

WOMEN'S  STUDIES  
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# FEMINIST COLLECTIONS

A QUARTERLY OF WOMEN'S STUDIES RESOURCES



Volume 31  
Numbers 1–2  
Winter–Spring 2010

University of Wisconsin System

# Feminist Collections

## A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources

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Numerous research guides, bibliographies and other informational files are available on the Women's Studies Librarian's website, <http://womenst.library.wisc.edu>. You'll find information about the office, tables of contents and selected full-text articles from recent issues of *Feminist Collections*, tutorials, WAVE: Women's Audiovisuals in English, a link to the Women's Studies Core Books Database, full issues of *Feminist Periodicals: A Current Listing of Contents*, and links to hundreds of other selected websites and databases on women and gender.

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## FROM THE EDITORS

This issue's cover features one section of a three-panel collage art installation, titled "Dear Sisters: Referencing Women," that was displayed in the second-floor lobby of Memorial Library for Women's History Month this year. Melissa A. Young, one of our student assistants, designed the collage and put it together with help from fellow student assistant Elzbieta (Bess) Beck. The work incorporates, as design elements, details cut from the otherwise-discarded dust jackets of books catalogued in the UW–Madison Libraries. (The dust jackets are removed from books as part of the pre-cataloging process here.) What a great way not only to recycle but also to expose library patrons to book-cover art they would otherwise not see on the shelves. We and all our library colleagues were awed by this work of art.

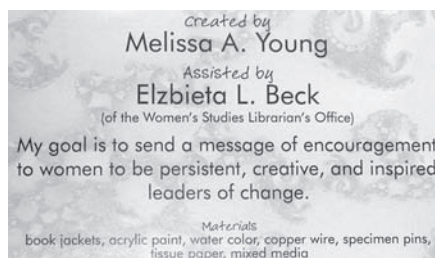
And what awesome talent emerges from the creative young women who work in this office, writing reference reviews and other columns for *Feminist Collections* as well as doing many less-glamorous yet necessary tasks that keep our publications going! We are very fond of — and impressed with — the students we employ. They are usually not women's studies majors, but they embody feminism. They work here only part-time and for an hourly wage, yet they display remarkable loyalty and commitment to the big picture of what we do, as well as to the smallest details. They typically stay for two years or longer, and we are sad to see them go when they graduate, even as we applaud their successes and support their future goals. A fair number go on

to become librarians, and many stay in touch over the years.

In Melissa's case, we can hardly believe our good fortune. She has just graduated (with a double major in French and psychology) from the University of Wisconsin — but she won't be leaving! Melissa has been accepted into the UW Law School, and she intends to keep working with us while she begins to pursue her J.D. Since Bess Beck and our third assistant, Madelyn Homuth, have not yet graduated, our current, fabulous student team will stay together for at least one more semester, and we're delighted.



Dear Sisters  
Referencing Women



Created by  
Melissa A. Young  
Assisted by  
Elzbieta L. Beck  
(of the Women's Studies Librarian's Office)  
My goal is to send a message of encouragement  
to women to be persistent, creative, and inspired  
leaders of change.  
Materials  
book jackets, acrylic paint, water color, copper wire, specimen pins,  
tissue paper, mixed media

Speaking of "referencing" women, this double issue includes a record number of reviews of reference works: sixteen, covering topics from addiction, colonial America, and queer history through Latin American writers, LGBT research, and women's rights. Among the feature essays are our first-ever review of books (and one film) on women as terrorists, a look at five titles on incarcerated women, reflections on scholarly work about detective stories that feature women as sleuths, an illustrated history of the Maine Women Writers Collection, a review of five important digital collections of work by women, and more.

We're always looking for more good writers who can review groups of resources on women's and gender studies.

Please get in touch if there's a topic you would love to take on.

○ J.L.

P.S. A recent misunderstanding about reprint permission convinced us that we need to make our policy more prominent. We've added a statement to the inside cover of the journal, but here it is as well:

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# BOOK & FILM REVIEWS

## GENDER AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

by Janice Bogstad

**MY DAUGHTER THE TERRORIST.** 58 mins. 2007. Film by Beate Arnestad; produced by Morten Daae; distributed by Women Make Movies ([www.wmm.com](http://www.wmm.com)). DVD: Order No. W09934. Sale: universities, colleges, & institutions, \$295.00; home video, \$29.95. Rental to colleges, universities, & institutions: \$90.00.

Tara McKelvey, ed., **ONE OF THE GUYS: WOMEN AS AGGRESSORS AND TORTURERS.** Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007. 266p. bibl. notes. pap., \$15.95, ISBN 978-1580051965.

Paige Whaley Eager, **FROM FREEDOM FIGHTERS TO TERRORISTS: WOMEN AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE.** Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008. 240p. bibl. index. \$89.95, ISBN 978-0754672258.

Margaret Gonzalez-Perez, **WOMEN AND TERRORISM: FEMALE ACTIVITY IN DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TERROR GROUPS.** New York: Routledge, 2008. Contemporary Terrorism Studies. 162p. bibl. index. pap., \$39.95, ISBN 978-0415570732.

We're all familiar with the stereotype that women are biologically inclined to play private and nurturing roles in society, even in the midst of war or other political violence. Interestingly, as more women actually become directly involved in political violence — whether in governmental or non-governmental military settings — that stereotype is alternately challenged and reinforced, depending on who is interpreting the evidence.

Since women appeared in the Algerian conflict in the 1970s, their significance on the front lines in battles for ethnic, religious, or political autonomy has engaged cultural and political critics. The naïve view that women are innately unsuited to actions requiring direct physical violence seems to have disappeared, but the more recent increase in numbers of women soldiers, women terrorist and freedom fighters, and women suicide bombers has sparked debate about the conditions under which women make these — seemingly unnatural — choices to kill and to die violently.

The documentary film and three books under review here all address, either theoretically or more personally, what one of the authors, Paige Whaley Eager, calls political violence. All conclude that women's agency is an important factor — that is, that women choose to participate in political violence, although personal experience of extremely violent conditions is often a motivating factor in their choices — and that those choices are often made at great personal cost. The maker of the film and the authors of these books also agree that the level of social coercion involved in women's choices differs from one conflict situation to another.

These resources, as a group of texts, also make it apparent that the width of the lens through which events are viewed greatly influences how those events are interpreted, and that this is the case both for participants in violence and for observers (including the readers of these texts). All of these texts contrast national and sometimes international violence with intense interpersonal or case-study approaches

to women who are involved in political violence, whether that involvement is legal, quasi-legal, or illegal. And even those categories are called into question, as is the conventionally understood definition of terrorism.

*My Daughter the Terrorist*, the documentary film, is the most personal of the texts, opening with interviews of two of the women in the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (also known as Black Tigers) in Sri Lanka. The essay collection *One of the Guys* is also much more personal than national or global, with its focus on the torture tactics used against Arab men at Abu Ghraib and on the women military personnel who were prosecuted based on the few (of many alleged) photographs that were smuggled out to the news media. *One of the Guys* also introduces broader perspectives by examining feminist and anti-feminist dialogues about women in the present-day military.

Although the essays in *One of the Guys* all interrogate feminist theory (especially what some essayists call "naïve" and others "liberal" feminism), they

come to varying conclusions. All of these essays are accessible to a lay audience, including readers unfamiliar with feminism or with the larger political context of the Abu Ghraib atrocities. That same accessibility does not typify the two other texts reviewed here, both of which are embedded in sociological dialogue. Both Margaret Gonzalez-Peréz, in *Women and Terrorism*, and Paige Whaley Eager, in *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists*, attempt to illuminate the involvement of women in violence around the world, using an overview process and carefully clarified — although very different — methodologies. Both use case studies, but both set those studies within larger social and political contexts. These two books explore very different theses, but reading them together provides both historical and current comparisons of a wide range of existing groups. For example, each discusses women in the Tamil Tigers, but their differing methodologies and lenses expand our understanding of this conflict and others worldwide.

Several of the resources reviewed highlight women caught between the sexualized violence of their families, the official approval of government soldiers and functionaries, and the leadership of terrorist organizations. This perspective is especially brought to bear in a very personalized way in *My Daughter the Terrorist*. The young Tamil women in Sri Lanka seem to have few choices: they can be raped, harassed, and tortured and generally have their lives destroyed by the Sri Lankan government, or they can become Tamil fighters and expect to live very short lives. The Sri Lankan government has demonstrated its ruthlessness even since the establishment of peace in that country in May of 2009. More than 300,000 ethnic Tamils were being

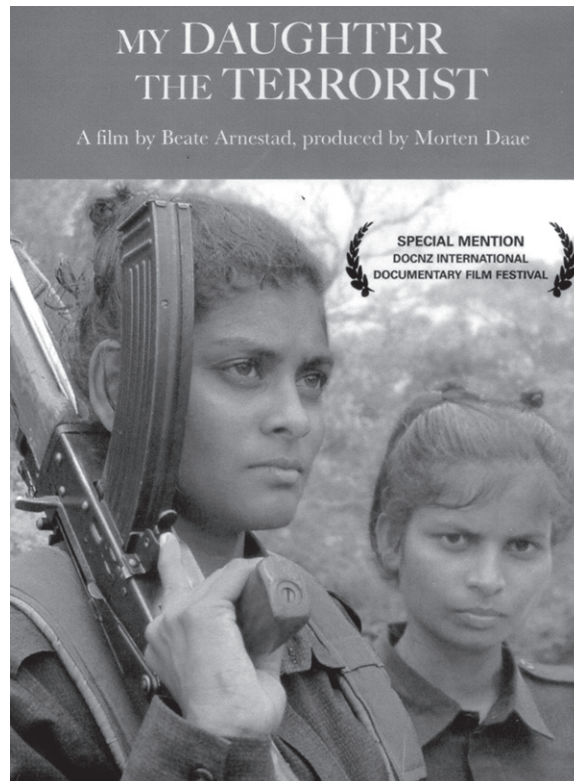
held in wholly inadequate “settlement” camps, and the government refused to allow humanitarian aid. What will inevitably follow if the U.N. is not able to intervene is tantamount to genocide. And it is clear from this documentary that these young Tamil women knew the likely outcome of their defeat.

In *My Daughter the Terrorist*, we actually meet two of these young women, Dharsika and Puhachudar, twenty-four-year-olds who have been Tamil Tigers since their early teens. The film follows their normal routine over the course of a few days, including military training as well as such every-

that her leader would never authorize actions that jeopardize civilians; she also claims that she would immediately kill her friend as a traitor if ordered to do so. Dharsika’s mother, who is also interviewed, experienced in her own childhood some of the same events that Dharsika has identified as having motivated her decision to become a Tamil Tiger. It is clear there was little choice for these young women between enduring the debased refugee status that her mother and other Tamils in Northern Sri Lanka suffer and joining the Tigers. Her mother describes the conditions of terror under which they have lived since Dharsika was four, “inside

the war,” with their living spaces bombed and invaded, women and girls attacked, tortured, and raped by government soldiers, and the end of any dreams for education and a normal life. In a particularly affecting scene, Dharsika’s mother is shown some of the film clips that will make their way into this production, the first news she’s had of her daughter in several years. Then, near the end of the film, we are treated to views of the graves and hero-walls dedicated to the many young women who performed suicide bombings as Tamil Tigers. Dharsika’s mother tells us that she doesn’t even know where her own daughter is buried, leaving us to assume that both young women are dead. In the lives of all three of these women, the personal is very political. As of this writing, the hope of a Tamil

homeland is gone, and we can only wonder at the fate of the thousands of girls and women of the Tamil ethnicity still in Sri Lanka. The film does a good job not only of contrasting these women’s understanding with that of the rest of the world, but also of portraying their extremely limited opportunities.<sup>1</sup>



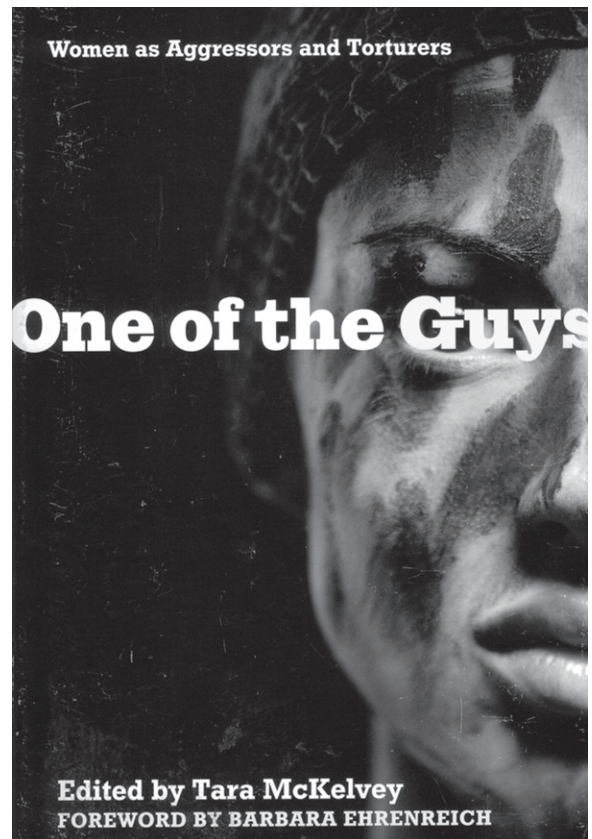
day domestic activities as eating, doing hair, and even praying. The two have lived and fought together for seven years and, despite the statement by one that if she is chosen as a suicide bomber, the other will ask to take her place, we also get a sense of the ominous mindset they have absorbed in their training. Dharsika states emphatically

The essays in the volume edited by Tara McKelvey, *One of the Guys: Women as Aggressors and Torturers*, focus particularly on women and violence, but not the violence perpetrated by groups defined nationally and internationally as terrorist. Here, a very specific, sexually coded violence, mandated or at least encouraged by the U.S. military and the CIA, is addressed. Most of the essays at least make reference to the official government explanation of the smuggled photographs<sup>2</sup> that came to the attention of the world — that they portrayed the independent actions of “a few bad apples” (including media “poster child” Lynndie England). According to Jumana Musa, many other photos existed, of similar actions perpetrated by many other soldiers at Guantanamo Bay prison and elsewhere, but those were either suppressed or destroyed. Moving beyond the question of whether the three young women who were prosecuted (out of seven) were guilty, Musa notes that “many questions have been raised about the positions in which female soldiers and interrogators were placed. Interrogation techniques that have come to light reveal a willingness to exploit women’s sexuality to achieve a larger objective” (p. 85). She also describes a common practice of smearing Arab men with fluid made to look like menstrual blood, and asks whether male soldiers would be asked to use sexuality in a similar way. Furthermore, she documents increases in sexual violence against female spouses at the hands of male American soldiers returning from Afghanistan. Her argument is intended to portray not only the military tendency to exploit sexual violence and to expect women soldiers to comply with orders to do so, but also to show that the women soldiers are then blamed for following orders and held up as examples of women who have acted in an unnatural way. Musa points out, as do

several other essayists in this volume, that the only officer to be punished for Abu Ghraib was Brigadier General Janis Karpinski (a reservist in charge of Abu Ghraib at the time), while one of those directly responsible for designing the policies, Major General Geoffrey Miller, was never brought to trial (p. 87).<sup>3</sup>

Lucinda Marshall, in the essay “The Misogynist Implications of Abu Ghraib,” attacks one important way the “bad apples” explanation has been used: to argue that feminism is the main culprit because it has increased the numbers of women in the military. “Linda Chavez of the deceptively named Center for Equal Opportunity,” Marshall writes, “quickly suggested that the presence of women in the military actually encouraged such ‘misbehavior’” (p. 51). Although there is now ample evidence that sexual humiliation of Arab men is an oft-practiced interrogation technique taught in manuals sanctioned by the U.S. military, several conservative media pundits have claimed that feminists’ attempts to force women into places they don’t belong is really at fault. Marshall also notes the underreporting of male military men abusing female Arab prisoners: “But far more misogynistic is the almost total lack of attention to the ample evidence of sexual assault against Iraqi women at Abu Ghraib. Quite simply, sexual abuse against men is considered torture; sexual abuse against women by men is business as usual” (p. 55).

Ilene Feinman provides statistics to document ways the media have obscured the role of gender and race in both perpetrating and representing that torture in Abu Ghraib. She notes the overrepresentation of white women soldiers as perpetrators of torture: women are only 15% of the soldiers at this facility and 17% of the forces in the Army. She notes, “I would argue that women in the military are used as an enormous symbolic wellspring of unresolved issues around gender equality and masculinism” (p. 64). She



also identifies broad patterns of torture techniques in Iraq and Afghanistan that were uncovered by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Amnesty International.

Feinman is not the only contributor to this volume to attack gendered torture techniques as military policy, explaining the actions of England and



other women in terms of both what was ordered by the military or the CIA and what was encouraged or allowed by them. Timothy Kaufman-Osborn posits that our shock over the pictures is also a gendered response: "I argue that much of what appeared so shocking when these photographs were first released can be read as an extension of, but also threats to, the logic of masculinized militarism" (p. 146). Like some of the other contributors, Kaufman-Osborn interrogates the culture of the military as well as of a significant public sector that is intolerant of women as soldiers at the same time that it expects them to raise the moral tone of the military. As M.S. Embser-Herber has suggested, the fixation on these particular photographs may well indicate that Americans today are better prepared to see women return from Iraq in body bags than as quasi-sexualized aggressors. Women in the military are in a sort of catch-22: they don't fit in because they are supposedly unable to brutalize; but if they prove themselves able, they are blamed as if theirs are monstrous actions. As Feinman argues, male torturers are a given, but female torturers, no matter how much they were instructed and trained to torture, are unnatural.

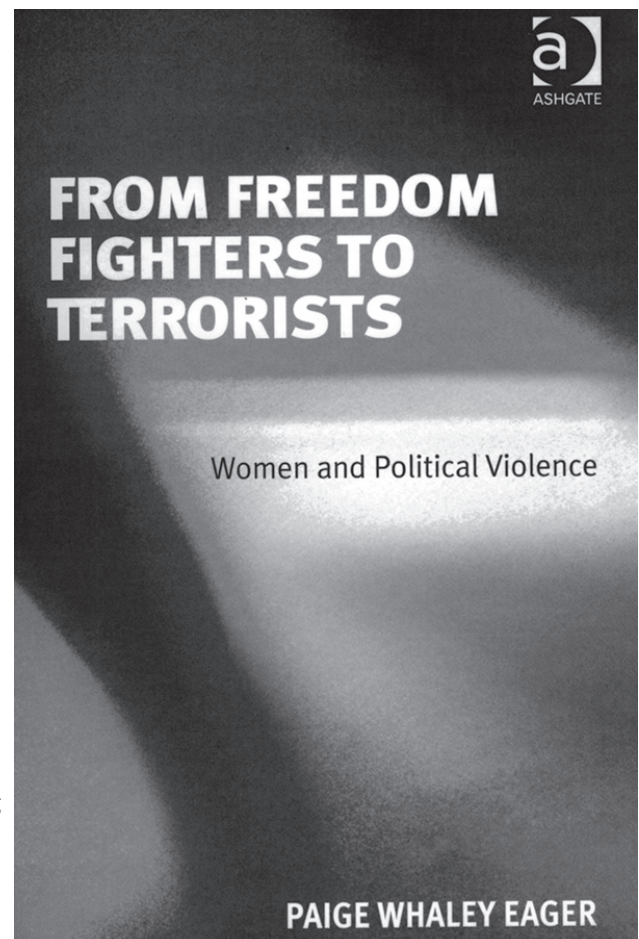
Not all of the contributors to *One of the Guys* excuse the actions of the women soldiers who carried out the policy of sexualized torture. While Lila Rajiva invokes the double standard as an explanation for these women being prosecuted, she also notes that we need to acknowledge their agency: "Ultimately, we are compelled to admit that it was not because they were powerless that women acted as they did, but because they were exulting in their power — exulting both in the voluntary submission of their fellow soldiers to their sexual power (witness the sex videos of Lynndie with numerous partners)

as well as in the coerced submission of male prisoners" (p. 228). Yet somehow these women were both taught and encouraged to take advantage of a situation. Rajiva's argument is merely that if we claim that the women were totally under someone else's control, we are again denying their agency. She still agrees that they were scapegoated and used to direct attention away from a misogynistic military milieu and culpable leaders.<sup>4</sup>

Barbara Finlay analyzes the experience of women in the military as a whole: what they do to cope and what happens to them if they don't put up with regular attacks and humiliation by their male peers. She claims that "[t]o survive, they tend to take one of three general approaches. Some try to fit in, to be 'one of the guys,' as manly and aggressive as the men, enduring sexist behavior in silence and participating in or complying with the misogynist culture and harassment of other women. This is the only way a woman can actually be accepted and promoted" (p. 201). Other strategies include isolating themselves or reporting and resisting the misogyny, neither of which bodes well for a woman's military career. In sum, the essays of this book cast serious doubt on whether women at Abu Ghraib had much choice in becoming torturers, as well as seriously calling into question the cultural interpretation, in news media and more generally, of both their

immediate actions and their essential natures.

When *One of the Guys* is read in the context of the other resources reviewed here, one notes startling similarities in the lives of women in the military and women who become terrorists. Both within the military and within terrorist organizations, women's lives are structured by misogyny. Interestingly, women in both groups also are similar in that poverty and abuse figure heavily in their backgrounds. Apparently, some of the same social forces that lead some women to become freedom fighters and terrorists lead some others into the U.S. military, where, despite all efforts to counter male hostility, they find some of the same sexuality-based hostility and interper-





sonal manipulation suffered by women “freedom fighters,” that is, women who find themselves in organizations that oppose their government. Hence, the title of this book identifies the irresolvable tension for these women: On the one hand, they are expected to be like “the guys”; on the other, they are criticized for not being proper women, and victimized as if their success as soldiers also makes them sexually available. As even Janis Karpinski, the former commander of Abu Ghraib, says, men don’t like to work for women, and they use a range of behavior to demonstrate their frustrations.

**P**aige Whaley Eager, in *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists: Women and Political Violence*, is more interested in what she describes as the range of forces in women’s lives that lead them to become terrorists or freedom fighters. In an effort to refute the impression prevalent in the news media that women become terrorists for personal reasons (e.g., they have boyfriends in the movement or have had personal experiences of injury or humiliation), but that men do so for political reasons, she first organizes her case studies into political groupings and how they make use of women: left-wing organizations, right-wing organizations, national liberation organizations, ethnonational political violence, and suicide bombing. Her focus is a search for women’s levels of agency in these various situations — or, more exactly, to demonstrate that one cannot assign women a “personal” impetus and men an ethical or social one. But she first defines political violence as a more neutral term than terrorism, explains why it is useful, and concludes by offering observations on differences and similarities of women operating in these different organizations, internationally. She approaches each type of group by looking at different meanings that can be read into their actions at different levels of

analysis. Each is first discussed on the basis of what she calls the macrolevel factors influencing women’s participation in political violence and terrorism, in both a wider historical and a current context. In another category, which she calls mesolevel factors, she examines current political and social issues relating to the group in question; in a third, microlevel factors, she describes the general involvement of women in the group or groups identified and then provides short case histories of individual women.

**E**ager addresses each group only once — so, for example, the Tamil Tigers of Eelam are discussed in Chapter 5, where they are viewed in the context of ethnonational political violence, and not where one would expect, in Chapter 6 along with other female suicide bombers. Yet her carefully set-out multilevel analysis provides information that makes these individual women’s choices much more clear. *My Daughter the Terrorist* included references to the Tamil leader, but Eager goes further, identifying him as Prabhakaran (p. 135) and reviewing his historical involvement in the conflict, seriously undercutting the cult-of-personality image narrated by the young women. And, of course, news of Prabhakaran’s recent death during the disastrous defeat of the Tamils was identified by current news media as one major factor in the surrender of the surviving Tamil Tigers.

Yet each of Eager’s narratives is very brief, so the book reads like a catalog of “freedom fighters” or terrorist organizations. This approach is useful for making comparisons. As does Gonzalez-Perez’s *Women and Terrorism*, Eager’s work identifies a disturbing trend: that news media around the world interpret the same evidence differently depending on whether the perpetrators are male or female. Journalists constantly point to personal tragedies

as the reason that women become terrorists and suicide bombers, while the motives of male terrorists, who tell the same stories of privation and suffering, death of relatives, and personal affront, are described as primarily political. Equally disturbing is the propaganda created by the political movements themselves. Women are often portrayed as martyrs for either a political or religious cause, but not as people with individual agency. And in most of the countries where activity has recently taken place or is happening now, these very women who become active in the political sphere also become social outcasts, no longer considered appropriate marriage candidates by family or society at large. Eager also makes a very telling comparison between the terrorists and suicide bombers of other groups and those identified by the PLO.

**A**pparently, the women in the Tamil Tigers and several other groups were allowed to advance through their organizations, gaining positions of authority and participating in decision-making, while this trajectory was manifestly not apparent for the women in the PLO. At the same time, the PLO recruited the largest number of terrorist bombers and women terrorists. Eager’s short descriptions of each group, of course, do not offer an in-depth analysis of either the group itself or the women involved. She is clearly seeking comparisons in her search for the forces that move women from the roles of private life — regardless of the political, religious or social construct — into organizations that promote terrorism. Like Gonzalez-Perez (discussed next in this review), Eager asserts that suicide bombers in different movements are there for very different reasons, and that some choose this role while others are forced into it, just as is the case for the men around them. And she concludes that it is not just femi-

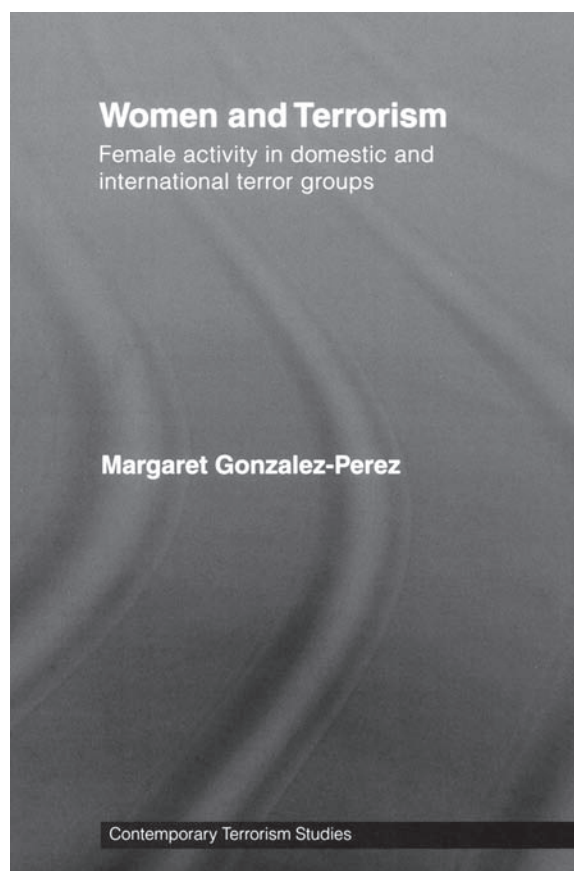
nism (while liberal feminism has some influence), Marxism, or personal relationships that motivate women or men to work within these groups, but larger social networks such as university connections, extended families (as with the IRA), and ethnic identities (as with the Tamil Tigers, the Basques, or the FLN). "What is clear, however, is that there is no single profile of female suicide bombers, just as there is not with their male counterparts. Although they may be younger as opposed to older, they come from all types of socioeconomic backgrounds, secular versus religious milieus, and various educational attainment levels" (p. 215).

In *Women and Terrorism: Female Activity in Domestic and International Terror Groups*, author Gonzalez-Perez explores her view that there is a significant correlation between the numbers of women who join a terrorist organization and the number of women in positions of leadership or authority. She claims in her introduction that "high levels of female terrorist activity appear predominantly in domestic terrorist organizations because the characteristics of these groups are more conducive to the rejection of traditional gender roles and the acceptance of active female participation, thereby encouraging the mobilization and participation of women" (p. 2). In other words, women participate more often in groups with national agendas because they perceive that they have a chance to improve their status within their society, an opportunity they don't find in groups with international foci.

Gonzalez-Perez sets out to methodically explore the reasons that women are far more likely to join organizations that have a national agenda and are opposed to a totalitarian government. In this type of organization, women are far more likely to hold positions of authority, to advance through the ranks, and to be willing

participants in personally dangerous acts. This argument must be made very carefully, because it might seem almost circular; alternatively, the groups chosen from the many possibilities may seem to have been selected only because they support the thesis.

Gonzalez-Perez first reviews definitions of terrorism; in the course of that review, she highlights the many difficulties attendant on a workable definition, including the ideology that might inform it. For example, depending on your definition, you could exclude acts of terrorism promulgated by a government, such as the Sri Lankan government against the Tamil minority in the North, or, even less ambiguously, the German government against the Jews in the 1930s and 1940s. Laqueur's definition, she notes, focuses on the illegitimate use of force and the targeting of innocent people for the purpose of creating fear; another analyst, Paul R. Pillar, "further organizes the concept of terrorism into five essential elements: premeditation, political motivation, noncombatants as targets, clandestine agents and creating the presence of threat" (p. 9). Most definers agree, however, that the political use of violence against innocent civilians is a more generally understood condition of terrorism. It is clear that several of the terms used in each definition are ideologically coded, even if the definitions as a whole seem quite reasonable. The range of definitions cited points to areas of ambiguity in the attempt at definition. For example, the claim that terrorists are always counter to their own governments raises the is-



sue of what to make of groups in the Arab-Israeli conflicts. Is the targeting of noncombatants always a terrorist act? (If so, what do we make of the many governments that target "villages" and ethnic groups suspected of hiding terrorists? Aren't government troops then also terrorists when they use violent methods?) Clearly, some of the definitions are included to emphasize the difficulty in distinguishing between institutionalized terrorism as practiced in totalitarian regimes and counter-institutional terrorism practiced by both domestic and international terrorist groups with ethnic or political agendas. But Gonzalez-Perez concludes her introduction with the acknowledgement that a working definition is necessary:

Terrorism, then, is the use or threat of violence against noncombatants by individuals, groups, or state governments

for political objectives. These activities may include guerrilla warfare, revolutions, state-sponsored terrorism, separatist movements, and organized militia movements. (p. 11)

Gonzalez-Perez then sets out the categories of her major theoretical position by briefly exploring the concept that women perceive themselves as a repressed majority with issues similar to those of ethnic, tribal, or other minorities. However, since her exploration also requires her to distinguish between national and international groups, she also interrogates the often elided definitions of nation and state and then finally describes a range of roles for women in terrorist groups, as Sympathizers, Spies, Warriors, and Dominant Forces; and she uses these categories throughout her discussion of many practitioners of political violence. Criminal justice scholars Pamala Griset and Sue Mahan, she says,

characterize Sympathizers primarily as camp followers who provide money, time, sewing, cooking, and even sex to the males in the terrorist organization. Spies are a more active group, serving as decoys, messengers, intelligence-gatherers and contributing strategic support to the men as well. Sympathizers and Spies are linked by the lack of any return on their investment. (p. 15)

Warriors, on the other hand,

are more active participants who are recruited and trained to use weapons and incendiary devices in guerrilla warfare. They may fight alongside their male counterparts, but they are not allowed to become leaders

and have little, if any, input on policy formation. Furthermore, there is rarely any anticipation of change in their status once the group's goals have been achieved. (p. 16)

The Warrior category is both central to the thesis of the entire book and ambiguous, especially with regard to suicide bombers. Gonzalez-Perez finally concludes, as did Eager, that there must be more than one category of suicide bombers — those used exclusively as suicide bombers by international terrorist groups, and those who train and operate as warriors before being asked, as their male counterparts sometime are, to commit suicide bombings. So female suicide bombers can either be Warriors or belong to the fourth category — Dominant Forces — the most privileged one for women: “Finally, the Dominant forces participate at the highest levels, providing leadership, ideology, strategy and motivation. These women often fill commando positions at the core of the group” (p. 16).

This last category is not as ambiguous as Warriors, as it requires that the organizations invest time in training and permit women to have power and authority within the organization. While organizing her study of these groups geographically rather than by type, Gonzalez-Perez comes to conclusions about women's level of agency that are similar to those of Eager: that women's level of agency in Dominant Forces, especially, is very high and is motivated by a range of personal, social, and accidental reasons.

Gonzalez-Perez's technique for arguing that women play a more active role in national terrorist groups is to present short overviews of national and international organizations within specific countries. She surveys the groups based on the region in the world in which they operate — the Americas,

Asia, Africa and the Middle East, or Europe — and contrasts domestic terrorism and international terrorism in each chapter. However, in each case, she relies on admittedly limited information in determining which of the four possible roles women play in the specific terrorist organization, further emphasizing the definitional complexities attendant on such a study. And of course the national and international organizations she reviews in each region are not in the same countries, rendering comparisons problematic yet again. For example, the first group discussed in Asia is the Tamil Tigers (also referenced in the DVD and in Eager's book), which is identified as *intranational*, that is, a group opposing the government of its country, and also as attracting women and affording them the opportunity to become Warriors and Dominant Forces. Several other groups with women members are mentioned; one comparison is with the Vietnam National Liberation Front, which “typically portrayed women as active members of the Vietnamese insurgency...but these instances were extremely rare” (p. 73). As in this comparison, at each stage in her argument Gonzalez-Perez relies more on her own judgment and that of her peers than on stated facts and figures, although it can be argued that she does so because there is not a lot of evidence. Thus, the conclusion that women select intranational organizations because they perceive the chance to improve their status slides all too easily into the argument that these organizations attract women because self-agency is more possible within the groups.

Gonzalez-Perez has an intriguing thesis that is as difficult to prove as it is compelling. As a result, it is more of a suggestion of where to look for women's roles as terrorists than a proof that women are more common as intranational than as international terrorists. Nevertheless, her knowledge



of the definitional issues as well as of the stereotypical cast given to women's terrorist activity is both fascinating and subtle. With more hard evidence, her thesis might even be more solid. At the same time, some statements in her conclusion are evidentially valid when groups like the Tamil Tigers are studied in more detail. For example, she states that "[a]s a policy tool, studies in this area could encourage government institutions to provide gender equity and opportunities for women in economic, political and social arenas, thereby reducing terrorist movements' appeal to women, and thus, diffusing the infrastructure of such movements. Poverty, human rights abuse, and discrimination are all factors that generate discontent among women and provide potential mobilization for political violence against the state" (p. 131). Such a conclusion correlates with other sources of information on the value of education, economic support, and social investment in women worldwide. That it should appear in a study of the motivations for terrorism should be no surprise.

I can highly recommend both Eager (*From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists*) and Gonzalez-Perez (*Women as Terrorists*), as much for alerting the reader to the reasons for women's widespread involvement in terrorism and to the broad and deep development of terrorist movements since the late 1960s as for their stated theses. One can compare their relatively brief discussions of some of the same organizations for alternative perspectives. In fact, reading (or viewing, in the case of the video) all four of these works in concert has been very arresting for me. *My Daughter the Terrorist* and *One of the Guys*, while more personal in tone, reinforce the broader conclusions of the more theoretical works, and all serve to emphasize the gross dehumanizing effects of institutionalized violence, whether that violence is sponsored by legiti-

mate (to some degree) governments or by nationalist or international terrorist groups. Perhaps women's direct experience with this sort of physical violence will eventually result in men also exercising the freedom to refuse such violence as an answer to conflict. And perhaps we can more openly acknowledge that women as well as men have always paid a high personal price — physically, socially, economically, and psychologically — for their involvement.

#### Notes

1. For a fuller understanding of how this conflict came about, Eager's and Gonzalez's sociological studies (reviewed in this essay), although more scholarly, are helpful. Neither focuses primarily on the Tamil situation, but includes it in the context of wider studies of terrorism and women. Another film, *To See If I'm Smiling* (Women Make Movies, 2007, directed by Tamar Yarom), reinforces the similarities in the military socialization process described in both *My Daughter the Terrorist* and *One of the Guys*; young women who have served in the Gaza Strip for the Israeli army describe the negative ways in which the experience has changed them and the social indifference to their suffering.

2. The photographs showed primarily female soldiers seemingly gloating over Arab males who are fully or partially naked and in sexually suggestive or humiliating positions — for example, stacked in a naked pyramid, or leashed like dogs, with a woman holding the leash.

3. In fact, as Feinman points out, despite the names and involvement of Colonel Thomas Pappas and Major General Barbara Fast coming to light in subsequent investigations, Fast was not held culpable, although it is now

clear that she had had a major role in directing the soldiers' actions, while former General Janis Karpinski had been allowed only restricted access (to the infamous cellblocks) under the guise that interrogation was under the singular control of the CIA.

4. For a more detailed assessment of the problems created for women in military culture, one might also look to Helen Benedict's *The Lonely Soldier: the Private War of Women Serving in Iraq* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2009). We will see women's agency addressed again in Paige Whaley Eager's *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists: Women and Political Violence*, which is also reviewed in this essay.

5. There are now a number of other interesting studies both of women in terrorist organizations and women in the military. See, for example, in addition to those cited in Notes 1 and 4, Kirsten Holmstedt's *Band of Sisters: American Women at War in Iraq* (2008) and *The Girls Come Marching Home: Stories of Women Warriors Returning from the War in Iraq* (2009); Eileen MacDonald's *Shoot the Women First* (1992); Laura Sjoberg & Caron E. Gentry's *Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Women's Violence in Global Politics* (2007); and the film *The Sari Soldiers*, directed by Julie Bridgham (Women Make Movies, 2008).

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# ***THE MYSTIQUE OF THE FEMALE SLEUTH, OR, HOW I STOPPED WORRYING AND LEARNED TO LOVE A GOOD CLUE***

by Patricia Gott

Phyllis M. Betz, ***LESBIAN DETECTIVE FICTION: WOMAN AS AUTHOR, SUBJECT AND READER***. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006. 207p. pap., \$35.00, ISBN 978-0786425488.

Michael G. Cornelius & Melanie E. Gregg, ***NANCY DREW AND HER SISTER SLEUTHS: ESSAYS ON THE FICTION OF GIRL DETECTIVES***. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008. 216p. pap., \$35.00, ISBN 978-0786439959.

Lisa M. Dresner, ***THE FEMALE INVESTIGATOR IN LITERATURE, FILM AND POPULAR CULTURE***. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006. 240p. pap., \$35.00, ISBN 978-0786426546.

A few months ago, I spent a few days watching bits of television crime dramas, after which I walked away with the following impression: It's clear our culture possesses a morbid and disturbing fascination with dead women. Shows like *CSI* and *Law and Order*, which feature a forensic science component, regularly portray women characters as victims of extremely vicious and sadistic crimes, and many Americans digest these portrayals without a second thought. That's why it's refreshing to escape to the less-complicated world of the Nancy Drew Mystery Stories® and also to the realm of the tough and independent female investigator. The three works under consideration here indicate that the interest in strong female heroines in charge of their destinies is alive and well — at least in the scholarly universe.

*Nancy Drew and Her Sister Sleuths* will be an absorbing read for anyone who ever found herself ensconced in the world of juvenile detective series fiction. Michael Cornelius posits in his introduction that juvenile detective series endure precisely because they uphold conservative values even as the protagonists undercut those values. Nancy is simultaneously a rebel and a defender of the status quo. Most

important, though, is that she is fearless. As a young girl, I devoured series books, especially Nancy Drew and Trixie Belden, but also Judy Belden and the Hardy Boys. As I read and re-read them, I imagined myself as Nancy Drew, a fearless and indefatigable spirit who never failed in her many quests to root out the villain and unravel the series of clues put before her. I suppose some part of me still holds her in awe and hopes to emulate her blend of intuition and deductive logic.

In this vein, feminist strains are referenced by several writers in the Gregg and Cornelius anthology. Although Mildred Wirt Benson, the writer of twenty-three of the original fifty-six Nancy Drews, did not describe herself as a feminist, she was an independent, driven woman who flew planes well into her old age and authored a column for the *Toledo Blade* newspaper for fifty-five years.<sup>1</sup> Trixie Belden's creator, Julie Tatham, was a self-described feminist (p. 129). As Cornelius notes, "This prelude to feminism — this amalgamation of the qualities perceived to be the finest in both boys and girls — this ability to inhabit and succeed in realms traditionally ascribed to men — this potent

combination of will, desire, intelligence and a healthy dash of fearlessness — it is these qualities that make the girl detective as popular as she is" (p. 3). Indeed, Nancy Drew's spirit lives on today in new and ever-unfolding variants such as Veronica Mars and *Harry Potter's* Hermione Granger.

The piece "Nancy Drew and the Mythical Story" provides fascinating details about the genesis of the Nancy Drew books. James D. Keeline notes that upon first publication of the series (1930), Nancy Drew differed from her predecessors because the works revolved primarily around her, rather than around a group — the Rover Boys or the Bobbsey Twins, for example. While her chums Bess Marvin and George Fayne accompany her in her sleuthing, Nancy is at the center of the action, a clear orchestrator and agent of her life and her work. This represents a real victory for girls. The article concludes that there is not one, fixed Nancy; she changes to fit the times.

Does she change enough, though? In "Race and Xenophobia in the Nancy Drew Novels," Leona W. Fisher exposes some of the more disturbing aspects of the works, including egregiously racist depictions of people

of color, particularly African Americans. Some details are minimized or whitewashed in subsequent rewrites, but as Fisher notes, “The effects of this second, ostensibly ‘colorblind’ strategy are both confusing and insidious” (p. 69). Fisher discusses what was identified as troubling about the original series and what the newer versions lack in terms of overtly racialized messages. Both the rewrites and the original versions are problematic in that they reinforce deeply entrenched cultural biases in favor of whites. From a narrative standpoint, the original versions are far more engagingly and charmingly written in terms of topical detail, while the edited versions seem to have been written by committee. Indeed, I don’t believe it is overstating the point to say that the attitudes expressed by the white characters in both versions occasionally border on white supremacy, particularly in the early novels where black characters are often portrayed as inept, while white characters’ ethnicity is rarely commented on. Also disturbing is that whites are most often portrayed as the social superiors of black characters. The fact that this bias extended into some of the 1970s rewrites reveals some of the deep biases of the Stratemeyer Syndicate, the owner of the Nancy Drew series.

In his tightly written entry, “‘They Blinded Her with Science’: Science Fiction and Technology in Nancy Drew,” Cornelius notes that “the men in the series all possess some form of formal education or specialized training, whereas none of the women in these texts have any higher schooling at all” (p. 89), which does not provide an accurate reflection of the larger culture

at all. Cornelius observes that by the end of the 1970s, the majority of students enrolled at American universities were female (p. 79). His larger point — that the subsidiary characters such as Ned Nickerson, Nancy’s sometime boyfriend, often possess more scientific and technical insight than the main female characters, particularly in some of the 1970s volumes such as *The Invisible Intruder* — would suggest that the conservative strain is still present in the works at this time.

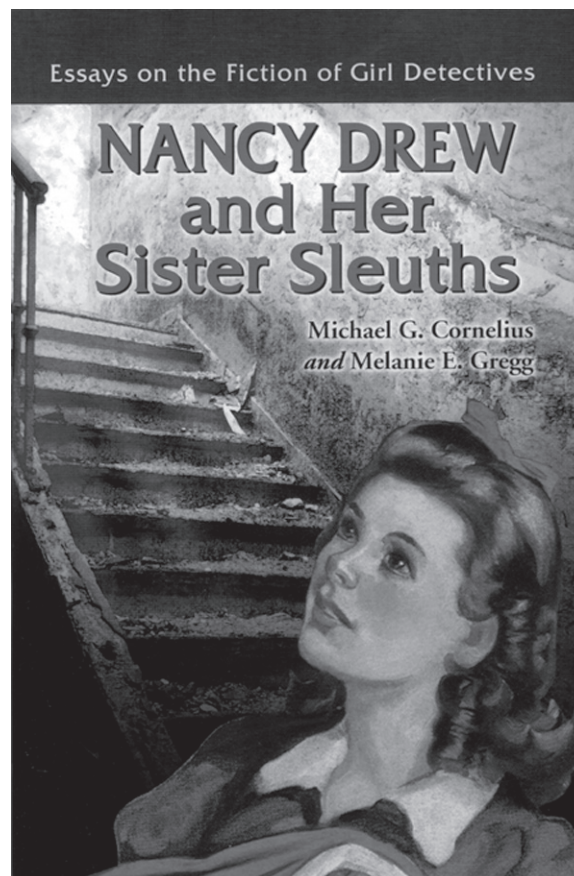
Several essays assert that female detective series both reinforce and challenge conventional norms, whether

Zani diverges a bit from this point. The Trixie Belden books, like the Nancy Drew ones, involve formulaic storytelling, a preponderance of clichés, and unrealistic details that sometimes border on the excessive. Zani believes, however, that the emphasis on family structures in the Belden series provides an alternative that readers might more easily relate to. Additionally noteworthy is the series’ attempt to put forth a middle-class heroine who at times challenges class issues, unlike her sister sleuth Nancy Drew. For example, in several of the books, Trixie and her pals conduct fund drives for deserving

causes such as UNICEF; in the first of the series, *The Secret of the Mansion*, Trixie triumphantly champions the cause of Jim, a homeless runaway; and in the *Red Trailer Mystery*, she and her best friend Honey Wheeler help a nearby family living in a trailer achieve a more secure financial position. It’s hard to imagine Nancy immersing herself in similar earnest causes.

In “Not Nancy Drew but Not Clueless,” Marla Harris foregrounds the view that in the largely post-Nancy Drew world, the more modern female detectives — the Lulu Darks and the Veronica Marses — rely on feminine accoutrements, such as makeup and high fashion, both to define themselves and to achieve their strategic ends. Unavoidable, too, is the sexual dimension, which leaps out of the page in works such as Madison Bennett’s *Lulu Dark Can See Through Walls* and Alane

Ferguson’s *The Christopher Killer: A Forensic Mystery* (p. 158). The presence of dark sexuality and the reliance on it by both male and female detectives to achieve their ends is no stranger to

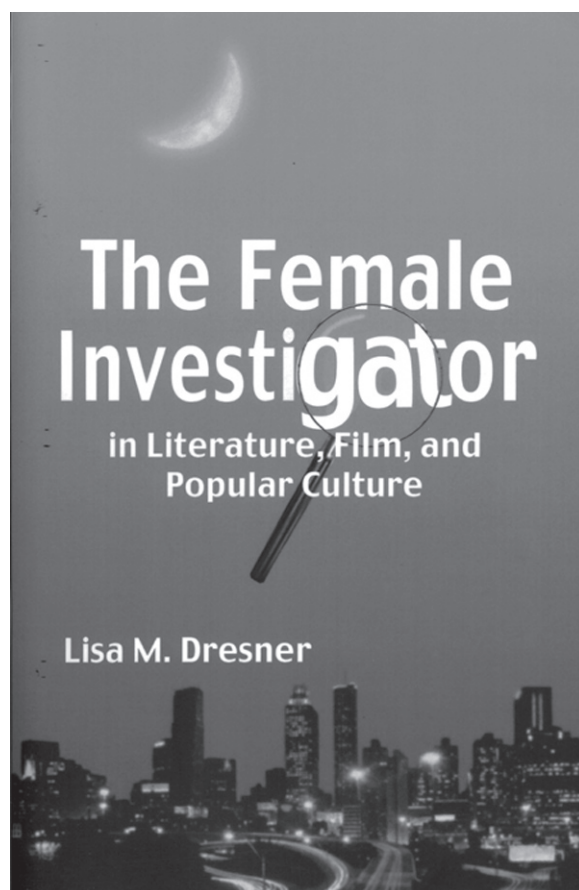


they be in relation to gender or to family structure and dynamics. In “Puzzles, Paternity and Privilege: The Mysterious Function(s) of the Family in Trixie Belden,” however, Steve J.



the detective genre, but to reference it to the degree some of the contemporary teen authors do is somewhat new. No doubt films and other media are part of the reason for such an explosion of hormones: witness the extreme popularity of the *Twilight* series (both in print and on the large screen). Harris also critiques the extreme reliance on femininity and thinness in the more recent girl sleuth offerings, tracing girls' insecurities and ambivalence to their status in a world that objectifies them at increasingly younger ages. Even as girls achieve a modicum of success as thinking beings, much of their intellectual achievement is overshadowed by anxieties that manifest themselves in a fixation with their physical appearance — a fixation neither sensible Nancy Drew nor tomboyish Trixie Belden would have tolerated. Previously, books with female heroines — detective novels in particular — provided a bit of an escape valve for girls. Harris raises the issue of whether such a valve currently exists in young adult fiction. This suggests that while there are limitations to the Nancy Drew formula, more recent incarnations of series books have not completely transcended those limits.

In *The Female Investigator*, the second of the three texts reviewed here, Lisa M. Dresner examines the agency of the adult female detective in media and a few novelistic depictions, including Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*. Dresner, having investigated these works through a variety of lenses, believes that "the female investigator is least limited as she is portrayed in fiction; somewhat more limited as she is portrayed in television; and most limited as she is portrayed in film, a medium in which she is routinely cat-



egorized as mad" (p. 2). It's an intriguing concept, admittedly, but a thin one on which to base an entire analysis. In "The Socio-Cultural Determinants of the Role of the Female Investigator on Television," Dresner refers to several examples of 1970s television series in which the key investigators are female. Surprisingly, she sees the oft-maligned *Charlie's Angels* as more progressive than many might think. The Angels are depicted as driving sports cars, flying helicopters, and piloting boats; in other words, they possess agency in many situations, as do several other of their female investigator counterparts. Perhaps the 1970s was a more progressive time for the female sleuth than one might have previously intuited. This is one of Dresner's more valuable observations.

While Dresner's work provides a useful overview of the topic, it pos-

sesses a somewhat disconnected feel, in part because it reads a bit like an overly long list of diffuse topics. For example, right after discussing driving and transportation motifs as symbols of female distress, Dresner mentions madness as a key motif in works such as Nikki Baker's *The Lavender House Murder*, without showing any logical link between the two concepts (pp. 54–55). Furthermore, subject headings in several chapters appear tacked on. The book does, however, pique the reader's interest in seeking out new works featuring the female sleuth.

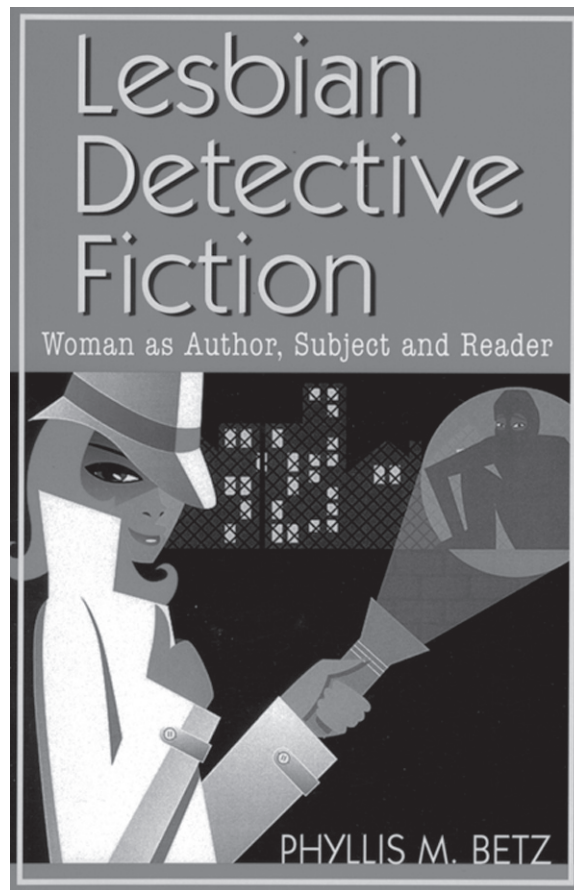
Phyllis Betz's structure and approach in *Lesbian Detective Fiction: Woman as Author, Subject and Reader* are quite cohesive. Although Betz does incorporate some theoretical material, she is able to get directly to her point and make her ideas accessible to a wider, non-scholarly audience.

(To be fair, all the books under consideration succeed in this regard.) Betz is familiar with the historical precedents that have helped put women sleuths on the literary map, as well as the particular challenges that lesbian detective chroniclers such as Katherine V. Forrest, one of the early originators of the genre,<sup>2</sup> have faced.

One such challenge involves the paradox of placing strong female characters in very vulnerable situations. Betz is clear-eyed about the genre, noting that "crimes of violence against women, especially sexual-based ones, appear often in works with female detectives" (p. 48). This is true, for instance, in the adventures of Sue Grafton's Kinsey Milhone (a character who may not be a lesbian but certainly personifies the independent spirit of one). Betz grapples repeatedly with the paradox that female detectives

often have to employ the very violence that most of them deplore. When lesbian detectives are forced to direct this violence toward female villains and perpetrators, it's a double blow, one that presents real dilemmas for the main characters.

The stigma still faced by lesbian detectives, who confront sexism and homophobia from coworkers, criminals, and the larger society, is another motif oft-referenced in the lesbian detective novel. Characters such as Forrest's Kate Delafield often transcend these societal pressures, however, and in the process they lead readers to a sort of "revolution," in Betz's words (p. 175). She concludes with this optimistic view: "When I pick up a detective novel, written by a lesbian author, detailing the ability of a lesbian character to engage with people and institutions unwilling to acknowledge their existence and succeeding, I become part of a community of readers experiencing the same recognition and approval for those efforts" (p. 175). I finished Betz's work with the sense that the lesbian detective genre deserves to be more fully acknowledged for its important place in the pantheon of detective fiction.



These three works make it apparent that significant progress has been made in presenting the female sleuth as an intelligent agent in both senses of the word, capable of taking rational and decisive action. The trails cut by Mildred Wirt Benson back in the 1930s have led to innumerable detours, some of which have not reflected

positively on the progenitors of the detective series, as witnessed by the tendency of the older versions of the teen-detective series books to reify dominant ideologies. However, new versions of the female detective continue to unfold in a variety of media, and she continues to fascinate readers of all ages. Nancy Drew's spirit is still very much with us today.

#### Notes

1. Amy Benfer, "Who Was Carolyn Keene?" *Salon*, October 8, 1999, [http://www.salon.com/mwt/feature/1999/10/08/keene\\_q\\_a/](http://www.salon.com/mwt/feature/1999/10/08/keene_q_a/).

2. Lori L. Lake, "Gay and Lesbian Detective Novels, Part 2: The Lesbian Detective Novel," *Crime Spree Magazine*, Jan/Feb 2006, reprinted at <http://www.lorillake.com/lesbiandetective.html> (accessed May 21, 2010).

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# WOMEN AND LITERACY

by Martha Kaplan

Mev Miller & Kathleen P. King, eds., *EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH LITERACY: VIEWS FROM EXPERIENCE*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2009. 344p. pap., \$45.99, ISBN 978-1607520832.

When asked to review this book, I accepted, although I expected it to be dry work. Instead I found it engaging, intelligent, often delightful, often hopeful, and frequently painful. This assemblage of voices from those working and learning in adult women's literacy programs is one of the resources available through WE LEARN—Women Expanding / Literacy Education Action Resource Network—a participatory feminist organization fostering literacy as a tool for empowerment and equity for women ([www.litwomen.org/welearn.html](http://www.litwomen.org/welearn.html)). Editors Mev Miller and Kathleen King felt that such a forum was needed to counteract the isolation often experienced by those working and learning in this field. This gathering of voices would, in the editors' views, provide a site for sharing information within the field as well as with educators, policy makers, and others interested in social justice and change. Through their network, the editors invited those working in the field to share their experiences.

Much of the literature on achieving literacy focuses on three elements that must be part of any effective teaching. Teachers must build motivation, create relationships, and have specific strategies for teaching the different skills needed for literacy, including those dealing with difficulties that may be neurological. As responses from the field came in, however, it became clear to the editors that the most critical element for success with adult basic education, especially with women, was the affective element. Teaching that focused solely on the skills to be learned and not on the emotions and life ex-

perience of those learning was simply not effective. In the words of the WE LEARN cooperative,

WE LEARN seeks to encourage teachers to create holistic women-supportive learning environments in spite of restrictions placed by the National Reporting System (NRS) and state/federal assessment and accountability policies. We challenge activists from every social movement to consider the literacy proficiencies of all people and to consider how print-based information and privileged language continues as a barrier for access of the people to people's liberation causes. (p. xv)

*Empowering Women Through Literacy* is divided into three sections. The first, "Reflections," offers an open-ended sharing of experiences by fourteen teachers and learners. Participants employ different strategies and genres to talk about their own vulnerabilities and their individual successes. In "The Literacy of Being," ESL teacher Denise DiMarzio argues by analogy for respect for each individual's existence, by tracing the etymology of the verb *to be*. She argues that the English language itself, including its most fundamental verb, is a hybrid that has traveled through time and geography. She includes poetry by her students, as do many other contributors to this volume. Also in this section, Karen Milheim sets out a

series of recommendations for teaching adult women literacy that she has developed through her years of teaching. She suggests that before any student joins a class, teacher and student meet for an interview to lay the groundwork for understanding the life and experiences of the person joining the class. The teacher's job in that interview is, first, to listen. Milheim also recommends that teachers learn about the communities of their students outside the classroom.

Stories throughout this section tell how women's lives have been negatively affected by broader social policies reflecting race, class, and gender. One of the striking stories comes from Beatrice Arrindell, about the treatment of her African American community and its children in East Brooklyn, New York, in the 1970s, when questions of racial policy in America were often myopically focused only on the South. The price here was paid in the broken lives of young people, in her life and in her brother's. There are also prison narratives, poems by women in literacy programs where the constraints are beyond the imagination of most of us, and poems about journeys of pain and growth. Each story, however, shows how adult literacy programs have empowered these women, often transforming their lives.

The second section of the book, comprising thirteen articles from practice, focuses on different learning communities that have been fostered to create learning and empowerment.



A teacher in a GED program in Providence, Rhode Island, develops a picture-to-story-to-text process to create *herstories* with her students; another teacher uses Gestalt theory for her theoretical base as she creates positive classroom images around her students to challenge their negative self-images. In Chicago, a literacy project uses novels by African American women with themes of abuse and trauma to help women frame their experiences and begin to acknowledge the impact of trauma in their educational past and to form corrective, supportive communities. In all these testimonies, listening to women learners takes on central importance. There are stories of empowerment through ingenious strategies to build literacy in a recovery house. The contribution from the Center for Immigrant Families outlines how a community came together in a literacy project to overcome Clinton Administration laws that "had a dire effect on the lives of poor and working class people of color and immigrants, particularly women" (p. 119). In all the contributions, the lives of individuals shine.

The third section, "Explorations of Practice," offers twelve essays: they include inquiries stemming from reflections of practices based both on theory and on action research, as well as personal testimonies that argue against prioritizing only skills-based approaches to literacy. Some of the essays examine the negative impact of present practices that are infrequently reflected upon: attendance rules, for example, that fail to take into account many of the constraints that marginalized women are up against. The impact of grief, trauma, and violence on learning continue to be examined in this section. Also here are articles providing statistics about some of the effects of current educational and welfare policies.

One of the more disheartening stories is by Dianne Ramdeholl, Stacie Evans, and John Gordon, about Open Book, a small, community-based literacy program in Brooklyn, New York. After sixteen years of success, Open Book was forced to close its doors in 2002, when funding priorities for adult literacy changed to the limited focus of workforce development; a skills-based approach trumped social justice and human development. This article provides one explicit example of how the 1998 passage of the Workforce Investment Act enshrined higher test scores as the main measure of program quality and achievement.

Mary V. Alfred's contribution, "Empowering Women Through Voice: Low-Income Women Speak About Work, [Non]Education, Poverty, and Welfare Reform," is a particularly strong critique of present education and welfare policies. The sweeping changes enacted in 1996 imposed strict limitations on education programs, both limiting program content and enacting time limits for support before recipients must find employment. The barriers to empowerment and to the workplace created by these changes are legion; Alfred's article contains an extensive list of them.

One important lesson this book offers the layperson is a warning that, increasingly, the affective, motivational, and community aspects of literacy learning are being sacrificed to a more narrow, skills-based approach. Skills-based teaching ought to be just one part of a broader approach to learning. The caution suggested by this book is that a narrow approach is simply not effective for adult women; it marginalizes them, as it does their teachers.

For teachers in adult literacy programs, *Empowering Women Through Literacy* provides support as well as a

fund of ideas for teaching and learning. Laypeople interested in educational issues will also find it valuable. Both audiences may also benefit from WE LEARN's extensive website at [www.litwomen.org/welearn.html](http://www.litwomen.org/welearn.html), which offers resources, events, and ongoing projects.

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FC readers interested in the issue of women's literacy may also want to look at these books:

Lorna Rivera, *Laboring to Learn: Women's Literacy and Poverty in the Post-Welfare Era*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008.

Beth Daniell & Peter Mortensen, *Women and Literacy: Local and Global Inquiries for a New Century*. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007.

# WOMEN IN PRISON

by Frances M. Kavenik

Silja J.A. Talvi, **WOMEN BEHIND BARS: THE CRISIS OF WOMEN IN THE U.S. PRISON SYSTEM**. Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007. 382p. bibl. index. pap., \$15.95, ISBN 978-1580051958.

Jody Raphael, **FREEING TAMMY: WOMEN, DRUGS, AND INCARCERATION**. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England/Northeastern University Press, 2007. 232p. bibl. index. pap., \$24.95, ISBN 978-1555536732.

Victoria Law, **RESISTANCE BEHIND BARS: THE STRUGGLES OF INCARCERATED WOMEN**. Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2009. 288p. bibl. index. pap., \$20.00, ISBN 978-1604860184.

Suvarna Cherukuri, **WOMEN IN PRISON: AN INSIGHT INTO CAPTIVITY AND CRIME**. New Delhi: Foundation Books/Cambridge University Press India Pvt. Ltd., 2008. 160p. bibl. index. \$34.00, ISBN 978-8175965478.

Kathleen A. Cairns, **HARD TIME AT TEHACHAPI: CALIFORNIA'S FIRST WOMEN'S PRISON**. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2009. 224p. \$27.95, ISBN 978-0826345721.

It has been quite a few years since I taught students at Taycheedah and Ellsworth Correctional Institutes, the primary women's prisons in Wisconsin, but reading the five books under review here leads me to believe that nothing has changed in the world of women's incarceration, except for the worse. In the United States we imprison more and more women each year, under harsher, less humane conditions, and focus ever more intently on punishment rather than reclamation. The fact that this process has failed both society and the women themselves seems not to concern the politicians or the general public who turn a blind eye to the black hole in their midst. Nearly unbearable as it was to read these books, I found myself wanting everyone else to read them too.

Three of these in particular seem most suitable for general readers and for students in entry-level women's studies courses: Silja Talvi's *Women Behind Bars*, Jody Raphael's *Freeing Tammy*, and Victoria Law's *Resistance Behind Bars*. Each of the three authors takes a different approach to the subject, and in that respect they provide complementary perspectives on the

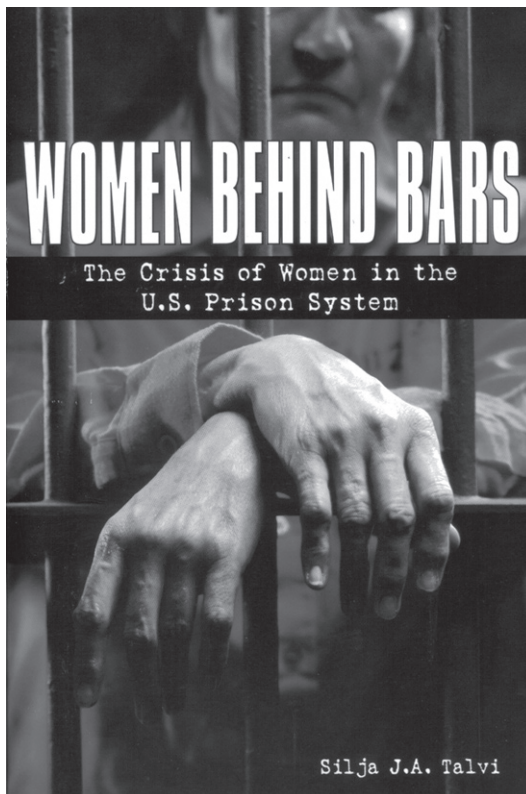
issues, yet all three use the voices of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women, as well as those of corrections professionals and other scholars and researchers, to talk about women in prison in the early twenty-first century.

Talvi, in *Women Behind Bars: The Crisis of Women in the U.S. Prison System*, employs the most documentary approach, in keeping with her background as an investigative journalist and essayist. She dedicates her work "to all the girls and women who never made it out" (p. vii). Talvi interviewed about 110 incarcerated women and girls over a two-year period, received letters from 300 women prisoners, interviewed more than a dozen ex-prisoners, and visited numerous prisons around the U.S. and three abroad. Her perspective is perhaps broader and more comprehensive than that of the other two general-purpose texts; at the same time, her use of extensive quotations from the women she interviewed add life and body to her assertions and conclusions.

Many of Talvi's chapters have catchy titles: "Here's Your One-Way Ticket to Prison," for instance, and

"Living in the God Pod." She covers a range of important topics, such as health issues (including mental health), the "war" on drugs (and its responsibility for incarcerating an exponential increase in women), sexual abuse, motherhood and parenting issues, and the transporting of women to prisons far from home and family (in response to overcrowding and other economic considerations).

The many statistics cited in this volume are consistent with those in the other texts. Here's a sampling: "one of every thirty-two Americans is under correctional supervision" and "one quarter of the entire world's inmates are contained in U.S. jails and prisons" (p. xiv); incarceration of women increased 757 percent during a time when men's incarceration rate only doubled (p. xv); a quarter of the prison population is "locked up on drug-related charges" (p. 23); and the vast majority of those incarcerated are people of color. Women prisoners of color are also likely to be semi-literate, heads of their households, and homeless, and draconian laws have limited their access to higher education, public



housing, food stamps, and TANF after their release (p. 276).

Talvi provides thorough endnotes and an extensive bibliography of texts and videos, all of which should be helpful to students wishing to explore the issues further.

Jody Raphael takes a different approach, in *Freeing Tammy: Women, Drugs, and Incarceration*, to demonstrating the realities of incarcerated women. Telling Tammy's story in the third person, but incorporating many direct quotations from Tammy's diaries and interviews, Raphael shows how an intelligent woman stumbles into the system through a series of bad decisions and mistaken loyalties. The story, which reads like an extended narrative autobiography, depends for its emotional impact on our sympathy for and empathy with the protagonist, an articulate and sensitive middle-aged Black woman negotiating the criminal justice system without a safety net. Its chap-

ters are organized chronologically, beginning with Tammy's arrest and conviction and ending with her self-reclamation and new life.

For example, we hear about Tammy's introduction to Cook County Jail, where she endures thirty days of nightmare between conviction and sentencing:

Tammy's new residence was a jail cell, a ten-by-ten-foot cinderblock room with a bunk bed set with pencil-thin mattresses. A narrow window at one end was covered by a mesh so thick that no light came through. Guards used a small slot, a three-inch-by-twelve-inch slit in the cell's steel door, to monitor the prisoners. A steel toilet, without lid or seat, and a small sink completed the cell's furnishings. Apparently at one time or other prisoners had removed seats and toilet bowl covers and used them as weapons, resulting in their current ban. To keep the mice out, everyone stuffed towels under the doors. (p. 24)

Meanwhile, Rafael offers commentary and context for Tammy's revelations, such as, "Tammy didn't know it then, but this was her first encounter with the new penology, America's current retreat from rehabilitation to the deliberate infliction of prison pain, intended to punish wrongdoers" (p. 35).

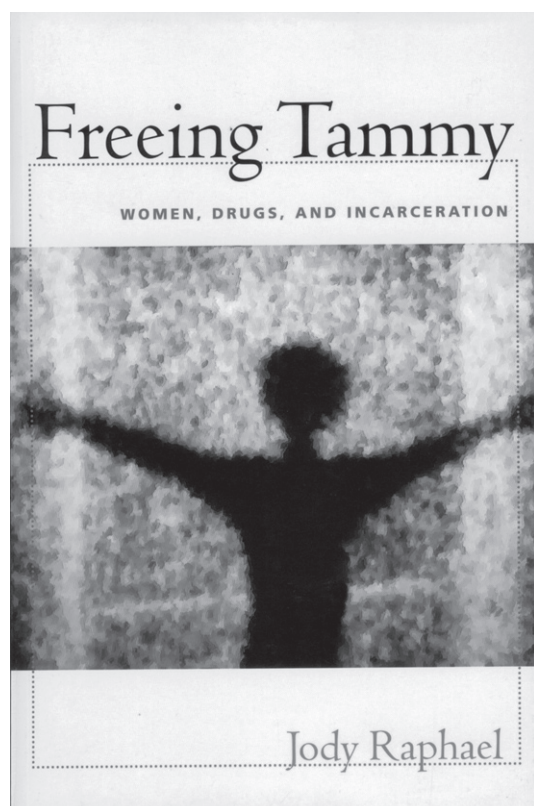
But for the most part, Rafael allows Tammy to report her own experiences, and particularly their emotional impact — for instance, about the period when she literally hid in her basement after leaving prison:

*I knew something was wrong when I didn't have any more homework or during summer breaks and Christmas breaks I was still in the basement. I would wake up, get my coffee, and I would go to the basement. And I would come up from the basement whenever my son came home from school, and if he didn't come home from school if he had activities, I'd come up when it was dark. In my mind, I was still in the dark. I was hiding so the world couldn't see me. Same thing as being on drugs, only I didn't have the drugs. Trapped forever. It was all the same big ball of despair and degradation and embarrassment and humiliation. I was encompassed in that circle, and I couldn't break through that circle, so everywhere I looked I felt that humiliation, I felt the degradation, I felt the embarrassment.* (p. 112)

Of the first three books, this one is most clear about the impact on children of incarcerating their mothers, by focusing one chapter entirely on Tammy's son Terrence, who also paid for his mother's mistakes. Even more importantly, it shows the impact of abandoned children on society overall:

Children love even the most neglectful parents; the separation will be experienced on a deeply emotional level, with the possibility of lifetime adverse impact. Nell Bernstein, a journalist who has studied the issue for over five years, [says that] "the main thing that I've learned from talking to so many kids, which should be so obvious, is that these are the parents they've got. These are





the parents they love. And their connections to those parents are exactly as real and as deep as my connection to my kids. And I know that should go without saying, but it never does." [Bernstein concludes,] "We are able to lock people up in the numbers that we do only so long as we see them as useless — extraneous individuals whom our society simply does not need. But the majority of prisoners are mothers and fathers; they are needed in the most fundamental way. The parent-child bond, beyond its private importance to the individuals who share it, is a social asset that must be valued and preserved." (p. 102)

*Freeing Tammy*, like *Women Behind Bars*, is copiously footnoted and has an extensive bibliography for further research and reading. Highly readable, it

could also be used in a creative writing or communications course.

Victoria Law's *Resistance Behind Bars* is the most radical of this first group of texts, calling not for prison reform but prison eradication: "This book should not be mistaken for a call for more humane or 'gender responsive' prisons. It is a long-overdue recognition of the actions that incarcerated women themselves have taken and are taking to challenge the injustices and abuses that accompany imprisonment" (p. iv). Law states her rationale again at the end of the volume:

Calls for reform have failed to adequately address the factors leading to women's incarceration.

Instead, they mask the inequities and injustices inherent in the prison system and have historically strengthened its capacity and ability to separate and punish those who transgress social mores, particularly the poor, people of color and other marginalized populations. (p. 168)

Like Talvi and Raphael, Law uses women's stories and their own words — gathered, in this case, over a seven-and-a-half-year period — to clarify and particularize the issues. She covers many of the same topics that the other two do, including health care, sexual abuse, mothers and children, and education, but has some unique chapters as well, dealing with im-

migrant detention, women's work in prison, grievances and lawsuits, and women's media. Every chapter in the book, she explains, "focuses on an issue that the women themselves have identified as important" (p. iv).

I found the chapter on women's work compelling: Law quotes California federal prisoner Marilyn Buck's report that "[a] woman's labor, with few exceptions, is extremely alienated, exploited, and grossly underpaid," and adds that prison jobs "provide little to no opportunity for women to learn job skills that can be used upon release" (p. 97). Nor is higher education any longer a means of opportunity, since grants providing college programs for prisoners were legislated out of existence in the 1990s (p. 82), particularly the Pell Grant program, which funded most of the prison higher education programs. It seems clear that if women released from prison are to change their lives and become "productive members of society," they must receive either



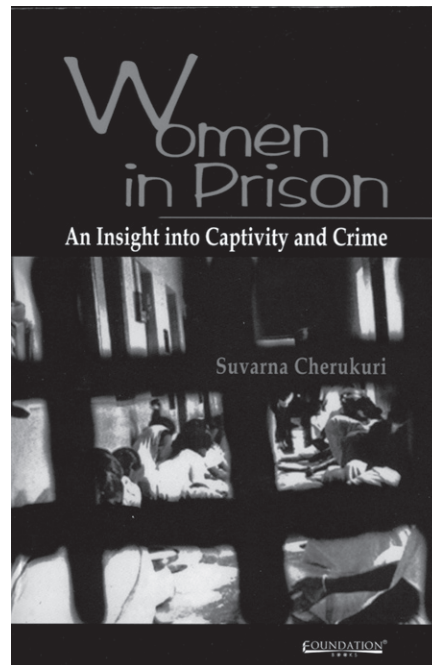
serious job and skills training or education. "Punishment" advocates prefer to ignore this simple truth.

I also found the chapter entitled "Some Historical Background" enlightening. Law points to the end of the U.S. Civil War, when "former slave states passed...Black Codes" to control and imprison African Americans, replacing slavery with penal servitude, as the beginning of today's prison system (pp. 159–60). This chapter also underscores how "imprisonment has often been used as a means of gender as well as social control" (p. 162), and shows that modern legislation of various kinds — the "war on drugs," "three strikes," "welfare reform," and the privatization of prisons — have contributed to the present crisis.

Useful end-of-book features include a glossary, which defines terms ranging from "administrative segregation" to "write-up"; resources, both national and local, in categories such as health, incarcerated mothers, and free books and reading materials, all fully annotated; and a modest but solid and annotated bibliography of useful books, periodicals, and reports. All of these additions make this book a rich classroom text.

The other two books under review here are more specialized in their approach to women in prison. Suvarna Cherukuri introduces *Women in Prison: An Insight into Captivity and Crime* with the legendary figure of Phoolan Devi, the "Bandit Queen" who became a cult figure in late twentieth-century India. After her "Robin Hood" career, she surrendered to police, served her time in prison, and became a member of Parliament; she was assassinated in 2001. Cherukuri is interested in Phoolan not only as a cult figure but also as a woman who transgressed caste and gender roles in a highly stratified patriarchal society; as such, Phoolan served as inspiration for Cherukuri's

investigation of the Chanchalguda women's state prison in Hyderabad, the capital city of the southern state of Andhra Pradesh (p. vii, note 2). For this study Cherukuri interviewed forty-nine inmates, many of whom had been convicted of "dowry crimes" against daughters-in-law or sisters-in-law.



The author is clear about how this text should *not* be used: "The idea is not to add 'women from India' into the discourse of gender, race, and class. On the contrary, the attempt is to address multiple hegemonies — in this context including caste — explore power structures that operate within the Indian women's prison, and the way these power structures define and circumscribe the lives of women in prison" (pp. vii–viii). At the same time, she does provide some information about prisons outside India, in Chapter 1, so that the reader unfamiliar with such systems has some background with which to understand the cultural similarities and differences.

Of all the books under review, this one reads most like a scholarly exercise or master's thesis, beginning with a literature review entitled "Theoreti-

cal Considerations" before moving on to "Methodological Framework..." and then to a chapter called "Indian Penitentiary and the Historiographical Silence About Women." The last three chapters present some of the women's stories, analyze the prison system, and expand on Cherukuri's conclusion that "[p]risons are part of a larger societal network, and prisons in many ways replicate the larger social ideologies that define the moral boundaries for women" (p. x).

Of the five chapters, the one presenting the women's own responses, Chapter 4, is the most interesting, but it lacks analysis. Cherukuri remarks often about the caste differences between the women inmates and outsiders, such as the prison staff, but never articulates clearly how those differences affected her own research model. Typically, the inmates address the interviewer as "madam" and assert their innocence. This creates a sharp contrast with the other books' reliance on women prisoners' own voices and self-understanding.

I think Cherukuri is right, that this book raises too many culturally specific issues for a general women's studies course. On the other hand, it might be used in courses on marriage and the family, on India, or on international studies focusing on women, largely because the whole notion of dowry is so deeply embedded in Indian culture and society, and because woman-on-woman crime seems to be a direct result of this cultural expectation.

*Hard Time at Tehachapi: California's First Women's Prison*, perhaps the best-written of the five books reviewed in this essay, offers a coherent tale of an experiment in dealing with female offenders that was ahead of its time. The experiment also demonstrated the barriers to feminist activism, mainly entrenched political, social, and eco-

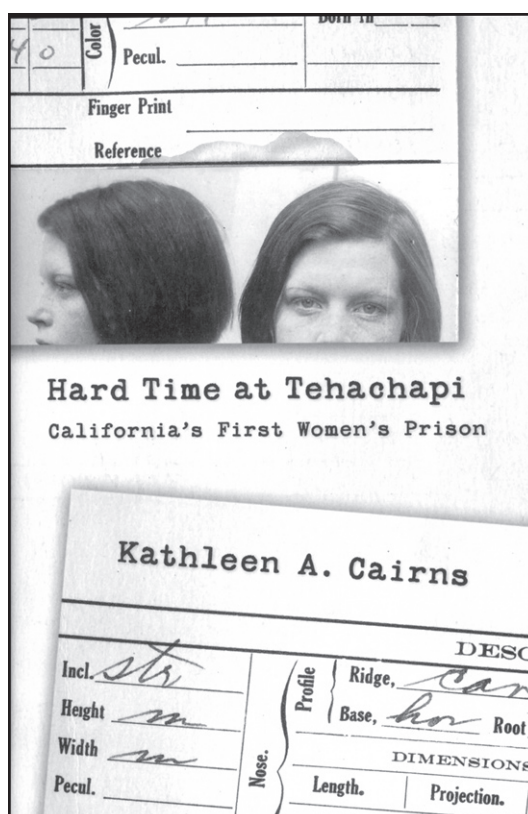


conomic interests. For these reasons, I think *Hard Time* would be an excellent addition to a feminist history or grassroots activism course.

From the outset, Cairns notes the irony of a “kinder, gentler prison” being located in California: “[D]espite its laissez faire reputation, California has seldom exhibited any charitable impulses toward criminals, no matter what their gender. The state is, after all, proud of its designation as a ‘three-strikes-and-you’re-out’ kind of place, no matter how minor the offenses might be” (p. 2). But the timing was right, the Progressive Era was in full flower, and fifteen states and the federal government had opened separate women’s facilities after the turn of the twentieth century when a group of clubwomen and mainly female reformers started pushing for a separate women’s “reformatory” in California. If the timing was propitious at first, it soon turned sour, and by 1933 the political and social winds had shifted to

the Jazz Age flouting of Prohibition and growth of an illegal underground economy based on drugs and alcohol; anger at “dangerous radicals” including union organizers; a deep depression that fueled a spike in criminal behavior by both genders. By the 1930s few reformers still openly argued for the “perfectibility” of human nature, or social “uplift.” Complaints of “coddling” hardened criminals could be heard with some frequency, but state officials had committed to the reformatory and so it opened, more or less on schedule. (p. 5)

In 1952, after an earthquake, the women were moved to a new facility at Corona.



Cairns offers a provocative blend of feminist and social history, with a critical perspective and wry wit that overlays everything. She comments on San Quentin: “Purchased in 1851, the year after California became a state, it seemed a virtually perfect location. Isolated enough to keep inmates from trying to escape across the bay to ‘sinful’ San Francisco, it was accessible to the city by ferry, enabling future employees to belly up to numerous bars on their days off” (p. 19). While sympathetic to the reformers and their aims, she is clear about their deficiencies. She also uses personality profiles of the important players, like Rose Wallace, Miriam Van Waters, and others, to clarify and highlight their individual effort and dedication.

As a history text, *Hard Time* illustrates the difficulty of gathering information, especially about those with no status:

The aftermath of the 1952 earthquake in Tehachapi offers evidence of the system’s indifference toward female inmates. Almost immediately, and in spite of intense opposition from the town of Tehachapi, lawmakers made plans to rebuild the reformatory and turn it into a men’s prison. No one involved in the reconstruction apparently thought it necessary to dig through the rubble to retrieve precious records. In addition to demonstrating a distinct lack of interest in the inmates, this oversight left a gaping hole for future generations of scholars. The records — or what remains of them, if anything — still lie buried beneath the remodeled administration building.

Virtually nothing exists to tell us who these women were, where they came from, their ethnic or family backgrounds, the crimes they committed, their living arrangements and relationships at Tehachapi. (p. 13)

Infuriating for the historian, this indifference suggests a prevailing attitude toward these women that borders on amnesia. They were, and remain, society’s discards.

Yet Cairns manages to unearth evidence of the women’s own voices, and she devotes a whole chapter to the prison newspaper, the *Clarion*. She asserts that

[p]rison newspapers...served the interests of inmates. While resenting a system that tried to silence them and forced them into lockstep conformity, they



could not openly resist without risking their future freedom. Engaging in sex with other inmates, fighting, destroying property, talking back, even malingering or faking illness brought swift punishment and the loss of precious good-time credits. Writing for newspapers gave them the ability to express their individuality in safe ways, while also suggesting that they had mastered the behavior necessary to demonstrate their successful rehabilitation. (p. 102)

In a study hampered by lack of reliable evidence, the *Clarion* is a welcome source, although, unfortunately, “fewer than two dozen issues of the *Clarion*’s Tehachapi years survive, virtually all from the 1940s” (p. 107). Nonetheless, Cairns culls much from this limited material. She concludes,

For women imprisoned at the California Institution for Women, the *Clarion* served many purposes. It entertained, instructed, and uplifted. It provided a creative outlet for poets, artists, and writers. It lessened the loneliness and sense of isolation and gave inmates a crucial sense of community. Most importantly, it was an invaluable forum that enabled them to present themselves as ordinary people, complex and flawed — neither the paragons nor the monsters portrayed in various forms of popular media. As writer Isa Lang noted, “*The Clarion* is small in comparison to many other penal publications, but ‘good stuff is done up in little packages,’ as the old saying goes. As it goes forth each month, it is with the sincere prayer that those who

read it may find something in its pages that will create a kinder feeling toward those who having failed along the way are finding the way back... Within ourselves lies victory or defeat.” (p. 119)

In the final chapter, “After Tehachapi,” Cairns’s conclusions are very similar to those of the other writers whose work I have reviewed in this essay: “Tehachapi partly foundered on divisions among women, on the realization that women did not comprise a single class. The current crop of women’s prisons, it seems, may be foundering on its opposite: the notion that women should be exactly equal to men” (p. 174). And the result, Cairns suggests, is to *make* incarcerated women more like incarcerated men. A survey of women prisoners at Corona in 1963 and in 1998, using the same questions, found striking differences:

Responses from the earlier survey revealed a more communal and trusting environment. No longer. Nineteen-nineties inmates revealed a deep distrust, both of staff members and of each other. Gartner and Kruttschnitt [the researchers] attributed the changes to the overall effort to make women’s prisons just like men’s. Half the wardens working at Corona are now men. None receive special training for work at a women’s prison, but go through the same program as all other prison employees, leading to “greater distance and detachment in staff relations with prisoners.” Additionally, “as the prison became less ambitious in its goals and lowered its expectations of prisoners, prisoners in turn came to expect

less from prison and from each other.” The “move to gender equality,” Gartner and Kruttschnitt concluded, has created a climate of cruelty. (p. 175)

Cairns’s own position is clear. Basically, she asserts, historically men’s prisons became more like female prisons:

As female inmates sank beneath the radar screen, their male counterparts reaped many of the benefits of their ideas and programs. Though most prisons in today’s tough-on-crime environment have abandoned any notion of “coddling,” the rehabilitative model created by women [at Tehachapi] remains a model of what prisons could be, in a better world. (p. 12)

Ultimately, these five books show the gaps in America’s understanding of and engagement with the truth about men and women who commit crime. In Wisconsin, for example, we incarcerate two-and-a-half times more offenders than does neighboring Minnesota, which has about the same population. Once they are in “the system,” these people are ignored and forgotten until they offend again, and again. In personalizing and humanizing the women behind bars, these books are a wake-up call, a reminder that we need to deal with society’s problems, not just rely on short-term and short-sighted solutions.

#### Note

1. Editorial, *Kenosha News*, May 2, 2010, p. B6.

[Frances M. Kavenik is an emeritus professor of English at the University of Wisconsin–Parkside.]

# THE MAINE WOMEN WRITERS COLLECTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND

by Jennifer S. Tuttle & Cally Gurley

In 1959, at what was then Westbrook Junior College for women, English professor and college president's assistant Dorothy M. Healy (1904–1990) invited fellow literature professor Grace A. Dow (1901–1995) to accompany her English novel class on a field trip to Colby College to see the Thomas Hardy collection there. On the return trip, Dow suggested starting a collection of Maine women's writing at Westbrook. The two women met with college president Edward Blewett the next day, and he was enthusiastic. "I thought before things were lost entirely," Grace Dow explained, "it would be a good idea to get together all that we can."<sup>1</sup>

Thus began a collection devoted to honoring and preserving writing by women, material that otherwise was not taken seriously and was at risk of being lost and forgotten. As Sandra M. Gilbert explains, Healy and Dow established the Collection over fifty years ago, "before the so-called second wave of the women's movement produced so much feminist theory that would allow us to analyze and understand collections like this one. So the people who founded it...had great foresight and fabulous historical and critical imaginations."<sup>2</sup> The Maine Women Writers Collection (MWWC) was supported by a \$400 budget

and an ambitious goal: to preserve and provide access to writing, letters, and memorabilia by Maine women writers — both those who were famous and those who were more obscure. It was one of the first collections of its kind in the country, and its growth has been bolstered and enriched by the rise of women's studies in the academy and by the women's movements of the past fifty years.

## Mission

The mission of the Collection is to honor and preserve writing and other forms of cultural production by and about Maine women, as well as to promote research and study on the lives and work of these women and the culture of their times. One of the central aims in collecting such work is to give it a secure, accessible home in

Maine, instead of allowing it to be sold or deposited out of state. The MWWC includes many types of material representing women and the numerous academic and cultural subject areas reflected in their work — a unique cross-section of U.S. literary history. It has served a broad user base for many years: students and faculty, outside researchers from many disciplines, casual visitors, and friends patronize the Collection in a variety of ways. The diversity of the collection accounts for its wide appeal and prospects of continued strength, recognition, and relevance to academic trends.

## Holdings

The MWWC now has nearly 8,000 volumes on more than 500 Maine women writers. Its holdings are especially strong in nineteenth and twentieth-century resources. Published material ranges from rare books, pamphlets, and broadsides to newspapers and literary and popular journals. Among the Collection's unpublished materials are travel journals, diaries, correspondence, photographs, manuscripts, artwork, material culture, memorabilia, artists' books, and organizational records. Some of the subject areas most

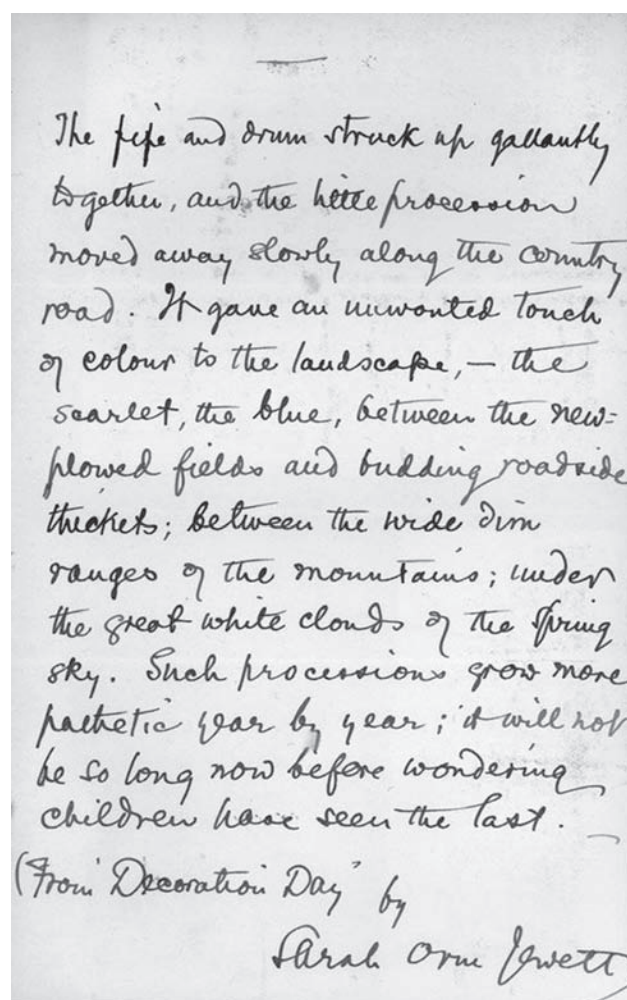


Dorothy Healy and Grace Dow with Westbrook Junior College literature students, ca. 1965; *from the Collection*

deeply represented are women's literary and social history, the suffrage and women's movements, women's health and medicine, women's sexuality, nature and the environment, women's education, spiritualism, New England studies, children's literature, and Maine history. May Sarton once commended Dorothy Healy on having brought to the Collection both "treasure from the past and recognition to writers of the present."<sup>3</sup> "Treasure from the past" is everywhere to be found in the Collection's holdings, which include rare copies of novels by and the only known daguerreotype of Maine's first novelist, Sally Sayward Barrell Keating Wood; the Sarah Orne Jewett Collection, featuring Jewett's earliest known writings as well as correspondence with Annie Adams Fields, among many others; and the Josephine Diebitsch Peary Collection, reflecting a rich selection of both literary and material culture related to Peary's life and her experience on arctic expeditions prior to her husband's race to be the first to reach the North Pole. Now itself a treasure of the past, the May Sarton Collection includes a variety of manuscript and published material, along with a significant portion of her personal library. At the MWWC one may also find book and manuscript material by and about Louise Bogan, Rachel Carson, Elizabeth Coatsworth, Fanny Fern (Sara Payson Willis Parton), Dahlov Ipcar, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Ruth Moore, Elizabeth Oakes Smith, Harriet Prescott Spofford, Ann Sophia Stevens, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Margaret Jane Mussey Sweat, Celia Lighton Thaxter, and Kate Douglas Wiggin, to name but a few.

Likewise committed to recognizing "writers of the present," the Collection holds the papers of contemporary writers such as Cathie Pelletier, Monica

Wood, and global family issues writer Perdita Huston. Recently, the MWWC has developed new initiatives in the area of collection development, with the aim of diversifying our holdings to make them more inclusive. We are actively seeking to strengthen our range of materials representing, for example, women of color, Franco American women, immigrant women, working-class women, and women writing in new genres. Such work includes the Donna Loring Papers, illuminating the career of this author and Vietnam veteran who served as the Penobscot Nation representative to the Maine Legislature for twelve years. We are currently launching an oral history project designed to preserve the stories of Maine women from underrepresented groups. And we are building dynamic collections of new literary forms such as zines and artists' books. Our holdings are particularly rich in the latter, highlights being work by Martha A. Hall and Rebecca Goodale. Our collection policy strives, then, to strike a balance between reflecting the diversity of literary and cultural resources of Maine and focusing on a number of special subjects, material types, and writers whose work is of special interest.



Page handwritten by Sarah Orne Jewett from *Country of the Pointed Firs*, ca. 1896; from the Collection

## History

The first item to find a home in the Maine Women Writers Collection was Edna St. Vincent Millay's volume *A Few Figs from Thistles: Poems and Sonnets*, a gift from the personal collection of Dorothy Healy and her husband, John. With their \$400 budget in hand, housing the Collection in "cramped quarters" that "migrated from location to location on campus,"<sup>4</sup> Healy and Dow built the MWWC with fearless enthusiasm. From 1959 to 1967, Dow served as the Collection's first curator; Healy was also centrally involved in the enterprise during that





Grace Dow, in the Maine Women Writers Collection, ca. 1965; *from the Collection*

time. On the collaboration between Dow and Healy, Westbrook College alumna Louise Parker James has noted, “It was the perfect coming together of an idea and someone who could make it happen.”<sup>5</sup> Dorothy Healy’s dynamism, creativity, and personal connections are widely credited for building the Collection: she acted on a deep love of and wide familiarity with literary culture and she nurtured relationships with authors, donors, and book dealers. Notable among the latter group is Portland’s Francis O’Brien, who supplied the first one thousand volumes — the foundation of the Collection — and who continued to work with Healy on subsequent acquisitions. Many flyleaves in the Collection contain lightly penciled notes in O’Brien’s hand.

Healy was curator herself from 1967 to her death in 1990. A highlight of her tenure was a 1981–1982 grant for statewide programming from the Maine Humanities Council, which

significantly expanded public exposure to the MWWC. The year-long project, titled “A Goodly Heritage,” was directed by Karin Woodruff of the Department of Language and Literature at Westbrook College. It involved lectures, original plays, and other programming about a wide array of Maine women writers represented in the Collection. In 1986, Healy shepherded the MWWC into a new and more appropriate location in the Josephine P. Abplanalp Library at Westbrook College. Her most significant achievement, however, was work that led to the creation

of an endowment fund that would ensure the MWWC’s security into the future. Established in 1991 by Portland philanthropist John Payson, a longtime friend of Healy, the endowment has provided the MWWC with a state-of-the-art facility, a budget for acquisitions and programming, a full-time curator, and a professorship of literature named for Healy.

In the two decades since Healy’s death, the MWWC has been well served by curators Mary Anne Wallace (1990–1996), Nancy Noble (1996–1997), Pat Milligan (1997–1999), and Cally Gurley (1999–

2010), with Roberta Gray stepping in as acting curator during interim periods. This year marks a new beginning for the Collection as we welcome a new curator, Cathleen Miller, while Cally Gurley moves into the role of directing a newly established Department of Special Collections at the University of New England (UNE). Over the last twenty years, these curators have worked in concert with the Healy Professors and a small army of support personnel to catalog, organize, and improve access to the MWWC’s holdings, developing both internal activities and public programs. This focused work maintained the MWWC’s good health throughout its development and through the merger of Westbrook College with UNE in 1996. The MWWC has since been designated a National Literary Landmark by Friends of Libraries USA.



Dorothy Healy at her desk, ca. 1965; *from the Westbrook College History Collection*



Well-known Maine author and Smith College professor Mary Ellen Chase, ca. 1920; *from the Collection*

In 2009, the MWWC celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a symposium titled “Women in the Archives: Using Archival Collections in Research and Teaching on U.S. Women.” Since 1982, the Collection has been sponsoring academic conferences, some international in scope, on topics relevant to its holdings, from individual authors, such as May Sarton and Sarah Orne Jewett, to themes, such as women’s health, women’s friendship, and women’s nature writing. The program for the Fiftieth Anniversary Symposium, along with a forum, photo album, and list of relevant archival repositories, is posted on the MWWC website. This celebration also featured the premiere of the film *The Maine Women Writers Collection: The First Fifty Years*, which explores the MWWC’s history in the larger context of local and national developments in U.S. culture and academe.<sup>6</sup>

### Dorothy M. Healy Professorship

The imaginative vision of the Healy Endowment creators to pair a literature expert with this library resource established a premium on scholarly leadership for the collection. The Healy Professor’s charge is to promote, develop, and encourage use of the MWWC. As faculty director of the Collection, the Healy Professor not only helps to shape collection development policy and informs programming decisions, but also provides a conduit, operating in both directions, between this special library collection and the world of academe. Working outward, the Healy Professor publi-

cizes the MWWC and makes its value intelligible to scholars, delivers public talks related to the MWWC, and works with faculty to integrate its holdings into the undergraduate curriculum at the University of New England and at neighboring institutions. Working inward, she brings researchers to the Collection through hosting conferences and symposia, supervising a research support grant program, and otherwise stimulating research in the MWWC’s holdings. Through spring of 2001, several scholars contributed their expertise as visiting Healy Professors: Bradford Dudley Daziel, Sheila Curran Bernard, Karen Kilcup, Janet Varner Gunn, Judith McGraw, Margret Spratt, Susan Goodman, and Jonathan Handelman. Jennifer S. Tuttle began serving in the fall of 2001 as the permanent Dorothy M. Healy Professor of English; Carol

Farley Kessler served as Acting Healy Chair while Tuttle was on sabbatical leave.

### Facility

The collection now holds almost 8,000 volumes and 500 linear feet of manuscript material, memorabilia, objects, and furnishings. It is located in a wing of the Abplanalp Library on the Portland campus of the University of New England (of Biddeford and Portland, Maine). Renovated in 2000, the secure and climate-controlled facility measures approximately 2000 square feet. It includes storage areas, a processing area, a curator’s office, public and reference areas, a reading room, and an exterior patio. The facility has continued to develop as a center for study, discussion, scholarly interaction, realization of the teaching mission of the University, and development of a rich reservoir of cultural resources. Our programming reflects this, with publicly accessible readings, lectures, and a creative writing workshop program.

### Access

One of the most appreciated aspects of the collection is its welcoming and accessible facility: although visitors must make appointments to do research, the facility in Portland is pleasant to work in and fairly easy to find. The Collection staff pride themselves on the research support that they provide individually. This dedication to the needs of researchers most notably distinguishes the Maine Women Writers Collection.

Collection books are cataloged in the UNE Library Services online catalog (<http://lilac.une.edu>; search “author=‘Maine Women Writers Collection’”). Archival collection records can be found on the website: [www.une.edu/mwwc/research/findingaid.cfm](http://www.une.edu/mwwc/research/findingaid.cfm). The patron-focused philosophy of

the UNE Libraries ensures that visitors' research will be given top priority and will benefit from all research assistance at the Library's disposal.

More information about the MWWC is available on our website: [www.une.edu/mwwc](http://www.une.edu/mwwc).

#### Notes

1. *The Maine Women Writers Collection: The First Fifty Years*. The Maine Women Writers Collection, 2009. Film.

2. *The Maine Women Writers Collection: The First Fifty Years*.

3. May Sarton, "Life-Enhancing Dorothy," in *A Passionate Intensity: The Life and Work of Dorothy Healy*, ed. Gael May McKibben & William David Barry (Portland, ME: The Baxter Society, 1992), p. 14.

4. Gael May McKibben & William David Barry, "Dorothy Healy: A Biographical Sketch," in *A Passionate Intensity*, p. 9.

5. *The Maine Women Writers Collection: The First Fifty Years*.

6. To order this film, please contact Cally Gurley, Director of Special Collections, by phone, email, or mail: (207) 221-4324; [cgurley@une.edu](mailto:cgurley@une.edu) (write "film order" in the subject line); The Maine Women Writers Collection, Abplanalp Library, Portland Campus, University of New England, 716 Stevens Avenue, Portland, ME 04103. We will ship the film free of charge; we are especially interested in seeing it placed in institutional and library collections.

This is the second film created by the MWWC. In 2004 we worked with Martha A. Hall (1949–2003) to pro-

duce *I Make Books*, a film exploring her artists' books about living with breast cancer (dir. Hollis Haywood & Kari Wagner [University of New England Media Services and Maine Women Writers Collection, 2004]).

[Jennifer S. Tuttle is the Dorothy M. Healy Chair and Associate Professor of English at the University of New England, where she also directs the Women's and Gender Studies Program. Beyond UNE, she serves as a coeditor of *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*. Cally Gurley served as curator of the Maine Women Writers Collection from 1999 until June of 2010, at which time she became the director of the University of New England's Department of Special Collections (which of course includes the MWWC). Cathleen Miller, of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, is the MWWC's new curator.]



MWWC Researcher John Davis and daughter studying the papers of Josephine Diebitsch Peary



# WOMEN'S COMPOSITIONS ONLINE: FIVE DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

by Susan Wood

Online, freely available, digital collections of women's writing, speeches, and music abound. These collections have been conceived, funded, constructed, and maintained by governmental and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, museums, public archives, and individuals. Here I present brief descriptions of five such collections of women's compositions that are suitable for both students and scholarly researchers. Representing digital projects begun in the late 1990s through 2007, these collections are presented here to demonstrate a range of the primary materials available, as well as to provide information on the discovery tools embedded in them. They are a sample from a larger project in which I am exploring the question of how the organizational and representational features of women's digital collections affect the ways in which content created by women is discovered and perceived by researchers.<sup>1</sup>

A digital collection is more than a website. While basic websites offer content, digital collections offer content plus services. The services offered differ from collection to collection and include annotations of the content in the form of critical analyses and summaries, as well as supplemental information, such as biographies and information on the historical and geographical context of the works. Discovery features such as robust indexing allow for more sophisticated searches than are provided by a simple "search the site" box. For example, the documents can be accessed by keyword and subject searches, as well as by full-text search-

ing. Users can also search and sort the material by author, date, geographical location, genre, and more.

Digital collection content, like the content of collections in a physical library, has been curated and vetted for authoritativeness. Not all digital collections have been created from existing analog documents; some content is born digital, while some has been digitized from analog sources. In the case of digitized content, a collection may include editorial information identifying the exact copy used in the digitization process and its physical location. Often the technical details of the digitization process are provided — for example, the type of scanner and the scan settings. Including these details assures the researcher of the validity and authority of the material. Transcriptions, translations, and images of the print sources offer a variety of ways to navigate and use the documents. In addition, the creators of digital collections may make an effort to ensure the longevity and stability of the content by using encoding and archiving standards that meet best practices.<sup>2</sup> The collections described here exhibit various combinations of these tools and services.

**The Public Writings of Margaret Sanger, 1911–1960**, <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/webedition/app/>, is part of a "historical editing project"<sup>3</sup> of the Department of History at New York University. The site currently offers 266 accessible documents, including a selection of Sanger's speeches, published articles, and manuscripts. The goal of this digital project

is to make available, free of charge, a "completely vetted, historically accurate digital version of [Sanger's] papers [that will] conform to established standards, both in terms of technical features of its encoding, and in terms of providing accurate renderings of the texts."<sup>4</sup> In addition, it is noted in the mission statement that "these speeches and articles are of interest to both [Sanger's] supporters and detractors, and among the materials readers and researcher[s] seek most."<sup>5</sup> This statement provides a neutral, scholarly context for the documents, as opposed to a laudatory one, and succinctly captures the complexity of feminist interest in Sanger's work rather than portraying feminist scholarship as arising from a monolithic, undifferentiated perspective.

The collection is searchable in multiple ways. A researcher may view a full list of the documents, or search by keyword in title or in full text, limit by document type, date range, and source of publication, or browse a subject index. The relevance of a keyword search can be ascertained by comparing the subject terms provided at the footer of each document with the keyword. This minimizes the problem of relevance in keyword searching, in which a document containing the keyword in disparate passages is retrieved on an equal basis with documents that are more consistently about the particular topic searched.

**Documents from the Women's Liberation Movement: An Online Archival Collection**, <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/>, presents fifty-six digitized and transcribed versions of

documents held by Duke University's Special Collections Library. The stated scope and purpose of the collection is to provide an "on-line archival collection [to] document various aspects of the Women's Liberation Movement in the United States, and focus specifically on the radical origins of this movement during the late 1960s and early 1970s."<sup>6</sup> The documents represent a range of materials, from the meeting minutes and newsletters of grassroots women's groups like the Cleveland Radical Women's Group, the New York Radical Women, and the Black Unity Party of Peekskill, New York, to articles in publications such as *No More Fun and Games: A Journal of Female Liberation* and the Redstockings' *Feminist Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1978). Original versions of speeches, presentations, and writing by well-known and lesser-known feminist politicians, academics, and activists are among some of the primary source materials available.

Each document includes images of the print work alongside the transcribed copy, allowing researchers to view the document in context without sacrificing readability. Search tools include browsing by categories, as well as a simple keyword search. The keyword search returns links to the documents followed by short passages from the documents showing the keyword in bold type. Unlike the Sanger papers, these documents lack subject index terms, and the eight categories for browsing are broad and idiosyncratic: General and Theoretical, Medical and Reproductive Rights, Music, Organizations and Activism, Sexuality and Lesbian Feminism, Women of Color, and Women's Work and Roles. This collection is not continually updated, but the scanned documents and transcriptions offer students and scholars online access to materials representing the issues, ideas, and activism of second-wave feminism.

**African American Women Writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century**, [http://digital.nypl.org/schomburg/writers\\_aa19/toc.html](http://digital.nypl.org/schomburg/writers_aa19/toc.html), is a project of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture at the New York Public Library. Begun in the late 1990s, the digital collection contains fifty-two published works by thirty-seven African American women. The mission of the project includes a recognition that the interest in African American writing in the 1960s resulted in reprints primarily of men's writing; "Lesser-known black women were generally over-looked... [and] this collection provides access to the thought, perspectives and creative abilities of black women as captured in books and pamphlets published prior to 1920...[for] the researcher or casual reader."<sup>7</sup>

This origin of the collection is exceedingly well-documented and transparent, with links pointing to funding sources, acknowledgements, technical information, editorial methods, and more. Each document is displayed with digitized images of the print source, and the original formatting is maintained. Categories for browsing the documents include title, author, and genre; the full lists of titles can be displayed as well. Supplementary material includes short biographies for each of the authors, written by Tonya Bolden, the award-winning author of literature for both children and adult readers. Sophisticated search tools are not a strength of this collection, but browsing is sufficient for the relatively small number of documents.

**Ming Qing Women's Writings**, <http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/min-qing/english/>, is a joint project of the McGill Digitization Team at McGill University and the Harvard-Yenching Library. The purpose of the collection is to make available to the scholarly community a body of writing, held at Harvard-Yenching Library, by women

in China. The mission of the collection includes the recognition that "most writings by women in pre-modern China have suffered from neglect... making it difficult to carry out extensive and efficient research on women's history and culture."<sup>8</sup> Preservation, as well as dissemination, is part of the project's mission. The collection consists of ninety titles of mixed genres, spanning the seventeenth through early twentieth centuries. Genres include poetry, a verse novel, letters, prose, songs, and "remarks on poetry." The scanned documents are also useful for researchers interested in printing and publishing trends in Late Imperial China.

A very detailed and helpful explanation of the robust search utilities and arrangement of materials is available in the "Introduction" and on the "Search Help" screens, including tips on browsing, how to create a query for content analysis, and notes on the historical periods represented. A user can click on individual titles or browse by title of collection, title within collection, personal name, poem title, tune pattern (songs), title of illustrations, year span (Western calendar), historical geographic location, genre, poetic form, marital status of author, and ethnic group of author. Users may search by entering terms either as Chinese characters or romanized in pinyin. The search features of this collection are far and away the most sophisticated of these five collections and demonstrate the potential for working with digitized primary sources.

**Sophie: A Digital Library of Works by German-Speaking Women**, <http://sophie.byu.edu/>, is a collection created by the College of Humanities at Brigham Young University. The mission of the project is to address the problem of "marginalized authors, texts and creative works in the academic curriculum and in scholarly research agendas," in recognition of the issue

within the field of German Studies that “women artists and authors have traditionally been excluded from the canon, [and] until recently, relatively little scholarly effort has been invested in the study of their works,” resulting in poor access to materials.<sup>9</sup>

The works include out-of-copy-right and out-of-print early texts (1743–1920) by German-speaking women arranged by genre: Literature, Music, Journalism, Colonial/Travel, and Drama/Film. Types of material available include musical scores, recordings, concert programs, and film summaries. Many of the analog sources are available at BYU Libraries, and the digitization process has been handled in multiple ways. There are scanned documents, transcriptions, some English translations, and recordings of music (MP3 format). Supplemental information, in the form of images of the authors and biographical and bibliographical details, has been provided sporadically.

The documents may be browsed by genre, and the entire collection may be searched by keyword. The site index provides a useful interface for navigating the collection, supplementing the rather simple search tool. Each genre-based collection also includes an index arranged alphabetically by author's last name and a helpful “Home” link that provides an overview of what types of texts each genre-area contains.

These five collections demonstrate a variety of primary sources suitable for a range of researchers, from student to scholarly, as well as a range of research orientations, from content analysis to literary criticism to historical endeavors. These collections can also be put to a variety of pedagogical uses, providing

unique material for classroom instruction in languages, creative writing, music, and information literacy. Overall, there is a wealth of primary sources in these collections made easily accessible to both students and scholars.

#### Notes

1. This review is part of a larger project, geared to a library and information sciences audience, in which I analyze digital collections of women's compositions from the point of view of Hannigan's statement that “feminist scholarship involves looking at the assumptions and biases, particularly androcentric biases, incorporated in theory and research, that directly affect the ways libraries collect, store, and disseminate materials and the choice of services offered to users.” Janet Hannigan, “A Feminist Standpoint for Library and Information Science Education,” *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, v. 35 (1994), pp. 297–319 at 302.

2. For example, Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS), Model Editions Project (MEP), and Text Encoding Initiative (TEI).

3. Margaret Sanger Papers Project, “About the project,” <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/aboutmspp/index.html>. The Project is also working on a four-volume print work, *Selected Papers of Margaret Sanger*, the first two volumes of which have already been published by the University of Illinois Press.

4. Margaret Sanger Papers Project, “Documents Online, Electronic Edition (in production),” [http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/publications/electronic\\_ed/speeches\\_and\\_articles.html](http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/publications/electronic_ed/speeches_and_articles.html).

5. The Public Writings of Margaret Sanger, 1911–1960, “About the digital edition,” <http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/search/abouted.html>.

6. Documents from the Women's Liberation Movement, <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/#subject>.

7. Digital Schomburg African American Women Writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, “Introduction,” [http://digital.nypl.org/schomburg/writers\\_aa19/intro.html](http://digital.nypl.org/schomburg/writers_aa19/intro.html).

8. M.M. Zheng, “McGill-Harvard-Yenching Library Joint Digitization Project: Minq-Qing Women's Writings,” *Journal of East Asian Libraries*, v. 7 (2006), pp. 36–40.

9. SOPHIE: A Digital Library of Works by German-Speaking Women, “About the Sophie Project,” <http://sophie.byu.edu/project/index.php?p=index.html>.

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# E-SOURCES ON WOMEN & GENDER

Our website (<http://womenst.library.wisc.edu/>) includes recent editions of this column and links to complete back issues of *Feminist Collections*, plus many bibliographies, a database of women-focused videos, and links to hundreds of other websites by topic.

Information about electronic journals and magazines, particularly those with numbered or dated issues posted on a regular schedule, can be found in our “Periodical Notes” column.

## BLOGS

What could be better, in the world of feminist blogging, than a global feminist blog aggregator? **FEMINIST BLOGS: INDEPENDENT ALTERNATIVES TO THE MALESTREAM MEDIA** at <http://feministblogs.org/> “collects articles from many smaller community hubs within the Feminist Blogs network.” Five hubs are represented, one of which (“Feminist Blogs in English”) includes about a hundred different blogs! Check it out.

**GIRL WITH PEN** (<http://girlwpen.com/>) “publicly and passionately dispels modern myths concerning gender, encouraging other feminist scholars, writers, and thinkers to do the same.” This is quite the sophisticated blogging venture, boasting a feminist-star-studded lineup of fourteen editors — Deborah Siegel, Virginia Rutter, Shira Tarrant, Veronica Arreola, Allison Kimmich, Courtney Martin, Adina Nack, Heather Hewett, Elline Lipkin, Leslie Heywood, Allison McCarthy, Alison Piepmeier, Lori Rotskoff, and Natalie Wilson — who post regularly here on different topics. Try matching the names above to the titles of the columns they write: “The Intersectional Feminist”; “Bedside Manners”; “Girl Talk”; “The Man Files”; “Mama w/Pen”; “Nice Work”; “Science Grrl”; “Generation Next”; “Body Language”; “Off the Shelf”; “Global Mama”; “Pop Goes Feminism”; “Beyond Pink and Blue”; “The Xena Files.”

## BOOKS, REPORTS, & OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The **2010 AMELIA BLOOMER LIST** of “feminist books for young readers” — recommended by the **FEMINIST TASK FORCE** of the American Library Association’s Social Responsibility Round Table — is in PDF here: <http://libr.org/ftf/Amelia%20Bloomer2010%20final.pdf>. (I want the picture book about Louise, the adventurous chicken!) Lists from the previous eight years are also downloadable: <http://libr.org/ftf/bloomer.html>.

“In all European countries and beyond, women are having difficulties getting ahead in research careers,” say the writers of **THE GENDER CHALLENGE IN RESEARCH FUNDING: ASSESSING THE EUROPEAN NATIONAL SCENES** in the Executive Summary of this report, which “analyses the gender dynamics among applicants, recipients and gatekeepers of research funding, in funding processes, instruments and criteria, and the role of key funding organisations in promoting gender equality in research.” Published by the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2009. 136p. ISBN 978-9279105999; [http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document\\_library/pdf\\_06/the-gender-challenge-in-research-funding-report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/the-gender-challenge-in-research-funding-report_en.pdf)

“Disasters don’t discriminate, but people do. Existing socio-economic conditions mean that disasters can lead to different outcomes even for demographically similar communities — but inevitably the most vulnerable groups suffer more than others. Research reveals that disasters reinforce, perpetuate and increase gender inequality, making bad situations worse for women.” Thus begins **MAKING DISASTER RISK REDUCTION GENDER-SENSITIVE: POLICY AND PRACTICAL GUIDELINES**, a 2009 publication from the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. Download the 163-page guide: [http://www.preventionweb.net/files/9922\\_MakingDisasterRiskReductionGenderSe.pdf](http://www.preventionweb.net/files/9922_MakingDisasterRiskReductionGenderSe.pdf)

Publications of the **NATIONAL WOMEN’S STUDIES ASSOCIATION** are now listed (with links) along with other resources of interest under “Professional Resources” on the redesigned NWSA website at <http://www.nwsa.org/research>. These include, notably, **TEACHING RESOURCES ON RACISM, WHITE PRIVILEGES, & ANTI-WHITE SUPREMACY: A PROJECT OF STOP DREAMING/KEEP WORKING WORKSHOP**, edited by Shu-Ju Ada Cheng (2006, 195p.), and **INTRODUCING WOMEN’S AND GENDER STUDIES: A COLLECTION OF TEACHING RESOURCES**, edited by Elizabeth M. Curtis (2007, 280p.). PDFs for both of these resources as well as others can be downloaded from <http://www.nwsa.org/research/publications/index.php>.

Women's Refugee Commission, **REFUGEE GIRLS: THE INVISIBLE FACES OF WAR**. Pearson Foundation, 2009. 48p. ISBN 1-58030-079-0. Download PDF from <http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/programs/youth/763-girlsstories>. A sampling of section titles: "Girls as Targets and Instruments of War," "Fighting Isn't Just for Boys: Girls Go to War," "Girls for Sale," "Defending the Family Honor," "Close Quarters: Life in a Refugee Camp," "All We Want Is to Go to School," "Their Bodies Are Not Their Own," "Finding a Permanent Home," "Seeking Asylum, Finding Barriers," and "Why There Is Cause for Great Hope."

**TEACHING WITH GENDER**, "a book series on learning and teaching in the interdisciplinary field of gender studies," is published by ATHENA3 (the Advanced Thematic Network in Women's Studies in Europe, the University of Utrecht, and the Centre for Gender Studies at Stockholm University). Seven of the eight books are free and downloadable in PDF (and in English) from <http://www.su.se/pub/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=10447&a=64480>. Those titles are *Teaching Gender, Diversity and Urban Space. An Intersectional Approach between Gender Studies and Spatial Disciplines*; *Teaching Gender in Social Work*; *Teaching Subjectivity: Travelling Selves for Feminist Pedagogy*; *Teaching with the Third Wave: New Feminists' Explorations of Teaching and Institutional Contexts*; *Teaching Visual Culture in an Interdisciplinary Classroom: Feminist (Re) Interpretations of the Field*; *Teaching Empires: Gender and Transnational Citizenship in Europe*; and *Teaching Intersectionality: Putting Gender at the Centre*.

## OTHER SITES OF INTEREST

**MONASTIC MATRIX**: Not a new sci-fi film, but "an ongoing collaborative effort by an international group of scholars of medieval history, religion, history of art, archaeology, religion, and other disciplines, as well as librarians and experts in computer technology...to document the participation of Christian women in the religion and society of medieval Europe. In particular, we aim to collect and make available all existing data about all professional Christian women in Europe between 400 and 1600 C.E." The site at <http://monasticmatrix.usc.edu> is coordinated by Lisa Bitel of the Department of History at the University of Southern California.

The **SENTENCING PROJECT** ("Research and Advocacy for Reform") website at <http://www.sentencingproject.org> has a section devoted to **WOMEN IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM** that offers publications, news, advocacy materials, and the powerful personal stories of five women who have endured unjust treatment. One of the publications is a ten-page compilation of statistics about women in the system (e.g., "44% of women in state prison have neither graduated from high school nor received a GED"; "Only 4 in 10 women are able to find employment in the regular labor market within one year of release").

○ Compiled by JoAnne Lehman



Miriam Greenwald

# NEW REFERENCE WORKS IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

## ADDICTION

Kathleen T. Brady, Sudie E. Back, & Shelly F. Greenfield, eds.,  
**WOMEN AND ADDICTION: A COMPREHENSIVE HANDBOOK.**  
New York: Guilford Press, 2009.  
526p. index. \$65.00, ISBN 978-1606231074.

*Reviewed by Susan E. Searing*

In the 1980s, a number of books appeared that broke the prevailing silence about women, alcoholism, and drug addiction. *A Woman Like You: Life Stories of Women Recovering from Alcoholism & Addiction*, by Rachel V. (New York: Harper & Row, 1985); *Out From Under: Sober Dykes & Our Friends*, edited by Jean Swallow (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1983); and a handful of other works exposed the raw realities of women's experiences of addiction and offered hope for recovery. But the research literature lagged behind. Understanding of the physiological and psychological nature of addiction, and of the kinds of treatment programs that worked, derived largely from studies of male populations. Rising awareness of the dangers of ignoring possible sex differences in biomedical research finally led the National Institutes of Health, in 1994, to mandate the inclusion of women in the studies it funds. Subsequent research on alcohol, drug, and nicotine use uncovered many aspects of addiction that differ between women and men. This hefty volume takes stock of the mushrooming research literature, analyzes and synthesizes hundreds of studies, and pinpoints the remaining gaps in the knowledge base.

This is not a book to hand to someone who needs a basic introduction; nor will it be useful to women eager to help themselves or others on the path to recovery. Nor is it explicitly grounded in feminist theory or politics. The text is heavy with scientific terminology, concepts, and acronyms. The advanced student or researcher, however, will be very well served. The editors group thirty review essays into seven sections. While there is some overlap in the sources cited, the individual chapters stand alone. Each concludes with a helpful summary of "key points" and a bibliography of 50–250 works in which recommended readings are starred.

Section I presents two excellent overviews, one of substance abuse across the female lifespan and the other of research design and methodology. The second section clusters seven chapters on biological issues, from the influence of hormones and stress to observed differences in neurotransmitter systems and pharmacokinetics. The third section examines co-occurring psychiatric disorders, such as depression, anxiety, and eating disorders. Section IV focuses on various treatment options and their outcomes, and Section V looks at specific substances: alcohol, nicotine, opioids, marijuana, and stimulants. The sixth section explores special populations: adolescents, pregnant women, women of diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds, and sexual-minority women. The two chapters in the final section address violence and victimization among women addicts and the legal issues related to addiction

and gender. The volume concludes with an index.

The experts who authored the volume occasionally differ in the conclusions they draw from the literature. For example, the authors of the chapter on gender-specific treatment models emphasize that "the effectiveness of gender-specific programs for women on substance abuse treatment outcomes remains unclear based on the available literature" (p. 299), while the authors of the chapter on alcoholism assert that "evidence is accumulating that such gender-specific alcohol treatment services are achieving their goals of better treatment engagement and retention" (p. 354). In a work that consolidates so many scientific and social-scientific perspectives, such rare discrepancies can be tolerated. This handbook would be a useful addition to collections that support academic programs in medicine, nursing, psychology, biology, public health, or social work. For a more indepth focus on treatment options, consult *The Handbook of Addiction Treatment for Women*, edited by Shulamith Lala Ashenberg Straussner and Stephanie Brown (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), which defines addiction more expansively to include gambling, sex, and relationships.

*[Susan E. Searing is the library and information science librarian at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.]*



## COLONIAL AMERICA

Merril D. Smith, **WOMEN'S ROLES IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA**. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008. 216p. \$59.95, ISBN 978-0313339769.

*Reviewed by Vanette Schwartz*

Lustful whores? Pious wives? Or cunning witches? Women of colonial America were labeled as all three. This reference work from Greenwood repudiates the stereotypes and details the diversity and complexity of seventeenth-century women's lives. Author Merrill Smith, an independent scholar, earned her Ph.D. in history from Temple University in 1990. Her first book, *Breaking the Bonds: Marital Discord in Pennsylvania, 1730–1830*, was published in 1991, followed by two edited volumes: *Sex and Sexuality in Early America* (1998) and *Sex Without Consent: Rape and Sexual Coercion in America* (2001). In 2004 Smith also edited the *Encyclopedia of Rape*.

*Women's Roles in Seventeenth-Century America* has a twofold purpose: "to examine how seventeenth century attitudes, perceptions and beliefs about women affected and shaped their lives" and "to demonstrate how significant women were in shaping the world around them." (p. xiii). Aimed at senior-high-school through college students and general readers, the book covers primarily white women, but also includes African American and Native American women in the British colonies of North America.

Smith provides a detailed overview of women's lives, discussing the family, law, immigration, work, religion, and war, concluding with a chapter on education, literature, and recreation. Drawing on women's major role as wife and mother, she details the customs of marriage, sexual practices, pregnancy,

and childbirth, explaining that the domestic role for women was based on the British law of coverture, which denied a woman any legal status of her own. The chapter on immigration outlines why women came to the colonies and describes the perils of their voyages and how they adapted to life after they arrived.

One chapter explores the range of work women performed, explaining variations by class lines and geographical areas, and another one — especially well written — examines the influence of religion in women's lives as well as the roles of such leaders as Anne Hutchinson and Mary Dyer. Smith also analyzes how women who moved beyond the bounds of accepted behavior were often charged with witchcraft; and, in the chapter on war, she looks beyond women as victims to show them defending themselves, exacting revenge, and exercising political influence. The book includes a helpful chronology of major events during the seventeenth century, as well as an index and a selected bibliography of books, articles, films, and websites.

Based largely on secondary sources and selected primary sources, this reference fulfills the author's first purpose better than her second. It does provide an excellent overview of how seventeenth-century attitudes and beliefs about women affected women's lives. Given the scarcity of women's writings from this time period, demonstrating the reverse — how women affected their world — must have been very challenging. Smith mines her sources carefully to find examples of women who were significant in shaping the American colonial world.

Without question, this book fills a gap in the literature with a well-written and documented overview of women during the seventeenth century. Various works on colonial women were

published in the 1990s, but the most recent comparable text is the encyclopedia *Women in Early America: Struggle, Survival and Freedom in a New World*, published in 2004. *Women's Roles in Seventeenth-Century America* will be of great use to students and general readers.

[Vanette Schwartz is the social sciences librarian and women's studies liaison at Illinois State University.]

## FOLKLORE

Liz Locke, Theresa A. Vaughan, & Pauline Greenhill, eds., **ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN'S FOLKLORE AND FOLKLIFE**. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2009. 2 vols. 872p. bibl. index. \$199.95, ISBN 978-0313340505.

*Reviewed by Janice M. Rice*

Feminist writers have shown that folklore about women has not always been positive. Researchers have documented that women's folklore is distinct from the portrayal of women in the earliest literary writings; what is shared in women's circles often does not coincide with the patriarchal images and interpretations of the past. No longer marginalized and unexplored, however, the scholarship of women's folklore and folklife is brought to the forefront by the voices of 130 leading feminists and folklorists, interwoven by editors Liz Locke, Theresa Vaughan, and Pauline Greenhill, in this valuable two-volume reference. Contributors include established feminist writers and ethnographers as well as emerging scholars in the field.

In the first volume of this encyclopedia, four essays contextualize the work: "Women's Folklore," by Pauline Greenhill, Diane Tye, and Norma E. Cantú; "Folklore About Women," by Pauline Greenhill; "Folklore of Subversion," by Jessica Senehi; and "Women Folklorists," by Norma E. Cantú, Paula Greenhill, and Rachelle H. Saltzman. The fourth is an outstanding overview of the founding foremothers who have forged groundbreaking ethnographic work and scholarly research; while its scope is not comprehensive, references to well-known and emerging folklorists are included. Each essay includes theory, historic perspectives, and excerpts from leading feminists and folklorists, along with extensive bibliographic references. Although they do not share a single definition of women's folklore and folklife, the essays provide a framework for the types of entries and areas of scholarship that are included. The novice will need to consult this section.

In each of the volumes, the range of coverage includes expected and familiar topics such as ballad, legend, rites of passage, and proverbs, but with a feminist perspective. Readers will also find entries devoted to subjects more familiar to women and young girls. Terms such as *androgyny*, *coding*, *cyber culture*, *croning*, *glass ceiling*, *hip-hop culture*, and *tradition bearer* are not often found in classic folklore encyclopedias. In these descriptive entries, the reader will learn how these concepts originated in previous generations and have influenced the lives of women today.

Each volume includes a list of entries and a guide to related topics as tools for browsing. The nearly 260 entries, which include "aesthetics," "Barbie doll," "diet culture," "home birth," "lesbian folklore," and "veiling," are listed alphabetically. The boldface headings in the guide lead to such topics as domestic life, feminism, folklore as profession, life cycle, material cul-

ture, religion/ethnicity, sexuality, and verbal lore; subtopics are listed under the main headings. Volume 1 also includes an index.

Volume 2 provides some global perspective, with fifteen articles about women's folklore and folklife in countries and regions of the world ranging from Australia and New Zealand to Western Europe, although, with the majority of contributors from the United States, the focus is mainly on North America. (Canada and Mexico, with their borderland influences, do qualify for their own entries in the section for this region.) Folklore about indigenous women of North America is interwoven in the topic categories and briefly addressed in the U. S. segment.

Readers will find references to familiar works such as Marta Weigle's *Spiders and Spinners: Women and Mythology*, Rosan Jordan and Frank de Caro's "Women and the Study of Folklore" in *Signs*, and the 1975 special issue of the *Journal of American Folklore*, all of which provide background on the emergence of the field.

For those who want to do further research, there is a bibliography listing significant books, articles, and websites that can be used as starting points in studying women's folklore. The website section lists government and organizational sites, along with search tools that lead to sources in English and other languages. Overall, the entries in the bibliography are for predictable sources of information on folklore generally; it is incumbent upon the reader to explore further. Although some of the websites address feminist issues and women's folklore, the list is short and the researcher may long for more. In this evolving field, deeper and broader scholarship is certainly needed.

In the field of folklore, this feminist encyclopedia will stand as a major accomplishment and a tool that en-

courages more research and challenges more women to continue their fieldwork in women's folklore and folklife.

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## GENDER ROLES

Janet H. Ulrich & Bernice T. Cosell, eds., **HANDBOOK ON GENDER ROLES: CONFLICTS, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS**. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2009. 347p. index. \$195.00, ISBN 978-1606926376.

*Reviewed by Beth Strickland*

A brief note in the November 2009 issue of *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews* implicitly reprimands the publishers of "expensive handbooks," which are marketed primarily to libraries, maintaining that such texts are often thrown together quickly and cheaply, with inconsistent results. "Chapters within a single volume vary, too," the reviewers point out, "in quality and coverage."<sup>1</sup> Although it would not be fair to assume that *all* handbooks currently being published suffer from such inconsistency, the criticism is certainly applicable to Nova's exorbitantly priced and haphazardly organized *Handbook on Gender Roles*.

From the noticeably grainy front-cover graphic to the random topics listed in the table of contents, this resource not only appears to have been produced rapidly, but also reads more like than an anthology than a handbook. A handbook, by definition, should provide a concise yet comprehensive overview of a topic. The chapters in this book, in contrast, bounce around from a discussion of rap lyrics to an exploration of differences in

physical aggression between gay and heterosexual men and an examination of gender differences among the people of Israel. The introduction does very little to explain why these topics and not others were chosen to represent the various conflicts, attitudes, and behaviors related to gender roles. The scope of the work is cross-cultural, which is commendable, but the case studies present data far too specific for this sort of reference. Little information is provided about the contributing authors other than their institutional affiliations, and absolutely none about the volume editors.

Unlike the majority of gender-related handbooks, which tend to approach this topic from the disciplinary perspective of psychology or sociology, this one tries to take an interdisciplinary approach — which can certainly be useful for the field of women's studies. Unfortunately, without adequate direction this has resulted in too broad a scope, as well as in reference lists that will be of little use to most feminist scholars. Rather than purchase this single text with its expansive focus, libraries would be do better to invest in several more narrowly focused resources.

#### Note

1. J. Houle et al., in "Briefly Noted," *Contemporary Sociology: A Journal of Reviews*, v. 38, no. 6 (November 2009), p. 604.

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## GIRLS

Elline Lipkin, **GIRLS' STUDIES**. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2009. (Seal studies series.) 256p. bibl. index. pap., \$14.95, ISBN 978-1580052481.

*Reviewed by Leigh Younce*

In the United States and around the world, there is growing concern about girls' lives. What does it mean to be a girl? "Seeing popular culture follow the waves of interest in 'mean girls,' crest to the catchphrase 'girl power,' and then ricochet off to new directions," writes Elline Lipkin, "has led me to realize how deeply American culture cares about its girls — and also how fraught that concern can be" (p. x). Until somewhat recently, the study of girls' culture and girlhood has received little attention; research has focused mainly on adult women. Over the past two decades, however, academics have begun to recognize that girlhood is a worthy area of study that deserves respect as an academic discipline.

Lipkin provides a detailed, objective, and clear guide to girls' studies, covering a broad range of challenges girls face as they grow into women. Gender imprinting begins at birth, she points out, when pink caps are put on the heads of newborn girl babies. Lipkin goes on to discuss socialization, the influence of the media, body image, and gender expectations, concluding with suggestions for empowering girls and providing what they need to have bright, successful futures. Some of these issues, I am ashamed to admit, I had not given a great deal of thought to.

The thought-provoking material in *Girls' Studies* is sure to spark interesting discussion and debate. Sidebars, illus-

trations, a reader's guide with questions for discussion and further research, and an extensive bibliography of additional resources enhance this reference. This book provides a perspective on girls' lives that scholars and students can build upon in their own research. It would be a fantastic addition to any academic library or introductory women's studies curriculum.

[Leigh Younce is an instruction/reference librarian at Auburn University and serves as the women's studies liaison.]

## HEALTH

Sandra J. Judd, ed., **WOMEN'S HEALTH CONCERNS SOURCEBOOK, 3<sup>rd</sup> EDITION**. Detroit, MI: Omnigraphics, 2009. 730p. gloss. index. \$93.00, ISBN 978-0780810365.

*Reviewed by Stacy Russo*

Omnigraphics' series of health reference sourcebooks "is designed to provide basic medical information for patients, families, caregivers, and the general public" (p. xvii). The entries in this one are predictably brief, given the broad subject: women's health. Brevity is welcome in this case, as it helps to make this book an accessible starting place for readers with little or no knowledge about a particular topic. Its accessibility is strengthened by bulleted lists, bold headings, and an absence of excessive medical jargon. Images are kept to a minimum, but appear at appropriate times.

The sourcebook is divided into six parts, subdivided into fifty-four chapters, and further broken down into sections. The parts are titled "Issues and Trends in Women's Health," "Breast and Gynecological Concerns," "Sexual and Reproductive Concerns," "Cancer in Women," "Other Chronic



Health Conditions of Special Concern to Women,” and, finally, “Additional Help and Information,” which consists of a glossary and a directory of women’s health resources. The volume is indexed.

All of the content in the sourcebook is reprinted or excerpted from documents produced by such sources as Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the National Institutes of Health, the National Women’s Health Information Center, Planned Parenthood, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the National Cancer Institute, the National Institute of Mental Health, and numerous others. Some of the reprinted material is available for free online. Because the sources are traditional and perhaps mainstream, readers hoping to find discussions of alternative treatments or theories regarding women’s health will need to look elsewhere or supplement this source with others. (This Omnigraphics series does include a *Complementary & Alternative Medicine Sourcebook*.)

Certain aspects of the volume are commendable, including short chapters on “Health Disparities Affecting Minority Women” and “Lesbian Health Concerns.” A chapter titled “Violence Against Women and Ways to Prevent It” provides practical information, including a “safety planning list” of “items to get together when you are planning on leaving an abusive situation” (pp. 122–23). Almost every woman can benefit from chapters such as “Nutrition and Wellness,” “Avoiding Risk Factors for Common Health Concerns,” and “Recommended Screenings and Checkups for Women” (which covers preventive care; screening for breast cancer, cervical cancer, and colorectal cancer; and screening for osteoporosis). Many other topics are discussed in the volume as well — for example, menstruation and the menstrual cycle, endometriosis, pelvic floor disorders, gynecological procedures,

birth control, abortion, pregnancy, sexual dysfunction, mental health issues, urinary tract disorders, and diabetes.

This volume is appropriate for undergraduate-level reference collections and public libraries. Students needing general data and readers looking for introductory information about a personal concern will find it here. Of course, this would be only a first stop for someone who intends to do in-depth research. Readers who want additional basic information on women’s health may be interested in some of the more focused volumes in the series, such as the *Breast Cancer Sourcebook*, the *Breastfeeding Sourcebook*, the *Domestic Violence Sourcebook*, and the *Eating Disorders Sourcebook*.

[Stacy Russo is the chair of public services for Chapman University’s Leatherby Libraries, where she serves as the subject liaison for education, peace studies, political science, and women’s studies.]

Christine Ammer, **THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN’S HEALTH, 6<sup>th</sup> EDITION**. New York: Facts on File, 2009. 480p. index. \$75.00, ISBN 978-0816074075. Trade paper edition with identical content: **THE NEW A TO Z OF WOMEN’S HEALTH, 6<sup>th</sup> EDITION** (Facts on File Library of Health & Living), \$19.95, ISBN 978-0816074082.<sup>1</sup>

*Reviewed by Janet S. Fore*

This comprehensive health reference guide for women is now in its sixth edition. Entries have been updated and expanded to include discussions of the latest developments, such as a new non-invasive test for breast cancer and an alternative to traditional colonoscopy (CT colonography), yet because of efficient reformatting, this edition is only forty-five pages longer

than the fifth. The author writes for the general reader, including young adults; her goal is “to present subjects simply and clearly, in everyday language” (p. x) and offer alternative answers to controversial questions.

More than 1,100 entries, arranged alphabetically and varying in length from a single line to multiple pages, address health and wellness topics specific to women, from *addiction* to *zygote*, with an emphasis on reproductive health and disease. Many cross-references are included. New entries in the sixth edition include *cervical cancer vaccine* and *serotonin poisoning*. Detailed black-and-white drawings accompany the text, and there are many charts and tables providing “information at a glance” — for instance, a list of medications used in treating rheumatoid arthritis (however, not all charts cite sources or dates). A resource appendix (with names, phone numbers, and website addresses for many organizations that can provide further information and support) and a subject index complete the volume.

Christine Ammer, a professional writer and editor, has published many books, including guides on subjects from music to business as well as dictionaries of clichés and idioms. Her first edition of this health guide, published in 1983, was titled *The A to Z of Women’s Health: A Concise Encyclopedia*; she has revised it approximately every five years since.

Considering the rapidly changing field of medicine, we all need current, reliable, and accessible consumer health information. Libraries may wish to consider this new edition. *The New Harvard Guide to Women’s Health* is a similar, although somewhat more technical, reference, but it has not been updated since 2004. Ammer’s updated *Encyclopedia*, whether in this hardcover version or the less expensive (yet iden-

tical in content) trade paperback titled *The New A to Z of Women's Health*, is an attractive purchase.

Note

1. See section titled "Caveat Emptor" at the end of "New Reference Works in Women's Studies."

[Janet S. Fore is the director of the Cushwa-Leighton Library at Saint Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana.]

## HISTORICAL QUEERNESS

Keith Stern, *QUEERS IN HISTORY: THE COMPREHENSIVE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF HISTORICAL GAYS, LESBIANS, BISEXUALS, AND TRANSGENDERS*. Dallas, TX: BenBella Books, 2009. 608p. bibl. index. illus. pap., \$19.95, ISBN 978-1933771878.

Reviewed by Nancy Nyland

The age of *Wikipedia* confronts us with this question: Do we need print reference books for information that we can look up online? A book that cites *Wikipedia* as a source for 80 of the 1,000 entries, as this one does, cannot be sold as an encyclopedia. The use of *Wikipedia* as a primary source makes it impossible for an academic library to justify spending \$20 plus processing costs for this print volume. The library can simply refer its users, similarly, to *Wikipedia*.

Even *Wikipedia* requires its contributors to cite their sources. But the author does not follow the research trail back to those sources, as a historian is expected to do. The frequent citing of other reference works, such as *Who's Who in Gay & History* and *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality*, brings up the question of whether there is enough unique content in this volume to war-

rrent purchase. When the author cites *Reader's Digest Strange Stories*, *Amazing Facts of America's Past*, he has left the realm of scholarly reference books.

The coverage makes more sense knowing that this book began as a database. The three useful indexes (by profession, birthplace, and year of birth) look like printouts of spreadsheets. The book reads a bit like a printed database. No judgment is made as to the value of a person's contribution to history. Movie makeup artists, fashion designers, and famous hairdressers are given equal weight alongside popes and emperors. There appear to be no criteria for the relative length of the entries. Perez Hilton, a celebrity blogger, has one of the longer entries at six paragraphs, while others are inexplicably brief. Keith Haring's, for example, has only three sentences totaling fewer than fifty words. And a closer proofreading during the transition from database to book could have prevented some embarrassing printing errors.

The subtitle advertises the book as "comprehensive," but the dozen selections from B.C.E. seem random. The subtitle's description of "historical" is also inaccurate. Almost half of the people listed were born in the last 100 years, many of whom are still living and thus are contemporary figures, not historical. Stern, an independent scholar, refers to his entries as "stories," as in "I hope the stories in this book are amusing and informative" — but they are not necessarily credible.

These shortcomings are unfortunate, because some of the content is drawn from original sources such as diaries and letters and offers us a new way at thinking about historical figures. Stern points out in his introduction the important role a resource like this can play: "When I was growing up and began to identify myself as a gay person, I wanted role models, but

it seemed gays were excluded from the standard textbooks, newspapers and television." And Sir Ian McKellen, in a foreword, predicts, "For those who have ever felt abandoned by history and plagued with injustice, this latest sample of gay experience will be a comfort and joy." One of Mr. Stern's goals is to "provide role models for young people," and in this work he has opened a window into a whole new realm of possibilities.

One source cited is Leigh Rutledge's *The Gay Fireside Companion*. It is unfortunate that this title was already taken, because it would have been a more appropriate one for this volume, which could make pleasant reading for someone lounging next to a toasty fireplace, contemplating whether Elvis Presley or Abraham Lincoln could really have been gay or bisexual. Academic libraries, however, should seek out more scholarly sources.

[Nancy Nyland is a reference librarian at the Germantown campus of Montgomery College in Maryland.]

## LATIN AMERICAN WRITERS

Kathy S. Leonard, *LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS: A RE-SOURCE GUIDE TO TITLES IN ENGLISH*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007. 349p. \$88.00, ISBN 978-0810860155.

Reviewed by John H. Burns

Literature in translation is often looked down upon in academic circles as somehow impure, second-rate, or imitative. Kathy S. Leonard does not suffer from such a bias; she has made a valiant effort to gather information on women writers from Latin America for those readers and researchers who are

approaching this body of literature as it is rendered into English by translators. *Latin American Women Writers: A Resource Guide to Titles in English* sets out to create a bibliographical framework for a field that is not often given its due by Latin Americanists; this ambitious resource guide succeeds on several fronts.

As her target audience is not composed of scholars who work in Spanish and Portuguese, Leonard has crafted an introduction that assumes little if any prior knowledge of the literary work produced in Latin America between 1898 and 2007. What newcomers to the field may find valuable is Leonard's sensitivity to the regional specificities of Latin American literary production. The book lists authors by country of origin, and most of the short notes that accompany the lists of anthologies, biographies, novels, and other narrative work do a very good job of quickly situating these authors in their specific historical context. For example, a new reader of Diamela Eltit's experimental work, *Custody of the Eyes*, will find it glossed as a piece that deals with "the climate of vigilance as it relates to family relations as well as societal norms disrupted by the dictatorship of Pinochet in Chile" (p. 285), and someone new to Nobel laureate Rigoberta Menchú's work will find out that this "Quiché-Mayan human rights advocate gives testimony to abuses inflicted on her people by the Guatemalan government" (p. 185).

Leonard's main criterion for inclusion in this guide is that the work be originally written in the twentieth century in prose. Painting the picture of Latin American women writers with such broad strokes, obviously, has its drawbacks. While the geographical orientation may be beneficial to newcomers, an attempt to grapple with literary movements might have been of more use to those readers coming to Latin American literature with more substan-

tial background. To learn, for example, of Eltit's links to other experimental Chilean writers, or of Menchú's place among Latin American testimonial writing, might have been helpful for such readers. In short, the summaries of the works that Leonard includes are sufficient, but not systematic. Non-prose genres such as poetry or theater are another curious omission. It baffles me somewhat that a work purporting to be a guide to Latin American women writers would entirely privilege prose writing.

Leonard herself anticipates that this guide's audience will be instructors creating women's studies and ethnic studies curricula. While this will certainly be the case, I would add that high school English teachers and college professors who are interested in teaching literature in translation might also find it most useful.

[John H. Burns is an assistant professor of Spanish at Rockford College in Rockford, Illinois.]

## LGBT RESEARCH

William Meezan & James I. Martin, eds., *HANDBOOK OF RESEARCH WITH LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER POPULATIONS*. New York: Routledge, 2009. 472p. index. \$158.00, ISBN 978-1560235309; pap., \$87.95, ISBN 978-1560235316.

*Reviewed by Susan Bennett White*

An expanded version of an essay collection that appeared both as a special issue of the *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services* (vol. 15, nos. 1–2, 2003) and as a volume titled *Research Methods with Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Populations*

(Harrington Park Press, 2003), this work fills a critical need for a fully-formed LGBT research methodology. Discussions of lesbian topics are nicely balanced with ones focused on the gay, bisexual, and transgender communities. Twenty-one signed chapters describe research issues, methods, and applications that enable scientifically sound studies of what are largely ignored populations.

An opening chapter argues persuasively that LGBT research furthers understanding not only of the lives of LGBT people, but also of other groups, both marginalized and mainstream. Ethical and privacy issues are then covered in the two chapters of Section II, titled "Doing it Right: Ethical Standards in Conducting Research," which also deals with the role of institutional review boards in the research process. The nine chapters of Section III cover aspects of valid research: definitions and sampling, design and measurement, understanding the role of the researcher as either an "insider" or an "outsider," and the value that technology can bring to the research enterprise. Section IV addresses some of the most sensitive areas of LGBT research, including work with transgender persons, LGBT people in rural settings, racial groups within urban LGBT populations, and LGBT drug users and those who are HIV-positive. Section V treats the broader social and political context of LGBT studies — the role of AIDS service organizations, for instance, and the impact of LGBT research findings on judicial decisions. Each chapter concludes with a lengthy list of references.

In their preface and concluding chapter, the editors provide a solid framework for understanding the context and history of research with LGBT populations, as well as useful directions



for further research. The volume ends with biographies of the contributors and a subject index.

Fulfilling and then going beyond its stated goal of providing methodology for LGBT research, this handbook would be an excellent choice for upper-level academic and research collections. The authors not only explain how to construct solid research with LGBT subjects, but also address LGBT issues more broadly.

[Susan Bennett White is the sociology librarian at Princeton University Library, where she provides materials and research support for the Princeton LGBT Program. She has been a senior research librarian at Princeton for over twenty-five years.]

## LITERATURE

Emmanuel S. Nelson, ed., *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CONTEMPORARY LGBTQ LITERATURE OF THE UNITED STATES*. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Press (an imprint of ABC-CLIO), 2009. 2 vols. 762p. bibl. index. \$195.00, ISBN 978-0313348594.

Reviewed by Kari D. Weaver

Historian Barbara Tuchman famously said that books “are humanity in print.” In few places does the range of human experience reveal itself more clearly than in contemporary LGBTQ literature. Editor Emmanuel Nelson, professor of English at SUNY Cortland, states in his preface that the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary LGBTQ Literature of the United States* is “intended as a significant contribution” to the “ongoing project” (p. ix) of legitimizing the field of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer studies. This two-volume set, meant for a general audience, takes a strong step toward

this goal by providing a substantial foundation of information on LGBTQ literature over the past few decades.

Providing reference assistance from the very start, the encyclopedia begins with an alphabetical listing of all entries, followed by a guide that organizes every entry into the major groups of LGBTQ literature, plus a short listing of general topics such as bisexuality and stereotypes. These expanded tables of contents are followed by the editor’s preface and an exceptional introduction by noted LGBTQ scholar Marylynn Diggs. The entries are universally strong and cover a wide variety of content, ranging from biographies of Allen Ginsberg, Audre Lorde, and Tennessee Williams to the history and development of queer theory. Entries on special topics such as Puerto Rican and Mexican American gay literature are a particularly welcome find, as they highlight the inclusive nature of LGBTQ literature and help establish connections within the wider canon. The set is focused primarily on literature since 1980, although some older works of significant historical value can also be found here.

My main disappointment with this encyclopedia is that the listings of “further readings” at the end of each entry are occasionally sparse, creating a considerable challenge for the interested reader. A two-page selected bibliography at the end of the second volume does not help, as it provides only a shallow overview of LGBTQ sources. The superb indexing, however, along with the extensive scope of content and excellent writing and thorough research throughout the text, easily compensate for these shortcomings.

The *Encyclopedia of Contemporary LGBTQ Literature of the United States* meets its goal of being a significant contribution to the field of LGBTQ studies. Overall, I recommend this set

for institutions with history, English, or gender studies programs in need of a wide-ranging reference in this growing area of literary study.

[Kari D. Weaver is an information literacy librarian at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. She is the liaison librarian to the business administration, communication arts, English, and women’s studies departments.]

Jessica Zellers, *WOMEN’S NONFICTION: A GUIDE TO READING INTERESTS*. Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited (an imprint of ABC-CLIO), 2009. 442p. \$55.00, ISBN 978-1591586586.

Reviewed by Rebecca Tolley-Stokes

“Women’s Nonfiction isn’t a genre,” muses Jessica Zellers in her introduction to this new volume in the *Real Stories* series. “It’s not even a reading interest, not the way African American nonfiction is. Women’s Nonfiction isn’t *anything*, because no one recognizes it.” But Zellers has gamely taken on the project of compiling a guide to the best books in this as-yet-unrecognized category/genre, because “[w]hat they *do* share is a readership” (p. xvi).

Zellers is a spitfire of a librarian and annotator whose gutsiness shows in each sentence. Her definition of women’s nonfiction is “a reading interest comprising titles that speak to women’s experience,” with a few specific criteria for inclusion: womanhood must be a central theme of the book, and the author must address sex or gender. Also, only books owned by more than 200 libraries are listed. Most of the titles Zellers includes are written by women and typically read by women, although some will appeal to

men as well, especially the books in the travel and adventure subgenres, and some have male authors.

Zellers, who has a scholarly background and orientation, admits her feminist bias in compiling and annotating *Women's Nonfiction*; she even devotes a category (and a corresponding chapter) to "Feminism and Activism." She tries to include contributions equally from writers of varying class, race, and sexual orientation and includes diverse perspectives. She balances mainstream bestsellers with niche interests like transsexual experience; however, you won't find antifeminist books here.

Zellers cherry-picked the 632 titles, which date from 1998 to 2003, with pleasure in mind. Most, therefore, will appeal to an audience that reads popular literature, although an occasional scholarly work appears if it is the only monograph available that deals with a particular topic. She drew from many sources, including women's bookstores, small presses, other bibliographies, and WorldCat and Amazon.com searches.

Each of the eight chapters represents a specific genre or reading category. The three classic categories are life stories, history, and adventure and travel. Zellers divvies up books about personal growth; health, wellness and beauty; feminism and activism; women at work; and women in society into the remaining five chapters. Each chapter, in three narrative sections, gives the history and definition of the genre or category, reasons for the category's appeal to readers and its inclusion in the book, and a summary of the chapter's organization.

Some classics published before 1998 are included: Beryl Markham's *West With the Night*, for instance, and Isabella Bird's *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*. Readers looking for light fare will appreciate the author's cautions about the challenges inherent in

the more scholarly works. For the most part, narrative with plot is favored. Reference books are only included if they are deemed enjoyable.

Annotations average about a hundred words, summarizing plot and identifying tone, style, setting (including geographical and historical setting), and characters; publication date, format, and age suitability are noted as well. At the end of each entry, Zellers suggests one to three other titles under the heading "Now Try." If the reader enjoyed *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls, for instance, she might want to try Augusten Burroughs' memoir, *Running With Scissors*. (This example illustrates that Zellers does not hesitate to recommend books written by men that she believes that women will read, enjoy, and empathize with.) Finally, for each chapter/category, Zellers provides a short list of "Fiction Read-Alikes" for genre-crossers.

*Women's Nonfiction* fills a gap in the "reader's advisory" literature. It will serve librarians well as an all-purpose referral tool when their own knowledge fails them in certain areas, such as finance, food, self-help, how-to, work-life balance, sports, sexual discrimination, relationships, and roller derby — to name just a few.

[Rebecca Tolley-Stokes is an associate professor and librarian at East Tennessee State University. Her essay on censorship appears in the forthcoming *Critical Perspectives* on "To Kill a Mockingbird." She has contributed more than 100 entries to encyclopedias such as *Biographical Dictionary of Literary Influences: The Twentieth Century*; *Dictionary of Literary Biography: American Radical and Reform Writers*; *Early American Nature Writers*; and *Greenwood Encyclopedia of Multiethnic American Literature*.]

## NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

Lynn Jurgensen, ed., *INNOVATION IN HISTORY: THE NEW WOMAN RESOURCE BOOK*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009. 237p. \$39.00, ISBN 978-1598842920.

*Reviewed by Madeleine Charney*

ABC-CLIO teamed up with National History Day, an academic history program designed for elementary- and secondary-school students, to create the *Innovation in History* series of illustrated workbooks. The development team for *The New Woman Resource Book* is the complementary duo of Brett Piersma, a high school history teacher, and Danielle Swiontek, a university professor specializing in U.S. women's political activism in the twentieth century. With an emphasis on active participation, this workbook offers teachers and students a fresh look at how the innovative thinking and actions of two women helped shape U.S. history. The thematic approach is a welcome contrast to teaching our children history as ossified chronological facts.

The main text of this book is divided into two "Defining Moments." The first centers on Julia Morgan, an early twentieth-century pioneer of architecture as a woman's profession, and the second covers Betty Friedan, a powerful feminist writer most prolific in the 1960s. A brief introduction provides historical context, offering a timeline of each woman's life, pithy excerpts from her work, and notable quotes that illuminate her individuality. The cumulative lessons that follow vary in length and may easily be adapted to fit teachers' instructional goals and time constraints as well as their students' needs. The well-orga-

nized format includes a list of materials needed and step-by-step instructions for completing related projects. Primary and secondary sources, including documents, images, and cartoons, form the basis of relevant handouts. Biographies of other individuals from the same period, outlines of important laws, and concise descriptions of places and events provide background. The graphics are compelling, despite being entirely in black and white.

With the resources in Part I, for example, students can read correspondence between Julia Morgan and William Randolph Hearst about the designing of his estate, her most well-known architectural work, and then roleplay the parts of Morgan and Hearst. Part II, on Betty Friedan, helps students learn about *The Feminine Mystique*, a seminal work of the women's movement that uncovered hidden truths about women's lives in America after World War II. Based on the material in the book, students are asked to analyze images and excerpts from issues of *Life* magazine that were published in the 1950s.

The "Additional Resources" section at the end of the book suggests ways to use ABC-CLIO research databases and integrate what has been learned into National History Day projects; it also lists additional topics about women's roles, such as Title IX and women's sports, free love in the Victorian era, and the third wave of feminism.

The book's table of contents would be more useful if it listed each activity. Also, tabs identifying each activity would allow teachers to move more easily between different sections. Otherwise, *The New Woman Resource Book* is content-rich and overflowing with possibilities to suit a wide range of teachers' styles and diverse students' needs. Recommended for teachers in

elementary and secondary schools as well as for university libraries with education collections.

[Madeleine Charney is a reference services librarian in the W.E.B. DuBois Library, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.]

## SOUTHERN GENDER

Nancy Bercaw & Ted Ownby, vol. eds., ***THE NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SOUTHERN CULTURE, VOLUME 13: GENDER***. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. 456p. \$19.95, ISBN 978-0807859483.

*Reviewed by Yadira V. Payne*

Developing a deep understanding of Southern U.S. culture requires studying key figures, groups, social influences, and historical incidents as well as stereotypes and gender issues. Such an examination will result in a comprehensive understanding of women's influences on modern Southern culture, as well as a clearer perception of how that culture has affected women's lives. In Volume 13 of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, editors Nancy Bercaw and Ted Ownby have successfully compiled the contributions of major scholars and researchers in the fields of Southern history, the history of women, and women's studies to allow for just such an investigation.

Arranged in alphabetical order, the entries in this volume provide a general overview of such familiar topics as abortion, education, family, and sexuality. In addition, the contributors offer an understanding of certain stereotypes of women in the antebellum South, as well as in the modern South, in such entries as, for example, "Belles and La-

dies," "Good Old Boys and Girls," and "Mammy," which examine the particular regional meanings of these terms then and now. Other entries, such as "Civil Rights," "Civil War," "Lynching," and "Slavery," broadly trace major events in Southern history as well as their effects on women. A few of the topics covered may seem unexpected, although they will not be foreign to Southerners: "Antimiscegenation Laws," for instance, discusses the ban on interracial marriages that was eventually overturned by *Loving v. Virginia*; "Beauty Shops and Barber Shops" emphasizes the importance of these places for Southern African Americans in particular; and "Visiting" portrays the social and cultural relevance of visiting with neighbors, family, and friends.

The entries vary from broad overviews to more intensively researched and explicitly detailed essays, and they range in length from one page to many. They are rich resources through which readers can acquire both a fundamental and advanced understanding. Each entry is supported by references and resources for further study. Cross-references would have been helpful, however, as some entries overlap (for instance, citing the same historical events or court cases).

The volume has two major parts, the first of which consists of sixty-nine alphabetically arranged essays including the ones described above. The second part consists of forty-four entries. Some, such as those for Oprah Winfrey and Barbara Jordan, are biographical; others describe organizations (e.g., the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the National Association of Colored Women), federal developments (e.g., the *Loving v. Virginia* case and the Moynihan Report), works of literature (e.g., "I Am A Man"), and television shows (including *Designing Women*).

The essays in the volume are, in general, written and edited well, and all



entries include suggestions for further reading. The subject indexing seems to have been done carefully and dependably, and there is an index of contributors. An introductory essay explains the development of this volume, *Gender*, from a single chapter titled “Women’s Life” in the original edition of the encyclopedia.

Missing from this text is any critical examination of Hispanic or Native American perceptions and experiences in the South, although they are glossed over in a couple entries. Overall, however, this reference is recommended for purchase by academic libraries; it will be of value to anyone engaging in a preliminary study of gender and Southern culture.

*[Yadira V. Payne is the government documents librarian and an assistant professor of library science at Augusta State University’s Reese Library. She holds an M.S.L.I.S. from Drexel University and is a published author and an artist.]*

## WOMEN OF COLOR

Maythee Rojas, **WOMEN OF COLOR AND FEMINISM**. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2009. 224p. bibl. pap., \$14.95, ISBN 978-1580052726.

*Reviewed by Jeanne Armstrong*

This volume is similar in format to other Seal Press books intended for academic course use, such as *Men and Feminism*. The author, a professor at California State University, describes herself as a “Latina from a working-class background whose family and friends are still largely removed from the academic world” (p. ix).

The book’s five chapters are “Defining Identities,” “Embodied Representations,” “Social Struggles,” “Creative Expressions,” and “Loving Selves.”

The first discusses identity not being easily recognized by the dominant culture, identity being imposed by the dominant culture through stereotypes or prejudices, and the complexity of multiple identities. Rojas explores the hegemony “that holds most forms of oppression in place [and] works to ensure that we accept binary relationships” (p. 7), which results in the double consciousness described by W.E.B. Du Bois, Gloria Anzaldúa, and others. This chapter describes the various liberation groups that emerged through the inspiration of the civil rights movement, including the American Indian movement, the Chicano movement, and the Asian-American movement. In the “Conflicting Alliances” section of this chapter, Rojas discusses how women and gay men often developed differences with the heterosexual male leadership of these movements.

Chapter 2, “Embodied Representations,” addresses the challenge it is for African American, Asian American, Latina, and American Indian women to overcome stereotypes about their bodies and sexuality that impose polarities of “good girl” versus “bad girl.” In the section called “Legacies of the Past,” Rojas mentions the stereotypes of Mammy and Jezebel assigned to African American women, as well as the effect of slavery on the sexual exploitation and violation of black women’s bodies. “Body Counts” provides data showing that domestic violence on reservations is a major problem. Amnesty International reported homicide as the third highest cause of death among Native American women in 2005 and 2006. The image of the quiet, invisible, Asian American woman prevents openness about domestic violence in the Asian American community. The section “So Many Gay All Over the World” describes the cultural and religious biases that often cause Asian

American or Chicana lesbians to be rejected in their communities.

The chapter titled “Social Struggles” covers a variety of issues that have galvanized women of color to organize, such as health care, reproductive rights, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, high rates of imprisonment, and violence. Rojas mentions some significant examples of legal cases or groups that succeeded in challenging injustices, such as the women-of-color antiviolence activists in Mothers of East Los Angeles and INCITE!

In Chapter 4, “Creative Expressions,” Rojas emphasizes the significance of pop culture as a forum for creative expression by women of color. This chapter’s overview of “publishing from the margins” mentions women-of-color publishers such as Third Woman Press and Aunt Lute Books. Rojas concludes with examples of women artists who reclaim the male gaze through varied genres — for instance, Laura Aguilar through photography, Ana Mendieta through multi-media, Lourdes Portillo through film, and Kara Walker through her silhouettes.

“Loving Selves” is the final chapter. Quoting Audre Lorde’s “Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power,” Rojas describes erotic power as the transitory moment of bliss we feel when touched by physical and emotional intimacy. She refers to bell hooks’s *Sisters of the Yam* on loving self and other women as the way to heal the oppression, violence, and dysfunction experienced by generations of women of color in America. Rojas references Maria Lugones on playfulness and world travelling as a method of cultural understanding.

In sidebars throughout each chapter, Rojas includes examples of the concepts or issues she explains in the

chapter. Some sidebars cover Anna Mae Pictou-Aquash, Tracy Chapman, Yellow Woman, the Mothers of East Los Angeles, INCITE!, and women-of-color blogs.

The book has a detailed index, a reader's guide with questions for discussion and topics for research, and a comprehensive bibliography of books, films, and websites. There is also a list of sources in each chapter subsection. *Women of Color and Feminism* would be an appropriate overview text for a women's studies or gender studies survey course, and could even be one of the assigned texts in a survey course on people of color.

[Jeanne Armstrong is a professor at Western Washington University and is the librarian liaison for several departments and programs, including Women Studies.]

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Nikki van der Gaag, *THE NO-NONSENSE GUIDE TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS, NEW UPDATED EDITION*. Oxford, U.K.: New Internationalist Publications, 2008 (original edition published in 2004). 144p. index. pap., \$13.95, ISBN 978-1904456995.

Reviewed by Sherri L. Barnes

I often tell my students that a reference work, while it can be an excellent source of concise, easily accessible, factual, and widely accepted information, is not the place to look for a critical approach to a subject. This updated women's rights volume in the *No-Nonsense Guide* series, however, has an unapologetically activist and critical orientation. Author Nikki van der Gaag is a British freelance writer and editor specializing in gender, poverty,

human rights, and refugee issues. New Internationalist Publications is an independent, not-for-profit publishing cooperative that reports on issues of global justice. World-renowned Egyptian feminist writer, activist, and physician Nawal El Saadawi contributed the foreword (unchanged from 2004).

The *Guide* offers easy access to concise information about feminist perspectives on a variety of social, economic, and political issues facing women globally. The focus is on the quality of women's lives and how it can be improved, with emphasis on the majority world of the Global South. Each chapter addresses a realm of life (e.g., "birth and death," "poverty, development, and work," "power, politics, and the law," "education," "marriage, sexuality, and old age," "violence against women,") in which women are denied full equality, showing just how their rights are limited in that area. In addition to covering the expected issues, this edition adds a chapter on how environmental issues affect women and updates the unique chapter on women as global consumers to include the impact of social networking and other Web 2.0 technologies on women's lives. Every chapter includes introductory paragraphs that frame the issue, followed by subheadings that highlight related issues. Interspersed throughout each chapter are tables and boxed insets that feature policies, biographical profiles, best practices, first-person accounts, chronologies, statistics, anecdotes, and more, all complementing the text. There is no bibliography, but sources are carefully and heavily cited throughout. Most source information comes from governmental and nongovernmental organizations and research and policy institutes rather than from mainstream trade and academic presses. For instructional purposes, this is a good example of useful and high-quality

publishing by small, alternative, and feminist presses.

I appreciate that although there is no shortage of negative information to report about the status of women (e.g., sterilization is the most common form of contraception worldwide), van der Gaag doesn't overlook positive advancements: for instance, the final chapter includes a list of changes for the better in fourteen countries since 2000. She points to the many women's organizations that have emerged worldwide since globalization as forces that can counteract some of globalization's negative effects. I would argue that those forces can also counteract the backlash against feminism that she discusses in Chapter 1.

This *No-Nonsense* guide is not an essential reference source, but it is valuable. As is evident from the cited sources at the end of each chapter, most of the information presented in the volume is available online. The value of the book is that it brings the information together in one small (144 pages, 7 x 4.25 inches), easily accessible place. For libraries downsizing their print reference sections, this nontraditional reference work would be suitable for circulating collections.

[Sherri L. Barnes is the feminist studies librarian at the University of California, Santa Barbara.]

## CAVEAT EMPTOR

Scarecrow Press (a subsidiary of Rowman & Littlefield) is apparently making a practice of reissuing previously published hardcover works in new paper series, with new titles, new ISBNs, and new publication dates in the publisher's catalog (which get picked up by Amazon.com and librar-

ies everywhere), but with absolutely identical content to the original — and no indication that the book is not really new! The two supposedly new *A to Z* references listed below are identical to the older *Historical Dictionaries* — both of which we have reviewed in this column in years past — from the dedication pages at the beginning to the authors' bios at the end. It becomes clearer only when the copyright pages are examined; the "new" versions still bear the original copyright dates. We do not approve of this practice:

JoAnne Myers, *THE A TO Z OF THE LESBIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT: STILL THE RAGE*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press (a subsidiary of Rowman & Littlefield), 2009. ISBN 978-0810868113. Previously

published as *HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF THE LESBIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT: STILL THE RAGE*, 2003; identical content but different title and ISBN; reviewed in *Feminist Collections* volume 25, number 1, Fall 2003, pp. 33–34.

Catherine Villanueva Gardner, *THE A TO Z OF FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY*. Scarecrow Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0810868397. Previously published as *HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY*, 2006; identical content but different title and ISBN; reviewed in *Feminist Collections* volume 27, numbers 2–3, Winter–Spring 2006, pp. 31–32.

Meanwhile, in a slight variation on Scarecrow's practice, Facts on File continues to issue simultaneous hardcover and paperback versions of the same book, with identical content but different titles (and vastly different prices), with no warning or explanation, not only creating confusion for reviewing publications, but also leading (whether deliberately or not) libraries with automatic purchasing systems to buy both versions unintentionally. Christine Ammer's *The Encyclopedia of Women's Health*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, published simultaneously as the much cheaper *New A to Z of Women's Health*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition — reviewed in this column on pages 41–42 — is one of the latest examples of this. See Phyllis Holman Weisbard's comments about this practice in her review of the fifth edition, in *Feminist Collections* v. 27, no. 1 (Fall 2005), pp. 31–32. We repeat: *Caveat emptor!*



Miriam Greenwald



# PERIODICAL NOTES

## NEW MAGAZINE FOR GIRLS

**KIKI: FOR GIRLS WITH STYLE AND SUBSTANCE.** 2007–. Founder and ed.-in-chief: Jamie Bryant. Publisher: B-books Ltd. Frequency: 4/yr. Subscriptions: U.S., \$26.00/yr.; Canada, \$41.00/yr.; other countries, \$62.00/yr. *Kiki Magazine*, 118 West Pike St., Covington, KY 41011; website: [www.kikimag.com](http://www.kikimag.com) (Issue examined: Vol. 3, No. 1, Fall 2009.)

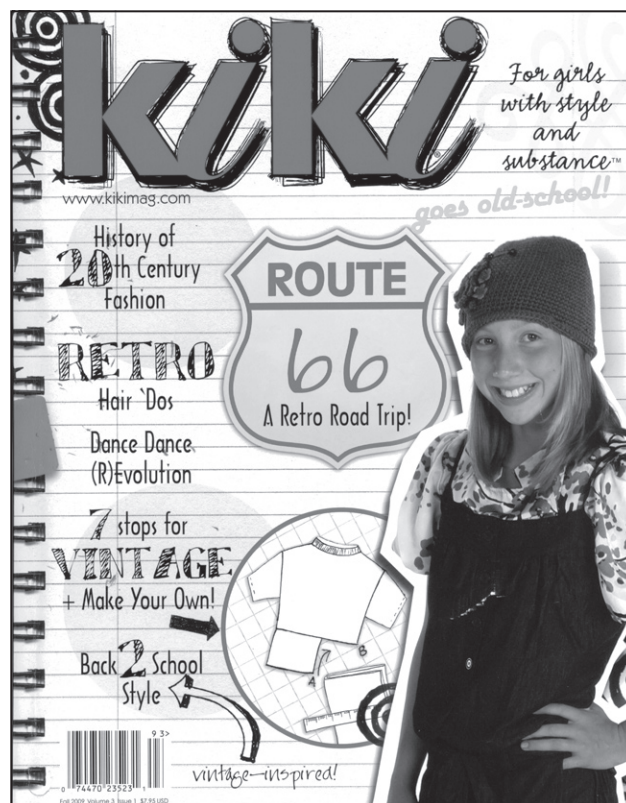
This is different: a magazine for girls that is unabashedly about fashion, but not in the ways that usually make us cringe: “*Kiki* has a unique point of view,” the website tells parents and other adults in girls’ lives. “To make room for creativity, we’ve left out a lot of what publishers consider ‘must-have’ content. There’s no gossip, no dating, no sensuality, no instructions on how to kiss, no tips on getting sexy abs... The magazine uses the college fashion design curriculum as a starting point to encourage girls to explore other disciplines (business, geography, fine art, craft, history, world culture, even math). Girls will learn that having fun with style and artistry is completely compatible with intelligence and creativity.”

There’s also a direct message on the website for girls themselves (the audience targeted is preteen and teen):

*Kiki* is a magazine for girls who love life, appreciate creativity, and recognize good ideas. A *Kiki* reader thinks for herself, has her own look, and is on her way to being a confident, strong, and smart young woman. She’s a girl with style and substance!

*Kiki* shows you all the different ways you can be involved in design. Seven different departments blend style and artistry with intelligence and creativity, and design features will inspire you to transform your *Kiki* into your very own creativity journal!

In this issue: a pair of lead articles — “She Designs, He Designs” — featuring Anna Sui and Ralph Lauren; a look at cheating; the history of polymer clay; the history of twentieth-century fashion; how to prevent and treat “numb thumbs” from texting too much; shopping for vintage clothing; Ellis Island; Route 66; Mexico; hair; semi-blank pages for a girl’s own drawing, painting, or collage...



The only things I find a bit troubling are the shopping suggestions in “Vintage-Inspired Back-to-School Fashion.” Most of the items featured are very pricey; perhaps there’s too much promotion of Zappos.com and Urban Outfitters here. Sixty-four-dollar knee socks for a preteen? Come on!

## SPECIAL ISSUES OF PERIODICALS

**ASIAN AND PACIFIC MIGRATION JOURNAL** v. 18, no. 1, 2009: Special issue: “Women, Mobilities, Immobilities and Empowerment.” Issue editor: Amy Sim. Publisher: Scalabrini Migration Center (Quezon City, Philippines). ISSN: 0117-1968. Available online to licensed users via SocINDEX.

Partial contents: “Foreign Brides, Multiple Citizenship and the Immigrant Movement in Taiwan,” by Hsiao-Chuan Hsia; “Women Versus the State: Organizing Resistance and Contesting Exploitation in Indonesian Labor Migration to Hong Kong,” by Amy Sim; “Global House-

holding and Care Networks: Filipino Women in Japan,” by Maria Rosario Piquero-Ballescás; “Female Migration and Social Reproduction in the Mekong Region,” by Bernadette P. Resurrección; “Circulation, Encounters and Transformation: Indonesian Female Migrants,” by Amrih Widodo & Catharina P. Williams.

**CENTAURUS: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND ITS CULTURAL ASPECTS** v. 51, no. 1, February 2009: Workshop papers from a meeting of the Commission on Women in Science, Technology and Medicine of the International Union for History and Philosophy of Science/Division of History of Science and Technology IUHPS/DHST), Syros, Greece, July 2007: “Gender and Networking in Twentieth-Century Physical Sciences.” Issue editors: Maria Rentetzi & Sally G. Kohlstedt. Publisher: Blackwell. ISSN: 0008-8994. Available online to licensed users via Wiley Interscience and EBSCOhost.

Partial contents: “On the Outskirts of Physics: Eva von Bahr as an Outsider Within in Early 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Swedish Experimental Physics,” by Staffan Wennerholm; “Unstable Networks Among Women in Academe: The Legal Case of Shyamala Rajender,” by Sally G. Kohlstedt & Suzanne M. Fischer; “Gender, Science and Politics: Queen Frederika and Nuclear Research in Post-War Greece,” by Maria Rentetzi.

**CLUES: A JOURNAL OF DETECTION** v. 27, no. 1, 2009: Theme issue: “The Girl Sleuth.” Issue ed.: Leona W. Fisher. Publisher: McFarland (<http://www.mcfarlandpub.com/clues.html>). ISSN: 0742-4248.

Partial contents: “The Accidental Sleuth: Investigating Mysteries and Class in Three Series for Girls,” by Ramona Caponegro; “‘Use Your Head, Judy Girl’: Relationships, Writing, and an Ethic of Care in the Judy Bolton Mysteries,” by Mary Jeanette Moran; “Configuring Identity and Flights of Fancy in the Vicki Barr, Flight Stewardess Series,” by Michael G. Cornelius; “Trixie Belden, Edgar Allan Poe, and the Secret of the Secret in Girl-Sleuth Literature,” by Steven J. Zani; “The Legacy of George and Bess: Sidekicks as Normalizing Agents for the Girl Sleuth,” by Julie D. O’Reilly; “‘You Get Tough. You Get Even’: Rape, Anger, Cynicism, and the Vigilante Girl Detective in *Veronica Mars*,” by Alaine Mar-taus.

**DIGITAL CREATIVITY** v. 20, no. 4, 2009: Special issue: “Women in Games.” Issue editor: Emma Westecott. Publisher: Intellect Books. ISSN: 1462-6268. Available online to licensed users via EBSCOhost.

Contents: “Growing Up with Games,” by Emma Westecott; “Female Players from Margin to Centre: Female Sociality, Digital Consumer Citizenship and Reterritorialisations,” by Laura Fantone; “‘The Street Smarts of a Cartoon Princess’: New Roles for Women in Games,” by Esther MacCallum-Stewart; “Cheerleaders/Booth Babes/Halo Hoes: Pro-Gaming, Gender and Jobs for the Boys,” by Nicholas Taylor, Jen Jenson, & Suzanne de Castell; “Taking a Chance on Losing Yourself in the Game,” by Maureen Thomas; “Women Creating Machinima,” by Jenifer Vandagriff & Michael Nitsche.

**HARVARD REVIEW OF PSYCHIATRY** v. 17, no. 2, April 2009: Special issue: “Women’s Mental Health: New Research Findings.” Issue editors: Hadine Joffe & Shelly F. Greenfield. Publisher: Taylor & Francis for Harvard College. ISSN: 1067-3229. Available online to licensed users via EBSCOhost.

Partial contents: “A Reproductive Subtype of Depression: Conceptualizing Models and Moving Toward Etiology,” by Jennifer L. Payne, Jennifer Teitelbaum Palmer, & Hadine Joffe; “Reproductive Aging, Sex Steroids, and Mood Disorders,” by Veronica Harsh et al.; “Sex Differences in Drug-Related Stress-System Changes: Implications for Treatment in Substance-Abusing Women,” by Helen C. Fox & Rajita Sinha; “Update on Research and Treatment of Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder,” by Joanne Cunningham et al.; “Reproductive and Metabolic Abnormalities Associated with Bipolar Disorder and Its Treatment,” by Heather A. Kenna, Bowen Jiang, & Natalie L. Rasgon; “Infants of Depressed Mothers,” by Edward Tronick & Corrina Reck; “Treatise on Insanity in Pregnant, Postpartum, and Lactating Women (1858) by Louis-Victor Marce: A Commentary,” by Katharina Trede et al.

**PS: POLITICAL SCIENCE & POLITICS** v. 42, no. 2, April 2009: Symposium: “Fieldwork, Identities, and Intersectionality: Negotiating Gender, Race, Class, Religion, Nationality, and Age in the Research Field Abroad.” Symposium editors: Candice D. Ortobals & Meg E. Rincker. Publisher: American Political Science Association. ISSN: 1537-5935. Available online to licensed users via Cambridge University Press Journals and ProQuest.

Partial contents: “‘We Thought You Would Be White’: Race and Gender in Fieldwork,” by Frances B. Henderson; “I Don’t Know Monica Lewinsky, and I’m Not in the CIA. Now How About That Interview?” by Gina Yannitell Reinhardt; “Being True and Being You: Race, Gender, Class, and the Fieldwork Experience,” by Erica Townsend-Bell; “Em-

bodied Researchers: Gendered Bodies, Research Activity, and Pregnancy in the Field," by Candice D. Ortals & Meg E. Rincker; "Research, Identities, and Praxis: The Tensions of Integrating Identity into the Field Experience," by Marshall Thompson.

**QUALITATIVE INQUIRY** v. 15, no. 2, February 2009: Special issue: "Gender, Violence, and Identity." Issue editor: Himika Bhattacharya. Publisher: Sage. ISSN: 1077-8004 (print), 1552-7565 (online). Available online to licensed users via Sage Journals Online.

Partial contents: "Fragments and Interruptions: Sensory Regimes of Violence and the Limits of Feminist Ethnography," by Radha S. Hegde; "Locating Community in Women's Experiences of Trauma, Recovery, and Empowerment," by Kathleen Burns Jager & Marsha T. Carolan; "Their Words, Actions, and Meaning: A Researcher's Reflection on Rwandan Women's Experience of Genocide," by Eddah Mutua Kombo; "Finding My...A Story of Female Identity," by Cara T. Mackie; "Power, Pleasure, and Play: Screwing the Dildo and Rescripting Sexual Violence," by Jeanine Minge & Amber Lynn Zimmerman; "I Don't Know How to Start Talking About It: Six Poems," by Lori E. Koelsch & Roger M. Knudson; "Performing Silence: Gender, Violence, and Resistance in Women's Narratives From Lahaul, India," by Himika Bhattacharya.

**SECURITY STUDIES** v. 18, no. 2, April 2009: Special issue: "Feminist Contributions." Issue editor: Laura Sjoberg. Publisher: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group. ISSN: 0963-6412 (print), 1556-1852 (online). Available online to licensed users via Informaworld and EBSCOhost (Military & Government Collection).

Partial contents: "Gendering the Cult of the Offensive," by Lauren Wilcox; "Securitization and Desecuritization: Female Soldiers and the Reconstruction of Women in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone," by Megan MacKenzie; "Loyalist Women Paramilitaries in Northern Ireland: Beginning a Feminist Conversation about Conflict Resolution," by Sandra McEvoy; "Peacebuilding Through a Gender Lens and the Challenges of Implementation in Rwanda and Côte d'Ivoire," by Heidi Hudson; "Beyond Border Security: Feminist Approaches to Human Trafficking," by Jennifer K. Lobasz; "Environmental Security and Gender: Necessary Shifts in an Evolving Debate," by Nicole Detraz.

**SOCIAL SCIENCE HISTORY** v. 33, no. 4, Winter 2009: Special section: "Debating Gender, Work, and Wages: A Roundtable Discussion." Section editor: Anne McCants. Publisher: Duke University Press for the Social Science

History Association. ISSN: 0145-5532. Available online to licensed users via Duke Journals, JSTOR, Project Muse, EBSCOhost, and SocINDEX.

Partial contents of section: "Disciplinary Differences: A Historian's Take on Why Wages Differed by Gender in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Britain," by Amy M. Froide; "Strength and Power in the Industrial Revolution," by Claudia Goldin; "The Gender Gap in Wages: Productivity or Prejudice or Market Power in Pursuit of Profits," by Jane Humphries; "The Significance of Brawn," by Pamela Sharpe.

**UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE LAW FORUM** v. 39, no. 1, Fall 2008; v. 39, no. 2, Spring 2009: Articles that "grew out of" the Feminist Legal Theory & Feminisms Conference in March 2008 (making up a two-part volume titled *Feminist Legal Theory & Feminisms*). Publisher: University of Baltimore School of Law. Issues available in full text at <http://law.ubalt.edu/template.cfm?page=656>.

Contents of special section: *in v.39, no.1*: "Foreword: Traversing 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Waves: Feminist Legal Theory Moving Forward," by Barbara Ann White; "Keynote Address," by Gloria Steinem; "Welfare, Privacy, and Feminism," by Michele Estrin Gilman; "Is What We Want What We Need,

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and Can We Get It in Writing? The Third Wave of Feminism Hits the Beach of Modern Parentage Presumptions,” by Justice Carol A. Beier & Larkin E. Walsh; “Here Comes the Judge! Gender Distortion on TV Reality Court Shows,” by Taunya Lovell Banks; “Lifting the Floor: Sex, Class, and Education,” by Naomi Cahn & June Carbone; “Copyright Law and Pornography: Reconsidering Incentives to Create and Distribute Pornography,” by Ann Bartow. *In v.39, no.2*: “Not Our Mother’s Law School? A Third-Wave Feminist Study of Women’s Experiences in Law School,” by Felice Batlan et al.; “Empowerment or Estrangement? Liberal Feminism’s Visions of the ‘Progress’ of Muslim Women,” by Cyra Akila Choudhury; “Feminist Legal Theory in the Context of International Conflict,” by Teresa Godwin Phelps; “Creating Law and Policy with Women’s Voices: Feminism in Action,” by Alicia C. Carra; “Regulating Pregnancy in Taiwan: An Analysis from an Asian Legal Feminist Using Feminist Legal Theories,” by Chih-Chieh Lin.

## TRANSITIONS

The former Association for Research on Mothering (1998–2010), which has been relaunched as the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement (MIRCI), will in turn launch the first issue (Volume 1.1) of its new scholarly, peer-reviewed, bi-annual **JOURNAL OF THE MOTHERHOOD INITIATIVE** (the former *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*, or *JARM*) in Summer 2010, with the theme “Mothering, Violence, Militarism,

War and Social Justice.” Volume 1.2, “Mothering, Bereavement, Loss and Grief,” will be the Fall/Winter 2010 issue. To subscribe to the new journal or order back issues of the old one (*JARM*) at half-price, see <http://www.motherhood-initiative.org/journalmotherhoodinitiative.html>.

Also sporting a new name and mission is the former *NWSA Journal*, which is, as of this year, titled **FEMINIST FORMATIONS**. Volume and issue numbering, however, continue in sequence: the first issue of *Feminist Formations* is Volume 22, Number 1 (Spring 2010). “This new title more clearly matches our expanded focus,” write Rebecca Ropers-Huilman and Adela C. Licóna (editor and editorial board member, respectively) in their welcome message in this issue. “Specifically, we mean to signify that we encourage transnational exploration of issues that related to Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies in a wide variety of contexts.” The address for the new journal is *Feminist Formations*, 330 Wulling Hall, University of Minnesota, 86 Pleasant Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455; phone: (612) 626-3818; email: [femform@umn.edu](mailto:femform@umn.edu); website: <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/Feminist-Formations>.

## CEASED PUBLICATION

**WISCONSIN WOMAN** magazine, published since 1998 by O’Gara Publishing in Fitchburg, Wisconsin, has ended its publishing run, citing “the economic times.”

○ Compiled by JoAnne Lehman



Miriam Greenwald

## BOOKS AND VIDEOS RECEIVED

### **THE ACP HANDBOOK OF WOMEN'S HEALTH.**

Fife, Rose S. and Schrager, Sarina B. American College of Physicians Press, 2009.

### **ANYTHING I PERCEIVE: A TRIBUTE TO THE**

**SIXTEEN WOMEN SENATORS (VIDEO).** Loomis, Wendy, producer. Wendy Loomis, 2010.

### **THE ASHGATE RESEARCH COMPANION TO**

**QUEER THEORY.** Giffney, Noreen and O'Rourke, Michael, eds. Ashgate, 2009.

### **BECOMING MODERN WOMEN: LOVE AND FEMALE IDENTITY IN PREWAR JAPANESE**

**LITERATURE AND CULTURE.** Suzuki, Michiko. Stanford University Press, 2010.

### **BENIGN BIGOTRY: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SUBTLE**

**PREJUDICE.** Anderson, Kristin J. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

### **CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN: A BIOGRAPHY.**

Davis, Cynthia J. Stanford University Press, 2010.

### **CONFINED.** Dietl, Mariana. Litchfield Review, 2009.

### **THE DICTIONARY OF BRITISH WOMEN ARTISTS.**

Gray, Sarah. Lutterworth, 2009.

### **ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GODDESSES AND HEROINES.**

Monaghan, Patricia. Greenwood, 2010.

### **ENTANGLING ALLIANCES: FOREIGN WAR BRIDES**

**AND AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.** Zeiger, Susan. New York University Press, 2010.

### **FEMINIST STUDIES: A GUIDE TO INTERSECTIONAL THEORY, METHODOLOGY AND WRITING.**

Lykke, Nina. Routledge, 2010.

### **FIRST VOICES: AN ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S**

**READER.** Monture, Patricia A. and McGuire, Patricia D, eds. Inanna, 2009.

### **GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITIES THE WORLD**

**OVER.** Simon, Rita J. and Brooks, Alison M. Lexington, 2009.

### **GLAMOUR: WOMEN, HISTORY, FEMINISM.**

Dyhouse, Carol. Zed; distr. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

### **THE GREENWOOD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF LGBT**

**ISSUES WORLDWIDE.** Stewart, Chuck, ed. Greenwood, 2010.

### **HANDBOOK OF WOMEN'S HEALTH.** Rosenfeld, Jo

Ann, ed. Cambridge University Press, 2009. 2nd ed.

### **HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF SEXPIONAGE.** West,

Nigel. Scarecrow, 2009.

### **IRON BUTTERFLIES: WOMEN TRANSFORMING**

**THEMSELVES AND THE WORLD.** Regine, Birute. Prometheus, 2010.

### **THE KALEIDOSCOPE OF GENDER: PRISMS,**

**PATTERNS, AND POSSIBILITIES.** Spade, Joan Z. and Valentine, Catherine G, eds. Pine Forge; distr. Sage, 2011. 3rd ed.

### **LIFE STORIES OF WOMEN ARTISTS, 1550-1800: AN ANTHOLOGY.** Dabbs, Julia K. Ashgate, 2009.

### **THE MAINE WOMEN WRITERS COLLECTION:**

**THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS (VIDEO).** Gurley, Cally and Hoose, Shoshana, producers. University of New England, 2009.

### **NEW BLOOD: THIRD-WAVE FEMINISM AND THE POLITICS OF MENSTRUATION.** Bobel, Chris. Rutgers

University Press, 2010.

### **ORIGINS OF THE MAGDALENE LAUNDRIES:**

**AN ANALYTICAL HISTORY.** McCarthy, Rebecca Lea. McFarland, 2010.

### **OUR BODIES, OURSELVES AND THE WORK OF**

**WRITING.** Wells, Susan. Stanford University Press, 2010.

### **RAILROAD NOIR: THE AMERICAN WEST AT THE**

**END OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.** Niemann, Linda Grant. Jensen, Joel, illus. Indiana University Press, 2010.

### **RIDING THE BLACK RAM: LAW, LITERATURE,**

**AND GENDER.** Heinzelman, Susan Sage. Stanford University Press, 2010.

### **THE STRONG WOMEN'S GUIDE TO TOTAL**

**HEALTH.** Nelson, Miriam E. and Ackerman, Jennifer. Rodale, 2010.

### **URSULA K. LE GUIN'S JOURNEY TO POST-**

**FEMINISM.** Clarke, Amy M. Palumbo, Donald E. and Sullivan, C. W., eds. McFarland, 2010.

### **WOMEN IN SHAKESPEARE: A DICTIONARY.**

Findlay, Alison. Continuum, 2010.

### **WOMEN IN THE AGE OF SHAKESPEARE.** Kemp,

Theresa D. Greenwood/ABC-CLIO, 2010.

### **WOMEN IN THE LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY**

**OF JAPAN: THE LINGUISTIC ROOTS OF BIAS.**

Takemaru, Naoko. McFarland, 2010.

### **WOMEN'S SPIRITUALITY: CONTEMPORARY**

**FEMINIST APPROACHES TO JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM AND GODDESS WORSHIP.**

Stuckey, Johanna H. Inanna, 2010.



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