 1997*. For further information, see the CCBC website: <http://www.soemadison.wisc.edu/ccbc/>

2. Edwin A. Abbott, *Flatland*. 6th ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

Reviewed by Phyllis Holman
Weisbard except as noted

PERIODICAL NOTES

New and Newly Discovered Periodicals

ACTIVIST EPIZINE: A MAGAZINE OF PROFEMINIST ACTIVISM 1996- . Eds.: Editorial committee. Approx. 4/yr. \$17 (sliding scale to \$10). Overseas add \$7 postage. Sexual Exploitation Project, 1811 NE 39th Ave., Portland, OR 97212; email: straton@science1.sb2.pdx.edu (Issue examined: v.1, no.3)

An outgrowth, apparently, of the *Activist Men's Journal*, this somewhat irregular magazine focuses on men's profeminist activism, with such articles as: "Because They Can" (on why men batter and rape); "How to Form a Men Against Rape Group" (Jack Straton); "Back to the Garden" (David S. Shaw); "Tupac Shakur and Black Masculinity" (Vernon McClean); "Homosexuality and the Bible" (reprint by Walter Wink listing behaviors either prohibited by the Bible that are now viewed as fine, or encouraged by the Bible that are now seen as unacceptable); and a protest statement on the film *The People vs. Larry Flint*.

AFRICAN JOURNAL OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH 1997- . Eds.: Friday E. Okonofua, Rachel C. Snow. 2/yr. \$15 (indiv. - Africa); \$30 (indiv. - outside Africa); \$20 (inst. - Africa); \$50 (inst. - outside Africa). Add N 100 (local) or \$5 (international) postage. Single copy: \$25. Editorial Office, Dept. of Population & International Health, Harvard School of Public Health, 665 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115 or No. 4 Alofoje Avenue, Off Uwasota Street, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria; website: www.hsph.harvard.edu/ajrh (Issue examined: v.1, no.1, March 1997)

Because "as many as ten percent of African women of reproductive age continue to die needlessly from pregnancy-related complications," (p.5), The Women's Health and Action Research Center (WHARC) began this journal as a "pan-African and international forum for health scientists to document and disseminate their findings on reproductive problems in sub-Saharan Africa" (pp.3-4). Among the topics in this 114-page inaugural issue are unsafe abortion, HIV/AIDS prevention, urbanization, traditional fertility practices, sex workers and barriers to condom use.

CIRCLES 1998- . Ed./Publisher: Kit McChesney. 6/yr. \$24.95 (U.S.); \$34.95 (Canada, Mexico); \$50 (elsewhere). Single copy: \$4.95 (U.S.); \$5.95 (Canada). 1705 Fourteenth St., Suite 326, Boulder, CO 80302-6321; email: circles@circlesmagazine.com; website: <http://www.circlesmagazine.com>.

com (Issues examined: v.1, no.1, March-April 1998; v.1, no.2, June 1998)

What began in October 1996 as a magazine for the Colorado lesbian community has gone national in a big way, complete with national advertisers. Among the topics covered in the magazine's first two issues: the cons of legal marriage; the Lesbian Health Advocacy Movement; stories from the "Love Makes a Family" photo exhibit; gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth; an interview with comedienne Kate Clinton; transsexual lovers; the National Center for Lesbian Rights and its executive director Kate Kendell.

DREAM/GIRL 1997- . Ed.: Frances O. Dowell. 4/yr. \$10. Single copy: \$3. ISSN 1097-3508. P.O. Box 639, Carrboro, NC 27510. (Issue examined: v.1, no.3, Summer 1998)

Subtitled "The Arts Magazine for Girls," and with the goal of providing "info on art-related matters for girls...11 to 15," this quarterly carries a number of interesting pieces, including an interview with author Sarah Dessen, "The Art of Thrift," tips on what to find in the library, "Alt.Country" on country-punk music, "Printmaking Made Easy," "Grow Your Own Book Group this Summer," and in the "First Person: Artists Talk about Their Art" section, actor Diana Slickman. A clean layout, book and music reviews, and occasional poems enhance the issue.

ERRATA 1997- . Ed.: S. Lynette Bondarchuk. Cdn\$9. ISSN 1206-9302. Edmonton Small Press Association, P.O. Box 75086, Ritchie Postal Outlet, Edmonton, Alberta, T6E 6K1, Canada. (Issue examined: No.1, August 1997)

Subtitled "Contemporary Visual and Literary Art," this compendium of 150 pages of cartoons, commentary, short fiction, "news and views," as well as ads, creates a potpourri intended to "increase the awareness of contemporary comic Art by Women in Canada,... to put young, starving, contemporary comic artists to work, doing work that they love to do,... to break gender barriers," and more. The title is taken from Mary Daly's *Intergalactic Wickedary of the English Language*, which gives the meaning of "errata" as "1: Defiant/Deviant women 2: the works of such women...."

HEAVY GIRL PRESS 1997?- . Ed.: Kerry Daniels. \$5 Cdn. orders + postage; \$6 U.S. orders + postage. #823-77 Huntley St., Toronto, ON, M4Y 2P3, Canada; email: hgirl@sympatico.ca (Issues examined: No.1; No.2)

This Toronto-based fanzine is "dedicated to all women, but specifically sets out to celebrate, explore and unite fat women of all ethno-racial backgrounds and sexualities"

(p.44, No.2). The first issue, in 8-1/2 x 11-inch format, offers 22-pages of cartoon art, articles (such as "What Roseanne Gave Us"), poetry, and an editorial. In 5 x 8 format, the second issue includes media reviews, more art (and a truly bright cover!), recipes, and such articles as "Heavy Guys: The Big Fat Double Standard."

THE MAUD POWELL SIGNATURE: WOMEN IN MUSIC 1995- . Ed.: Pamela J. Blevins. 4/yr. \$28 (but currently not accepting subscriptions). ISSN 1083-5954. 5333 N. 26th St., Arlington, VA 22207; email: kshaffer@erols.com (Issue examined: v.1, no.4, Spring, Summer 1996)

Named for the U.S.'s first "violin virtuoso of international standing" (publicity), this publication carries news of a host of classical women composers and performers. Past issues have included features on English musicologist Marion Scott, composer/conductor Ruth Gipps, pianist Julianne McLean, singer Maria Garcia Malibran, composer Elinor Remick Warren, the experiences of Black women in orchestras, Jeanette Thurber (founder of the National Conservatory of Music); Jenny Lind; folk music collector Jennie Devlin; composer/harpsichordist Jacquet de la Guerre; and many more musicians. Though temporarily not accepting further subscriptions, the magazine nonetheless is seeking support, as its original funder quite suddenly withdrew support "on the grounds that a magazine about women in music is 'a waste of time'" (letter).

NASHIM: A JOURNAL OF JEWISH WOMEN'S STUDIES & GENDER ISSUES 1998- . Ed.: Deborah Greniman. 2/yr. \$25 (indiv.); \$20 (student); \$45 (inst.) (includes surface mail anywhere). ISSN 0793-8934. International Research Institute on Jewish Women, Brandeis University, Lown 300A, mailstop 079, Waltham, MA 02254-9110; email: IRIJW@brandeis.edu (Issue examined: No.1, 57581/1998)

Within its 168 pages, this first issue focuses on the theme "Women and the Land of Israel" in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the first Zionist Congress. Partial contents: "A Tale of Three Rachels, or The Cultural Herstory of a Symbol" (Susan Sered); "Patriarchy, the Land of Israel and the Legal Position of Jewish Women in Rabbinic Literature" (Tal Ilan); "The Double or Multiple Image of the New Hebrew Woman" (Margalit Shilo); "Irma 'Rama' Lindheim: An Independent American Zionist Woman" (Shulamit Reinharz); plus an article and review on "Women in the Rabbinate" and a separate book review.

NEWS FROM MAITREE 1997- . Ed.: Sanhita Resource Center. 2/yr. SANHITA, 89B Raja Basanta Roy Road, Calcutta-700 029, India. (Issue examined: March 8, 1998)

Maitree, a coalition of women's groups and activists in West Bengal, publishes this newsletter in the interests of "making this platform [of groups] into an organized force" and introducing Maitree to activists beyond West Bengal. Reports in the eight-page sample newsletter note the death

of a social worker due, perhaps, to abuse by her husband; a photo exhibition on the role of Indian women in the history of the country; International Fortnight Against Violence on Women; work against alcohol and trafficking in women and children; a seminar on crimes against women; questioning of women's dress by school authorities; and much more.

SAFERE: SOUTHERN AFRICAN FEMINIST REVIEW 1995?- . Ed.: Ruth Meena. 2/yr. Z\$100 (Zimbabwe); US\$35 (Africa); US\$40 (elsewhere). ISSN 1024-9451. Safere, Gender Division, P.O. Box MP 111, Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe. (Issues examined: v.2, no.1, 1996; v.2, no.2, 1997)

Each sample issue has a special focus, the first on "Sexuality, Identity and Change," the second on "Feminist Discourses in Southern Africa." There are articles, reports, and book reviews in each, and in addition the Sexuality issue includes poetry, "reflections," and debates. Topics in the issues include Winnie Mandela and "Black Woman" as signifier; women in the commercial farming sector of Zimbabwe; a pan-African women's seminar; gender as an important development issue in Southern Africa; and the African Gender Institute at the University of Cape Town.

WOMAN 1996- . Ed./Publ.: Elizabeth Scott. 4/yr. \$12.84 (indiv., Canada); \$21 (U.S.); \$24 (elsewhere, surface); \$30 (elsewhere, air). Single copy: \$3.95. ISSN1205-9935. 422 Parliament St., P.O. Box 82510, Toronto, ON M5A 3A0, Canada; email: woman@web.net; website: <http://www.web.net/~woman> (Issues examined: Spring 1998; Summer 1998)

There are lots of ads to help pay for the forty sharp pages of each newsprint-size *Canadian Women's Quarterly Newsmagazine*, printed on nice paper, but also plenty of informational articles. An interview with Gloria Steinem, some Web pointers, and items on women entrepreneurs, adoption, treating infertility, kegel exercises, franchising, farmwomen, eating disorders, and more are complemented by book and film reviews and columns on humor and women's history.

Special Issues of Periodicals

HISTORY & MEMORY v.8, no.2, Fall/Winter 1996: "Hannah Arendt and *Eichmann in Jerusalem*." Ed.: Gulie Ne'eman Arad. Subscriptions: \$20 (indiv.); \$30 (inst.). Surface postage outside U.S.: \$7. ISSN 0935-560X. Journals Manager, Indiana University Press, 601 North Morton St., Bloomington, IN 47404.

Contents: "The Ambivalences of German-Jewish Identity: Hannah Arendt in Jerusalem" (Richard Wolin); "Identity, Perspective and Narrative in Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem*" (Seyla Benhabib); "Eichmann, Arendt and Freud in Jerusalem: On the Evils of Narcissism

and the Pleasures of Thoughtlessness" (José Brunner); "Between Eichmann and Kant: Thinking on Evil after Arendt" (Adi Ophir); and "When Actor and Spectator Meet in the Courtroom: Reflections on Hannah Arendt's Concept of Judgment" (Leora Y. Bilsky).

LABOUR HISTORY REVIEW v.63, no.1, 1998: "Gender and Work." Guest eds.: Pamela Sharpe, Harriet Bradley. Subscriptions: £17.50 (indiv., UK&EU); £22 (indiv., overseas); \$40 (indiv., North Am.); £35 (inst., UK&EU); £38.50 (inst., overseas), \$70 (inst., North Am.). Single copy: £12.95. ISSN 0961-5652. Journals Dept., Edinburgh University Press, 22 George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9LF, UK.

From a series of seminars at Bristol University 1996-1997: "'To Bridle the Falsehood of Unconscionable Workmen, and For Her Own Satisfaction': What the Jacobean Housewife Needed to Know about Men's Work, and Why" (Michael Roberts); "Female-headed Households in Early Industrial Britain: The Vanguard of the Proletariat?" (Jane Humphreys); "The Face on the Cutting-Room Floor: Women Editors in the French Cinema of the 1930s" (Siân Reynolds); and "'They Didn't Want Women Back in that Job': The Second World War and the Construction of Gendered Work Histories" (Penny Summerfield).

NEW YORK LAW SCHOOL JOURNAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS v.14, Part 1: "Symposium 1997: Finding a Path to Gender Equality: Legal and Policy Issues Raised by All-Female Public Education." Single issue: \$10.00. *Journal of Human Rights*, Coordinator of Co-Curricular Programs, New York Law School, 57 Worth St., New York, NY 10013.

Panel One: "East Harlem Girls School"; Panel Two: "Constitutional, Statutory, and Policy Issues Raised by All-Female Public Education"; Panel Three: "Educational and Social Scientific Perspectives on All-Female Education." Articles: "Of Two Minds: Single-Sex Education, Coeducation, and the Search for Gender Equity in K-12 Public Schooling" (Patricia B. Campbell & Ellen Wahl); "The House That Ruth Built: Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Gender and Justice" (Carol Pressman); plus a note by Jason M. Bernheimer: "Single-Sex Public Education: Separate But Equal Is Not Equal at The Young Women's Leadership School in New York City."

PEACE & CHANGE v.22, no.3, July 1997: "Forum: Gender, Rhetoric, and Peace Discourse." Exec. eds.: Scott L. Bills, Sudarshan Kapoor. Subscriptions: \$59.50 (indiv., North Am.); \$68 (indiv., elsewhere); \$157 (inst., North Am.); \$165 (inst., elsewhere). Single copy: \$21 (indiv.,

North Am.); \$23 (indiv., elsewhere); \$45 (inst., North Am.); \$47.50 (inst., elsewhere). ISSN 0149-0508. Blackwell Publishers, 350 Main St., Malden, MA 02148.

Lead article: "Metaphors of Control Toward a Language of Peace: Recent Self-Defining Rhetorical Constructs of Helen Caldicott" (Margaret Cavin, Katherine Hale, Barry Cavin); Commentaries: "What Is an Effective Language of Peace?" (April Gordon); "Moving Beyond the Metaphors of Conflict Toward a True(er) Peace" (Cynthia A. Brincat); "In Search of Counterhegemonic Discourses of Peace" (Simona Sharoni); and "Demystifying Helen Caldicott - The Australian Experience" (Ralph Summy, Hilary Neil).

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN PRESENTS Special Issue, v.9, no.2, Summer 1998: "Women's Health." Subscriptions: \$19.80 (\$23.80 outside U.S.). Single copy: \$4.95 + \$2 postage/handling (outside U.S. add \$5 postage/handling). ISSN 1048-0943. *Scientific American*, Dept. SAQ, 415 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10017-1111.

Partial contents of this quarterly (which is separate from the *Scientific American* monthly publication): for women in their 20s: "Dying to Be Thin," "Help for Victims of Rape," "What Women Need to Know about Sexually Transmitted Diseases"; for those in their 30s and 40s: "Why Are So Many Women Depressed," "The Female Orgasm," "The Ethics of Assisted Reproduction," "Get Moving: How Much Exercise is Enough?"; for the 50s and 60s: "Bad Day at the Office?," "Menopause and the Brain," "Fat Chances?"; and for the 70s and up: "Why Women Live Longer than Men," "At More Risk for Alzheimer's?," and "Having a Ball: Tips on Enjoying a Long and Healthy Life." Another section offers questions and answers on migraine headaches, infertility, osteoporosis, urinary incontinence, and more.

SOCIOLOGICAL SPECTRUM v.18, no.3, 1998: "Women and Power: Arenas of Change." Guest ed.: Jackie Eller. Subscriptions: US\$83/£50 (indiv.); US\$195/£118 (inst.). ISSN 0273-2173. 1900 Frost Rd., Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007.

Following the introduction are these articles: "Women and Power in Sociology: SWS as an Arena of Change" (Kathryn M. Feltey, Beth Rushing); "The Rhetoric of Domination and its Strategic Use by Homeless Mothers" (Cynthia J. Bogard); "Victim Feminism/Victim Activism" (Dawn McCaffrey); "Unions' Empowerment of Working-Class Women: A Case Study" (Barbara Thomas Coventry, Marietta Morrissey); "Low-Income Women and Community Power" (Judith N. DeSena); and "Women at the Intersection of Business and Government: Are They in Places of Power?" (Denise Benoit Scott).

Anniversaries

AGENDA: EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR GENDER

EQUITY is embarking on its second decade of publishing in South Africa. Editor is Lou Haysom and the most recent issue is No.37, focusing on "New Men?" Address: P.O. Box 18983, Dalbridge 4014, South Africa; website: <http://www.oneworld.org/agenda/>

RFR/DRF (RESOURCES FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH/ DOCUMENTATION SUR LA RECHERCHE

FEMINISTE) is celebrating twenty-five years of publishing by changing its format to a more traditional scholarly size with v.26, nos.1-2, 1998. This will mean fewer articles per issue, but the editors plan to "continue to demonstrate the high quality of feminist research generated in Canada" and

also "do not want to forsake our ties to the community that creates the knowledge base from which we publish" (p.9). For information, contact **RFR/DRF** at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, 252 Bloor St. West, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 1V6, Canada; email: rfrdrf@oise.utoronto.ca; website: <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/rfr>

Publications Ceased

BAD ATTITUDE 1992-1997. Eds.: Collective. 121 Railton Rd., London SE24 0LR, UK. (Info from *off our backs*, June 1998, p.7)

Compiled by Linda Shult

ITEMS OF NOTE

ADVISER, TEACHER, ROLE MODEL, FRIEND: ON BEING A MENTOR TO STUDENTS IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING discusses what mentoring is, how career advising works, and gives advice for improving the quality of mentoring experiences. Although developed for women in science and engineering, the guide applies to all mentoring situations. Produced by the Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy and published by the National Academy Press, it is available for \$9.95 by calling: 800-624-6242.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION: CLAIMING VISIBILITY AND VOICE, a new monograph by Shirley Hune from the American Association of Colleges & Universities, assesses the progress of Asian Pacific American women as students, faculty, staff, and administrators in the realm of higher education. The study examines stereotypes, cultural notions about leadership, and the complex diversity of the Asian Pacific American population in the U.S. To order, contact the AAC&U Publications Desk at 800-297-3775; email: pub_desk@aacu.nw.dc.us

BEST PRACTICES GUIDEBOOK: THE CLASSROOM is an 89-page guidebook containing papers presented at a 1997

Best Practices workshop sponsored by the Committee on Institutional Cooperation Women in Science and Engineering Initiative, and the National Science Foundation. The focus of the workshop: improving the status of women in science, engineering, and mathematics through institutional change. While many of the papers in this guidebook are geared toward science teachers, some techniques apply to other disciplines. Available for \$20.00 + \$5.00 shipping from the Committee on Institutional Cooperation, Suite 1705, 302 East John Street, Champaign, IL 61820. Phone: 217-333-8475; fax: 217-244-7127. Also available from the same address is the forthcoming guidebook from the 1998 Best Practices workshop on Undergraduate Research and Living-Learning Programs. The 1997 and forthcoming 1998 guides will be available on the Web at <http://ntx2.cso.uiuc.edu/wise/wiseintr.html>

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND SURVEY OF THE HEALTH OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS, a survey of over six thousand girls, reveals much of significance about abuse and violence, mental health, risk behaviors, and access to health care among these young women. Some of the findings: one in five high school girls reported physical or sexual abuse and one in four girls reported lack of access to necessary health care. For a copy of the survey results,

contact The Commonwealth Fund, One East 75th Street, New York, NY 10021. Phone: 212-535-0400; fax: 212-606-3500. Find the Commonwealth Fund on the Web at <http://www.cmwf.org>

DIARIES IN ENGLISH BY WOMEN IN CANADA, 1753-1995: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY by Kathryn Carter is a new resource for learning about women's experiences in Canada. The bibliography draws on archival research and provides new information on how to find hundreds of unpublished diaries in Canadian museums, repositories and archives. Send \$8.00 per copy + \$2.00 shipping and handling for up to 3 copies to: CRIAW, 408-151 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H3 or fax your order to 613-563-0682.

IN OUR OWN WORDS: MOTHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON WELFARE REFORM (1997) and **IN OUR OWN WORDS: MOTHERS' NEEDS FOR SUCCESSFUL WELFARE REFORM** (1998) are projects of the Women and Poverty Public Education Initiative of Wisconsin, funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Center for Community Change and sponsored by the University of Wisconsin System Women's Studies Outreach Program. The first survey (of 740 women in poverty), made before the July 1997 implementation of "Wisconsin Works" (W-2) welfare reform, found that these current and former AFDC recipients and lower-wage earners needed family-supporting jobs, child care, and education in order to work themselves out of poverty. The second report examined the original circumstances of the women's poverty, the barriers they faced, and includes policy recommendations for how W-2 might be modified to actually help women become self-sufficient. For more information about the project or report,

contact Laura Wittman, project coordinator, at 414-376-1427, or Anne Statham, statewide coordinator, at 414-595-3341.

GENDER AND THE LAW: AN INTRODUCTORY HANDBOOK FOR LAW STUDENTS, from the National Association of Women and the Law, is a collection of short articles introducing feminist legal thought, strategies for equalizing legal education for women, and analysis of the impact of legal education on women from diverse backgrounds in Canada. Copies are available from NAWL Charitable Trust for Research and Education, 604-1 Nicholas Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7B7, Canada. Phone: 613-241-7570; fax: 613-241-4657.

The African Books Collective, Ltd. presents **WOMEN IN PUBLISHING AND THE BOOK TRADE IN AFRICA: AN ANNOTATED DIRECTORY**. Designed as a networking tool, the directory includes 145 entries with details about women publishers in Africa, women in senior management positions in African publishing, women in retail book trade and distribution, and African women's organizations with publishing programs. Annotations contain brief profiles and full contact details. \$25.00 + shipping (\$4 surface/\$8 air) for customers outside Africa. Free to publishers, librarians, booksellers, and writers within Africa. Order from: African Books Collective Ltd., The Jam Factory, 27 Park End Street, Oxford, OX1 1HU, United Kingdom. Phone: +44(0) 1865-726686; fax: +44(0) 1865-793298 or +44(0) 1993-709265; email: abc@pipex.com

Compiled by Jennifer Kitchak

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