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Feminist Collections

A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources

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A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources

Volume 33, Number 3, Summer 2012

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FROM THE EDITORS

Just before this Summer issue went to press, I spent a few days visiting my 93-year-old father at his home in Pennsylvania, where one of my brothers is his primary caregiver. Recently widowed (Mom died in February), Dad is physically frail and has advanced dementia. At this point he says little, relies on a wheelchair, and cannot do much for himself. Just two years ago, though, he was still pretty active and sharp. He assisted with my mother's care (ironically, she had dementia first, although hers never got as severe as his is now), and he spent long hours outside in his extensive gardens every day. He's had a bad knee for decades, and as it got worse he walked with difficulty and often had to sit on the ground to pull weeds, but he still did it, relentlessly. I even joked that he would happily die there in the garden, and that we'd just take him by wheelbarrow to be buried under his beloved blueberry bushes.

Both Dad and Mom grew up on small dairy farms, and each came from a long line of forebears who "use[d] land for growing food or raising animals," as the online Merriam-Webster dictionary for English-language-learners defines farming. For the first few years of their marriage, they carried on that tradition, with their own acreage and herd of cows just up the road from Dad's parents, until their barn was hit by lightning and burned to the ground. Then Dad enrolled in Penn State's "Aggie" program for awhile, eventually dropping out to find work managing herds for larger farms. His career path then shifted: he went to seminary and became a minister, which to me was his primary identity during my youth. But he and my mother never stopped "using land" in the manner of farmers — even when, as was the case in the years of parsonage living, they didn't own it. I well remember their passionate soil-tilling and food-gathering, both when I was a teenager (and didn't appreciate it) and when, as an independent young adult, I would ask their advice about my own first gardening endeavors.

My brother — the one who is caring for Dad — went through a farmer-wanna-be phase as a preteen, although it may have been motivated largely by the desire to drive tractors. Otherwise, I don't remember him showing any particular interest in growing food or tending plants, until my father's recent severe decline. As Dad became less able to garden, John started to express a desire to somehow keep things going in my parents' honor and memory, and he is doing that. This year he planted a vegetable garden on his own, and during my visit last week I admired his efforts and shared in the harvest. We encouraged my father to eat by

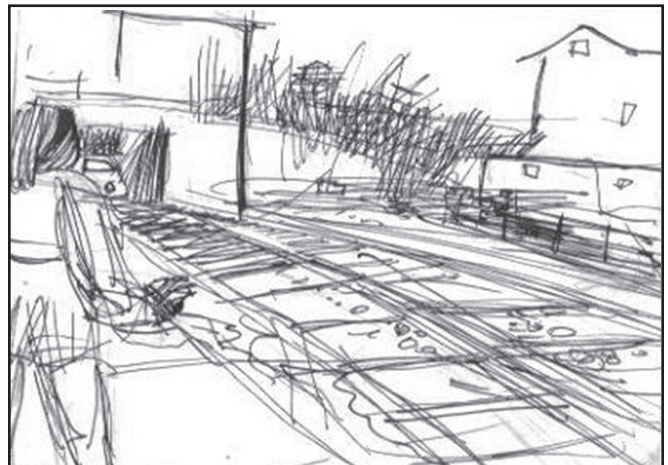
saying, "These tomatoes are from your garden, Dad," even though we can't know what he comprehends.

Here in Wisconsin, I've been "urban farming" with my partner, in our own quirky and ever-expanding way, for a decade and a half. Honeybees, egg-laying hens, meat- and fiber-producing rabbits, fruit trees, and seasonal vegetables of all description have figured into our land-use adventures so far, although we still have a long way to go to realize any dreams of sustainability or even real cost-savings. But the whole issue is dear to me, and even the small extent to which we can help produce what we consume is rewarding on many levels.

I was especially happy when Dianna Hunter agreed to write a review for this issue of *FC*. In the essay beginning on page 5, Dianna, once a dairy farmer herself, introduces us to women who farm and those (also women, in these cases) who write about them. Dianna ponders the apparent dearth of new writing that specifically examines the gendered aspects of farming and food. At least a few of the books she highlights, though, do "theorize explicitly about dominance, subordination, and social justice."

Also in this issue: Charlotte Perkins Gilman as a "somewhat wayward subject for feminist scholars"; disturbing questions about young Siberian girls recruited as fashion models; the gendered aspects of video gaming; new reference works about grant-seeking, media, poetry, and the history of the women's movement; and guides to some websites and scholarly journals you really should look at.

○ J.L.



Miriam Greenwald

BOOK REVIEWS

CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN: A LIFE WRIT LARGE

by Jean M. Lutes

Judith A. Allen, *THE FEMINISM OF CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN: SEXUALITIES, HISTORIES, PROGRESSIVISM*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009. 467p. notes. bibl. index. illus. pap., \$35.00, ISBN 978-0226014630.

Cynthia J. Davis, *CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN: A BIOGRAPHY*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010. 537p. notes. bibl. index. illus. pap., \$27.95, ISBN 978-0804738897.

Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *WILD UNREST: CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN AND THE MAKING OF "THE YELLOW WALL-PAPER"*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. 251p. \$24.95, ISBN 978-0199739806.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860–1935) was a brilliant advocate for women's rights who is best known today as the author of "The Yellow Wallpaper," a gothic short story that has been giving readers chills since it was first published in 1892. Prolific, ambitious, and deeply earnest in her desire to make the world more just for women, Gilman's long career as a speaker and writer inspired countless women to work for change. Her status as one of the most important feminist thinkers of the Progressive Era is undeniable. And, despite her frequent moves and struggles with poverty, she managed to leave behind a treasure trove of documents, including personal journals and correspondence as well as hundreds of published poems and stories and thousands of nonfiction essays.

Yet Gilman has proved a somewhat wayward subject for feminist scholars. She was celebrated in the 1970s and 1980s as a feminist icon who drew on her own struggle with postpartum depression to write "The Yellow Wallpaper" and went on to pioneer the sociological study of women's oppression. Her *Women and Economics*, an impassioned treatise published in 1898, made her a celebrity with its

clearly written analysis of the sexual and economic dimensions of female subordination.

In the last two decades, however, the adulation has given way, at least in part, to criticism and disappointment, as scholars have turned their attention to Gilman's less appealing ideas: her anti-Semitism, her bias against immigrants, her belief in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race, and her embrace of eugenics, a pseudo-science of selective breeding that was seen as a way to fight the decline of the "better" races.

Even "The Yellow Wallpaper," widely recognized as Gilman's most significant literary achievement, has undergone re-evaluation in light of these ideas. In a provocative essay published in 1989, Susan Lanser argued that white feminist readings of "The Yellow Wallpaper" as a universal tale of patriarchal oppression had obscured the racist dimensions of the story's symbolic use of the color yellow, especially since Gilman wrote the story in California during a time of intense anxiety about Chinese immigrants as a "yellow peril." When Lanser suggested that Gilman's upper-middle-class white female narrator may have been repressing the reality of racial difference, she inaugurated a

new line of self-conscious criticism that highlighted the distortions of Gilman's own perspective.¹

Although Gilman's prolific output has continued to attract scholarly attention, we have lacked authoritative book-length treatments of her life that dealt squarely with the complexity and scope of her legacy, warts and all.² No major book-length studies of Gilman have been published since 1990 — until now.

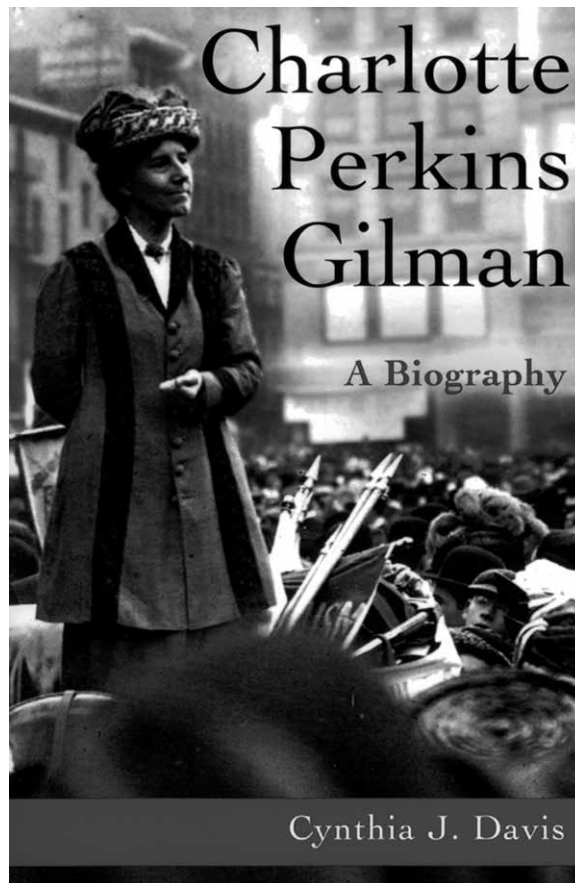
In three meticulously researched books published just in the past few years, Gilman's life and works get the kind of sustained, careful attention they have long deserved. These works take the scholarship on Gilman to a new level, synthesizing decades of research and adding new layers of biographical and textual detail. In her immensely readable and comprehensive biography, Cynthia J. Davis tells Gilman's fascinating life story with precision, wisdom, and tact. Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz's *Wild Unrest*, which focuses more narrowly on how Gilman came to write her most famous story, provides a well-researched look at the early years of her adulthood and serves as an excellent complement to Davis's broader treatment. Judith A.

Allen's historical study of Gilman's contributions as a public intellectual provides a rich, useful contextualization of her place among Progressive-Era thinkers.

Read together, these books give us Charlotte Perkins Gilman from multiple angles: an internationally acclaimed activist; a young mother caught between her commitment to her career and the exhausting demands of her husband and child; a talented thinker without formal education who became the best-known theorist of the American women's movement at the turn of the twentieth century; a depressive, subject to psychic darkensses that would probably warrant hospitalization today; a working woman, whose funds regularly ran so low that she often faced "The Wolf at the Door," as she titled one of her poems (Davis, p. 151); and a one-time radical, who took increasingly conservative positions in her skepticism about sexual expression and, more disturbingly, in her attacks on immigrants as a "flood of low-grade humanity" (quoted in Davis, p. 333).

Davis's *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: A Biography* provides the most complete consideration of Gilman's life. Davis explores the dynamic between Charlotte's private and public personas, beginning with her imaginative but emotionally deprived girlhood, moving through her tumultuous coming of age and her struggles to reconcile marriage, family, and professional goals, and following her long career as a writer and activist. The book includes twenty-five photographs, some never before published, and its careful documentation of sources will prove a boon to future Gilman scholars.

In every chapter, Davis uses epigraphs drawn from Gilman's own



words, mostly quotations from her poetry, which enrich our sense of her voice, always witty, striving, and purposeful. Davis details Charlotte's deep conviction that her public self was the one that counted most, and she reminds us that Charlotte preferred the term "living" to "life": "Whenever Charlotte experienced this feeling of participating in human history and human progress, she felt that she was truly living" (p. xv).

Yet Davis also reveals how much Gilman's private conflicts shaped her public work. Charlotte's father deserted her mother when Charlotte was young, and her mother barely managed to support the family, working sporadically as a schoolteacher and moving often. Charlotte's belief in the necessity of preparing women to be wage-earners thus had its roots in her own family's struggle to survive. Still, she took pride in her family tree: her great-grandfa-

ther, Lyman Beecher, and her great-uncle, Henry Ward Beecher, were acclaimed ministers, and her great-aunts were also prominent — Harriet Beecher Stowe was famous as the author of the hugely popular anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), Catherine Beecher was an outspoken advocate for women's education, and Isabella Beecher Hooker was a leader in the woman's suffrage movement.

Charlotte identified with the reformers in her bloodline and saw her work as a writer and speaker as a secular form of ministering to those in need. Her fondness for abstract thinking and discomfort with practical alliances, however, made her a better social philosopher than nuts-and-bolts activist. When she visited Chicago in 1895, she was pleased to have an invitation for an extended stay at Jane Addams's storied Hull House, a vi-

brant residence and community center that served hot lunches and provided child care, job training, and cultural events for the city's poor. But she cut her visit short. The mix of ethnicities and classes at Hull House, along with the focus on practical needs and individual problems, did not suit her (Davis, pp. 181–187).

Davis interweaves details of Gilman's personal joys and struggles with a careful accounting of her intellectual achievements. In one especially fascinating section, she traces the roots of some of the ideas featured in *Women and Economics*, Charlotte's biggest success in her lifetime, along with the intensification of her relationship with the man who became her second husband, Houghton Gilman. Charlotte's happy marriage to Houghton, her second cousin, gave her some much-needed stability and emotional suste-

nance, even as she continued to travel and work independently.

True to form, Gilman even turned the end of her own life into an instructive event. Suffering from advanced breast cancer, she committed suicide and left behind a note that read, in part, “The time is approaching when we shall consider it abhorrent to our civilization to allow a human being to die in prolonged agony which we should mercifully end in any other creature. Believing this open choice to be of social service in promoting wiser views on this question, I have preferred chloroform to cancer” (quoted in Davis, p. 397). As Davis observes, “With her dying words, Charlotte succinctly summarized her philosophy and strove to make her death a beginning rather than an ending” (p. 397). Davis also notes that “euthanasia proved one of the few issues Charlotte supported in her final years that positioned her on the cutting edge” (p. 399).

For readers new to Gilman, *Wild Unrest*, Horowitz’s relatively slender book, may be the best place to begin. Even with a subject less grand than Gilman, the drama of a young woman falling in love and deciding whether to marry is fairly irresistible. In lively, accessible prose, Horowitz documents Charlotte’s adolescent dreams and her powerful attraction to Walter Stetson, the artist she married in 1884 after a tempestuous courtship in which she repeatedly worried that her life’s goals could not be achieved unless she stayed unmarried.

Horowitz then follows Charlotte’s descent into severe depression as she found herself immediately trapped in demanding roles as wife and mother (she was pregnant within months of the wedding)

that restricted her from pursuing her own ambitions. Horowitz adds new insight into our vision of this defining moment for her, drawing on Stetson’s correspondence to fill in critical details and to give us a sense of the vast divide that separated Charlotte’s point of view from that of her husband’s. Horowitz presents us with a young woman who proved unable to reconcile her sexual desire for Stetson with her reservations about the union; she was ambivalent long before the wedding ever took place. At the same time, Horowitz’s focus on the young Charlotte as a reader and thinker finding her way — and stumbling at times — gives us a fine narrative of the development of an extraordinary intellect in conditions of relative privation.

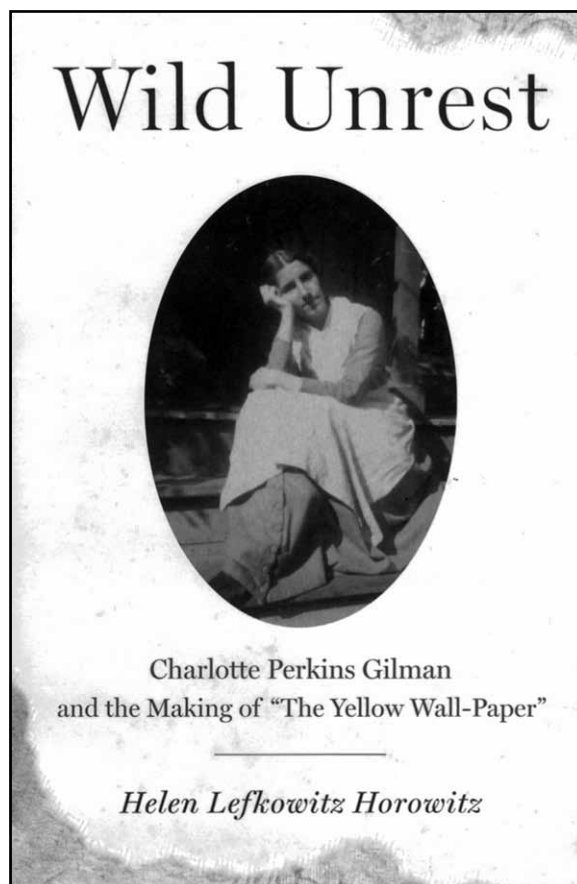
Both Davis and Horowitz honor Gilman’s intellectual legacy while also revealing the fraught emotional legacy of a woman who believed it was her

calling to change the world. They illustrate not only her passion, sheer grit, and powerful will, but also the anguish, confusion, guilt, and self-doubt that dogged her.

In contrast, in *The Feminism of Charlotte Perkins Gilman*, Allen concentrates more on Gilman’s public role. This fine book provides an illuminating overview of Progressive-Era intellectual work and goes a long way toward clarifying Gilman’s sometimes-foggy place among Progressive reformers. As the book’s title suggests, Allen is especially interested in explaining the nature and meaning of Charlotte’s feminism. To that end, Allen demonstrates her significant involvement in the suffragist movement — which has often been overlooked — and tracks her enormous influence on the women’s movement in the United States and around the world.

Allen’s comprehensive overview of Gilman’s thought takes her seriously as a sociologist, instead of focusing on her primarily as a literary figure. Since Gilman rejected any purely aesthetic vision of literary work and was deeply engaged with social theorists throughout her life, Allen’s approach is more than justified. Her careful review of scholarship that castigates Gilman for her racist views is useful, if somewhat unnecessarily defensive.

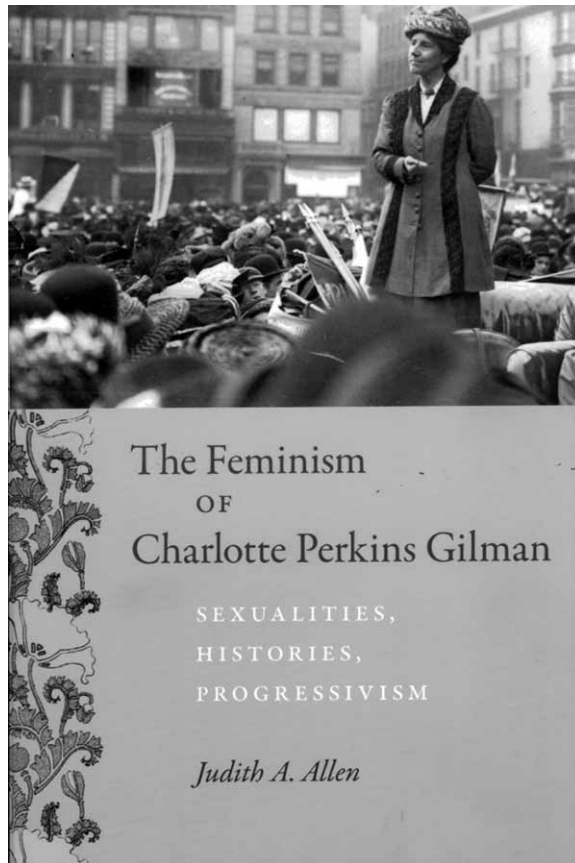
As should already be apparent, these three books complement each other nicely. Horowitz and Allen both argue, for instance, that it is a mistake to read “The Yellow Wallpaper” as a straightforward indictment of the methods of “rest cure” doctor Silas Weir Mitchell, who treated Charlotte for postpartum depression. Both cite evidence suggesting that Stetson, Charlotte’s first husband, contributed to her suf-



fering far more than Mitchell himself did. Together, these books — along with the recently published *The Selected Letters of Charlotte Perkins Gilman*, ed. Denise D. Knight and Jennifer S. Tuttle (University of Alabama Press, 2009) — set the course for future scholarship on Gilman's life and works.

I did wonder why the potential insights of queer-theory scholars go so resolutely unacknowledged by all three books. Although Charlotte's first husband proved to be a disastrous match, by all accounts she found joy and support in her second marriage. However, abundant evidence also suggests that she had significant relationships with women as well. These books discuss her passionate attachments to specific women, while carefully avoiding the term "lesbian" or even "bisexual," which are even absent from all three of their indexes. I respect this resistance to labeling her, given the complex nature of her sexual identity. But given her powerful theoretical arguments about the oppressiveness of heterosexuality, the possibility that she was sexually attracted to women seems theoretically relevant, at the very least.

Horowitz's thoughtful discussion of Charlotte's coming of age concludes that she had limited knowledge of sexuality and that she "did not understand or chose not to see her strong homoerotic feeling" for her first great love, Martha Luther (Horowitz, p. 15). In a discussion of Charlotte's intense relationship with San Francisco newspaper reporter Adeline Knapp, Davis writes that homosexual relationships were common in the group with which Charlotte associated. Still, "[l]ong after the relationship ended, Charlotte feared that her letters to Delle would



resurface (they have not) and prompt newspapers to broadcast 'Mrs. Stetson's Love Affair with a Woman'" (Davis, p. 135). Davis also notes that until Charlotte began to cultivate a serious relationship with Houghton Gilman, her "most unambivalently passionate and enduring relationships" had been with women (p. 135).

Allen admits that some scholars have argued that Gilman indicted heterosexual unions so powerfully that she is best understood as an advocate of lesbianism (p. 73). But then Allen ducks the issue: "The unevenly suggestive but inconclusive evidence here," she writes, "warrants continued debate" (Allen, p. 73). I agree. But I expected these authors to wade at least a little further into that debate themselves.

Notes

1. Susan S. Lanser, "Feminist Criticism, 'The Yellow Wallpaper,' and the

Politics of Color in America," *Feminist Studies*, v. 15, no. 3 (Fall 1989), pp. 415–441.

2. Important biographical treatments of Gilman are Mary A. Hill's useful 1980 biography, which covers only half of Gilman's life, Gary Scharnhorst's literary biography, published in 1985, and Ann J. Lane's thematic study, published in 1990. See Hill, *Charlotte Perkins Gilman: The Making of a Radical Feminist, 1860–1896* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980); Scharnhorst, *Charlotte Perkins Gilman* (Boston: Twayne, 1985); and Lane, *To Herland and Beyond: The Life and Work of Charlotte Perkins Gilman* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1990). For an instructive essay collection reflecting evolving perspectives on Gilman, see Catherine J. Golden and Joanna Schneider Zangrando, eds., *The Mixed Legacy of Charlotte Perkins Gilman* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2000).

[Jean M. Lutes is an associate professor of English and co-director of the gender and women's studies program at Villanova University, where she teaches modern American fiction. She is the author of *Front-Page Girls: Women Journalists in American Literature and Culture, 1880–1930* (Cornell University Press, 2006). Her current book project examines emotion, mass culture, and women's narratives in early twentieth-century America. Her two most recent essays are "Tears on Trial in the 1920s: Female Emotion and Style in Chicago and Machinal," forthcoming in *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, and "The Queer Newspaperwoman in Edith Eaton's 'The Success of a Mistake,'" forthcoming in *Legacy: Journal of American Women Writers*.]

DELICIOUS REVOLUTION: WOMEN, FARMING, AND FOOD

by Dianna Hunter

Novella Carpenter, *FARM CITY: THE EDUCATION OF AN URBAN FARMER*. New York: Penguin Group, 2009. 276p. \$16.00, ISBN 978-0143117285.

Temra Costa, *FARMER JANE: WOMEN CHANGING THE WAY WE EAT*. Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith, 2010. 224p. \$15.99, ISBN 978-1423605621.

Catherine Friend, *SHEEPISH: TWO WOMEN, FIFTY SHEEP & ENOUGH WOOL TO SAVE THE PLANET*. Philadelphia: Da Capo, 2011. 263p. \$16.00, ISBN 978-0306818448.

Mary Zeis Stange, *HARD GRASS: LIFE ON THE CRAZY WOMAN BISON RANCH*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010. 320p. \$27.95, ISBN 978-0826346131.

Spring Warren, *THE QUARTER ACRE FARM: HOW I KEPT THE PATIO, LOST THE LAWN, AND FED MY FAMILY FOR A YEAR*. Illus. by Nemo. Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2011. 335p. \$17.95, ISBN 978-580053402.

With women providing vision, labor, and leadership, the sustainable food and farming movements support a variety of projects, large and small, aimed at the root-to-seed transformation of our agriculture, our cuisine, and our food distribution systems.

In a study of women farmers in Pennsylvania, Amy Trauger characterized sustainable agriculture as “a complex suite of social, environmental, and economic goals and practices” that “defies simple definition” but usually includes labor-intensive work, social justice concerns, and opposition to mechanization and chemical use.¹ Five recent nonfiction books highlight women’s work in sustainable agriculture and in the related movements for local, chemical-free, and nutritious foods. Temra Costa, the author of one of these works, calls the intertwined farming and food movements in the United States “the delicious revolution.”²

A small trove of feminist literature has taught us about women’s work in sustainable food and farming projects worldwide, and we still have much to learn.³ All five of the works reviewed

here, meanwhile, focus on women at the center of a diverse and vibrant movement in the U.S. They also share cautionary notes on an American farming dream that, in practice, has resulted in the exploitation of nature, farmers, workers, and eaters.

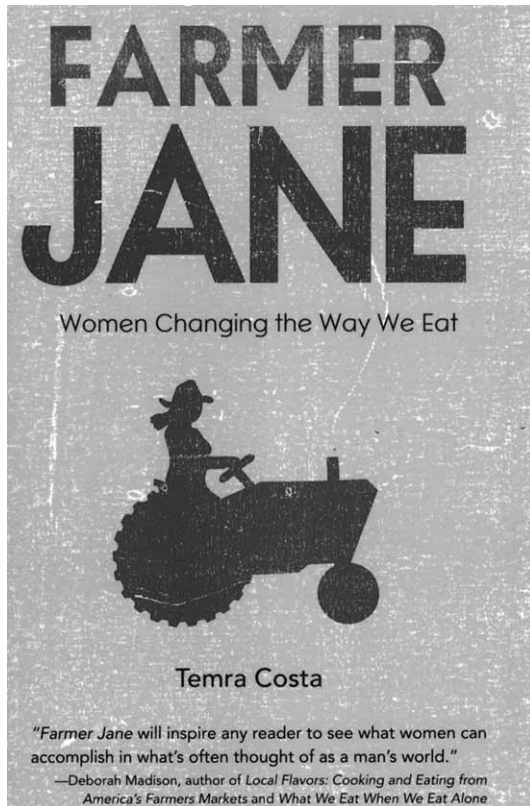
Lois Ellen Frank, one of the women profiled in Temra Costa’s book *Farmer Jane*, points out that long before European settlers introduced the concept of land ownership, indigenous people sustainably planted, gathered, hunted, and cooked delicious and nutritious foods here.⁴ Since then, women have actively participated in farming — for good or bad — as enslaved or underpaid field workers, as partners to male husbands, and sometimes as owner-operators. The Homestead Act of 1862 and related laws discriminated against married women, according to sociologist H. Elaine Lindgren, but widows, abandoned wives, and single women could, and did, claim land in their own names.⁵ And now, according to Trauger, the numbers of woman-owned and organic farms are increasing faster than traditional farms,⁶ and women in western culture are three

times as likely to farm in sustainable ways as they are with traditional, industrial agriculture practices.⁷ Women farmers, Costa tells us, “are tending toward diversified, direct-marketed foods that create relationships with eaters.”⁸

Carolyn Sachs dates the American sustainable agriculture movement to the late 1970s.⁹ In the 1980s, I recall, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Census of Agriculture found that women owned and operated about five percent of farms. Farm journals reporting on this statistic typically included a USDA-supplied narrative explaining that most of these women were widows who inherited farms from their husbands. At the time, I owned and operated a thirty-five-cow dairy farm in northern Minnesota. As a partnered lesbian and then a single woman, I violated the social script that specified a farmer as a heterosexual man with a helpmate wife.

Temra Costa’s *Farmer Jane: Women Changing the Way We Eat* profiles women farmers, restaurateurs, and social change activists who have been busy rewriting a number of social

scripts. Elizabeth Henderson, for instance, tells Costa that she started speaking publicly twenty-some years ago, because she felt “tired of the fact that Fred Kirschenmann, Wendell Berry, and Wes Jackson were the only spokespeople for sustainable agriculture since at least half of the work was, and is, being done by women” (p. 27). Henderson operates a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), a farm operation in which members pay farmers up front for a share of the season’s crops (In her CSA, members volunteer labor, too).

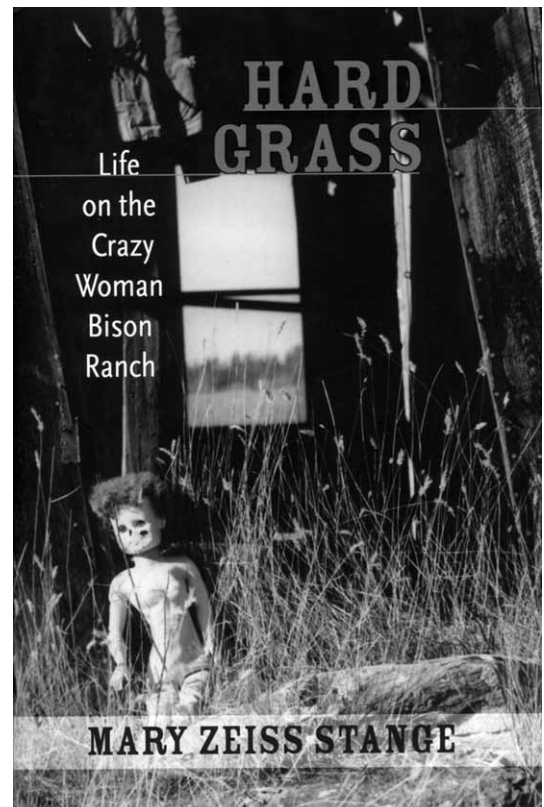


On the cautionary side, the USDA reports that “most women-owned farms are small, diversified, and financially at-risk. . . . Nearly 80 percent report annual sales under \$25,000.”¹⁰ With average net farm income projected at \$80,600 for 2011 (and seventeen percent lower for 2012),¹¹ the gendered dynamics of farm economics seem worth exploring further, but — with the exceptions of *Hard Grass* and *Farmer Jane* — the books under review here include little or no explicit gender analysis.

As one who came of age during the women’s liberation movement, I miss the thinking about gender and power that put “meat” into earlier women’s farm writing, like Joyce Cheney’s 1985 *Lesbian Land*.¹² When, in the course of writing this essay, I looked to the research for help in thinking through what I thought was missing, I learned that Trauger

found, through interviews with women farmers in Pennsylvania, that farmers’ markets, sustainable agriculture meetings, and related activities provided places where women could earn income, meet one another, share ideas, develop markets, and find support.¹³ Similarly, Laura DeLind and Anne Ferguson found that a Michigan CSA provided supportive community for women farmers, even though “no one spoke of the CSA as a vehicle for raising consciousness of gender relations or subordination.”¹⁴

The five books under review here illustrate with concrete details how women become empowered within the sustainability movement. Some of the writers also theorize explicitly about dominance, subordination, and social justice. In *Farmer Jane*, we meet Ericka Allen, who founded the gardening project Growing Power Chicago (p. 165). Costa quotes Allen on how racism and sexism disadvantage participants as they work with city government and nonprofit organizations alike:



Just our confidence and ability to challenge things becomes a barrier. People (meaning white folks) aren’t used to that; they’re used to being the experts

and being in the place of expertise rather than getting information from a person of color, especially a woman. (pp. 168–169)

Women direct and work in a number of neighborhood-based food and farming projects aimed at addressing the problem of food distribution, or the lack of it, in “food deserts” and “junk food islands,”—neighborhoods without grocery stores where the only places to buy “food” (if it can be called that) are gas stations and liquor stores.

Participants in Growing Power Chicago teach and learn gardening skills and the benefits of fresh food, along with food politics and strategizing for change (*Farmer Jane*, pp. 168–171). Similar projects are happening in many places. From an episode of Krista Tippett’s *On Being* public radio program, I learned about the Gardening Angels of Detroit, older women who grew up on farms and are now teaching neighbors to grow and gather fresh food on abandoned lots.¹⁵ And Natasha Bowens’s blog, *Brown.Girl.Farming*, provides writing, photography, and film that combine gender, race, and class analysis with ideas for community building and education through farming and food.¹⁶

Mary Zeiss Stange’s breathtakingly deep, beautifully crafted memoir, *Hard Grass: Life on the Crazy Woman Bison Ranch*, includes a chapter titled “Being ‘Differnt’” (sic) (pp. 39–58). The whole book serves as an extended examination of what it means to be “differnt” in the white, male-dominated ranching country of southeastern Montana. Stange takes into account the indigenous and natural histories of the place and tries to come to grips, as a white, academic feminist, with understanding indigenous viewpoints in the context of an ethos of sustainability:

In the Blue Earth Hills, questions of the local, of home, of ownership or stewardship, of how we orient ourselves to our world, of how we adjudicate the competing claims of those various individuals and groups, Native and Anglo, who . . . severally

experience this land in terms of their “chosen way of life” . . . all of these questions need to be asked in light of the wisdom of the Cheyenne saying, “We are just moving through, don’t tarry long,” as well as of the Biblical intimation that all flesh is grass. (p. 149)

A sense of making the most of an ephemeral intersection of time and space also pervades Novella Carpenter’s witty and gripping memoir, *Farm City: The Education of an Urban Farmer*. Carpenter paints a picture of North Oakland in transition, with higher-end condos, restaurants, and

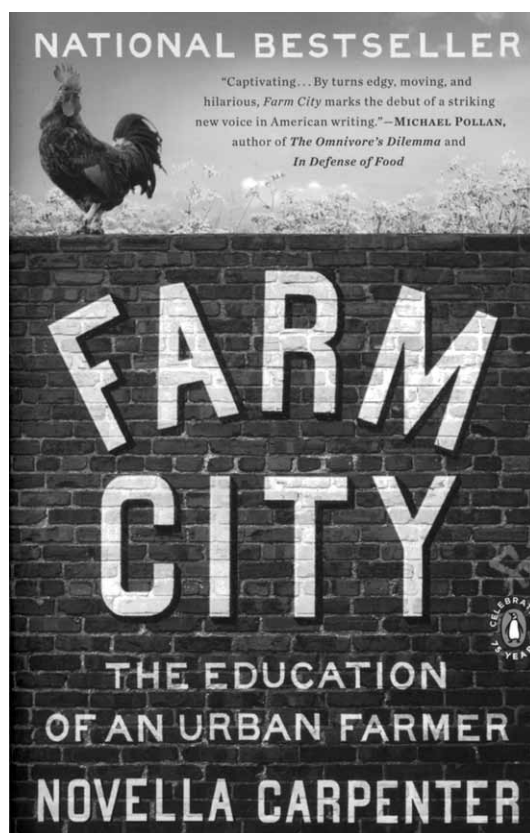
coffee shops encroaching on the abandoned lots, derelict cars, and racially mixed residents of the neighborhood she calls Ghost-Town. As she diversifies her farm from vegetables to bees, poultry, rabbits, and then pigs (which she feeds from the dumpsters of toney restaurants) she makes clear that her abandoned-lot farming fits within a history of squatting on land that goes back to the European settlement of America (p. 20).

Stange, in *Hard Grass*, characterizes the current interest in farming as an old, familiar one:

The idea of homesteading and the myth of self-sufficiency that goes along with it are trendy again, as even the most casual Google search bears out. Various construed as an exercise in personal independence, as spiritual practice, and/or as crisis preparedness, this deeply American assertion

of back-to-the-land self-reliance exerts as powerful an influence on the American imagination now as it did a hundred and more years ago. (p. 276)

Stange takes readers to the ruins of three Woodrow Wilson-era, abandoned homesteads, all situated within the bison ranch that she and her husband, Doug, operate. These remnants illustrate the crash that occurred after a two-decades-long farming boom that Mary Neth describes as the “Golden Age of Agriculture,” in stark contrast to the non-golden busts of the 1890s and 1920s.¹⁷



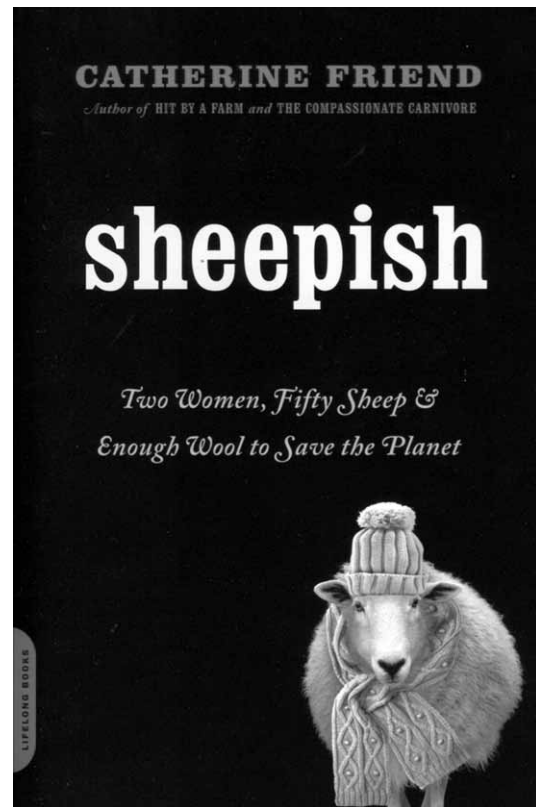
Some of us cannot forget the farm bust of the 1980s. Here's a standpoint confession: More than half the farmers selling milk to my creamery substation in Duluth, Minnesota, lost their farms that decade, including me.¹⁸ In the name of free-market economics, Ronald Reagan cut farm program payments and precipitated a financial crisis that brought down farms, rural businesses, and banks. Taxpayers bailed out the Farm Credit System while farm protests sprang up across the country.¹⁹ Eden, as Stange points out, "does not come cheap" (p. 278). Neither do our falls from grace.

Stange's farming dream begins in 1989, when she and her husband, Doug, buy their ranch. The sellers can no longer make their payments, due to "a free fall in cattle prices" and overgrazed pastures (p. 29). The Stanges plan to do better by managing the land more sustainably, nurturing its interconnected systems of grass and grazing animals. They rotate pastures to give the grass a chance to grow back, and they switch from cattle to less destructive bison. In the early 1990s, bison prices soar, and investment firms like Goldman Sachs and Merrill Lynch are listed, along with billionaire Ted Turner, as members of the National Bison Association (p. 176).

Surprise! Surprise! Bison prices slide in 1999. When they don't recover, the Stanges switch from marketing breeding stock to organizing for-pay, bison hunting parties to raise income and thin their herd. As Stange tells us in "The First and Last Annual Buffalo Gals Hunt," the hunting parties become a messy and exhausting business of hosting, shepherding, and coaching clients, and grieving losses when bullets go astray (pp. 201–225).

In *Farm City*, Novella Carpenter periodically checks and rechecks her inner-city farm life against her parents' experience of homesteading in rural Idaho and Washington state:

Along with most of the other back-to-the-landers, my mom had realized that the remaking of our entire American society might not be possible in her lifetime. That spinning wool or churning butter might be fun for a while, but eventually the conveniences of modern life — grocery stores, clothes driers — seemed pretty wonderful. The possibilities for mockery, in hindsight, are endless. The back-to-the-land movement's failure, as inevitable as the collapse of every other utopia, became a buffet of *schadenfreude* at which even I had occasionally feasted. But now that I was farming, I knew it was hard work and that plans never went the way you thought they would. (p. 116)



Although a primary goal of the movement — transforming the farm system — may or may not be reached, each of these memoirists struggles to achieve more modest, individualized goals: maintaining a home, a set of relationships, a food supply, a herd, a flock, an orchard, and/or some acreage.

Perhaps the most similar of the memoirs are *Sheepish: Two Women, Fifty Sheep, and Enough Wool to Save the Planet*, by Catherine Friend, and *The Quarter Acre Farm: How I Kept the Patio, Lost the Lawn, and Fed My Family for a Year*, by Spring Warren. Witty and quick reads, both books include helpful resources (recipes and gardening tips in Warren and knitting patterns in Friend). They offer readers insider knowledge, from organic ways to kill plant pests to the mysterious qualities of wool.

In *Sheepish*, Friend describes her earlier two memoirs, *Hit by a Farm* and *The Compassionate Carnivore*, as "a mix of memoir, nonfiction, and self-help" (p. 102). The same can be said of *Sheepish*. Friend textures amusing truths against more serious ones. While the reader chuckles, a thread of sobering concerns appears in the weft (or is it warp?) and takes us deeper. An MRI shows that Friend's life partner has disc problems in her neck:

The farm suddenly feels very large to both of us. The steers are at their market weight, so Melissa takes them to the processor. We're sad to see them go but excited about getting more calves in the spring after Melissa has recovered. That I must feed and care for seventeen sheep and three llamas feels complex. What if an animal gets sick? Treating a sick animal isn't one of my skills and having a vet come out will be expensive. (p. 225)

As the two consider reducing the size of their flock, Friend quips, "I can reveal my underwear size to thousands of readers. . . . I can tell a room full of total strangers that I'm gay. But to admit we only have seven sheep? That information is *much* too personal" (p. 227). The couple's marriage, in San Francisco City Hall, provides one of the book's triumphant moments, until Proposition 8 puts them in what Friend calls "the twilight zone" (pp. 106–109).

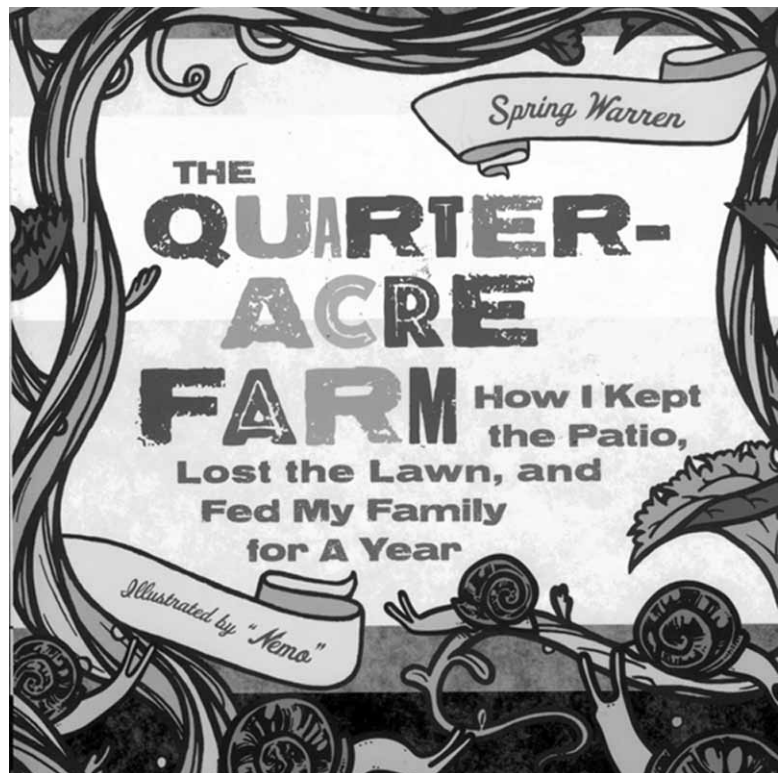
Spring Warren's story in *The Quarter-Acre Farm* starts on a road trip, when she hears news of food-borne illnesses on the radio (pp. 10–11). As she passes feedlots where cattle stand shoulder-to-shoulder, she's reminded of reports about industrialized livestock practices (pp. 11–12). She pledges to produce seventy-five per cent of her own food, admitting that she's not a likely farmer. Until now, she's made her garden "a testing ground for plants able to withstand abuse" (p. 13).

"The Trouble with Tomatoes" (chapter beginning on p. 55) turns out to be nematodes, and Warren is forced to trade the "green H for Heirloom" on her breast to a "scarlet H for Hybrid." A nematode-resistant tomato variety provides a solution, although one not quite as green as Warren had hoped. Gardeners can save their own seeds if they grow heirloom varieties, while hybrids do not reliably reproduce the traits of the parent plants.

Taken together, these five books teach a great deal about gardening, cooking, and farming — and also about history, politics, and relationships. They provide a variety of windows into women's lives, work, and empowerment in the sustainable food and farming movements. A sense of gendered experience, situated within particular communities, comes through via situations, settings, and characters, even if not often through explicit theory. Readers learn through concrete details that transformation, both systemic and personal, comes with risk as well as with delicious possibility.

Notes

1. Amy Trauger, "'Because They Can Do the Work': Women Farmers in Sustainable Agriculture in Pennsylvania, USA," *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, v. 11, no. 2 (2004), p. 292.
2. Temra Costa, *Farmer Jane: Women Changing the Way We Eat* (Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith, 2010), p. 6.
3. See, for instance, Leonie Caldecott & Stephanie Leland, eds., *Reclaim the Earth: Women Speak Out for Life on Earth* (London: Women's Press, 1983); Wangari Maathai, *The Green Belt Movement: Sharing the Approach and the Experi-*



ence (New York: Lantern Books, 2003); Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Women Healing Earth: Third World Women on Ecology, Feminism, and Religion* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996); Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Survival in India* (New Delhi: Kali Press, 1988); Vandana Shiva, *Close to Home: Women Reconnect Ecology, Health and Development* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1994); and the online *Ecofeminism: An Introductory Bibliography* on the website of the UW Women's Studies Librarian's Office: <http://womenst.library.wisc.edu/bibliogs/ecofem.html>.

4. Costa, p. 122.
 5. H. Elaine Lindgren, *Land in Her Own Name: Women as Homesteaders in North Dakota* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996) p. 61.
 6. Trauger, p. 291.
 7. Trauger, p. 289.
 8. Costa, p. 9.
 9. Carolyn Sachs, "Reconsidering Diversity in Agriculture and Food Systems: An Ecofeminist Approach," *Agriculture and Human Values*, v.9, no.3 (1992), p. 9.
 10. United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture, "Women in Agriculture," http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/economics/in_focus/small_business_if_women.html (accessed August 23, 2012).
 11. USDA Economic Research Service, "Farm Income and Costs: Farm Business Income," <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FarmIncome/BusinessIncome.htm> (accessed August 23, 2012).
 12. Joyce Cheney, *Lesbian Land* (Minneapolis, MN: Word Weavers, 1985).
 13. Trauger, p. 301.
 14. Laura B. DeLind & Anne E. Ferguson, "Is This a Women's Movement? The Relationship of Gender to Community-Supported Agriculture in Michigan," *Human Organization*, v. 8, no. 2 (Summer 1999), pp. 190–200.
 15. For more on the Detroit sustainability movements, including the Gardening Angels; We Want Green, Too; Feed 'em Freedom; and philosophical notes from civil rights leader Grace Lee Boggs, see Krista Tippetts's archived *On Being* radio program, "Becoming Detroit: Reimagining Work, Food, and the Very Meaning of Humanity," January 19, 2012 (<http://www.onbeing.org/programs/2012>).
 16. Natasha Bowen, *Brown Girl Farming*, <http://brown-girlfarming.com/2011/04/29/a-womans-hands/>.
 17. Mary Neth, *Preserving the Family Farm: Women, Community, and the Foundations of Agribusiness in the Midwest, 1900–1940* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995). Quoted in Barbara Handy-Marchello, *Women of the Northern Plains: Gender & Settlement on the Homestead Frontier, 1870–1930* (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005), p. 5.
 18. For more on the farm crisis, as interpreted by Minnesota farmers and lawyers who assisted them in an advocacy program aimed at keeping them on the land, see my book *Breaking Hard Ground: Stories of the Minnesota Farm Advocates* (Duluth, MN: Holy Cow! Press, 1990).
 19. *Breaking Hard Ground*, p. xv.
- [Dianna Hunter gardens and lives in Duluth, Minnesota. She recently retired from teaching writing and women's and gender studies at the University of Wisconsin–Superior.]

FEMINIST VISIONS

GIRL REFRACTED: THE UNGLAMOROUS LIFE OF A SIBERIAN GIRL MODEL

by Beth Huang, Michelle Preston, Heather Shimon, & Kelsey Wallner

GIRL MODEL. 78 mins. Directed by David Redmon & Ashley Sabin, 2011. In Russian, Japanese, & English, with English subtitles. Distributed by First Run Features, The Film Center Building, 630 Ninth Avenue, Suite 1213, New York, NY 10036; phone: (212) 243-0600; fax: (212) 989-7649; website: <http://firstrunfeatures.com>. [DVD not yet released for purchase or rental in 2012; film still playing in festivals and theaters.]

The student staff (Beth, Michelle, and Kelsey) of the Women's Studies Librarian's Office and I, their supervisor (Heather), once again are delighted to collaboratively review a woman-focused movie from our wonderful Wisconsin Film Festival. This year, we picked a documentary called *Girl Model*, which tells the story of thirteen-year-old Nadya Vall in Siberia, who wins a modeling contract to work for an agency in Japan. The contract represents a chance for Nadya to pull her family out of poverty while enjoying a glamorous career, but her excitement instantly turns to despair upon arriving in Tokyo and finding herself alone in a big city and unfamiliar Japanese culture. It is here that the agency's motives come into question. Even though Nadya is unable to book any jobs, the agency encourages her to remain in Tokyo and continue to circulate in a market that does not want her. Ashley Arbaugh, the modeling scout who discovers Nadya, provides context about the Japanese modeling market and its history of importing Caucasian girls. Ashley, an American who modeled in Japan herself as a teenager, does not hide her disillusionment with the industry; but the ambivalence with which she voices observations about the business's atrocities, such as its demand for girls thirteen years old or younger as well as its connection to prostitution, is astonishing. We discuss our bewilderment with Ashley's many contradictions, as well as the issues of human commodification, child labor, and loneliness that appear in this compelling and enlightening film.

Heather: What are your general impressions of the movie?

Kelsey: I like how it exposes the corruption in the modeling industry instead of showing the glamour we usually see in television shows like *America's Next Top Model*.

Beth: I remember being almost nauseated by the number of moving images reflected in the mirrors in the beginning

scene, and again when Ashley was traveling on the train and there was a little bit of sun that is shining brightly on one spot of her face. There were certain parts of the movie that were nauseating. I think the general effect that the film is trying to accomplish is that this industry seems beautiful — these women in the mirrors are beautiful — but that the impression of all of it together is nauseating.

Kelsey: And they're not even women. Some of the girls are only twelve years old.

Michelle: In the first scene, I was struck by how the industry dehumanized the girls. They were herded like animals, and the way the modeling scouts evaluated the girls' physical appearances and discussed their flaws right in front of them reminded me of livestock judging.

Heather: Yes. The girls are commodified.

Beth: It's like indentured servitude. The girls are sent to a new place and told to earn their way into success, just as people were sent to the Americas and then had to earn their way back into some kind of financial solvency.

Michelle: It seems to me that a lot of the girls do not want to be models, but their parents push them into modeling to make money.

Heather: Nadya's family definitely struggles with poverty. How do you feel about Nadya's arrival in Japan and how different Japan is from her home?

Michelle: I feel horrible for her because she can't speak Japanese or English, and no one there speaks Russian. There is no way that she could have navigated that airport if the film crew hadn't been there to help her.

Beth: I was overwhelmed by that scene.

Heather: I am astonished that no one from the modeling agency is there to meet her. She doesn't know the language and has no idea where to go. It's heartbreaking. What do you think about her apartment in Japan?

Beth: Not so glamorous.

Heather: Is that surprising to you?

Michelle: It is a direct contrast to *America's Next Top Model*, where the contestants live in a mansion and are pampered. Nadya's hotel room is run-down and smaller than a dorm room.

Kelsey: There is such a lack of human connection between the agency and its models — like when Ashley visits Nadya. Ashley doesn't speak Russian, and doesn't attempt to reach out to Nadya, even though Nadya is obviously upset about her situation.

Heather: Ashley offers Nadya no help and ignores her distress. And why doesn't Ashley speak Russian? She works in Russia and interacts with Russian girls all the time. What do you think of Ashley?

Michelle: She confuses me, because she obviously hates the business. She's an ex-model who absolutely hated modeling. You can tell she doesn't like how the girls are treated, but at the same time, she keeps working in the industry. She's hard to figure out.

Kelsey: I have little sympathy for her, because she blatantly lies to the girls and their families. It is so disturbing.

Beth: She knows on at least some level that there is major exploitation in the business. And she has a history of being exploited by the industry, so I cannot understand how she is able to delude herself into deluding other people.

Michelle: I am surprised by her desire to be a mother. The way that she acts with these girls — she has no mother-like qualities. She doesn't comfort them or try to help them.

Kelsey: I am confused by what she says about the girls entering into prostitution if they can't find modeling jobs.

Heather: She says matter-of-factly that the girls learn to make money from exploiting their bodies, so prostitution makes sense to them.

Kelsey: But then she says that she does not participate in that part of the industry.

Beth: I am shocked that Ashley said it's normal to be a prostitute. But she does this a lot where she exposes corruption and reveals terrible, glaring parts of the modeling industry, and then draws back from it and says that she's not feeding into the system — that she's just doing her job.

Kelsey: But she's the first step for the girls to get into the industry.

Beth: Yes. She feeds into a system of exploitation that she knows exists, and then distances herself from it with a long rant about how terrible the system is. It's weird and it's confusing.

Heather: She seems to want to expose it, but she can't because she's part of it. This movie isn't just about the industry; it's also about her and her role in it. Also, the movie made me think about child labor and the modeling industry. I never thought about that before. Nadya is just thirteen years old. She's being pulled out of school to model.

Beth: One of the main takeaways from the movie is an overall sense of overwhelming loneliness from seeing Nadya thrust into an adult world without being prepared for it.

Michelle: I am shocked by how the industry takes advantage of these girls. The agencies make the girls sign unfair contracts that are in English or Japanese, which many of the girls and their families do not understand, and then the girls have no idea what the agencies do with their photos. I never thought about that, because even though I'm sure it happens in the United States too, you don't hear about it.

Heather: Is there anything that the movie is missing or leaves you confused about?

Beth: The chain of command is confusing. Who works for whom, who gets what from what business, is all really confusing.

Heather: I wonder if the filmmakers do that on purpose, because you are supposed to feel as confused as the models.

Michelle: I wish I would have seen more of what Ashley is like away from her job. She is a very confusing character to me. I don't understand how her mind works. We get a little glimpse into her personal life when she shows us her house.

I'm curious how she can afford such a large house when she says she only makes enough money to cover her expenses.

Kelsey: Her house is a good metaphor for her life because it is so empty. She doesn't have anything on the walls. It looks like she just moved in. She has no connection to her house, and no connections to other people.

Michelle: I wrote in my notes that modeling equals no home. The modeling industry moves the girls from country to country, and no one is there to comfort them or to help them along the way. There isn't much emphasis on making friends or cultivating lasting personal relationships with others.

Heather: Do you think this movie is appropriate for women's studies classes?

Beth: Yes. There are many layers of representations of women. By telling both Nadya's and Ashley's stories, it's not just the story of a thirteen-year-old girl shipped off to Japan, but also the story of an adult woman navigating a post-modeling career in the industry.

Heather: The ending of the movie changes the beginning of the movie. The beginning is a contest, and then you later discover that Nadya really did not win anything at all. That to me was very moving. It's a complex and well-realized film.

[Beth Huang, a former student assistant in our office, is an undergraduate studying biochemistry and history at UW–Madison. Michelle Preston, current student assistant, is studying business with an emphasis on health care management. Heather Shimon, our office operations associate, is also a graduate student in the UW–Madison's School of Library Studies. Kelsey Wallner, current student assistant, is studying gender and women's studies and Spanish.]

***Girl Model* touches on issues of prostitution and child labor in the modeling industry. The following resources offer more information on these topics, as well as background of the film:**

<http://www.austindaze.com/2012/03/23/sxsw-interview-girl-model-filmmakers-share-a-shocking-secret-about-the-making-of-their-film>

An interview with the filmmakers for the local paper, *The Austin Daze*, in which they reveal that a threat on their lives kept them from further investigating a connection between the modeling agencies in the film and prostitution.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aA1U5QsIStM>

A question and answer session after a screening of the movie at the IFC Center's "Stranger Than Fiction" 2012 winter film series in New York City, with filmmakers Ashley Sabin and David Redmon, Rachel Blais, a Russian model who briefly appears in the movie and has modeled in Japan for many years, and The Model Alliance founder Sara Ziff and staff member Jenna Sauers.

<http://modelalliance.org>

The Model Alliance is a not-for-profit organization working to "give models in the U.S. a voice in their workplace and organize to improve their basic working conditions in what is now an almost entirely unregulated industry."

PROFESSIONAL READING

GENDER AND ONLINE GAMING

Jenny Sundén & Malin Sveningsson, *GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN ONLINE GAME CULTURES: PASSIONATE PLAY*. New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2012. 246p. bibl. index. \$125.00, ISBN 978-0415897662.

Reviewed by Dorothea Salo

World of Warcraft, a “massively multiplayer online role-playing game” (MMORPG), regularly makes headlines in technology media because of sexism, homophobia, and other incidents of hate perpetrated by its predominantly white, male, heterosexual, and youthful playerbase. Were that not enough, women who brave the atmosphere to play MMORPGs chronicle (on blogs and in gaming forums) the same tiresome patterns of sexist and homophobic language and humor that can be found throughout high-technology-related professions and hobbies.

In their collaborative first-person ethnography, Jenny Sundén and Malin Sveningsson argue that while these patterns of oppression are real and troubling, MMORPGs also demonstrate patterns of resistance, as well as offering novel channels to both straight and lesbian women for combined cerebral and physical engagement with the games’ fantasy environments and with fellow players of all sexes and sexualities.

Sundén and Sveningsson articulate three major goals for the book: to perform an intersectional analysis of gender and sexuality in gaming, since few analyses specifically of sexuality and almost no intersectional analyses currently exist; to theorize and legitimize the practice of immersive first-

person ethnography — studying the game through *playing* the game — in research into gaming; and to gather and analyze additional data on the lived experience of straight and lesbian female gamers.

Sundén’s work and language contrast engagingly with Sveningsson’s, whose literature reviews are meticulous and detailed, making a wealth of citations and discussion both of gaming research and ethnography theory accessible to the novice in either field. Sveningsson’s data collection likewise is extensive; future researchers into women and gaming would do well to examine the chat logs and incidents she describes.

Sveningsson’s conclusions with respect to women’s gaming experiences, however, are ambivalent, tentatively expressed, and, for the most part, not especially novel. That women are alternately ridiculed, harassed, courted, and placed on uncomfortable pedestals in MMORPGs is not new information, nor does it distinguish MMORPGs from most other technology-mediated environments. Examining research into women’s experiences with other high-technology leisure pursuits, such as open-source software and even Wikipedia editing, would clearly demonstrate that her experience of the social environment of gaming differs little, if at all, from that of women participating in other technology-mediated hobbies.

Sundén, in contrast, reveals considerably more of herself in her chapters, and in so doing illuminates more of her subject. Her lush, evocative descriptions of in-game locales and character designs offer a fascinating background discussion of how a gamer’s

body may respond to the not-obviously corporeal stimuli offered by the game. Game avatars and their owners participate in complex rituals and reactions when romantic or sexual attractions are in play, and those rituals and reactions are all the more compelling when the attraction is lesbian, such that the often-intrusive politics of male-on-female sexism do not intrude.

Sundén’s willingness to expand her analysis beyond her own subject position serves her well when discussing “queer play,” or how non-heterosexual MMORPG players subvert, poke sly fun at, and otherwise reframe the overwhelmingly male-gaze and hetero-oriented MMORPG environment. (In general, Sveningsson shrinks from describing or theorizing experiences not directly hers.) From the sometimes-lonely process of finding a congenial group to play with to the use of wordplay to signal one’s sexuality and push back against the sometimes-oppressive assumptions of the game designers, Sundén paints a lively, engrossing picture of LGBTQ gamers and the work they do to carve out friendly spaces in a potentially hostile milieu.

Readers not intimately familiar with gaming in general or with online gaming in particular would be well-advised to have a glossary at hand (such as *Rei’s Random Guide to MMP Gaming Terms*, <http://www.mit.edu/~rei/game-terms.html>) or a gamer friend to consult while reading this book. There is neither a glossary nor an acronym dictionary, and the authors are woefully inconsistent about defining potentially unfamiliar terms or acronyms (LAN, RL, “aggro,” and similar jargon)

on first mention. Reproduced in-game chats are naturally dense with jargon and emoticons, but on the whole are readable without intervention. That said, those who research the impact of gender and sexuality on other Internet phenomena will find this book useful, timely, and accessible.

Does the publication of this book mean that Sveningsson and Sundén have succeeded in their attempt to legitimize first-person ethnography in feminist/queer analysis of gaming interaction? That will depend on ethnographers, to be sure, but Sundén's writing at least makes a compelling case for the practice. Her frank discussion and analysis of a game-fueled affair she engaged in would be almost impossible to capture in such detail in any other investigative modality, because of natural concerns about human-subjects privacy and confidentiality. Both Sundén and Sveningsson offer valuable guidance on the ethical praxis of immersive ethnography, carefully detailing how they announced and explained their work to their fellow players, navigated their dual identities as gamers and researchers into gaming, and worked out how to distance themselves from their subject positions long enough to produce viable analyses of their gathered data and personal experiences.

The casual reader seeking to understand female and queer experience with MMORPGs might well choose to read the authors' joint introduction and then skip straight to Sundén's beautifully-written chapters. Feminist and queer theorists as well as ethnographers will prefer to read the entire book. Either way, Routledge has published a valuable addition to the growing literature elucidating the experience of often-invisible, often-ignored minorities among the largely homogenous mass of online gamers.

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James Paul Gee & Elisabeth R. Hayes, ***WOMEN AND GAMING: THE SIMS AND 21ST CENTURY LEARNING***. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. 201p. bibl. index. \$37.00, ISBN 978-0230623415.

Reviewed by Linda Shimon

If a good education is the path to human enlightenment, one might well ask what the current state of education is. Authors Gee and Hayes waste few words in their answer: education in our culture is critically wanting. Their book is a detailed explanation of the skills they believe are needed for navigating the social, cultural, and economic conditions of the twenty-first century, and they showcase the experiences of girls and women to demonstrate how these skills can be acquired through playing *The Sims*, a simulation game.

The authors are clearly qualified to assess how the current state of public education inhibits the full cultural participation of women and girls. James Paul Gee, who has an M.A. and a Ph.D. in linguistics, has researched the applications of linguistics to literacy and education; one result of his research was to identify the learning principles present in the design of good video games and apply them to classroom teaching. Elisabeth R. Hayes's research focuses on gender and digital technologies and learning. She was involved as an investigator for two MacArthur-funded projects and was a founding member of the "Games + Learning + Society" research group at the University of Wisconsin–Madison; she is currently a professor at Arizona State University.

Chapter 1 introduces, among other ideas, the notion that schools should prepare students for a culture that requires complex language, thinking, and problem-solving skills. Television is now demanding that the viewer do more than passively watch, as the plots of some shows engage their audiences with many intricate subplots using language that is "complex, technical, and specialist" (p. 5). Gee and Hayes comment that although students never experience this language in school, video games do present critical thinking opportunities. They cite the "modding" of video games, or modifying games by creating new environments — a project that demands complex thinking, technical skill, and problem-solving. This introductory chapter does much to promote the benefits of game play to education, but does little to analyze the gaming practices of women and girls or to describe any differences between the practices of women and girls and those of men and boys. Only the very last words of the chapter refer to gender and gaming, promising that before the book's end, an explanation will emerge of how women and girls are involved in the "big issues about learning in our complex, globalized world" (p.16).

Nor is there much attention to women and girls in Chapters 2, 3, or 6. In fact, Chapter 2 revolves around a boy named Sam, spanning the part of his life from ages seven to fourteen. This chapter explores the interest that educators and policymakers have in video gaming, presents case examples of the relevance of gaming to learning and higher-level thinking skills, and looks at the use of digital tools and gaming's encouragement of social participation (both in person and virtually) (p. 24). I suspect that Sam's story is actually used here to strengthen the argument for using gaming to sup-

port literacy — which is, I think, Gee's main reason for writing this book, as opposed to the connection of women and girls to gaming. The final section of Chapter 2, "Themes for this Book," explains how girls and women fit into the authors' model for the importance of video gaming. After asking, "So why have we started with Sam?" they answer that this will help the reader gain a better understanding of the changing world of gaming, and that these changes involve both men and women (p. 38). I felt that, with all the data these authors have collected over the years, a woman's or girl's experiences could have been used here instead. That they featured a boy was more evidence that the book was written only to further their premise of the importance of gaming as a learning tool.

A small portion of Chapter 3 does focus on a case study of a woman's gaming practices and makes a short comparison between her game design and that of a man's. The player Yamx not only used the book *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*, by Barbara Ehrenreich, to create a Sims-type game in which players act out conditions detailed in the book (p. 46), but she also exhibited her skills as a "game designer, modder, mentor, teacher, and leader." The authors then claim that the male paradigm of game design can "lead us to see what Yamx is doing as 'soft'" (p. 60). Soft, in this context, means using a person's social and emotional intelligence.

Chapter 6 suggests that "passionate affinity groups" — defined as groups of individuals who have a passion for building and designing real and powerful virtual tools within a specific virtual world for those who participate/belong

to that community — draw together people with common interests, endeavors, goals, or practices rather than separating them by race, class, gender, or disability (p. 107). These groups mitigate a world where expertise "over-values what it knows and undervalues what it does not know" (p. 123).

Chapter 4 contains the first substantive hints of how women fit into the world of gaming, showing how playing *The Sims* can be a gateway to careers in such fields as mathematics, engineering, and computer science, where women have been underrepresented (p. 62). This case study examines the immersion of a young girl named Jade in the game, showing how it motivated her to develop skills in hardware and software technology. In addition, Jade adopted a new, proactive view of her life when she learned that these technical skills could open up employment opportunities beyond the low-skill industries she feared she would be relegated to because of her poor academic record.

Chapters 5 and 7 provide case studies that show how "the female touch" can result in school reform. In Chapter 5, players Tabby Lou, Izazu, and EarthGoddess demonstrate the giving and receiving of help among the Sims community of designers, the process of proactive learning, and the importance of encouraging the *passion* to learn. Chapter 7 shows a player named Alex improving her writing skills by developing stories based on *The Sims* enterprise. Positive benefits in this case extended beyond Alex to another population of girls, because her fiction attracted a very loyal fan base (almost entirely girls) who felt that her writing spoke to their "age, feelings, and experiences in a deeper way. . . in part because it is written by another teen girl" (p. 138).

Chapter 8 presents a case study on diversity in virtual worlds, showing, with the example of Jesse, a thirty-something, biracial lesbian, that online gaming can redefine the concept of diversity. The virtual world allows for the free flow of information and ideas uninhibited by classifications of culture, religion, or sexual orientation, because people are "often playing different sorts of people in virtual worlds than they are in real life" (p. 154). As Jesse comments, "Well the way I see life is that everyone you encounter can create a learning experience" (p. 155).

The authors of *Women and Gaming* use their own case studies and the abundance of existing literature on games and learning to prove their argument for learning through simulation game play. Although their case studies focus on women and girls, however, only a stray sentence or two compares the gaming practices of girls and women to those of boys and men. The book does draw upon the experiences of many ages and types of girls and women, and would be relevant to many other topics related to education. The reference section is fourteen and a half pages strong, and definitions are provided for gaming jargon.

The authors have done a commendable job of positing a theory of learning according to which real education is not about acquiring knowledge, but rather about "becoming" something. *Women and Gaming* is an easy read and should be useful in many instructional settings, although it may quickly become dated due to the rapid growth of science and technology, jobs, skills, and information.

[Linda Shimon taught middle school and high school language arts and history in the Sheboygan (Wisconsin) Area School District.]

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

It's a blog; it's a book; it's Emma Koenig's life: **F*CK! I'M IN MY TWENTIES**. Living in New York after college; not making a living; moving back in with parents; writing a blog about it all. And seeing get reviewed in a *New York Times* article ("Wash That Blog Out with Soap," July 26, 2012) and become a book. See Koenig's endearing pages, many handwritten, on her Tumblr blog: <http://fuckiminmy20s.tumblr.com/>.

And here's a blog for 50-somethings: **LIFE AFTER TAMPONS** (<http://www.lifeaftertampons.com/>), by Jennifer Boykin ("your midlife midwife"). Subtitle: "Quit your bitching. Change your life." Lots of self-help cheerleading, some of which has me looking furtively for an exit. You can even have a personal sort of class/workshop/counseling relationship with Jennifer for \$395. I'll pass on that, but I am checking out her free "eRetreat," which consists of twenty-one daily readings you can park on your desktop and turn to for inspiration. (Yikes: The first one suggests a hair/nails/clothes makeover.)

DOWNLOADABLE DOCUMENTS

Saranga Jain et al., **ALLOWING MEN TO CARE: FATHERHOOD PROJECT IN SOUTH AFRICA**. AIDS Support and Technical Assistance Resources (AIDSTAR-One) Project, October 2011. 12 pp. "In South Africa, men are increasingly rejecting wide-spread stereotypes of manhood by stepping forward to challenge gender roles that compromise their well-being and the health of their partners and their families. This case study documents the Sonke Gender Justice Network's Fatherhood project, which was designed to reduce HIV transmission and address

related problems, such as gender-based violence, women's overwhelming burden of care, and the preponderance of children in need of care and support." PDF from http://www.aidstar-one.com/focus_areas/gender/resources/case_study_series/allowing_men_to_care.

Also by Saranga Jain et al., and from AIDSTAR-One: **EARNING THEIR WAY TO HEALTHIER LIVES: WOMEN FIRST IN MOZAMBIQUE**. AIDS Support and Technical Assistance Resources (AIDSTAR-One) Project, October 2011. Describes a program that "aims to give rural women options for a better life. It provides them with a combination of small business skills training, access to household products to sell, and health and HIV peer education sessions. Together these activities give women the resources — skills, information, peer support, and assets — to make informed health decisions." Get the twelve-page case study from http://www.aidstar-one.com/focus_areas/gender/resources/case_study_series/mozambique_women_first.

Srilatha Batliwala, **FEMINIST LEADERSHIP FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION: CLEARING THE CONCEPTUAL CLOUD**. AWID (Association for Women's Rights in Development) for CREA (Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action), 2011. 84p. Chapter titles: "What Is It? Defining Leadership"; "What's In It? Unpacking Feminist Leadership"; "Where Is It? Feminist Sites of Leadership"; "What Does It Look Like? Feminist Ways of Leading." PDF at <http://web.creaworld.org/files/fl.pdf>.

Janneke Plantenga, Chantal Remery, & Ingrid Mairhuber, **FLEXIBLE WORKING TIME ARRANGEMENTS AND GENDER EQUALITY: A COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF 30 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**. European Union, 2010. 128p. Search in "Publications and Documents" on the European Commission's "Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion" site (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=22>).

"COVERAGE OF WOMEN'S SPORTS: LOWER THAN EVER" (in 2009). Surprised by that heading? I was, too, but it's one of the findings in a study by Michael A. Messner and Cheryl Cooky, sponsored by the Center for Feminist Research at the University of Southern California: **GENDER IN TELEVISED SPORTS: NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS SHOWS, 1989–2009**. The full report,

with an introduction by Diana Nyad, is in a 35-page PDF at <http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/home/research/articles-and-reports/media-issues/women-play-sports-but-not-on-tv>.

RAPE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE: HUMAN RIGHTS LAW AND STANDARDS IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT. Amnesty International, March 2011. 47p. In Spanish or English, HTML or PDF, from <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/IOR53/001/2011/en>.

Uganda Land Alliance, **A WOMAN AND HER LAND: A RAY OF HOPE BEACONS.** (Funded by the American Jewish World Service.) Kampala, Uganda, 2011. 30p. http://ulaug.org/new/wp-content/uploads/women_land_rgts_bklet1.pdf.

OTHER SITES OF INTEREST

THE HISTORY OF NORDIC WOMEN'S LITERATURE (www.nordicwomensliterature.net) "is a trilingual web site in Danish, Swedish, and English, which for the first time makes a thousand years of women's literary history in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland, and the Åland Islands freely available online. — The site aims to be useful to all with a general interest in literature, as well as to students, teachers, scholars, journalists, librarians, and others with a professional interest in Nordic literature." Well, it has certainly piqued this reader's general interest: Now, excuse me while I go learn more about Nobel-winning Swede Selma Lagerlöf and Finnish writer Minna Canth.

It's been a workshop; it's a website; it's an amazing mother-and-daughter team; and it will be a book by Spring 2013: **MOTHERING & DAUGHTERING** (book subtitle, "How to Create a Deep and Enduring Relationship Through the Teen Years"), by Sil and Eliza Reynolds. "In our workshops and writing together," they explain at www.motheringanddaughtering.com, "we teach the radical notion that mothers and their daughters can not only

survive the adolescent years, but also thrive in them, and in contrast to conventional wisdom, pre-teen and teenage daughters want and need a close relationship with their mother." Sil Reynolds, a nurse practitioner and therapist who studied with renowned Jungian analyst and author Marion Woodman, and her daughter Eliza, once a teen and now a student at Brown University, have written paired essays on such topics as being "body sane," raising (and being raised) a feminist daughter, and the intricacies of letting go and growing up; read these on the "News" page of their site.

Gothenburg University Library offers **PORTALS TO THE HISTORY OF THE SWEDISH WOMEN'S MOVEMENT** at <http://www.ub.gu.se/kvinn/portaler/>. They include "Swedish Women's Struggle for Suffrage"; "Women's Struggle for Knowledge"; "Women at Work"; "Women and Peace"; "Love, Power and Sisterhood"; and "Historical Swedish Periodicals for Women."

Listen to **RADIO STORIES ON THE AIR** about women in "STEM" (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) at <http://www.womeninscience.org/>. In one of the programs, "The Tech Club," two high-school students interview professional women in science and technology; for instance, Donna Lee Shirley, the head of the NASA team that built the Mars rover.

The **WOMAN STATS PROJECT** (<http://womanstats.org>) is "the most comprehensive compilation of information on the status of women in the world... We comb the extant literature and conduct expert interviews to find qualitative and quantitative information on over 310 indicators of women's status in 174 countries. Our database expands daily, and access to it is free of charge." It's a very complex database, but there are video tutorials for first-time users. Principal investigators for the project are from Brigham Young University, the University of Minnesota, Brown University, the University of Kent at Canterbury, and Ohio State University, in the fields of international relations, political psychology, geography, psychology, and sociology.

○ Compiled by JoAnne Lehman

NEW REFERENCE WORKS IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

GRANTS FOR WOMEN

Gail Ann Schlachter & R. David Weber, eds., ***DIRECTORY OF FINANCIAL AIDS FOR WOMEN, 2012–2014***. El Dorado Hills, CA: Reference Service Press, 2012. 514p. \$45.00, ISBN 978-1588412164.

Reviewed by Nancy Nyland

In the 1970s, the balance between male and female college students shifted in favor of women. The first edition of this directory appeared in 1978, just in time to help the new female majority of college students find financial aid. Sixteen editions have been positively reviewed in *Library Journal*, *Choice*, and other places, and a *Feminist Collections* writer endorsed the 2003–2005 edition as the “best work in print about grants for women as a population group.”¹ The publisher, Reference Service Press (RSP), has collected laudatory quotes from the many reviews at its website, www.rspfunding.com, although a number of them refer to older editions.

The 1,489 entries are presented in three sections, one each for undergraduates, graduate students, and professional or postdoctoral programs. An extensive introduction uses a sample entry to explain clearly how the directory is organized, and how to use it. Entries are cross-referenced in six indexes by subject, program title, sponsoring organization, residency requirements for applicants, “tenability” (geographic requirements for where the aid can be used) and “calendar” (application deadlines.) Individual entries

also contain eligibility requirements, financial data about each program, the duration of the financial support, and the number of grants awarded. The directory excludes loans, grants for foreign students, money for study abroad, internal institutional grants, and programs with restrictive limits.

In the almost thirty-five years since the first edition, the world has changed. Even if this directory was the “best work in print about grants for women,” in 2012 the competition is not with other print directories, but with online services, both commercial and free. RSP’s own website offers subscriptions to its database, Funding-Finder, which allows academic institutions to increase the number of searchable programs from 1,500 to 50,000.

The advantage of a print directory is that it saves time compared to going from one website to another in search of scholarships in places like the Foundation Center, the Community of Science, the Department of Commerce, and the many other financial aid sites. Even a helpful site like *Grants for Women: Individuals*, maintained by John Harrison at Michigan State University, could oblige grant seekers to follow as many as fifty different links to find aid that matches their qualifications. Today’s students inevitably prefer to use one of the many free online services that have compiled the same information, such as FinAid, FastWeb, CollegeNet, Education Connection, SchoolSoup, or Findtuition.com. Purchase of this print volume is not recommended.

Note

1. Elizabeth Breed, in “Finding Funding for Women: Web and Non-Web Resources,” *Feminist Collections* v. 25, no. 2 (Winter 2004), p. 11.

[Nancy Nyland is a librarian at the Germantown Campus of Montgomery College in Montgomery County, Maryland.]

MEDIA

Karen Ross, ed., ***THE HANDBOOK OF GENDER, SEX AND MEDIA***. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012. (Handbooks in communication and media.) 576p. index. \$199.95, ISBN 978-1444338546; e-book, ISBN 978-1118114254.

Reviewed by Kari Weaver

Writer Allen Ginsberg once famously stated, “Whoever controls the media, the images, controls the culture.” While editor Karen Ross and the forty-plus scholars who contributed to this handbook would agree that media has great influence in our culture, they use the text’s nearly 600 pages to explore the ways in which media reflects but absorbs, represents but subverts constructs of gender and sexuality in modern society. It is this core tension — between how the media both stereotypes and is influenced by the very individuals it seeks to characterize — that provides the true connective thread of this work.

The book has five distinct sections “focused on sexual identity and

sexuality" (p. xxi): representations of women; masculinity; queerness in media; the interaction of women, men and gender; and sex. This structure, with the exception of the section on masculinity, seems rather arbitrary, as most chapters could have fit easily almost anywhere in the text. However, the volume is expertly indexed, greatly improving ease of use for the novice. The topical coverage is extensive and international in scope, ranging from Claudia Bucciferro's media representations of Chilean Women to Begonya Enguix and Elisenda Ardévol's exploration of media practices in online dating. The book truly excels, though, in its broad coverage of masculinity and transgender scholarship, which are covered more effectively and integrated into the text more easily in this than in similar publications.

All of the contributing authors do an excellent job of using both existing scholarship and a large variety of primary media texts to support their research. The references at the end of each chapter are essential for anyone new to this area of study. Overall, the book makes important contributions to scholarship in the areas of gender, sex, and media while maintaining a strong grounding in the theories of the academic disciplines it represents. Although each chapter will likely be used separately, the volume is recommended for all reference collections as an important foundational publication in gender and cultural studies.

[Kari D. Weaver is an assistant professor of library science and the library instruction coordinator at the University of South Carolina Aiken.]

POETRY

Jane Dowson, ed., *THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO TWENTIETH-CENTURY BRITISH AND IRISH WOMEN'S POETRY*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. 240p. bibl. illus. index. \$82.00, ISBN 978-0521197854; pap., \$29.99, ISBN 978-0521120217.

Reviewed by Susan Bennett White

Jane Dowson is joined by nine other knowledgeable and weighty critics in crafting a reference work of shimmering dissonance, in which readers can experience the art and pathos of British and Irish female poets of the last century. This slim and tightly structured volume begins with a thoughtful nine-page chronology that identifies historical, cultural and literary events that progressively led to the end of Empire, and does so with a uniquely feminist slant. History here begins with Empire still heavily present in 1901, with the death of Queen Victoria, paired with the cultural/literary event of Rudyard Kipling's publication of *Kim*, based on the nineteenth-century India of Empire. The concluding years of the chronology are 1998–2000, a period marked by the devolution of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The cultural/literary event highlighted for that period is the nomination of Carol Ann Duffy as British Poet Laureate (Duffy was the first woman so honored).

Chapter 1 introduces both critics and poets, and then follow ten succinct discursive chapters, where rather dense text averages about fifteen pages, with each chapter supported by an average of sixty-six references. For example, Chapter 2 (with fifty-one references) notes that "The silliness and shrillness

of the music of Sitwell and Smith — which turns feminine self-parody into satire of masculine assumptions of its own rational authority ... prepares the way for the dancing and demented cows ... and the uproarious sing-song of their flaky carnival" (p. 9).

The need for this volume is illustrated in the statement that the "recent Oxford Handbook of British and Irish Poetry (2007) ... assigns [only] 100 of 754 pages to women's poetry." (p. 25). There is indeed so much more to be said. In this volume, eighteen women poets are named as individual subjects in the titles of six of the chapters; in four other, thematic chapters — about verbal and visual art, women's war poetry, post-pastoral perspectives, and "feminism's experimental 'work at the language-face'" — many other women poets figure significantly.

It might seem that one should only acquire and use this *Companion* in conjunction with poetry already in hand in other volumes. But this is not the case. Indeed, this volume has its own resonance and could well stand alone as an introduction to the poets and poetry it references. This treatment of the subject is well done, and the volume could be useful in a broad range of libraries. It is highly recommended for both public and academic libraries where the topic is of interest, even — and perhaps especially — where the individual poets are *not* otherwise represented.

[Susan Bennett White is the sociology librarian at Princeton University Library, where she supports feminist studies in many departments. She has been a senior research librarian at Princeton for more than 25 years.]

WOMEN'S MOVEMENT HISTORY

June Hannam, *FEMINISM, 2nd edition*. Harlow, England: Longman, 2012. (Seminar studies in history.) 200p. bibl. index. pap., \$32.00, ISBN 978-1408255575.

Reviewed by Rachel Bicicchi

This volume in Longman's "Seminar Studies in History" series can be used either as a textbook for an introductory course in women's studies or as a reference work for those looking for a concise introduction to particular aspects of feminism.

Hannam examines four broad themes: (1) challenges feminists have posed to ideas about a woman's proper place; (2) the complex relationship and interplay between equality and difference; (3) the notion of sisterhood and the tension between solidarity on one hand and differences in race, class, nation, sexual orientation, etc., on the other; and (4) the relationship between feminism and other social and political reform movements (pp. 8–10).

The book is organized into an introduction and six roughly chronological chapters covering the modern (Enlightenment to present) feminist movement. With the exception of the final one, each of the chronological chapters is weighty enough to be read or assigned as a stand-alone article should the entire chronological narrative not be needed.

One of the most valuable contributions of this volume is its continuous reminder that a "feminist movement" is not a singular idea or set of beliefs. The challenges posed by differences in race, class, sexual orientation, nationality, and ethnicity are highlighted as Hannam returns throughout to the four themes she laid out in the introduction. For example, in Chapter 3, "Women's Suffrage: 1860s–1920s,"

she explains why suffrage was a goal for many women, how it challenged the prevailing attitude that women shouldn't participate in the political sphere (pp. 38–39), how women came together to form organizations to push for voting rights, and how suffrage groups were connected to others, such as abolitionist and temperance groups (p. 30). At the same time, she emphasizes that some groups felt suffrage was not the appropriate goal (p. 31); that militancy as a tactic was a particularly contentious debate (pp. 41–42); and that the question of limited vs. universal suffrage was often introduced to advance the goals of the upper and middle land-owning classes at the expense of racial and ethnic minorities and the working poor (pp. 32, 38).

The final chapter, "Assessment," is the weakest, spanning only three pages and briefly introducing the question of whether a "third wave" exists; pointing to some generational differences between women; and noting that women are playing ever-more-active roles in other global movements, such as environmentalism and human rights (among others), and that many women do not see women's issues as separate from these broader human issues (p. 94). More thorough development of these ideas would have increased the book's value to a reader trying to connect the historical context of the previous chapters to present-day feminism.

In addition to the main narrative, the book contains extensive front and back matter, including a chronology, a "who's who" listing, a glossary, suggestions for further reading, a bibliography, and, most important, thirty-one pages of primary documents for analysis and study. Some of these documents have been widely reproduced (e.g., the Declaration of Sentiments from the 1848 Seneca Falls Conference), but others, collected from memoirs and newspapers around the world, will be less familiar to many audiences.

Academic and public libraries with few introductory resources on feminism will find this a useful addition to their reference collections, but in most libraries it will find a more appropriate home among the circulating items.

[Rachel Bicicchi is an assistant professor, educational technology coordinator, and research/instruction librarian at Millikin University in Decatur, IL. She is the liaison librarian for communication, English/literature, gender studies, modern languages, and physics and astronomy.]

Don Nardo, *THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT*. Farmington Hills, MI: Lucent Books, 2011. (World history.) 128p. bibl. index. \$33.95, ISBN 978-1420505924.

Reviewed by Melodie Frankovitch

The Lucent *World History* series "gives middle school and early high school students a clear sense of time, place, and features vivid primary source quotations drawn from unique...sources" (p.5). Don Nardo, a prolific writer of historical literature for children and young adults, begins this volume in the series with issues related to education, social status, and equality in the home during colonial times in America. He continues with the development of the women's movement in America over three centuries, documenting historical facts with primary sources, commentary, and visual interpretation including drawings and photographs. He explains that one of the key components that furthered the women's movement in America was the momentum to organize during the 1830s and 1840s.

This text will give students insight into the social, economic and political context of the women's movement and the creation of significant legislation that attempted to address both gender and racial inequality. In the years fol-

lowing the Civil War, women's organizations such as the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA) were formed to promote women's suffrage in a united front that had not been seen before. In 1966, the National Organization for Women (NOW) was established to provide "American women with a group that could fight for their rights" (p.73): "Whether one agreed or disagreed with the women's movement and its activism, no one doubted that it was having a growing effect on society" (p.75). The volume concludes with specific contemporary examples of "women in the political arena" (p.84) and also mentions advances women have made in the workplace and in the military.

The Women's Movement is an informative overview and a starting point for more indepth research. The book is well-organized, with photographs and drawings that complement the text and enhance the personal accounts. A timeline of the women's movement, sidebar highlights, a "For More Information" section, and chapter notes will encourage students to investigate further. This title is also available as an e-book.

[Melodie Frankovitch is the public relations librarian and women studies liaison at Duquesne University's Gumberg Library in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.]

FEMINIST ARCHIVES

MATERIALS PLACED AT SWARTHMORE

A recent letter from the cofounder and the archival librarian of **COMMON GROUND** announced that

the archives of Common Ground, a 501(c)3 organization founded by Quakers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, have been placed with the Swarthmore College Peace Collection in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. From 1982 to 2006, Common Ground worked collaboratively with diverse individuals, faith communities and organizations across the Southeast, India and the US to break cycles of racism, sexism, and poverty through nonviolent education and action with increasing concern to walk with women leading at the grassroots.

Contact Wendy Chmielewski, curator of the Swarthmore College Peace Collection, for access to the Common Ground archives: www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace.



Miriam Greenwald

PERIODICAL NOTES

NEWLY NOTED

“We’re sick of the unspoken assumptions made in so many movie reviews,” say the editors of the online review **RE/ACTION** (<http://reactionblog.tumblr.com>), “that those of us who are not heterosexual males are not watching or reading, that we’re not interested. So here we are pushing in to say that we like action movies and superhero movies and horror movies and all the other movies that aren’t what they think we like. And we like those girly movies too. And we’re here to talk about them our way.” Published in the U.K. as a blog since August 2010; has a “paper sister” — a print magazine — as of 2011.

Some reviews currently posted: “Sex, RPGs, and the Harlot Table: Mary Hamilton finds that sex, in fantasy RPGs, can get really, really messy...”; “Mind Games: How do you imagine your way into the mind of a person with schizophrenia if you’ve never suffered from mental illness yourself? What about depression, or a phobia? Mary Hamilton looks at how role-playing games deal with mental illness...”; “Teen Movies All About...Why It Apparently Really Really Sucks to be Christian,” by Morgan Jones; “Getting Action Heroines Right (and Very Very Wrong),” by Lucy V. Hay; and “Her Secret Origin: Georgina Voss recommends four of the best autobiographical comics by women.”

SPECIAL ISSUES OF PERIODICALS

AJWS REPORTS (Spring 2011): Special issue: “Women Bring Change.” Editor: Susan Rosenberg. Publisher: American Jewish World Service, 45 W. 36th St., New York, NY 10018; phone: (800) 889-7146; website: <http://ajws.org>. Issue free in PDF at http://ajws.org/who_we_are/publications/ajws_reports/spring_2011/ajws_reports_spring_2011.pdf.

The American Jewish World Service “puts special emphasis on funding grassroots organizations that prioritize women.” More than half of its grantees “support programs that tackle some of the most difficult issues facing women and girls today,” and this issue of *AJWS Reports* features the work of some of those grantees, in countries such as Haiti (earthquake relief), Ethiopia (educating adolescent girls), Burma (refugee rights), Sri Lanka (LGBTI rights), Thailand (indigenous land rights), Senegal (peacemaking), Columbia (land and water rights), and Peru (Afro-Peruvian rights). Is-

sue also includes an interview with Ambassador Meryl Frank (then the U.S. Representative to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women), a report on graffiti art and other feminist actions in Bolivia, and information about a project that helps young women in India escape the poverty and violence that can accompany early marriage, and another that seeks to educate and empower refugee girls in Kenya.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN HISTORY vol. 44, no. 1 (March 2011): Special issue: “Human Rights, Utopias, and Gender in Twentieth-Century Europe.” Issue editors: Carola Sachse & Atina Grossmann. Publisher: Cambridge Journals, for the Central European History Society. ISSN: 0008-9389. Available online to licensed users through Cambridge Journals Online and other vendors.

Partial contents: “Gender and Utopian Visions in a Post-Utopian Era: Americanism, Human Rights, Market Fundamentalism,” by Mary Nolan; “‘The Psychological Marshall Plan’: Displacement, Gender, and Human Rights after World War II,” by Tara Zahra; “Utopian Visions of Family Life in the Stalin-Era Soviet Union,” by Lauren Kaminsky; “European Desires and National Bedrooms? Negotiating ‘Normalcy’ in Postsocialist Poland,” by Anika Keinz; “Grams, Calories, and Food: Languages of Victimization, Entitlement, and Human Rights in Occupied Germany, 1945–1949,” by Atina Grossmann.

GERMAN POLITICS (Journal of the International Association for the Study of German Politics (IASGP)), vol. 20, no. 3 (2011): Special issue: “Gender, Intersectionality and the Executive Branch: The Case of Angela Merkel.” Issue editor: Louise K. Davidson-Schmich. Publisher: Routledge. ISSN: 0964-4008 (print), 1743-8993 (online). Available online to licensed users through Taylor & Francis Current Content Access and EBSCOhost Academic Search Premier.

Partial contents: “Leadership in Grand Coalitions: Comparing Angela Merkel and Kurt Georg Kiesinger,” by Jonathan Olsen; “An Intersectional Approach to Angela Merkel’s Foreign Policy,” by Jennifer A. Yoder; “Citizenship and Migration Policies under Merkel’s Grand Coalition,” by Joyce Marie Mushaben; “A ‘Women’s Revolution from Above’? Female Leadership, Intersectionality, and Public Policy under the Merkel Government,” by Angelika Von Wahl; “Intersectionality and Bundestag Leadership Selection,” by Melanie Kintz; “A Critical Departure for Women Executives or More of the Same? The Powers of Chancellor Merkel,” by

Farida Jalalzai; "Gender and Energy Policy Making under the First Merkel Government," by Sarah Elise Wiliarty.

L'ESPRIT CRÉATEUR vol. 51, no. 1 (Spring 2011): Special issue: "Watch This Space: Women's Conceptualisations of Space in Contemporary French Film and Visual Art." Guest editors: Marie-Claire Barnet & Shirley Jordan. Publisher: University of Kentucky. ISSN: 0014-0767. Available online to licensed users through Project Muse.

Partial contents: "Virtual Homes: Space and Memory in the Work of Yamina Benguigui," by Isabelle McNeill; "Travelling in Circles: Postcolonial Algiers in Zineb Sedira's *Saphir*," by Joseph McGonagle; "Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*: Eluding the Frames," by Ann Miller; "'Cette poétique du politique': Political and Representational Ecologies in the Work of Yto Barrada," by Amanda Crawley Jackson; "The Feminist Beachscape: Catherine Breillat, Diane Kurys and Agnès Varda," by Fiona Handyside; "Museum Spaces in Palliative Art: Mariana Otero's *Histoire d'un secret*," by Emma Wilson; "Space and Absence in Sophie Calle's *Suite vénitienne and Disparitions*," by Nigel Saint; "Valérie Mréjen's Confining Camera," by Shirley Jordan; "Interviews with Agnès Varda and Valérie Mréjen," by Marie-Claire Barnet & Shirley Jordan.

MOTHER PELICAN: A JOURNAL OF SOLIDARITY AND SUSTAINABILITY (formerly **A JOURNAL OF SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**). Series of special issues: vol. 7, no. 4 (April 2011): "Gender Equality for Human Development"; vol. 7, no. 5 (May 2011): "The Coupling of Gender Equality and Clean Energy"; vol. 7, no. 8 (August 2011): "Confluence of Gender Equality and Clean Energy." Editor: Luis T. Gutiérrez. Online only; website: www.pelicanweb.org.

A sampling of articles — some of them reprints from other publications — in the gender equality series: "Via Feminina: Mystical Path of the Feminine," by Beverly Lanzetta; "Will Women Priests Change the Church?" by Mary E. Hunt; "Gender Equality and Justice in Islam," by Riffat Hassan; "Sustainability and Economics 101," by Susan Santone; "Substantive Signification of Sustainability," by Arup Kanti Konar and Jayanta Chakraborty; and "Gender Equality Between Aspirations and Realities," by Ioan Voicu. Each issue also opens with a lengthy editorial on the theme, by Luis T. Gutiérrez, and ends with a number of "supplements" that suggest other resources compiled by the editor.

TRANSITIONS

The journal **PHOEBE: GENDER & CULTURAL CRITIQUES** changed its name to **PRAXIS: GENDER & CULTURAL CRITIQUES**, beginning with its twenty-second volume (2011). "The change reflects the approaches and content which we have come to publish and invokes certain traditions we have always recognized," explained a notice on the journal's website: "feminist, Marxist, Freireian on wedding theory to practice as instruments of social liberation." More information at <http://www.oneonta.edu/academics/praxis/>.

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Books Recently Received

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS CONFRONT VIOLENCE: A CRITICAL STUDY OF NINE DRAMATISTS. Young, Patricia A. McFarland, 2012.

ARAB AMERICA: GENDER, CULTURAL POLITICS, AND ACTIVISM. Naber, Nadine. New York University Press, 2012.

COW. Hawthorne, Susan. Spinifex (Australia), 2011.

THE EDINBURGH COMPANION TO SCOTTISH WOMEN'S WRITING. Norquay, Glenda, ed. Edinburgh University Press, 2012.

ENSLAVED WOMEN IN AMERICA: AN ENCYCLOPEDIA. Berry, Daina Ramey and Alford, Deleso A., eds. Greenwood/ABC-CLIO, 2012.

ENVISIONING DISEASE, GENDER, AND WAR: WOMEN'S NARRATIVES OF THE 1918 INFLUENZA PANDEMIC. Fisher, Jane Elizabeth. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

FISH-HAIRWOMAN. Bobis, Merlinda. Spinifex (Australia), 2011.

GABRIELA MISTRAL'S STRUGGLE WITH GOD AND MAN: A BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL STUDY OF THE CHILEAN POET. Taylor, Martin C. McFarland, 2012.

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WELFARE STATE? Pascall, Gillian. Policy; distr. University of Chicago Press, 2012.

THE LACE MAKERS OF NARSAPUR. Mies, Maria. Spinifex (Australia), 2012. 2nd ed.

MAKE YOUR OWN HISTORY: DOCUMENTING FEMINIST & QUEER ACTIVISM IN THE 21ST CENTURY. Bly, Lyz and Wooten, Kelly, eds. Litwin, 2012.

OUR STORIES, OURSELVES: THE EMBODYMENT OF WOMEN'S LEARNING IN LITERACY. Miller, Mev and King, Kathleen P., eds. Information Age, 2011.

PLURAL WIFE: THE LIFE STORY OF MABEL FINLAYSON ALLRED. Allred, Mabel Finlayson Bradley-Evans, Martha, ed. Utah State University Press/University Press of Colorado, 2012.

RACIAL INDIGESTION: EATING BODIES IN THE 19TH CENTURY. Tompkins, Kyla Wazana. New York University Press, 2012.

RELIGIOUS ALLUSION IN THE POETRY OF GWENDOLYN BROOKS. Banks, Margot Harper. McFarland, 2012.

THE UNFINISHED REVOLUTION: VOICES FROM THE GLOBAL FIGHT FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS. Worden, Minky, ed. Seven Stories, 2012.

WOMEN AND CRIME: A REFERENCE HANDBOOK. Warner, Judith A. ABC-CLIO, 2012.

WOMEN ON CORPORATE BOARDS AND IN TOP MANAGEMENT: EUROPEAN TRENDS AND POLICY. Fagan, Colette and others, eds. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

WOMEN RECLAIMING SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS: SPACES LOST, SPACES GAINED. Harcourt, Wendy, ed. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

WOMEN WARRIORS OF THE AFRO-LATINA DIASPORA. Vega, Marta Moreno and others, eds. Arte Publico, 2012.



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