

SPOTLIGHT: A FEMINIST LIBRARY ZINE

by Phyllis Holman Weisbard

RIOT LIBRARRIAN, Issue No. 1 (Winter 2002), by Sara, 120 State Ave. NE, #135, Olympia, WA 98501-8212; and Jenn, 1949 W. Bradley Place, #2W, Chicago, IL 60613. \$2.00/issue. Email: riotlibrarrrian@hotmail.com

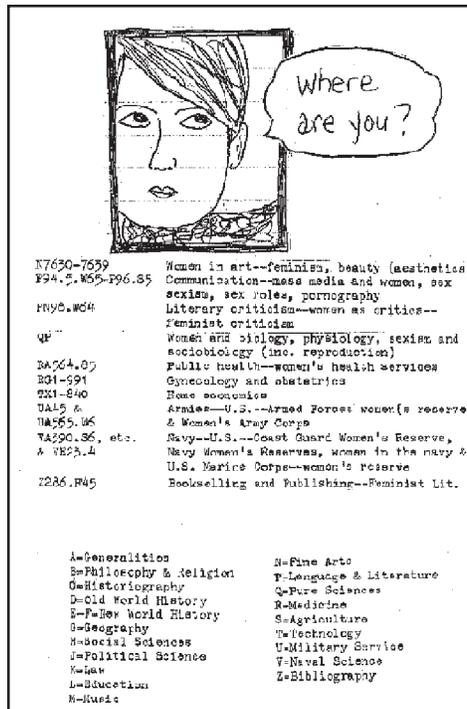
The two collaborators at the “butt-end of library school experience” confess to a missionary zeal for spreading information about libraries. Sara wants to spread library love “to melt over you like peanut butter on hot toast,” and Jenn puts it in more political terms: “There’s the opportunity [as a librarian] to give people the info that the media withholds, the stuff they need to make decisions about things that affect their lives, or just to read things that mean something to them. There’s a subversive element to librarianship that I adore.” They are obviously well-acquainted with the zine form — *Riot Librarian* is a typed (on a typewriter, no less! Where did two grad students even find one? But how else could they include typed-over mistyped letters, so iconographic of zines?), stapled, and photocopied collage of articles, drawings, and photographs. Their language is suitably breezy (“This site is huge and impressive as hell,” they say about grrrlzine network’s website), and capital letters scarce. Their subversion includes clueing in readers to the use of Interlibrary Loan, not only to obtain books not held by their local library, but also to influence the library’s selection choices down the road. They next demystify Library of Congress and Dewey Decimal System classification schemes enough so that readers will know where to browse for books on women and feminism. Then they describe some of their favorite (feminist) authors, books, magazines, and websites.

Sara and Jenn’s take has refreshing elements, such as the description of one of them (unidentified) reading Angela Carter with dictionary in hand, looking up words that generally turned out to mean “corpse-like or dusk-like or vapid.” A snippet from a dictionary definition of *crepuscular* appropriately follows. Jenn has an interesting piece about Melvil Dewey’s peccadilloes. The accompanying photograph of a pig eating from a bowl labeled “Dewey” suggests Jenn’s view of him, though her article points out that the record is unclear on whether he was a predator.

There’s more earnestness than rant in *Riot Librarian*, except for Sara’s reaction to a management professor’s statement in class (prefaced with “...this is for the males of the class”), later attributed to Carol Gilligan’s work, that they should “BE aWARE of the ‘female’ management atmosphere of public and academic libraries” (capitalization Sara’s). Besides the aforementioned pig, there’s mild, if not riotous, library-related humor, from the subtitle (“Breaking the Binding of Patriarchy since 2001”) to Sara’s goal that readers’ hearts will “pound away in your chest with the

rhythmic thumping of the due date stamp at the mere mention of the word...LIBRARY.”

There are many more topics in libraryland for feminist riot librarians to tackle. Is libraryese necessary to keep librarianship a profession? Is there a gender difference between an “information specialist” and a librarian? I hope there’s an Issue No. 2.



Feminist Collections

A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources

Volume 25, Number 1, Fall 2003

[To order complete copies of this issue of *Feminist Collections*: print this page and send it, with a check for US\$3.50 per copy (payable to University of Wisconsin-Madison), to Women's Studies Librarian, 430 Memorial Library, 728 State St., Madison, WI 53706. Include your complete postal mailing address. (For surface mail to a non-U.S. address, please add US\$1.50 postage for the first copy, plus US\$1.00 for each additional copy.) For a full year of *Feminist Collections* and our other publications (ten issues in one combined subscription), print and mail the subscription form on the next page.]

CONTENTS

From the Editors

Book Reviews:

Lynn Walter

**Bridges, Chasms, and Common Ground:
Multicultural and Transnational Feminism**

Lynn Walter

**Refusing False Choices: Feminist Responses
to September 11**

Alice Keefe

**The Spiritual Journeys of American
Buddhist Women**

Feminist Visions:

Dionne Espinoza

**Women and Maquiladoras on the
U.S.–Mexico Border**

Feminist Archives

World Wide Web Review:

Karen Eckberg

Feminism and Pregnancy on the Internet

JoAnne Lehman

E-Sources on Women & Gender

*Phyllis Holman Weisbard
& Melissa Gotlieb*

New Reference Works in Women's Studies

JoAnne Lehman

Periodical Notes

M.L. Fraser

Zine and Heard (for the Third Time)

Phyllis Holman Weisbard

Spotlight: A Feminist Library Zine

Melissa Gotlieb

Items of Note

Books Recently Received

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Subscribe to *Feminist Collections: A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources* and two other publications, all for one low subscription price! You'll get ten issues—four of *Feminist Collections*, four of *Feminist Periodicals: A Current Listing of Contents*, and two of *New Books on Women & Feminism*.

- Individual subscriber with University of Wisconsin-Madison campus address, \$8.25/year
- Organizational/departmental subscriber with University of Wisconsin-Madison campus address, \$15.00/year
- Individual, or nonprofit women's program, elsewhere *in* Wisconsin, \$16.00/year
- Individual, or nonprofit women's program, *outside* Wisconsin, \$30.00/year
- Library or other organization in Wisconsin, \$22.50/year
- Library or other organization outside Wisconsin, \$55.00/year

[Additional postage for **non-U.S. addresses only** (per year): Surface mail: Canada & Mexico—add \$13.00; other countries—add \$15.00; Air mail: Canada & Mexico—add \$25.00; other countries—add \$55.00]

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____ SUBSCRIPTION YEAR: **2004** (or _____)

Subscriptions are by **calendar year only**. If you subscribe for 2004, you will receive all periodicals dated 2004, regardless of when they are issued or when you begin your subscription. Students should give a permanent address where mail can reach them year-round.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

We occasionally provide our mailing list to publications/groups whose missions serve our subscribers' information needs. If you do NOT want your name and address shared, please check here: ____

Make your check payable to UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON and send it with this form to:

UW System Women's Studies Librarian
430 Memorial Library
728 State Street
Madison, WI 53706

Phone: (608) 263-5754