analysis of the relegation of women to Otherness in man's world is an unprecedented accomplishment, the solution she proposes, in the achievement of transcendent subjectivity, remains a masculine solution. Such a reading will again be familiar to many readers; but Nye's interweaving of Marxist and radical feminist themes with de Beauvoir's texts, and her discussion of the impact of *The Second Sex* on such American feminists as Millett, Atkinson, and Daly, are novel and interesting. Neither a reconceptualized feminine subjectivity, nor the separatist subjectivity of radical feminism, offers ontological possibilities that could alter the conflictual, alienated position of the warring consciousness of Sartrean philosophy, however.

The mixed reactions that Freudian theory has elicited among feminists will be well-known to Nye's readers. Again, it is her readings of women's contributions to psychoanalytic interpretation that constitute the innovative aspect of the chapter. From Millett's and Friedan's rejections of Freud's emphasis on sexuality, through Mitchell's reading of Freud as a "kind of corrective to Marxism," to Kristeva's and Irigaray's readings of Lacanian theory, Nye's discussion is sensitive and illuminating. The place of Horney and Deutsch as Freudian apologists is usefully detailed, and there is a good discussion of Flax's and Chodorow's ambivalent indebtedness to Freud in their contributions to object relations theory. Most insightful, I think, are her concluding references to Marie Balmary's *Psychoanalysing psychoanalysis*, a work which broaches the topic of Freud's unconscious motivations in the development of his theories. Such readings, in Nye's view, again point to the masculine specificity of the solutions proposed in purportedly global theories.

Saussure and Lacan are the traditional theorists of language with whom French feminist theorists most frequently engage in their efforts to understand the effects of language in constructing gender-identity. Derrida is the anarchistic figure of hope. Nye offers a witty analysis of attempts, particularly on the part of Irigaray and Cixous, to develop a woman's language that would emulate Derridean deconstructive practice, unbalancing and subverting the Lacanian order of the signifier, celebrating a "feminine 'style'," advocating *jouissance* over logocentrism. For all of the inventive, lucid promise she sees in these proposals – and in Kristeva's more direct engagement with male questions – Nye ends, again, on a note of caution. She argues: "Although a deconstruction of the text of patriarchy may be needed to clear the way for these new ideas, a feminine counter-text can only offer a mirror image of masculinist thought."

Nye's conclusions are by no means wholly pessimistic, nor do they suggest that her engagement with the "philosophies of man" has been a useless exercise. Yes, one must conclude, a practising feminist does need theory, but the "philosophies of man" do not serve her well. Feminist reworkings of men's theories reveal that they are indeed *men's*, derived out of men's gender-specific and historically-specific practices in order to offer solutions to their problems. Yet to understand the "conflictual and alienated sources of the philosophy of man" is to understand its contingency, and hence to refuse its totalizing effects. That refusal creates a space for the development of strongly affirmative feminist practices, out of which new theoretical positions can be constructed.

POETRY BY CANADIAN WOMEN

Rosemary Sullivan, ed. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1989

Linda Lamont-Stewart

Rosemary Sullivan's *Poetry by Canadian Women* differs from other recent anthologies of Canadian women's poetry, such as Mary di Michele's *Anything Is Possible* (1984) and Judith Fitzgerald's *SP/ELLES* (1986), in that it is designed to provide an historical record of the development of Canadian women's poetry from the early nineteenth to the late twentieth century. Sullivan begins her Introduction to the anthology with a quotation from Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* on the importance of early women writers in establishing a foundation of women's writing upon which later writers could build. Sullivan's anthology, then, is to be read "as a cumulative work, a single long poem created over one and a half centuries by women poets writing in Canada. Behind the eclectic generation of contemporary women writers is a cumulative tradition of poets who might be thought of as facilitators, clearing a space for future voices." *Poetry by Canadian Women* thus seeks to establish a canon of Canadian women's poetry.

The first question that arises with regard to any collection of women's writing is whether segregating women's literary work from the national canon as a whole contributes to its marginalization. Canadian women poets have been surprisingly well represented in anthologies since E.H. Dewart published his pioneering *Selections From Canadian Poets* in 1864. It is true, however, that with the notable exception of Isabella Valancy Crawford, the nineteenth century poets whose work has remained in the canon are predominantly male. There is, therefore, good reason to re-examine the work of our early women poets, as Sullivan argues: "To those who, fearing ghettoization, resist the idea of collecting women's writing under a single cover, one can only respond with Virginia Woolf's insistence: we need the homage of memory, the catalytic power of the retrospective glance."

In glancing retrospectively at early Canadian women poets, Sullivan has not attempted merely to be historically representative. Rather, she has sought out "poems that could sustain a modern reader's attention," and she has discovered some gems, particularly the first poem in the collection, "Sir Walter Raleigh's Advice to His Son on the Subject of Matrimony" by Margaret Blennerhasset (alias A Lady). Blennerhasset's witty and cynical condemnation of male attitudes toward women, published in 1824, has obvious appeal for today's feminist reader. In restricting her selections to poetry she feels should be of interest to the modern reader, however, Sullivan excludes the work of a number of women who were well known as poets in their own day. She lists the names of some of the writers she chose not to include, but does not explain why she considers their poetry of little interest. If only to illustrate the extent to which women's interests and attitudes have changed over the past century, it would have been useful to include representative poems by such writers as Mrs. Leprohon or Agnes Maule Machar. (Machar's name is misspelled in Sullivan's Introduction, and there are a number of other typographical errors in the text. One

would expect such a prestigious publisher as Oxford to provide more efficient proofreading, especially in a book which is otherwise very handsomely designed).

One good reason for limiting the selection of early writing is the need to provide space for the numerous women writers who have succeeded the Victorian lady poets. Sullivan's anthology, of course, includes the women whose work has found a secure place in the Canadian poetic canon, but it also presents the work of less well known writers who are usually excluded from anthologies of Canadian poetry. Sullivan makes a case for the inclusion of Louise Morey Bowman in the history of modernism in Canadian poetry. She presents poems by writers such as Lucy Maud Montgomery, Martha Ostenso and Adele Wiseman, who are better known for their prose fiction. The anthology includes a generous selection of contemporary work and acknowledges the cultural diversity of Canada by including poetry by, for instance, three writers of Caribbean origin and one Native Salishan poet.

The inclusiveness of *Poetry by Canadian Women* is its greatest strength. The anthology traces not only, as Sullivan suggests, "the evolution in the concerns of women poets," but also the formal evolution of Canadian poetry from the Victorian romanticism of an Isabella Valancy Crawford to the high modernism of a P.K. Page to the feminist postmodernism of a Daphne Marlatt. Another aspect of the collection's inclusiveness is its treatment of poets who are well established in the Canadian canon. Often such writers are represented in anthologies by a few well-known "classics," usually not recent works. Sullivan includes such canonized poems — Margaret Avison's "Snow," for instance, and Margaret Atwood's "Death of a Young Son by Drowning" — but she also includes selections of the writers' more recent poetry. This is most striking in her selection of poems by Anne Marriott, who is best known for her documentation of the dust-bowl condition of the prairies during the Great Depression. The much-anthologized "Prairie Graveyard" (1940) is here, but it is augmented by several poems dating from the 1970s and 1980s.

No anthology is ever entirely satisfactory. I have suggested that this collection's historical purpose might be better served by the inclusion of more nineteenth century women poets, and Sullivan acknowledges that her selection of newer poets has been limited by constraints of space. By and large, however, *Poetry by Canadian Women* achieves the editor's aim "to demonstrate the full range of writing by Canadian women."

CELEBRATING CANADIAN WOMEN: Prose and Poetry By and About Women

Greta Hoffmann Nemiroff, ed. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1989

MARGARET ATWOOD: Visions and Forms

Kathryn Van Spanckeren and Jan Garden Castro, eds. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988

Clara Thomas

In Anne Cameron's "The World is Full of Magic" the final work of fiction in *Celebrating Canadian Women*, Klopinum, the story teller, tells the listening girl: "Tell you what...I'll give the stories to you. You want it done, you do it." Greta Nemiroff's collection is a part of her answer to what she felt was a similar challenge [the other part of her answer was *Women and Men: Interdisciplinary Readings on Gender* (Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1987)]. The planning of this massive project began in 1984. Nemiroff describes her original design – to represent a cross-section of Canadian woman writers from every geographical, social and economic sector of Canada. That she could not, she says, is because of "restraints of length and consequent cost." Even without these restraints, I suspect, submissions by or dealing with the poor, native persons, francophones or recent immigrants were extremely scarce on the ground.

Her final decision, "to organize the book thematically around women's experiences" has many strengths. The thematic divisions — Growing Up Female, Body/Mind, Romantic Love, Mothers, Families, Work, Women and Men, Women and Women, Women Alone/ Women Aging, and Power and Transcen-

dence — constitute a ready-made pedagogical outline that will be extremely easy to use in course planning within the general rubric of Women's Studies, though the price ($35.00) certainly gives one pause. And though the thematic structure threatens at times to become overpoweringly inward-turning and narcissistic, the overall skill displayed in the writing of these pieces triumphs – this collection is much, much more than a celebration simply of the *Sturm und Drang* of womanhood.

One of the tempting exercises this anthology suggests is a comparative reading of the works of the well-known writers with those of the lesser-known. The results are flattering to the latter group, whose techniques of writing are of very high quality. Where the difference lies, perhaps, and I say this with hesitation, as one reader's tentative opinion only, is in the quality of imaginative finish that the work of our much-published writers displays. Some, by no means all, but some of the other works, both of poetry and prose, strike me as experience unmediated, or only partially mediated, by the imaginative process. Raw experience sounds crude, but that is what I mean.

Reservations aside, however, the positive values of this collection far outweigh its negatives. Much of the poetry seems to me to be exquisitely written, the prose wholly effective to its chosen themes and the showcasing of the lesser known among the better known writers complimentary to both. Greta Nemiroff is to be acknowl-