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# Feminist Collections



A  
Quarterly of  
Women's  
Studies  
Resources

WOMEN'S  
STUDIES



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Volume 28, Number 2, Winter 2007  
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Women's Studies Librarian

# Feminist Collections

## A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources

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# FROM THE EDITORS

June 12, 2007. Winter is a dim memory to me now, notwithstanding the season named on the cover of this issue. I remember that I was sick with a pesky respiratory thing for far too long, and that there were some big snowstorms, and that my furnace's oil supply ran out in the middle of one. Spring was very welcome, and I don't want to believe it's almost over, but according to the calendar it will be summer next week, and we've already had to install the living-room air conditioner at my house. My garden is coming along nicely, although it would be even nicer if the neighborhood groundhog could be persuaded not to eat from it.

By the time this issue is printed and in the hands of subscribers, this year's National Women's Studies Association conference (St. Charles, Illinois) will be over. If you participated in any of the sessions of the "embedded conference" there on girls' studies, or wish you had, you'll want to pay special attention to two articles in this issue of *Feminist Collections* — Sarah Hentges' "From Girl Power to Empowerment: The Theory, Pedagogy, and Practice of Girls' Film" (pp.14–18), as well as the review essay by Phyllis Holman Weisbard and Nicole Grapentine-Benton

on pages 31–36, "Resources on Young Adult Literature."

These two essays are just the *beginning* — a sneak preview, you could say — of a "year of girls' studies" articles in *FC*. The remaining three issues in 2007 will be chock-full of reviews of books and other resources dealing with this emerging field. Guest co-editor Tracy Wendt Lemaster will officially introduce our girls' studies theme next issue (volume 28, number 3). If you're not a 2007 subscriber, you'll want to become one immediately so you can get all of these thematic issues as they are published. (You can print out a subscription form at [http://](http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/Subscription.pdf)

[www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/Subscription.pdf](http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/Subscription.pdf). Be sure to specify 2007 as the subscription year.)

Also in this issue, Frances Kavenik wraps up our "gender and academia" thread (which began in v.26, no.4, Summer 2005) with a piece titled "Working-Class Women in Higher Education"; Phyllis Holman Weisbard explains how to use Google's new digitized-books resource to dig up hard-to-find women's history sources; and Heidi Fischle looks at four films about women in India that address human rights and "social imbalance" issues. This edition of our "New

Reference Works in Women's Studies" column covers reference books on women writers, gender and education, women throughout history (all the way back to 3200 B.C.E.), and gender issues in the field of information technology. Many other print and electronic resources for women's studies are introduced briefly in "E-Sources on Women and Gender," "Periodical Notes," and "Items of Note."

Here's hoping your summer is healthy, happy, and safe — and that you'll find time to drop us a line (you can email [jlehman@library.wisc.edu](mailto:jlehman@library.wisc.edu)) with some feedback about *Feminist Collections*.

○ J.L.



# BOOK REVIEW

## WORKING-CLASS WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

by Frances M. Kavenik

Claudia Leeb, *WORKING-CLASS WOMEN IN ELITE ACADEMIA: A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY*. New York: Peter Lang, 2004. 220p. bibl. pap., \$38.95, ISBN 978-9052019796.

Valerie Polakow et al., eds., *SHUT OUT: LOW INCOME MOTHERS AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN POST-WELFARE AMERICA*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2004. 252p. bibl. index. pap., \$24.95, ISBN 978-0791461266.

Vivyan C. Adair & Sandra L. Dahlberg, eds., *RECLAIMING CLASS: WOMEN, POVERTY, AND THE PROMISE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN AMERICA*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003. 269p. bibl. \$26.95, ISBN 978-1592130221.

These three books cover a significant range of interest in and information on the relationship between working-class women and higher education. All are conscientious treatments of the subject, each coming at it from a somewhat different perspective and targeting a slightly different audience.

*Working-Class Women in Elite Academia* is the most theoretical of the three and the only one by a single author. The book is in two parts. The first, "Class and Gender in Western Political Thought," deals with political philosophies from Plato and Aristotle to Pierre Bourdieu and seeks to explicate the "symbolic class violence" at the core of the Western unconscious. The second, "Women from Working-Class Backgrounds in Elite Academic Institutions," analyzes interviews with female Ph.D. students and/or professors, all of whom self-identified as working class, at three "elite" academic institutions in New York City.

Leeb's thesis is that a working-class woman entering academia has to assimilate: "[D]isciplinary forces aim at her body and force her to leave her working-class body behind and, with it, her working-class behaviors,

speech, and acts" (p.20). Further, she argues that "the academic/middle-class community needs to recognize that class domination in academic institutions refers to a hierarchy of values within Western societies, firmly entrenched in the value structure of academic knowledge production, which is so constituted that it denigrates the working-class (woman) as inferior or deficient... A counter-discourse needs to be established...[and] the women who participated in this study offer such a counter-discourse" (p.21).

The ten women "informants" Leeb interviews are a somewhat diverse group: five white U.S. Americans, one black U.S. American, one white Englishwoman, one Canadian of Muslim background, one U.S. American of Jewish background, and one white woman from Romania. Their ages range from mid-twenties to early seventies; half were married and half single; most were without children. All were connected, as Ph.D. candidates or professors, to one of three New York institutions: Columbia, New York University, or the New School for Social Research. She acknowledges that her sample

is skewed and limited, but explains, "Academics that have been trained in New York City are considered 'the best' of what United States academic institutions produce, because they are the ones who are considered to be at the center of intellectual debates. Thus, academic training in New York City is certainly an advantage, especially if one enters the academic job market" (p.23). (She might, of course, find some argument on this from those academics trained elsewhere in the U.S.: the Northeast, the South, the Midwest, and the West.) And she talks about how the myths of the American Dream and the Protestant work ethic serve to hide the reality of class violence and the "widening gap between the Rich and the Poor" (p.25) in the United States.

The first half of the book offers a useful grounding in political philosophy on the subject of class and gender, pairing the views of Plato and Aristotle, Kant and Rousseau, and Marx and Weber in separate chapters and then rounding up with Pierre Bourdieu. The four subsequent chapters offer her analysis of the interviews as a body of evidence, reinforcing her theories of class and

using modern (feminist) philosophers like Foucault, Kristeva, and Judith Butler, among others.

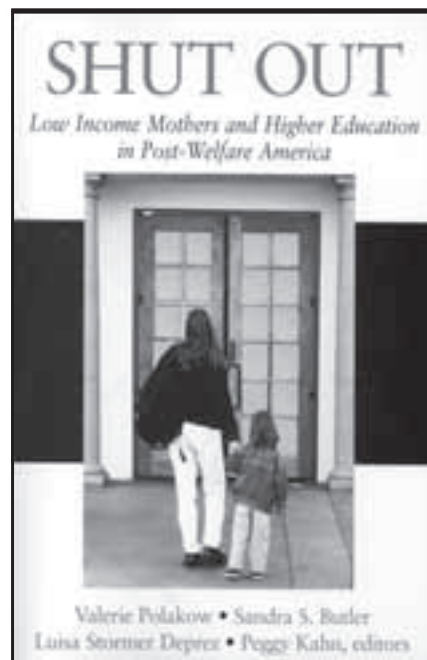
In the second half, Leeb establishes early on her interest in the ways that institutions of higher education deal with first-generation college students, those “yet to be disciplined by the bourgeois surveillant” (p.102). She borrows the metaphor of the Panopticon from Foucault (who borrowed it from Jeremy Bentham) to reinforce this notion of surveillance as in a prison. This part of the book is enlivened by the voices of the ten women, and Leeb offers substantial quotes from each about their lives inside and outside academia. She is particularly interested, of course, in their transformative experiences and their own perceptions of and reactions to the pressures upon them to change. What she finds is a consistent pattern of silence about class differences (even in “race, class, and gender” courses), and the interviewees report being rebuffed when they try to bring up the subject. We experience through their words the petty and deep humiliations of being “abject” — in dress, speech, manners, behavior — and how race and gender add yet another dimension to the inequity. She demonstrates how surveillance turns into self-surveillance, guilt, and self-exclusion, and finally into “hiding” or “passing” for middle-class.

Ultimately, this is an arresting exercise, but it is probably too theoretical to be accessible to most undergraduates at “non-elite” institutions, except in upper-division courses focusing on class and gender. Scholars and graduate students, however, will find much in this book to pique their interest and provoke discussion and further study.

*Shut Out: Low-Income Mothers and Higher Education in Post-Welfare America* is divided into eleven chapters written by twenty contributors, with an introduction and afterword by the editors, who also contributed to two of the chapters.

The purpose of the book, as identified in the introduction, is to examine the “confrontation between a welfare-to-work regime that coerces single mothers into low-wage work, and women who have resisted, understanding that higher education is critical to their capacity to provide for their family’s long-term economic self-sufficiency and their ability to make autonomous decisions about their lives, their children’s academic and social development, and their community’s well-being” (p.2). This introduction provides a lot of detail about the 1996 federal welfare legislation and its requirements and restrictions on the states, especially with regard to education vs. work requirements. It also notes the Bush Administration’s proposal to heighten the work requirements even further, to forty hours a week, without additional childcare funding. The editors provide estimates of how many women on welfare have left higher education as a result.

More than the other two texts under review, *Shut Out* provides a rich array of scholarship on the subject. Each chapter essay has a substantial bibliography to enable further study and exploration. This book is probably targeted more to specialists in the field or graduate students than to undergraduate students (with the possible exception of upper-level undergrads). Like the other books, it grounds its policy analysis in studies of and narratives by women about their own experiences and struggles.



It goes further, however, in offering perspectives on specific states and programs that either create barriers to low-income women seeking higher education (Michigan, New York City) or facilitate their access (California, Boston, Kentucky, Washington State, Maine).

Several of the essays critique the research that was used to support the 1996 federal policy change and offer preferred studies or their own research as counterweight. A theme that emerges is how the state and/or colleges and universities can ameliorate “welfare reform” and offer women a way out of poverty and dead-end jobs. The horrors of New York City’s Work Experience Program (WEP) and Michigan’s Work First program are made all too clear in the personal stories, in, respectively, Lizzy Ratner’s “Failing Low-Income Students” and Peggy Kahn’s and Valerie Polakow’s “That’s Not How I Want to Live.” Like many others, the latter essay points out the fallacy of such programs’ measures of “the rapid short-term decline in the welfare rolls that politicians and policy makers view as the primary indicator

of success” (p.76), which ignores the real consequences for women: “They were unable to find full-time, steady work, and faced continuing serious hardships such as housing insecurity and hunger...[T]he number of people in the state with incomes below 200 percent of the official poverty threshold increased” (p.76).

I was particularly interested in Sally Sharp’s “Support or Blocking Educational Progress?” which shows the impact of college and university policies on low-income women’s achievement by profiling three unnamed institutions (Small College, Regional University, and Research University). “Although colleges and universities have little influence on the degree and nature of outside support individual students bring to their educational settings, they can influence what happens to students once they enroll, shaping the quality of students’ experiences and their persistence in degree programs” (p.116). Sharp goes on to show, in each of the three examples, how institutions help these students adjust to college life, or don’t. The unique character of the book is its focus, in the last four chapters, on programs that do (or could) work to benefit welfare recipients. CalWORKs in California enables welfare recipients to attend community colleges by supporting them through child care, work study, job development, and job placement services. Kentucky’s Transitional Assistance Program (K-TAP) redefined its “work” requirements to include post-secondary education — a case study in local grassroots activism working to change a policy that did not fit the realities of Appalachian women. Boston’s Women in Community Development (WICD) empowers low-income women to use education to support each other and serve their communities while helping themselves.

Washington State has attempted to pass the Gaining Independence Bill for Families, modeled on the GI Bill of 1944, expanding financial aid for childcare. Maine’s program, called Parents as Scholars, was established when the Maine legislature rejected the federal welfare policy of “work first” in favor of its own, more education-focused reform. Maine’s legislators epitomize the thinking of the authors and editors of *Shut Out*: “Maine’s approach presumed that when PaS families (usually headed by single mothers) leave welfare, they will earn higher wages, be more likely to have employment-based health insurance, and be less likely to return to welfare than their TANF counterparts” (p.219).

Written on the eve of the reauthorization of federal welfare reform, with even harsher work requirements, in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, *Shut Out* is a call for action. “Such policies, if implemented, presage a bitter and contested future for poor women and their children — regulating their personal and family lives, diminishing their autonomy, and severely restricting their educational opportunities; and all is publicly framed in the Orwellian doublespeak of ‘Personal Responsibility and Individual Development’...Throughout the country both established and new innovative programs for low income mothers continue, and we believe it is essential that the fight for low income mothers’ access to education becomes a visible and mobilizing political issue. Activist research and advocacy play vital roles in critically analyzing, exposing, confronting, and resisting policies that continue to violate the rights of low income mothers” (p.239).

*Reclaiming Class: Women, Poverty, and the Promise of Higher Education*

*in America* contains fourteen essays by various writers, including the editors, derived from a Fall 1999 conference at Hamilton College of educators, legislators, social-service providers, and welfare activists. Like some of the contributions in the other books, these are “written by poor mothers and daughters who, ironically, found and then often learned to erase their voices in the post-secondary academy. It represents, in many cases, the first stirrings of stories that have been heretofore repressed, denied, erased, and dismissed in society and in the academy...We are women who have known profound poverty — as children and adults — and we, like the vast majority of our sisters in poverty, bear the material, social, psychic, and physical marks of our poverty-class origins” (p.2).

The book is divided into three sections: “Educators Remember,” “On the Front Lines,” and “Policy, Research, and Poor Women,” and moves from the personal and the particular to the level of public policy. The first segment generally melds educators’ personal experiences of poverty, graduate school, and a professional career with theory about the Other, race, and postcolonial systems of oppression. The second segment is from the student perspective, and the editors have wisely chosen to include narratives of failure along with those of success (as well as its cost). The third segment examines “policies that affect access to higher education and advocate remedies for improved access” (p.14).

As in most collections, some of the essays are more compelling than others. I was particularly taken with those that focused on students. For example, Sandra L. Dahlberg, in “Survival in a Not So Brave New World,” based

on her own experience as faculty at an open-admissions public university, comments, “Institutions offer few class-studies courses and — under the aegis of multiculturalism — the recognition, much less the recruitment, of poverty-class academics of all ethnicities is non-existent. Institutions whose student bodies are composed of significant numbers of working-class, poverty-class, or first-generation college students would benefit by hiring poverty-class and working-class academics who could serve as positive role models for the students...Yet, even when poverty-class and working-class scholars teach at such institutions, they are often so obviously in the minority among their peers that they resort to passing, or at least engage in selective exposure” (p.70). She concludes, humorously, “Coming-out stories are not accorded validity when coming out means coming out of the broom closet” (p.71).

**A** common theme of first-generation academics raised in poverty is that they inhabit a borderland between two worlds, as Dahlberg puts it: “The reality my family faces each and every day is so removed from the lives my peers know that it is hard to speak honestly about my family without having to make lengthy and personal explanations, to avoid having them appear as ‘less.’ I do not want to betray my family simply by talking about them. Their goals, achievements, pastimes, and joys exist in a realm different from the middle-class culture of my academic peers” (p.74).

The issue of how children are perceived in academia also comes up in Dahlberg’s essay. “To demonstrate my ‘academic worthiness’ and ‘commitment,’ I was asked to perform hours of unpaid service for the

department — on top of my paid work obligations and parental duties (and my graduate course load). It was precisely because I had children that I was told to perform the added ten to twenty hours per week of service — to prove that I could ‘keep up’ with my childless peers” (p.77).

**P**redictably, the second section, in which students and former students tell their stories, is even more affective and persuasive. Perhaps the most powerful is Tonya Mitchell’s “If I Survive, It Will Be Despite Welfare Reform,” in which she recounts her struggle to obtain a nursing degree and her failure to do so because of welfare reform. The other stories in this section are more upbeat, almost triumphant, but also frank about the costs of “passing” and about feelings of displacement. As Deborah Mcgovern puts it, “Caught in the margins between upper-class academe and my poor and working-class roots, I was becoming miserable in a way that compromised my mental health significantly. I was beginning to despise academe, and yet I felt compelled to continue on the career path to which I had committed. I also knew that I could not go home” (p.128).

This segment also makes clear, in tangible and uncompromising narratives, the short-sightedness of a “reformed” welfare system that effectively blocks women on welfare from higher education, which would lift them out of poverty, and instead forces them into low-wage, dead-end jobs. Andrea Harris recalls, “As if I had committed a crime, the worker who cautioned me that I would be terminated from the welfare program if I chose to attend school (as opposed to working), questioned my ‘ignorance’ in thinking that I was ‘entitled’ to assistance while earning a bachelor’s

*A common theme of first-generation academics raised in poverty is that they inhabit a borderland between two worlds.*

degree. She reminded me that I should have taken up a vocational skill and been satisfied with that” (pp.134–35). That this major public policy decision needs to be rethought is the thread running through all the essays in the third section. According to Sandra Dahlberg, “Higher education as a means of self-empowerment through social mobility and as a recognition of academic merit — as tenuous as those concepts may have been in the past — are sorely at risk today. With those concepts at risk, we jeopardize not only the lives of poor students in America, but the future of the country, as well” (p.170). All the essays in this section deal with the chilling effects of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, or federal welfare reform, which also, as Judith Owens-Manley points out, “affected benefits to legal immigrants, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for disabled children, the food-stamp program, child support, and foster care” (p.196).

**V**ivian Adair sums it up: “Before welfare reform in 1996, tens of thousands of poor single mothers quietly accessed post-secondary education to become teachers, lawyers, social-service providers, business and civic leaders, and medical professionals. In addition to becoming valued members of their communities, these women changed how they interpreted their value and authority as they reconceptualized their personal and familial goals...Today, unfortunately, the opportunity for low-income single

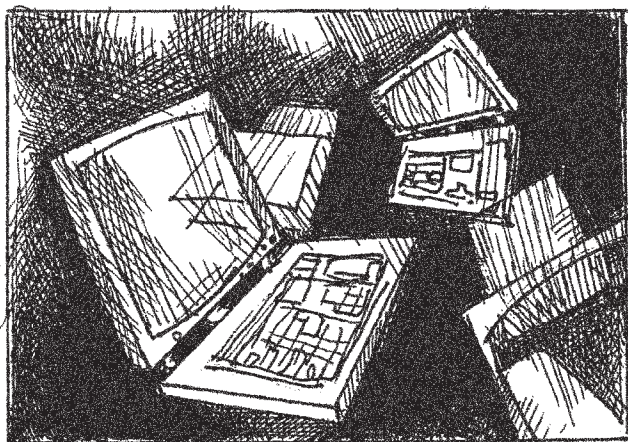
mothers to better their lives through education, and the pivotal supports necessary to do so, are simply not adequately available in the United States...As a result, they are prevented from gaining access to the knowledge, skills, and credentials that would otherwise allow them to lift their families out of poverty on a productive and permanent basis" (p.242). This book seems likely to be very useful in a number of educational settings, inside and outside the academy, because of its diverse approaches to the issues. Further, nearly all the professional educators and policy analysts have had first-

hand acquaintance with poverty and/or welfare, and this enriches their narratives and their analyses both. One can scarcely read this text without affirming and reiterating the final words of Vivyan Adair: "We stand at a critical juncture" (p.261).

**T**ogether, these three books offer both breadth and depth on the subject of class and gender in the United States as that subject affects, and is affected by, higher education and public policy. Although I wished both Adair/Dahlberg and Leeb had indexed their books, I was fully engaged with and enriched by the experience of reading all three.

*[Frances M. Kavenik is a professor of English and the director of the Interdisciplinary Studies program at the University of Wisconsin–Parkside. She is a former director of Women's Studies and a former member of the executive committee for the UW System Women's Studies Consortium. Her publications and presentations include work on Restoration and eighteenth-century drama, as well as film and cultural studies. She is co-editor, with Angela Howard (Zophy) of the Handbook of American Women's History. Currently, she is investigating women screenwriters of the classical age and working on projects addressing student literacy and general education.]*

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Miriam Greenwald

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# ***A RESEARCH REVOLUTION IN THE MAKING GOOGLE BOOKS AND MORE AS SOURCES FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY***

*by Phyllis Holman Weisbard*

If you follow developments in libraries, publishing, or Googleland, you have probably heard about the Google Books project. Google now has agreements with several major libraries in the U.S. and abroad to digitize vast quantities of their holdings. Harvard, Stanford, Oxford, the University of Michigan, and the New York Public Library are charter “library partners” in the enterprise, and as of this writing they have since been joined by the University of Wisconsin–Madison (including material from the Wisconsin Historical Society), the Midwest universities consortium known as the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (“CIC”), which also includes UW-Madison,<sup>1</sup> the University of California, the University of Virginia, the University of Texas, Princeton University, the Bavarian State Library (Germany), Ghent University Library (Belgium), University of Lausanne (Switzerland) and two libraries in Spain. A current list of partners and links to their involvement in the project is at <http://books.google.com/googlebooks/partners.html>. The project, formerly known as Google Print, was announced in December 2004 and is well under way; thousands of books are already in the database at <http://books.google.com/>.<sup>2</sup> Google Books and other mass digitization projects have the potential to revolutionize research methods and results. With what’s already available, Google Books can now greatly enhance student and scholarly quests.

Before illustrating ways that Google Books can be used for research in women’s history, there is a bit more background to consider.

The Google Books project has set off a considerable stir among authors and publishers of works still in copyright who consider the digitization of their works without their permission to be a breach of copyright. The Authors Guild and others sued Google in September 2005, and final ruling awaits court action. Google maintains that because it only displays brief “snippets” from a copyrighted work unless there’s an agreement with the publisher to display more, this usage is within the “fair use” guidelines of copyright law. Google also gives a second digital copy of each work to the lending library. The libraries generally plan to keep their digital copies of copyrighted works in “dark archives,”<sup>3</sup> although libraries’ interpretations of what’s in the public domain or falls within fair-use guidelines may differ somewhat from Google’s.

Google Books has numerous publisher partners; in fact, many publishers signed up before the library program was announced. These publishers control how much of the

content of each title they want displayed, from 20% to 100% of the text. Google Books labels any book with less than 100% displayed as “limited preview.” The entry for the book then includes the statement “Pages displayed by permission,” and Google displays links to the publisher.

Books that are out of copyright are labeled “full view”; and indeed, each and every page of these can be viewed. In most cases, these books can also be downloaded as PDFs, from which pages can then be printed. Currently, “copy and paste” of text in the PDFs does not appear to be possible (passages can, however, be copied as images); nor can optical character recognition be applied, even when the downloaded PDFs are opened in Adobe Acrobat Professional. This is a feature that library partners might choose to change in the presentation of their digital copies. (The University of Michigan Library catalog is already doing so. For books that have been digitized by Google, there are links to two e-versions: Google Books and “M-Books,” for the University of Michigan copy. M-Books can be displayed three ways: as images, as PDFs, or as raw, uncorrected text, labeled “full-text.” “Copy and paste” will work from the “full-text” display (although users will want to compare the text to the PDF, because there are errors in character recognition).

Google’s is not the only wholesale digitization effort going on. Microsoft, Yahoo, and numerous university presses and other publishers teamed up in Fall 2005 to form the Open Content Alliance (OCA; see <http://www.opencontentalliance.org/>). The OCA intends to build a multilingual and multimedia collection. The collection policy states that the OCA “will initially concentrate on digitally reformatted monographs and serials which represent diverse times, regions and subjects which are in the public domain or available under a Creative Commons license.”<sup>4</sup> OCA books will in the future be accessible directly through the OCA website and indexed through Yahoo, but are best browsed or searched at present through the “texts” section of the Internet Archive site at <http://www.archive.org/details/texts>. There is also a demonstration selection of books at <http://www.openlibrary.org/>.

The Open Content Alliance offers what appears to be higher-quality scanning than Google’s and numerous display options, including simple text (which is the best type to view when you want to copy and paste) as well as PDF and DjVu (a high-resolution, high-compression program). OCA also “welcomes all efforts to create and offer tools (including finding aids, catalogs, and indexes) that will enhance the usability of the materials in the archive.” OCA plans to allow its books to be indexed by other search engines, including Google, whereas thus far Google Books are searchable only within Google. Having all accessible digitized books indexed in one search engine would be very advantageous to researchers, especially if they are searchable in a subset limited to books.

Thousands of books have been digitized by other projects at universities and research institutions, such as the Making of American Project at the University of Michigan (10,000 nineteenth-century books) and Wright American Fiction 1851–1875 (2,887 volumes) at Indiana University, but it is often difficult to find the digitized version of a title within a

general search engine, since the search engine also picks up every mention of that title on Web pages. There are projects that attempt to index available e-books. The Digital Book Index (DBI) at <http://www.digitalbookindex.org/> has kept up reasonably well with existing projects — as of this writing it has indexed 130,000 books, of which 90,000 are freely accessible,<sup>5</sup> and the Online Books Page (<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/books/>)<sup>6</sup> links to 25,000 free e-books — but these figures will be dwarfed by the Google and OCA projects, and it is hard to see how either DBI or the Online Books Page will be able to keep up.

Since Google Books is further along than the Open Content Alliance project and has captured the imagination by the sheer breadth of its undertaking, my examples will mainly come from Google. Here are some ways to use Google Books, with examples coming from topics in women's history.

**Accessing known books that were published before 1924.** It's worth checking Google Books if you wish to consult *any* book you are already aware of that was published before 1924 (copyright cut-off date). For example, you are an undergraduate student at the University of Wisconsin. You're working, in your dorm room on the weekend, on a paper that's due Monday on the history of the term "feminism." You find a University of Wisconsin–Madison Libraries' catalog record for *What Women Want: An Interpretation of the Feminist Movement*, by Beatrice Forbes-Robertson Hale (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1914), and you want to check the definition of "feminism" put forward by Hale. The catalog shows two holdings, one in the Cairns Collection, a non-circulating collection of works by American women writers through 1930 held in the Special Collections Department of Memorial Library, and a microfilm version in the History of Women Collection (reel 819, no. 6595). Is it worth your time to tromp to the library? Once you get there, you'll find out that Special Collections is only open during the daytime on weekdays, so you won't be able to look at the print copy until Monday (your due date). And although you could consult the microfilm, you've never yet used any microfilm resource, and the prospect is intimidating. So, instead, you visit Google Book Search Advanced, where you type "What Women Want" in the title field, and up pops the entire text of this book, whose first line is already most of what you need: "Feminism is that part of the progress of democratic freedom which applies to women" (p.3).

**Better access to the contents of books.** Because Google indexes all the words in each book, you can find material in new ways. For example, there is a useful biographical dictionary of prominent women of the nineteenth century, edited by Frances Willard and Mary Livermore, that first appeared in 1893 and has been reprinted many times and under slightly variant titles. Google Books has thus far digitized the 1897 edition, called *American Women: Fifteen Hundred Biographies With Over 1,400 Portraits* (New York: Mast, Crowell and Kirkpatrick). In none of the editions, including the most recent (*Great American Women of the Nineteenth Century: A Biographical Encyclopedia* [Amherst, NY: Humanities Books, 2005]), is there an index by *place*. If one wanted to find all the women who have lived in

or been associated with Wisconsin it would be a tedious task. A search for “Wisconsin OR Wis. OR Wisc.” within the digitized Google book turns up thirty-five hits, including Osia Joslyn Hiles, an advocate for Indian rights who was the first secretary of the Wisconsin Indian Association; Sarah Dyer Hobart, a poet; and Ellen A. Dayton Blair, a temperance speaker. Even more significantly, Google Books performs a major city search automatically throughout the full-view book, then “Google-maps” the cities mentioned and lists the book pages on which that city’s name appears. Since Milwaukee is one of the major cities, the city display adds several other pages that are relevant for someone interested in Wisconsin women, where the text includes “Milwaukee” but not “Wisconsin.” One of the interesting women whose biography can be found this way is Ellen Palmer Allerton, who wrote for Milwaukee and Chicago newspapers and was at one time the book review editor for the *Milwaukee Sentinel*.

Here’s another example: You are a scholar of gender and disasters. You want to understand the gendered nature of women’s experiences during the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906 and their aftermath. Must you scour all 721 entries in WorldCat for works about this disaster for mention of women? Can Google Books short-circuit the process? Absolutely! For this quest, a more complex search statement helps: “‘San Francisco’ (woman OR women OR lady OR ladies) (fire OR earthquake),” and a click on “full view books.” (For Boolean aficionados: Google searches support OR’ing, if OR is put in capital letters; Google automatically ANDs; hence there are no ANDs between the grouped OR’d items.) There are 618 hits, of which 436 are available in “full view.” This may seem only somewhat better than the 721 figure from WorldCat, number for number, but the Google result is much more precise, since it retrieves the books and zeroes in on the *pages within* that meet the criteria. One of the first entries is for *The History of the San Francisco Disaster and Mount Vesuvius Horror*, by Charles Eugene Banks and Opie Percival Read (Chicago, 1906). Google takes us to page 116, where the authors quote the dispatch sent by reporter Helen Dare to her paper, the *Chicago American*, describing her personal experience during the quake. Banks and Read call it “the most graphic recital of an eye-witness to the destruction of San Francisco.” Dare seems particularly attentive to women she observes in various states of undress, carrying babies, dragging a sewing machine, etc. (“A drawer of it falls out and they halt to gather up the precious scattered spools. Poor little seamstress, this is her all now” [p.121]).

For this topic, a search of what’s available currently via the Internet Archive is also productive. Alice Gerstle Levison’s oral history, *Family Reminiscences* (conducted in 1967 by Ruth Teiser for the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley), shows up because Ms. Gerstle Levison experienced the San Francisco earthquake and discussed it in her interview, and the cataloging record includes subject headings for this. (It should be noted that a search of “regular Google” also turns up this oral history transcript — it just doesn’t appear in Google Books because it hasn’t been digitized specifically for that project.)

**Using materials that are not readily available on your campus.** Let’s say you are a historian of women’s health. You teach at a small college that lacks a significant history of

medicine collection and doesn't have the perceived demand for or the funding to acquire databases such as *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. You would like to examine some eighteenth-century tomes, such as *A Physical View of Man and Woman in a State of Marriage: With Anatomical Engravings*, by M. de Lignac (2 v., 1798), which, for example, the Ebling Library for the Health Sciences at the University of Wisconsin–Madison keeps in a “historical vault” and does not circulate. You are on a first-name basis with your interlibrary loan librarian, but even she can't spring books out of non-circulating collections elsewhere. You try Google Books and find that the New York Public Library's copy has been digitized. You can read the volumes through, search them for instances of particular terms, or go directly to many of the engravings, which Google presents in a “selected pages” area from the opening screen. (The OCLC/WorldCat record and Google Books note that the work was “[p]rinted on the Continent; most of the copies imported were seized by the Customs owing to the alleged indecency of the plates.”)

**Finding useful passages where you wouldn't otherwise think to look.** This is the most exciting aspect of mass digitization with full-text indexing. You retrieve relevant material in contexts you would otherwise not run across without considerable effort. Only serendipity compares, but one can't rely on chance encounters to support research.

Example: You are researching Emmeline Pankhurst and are interested in contemporary impressions of her efforts during World War I. Are there works that do not center on her sufficiently to come up under a subject heading for her, yet which include relevant information? What can Google Books offer for this research? Here are two items that turn up in a “Pankhurst” search in Google Books that would be hard to discover by systematically searching library catalogs or following bibliographic citations:

(1) You know that Mrs. Pankhurst visited Russia, intending to rally women to organize and to keep Russia in the war. But which of the 2,159 entries in WorldCat with the subject heading “World War, 1914–1918 — Soviet Union” should you look at for mention of Pankhurst? The answer from Google Books: *Runaway Russia*, by Florence MacLeod Harper (New York: Century Co., 1918). Harper writes: “I do not know what good was accomplished in the end, but I was very sorry that Mrs. Pankhurst had come to Russia, because she was foredoomed to failure... Her motive was good; she was sincere; but unfortunately the women of Russia were too busy revolutionizing to bother being organized” (p.162). Over the next several pages, Harper goes on to describe a Pankhurst meeting she attended that in her view went nowhere, and she speculates as to why Mrs. Pankhurst made no headway with Russian women. It is unlikely that a researcher would be led to the account in *Runaway Russia* by following footnotes in other scholarship, either. Harper and *Runaway Russia* are not referenced, for example, in June Purvis's recent thorough biography of Pankhurst (*Emmeline Pankhurst: A Biography* [New York: Routledge, 2002]) or in Paula Bartley's more concise study (*Emmeline Pankhurst* [New York: Routledge, 2002]).

(2) *Short Rations: An American Woman in Germany, 1915...1916*, by Madeleine Zabriskie Doty (New York: The Century Company, 1917). Its title doesn't hint that Doty

includes a chapter on “London and the Suffragettes,” about a visit she made from Germany to London in the summer of 1915. During her stay she observed with distaste a patriotic women’s procession organized by Mrs. Pankhurst, who in her view had abandoned the cause of women’s rights by urging women to take over the jobs of men who were away fighting, no matter the wages offered, in order to support the war effort. By contrast, Doty participated in a subsequent women’s march led by Emmeline’s daughter Sylvia, calling for fair wages for women workers. She noticed that Sylvia walked by her mother and sister without speaking to them. Although a diligent researcher might eventually find Doty’s book by examining all titles that share the subject heading “World War, 1914–1918 — Personal narratives,” there are more than 2,300 in WorldCat, so it would be quite a daunting task.

**“Search inside” and more.** Thus far I’ve focused on full-text results, but much can be gleaned as well from works available only in excerpts. In these cases, researchers discover books that are worth exploring further, either through purchase or in libraries. For this topic, I’ll leave Google for awhile — even though “snippets” and “limited views” in Google Books apply — and turn to another product: Amazon.com’s “Search Inside” feature. For each “Search Inside” book, with the agreement of the publisher, Amazon displays excerpts from the book and applies various word analyses. For this example, you are interested in doing a comparative study of women’s autobiography as a source of history. You would like to include the memoirs of Glückel of Hameln, a seventeenth- and eighteenth-century German Jewish businesswoman, and you want to identify some recent scholarship on her. You find Natalie Zemon Davis’s study, *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives* (Harvard University Press, 1995), through your library catalog, since Glückel is one of Davis’s three women and the cataloguer has provided a subject heading for her. You wonder if there is anything since then. Among the results from Amazon searches for Glückel (using variant spellings Glueckel or Gluckel or Glikl) are three academic books that can be “searched inside.” They are *Being For Myself Alone: Origins of Jewish Autobiography*, by Marcus Moseley (Stanford University Press, 2006), *Autobiographical Jews: Essays in Jewish Self-Fashioning*, by Michael Stanislawski (University of Washington Press, 2004), and Marion Kaplan’s *Jewish Daily Life in Germany, 1618–1945* (Oxford University Press, 2005). Searching inside the first two, you readily see from the tables of contents that Glückel is a chapter topic, so you’ll want to obtain these titles.<sup>7</sup> And you can be tantalized further by reading some of these books’ pages that deal with her, but sooner or later you will bump up against the end of the allowed excerpts. For *Jewish Daily Life in Germany*, you don’t find Glückel among the chapters or “key phrases” of people, places, and topics that Amazon notes in the book, but when you use the word search within the book, you are given thirty-six quotations in which Glückel (or, in this case, with the spelling Glikl) is mentioned, and you realize that this book will also be useful to you.

If you decide to pursue the uses of Glückel’s memoir by earlier historians before the advent of attention to women’s history, Google Books will have much to offer in “full view,” including the full text of Solomon Schechter’s 1908 essay, “The memoirs of a Jewess of the

seventeenth century [Frau Glückel von Hameln]” in his *Studies in Judaism* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society). There is a subject heading for Glückel for this book in library catalogs, so having it available in Google Books is more convenient than essential. But the power of Google Books to unearth material that is not addressed in subject headings can be seen in another hit for this search: Joseph Jacobs’ *Jewish Contribution to Civilizations: An Estimate* (Conat Press, 1920), p.263. The context is that Jacobs is taking issue with Werner Sombart’s theory that Jews are responsible for modern capitalism, calling it exaggerated. In his *The Jews and Modern Capitalism*, Sombart had discussed Glückel as part of his argument. Jacobs retorts that Christian businesspeople were similar, saying, “We might easily parallel Glückel of Hameln by Thackeray’s picture of old Mrs. Newcome, the head of the banking-house and the support of evangelical missions and charity.” Curious about the Sombart passage? No problem — it is easy to check, as both the German original (1911) and the English translation (E.P. Dutton, 1913) have already been digitized.

We are just at the dawn of mass digitization of the human record. Within the memory of current scholars, bibliographic searching jumped from tedious look-ups of single concepts in print indexes and catalogs to electronic databases that allowed for coordinated retrieval of instances that matched numerous concepts at once, and accessing full-text articles became the norm. Mass digitization of books is another giant leap whose promise is only now beginning to be glimpsed.

## Notes

1. For details about the CIC agreement announced on June 6, 2007, see <http://www.cic.uiuc.edu/programs/CenterForLibraryInitiatives/Archive/PressRelease/LibraryDigitization/index.shtml>.
2. Results from Google Books also appear within the standard, universal Google search, but mixed in within various other search results from websites, news sources, etc. A search for content within books digitized by Google is better performed within the part of Google specific to the Google Books project.
3. Webopedia.com definition: “An archive that cannot be accessed by any users. Access to the data is either limited to a set few individuals or completely restricted to all. The purpose of a dark archive is to function as a repository for information that can be used as a failsafe during disaster recovery.” See [http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/D/dark\\_archive.html](http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/D/dark_archive.html)

4. “Creative Commons” is explained on the website of that organization (<http://creativecommons.org/>) as providing “free tools that let authors, scientists, artists, and educators easily mark their creative work with the freedoms they want it to carry. You can use CC to change your copyright terms from ‘All Rights Reserved’ to ‘Some Rights Reserved.’”

5. Digital Book Index ([http://www.digitalbookindex.org/\\_publishers/publisherinfo01.htm](http://www.digitalbookindex.org/_publishers/publisherinfo01.htm), visited March 23, 2007) “lists all digital or electronic books distributed by both print or electronic publishers, including Adult, Professional, Business, Technical, Reference, and Children’s books. It does *not* generally list databases, theses, dissertations, magazines, or other unpublished works. The exceptions to the above are on-line Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Glossaries, Thesauruses, and other similar reference materials.” DBI is browsable by subjects, including “Feminism,” “Home economics,” “Witchcraft,” “Women writers and writing,” “Woman’s suffrage,” “Women: girls,” “Women: social and charitable organization,” “Women: wages: employment, incomes, cost of living,” “Women and education,” “Women and health and medicine,” “Women and industry, business, professions,” “Women and law,” “Women and work,” “Women’s roles (family and society),” and “Women’s studies: history and issues.”

6. The Celebration of Women Writers, <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/>, is a project developed in collaboration with the Online Books Page. Women writers’ books digitized under the auspices of that project or linked to from the project are also indexed in the Online Books Page. In addition, Celebration of Women Writers links to biographical and bibliographical information about women writers.

7. While it is the case that catalog records also in effect provide indexing at the chapter-heading level, through keyword searching of contents notes, not all books are so endowed. The record for the Stanislawski title has a contents note, but Moseley’s doesn’t. WorldCat provides a link to the table of contents for the Moseley book, but the content of these links is not retrieved through a WorldCat keyword search.

*[Phyllis Holman Weisbard, Distinguished Academic Librarian at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, is also Women’s Studies Librarian for the University of Wisconsin System.]*

# FEMINIST VISIONS

## FROM GIRL POWER TO EMPOWERMENT: THE THEORY, PEDAGOGY, AND PRACTICE OF GIRLS' FILM

by Sarah Hentges

**“Girls Rock!” “You Go, Girl!”  
“Girls Can Do Anything!”**

Simplistic expressions of “girl power” — connected to consumerism or uncritical celebration — permeate popular culture. Girls’ Studies has challenged such notions as these, but is still searching for models of empowerment that can do what the American Psychological Association Task Force on Adolescent Girls has identified as a challenge for the new millennium<sup>1</sup>: in the words of Jane Victoria Ward and Beth Cooper Benjamin, “for adults to support girls’ engagement in struggle at both the individual and the collective, social level: to empower them to respond to their own concerns, while recognizing that their concerns are rooted in larger systems of oppression that shape all our lives.”<sup>2</sup> We cannot expect girls or women to solve their personal problems if we do not recognize the ways in which systems and structures define and confine their collective and individual experiences. Furthermore, individual problems mirror problems in the larger culture, so the more we are able to work out these issues on individual and collective levels, the more prepared we are to tackle the “larger systems of oppression that shape all our lives.” This is the multilayered challenge that this article and the work it describes attempt to meet. In this context, “Girls’ Film” acts as lens, tool, and catalyst — as theory, pedagogy, and practice — toward a realization of this twenty-first century challenge.

### Girls’ Film: The Theory

The idea, or theory, of Girls’ Film is grounded in the relationships between and among mainstream and independent popular culture, individual lives and structural constraints, and the constructed, polarized categories of “girl” and “woman.” Girls’ Film Theory is an idea that attempts to make those relationships more obvious and more salient. For instance, because mainstream popular culture is mass-produced and mass-marketed, it is the most available form of entertainment for girls and women (as well as for boys and men). But mainstream popular culture is not simply entertainment; it also shapes people’s daily lived realities and their expectations for themselves and the world. Independent forms that challenge the limitations of mainstream culture are less accessible. But “mainstream” and “independent” are also categories that are blurred, as independent ideas infiltrate the mainstream and as independent forms adapt themselves to become more accessible to mainstream audiences. Girls’ Film recognizes the overlaps and interrelationships between mainstream and independent. Likewise, the line that marks the difference between girl and woman is always a blurry one — defined by the individual but influenced by the contradictory expectations of society and culture. Perhaps the line between girl and woman is not as important as the shared cultural and social spaces and lived experiences. Girls’ Film recognizes and exploits this overlap. Finally,

individual lives are shaped by the structures of society, but structures do not completely determine individual lives. Girls’ Film recognizes the power and potential of individual and collective challenge and the possibility of challenging and changing these structures through intervention, reflection, and activism.

In *Pictures of Girlhood: Modern Female Adolescence on Film*,<sup>3</sup> I describe the genre of Girls’ Film, which emerges from a body of popular culture that too often offers girls and women limited, stereotypical, oversexualized, and superficial roles and representations. This genre cuts across teen films, family films, dramas, comedies, and independent films and focuses on coming-of-age films with female protagonists, such as *Clueless*, *What a Girl Wants*, *Just Another Girl on the I.R.T.*, and *Girls Town*, although I also discuss films that don’t exactly fit those criteria, yet shed light on the ways girls are constructed within the mainstream, such as *American Pie* and *American Beauty*. I also consider some films that take this coming-of-age plot into the adult world, such as *Legally Blond* and *Party Girl*. Most important, I consider patterns that emerge across these films and the ways those patterns also construct the limitations and possibilities of girlhood and womanhood. The patterns reveal some of the contradictions between expectations and realities, identities and appearances, trends and truths, and desires and dreams — contradictions reflecting those that plague the lives of women and girls, yet which I contend are, or can be, powerful and

empowering. Contradictions allow a more complex picture of girlhood than do the white-washed, stereotypical, heterosexist plots and characters that dominate mainstream popular culture. This doesn't mean that we can't enjoy the predominant pictures; it only means that we must do so critically and actively, while also seeking out alternatives. Toward these ends, *Pictures of Girlhood* acts as a resource for girls and women — a catalog of popular films as well as of works that many girls and women have never even heard of — but more than that, it acts as a lens through which we can begin to make sense of ourselves and our “girl world.”

As with the term “Girls' Studies,” I use the plural possessive — thus, “Girls' Film” — to denote the ownership of this genre by a collective of girls (and women), despite the fact that most of these films are not written, directed, or produced by women, let alone by girls. The lack of women and girls in the production of this genre speaks not only to the limited ownership and control of the industry, but also to the power of interpretation and the ways in which girls and women are able to adapt and manipulate all popular culture forms in powerful and empowering ways. Thus, the Girls' Film designation is meant to highlight not simply the focus on or inclusion of girls, but their centrality and agency despite their lack of involvement in the films' production.<sup>4</sup> It also means to infuse these films with a transformative quality — a power that challenges the conventional and restrictive aspects of girlhood, particularly race, class, gender, sexuality, and citizenship. Girls and women can do this kind of interpretation with other kinds of films as well, but Girls' Film provides a kind of “textual museum,” a conversation between and among, and a space “where the girls are.”<sup>5</sup> What we *do* with Girls' Film is what's important.

### Pedagogy and Practice

Pedagogy and practice are two of the ways in which I conceptualize the application of Girls' Film in and out of the classroom. While “pedagogy” usually denotes an academic application, considering pedagogy and practice more broadly is a way of making connections — an important aspect of Girls' Film theory. As pedagogy and practice, I have used Girls' Film as

- The primary subject matter of a comparative ethnic studies course at Washington State University: “Girls' Film: Race, Identity, and Cultural Negotiations.” In this course, students were required to put the theories of Girls' Film into practice through a project.
- One of three examples of “oppositional” American popular culture — the other two being *The Simpsons* and Hip Hop — in an American studies course at Minnesota State University Moorhead: “(Oppositional) American Popular Culture.”
- A teaching tool — an embedded extracurricular assignment (film series) — in an introductory “American Cultures” class at WSU.
- A Girls' Film series connected to the Girls' Film class and offered as extra credit to students in other courses, particularly women's studies courses.<sup>6</sup>
- A topic in introductory American studies classes at both WSU and MSUM, to introduce and explain ideas like white supremacy, heteronormativity, and the social construction of race and gender.
- A subject within the topic of “Girls' Cultures and Popular

Culture” in an American studies and women's studies course called “American Girls.”

- A film series at MSUM that was planned, organized, and executed as a project by students in the “American Girls” course.
- A topic for two interactive workshops — “Girls' Education” and “Girl Power and Empowerment” — at the Expanding Your Horizons conference for seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade young women in the Fargo-Moorhead area.<sup>7</sup>
- A workshop for the student-organized CASHE (Children of Aztlán Sharing Higher Education) conference at WSU.
- A guest presentation in a fashion, merchandising, and apparels class at WSU and in “Contemporary Women's Issues” at MSUM.
- A presentation of my work at the University of Idaho Women's Center and several professional conferences.<sup>8</sup>

While all of these contexts grow directly from *Pictures of Girlhood*, this idea of Girls' Film continues to evolve through these projects and my continuing research. Some of the projects have been completed; some are still in process. In some of these contexts, students have read *Pictures of Girlhood* and other articles about girls or girls' studies; in some they have read only *Pictures of Girlhood*; and in some, they have read only the introduction or the first chapter, with Girls' Film acting as one part or theme within the broader curriculum. In other contexts, the ideas from this work have been embedded into the discussion, but the partici-

pants have not read the book at all. All of the applications have had their own successes and failures, but in all of them, Girls' Film acts as pedagogy and as practice. Girls' Film is pedagogy because it is a tool for teaching about girls as well as about the issues that are connected to girlhood individually and collectively. Girls' film is praxis as I put these ideas into practice through my curriculum and pedagogy and as I encourage students to put the ideas into practice through their projects. In some cases this pedagogy and practice stay within the classroom, but most often pedagogy and practice make a variety of connections beyond the classroom. I will discuss Girls' Film in these contexts as they apply in the classroom, specifically within the liberal arts classroom at the university level, because this has been the primary setting in which I have been able to share these ideas.<sup>9</sup> However, as Girls' Film connects the classroom with the larger campus and the surrounding community, there is potential for taking this theory and practice into other contexts, particularly girls' and women's production of new "pictures of girlhood."<sup>10</sup>

### **In the Classroom**

Within the classroom setting, I have used Girls' Film in several different contexts and applications as outlined above. Each of these contexts has held its own challenges and successes, but in general, Girls' Film has had its biggest impact as part of the subject matter for introductory courses in American Studies and Women's Studies. In a 400-level course on the subject of Girls' Film, on the other hand, I had difficulty getting the students to engage with a focus on "Race, Identity, and Cultural Negotiations." The difficulty had partly to do with the diversity of the students taking the class and the

lack of background many of them had in the disciplines of comparative ethnic studies or women's studies. About half the class were women and men of color and a few white women who were majoring or minoring in one or both of those subjects; the other half were students with little or no background in the most basic ideas from these disciplines, such as the social construction of race and gender. I also supplemented *Pictures of Girlhood* with readings from *All About the Girl*, *Colonize This!*, and other works concerned with Girls' Studies. Students tended to read my book, but not the supplemental readings, which they found more difficult and less accessible. Mostly I found that students had difficulty understanding what was meant by "cultural negotiations." Some students were able to understand and put into practice the ideas of Girls' Film and cultural negotiations, and they produced papers and projects that spoke to girls' and women's empowerment. One student produced a piece of artwork that expressed her "cultural negotiations" in each phase of her life, and another wrote a series of poems that empowered her as a woman. Another student made a set of collages meant to help other students question the ways in which girls and women are portrayed in popular culture. Other students produced "cultural intervention" projects, such as a page on MySpace called "Unleashing Lolita" and a sexual education campaign. For the most part, the students who were best able to put into practice the ideas from Girls' Film were women's studies majors or minors who were drawing on their experiences in that discipline as well as those from the Girls' Film course.

Like the students in Girls' Film who struggled with ideas of cultural negotiation, students in a 300-level American studies course on "(Oppo-

sitional) American Popular Culture" struggled with the idea of "oppositionality," particularly as we began with discussion of *The Simpsons* and the possibility of oppositional culture.<sup>11</sup> When we moved on to Girls' Film, students began to get a better idea of what oppositionality meant, and this understanding was most fully realized when we moved on to the final section of the class — Hip Hop. In this class, students noted that what they learned about Girls' Film changed their perceptions of "chick flicks" and teen films and made them realize that these kinds of films have more depth to them than originally perceived. Some students were able to understand the ways in which girls' films were oppositional to mainstream ideas about girls and girlhood, particularly as we made connections between Girls' Film and Hip Hop.

The most successful application of Girls' Film to date has been Girls' Film as an embedded extra-curricular pedagogy (a film series) in an introductory American studies course. In place of writing one three-page paper, students attended five films and discussions over the course of the semester, beginning with *Mean Girls*, continuing with *Crazy/Beautiful*, *Belly Fruit*, and *The Incredibly True Adventures of 2 Girls in Love*, and concluding with *Girls Town*. The twenty students who participated in this film series as part of their course work engaged in difficult conversations outside of class and were able to question not only the films and ideas from class but also the ways in which they had previously thought about issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Although I did not ask these students to do any assignments connected to the film series, many chose to use ideas from Girls' Film as part of their social movement projects and their final critical analysis (final exam). For instance, two students created T-shirts, posters,

and pamphlets to empower themselves and to counteract the negative messages that girls and women receive from the media. Almost all of the students chose to filter their understanding of the course subject matter — the themes of education, state violence, popular culture, and social movements — through Girls' Film. Thus, this "success" is not measured in achieved empowerment, something that is impossible to measure, but in the responses given by students in their final exams and the ways in which they applied the ideas learned in this film series to their projects. The students who participated in this embedded assignment produced some of the best and most thoughtful work of all of the students in the course. The informal setting of the film series freed students to create their own understandings and connections.

### Connecting the Classroom and the Campus/Community

Some of the student projects described above have connected the campus and the larger community, but many more such connections need to be made in order for Girls' Film to have a wider impact on girls and women, boys and men.<sup>12</sup> This is part of the idea behind the film series

I organized at WSU, as well as the film series currently being organized by students in my "American Girls" course at MSUM. The film series provides girls and women with the opportunity to watch films that they may have seen already, like *Mean Girls*, and discuss them in a setting where ideas from Girls' Film are included in the analysis and discussion. Even more important, it gives them the opportunity to see films that are not widely known or distributed, such as *Belly Fruit*, *Just Another Girl on the I.R.T.*, or *But I'm a*

*Cheerleader*. Some of the screenings at WSU were attended by more than fifty people, although fewer stayed for discussion. The film series at MSUM will be planned and facilitated by students and will be included in the events for Women's History Month.

In an attempt to bring these ideas to a population of girls, as opposed to college students, I have volunteered to do two workshops with seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-graders in the Expanding Your Horizons conference in Fargo-Moorhead. Although this conference focuses on math and science, my workshops and those organized by my students in "American Girls" will focus more generally on empowering girls, whether through math and science or not. While such conferences are important, they do little to address the interlocking systems that oppress girls and women and keep them from understanding themselves and the larger society as well as from participating in math and science. Here, Girls' Film attempts to expose these systems and bring a structural analysis and awareness into conversation with the realities that girls face in their individual and collective lives.

*"Girl power" must be more than stickers, shoelaces, and songs.*

Part of my hope in writing this article is that it will inspire projects that can take new directions and provide a framework for developing projects around Girls' Film that can move beyond "girl power" toward empowerment. Such projects could be small in scale, like a consciousness-raising group of girls and women who read *Pictures of Girlhood* and watch and discuss films; they could also be projects that happen within high schools and middle schools or after-school programs. Within the context of organizations like Reel Grrls,

Reclaim the Media, Beyondmedia Education, and GirlsFilmSchool, Girls' Film can be a powerful complement to the kinds of critique and hands-on production that these organizations make possible.<sup>13</sup> Ultimately, producing new "pictures of girlhood" and empowering real girls is what Girls' Film is all about.

### Connecting Contexts and Moving Beyond the Classroom

I have tried to explain and analyze some of the ways in which Girls' Film has been a successful project toward empowerment and some of the limitations of this idea or of the context in which it was applied. My goals and aspirations for these projects have not always been met by participants; however, the multiple levels of understanding and application speak to the complexity of the subject and the difficulty that students have in understanding their own power and agency. The theory, pedagogy, and practice of Girls' Film call for making the kinds of connections between girls and women, popular culture and lived realities, and identity and structures that politicize our struggles and move them beyond the individual level. This means that

"girl power" must be more than stickers, shoelaces, and songs; and it means that true empowerment

cannot be found on an individual level through psychological adjustment, but must be secured collectively through transformations of individuals as well as of structures and systems. This transformation is a shared project of girls and women — a challenge to white supremacy, patriarchy, and heteronormativity — that must happen in myriad contexts, on multiple levels. For a challenge this daunting, popular culture can be an accessible and salient beginning point.

Notes

1. Roberts, M.C. As cited by Ward and Benjamin. See note 2.

2. Jane Victoria Ward and Beth Cooper Benjamin, "Women, Girls, and the Unfinished Work of Connection: A Critical Review of American Girls' Studies," in *All About the Girl: Culture, Power, and Identity*, ed. Anita Harris (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp.15–25. (The statement quoted in the text is from pp.23–24.) In this piece, Ward and Benjamin "map a series of shifts in the study of girls' development in the United States since the 1990s" (p.15). They argue that the kinds of connections that were made between women and girls in the first wave of girls' studies are missing as girls' studies has become more specialized, less political, more centered on the individual's problems, more popularized, and less able to deal with the realities of a multicultural America. Most important, they argue, "we have lost sight of how these efforts were meant to save ourselves as well" (p.23).

3. Sarah Hentges, *Pictures of Girlhood: Modern Female Adolescence on Film* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006). [Editor's note: This book, along with several others on girls and popular culture, will be reviewed in the next issue of Feminist Collections.]

4. The need for increased involvement by girls and women in the production of media and popular culture is addressed and remedied by several authors and organizations. See notes 10 and 13.

5. In her foreword to *All About the Girl*, Michelle Fine describes this book as a kind of "textual museum" and "transnational conversation "between"" (p.xv). *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up*

*Female with the Mass Media* is the title of Susan Douglas's book about popular culture and its relationship to women of the Baby Boomer generation.

6. The Girls' Film Series was also advertised to the rest of the university through posters. However, it was primarily attended by students in the American Cultures class, and most students attending who were not in the American Cultures class did not stay for the discussion. A few students brought friends to the films, and at least one friend attended the entire series. As a more formal or embedded assignment, this setting can be a powerful space for understanding basic women's studies concepts.

7. Drawing on girls' studies more generally, students in the "American Girls" course will also plan a workshop according to each of these themes.

8. A version of this paper was presented at the NWSA conference in June 2006. Early versions of this work were presented at several conferences, including the Oregon State University Conference on Gender and Culture (April 2001) and The Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery (March 2000).

9. Because of my social, geographical, and professional locations, I have not had the time or opportunity to move Girls' Film very far beyond the college classroom.

10. In *Girls Make Media* (Routledge, 2006), Mary Celeste Kearny discusses the ways in which girls are producing media in a variety of formats, including films, magazines, musical recordings, and websites. Such production is made possible through organizations that provide girls with ideological and practical tools for critiquing and producing media. See note 13.

11. The book we discussed during this section of the course — *Leaving Springfield: The Simpsons and the Possibility of Oppositional Culture* — discussed the idea of "oppositonality" very overtly. But despite that overt discussion in the book, this was the context students struggled with most.

12. While my focus here is on girls and women, it is important to note that these projects have also been powerful interventions in the ways in which boys and men see girls and women, most often through boys' and men's realization that these films are not the shallow "flicks" that they assumed they were. The importance of these kinds of interventions cannot be overlooked, since changing our culture means changing the ways in which boys and men are taught to see girls and women, as well as the ways in which girls and women are taught to see themselves and others.

13. Without the overt idea of "Girls' Film," these organizations already do some of the work I describe here: media literacy programs, mentoring, and hands-on film production skills for girls. My hope is to connect with such organizations in the near future. Reel Grrls: <http://www.reelgrrls.org>; Beyondmedia Education: <http://www.beyondmedia.org/gam.html>; Reclaim the Media: <http://www.mediaand-women.org>; GirlsFilmSchool: <http://girlsfilmschool.csf.edu/>.

[Sarah Hentges is finishing a one-year assistant professor position in American Studies and Women's Studies at Minnesota State University Moorhead. She is looking forward to her next few writing projects and to further developing a Web resource for girls' film that can be found at <http://www.girls-film.com>.]

## IS “EDUCATION” THE ANSWER? FILMS ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL IMBALANCES IN INDIA

by Heidi Fischle

**SHAKTI: THE POWER OF WOMEN.** 54 mins. color. 2004. Distributed by Films for the Humanities & Sciences/ Films Media Group. Item# BVL35109. VHS (ISBN 978-1-4213-2843-0) or DVD-R (ISBN 978-1-4213-2844-7): purchase, \$129.95. Streaming video: 1-year lease, \$64.98. Website: [http://www.films.com/id/12298/Shakti\\_The\\_Power\\_of\\_Women.htm](http://www.films.com/id/12298/Shakti_The_Power_of_Women.htm)

**RUNAWAY GROOMS.** 52 mins. color. 2006. Produced and directed by Ali Kazimi. Distributed by Filmmakers Library, 124 East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016; phone: (212) 808-4983; e-mail: [info@filmmakers.com](mailto:info@filmmakers.com)/. VHS or DVD purchase: \$295.00; VHS rental: \$85.00. Website: <http://filmmakers.com/indivs/RunawayGrooms.htm>

**A PYRAMID OF WOMEN.** 20 mins. color. 2004. Directed by Cheryl Kanekar. Distributed by Cinema Guild, 115 West 30th Street, Suite 800, New York, NY 10001; phone: (800) 723-5522; email: [info@cinemaguild.com](mailto:info@cinemaguild.com). Code 2220. DVD or VHS: purchase: \$155.00; rental: \$65.00. Website: [http://www.cinemaguild.com/catalog/catalog\\_women\\_studies.htm](http://www.cinemaguild.com/catalog/catalog_women_studies.htm) (scroll down to film title).

**NALINI BY DAY, NANCY BY NIGHT.** 27 mins. color. Hindi/English, subtitled. 2005. A film by Sonali Gulati. Distributed by Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, Suite 500L, New York, NY 10013; phone: (212) 925-0606; e-mail: [info@wmm.com](mailto:info@wmm.com). Order # W06901. VHS or DVD: purchase: \$195.00; rental: \$60.00. Website: <http://www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c682.shtml>

It should come as no surprise that the most commonly suggested remedy for persistent human rights violations and social imbalances, especially those that are maintained in the name of tradition, is education. The four films reviewed here rest on this theme. Each film argues, in its own way, that if enough people are educated, they will recognize the imbalances and abuses of power that have long been accepted as part of cultural tradition, and work to dismantle the beliefs and practices in which those abuses and imbalances are embodied. The beauty of all of these films is that they allow us to hear the resonant tone of a call for change that a chorus of strong female voices creates.

*Shakti: The Power of Women* makes the most emphatic argument against the continuation of certain traditional practices — such as child marriage and the maintenance of the varna (caste) system — that, over the course of In-

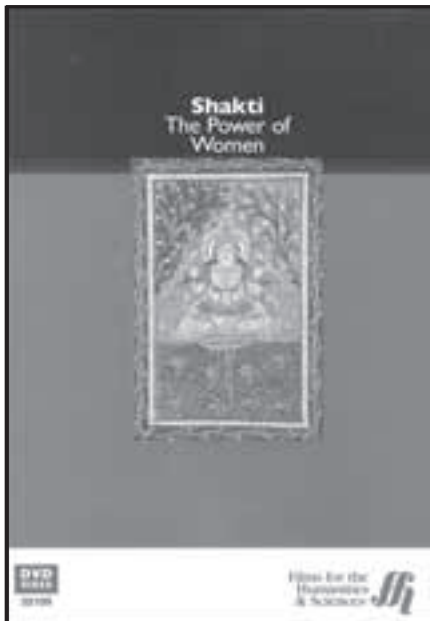
dia's history, have essentially marginalized and/or endangered the majority of the country's population. The film consists of four vignettes, each documenting a different geographical area and addressing a women's rights (human rights) issue prevalent in that area. The film aims to make known not only the persistence of what can only be considered human rights violations, but also the methodical and compassionate efforts made by women and men alike to fight against these imbalances that have been ushered into the present by the heavy hand of tradition.

Part One takes on the sensitive issue of child marriage, which, despite being prohibited since 1961, continues to be a daunting problem, with approximately thirty million such marriages taking place each year. Many of the child brides are given away in marriage before the age of ten; they are aptly said to have had their lives stolen

from them. These girls are “used in every way,” barely making it to middle age. Significantly, the culprit in this theft is considered to be traditional culture.

Likewise, Parts Two and Four address equally problematic social issues pertaining specifically to women. Part Two outlines the establishment of a member-owned organization (SEWA) that provides poor, rural, working women (who make up eighty percent of India's female population) with a place to do banking, access credit, and insure themselves and their families. Women who would otherwise be left isolated, working for mere rupees a day, are granted a means of establishing a type of worker identity that effectively brings them together and makes it possible to contend with the trials of their daily lives, while also being able to think about a more stable life

in the future. Part Four takes on the issue of members of the Indian population most commonly referred to as “untouchable.” Here again, traditional culture stands accused — in this case, of terminally subordinating a group of people who, simply because of their social status, are subjected to all manner of abuses with little or no recourse.

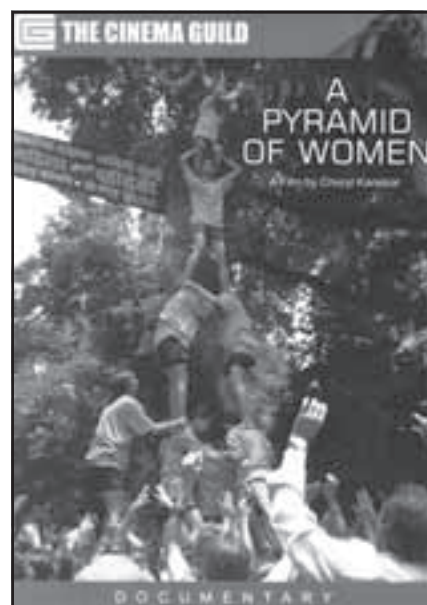


Part Three, while certainly connected to these other issues thematically, makes a distinctly different statement. Although the entire film is essentially calling for global concern over the issues it raises, the third part seeks to make a particularly global statement about the destruction of natural biodiversity in the name of corporate capital gain. It provides an example of how a few committed women (in this case, those who prevented the deforestation around their village by “hugging trees”) can supply the impetus and inspiration for change on a communal level and even far beyond. It goes on to highlight the work of Dr. Vandana Shiva, herself inspired by the conviction of the tree-hugging women, who has formed a

biodiversity farm as an example of how to have “solidarity with all of life.” She is a driving force against the destructive use of pesticides that are toxifying much of India’s agriculture.

The purpose of telling the stories in this film is not just to bemoan the deep cultural embeddedness of traditional practices, but also to illustrate how people can actively seek, through education, to initiate change. The implication here, as throughout the film, is that in order for drastic cultural shifts to actually occur, the foundational beliefs that have informed such practices throughout history must be called into question. The activists interviewed for this film stand firm in their commitment that it is “better to die fighting” for what is right than to allow things to continue as they have been. For the fight to be successful, those already armed with the power of education must continue to reach out in acknowledgment of the stoicism, bravery, and practical sense of those who have not been so fortunate. The importance of this film is that it bridges the gap between educated and non-educated. It makes the statement that all must participate if true change is to occur.

The theme of traditional culture — or, rather, the implications of following traditional practices in contemporary society — continues in *Runaway Grooms*. This documentary follows the stories of two women (Namita and Sonia) — two families, really — whose expectations of an appropriate arranged marriage are drastically dismantled when each of the chosen, Indian-born, Canadian-resident grooms takes off after the wedding with the dowry but not with the bride, not to be heard from until a year later, when Canadian divorce papers suddenly arrive in the hands of the confused young woman. Although the two women documented here come from



different backgrounds, the financial devastation incurred by the families is equally troubling. Each is left with no lawful means of reclaiming the lost money or property presented as dowry. Perhaps even more devastating is the social stigma of being a divorcée.

The film illuminates the effects of this “disturbing trend,” which is said to have “shattered the lives of at least 10,000 women in India,” while at the same time showing the strength that human beings have to fight back against injustice. For both Namita and Sonia, the loss of an imagined ideal marriage has forced them out from behind the confines of traditional life. Each is left with the choice either to retreat from life in shame or to move forward, fight back, and tell her story.

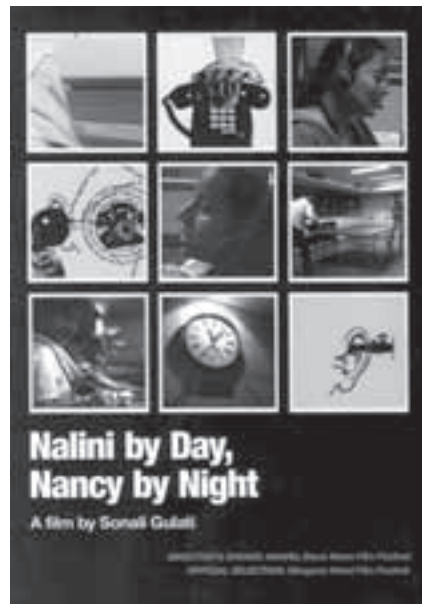
While the film does not necessarily address directly the damage that can come from such traditional marriage practices, it does a nice job of presenting the cases in raw form. There is a sense that the women, once confronted with the stark reality of their situations, are no longer speaking from a fantastical notion of a traditional ideal, but rather from a deep sense of knowing what it means to struggle in life. The sociocultural commentary is implicit

in the effects that the situations have on Namita, Sonia, and their respective families.

Of course, it is not only by reacting to negative experiences that people find within themselves the desire to challenge traditions. *A Pyramid of Women* tells of a group of Indian women from a “working-class textile-mill neighborhood” in Mumbai (Bombay) who have come together to alter their potential as participants in the Hindu religious festival Gokulashtami, which celebrates the birth of Lord Krishna. The film follows the course of events as community members seek to put together a team of women and girls who are capable of climbing their way into a human pyramid several stories high — normally a competition reserved for men — and break open hanging pots representing Krishna’s mischievous childhood behavior.

The underlying theme being explored is whether or not this shift in religious practice and belief is a result of economic factors affecting this particular area. As the textile mills are closed down and men lose their jobs, women begin to take over as the main sources of monetary support for the family. Within this atmosphere of shifting gender roles comes a reinterpretation of tradition. *A Pyramid of Women* represents the initiation of change in which women are no longer passive onlookers (as the Krishna myth implies), but rather active participants calling on Krishna to support them while they do the climbing for a change. Noteworthy is the fact that many of the young women choosing to participate in this event are university students. One says confidently that a woman can be an engineer, a doctor, even a pilot; so, why not this? In building this human pyramid, this community is saying that it accepts the possibility of change. Community members are coming together to create something new.

The last film under review, *Nalini By Day, Nancy By Night*, has quite a different tone from the others. It explores the ever-expanding culture of call centers. These centers, set up throughout India, are established to serve companies in the U.S., the U.K., and Australia, and positions in them are considered the most sought-after jobs by young, educated Indians. What the film does particularly well is illustrate the eerie distance between



call-center life — a life that happens while others sleep — and the life that awakens naturally with the New Delhi sun.

The call center is a culture in itself; management is focused on securing a reality disconnected from anything Indian — including the granting of non-Indian names to all employees so as to eliminate any chance that a customer might mispronounce a name. Interestingly, the film does not explicitly take up a women’s issue; rather, it suggests that call-center culture is gender-neutral. One requirement for employment is to be able to have successful

interactions with customers in English, unhindered by accent. The goal is for the customer to think she is talking to someone in her own country. Of course, what this implies is that education is a key factor in acquiring one of these positions — even though the educational degrees these employees have earned were certainly not intended to build a call-center labor force. Here one begins to see that the notion of education as the key to “progress” and “development” cannot be taken as a singular remedy for societal ills. *Nalini by Day, Nancy by Night* makes the very important point that education too can be empty, if undertaken with only the goal of economic success.

When the films are brought together in this way, a commentary emerges, asking what exactly the education *is* that is being suggested. In one sense, each of the films seems to rely heavily on the murky sentiment that education will alleviate the sufferings brought into the present by the uncritical repetition of traditional practices, beliefs, and customs. It is true that in order for change to occur there must be education — there must be an influx of new ideas, motivations, and realities. But I think the message presented here about the nature of education is much more pointed. These films teach us that there must be a practical, realistic application of knowledge in order for change to begin to occur. The key is to put what you know to the test.

[Heidi Fischle holds an M.A. from and is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia at UW–Madison. Her research emphasis is on Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia.]

# E-SOURCES ON WOMEN AND GENDER

Our website ([www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/](http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/)) includes all recent issues of this column, 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.

## WEBSITES...

The **AMERICAN-ROMANIAN PARTNERSHIP FOR GENDER EQUALITY (ARPGE)** has roots in Peace Corps work in the Eastern European country. The organization's website at <http://www.equality-romania.org> explains the group's specific aim of "working with our Romanian partner organizations to end domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination in Romania." One of ARPGE's current initiatives is to build a new domestic violence shelter.

To call this a website is a huge understatement: **DIOTIMA: MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY OF WOMEN AND GENDER IN THE ANCIENT WORLD**, at <http://www.stoa.org/diotima/>, offers translated works; bibliographies and essays; links to art collections, biblical studies resources, and course syllabi; and conference announcements and calls for papers. It's huge.

**EMINISM**: "Putting the Emi back in Feminism since 1975." Emi Koyama, that is: "a multi-issue social justice slut synthesizing feminist, Asian, survivor, dyke, queer, sex worker, intersex, genderqueer, and crip politics..." You can read her entries on "intersex, sex workers' rights, (queer) domestic violence, genderqueer, anti-racism, and other issues" at <http://www.eminism.org/>.

## ... A PODCAST...

**CHICKONOMICS CHAT** at <http://chickonomicschat.podomatic.com/> is "designed to educate and inspire women in business, education, entertainment, politics, science, and sports." The most recent podcast (May 29, 2007) is titled "Learn How Title IX is Being Threatened After 35 Years!" Lisa Orrell, the "chick" behind this e-source, also has a blog at <http://www.chickonomics.com/wordpress/>.

## ...A ZINE FOR JEWISH WOMEN...

Called **614** (an allusion to the 613 Jewish *mitzvot* or commandments), this online-only zine from Hadassah-Brandeis Institute has three issues posted so far at <http://www.brandeis.edu/hbi/614>. "The idea of 614 is not that there is one commandment missing," write the editors. "Rather it is about the idea [that] there is always room for innovation and exploration. At a complicated time when women are donating eggs, animals are being cloned and Hollywood equates beauty with emaciation, we must continue to probe, explore our values, and talk to one another. Hey, we Jews have an incredibly long history of doing this. So why not continue to look at the ideas that impact all of us in one central place?" Themes of the first three issues: "The Surprising Power of Jewish Names," "The Must-Have Books from the Twenty-First Century," and "Is Judaism a Girl Thing?"

## ... ARCHIVES...

**MICHIGAN FEMINIST STUDIES**, a graduate student journal, now offers full-text articles from issues published from 1978 to 1997, plus the back catalogue of *The University of Michigan Papers in Women's Studies (1974-1978)* at <http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/mfs/>.

A **FINDING AID** to the archived **KATHRYN E. CLARENBACH PAPERS** at the University of Wisconsin is available at <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/wiarchives.uw-lib-clarenbach>. Political scientist Kay Clarenbach started a continuing education program for women at the UW in 1962 — "a program which launched her leadership in the women's movement in Wisconsin and the country." Among other firsts: Clarenbach was the first Chair of the Board for the National Organization for Women. (Note: The archive itself is not digitized; this URL is for the finding aid.)

## ...AND OTHER ONLINE PUBLICATIONS...

Librarian Kristi Palmer at IUPUI (Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis) has developed a lesson plan called **IMAGE-ING OUR FOREMOTHERS: ART AS A MEANS TO CONNECTING WITH WOMEN'S HISTORY**. The instructional guide, available at

<http://idea.iupui.edu/dspace/bitstream/1805/267/1/ImageForemothersMural.pdf>, involves having students (high-school, college, or intergenerational) use image databases for research, and results in the painting of a mural.

Get your statistics here! **WOMEN, MINORITIES AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING**. National Science Foundation, 2007.



Miriam Greenwald

316p. <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/wmpd/pdf/nsf07315.pdf>. A two-page introduction and six pages of technical notes are the only prose here; the rest is numbers, in figures and tables — e.g., “Demographic characteristics of employed scientists and engineers, by disability status and sex”; “Science and engineering faculty, by sex and highest degree”; “Median number of subordinates of scientists and engineers employed in business or industry, by sex, race/ethnicity, and disability status”; “Intentions of freshmen to major in S&E fields, by race/ethnicity and sex”; and “Median annual salary of scientists and engineers employed full time, by sex, broad occupation, age, and race/ethnicity.”

More statistics here! **THE AMERICAN WOMAN ON THE WEB: A STATISTICAL PORTRAIT** provides information previously published in print in the biennial report *The American Woman* by the Women’s Research & Education Institute (WREI). Now available only online as a set of PDFs at <http://www.wrei.org/AmericanWomanWeb.htm>, the report still covers the broad areas of Education, Health, Employment, Earnings and Benefits, and Economic Security. “However,” explains an introductory note, “some sections that appeared in earlier editions are not included in this one. The Demographics section (Section One) is still

in preparation. For current information on Women in the Military (Section Seven), please visit WREI’s **Women in the Military** project [<http://www.wrei.org/WomeninMilitary.htm>]. For current information about elected officials and appointed women (Section Eight), we suggest the **Center for American Women in Politics** [<http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts/Officeholders/cong-current.html>].”

Would you like some text with those numbers? **WOMEN OF COLOR HEALTH DATA BOOK: ADOLESCENTS TO SENIORS, 2006**. U.S. Office of Research on Women’s Health, Office of the Director, National Institutes of Health. This 194-page report at <http://orwh.od.nih.gov/pubs/WomenofColor2006.pdf> offers many pages of text interspersed with figures and tables, as well as numerous references and an index. Random fact of interest: “The prevalence of osteoporosis is highest among Asian women, followed by Hispanic women, white women, Native American women, and black women” (p.134).

### ...INCLUDING SOME ABOUT HIV/AIDS AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH...

**INTEGRATING THE FIELDS OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND HIV/AIDS**. Joan Kaufman & Lisa Messersmith, 2005. 52p. <http://paa2006.princeton.edu/download.aspx?submissionId=60226>. “This report highlights the importance and urgency of collaboration between the fields of SRH [sexual and reproductive health] and HIV/AIDS in the context of weakened health systems, competing development challenges, and the feminization of the AIDS epidemic. After reviewing recent efforts, highlighting positive values that each field can bring to the partnership, and analyzing gaps and shortcomings in the current response, we offer several recommendations for developing a policy, program, and research agenda that fosters greater collaboration in responding to the worsening AIDS epidemic while meeting the sexual health needs of individuals and communities worldwide. Each field can learn from the other, gain better access to populations in need of services, benefit from gender and rights perspectives articulated for each field, and better focus resources and attention on the multiple needs of individuals, families, and communities.”

Maria de Bruyn of the health and reproductive-rights organization **IPAS** has compiled a literature review and recommendations for improving “reproductive health care for women living with HIV/AIDS.” The ninety-five page document, ***HIV/AIDS AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH: SENSITIVE AND NEGLECTED ISSUES***, includes 342 reference citations; it is available at [http://www.ipas.org/publications/en/HIVLITREV\\_E05\\_en.pdf](http://www.ipas.org/publications/en/HIVLITREV_E05_en.pdf)

### **...AND SOME ABOUT THE SAFE USE OF TECHNOLOGY.**

The **NATIONAL ONLINE RESOURCE CENTER ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN** has a special collection of papers, articles, reports, websites, and more “focusing on the use of technology as it impacts and intersects with violence against women and children.” Find the

***TECHNOLOGY SAFETY & ADVOCACY SPECIAL COLLECTION*** at <http://www.VAWnet.org> (in the “Help & Safety” area).

### **FINALLY, NOT ALL E-SOURCES ARE FREE...**

...but if you're a lucky drama scholar, your university library will pay for this one: **NORTH AMERICAN WOMEN'S DRAMA** from Alexander Street — “the full text of 1,500 plays written from colonial times to the present by more than 100 women from the United States and Canada. Many of the works are rare, hard to find, or out of print. Almost a quarter of the collection consists of previously unpublished plays.” Details are at <http://alexanderstreet.com/products/wodr.htm>.

○ Compiled by JoAnne Lehman

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Looking for film/video ideas for a women's studies course?  
Check out the **WAVE** database:

## ***Women's AudioVisuals in English***

**Women's Audio Visuals In English (WAVE)** is a database maintained by the University of Wisconsin System Women's Studies Librarian's Office that lists documentary, experimental, and feature film and video productions by and about women, with information drawn from distributors' and producers' catalogs and websites, reviews in periodicals, filmographies, reference works, and library catalogs.

**<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/WAVE>**

# NEW REFERENCE WORKS IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

## AUTHORS

Faye Hammill, Esme Miskimmin, & Ashlie Sponenberg, eds., *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BRITISH WOMEN'S WRITING, 1900–1950*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. 343p. \$95.00, ISBN 1-4039-1692-6.

Reviewed by Diana Wheeler

Is the purpose of an encyclopedia to report and reflect history, or to inform and shape history? Are the two impulses ever completely separable? I suppose one's perspective depends on with which side of the establishment one identifies, both as a reader and as a writer of history. The *Encyclopedia of British Women's Writing, 1900–1950* plays this dual role, in that part of its work is to rescue neglected authors from complete obscurity, part of it to recognize the established. To rescue some writers' rightful place in literary history, a campaign not just to reflect, but also to inscribe culture is at the root of the encyclopedic effort.

The editors of this excellent work succeed well. This encyclopedia is a rich and interesting read, busy with cross-references and topic entries that encourage further contextual explorations. There are seventy-two entries, and three useful appendices: pseudonyms, minor writers, and a timeline. Also included are an annotated bibliography and indices by author and topic. Source material includes both primary and secondary materials. Depending on the relative difficulty of finding information about each author, sources vary. For example, in the case of writer Magdalen King-Hall, her absence from

any previous literary dictionary necessitated use of "a whole range of print and internet sources, including historical maps of Ireland, genealogical websites, library catalogues and film databases" (p.ix).

In describing the young King-Hall, whose vibrant literary career has gone unrecorded by "any literary dictionary or reference work," Hammill makes the case for the scope, coverage, and philosophy behind the *Encyclopedia*: "By choosing a timespan which is narrow in comparison to that of other encyclopedias, we have been able to be more inclusive, to offer a very detailed picture of the range and variety of women's literary activity in this period" and to "anchor the women's writing of 1900–50 firmly in its literary, intellectual, and historical contexts"(p.ix)

Here we have a discrete collection of author entries that are richly detailed and cross-referenced with entries that provide social, political, and cultural context. The entry for "Nesbit, E. (1858–1924)" is followed by "Net Book Agreement" and "Newspapers and Periodicals." As for the letter P, we have: "Pacifism"; "Pankurst, Emmeline"; "Pankhurst, Sylvia"; "Panter-Downes, Mollie"; "Pargeter, Edith"; "Party Politics"; "Persephone Books"; "Pitter, Ruth"; "Plaidy, Jean"; "Poetry Anthologies"; "Pope, Jessie"; "Potter, Beatrix"; "Prix Femina-Vie Heureuse"; "Prostitution"; "Psychoanalysis"; and "Publishers."

As a reader, my only concern regards the possible arbitrariness of some of the historical context entries. If "Titanic," then why not "Hindenburg"

— especially when the Titanic entry contains nothing particular to women or British women's writing? This was one of the only entries that left me scratching my head in the context of the work as a whole. Its inclusion may reflect the editors' struggle to define and limit the scope of the *Encyclopedia*...or perhaps there is a connection to be made between the Titanic and British women's writing that is not made here. I also found it curious that there is no entry for "Class," when surely class has played a role in the obscurity of some women writers. Lots of fun can be found here, though. My favorite: the entry for "Brows" (high-brow, middlebrow, and lowbrow).

As stated, this encyclopedia captures both the famous and the obscure. There are differing lengths of bibliographic entry, as well as differences in degree of detail and originality. Such editorial judgments are explained in the introduction. As would be expected, Virginia Woolf is here, as are Stevie Smith and Daphne Du Maurier. For lesser-known writers such as the Irish poet Kathryn Tynan, or the English journalist and poet Olive Moore (Constance Vaughan), an entry here marks a beginning, a hoped-for foundation for future biographers to take interest. While browsing through, one cannot help but notice the circular nature of literary scholarship, as authors are at turns created and re-created, reflected and revised.

With entries written by more than seventy contributors, one intriguing aspect of this work is the diversity of

opinion regarding certain authors. This can be observed particularly in the case of authors who have their own entries and also show up in topic entries. In “Modernism,” for example, Deborah Parsons poses Virginia Woolf’s marginalization as a pioneer of modernism, “her aesthetic sidelined as domestic, enclosed, and insubstantial...in part the result of Eliot’s appropriation of Joyce” (p.169).

Woolf’s biographical entry, written by Bonnie Kime Scott, takes a more traditional view, asserting her place in “canonical modernism, alongside T.S. Eliot...and James Joyce” (p.286). The *Encyclopedia of British Women’s Writing 1900–1950* gets me thinking about why some literary works fall into obscurity while others gain fame over time. Perhaps it begins with simply getting published. In the high-, middle-, and low-brow worlds that are literature today, the qualifications for publication are endless, many of them unimpressive: Marketability; Fashionability; Genre; Class; Political, Social, Educational, and Historical Context and Constructs Thereof; Voyeuristic Appeal...but then there are Actual Beauty, Literary Merit, Brilliance, Insightfulness, Richness, Humor, and Wisdom, to name a few. In the end, Marketability reigns supreme.

In the period between 1900 and 1950 in Britain, these factors would all have played a role. Additional critical factors would have included social status, access to education, time for intellectual and/or literary pursuits, and economic independence. While it is probably true that great literature has inherent qualities that make it appealing across the generations, it is also true that education can serve to elevate even a mediocre talent. Conversely, native brilliance can be squashed by poverty and various social pressures. Lack

of education for many women in this period logically translates into much unproven talent, both great and modest. Yet surely the period between 1900 and 1950 produced male writers who fell short of genius, yet have enjoyed fame, recognition, and inclusion in canons, due to the strategic advantages afforded by being male.

I suppose recognition helps, for a start, then. The less well-known British women writers cataloged here represent some real, neglected talent, at least as deserving of mention as some of their famous male contemporaries. These are historical figures, irrespective of the high-, middle-, or low-brow nature of their work. It is upon this philosophy that the *Encyclopedia of British Women’s Writing, 1900–1950* is built. Without claiming that every entrant here is a great genius, the editors simply try to redistribute the wealth, to capture the historic value of these women before they go completely missing.

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Elizabeth Blakesley Lindsay, *GREAT WOMEN MYSTERY WRITERS, 2<sup>nd</sup> EDITION*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007. 352p. \$65.00, ISBN 978-0313334283.

*Reviewed by Helene Androski*

This second edition updates but does not supplant the original volume by Kathleen Gregory Klein, published by Greenwood Press in 1994. The new edition covers ninety contemporary English-language writers, including

many new to the field since 1994, and updates the entries of many from the former edition, but it has dropped the entries for nineteenth- and early twentieth-century writers who are now deceased but still important. It claims to have picked up where Klein left off, and rightly so. Selected on the basis of awards won or nominations, commercial success, and critical reception, the writers represented here are the significant contributors to the genre today. I was pleased to see that the pioneering Marcia Muller, inexplicably omitted in 1994, has been given her due in this edition. Each entry, running three to four pages, consists of a brief biography; an overview of major works and themes, including information on what type of mystery the author writes; a brief and mostly upbeat overview of critical reception, including nominations and awards won; and a bibliography of works by and about the author.

There are several useful appendices: a master index of character names, professions, and settings for each author, followed by separate indexes for series character, series setting, and sleuth type; chronological lists of the major awards — Edgar, Agatha, Anthony, Dagger, McCavity, Nero Wolfe, and Shamus — when won by a woman; a history of the Sisters in Crime organization; and a general bibliography, unfortunately not annotated. An introductory essay, supplemented by another unannotated bibliography, discusses the history of women’s participation in the genre and gives a slight scholarly patina, but this work is more a celebration than a critical analysis of women mystery writers. As such, it is a useful reader’s advisory tool for public librarians or an accessible reference for fans looking for a good read. Unfortunately, the Klein edition is now out of print; the two editions together would provide a good overview from classic to contemporary.

[Helene Androski recently retired from University of Wisconsin–Madison’s Memorial Library, where she was a reference and instruction librarian. She teaches an annual “History and Mystery” class for the UW–Madison’s Division of Continuing Studies.]

## BIOGRAPHY

Anne Commire & Deborah Klezmer, eds., **DICTIONARY OF WOMEN WORLDWIDE: 25,000 WOMEN THROUGH THE AGES**. Farmington Hills, MI: Thomson Gale (Waterford, CT: Yorkin Publications), 2007. 3 vols. \$340.00, ISBN 978-0787675851.

Reviewed by Vicki Tobias

Veronica Gambaro, Joan Beaufort, and Ripeka Wharawhara Love. Although each of these three women was once renowned in her own right, it is doubtful that mention of their names would elicit recognition now. While a contemporary biographical dictionary might offer only a standard sampling of entries about women such as Susan B. Anthony, Rosa Parks, Eleanor Roosevelt, and other well-documented figures, the *Dictionary of Women Worldwide* can accurately identify the aforementioned as, respectively, a sixteenth-century Italian poet, the fifteenth-century Countess of Westmoreland, and a nineteenth-century New Zealand tribal leader.

The *Dictionary of Women Worldwide* was envisioned to rectify what the editors describe as a shocking scarcity of entries, in traditional biographical dictionaries, about women — a situation that renders researchers helpless and frustrated when seeking basic biographical information about lesser-known women throughout history. This single source for researching women spans time periods and subject areas to include remarkable women from the

thirty-second century B.C.E. through the twentieth century C.E., engaged in a variety of roles and occupations including the arts, social organizations, politics, athletics, and science and technology. The dictionary has an international focus and includes many women who may be well known within their own countries but are rarely mentioned in many North American-centric reference resources. Although the majority of entries do present North American or European women, the editors have made a conscious attempt to be globally inclusive.

As a reference resource, the *Dictionary of Women Worldwide* succeeds where other similar works fall short. An excellent source for “ready reference,” the dictionary provides entries that present basic biographical information and provide a strong foundation for further exploration. The entries are longer than those found in conventional dictionaries and are well-researched to clarify, for example, name variations and marriage anomalies that often confound scholars researching women. Further, it is evident that the contributors took care to research female lineage, an often insurmountable task, yet critical for establishing accurate biographical information about women.

This *Dictionary* is substantial — 2,572 pages divided into three volumes (1, A–L; 2, M–Z; and 3, Indices). Volume 1 includes genealogical charts for royal families throughout history. Immensely valuable for establishing context and illuminating familial relationships, the charts are grouped alphabetically by country, with “House Title” to identify ruling house or family. Volume 3 offers three indexes that provide additional access points for individual entries: an Era Index, listing entries chronologically from thirty-second century B.C.E. through the twentieth century C.E.; a Geographic Index, list-

ing entries by country of origin, using both modern and ancient designations; and an Occupational Index, organized by roles or occupations, again using both contemporary and archaic terms. For information about women from Beverly Aadland (twentieth-century American actress) to Nina Zhuskova (twentieth-century Soviet track athlete), the *Dictionary of Women Worldwide* is an admirable “first stop” resource and offers scholars at all levels a much-needed starting point for more in-depth research.

[Vicki Tobias is a digital services librarian/project manager for the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections Center. She maintains an interest in women’s issues and was recently appointed to the UW–Madison Committee on Women in the University.]

## EDUCATION

Christine Skelton, Becky Francis, & Lisa Smulyan, eds., **THE SAGE HANDBOOK OF GENDER AND EDUCATION** (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2006). 560p. bibl. index. \$130.00, ISBN 9781412907927.

Reviewed by Jennifer L. Smith

Masculine or feminine, man or woman, girl or boy — what impact does society’s view of gender have on the way people learn? The editors of the *Sage Handbook of Gender and Education* provide a guidebook to different feminist theoretical positions on gender and education in an attempt to shed light on how society’s idea of gender affects how we educate students.

The handbook is a compilation of essays, from writers mostly in academic positions, on differing issues about gender and education. The writing

style is college-level and beyond. Thirty-five essays, each providing extensive reference lists for further reading, are divided into five sections: Gender Theory and Methodology; Gender and the Educational Sectors; Gender and School Subjects; Gender, Identity, and Educational Sites; and Working in Schools and Colleges. Contributor biographies appear at the beginning of the volume, and a comprehensive index is provided at the end.

Although the editors' stated purpose was to provide international scope for the issue of gender and education, they fell short of finding a wide range of researchers and writers from diverse places around the globe. The majority of the text's contributors are from the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. Only a few are located in or study the cultures of Scandinavia, Africa, or Asia. While it can be understood that finding writers and researchers outside of the West who publish in English must be a challenge, the lack of contributors from other areas, including developing countries, diminishes the promised international scope of feminist theories on gender and education.

If the reader looks beyond the lack of international research in the text, this handbook gives a broad and informative overview of recent feminist scholarship about gender and education that will be helpful to both students and educators. *The Sage Handbook of Gender and Education* would be an important resource for academic libraries at colleges or universities that have programs or courses in education and/or women's and gender studies.

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## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Eileen M. Trauth, ed., *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GENDER AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY*. Hershey, PA: Idea Group Reference, 2006. 2 vols. 1,451p. index. \$525.00, ISBN 1-59140-815-6 (online access only, for libraries only, \$420.00). Website: <http://www.idea-group.com/>.

*Reviewed by Sue Dentinger*

To rightly be called a reference work, a resource must meet four main requirements: It must be accurate, up-to-date, and comprehensive in coverage, and it must have an accessible organizational structure. The editor and publisher of this first edition of the *Encyclopedia of Gender and Information Technology* have undertaken the massive and overdue task of assembling a wonderful set of introductory four- to seven-page articles on a variety of current topics dealing with gender issues of all sorts and covering many parts of the world. I can't claim to have read all 213 articles, but those I have read are impressive for their readability and, from what I can see, their accuracy. They are also up-to-date in content.

Where this encyclopedia fails is in its organizational structure, which is all but non-existent. And one consequence of that failure is that the "comprehensive coverage" requirement is nearly impossible to verify — although as far as I can tell, there was at least an attempt made to be comprehensive. Articles are arranged alphabetically by article *title*, making it very hard to know whether you are seeing all other articles on the same or a similar topic. This complete lack of topical structure caused me to wonder why the publisher would choose to call this clearly needed and well-researched work an *encyclopedia*, when the articles themselves really have not been coordinated

in any fashion — a rather large flaw in a print resource! Fortunately, the online version is free for the life of the edition for purchasers of print copies. But is it no longer necessary to organize by subtopic, just because users can just hunt and peck in the online version? Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines *encyclopedia* as "a work that contains information on all branches of knowledge or treats comprehensively a particular branch of knowledge usually in articles arranged alphabetically often by subject." The editor of the *Encyclopedia of Gender and Information Technology* writes in the introduction that "my goal for this book was: (1) to bring together the research literature from all the different disciplines that are producing research about gender and information technology; (2) to bring together the gender and IT research from around the world; and (3) to produce a comprehensive resource that could be the first source to which people would turn to learn about the current state of research on gender and information technology" (p.xxiv). It appears it was never the editor's intention to create a subject encyclopedia after all.

For example, if you are interested in finding out about enrollment variations for women in computer science undergraduate programs, in this work you really have to look at all 213 article titles to be sure you didn't miss any pertinent ones. And if you do search on a topic like this, you will find some redundancy in coverage. Redundancy can be nice, as you get differing sets of references and ideas, but this probably isn't what encyclopedias are known for. Even conference proceedings are usually organized by tracks, and articles on the same topic tend to be in similar tracks.

So this got me thinking: Why would a clearly very talented editor who has undertaken such a massive project choose *not* to organize the

articles in any coherent fashion? And just how would one organize the field of gender and information technology anyway? After all, even the blurb put out by the publisher lists topical areas one would expect to find in this encyclopedia — areas like “Gender and IT Careers,” “Gender and the IT Skills Gap,” and “Gender and IT in Developing Countries.” Clearly the publisher had some idea of what gender-related topics there are in the IT field.

One topical organizational structure could be by country or region. But in a world that is now supposedly flat (Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*; New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006), that might not make much sense, although it certainly makes sense to me. While the IT community may be “flattening,” there are still vast differences by region relating to gender issues, so this wouldn’t be so bad a structure.

Or one could organize it by topical area, regardless of geography. But as I read the article titles, I realize how often articles cross topical boundaries. Should all articles mentioning gender issues in gaming be in one section? But what if the part about gaming was just one segment of an article called “Factors Influencing Girls’ Choice of Information Technology Careers”? And would the article “Gender Differences in the Navigation of Electronic Worlds” fit in the gaming section? I think I’m starting to see the problem: Exactly how does one categorize gender issues relating to IT, when there are so many angles from which to view them? And these angles may be IT-related, or they could also be about societal or economic structures relating to aspects of IT.

Since the editor/publisher chose not to make any topical decision at all, I’m not sure the reader is any better served by this alphabetical arrangement

of more than 200 articles in print. Perhaps saving the extra \$105 for the print version and licensing only the online version is preferable, so readers can simply search for what they need. People read and use materials differently online, so perhaps this whole organizational issue is simply me being old-fashioned, even if I have been in the IT industry for more than twenty years. The online version even has a “topic search” key, but then has no related topics assigned. The keyword search turns out to be a way to search the subject terminology definitions, but the way it is implemented, you have to access the PDF of the article and go to the end of it where the terms are defined to actually *see* the definition. This is a disappointing online implementation of subject definitions, although it is possible to see at a glance all the articles in which a term has been defined.

But don’t let the erroneous *Encyclopedia* title deter you; this collection of articles is a worthwhile reader for high-school students and undergraduates new to the field, or for anyone wanting overview materials and a starting point for further research. The articles I have read have been painstakingly researched and are thought-provoking in content — so much so that I found myself asking professors in related fields whether they were aware of this research. Each article is nicely structured and well-edited, with very good references that were easy to locate. Just soliciting, editing, defining terms for, and shepherding each of these short articles into this collection was, I’m sure, a monumental task, for which the editor deserves a big hand.

Unfortunately, there is another disappointment in the list of contributors. The only information provided is the institution and country each is affiliated with. In areas as broad as gender-related research and information technol-

ogy research, without at a minimum a department affiliation, it’s difficult to get an idea of each contributor’s credentials unless the contributor happens to provide them within the article. Is the contributor a professor, or a grad student? Is he or she in the Women’s Studies Program, or the Economics Department? In addition, considering a contributor’s background is part of the critical thinking we teach library users to use in determining how valid a piece of information is. The field of gender and IT covers such a wide range of topics and researchers that providing contributors’ backgrounds seems even more critical here than it would be for some other, more narrowly focused topic. Such information could even help readers make decisions about institutions to attend or mentors with whom to study or work. I looked up several contributors listed as being at my own institution, the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Three were in the Industrial and Biomedical Engineering Departments of the School of Engineering. This is very useful to know, as I was not aware that these departments at my university were doing gender-based research. I have contacted the publisher of the *Encyclopedia of Gender and Information Technology* and am happy to report that my suggestion of adding contributors’ departmental affiliations to the online version of this work is being considered, although as of this writing, six weeks after the request, the contributors’ list has yet to be added to the online version.

What an impressive accomplishment, to pull together so much information from such a broad range of institutions, countries, and topics. My hat is off to the editor for getting so many contributors to write completely new articles for this work, even if those articles are usually summaries of existing research and specialties. It’s extremely useful to have all of this in one

## New Reference Works

collection. Is it comprehensive? While there is only one author from East Asia (China, Japan, and Korea), it's possible that there are contributors from elsewhere who write about East Asian gender and IT issues. Searching online did reveal one article covering each of these countries, as well as other countries from which there was no contributor. For a first edition, this work covers a broad list of countries and continents.

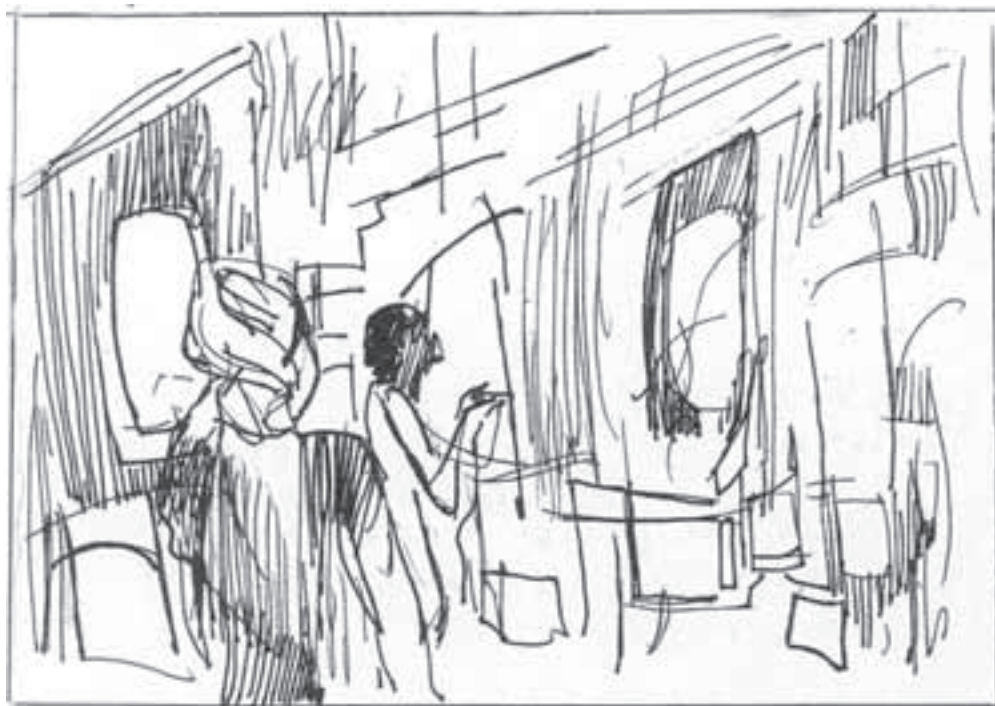
One last point: The promotional materials point out that there is a "definitions section" concisely covering nearly 1,500 terms and concepts, such as "Hanova (Hierarchical Analysis of Variance)," "Moral Economy," and even "Information Society" and "Trans-Gender." The definitions are indeed clear and concise. But to my

surprise, they are sprinkled in at the ends of individual articles. If a term, "Trans-Gender" for instance, is referred to in more than one article, the definition simply appears at the end of each article in which it is used. But as I thought about it, in a culture in which people read in snippets, this can be quite a useful organizational structure — especially if, for instance, an instructor wants to assign just specific articles as course readings. And there's a comprehensive index at the end of the print version, where you can find terms, names, subjects cross-referenced if you really need to, so perhaps it's not so bad. Certainly it is not a problem in the online version, except that it's not easy to *browse* definitions with this arrangement. It would seem, though, that the promotional materials have

been somewhat misleading in stating that there is a "section" that defines terms.

In summary, this is a fine first edition that presents a concise synopsis of current research on gender as related to the information technology field. It makes a fine online resource for students at the high school and undergraduate levels, even if one would prefer better organization.

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*Miriam Greenwald*

# RESOURCES ON YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

*A review essay by Phyllis Holman Weisbard, including a review by Nicole Grapentine-Benton of* *Declarations of Independence: Empowered Girls in Young Adult Literature, 1990–2001.*

Joanne Brown & Nancy St. Clair, ***DECLARATIONS OF INDEPENDENCE: EMPOWERED GIRLS IN YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE, 1990–2001.*** Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2002. 194p. index. (Scarecrow studies in young adult literature, 7.) \$37.50, ISBN 0810842904. (Reviewed by Nicole Grapentine-Benton.)

Michael Cart & Christine A. Jenkins, ***THE HEART HAS ITS REASONS: YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE WITH GAY/LESBIAN/QUEER CONTENT, 1969–2004.*** Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2006. 207p. (Scarecrow studies in young adult literature, 18.) index. \$42.00, ISBN 978-0810850712.

Kenneth L. Donelson & Aileen Pace Nilsen, ***LITERATURE FOR TODAY'S YOUNG ADULTS***, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon, 2005. 478p. ill. \$ 109.60, ISBN 978-0205410354.

Shelley Mosley & John Charles, ***THE SUFFRAGISTS IN LITERATURE FOR YOUTH: THE FIGHT FOR THE VOTE.*** Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2006. (Literature for youth, 10). 323p. index. pap., \$45.00, ISBN 978-0-8108-5372-0.

Carl M. Tomlinson & Carol Lynch-Brown, ***ESSENTIALS OF YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE.*** Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2007. 304p. \$55.20, ISBN 978-0205290147.

Alice Trupe, ***THEMATIC GUIDE TO YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE.*** Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2006. 259p. index. \$65.00, ISBN 0-313-33234-7.

In upcoming issues of *Feminist Collections* we are turning our attention to Girls' Studies in the academy as well as resources about, for, and in some cases by girls. Reference works are also a part of that corpus, and as a taste of what's to come, we look at several recent monographs and textbooks that can help librarians, teachers, and parents select books for young adult girls (and boys). "Young adult" books generally are aimed at twelve- to seventeen-year-olds, although some may be enjoyed by precocious younger readers and others were originally written for adults but feature teen-age protagonists and have become popular with that age group.

Librarians and teachers thrust into the role of selecting young adult (YA) literature will gain confidence in their selections if they first explore the history and intentions of the field. This can be accomplished by consulting textbooks used in education and library science courses on young adult literature. Both an old standby, *Literature for Today's Young Adults*, now in its seventh edition, and a new text from the same publisher, *Essentials of Young Adult Literature*, provide overviews of young adult literature, including criteria for evaluating them. Both cover the gamut of literary genres,

from "realistic" contemporary fiction through poetry, humor, biographies, and science fiction. There are also some differences between the texts. *Literature for...*, for example, includes a chapter on censorship, while *Essentials* has one on "multicultural and international literature." One can get introduced to the issues and themes of YA literature in either, however. My preference is for *Literature for...*, because it is longer, includes more examples, goes into topics a bit deeper, and is more interesting on gender differences.

Both books express concern about getting boys interested in reading. *Essentials* has a three-paragraph section on "Boys Who Resist Reading" without a parallel "Girls Who Resist Reading." *Literature for...* has a four-page section called "Questions About Gender and Literacy," which is also mostly about encouraging boys to read, although the authors conclude by cautioning that in the 1960s the focus was on boys, then in the 1980s on girls; and now, "[l]et's hope that this time we can get it right by focusing on the young people we work with as individuals" (p.45). Based on various cited studies, *Essentials* breaks down adolescent reading interests by gender, listing mysteries and scary stories/horror as having common appeal to boys and girls, but ad-

ventures, sports, science fiction and fantasy, and nonfiction on various subjects as more likely to interest boys. Additions to the girls' list are fewer: realistic stories and romances. *Essentials* goes on to list format preferences. Once again, girls have fewer distinctive preferences: "fiction, especially novels they can connect to, books that convey characters' feelings, newspapers and popular magazines"; while boys prefer "short texts or texts with shorter sections or chapters, also short stories; visual texts including...comic books and graphic novels, books with cover illustrations, mostly of teenagers..., books based on movies and television, [and] newspapers and popular magazines." Both males and females like "illustrations in books, adolescent protagonists of their own gender, characters the age of the reader or slightly older, fast paced stories, humorous stories, [and] familiar experiences about teen life" (pp.215–16). *Literature for...* seems somewhat more doubtful about the distinction and is more inclined to think the difference in reading patterns — historically at least — was that "boys' books were generally far superior to girls' books...Many authors insisted on making their girls good and domestic and dull (if a heroine were allowed some freedom to roam outside the house, she soon regretted it or grew up, which came first)... Boys were allowed outside the house not only to find work and responsibilities, of course, but also to find adventure and excitement in their books" (p.61). In that discussion, the *Literature for...* authors label the idea that girls would read boys' books, but not the other way around, as stereotyping reading habits. Later in the text they include an interesting sidebar on the subject,

by YA author Karen Cushman: "I have been told that boys won't read my books because they are about girls. Teachers choose books about boys because girls will read them. And a number of women writers have taken to writing about boy heroes. But isn't this ignoring the issue? If books about girls who are interesting, active, clever, and curious aren't being read by boys, isn't that the problem? Aren't we teaching boys somehow to be alienated and offended by female protagonists? Should we writers all give up and just write about boys? Not me. Girls are why I got into this in the first place" (p.231). The *Literature for...* authors also did their own survey of contemporary teen reading of magazines and comics, what video games they played, etc., and did find some gender differences, although fewer than readers might think.

After the overview, or if one is inclined to start with something more thematic and is looking primarily for discussion of novels, I suggest taking up Alice Trupe's *Thematic Guide to Young Adult Literature*. As with the textbooks above, there's no chapter headed "Gender," "Girls," or "Female Protagonists," yet some of the themes are quite germane, as are many of the books cited throughout. The *Guide* arranges the themes alphabetically, and the very first, "Abuse, Sexual Violence, and Healing," mainly discusses books in which girls have been the victims. "Pregnancy, Parenthood, Abortion" is another mostly with girls at the forefront, although *The First Part Last*, by Angela Johnson (2003), is about a single teen father. "Beauty's Meaning," "Breaking Silence, Speaking Out," "Dating's Challenges," and "Friends Forever" are examples of other sections that one can look to for books featuring girls and their issues.

Trupe intended her book to be an introduction to "the best fiction" for young adults, since there's very little criticism published about YA literature except for book reviews. Some of her "best," such as S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*, discussed in the chapter on "Insiders and Outsiders," appeared in



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the 1960s, the early days of publishing for this age group, while others are recent, including *Fat Kid Rules the World*, by K.L. Going (2003), in the “Addressing Addiction” chapter; *Big Mouth and Ugly Girl*, by Joyce Carol Oates (2002), in “School Days”; *Cruise Control*, by Terry Trueman (2004), in “Disease and Disability”; and *Saving the Planet & Stuff*, by Gail Gauthier (2003), in “Older People’s Impact on our Lives.” The most recent date spotted is in the entry “The Alice Series, by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor (1985–2006),” which gives the impression that the Alice series has ended. However, since *Dangerously Alice* came out in 2007, Trupe must just mean that she examined the series through 2006. Trupe also selected the more recent titles in the book with an eye to covering different variations on each theme addressed. Regardless of the theme to which Trupe assigned a particular book, she also states in her preface that she discusses each novel’s form, characterization, point of view, and symbolism.

Three to eight novels are covered in each thematic chapter. This gives Trupe plenty of time to go into depth on the novel’s plot and relationship to the theme. Most of the works are “problem novels,” where the characters have to deal with personal and family crises and sometimes societal ills. If you haven’t read any of these books, and you have some warm fuzzies about books you read as a teen, you are in for a shock. Take Margaret Mahy’s *The Other Side of Silence* (1995), whose protagonist, Hero, is a voluntary mute, due to her “soap opera quality” home life. As if that weren’t sufficient, the main plot of the book centers around Hero’s encounters with an eccentric older woman who turns out to have locked up her daughter in a chamber, bolting her to a bed. Or try *When She Was Good*, by Norma Fox Mazer (1997), in which an older sister physically and verbally abuses a younger one, the father is an alcoholic, the mother is dead, and the persecutor herself dies. These and many of the others in the *Guide* are powerful books by well-respected YA authors who know how to write about terrible situations. Their readers learn how the characters surmount their difficulties and grow. The Joyce Carol Oates title mentioned above also illustrates that there are authors of books for adults who also write for teens.

At the end of each chapter, Trupe lists additional reading recommendations, and in an appendix she offers additional themes and topics.

Another useful way to explore YA literature is to read relevant books in the Scarecrow Studies in Young Adult Literature series, edited by Patty Campbell. The series examines individual authors, including Norma Fox Mazer, cited above, and genres and issues in the literature. There are two recent titles in the series we think would be of spe-

cial interest to *Feminist Collections* readers: *Declarations of Independence: Empowered Girls in Young Adult Literature, 1990–2001* (#7 in the series), 2002; and *The Heart Has Its Reasons: Young Adult Literature with Gay/Lesbian/Queer Content, 1969–2004* (#18 in the series), 2006. Nicole Grapentine-Benton reviews the first; Phyllis Holman Weisbard, the second.

*Declarations of Independence* is a wonderful overview of books published in the last decade or so that feature “spunky, fiery, empowered girls” as protagonists (p.181). The book is a fantastic resource for everyone, from professors of young adult literature to middle- and high-school teachers, to feminist moms and dads seeking positive role models for their daughters.

The term “empowered girl” is discussed at length, with the emphasis that, while all coming-of-age stories feature some measure of empowerment, not all female characters are empowered girls. The authors focus on protagonists with distinctly feminine characteristics and experiences, “girls whose empowerment has more to do with gaining confidence in themselves than gaining power over others” (p.27). They divide these protagonists into broad categories of historical fiction, contemporary fiction, literature of the fantastic, and memoir. Each chapter of a particular genre includes analysis of several books that demonstrate a particular aspect of empowerment, and concludes with a list of “Suggestions for Further Reading.”

But Brown and St. Clair go beyond the simple compilation of good books for girls to read. They use their selections to create a broader assessment of the current status and reach of empowered girls in YA fiction. The first two chapters, titled “That Was Then” and “This Is Now,” compare the genre as it stands today with where it was thirty and even a hundred years ago. The authors use the character of Jo March in *Little Women* as a benchmark by which to measure progress, and refer to her frequently throughout the book. In 1868, Jo was the feisty, ambitious writer who was forced to restrain herself so she would be “rewarded by the attentions of a good man who [chose] to ‘have’ her” (p.10). They write, “Although female protagonists still struggle with their cultures’ expectations, seldom does their struggle conclude with the protagonist passively or totally accepting a script she has had no part in writing” (p.180).

The authors also explore how different genres lend themselves to different aspects of empowerment. They note that literature of the fantastic, for example, is distinct because it has a longer history than most other genres of YA fiction and can provide its female characters with more op-

portunities than are available to girls in this world. On the other hand, although opportunities may have been more limited in the past, many readers are more likely to accept feminist social commentary in historical fiction because it doesn't directly threaten the status quo. The book frequently refers to experts in feminism, literature, and girls' psychology to describe how certain themes relate to adolescent girls and why literature has such a profound impact on them.

Although *Declarations of Independence* is filled with strong, capable heroines who can inspire and motivate girls, most of the time those heroines don't seem to be having much fun. Brown and St. Clair write that empowered girls "are courageous, enthusiastic, and determined," but with all the constant struggles for acceptance and the hardships and prejudices to overcome, one does feel a little tired for these characters by the end. In my experience, the best way to get girls to read is to entertain them. If empowerment is largely doom and gloom, especially in the first crucial chapters, I wonder how much impact these important novels will really have on girls.

There are also some lingering questions as to the authors' categorization of both "empowered girls" and "young adult fiction." Of the first, one wonders, what about empowered girls who are boys (and vice versa)? Although there is lengthy discussion of the coming-out stories of bisexual and lesbian girls, no mention is made of transgender youth. There is a dangerous tendency as well to lump any novel with a young protagonist into YA fiction. In one case, the authors included Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower* in their chapter on literature of the fantastic. While that novel is a powerful story about a young woman's struggle for survival, the graphic violence and other mature content hardly qualifies it as a story for young adults.

Overall, however, this book does an excellent job of telling the story of empowered girls in young adult fiction over time, and of mapping their presence across many genres of the recent literature. It is very well organized and

easy to read, with smooth transitions between summary and critique. The authors deftly bring a wide variety of works together in their analysis to show a multifaceted, diverse genre that at the same time carries common themes that distinguish it from other YA literature. The pervading message of hope and progress in the portrayal of empowered girls is a welcome relief from the recent trend toward hyper-sexualized, body-image obsessed young adult series (such as the highly controversial *Gossip Girls*).

A collaboration between a library science professor and an author who formerly headed the Beverly Hills Public Library, *The Heart Has Its Reasons* charts the growth in young adult novels with gay content, from its slow beginnings with John Donovan's *I'll Get There. It Better Be Worth the Trip* (1969) and output of about one title per year in the 1970s to some twelve books per year since 2000. Like Trupe, Michael Cart and Christine Jenkins also comment on the meager

amount of critical analysis of YA literature on their theme. Their book redresses this dearth considerably. Their chronological approach also fits an evolutionary model Jenkins developed, which was influenced by Rudine Sims Bishop's schema for representations of African Americans in children's books. Sims Bishop's model saw movement in books' emphases from social conscience ("race was the problem and desegregation the solution") to melting pot ("racial diversity was present but unacknowledged, and integration was a given") to culturally conscious portrayals ("African Americans were portrayed in a culturally accurate manner") (p.xix). Jenkins' three categories are homosexual vis-

ibility (books in which "a character who has not previously been considered gay/lesbian comes out either voluntarily or involuntarily"), gay assimilation ("assumes the existence — at least in the world of the story — of a 'melting pot' of sexual and gender identity. These stories include people who 'just happen to be gay'"), and queer consciousness (GLBTQ characters are shown "in the context of their communities of



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GLBTQ people and their families of choice (and in recent years, often their families of origin as well)”) (p.xx).

Since there are only about 200 gay-themed YA books, Cart and Jenkins chose to discuss all of them, not just those they consider the best, and they don't mince words. Of Alice Childress's *Those Other People* (1989), they say, “this may be the only novel in which being an out gay is presented as something to be actively deplored. As a result, the novel seems anachronistic; worse, it is replete with one-dimensional characters and some of the most unfortunate homosexual stereotyping in the literature” (p.62). Yet they can also find redeeming value in novels that may not be the best-written, particularly if they portray gays in community. In discussing *Who Framed Lorenzo Garcia?* (1995) and *The Case of the Missing Mother* (1995), series titles by R.J. Hamilton, Cart and Jenkins write, “As typical series books, their plots are predictable, their characters are unidimensional, and much of their dialog reads like the transcript of a television police drama, but these titles provide an attractive, if perhaps unrealistic, picture of a community that embraces many differences” (p.112). And they are very complimentary about special texts, such as *Annie on My Mind*, by Nancy Garden (1982), “a classic work that tells the exquisitely nuanced story of Annie and Liza, two high school girls who meet and fall in love” (p.75).

There is a chapter each on the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s; each includes a discussion of books from that decade that represent the three categories in the model. That is followed by a year-by-year annotated description of each gay-themed YA novel. Appendix D is a complete chronological record of publication, without the annotations. The chapter on the 2000s notes eight trends in GLBTQ young adult literature spotted in the first half of the current decade: crossover titles (adult to YA, YA to adult), literary fiction (more character-driven, with complex structures and sophistication), new narrative techniques (nontraditional narrative approaches, such as textual collage excerpts from a zine), short story renaissance, poetry renaissance, internationalization (more GLBTQ titles now coming from outside the U.S. than in prior decades), graphic novels/comic books, and historical fiction.

The authors bemoan the lopsided proportion of gay male YA novels that have been published compared to lesbian YA books. Of the seventy GLBTQ young adult novels published in the 1990s, for example, only eighteen (26%) had lesbian content. They do not speculate on why this has been the case. (Perhaps our *Feminist Collections* readers would care to? Please write us...) Readers looking specifically for YA novels with lesbian characters may find it easiest

to identify them by consulting Appendix C. This is a table, alphabetical by author, that assigns titles to one of Jenkins' three categories, notes gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender content, and indicates whether the GLBTQ narrative role is primary or secondary.

Gay- and lesbian-themed books in school libraries and children's rooms of public libraries are sometimes challenged by parents whose protests are encouraged and supported by the concerted efforts of conservative organizations. Most titles weather the storms and remain in collections, although sometimes access to them is restricted. By contrast, books about women's suffrage are “safe.” No one seriously opposes votes for American women anymore. Perhaps collecting books about First Wave feminism provides a way to offer material about women, without engaging in more controversial issues raised by the Second and Third Waves? At any rate, *The Suffragists in Literature for Youth* documents that women suffrage and its proponents have inspired hundreds of biographies, suffrage-themed monographs, and works of fiction and drama (the title index lists more than 900 mentioned in the book; 50 suffragists receive individual treatment). The authors have a wide definition of “youth,” from very young readers in kindergarten through second grade, for whom Martha Rustad wrote *Susan B. Anthony* (Capstone, 2002), which Mosley and Charles call a “real treasure...scaled down in size to fit little hands...[v]ery well done, and a must-read for the youngest child” (p.19), to Ellen Carol Dubois' *Harriet Stanton Blatch and the Winning of Woman Suffrage* (Yale University Press, 1997), which they label “Grade 11–Adult.” A preponderance of the listings is of books intended or suitable for high school readers. This is especially so in cases where there aren't many books, period, about a person. For example, only one title is listed about Inez Milholland (Boissevain), the lovely figure who sat astride a horse and led the 1913 suffrage march, and it is Linda Lumsden's *Inez: The Life and Times of Inez Milholland* (Indiana University Press, 2004), Grade 9–Adult. On the other hand, there are fifty-six works included on Susan B. Anthony, and almost half of them are for children. Writers considering penning works on suffrage for school-aged readers could use *The Suffragists* to identify worthy subjects with minimal or no treatment thus far for their audience. And the fifty featured in the book still only represent a sampling of the thousands of suffragists, say Mosley and Charles: “[W]e hope that this small but mighty group will give teachers, librarians, and researchers a place to begin their adventure into this important part of American history” (Introduction).

Mosley and Charles begin each of the fifty entries with a quotation and a biographical sketch. Then come the annotated book listings, alphabetically by author. There are several men among the biographees: Frederick Douglass, Henry Blackwell, and William Lloyd Garrison. The biographical section constitutes about half the text. Next come sections for suffrage-themed nonfiction, fiction, drama, media (films, DVDs, CDs and audiocassettes of music or the spoken word), and Internet resources. The annotations often point out resources especially good for classroom use. In addition, there are four pages of suggested classroom activities, including one in which students learn of the suffragists who have been featured on postage stamps and then use their talents to design stamps for others. Another section of *The Suffragists* looks beyond the United States to the suffrage movements in other countries.

Of special interest for teachers and librarians working with young adults is a section of suggestions for YA discussions or papers. These include “What makes people reluctant to share the right to vote? Compare the suffrage movement to the Civil Rights movement and voter registration”; “Many women went to prison while fighting for the right to vote. Discuss whether or not students would be willing to

go to jail for their rights. Do an improvisation of the women picketing the White House during Wilson’s tenure as president...”; and “How many women ran for office during the last election at the local level? State? National? How many won?” (pp.272–73). Except for such mention of women in politics, missing from the list of suggestions is comparison to Second Wave feminism in leadership, objectives, tactics, achievements, or remaining issues. Aside from that minor slip in a book that is, after all, more concerned with the historical women’s rights movement, *The Suffragists in Literature for Youth* is an excellent compilation that will be of great use to teachers and librarians.

We encourage librarians, teachers, parents, and young adult readers themselves to consult any or all of these works to learn the state of YA literature today and to select appropriate reading material.

[Phyllis Holman Weisbard is Women’s Studies Librarian for the University of Wisconsin System and co-editor of Feminist Collections. Nicole Grapentine-Benton studies Portuguese, Spanish, and Environmental Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison; she will graduate in December 2007.]



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# PERIODICAL NOTES

[Note: Our website, at <http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/mags.htm>, lists hundreds of women-focused magazines and newsletters and provides links to websites for many of them. See also our quarterly publication *Feminist Periodicals: A Current Listing of Contents* for the tables of contents of more than 150 women-related journals.]

## NEW AND NEWLY DISCOVERED PERIODICALS

**COLLECTIVE VOICES.** 2004?–. Editor-in-chief: Loretta Ross. Publisher: SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Health Collective, P.O. Box 311020, Atlanta, GA 31131; phone: (404) 344-9629; email: [collectivevoices@sistersong.net](mailto:collectivevoices@sistersong.net); website: <http://www.SisterSong.net>. Frequency unclear (seven issues so far). No ISSN. No subscription information; available in print and online at <http://www.sistersong.net/newspaper.html>. (Issue examined: Volume 2, Issue 7 [Summer 2007], online.)

All seven issues to date of *Collective Voices*, “the *only* national newspaper addressing reproductive health created and distributed by and for women of color,” with print distribution of 10,000, are available for free online as PDFs. They range in length from twelve to forty pages. Only Issue 7 is dated (Summer 2007). The newspaper is an outgrowth of the SisterSong Collective, which is “made up of 76 local, regional and national grassroots organizations and more than 400 individuals, as well as white and male allies who support our goal of improving the lives of indigenous women and women of color in the United States through Reproductive Justice.”

Partial contents of the latest issue: “Health Disparities Update”; “Mapping Our Rights:

Navigating Discrimination Across the United States,” by Leila Hessini; “Midwives Honor the Sensuality of Pregnancy and Birth,” by Shafia Monroe; “SisterSong Creates History: After Ten Years of Movement Building, SisterSong Prepares for the 2008 Elections at the ‘Let’s Talk About Sex’ Conference,” by Yaminah Ahmad; “Strategies of Resistance: Women Rising in the Arab World,” by Leila Hessini; “Abortion and the Politics of Prevention,” by Betsy Hartmann.

**FEMINIST CRIMINOLOGY.** 2006–. Editor: Helen Eigenberg, email: [femcrim@utc.edu](mailto:femcrim@utc.edu). Publisher: SAGE Publications, 2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320; phone: (800) 818-7243; fax: (805) 499-0871; email: [journals@sagepub.com](mailto:journals@sagepub.com); website: <http://www.sagepublications.com>. Published in association with the Division on Women and Crime, American Society of Criminology. 4/yr. ISSN: 1557-0851. Subscriptions: \$476.00 institutions; \$127 individuals; more information at <http://www.sagepublications.com/journalscs/>. (Issue examined: Volume 2, Number 2 [April 2007].)

Contents: “Race, Abuse, and Female Criminal Violence,” by Matthew D. Makarios; “Age and Educational Differences in African American Women’s Sexual Assault Experiences,” by LaDonna M. Long et al.; “Girls’ Juvenile Justice Uniforms: A Semiotic Analysis of Their Meaning,” by Connie Ulasewicz; “I’m Just Not Good in Relationships’: Victimization Discourses and the Gendered Regulation of Criminalized Women,” by Shoshana Pollack.

**FEMTAP: A JOURNAL OF FEMINIST THEORY AND PRACTICE.** 2006–. Editorial board: varies by issue, but Ime Kerlee (Women’s Studies Program, University of New Mexico) has been on both boards so far, is the website designer, and maintains the editorial email address ([editorialboard@femtap.com](mailto:editorialboard@femtap.com)). Frequency unclear (one issue in 2006; two promised for 2007). No ISSN. Online only: <http://www.femtap.com>. (Issue examined: Summer 2006: “Theory and Praxis.”)

The stated mission of this refereed journal is “to investigate the intersections of feminist theory and practice by providing space for emerging scholars, defined broadly to include academics and non-academics alike, and innovative ideas. The journal itself functions as an example of theory and practice for the Editorial Board both in the editing process itself and in the papers that we will preference.”

Contents of the first issue: “Theory and Praxis: An Introduction,” by Ime A.S. Kerlee; “Feminist Activism and Activist Scholarship in the Twenty-First Century,” by Nancy A. Naples; “Disarming Venus: Disability and the Re-Vision of Art History,” by Ann Millett; “Receiving Love: Black Women’s Writing, Theory, and Experience,” by Tao Valentine; “Dear Regina: Formative Conversations About Feminist Writing,” by Alison Bartlett; “Transforming Tradition: Bat Mitzvah as Jewish Feminist Theory and Praxis,” by Lena McQuade.

The Spring 2007 issue, on “Race, Gender and Social Justice” is “coming soon.” Submissions for the Summer 2007 issue, on “Feminist Pedagogy: New Paradigms, New and Old Places,” were due in March 2007.

**METAFORMIA: A JOURNAL OF MENSTRUATION AND CULTURE.** Undated. Editor: Judy Grahn. Frequency unclear. No ISSN. Online at <http://www.metaformia.org/>.

Although this website is called a journal, it shows very little evidence of being “periodical.” There’s an introductory essay explaining Judy Grahn’s “metaformic theory,” a listing of news and upcoming events (one place where dates are evident), a “tidbits” section (“small metaformic anecdotes, mostly from the oral tradition”), commentaries about Hurricane Katrina by Judy Grahn and Starhawk, and seven undated articles. The site promises “art galleries and an interactive blog, as well as many more articles” in the future.

Articles currently posted: “The Emergence of Metaformic Consciousness,” by Judy Grahn; “Shedding Old Skin: A Search For New Origin Stories,” by Luisah Teish; “Women, Orangutans and the Moon,” by Tina Proctor; “Are Wars Metaformic?” by Judy Grahn; “Blood Relics: Menstrual Roots of Miraculous Black Madonnas in Italy,” by Mary Beth Moser; “Connecting With Deity Through a Feminist Metaformic Theology,” by Deborah J. Grenn; and “Goddess of the Blood of Life, Part One,” by Judy Grahn.

## SPECIAL ISSUES OF PERIODICALS

**CURRENT SOCIOLOGY** v.54, no.2 (March 2006): Monograph issue: “Gender, Marriage and Family Support in East Asian Families.” Issue editors: Chin-chun Yi & Bernhard Nauck. Publisher: SAGE Publications, in association with the International Sociological Association. ISSN: 0011-3921. Available to licensed users through SAGE Journals Online, <http://www.sagepub.com/journals.nav>.

Contents: “Marrying Someone from an Outside Group: An Analysis of Boundary-Crossing Marriages in Taiwan,” by Ruey-ming Tsay & Li-hsueh Wu; “Overlapping Social Networks: How Couples Manage Family Expenditure in Taiwan,” by Ray-may Hsung, Chin-chun Yi, & Yang-chih Fu; “The Employment Discontinuity of Married Women in Taiwan: Job Status, Ethnic Background and Motherhood,” by Chin-fen Chang; “Does Conjugal Disparity Affect Marital Relationships?: A Comparative Study of Taiwan, Shanghai and Hong Kong,” by Chin-chun Yi & Wen-yin Chien; “The Son Also Acts as Major Caregiver to Elderly Parents: A Study of the Sandwich Generation in Hong Kong,” by Hong-kin Kwok; “Changing Attitudes towards Elderly Dependence in Postwar Japan,” by Reiko Yamato; “Intergenerational Relationships and Elderly Care in China: A Global Perspective,” by Xuewen Sheng & Barbara H. Settles; “Intergenerational Support: Psychological and Cultural Analyses of Korean and German Women,” by Beate Schwarz et al.

**EAST EUROPEAN POLITICS AND SOCIETIES** v.20, no.1 (February 2006): “Gender and Circulation in East European Politics and Societies.” Issue editor: Susan Gal. Publisher: SAGE Publications, in association with the American Council of Learned Societies. ISSN 0888-3254. Available to licensed users through SAGE Journals Online, <http://www.sagepub.com/journals.nav>.

Partial contents: “A Different Type of Gender Gap: How Women and Men Experience Poverty,” by Éva Fodor; “N.S. Khrushchev and the 1944 Soviet Family Law: Politics, Reproduction, and Language,” by Mie Nakachi; “Foundation Feminism and the Articulation of Hybrid Feminisms in Post-Socialist Ukraine,” by Alexandra Hrycak; “European Union Gender Regulations in the East: The Czech and Polish Accession Process,” by Leah Seppanen Anderson; “‘Goodbye Serbian Kennedy’: Zoran Dindi and the New Democratic Masculinity in Serbia,” by Jessica Greenberg; “Gender and the Solvency of Professionalism: Eastern German Journalism before and after 1989,” by Dominic Boyer.

**ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH** v.101, no.2 (June 2006): Thematic section: “Women’s Occupational and Environmental Health.” Section editors: Karen Messing & Donna Mergler. Publisher: Academic Press/Elsevier. ISSN: 0013-9351. Available online to licensed users through ScienceDirect, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/00139351>.

Partial contents: “Sex, Gender and Women’s Occupational Health: The Importance of Considering Mechanism,” by Karen Messing & Jeanne Mager Stellman; “Gender and Snow Crab Occupational Asthma in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada,” by Dana Howse et al.; “Gender Differences in Respiratory Symptoms—Does Occupation Matter?” by Helen Dimich-Ward, Patricia G. Camp, & Susan M. Kennedy; “Women’s Strategies for Handling Household Detergents,” by Rima R. Habib, Amal El-Masri, & Robin L. Heath; “Are There Sex and Gender Differences in Acute Exposure to Chemicals in the Same Setting?” by Tye E. Arbuckle.

**JOURNAL OF PRAGMATICS** v.38, no.1 (January 2006): “Gender and Humor.” Issue editor: Helga Kotthoff. Publisher: Elsevier B.V. ISSN: 0378-2166. Available online to licensed users through ScienceDirect, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/03782166>.

Partial contents: “Gender and Humor: The State of the Art,” by Helga Kotthoff; “Sharing a Laugh: Pragmatic Aspects of Humor and Gender in the Workplace,” by Janet Holmes; “Risky Laughter: Teasing and Self-Directed Joking Among Male and Female Friends,” by Martin D. Lampert and Susan M. Ervin-Tripp; “Playfully Negotiated Activity in

Girls' Talk," by Angela M. Ardington; "Gendered Sense of Humor as Expressed Through Aesthetic Typifications," by Catherine Evans Davies.

**JOURNAL OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER** v.31, no.3 (May 2006): Symposium: "Institutional Assessment of Women in Science." Issue editor: Monica Gaughan. Publisher: Technology Transfer Society/Springer. ISSN: 0892-9912. Available online to licensed users through ABI/Inform.

Partial contents: "Profiles of Academic Activities and Careers: Does Gender Matter? An Analysis Based on French Life Scientist CVs," by M. Sabatier, M. Carrere, & V. Mangematin; "Women in Science: Racial and Ethnic Differences and the Differences They Make," by Cheryl B. Leggon; "Measuring Occupational Sex Segregation of Academic Science and Engineering," by Lisa M. Frehill; "How Do Female and Male Faculty Members Construct Job Satisfaction? The Roles of Perceived Institutional Leadership and Mentoring and their Mediating Processes," by Diana Bilimoria et al.; "The Impact of Gender and Department Climate on Job Satisfaction and Intentions to Quit for Faculty in Science and Engineering Fields," by Ronda Roberts Callister; "Participation, Performance, and Advancement of Women in Academic Science and Engineering: What is at Issue and Why," by Mary Frank Fox & Carol Colatrella; "Discovering Directions for Change in Higher Education Through the Experiences of Senior Women Faculty," by Jennifer Sheridan, Patricia Flatley Brennan, Molly Carnes, & Jo Handelsman.

**LIVING BUDDHISM** January–February 2007: Thematic section: "The Women of the SGI-USA: Today, Again, Never Be Defeated." Publisher: Guy McCloskey, SGI-USA Publications, 606 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90401. ISSN: 1093-5169.

The inside cover of this magazine explains that "[t]he Soka Gakkai International [SGI]-USA is an American Buddhist community that promotes peace through individual happiness, based on the teaching and practice of Nichiren Buddhism." Publisher Guy McCloskey writes, "This issue of *Living Buddhism* celebrates the women of our organization."

Contents of the thematic section: "Planting Seeds of Profound Cause: A Message from SGI Honorary Women's Leader," by Kaneko Ikeda; "Open the Gateway to Peace" (a letter "to all the women of SGI-USA" from the SGI-USA General Director), by Danny Nagashima; "Shining with Radiant Light," by Samantha Leigh; "Faith Over Fear," by Imani Salahuddin; "Creating Peace—One Person at a Time," by Peggy Chen; "One Hundred Million Aeons in a Single Moment of Life," by George Kawamoto; "Building a Self That Is Undefeated," by Linda Johnson (SGI-USA Women's Leader); "Living a Life of Continuous Victory" (about Giovanna Gentilli), by Valerie Kurita; "Chanting Through Whatever Life Throws at You" (about Karen Laverdiere), by Sally Marks; "Chanting with a Courageous Heart," by Kathy Jaekle/Amy Schor Ferris; "Transforming Our Marriage Through Faith," by Sarah Whalen/Jeri Love; "Breaking the Cycle of Abuse," by Sherry Roberson/Amy Brownfield.

**THEORETICAL CRIMINOLOGY** v.10, no.1 (February 2006): "Gender, Race and Restorative Justice." Issue editors: Kimberly J. Cook, Kathleen Daly, & Julie Stubbs. Publisher: SAGE Publications. ISSN: 1362-4806. Available to licensed users through SAGE Journals Online, <http://tcr.sagepub.com/content/vol10/issue1/>.

Partial contents: "Feminist Engagement with Restorative Justice," by Kathleen Daly & Julie Stubbs; "Beyond White Man's Justice: Race, Gender and Justice in Late Modernity," by Barbara Hudson; "Stopping the Violence: Canadian Feminist Debates on Restorative Justice and Intimate Violence," by Angela Cameron; "Restorative Justice, Navajo Peacemaking and Domestic Violence," by Donna Coker; "In Search of Justice for Domestic and Family Violence: Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australian Women's Perspectives," by Heather Nancarrow; "Doing Difference and Accountability in Restorative Justice Conferences," by Kimberly J. Cook; "Views of Justice Among Survivors of Historical Child Sexual Abuse: Implications for Restorative Justice in New Zealand," by Shirley Jülich.

○ Compiled by JoAnne Lehman

# ITEMS OF NOTE

Feminist activists from around the world discuss their experiences in the 2006 report *ACHIEVING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS: STRATEGIES AND LESSONS FROM EXPERIENCE*, by Alison Symington et al. The 47-page booklet, published by the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), looks at how the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has helped develop more effective strategies for securing women's rights across a range of issues, from the right to work to the right to a healthy environment. The ESCR report, as it is referred to by AWID, is available, for free, in PDF format at [http://www.awid.org/go.php?pg=escr\\_report](http://www.awid.org/go.php?pg=escr_report).

*ENGAGING MEN IN GENDER EQUALITY POSITIVE STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES*, by Emily Esplen, looks at how men and boys are working together with women to promote gender equality. The report includes an overview, bibliography, and contacts, and aims to show development programs what work is being done to change men's attitudes towards women globally, as well as to offer strategies for creating further change. The 51-page publication is available as a Word document or in PDF form, free of charge, at [http://www.siyanda.org/static/esplen\\_engaging\\_men.htm](http://www.siyanda.org/static/esplen_engaging_men.htm).

Stella Nyanzi and Katja Jassey reflect on how the social and political implications of HIV/AIDS, as well as development efforts to stop the epidemic, have affected perceptions of women. Their 40-page pamphlet, *HOW TO BE A "PROPER" WOMAN IN THE TIMES OF HIV & AIDS*, discusses several questions on this subject "through the use of personal and reflexive dialogue between a Western policy maker and an African researcher." The pamphlet has not yet been published, but will be available from Central Books Limited's Nordic Africa Institute, 99 Wallis Road, London, E9 5LN, United Kingdom, +44 (0)845 458 9910. The publication can also be pre-ordered online at <http://www.centralbooks.co.uk>.

According to one reviewer, there is "no better single place on the Web to find out what is going on in the world of Francophone women's literature" than the website **READING WOMEN WRITERS AND AFRICAN LITERATURE**, at <http://aflit.arts.uwa.edu.au/FEMEChomeEN.html>. The site is a comprehensive guide to African women writers in French, and provides not only a listing of authors, but also interviews, books in French, and English translations of selected texts. The resource is sponsored by the School of Humanities, University of Western Australia.

○ Compiled by Nicole Grapentine-Benton

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# BOOKS RECENTLY RECEIVED

**2007 DIRECTORY OF WOMEN'S MEDIA.** Allen, Martha Leslie, ed. Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, 2007.

**BELVA LOCKWOOD: THE WOMAN WHO WOULD BE PRESIDENT.** Norgren, Jill. Ginsburg, Ruth Bader, fwd. New York University Press, 2007.

**DRIVING WITH DEAD PEOPLE: A MEMOIR.** Holloway, Monica. Simon Spotlight Entertainment, 2007.

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