they say is that they are hungry, broke and very tired — hardly circumstances for generating witty or provocative aphorisms to seduce "outsiders." So the question is, will Baxter's book be read only by the converted? And the point becomes how does the imagination of the unconverted become captured so that poverty is made *un*boring and change can occur on an issue which has been so often dismissed as ageless, overwhelming, unmanageable?

The single thread that runs through all three of these important books is that of *HOW* to create change in seemingly intractable issues, women's issues. The titles of the other two books appear more affirmative: we are moved from simply "speaking out" to "challenging the abuse of power" and "feminist organising for change." They are indeed more upbeat. Anne Witte-Garland depicts women who are bucking the system, putting themselves on the line because of their ideals. Women who are vocal, passionate and sometimes successful in their fights. Women who, in Ralph Nader's Foreword, are "heroic individuals who combine spiritual reserves with pragmatic applications." And there is a clear intent to move from the particular and personal to the generalisable and political: although each story can stand comfortably alone in its own intensity, and although the author believes that most successful activism is intuitive, nevertheless the book provides us with "several prisms" through which to view planned change.

Adamson, Briskin and McPhail's book goes one step further. For them it is not enough simply to display truths, to provide narratives which invite readers to make their own discoveries. They set themselves the dual task of developing a theoretical perspective on socialist feminism as well as addressing the problem of making change in Canadian society. In order to accomplish this they describe their chosen model of feminist practice. It embodies two seemingly contradictory gameplans: disengagement (the creation of alternative structures based on a critique of present systems) and mainstreaming (reaching the majority through popular and practical solutions to particular issues). They argue that the one holds the risk of marginalisation and the other of cooptation but that the tension is reconcilable through an approach which is both collective and participatory.

Socialist feminism thus encompasses both diversity and specificity in its understanding of the complexity of women's position in society. The authors claim it avoids the risk that radical feminists take in the isolating and insulating approach of opposition to the 'male-stream,' and that liberal feminists take in not straying from the institutional framework.

But in returning to the issue of our first book, the question becomes whether the very richness and diversity of feminism and its many concerns has resulted in a failure to address the most intransigent of problems, that of poverty. When the movement takes on the double or triple oppression of many women, the intertwining of the four major categories of gender, class, race and sexual orientation, is there a necessary dilution? When the articulate and often middle-class focus on the personal becoming political, on the impetus for struggle coming from women's own experience, do the issues become self-selecting? What happens to those thousands whose personal experience is poverty and whose total energy is taken up in survival needs, leaving nothing for devising strategies or developing theoretical constructs on change for themselves? Perhaps it is not accidental that the feminisation of poverty was a late-developer amongst women's issues.

So, as feminism is proud to bear no single ideology, thus can it also skirt the most difficult of issues? Are there few left to fight the issue of poverty? Sheila Baxter quotes Martin Niemoller after the Second World War;

In Germany they came first for the communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a communist. Then they came for the Jews and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up.

It is hard to do justice to three excellent books in a single and brief review. But reading them together certainly concentrates the focus on how feminists can join together in the fight to end poverty. This is only one theme and is perhaps unfairly dictated by my particular assignment. But it is also central to the beliefs of socialist feminism and the argument for challenging fundamental differences in wealth, privilege and power in Canadian society.

All three books would be useful for teaching purposes and it is particularly heartening that two of them are Canadian and draw illustrations from Canadian experiences. All three describe the powerlessness that women so frequently feel about their ability to change their own lives. And all seek to increase the understanding which is the foundation for making those changes. Conceptual tools, examples of intuitive action, descriptions of individual circumstances combine as powerful elements towards this understanding. And this combination reinforces the theme of both interconnectedness and variety in the women's movement. In struggling to understand both the commonalties and the differences we become clearer on what it means to be a feminist. And these books persuade us that wherever the battlefield, women are at the centre of movements for change and must continue, through a variety of levels of sophistication, to ensure that it takes place.

FEMINISM AND POLITICAL ECONOMY: Women's Work, Women's Struggles

Edited by Heather Jon Maroney and Meg Luxton. Toronto: Methuen, 1987.

Paisley Currah

As Heather Jon Maroney and Meg Luxton state in the book's introduction, feminist political economy in Canada has developed separately from the dominant Canadian political economy tradition, with feminists ignoring the androcentric categories of the mainstream work pioneered by scholars such as Arthur Lower, Harold Innis and W.A. Mackintosh. Although the revival of the older genre — centered around the marxist journal *Studies in Political Economy* — has occurred concomitantly with the surge in feminist research into non-traditional areas of political economy in the last decade, the two approaches remain largely isolated from each other. Maroney and Luxton point out that *SPE's* first nine issues contained

only three articles that dealt with women, but, they contend that the current division between feminism and political economy is "conjunctural and not fundamental." Responding to a challenge from a 1981 conference to "put your pen where your mouth is," *Feminism and Political Economy* is an attempt to show that the two approaches need not be isolated, that the differences are resolvable, that an explicitly feminist political economy is possible.

The analyses of domestic labour developed by theorists such as Wally Seccombe, Margaret Coulson and Jean Gardiner in the 1970s have already demonstrated the usefulness of extending the traditional categories of political economy into oft-ignored "peripheral" women's areas. The 15 essays in this collection continue this important research, advancing the analysis of women's work in the home and the "pink-collar ghettoes." For example, in "Rational Capitalism and Women as Labour," Patricia Marchak asks a key question: "If employers normally seek the least-cost labour supply, and if women are the cheapest source of labour in the capitalist economy, why are men and women channelled into separate labour pools?" She arrives at her conclusion — that the division of labour under capitalism "has been rationally developed in the interest of profit accumulation, and has been an integral component of advanced capitalism between 1945 and 1980" — by using analytic distinctions such as domestic labour and service *versus* surplus-producing labour. Other essays, such as Charlene Gannagé's analysis of the gender and ethnic division of labour in a Canadian garment factory, underscore women's economic oppression with empirical investigations. Gannagé outlines the complexities of class, race and gender that must be addressed in feminist political economy. For example, both the gender and ethnic ideology of the trade are made explicit in one woman's account of her firm's hiring practices of "operators," a traditionally male Jewish job:

Another lady was come for work by machine. And she was work very nice. She finish a coat and I say "Oh, you make very nice coat," I met her in the toilet. She say "I don't think so he likes." I say, "Why?" She say, "Because I am a woman. I'm not Jewish." ... Everybody say she ... make a nice coat. It was lunchtime. After lunch the foreman say "Oh you make a nice coat. You go home. We going to call you," he say. "Now not so busy."

Many of these essays are endeavours to lay out the groundwork for future feminist research, ending on "toward" notes, such as the concluding section of Luxton and Maroney's essay, "Toward a Feminist Political Economy," and the last part of Lorna Weir's piece, "Toward a Socialist Feminist Politics of Sexuality." Weir argues for the permanent integration of sexual politics into socialist feminist theory and practice, openly confronting "a tension in socialist feminism between its class and non-class 'popular-democratic' aspects," a tension which may not be resolvable within the confines of the women's movement, according to Weir. She calls for — and begins to elucidate the conceptual framework necessary for — a non-reductionist class analysis of sexual politics. While non-socialist feminists might hold that "a non-reductionist class analysis of sexual politics" is an impossibility, Weir's call for the inclusion of the category of sexuality — and thus the inclusion of analysis of the oppression of lesbians, bisexuals and gays *as* lesbians, bisexuals and gays and not as generic class subjects — along with those of gender and class in socialist feminist theory and practice must be lauded.

In their introduction, appropriately titled "From Feminism and Political Economy to Feminist Political Economy," Luxton and Maroney present a manifesto which actually illustrates the root of the division between feminism and marxist political economy. Statements such as "[p]olitical economy, like feminism, sees social relations as conditioned by economic structures and processes" serve the purpose of prematurely suturing a debate that has not yet been resolved satisfactorily, in theory or in practice: the basic disjuction between marxist analysis in which class is the fundamental category and feminist analysis in which gender is the fundamental category.

At the end of this very broad review essay Luxton and Maroney try to assimilate all the major strands of feminist theory since the 1960s with seven "analytic and methodological theses" for their proposed feminist political economy. The theses presented here are not always nuanced enough to resolve the theoretical dilemma between class analysis and gender analysis, but this is not to suggest that the development of a sophisticated feminist political economy is an impossibility. Indeed, the empirical descriptions of women's economic oppression in *Feminism and Political Economy* show that, when put to work analyzing specific, historical moments of women's oppression, the extended categories of political economy can illuminate underlying economic structures of women's oppression that other types of feminist analysis can only hint at.

CHANGING PATTERNS: Women in Canada

Edited by Sandra Burt, Lorraine Code and Lindsay Dorney. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988.

Randi R. Warne

Those of us who teach courses outside the domain of women's studies are often dismayed to find how complacent many young women students are about the feminist project. It is not uncommon to hear feminism called "old-fashioned," or to have current feminist activists characterized as bitter women "who keep harping on the same thing over and over" when in fact all the doors of opportunity