more acute for more senior positions. Women students face difficulties, usually unrecognized by their teachers and often by themselves in the learning environment — and perhaps suffer at the hands of examiners too! A short section on putting feminist geography into practice attempts to encourage students to identify topics that can be approached from this perspective. And a shorter conclusion rightly portrays feminism as a challenge to us "to examine our personal, political and academic lives..."

This book is well argued and written and ought to be read by all geographers — men and women alike. It is careful to appeal to its intended undergraduate audience and offers many stimulating lines for discussion and research. It will be worthwhile reading too for other social scientists — as much for what geography can offer to feminism as the latter can to that discipline.

FEMINISM UNMODIFIED: DISCOURSES ON LIFE AND LAW

Catharine MacKinnon. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.

Mariana Valverde

The first question facing a prospective buyer of this book is: what is feminism supposed to be unmodified by anyway? The thought of the important American radical feminist Catharine MacKinnon is best grasped by answering this question at some length, for she begins by assuming a position in the centre of a 'pure' feminism and then defending it against all outside (and even inside) threats.

MacKinnon herself names socialism and liberalism as the twin evils threatening to undermine or co-opt what she calls feminism *tout court* and others would call MacKinnon's thought. We will take up these two enemies in a minute, but first let us clarify that MacKinnon has profound disagreements with most influential radical feminists, from Susan Brownmiller to Mary Daly; to explain these is to delineate her particular position within the by no means homogeneous radical feminist current of the women's movement.

Mary Daly is, like many other radical feminists, a thorough philosophical idealist. She believes that it is the ideology of patriarchy which oppresses women in the first instance; her revolution is located in language and in philosophy, not in workplaces, streets and homes (See my article "The Religion of the 'Race' of Women: A Critique of Mary Daly," *Rites*, Oct. 1985, pp. 14-16). MacKinnon rejects this and insists that "male supremacy" [her term] is organized and maintained through practices more than through ideas. However — and this is the first serious problem in MacKinnon's perspective — her rejection of idealism does not lead her to emphasize women's economic and political struggles. On the contrary, she names pornography as enemy No. 1, and has in fact dedicated most of her energy in the last few years to developing a civil-remedies approach to remove pornography from sight. One would think this is because she believes that the images of pornography shape men's attitudes to women; but this isn't how she explains it. She wants to claim that pornography is not a cultural genre but an actual practice of "male supremacy;" pornography, she says "*is* a form of forced sex" [emphasis mine].

That pictures of sex or violence are not in the same ontological plane as actual sex or violence is thus denied by MacKinnon. The view that pictures of sex are to be treated just as if they were sex is precisely that implicit in obscenity law (certain pictures are illegal because the activity portrayed in them is illegal), which is rather ironic given MacKinnon's rejection of obscenity law as irrelevant to feminist concerns. Her unwitting support for the obscenity approach is reinforced by her belief that what is pornographic and objectionable is not only violence but even sex itself. The infamous terms "sexually explicit," which most feminists want to eliminate from anti-porn legislation, are included in MacKinnon's proposed anti-porn ordinance. This is because in MacKinnon's view sex is *per se* degrading to women. Why? Well, because it is pornographic, that is degrading, she argues circularly. Those who persist in talking about sexual freedom, she says "claim not to be able to grasp how sexuality could be *always already* pornography" [emphasis mine].

Having set up, through circular reasoning, a closed cycle of male domination/female victimization, MacKinnon professes to be surprised whenever any woman rebels or even speaks. This brings us to another way in which she differs from most other radical feminists, namely her refusal to portray women as essentially better than men, as morally superior. Women are simply not subjects, moral or otherwise. (As a whole she has little trust in women as a group, which is probably why the only feminist favourably referenced in her book is Andrea Dworkin). The word 'resistance' is therefore absent from her vocabulary. Defending her use of the term "victims" to refer to women, she states that her task is "exposing the truth of women's victimization." *Any* discussion of social change, of the possibilities for non-patriarchal living, she dismisses as "fantasy and entertainment." This is another instance of her either/or, absolutist frame of mind: she rejects the vapid optimism of neo-maternal feminism only to paint a picture of a patriarchy so powerful that it is difficult to see how any woman has ever rebelled. She goes so far as to claim that "female power" is "a contradiction in terms." How can feminism then exist, one wonders?

The main contribution of the book is its critique of liberal feminism. MacKinnon rejects all notion of individual women making a difference in the world or in their private lives. And she has a well-deserved critique of the assumptions of liberal jurisprudence regarding individual equality: for instance, she refuses to use the term 'person,' which tries to overcome actual gender differences through an abstract and purely formal equality. Now, to criticize American bootstrap individualism may be necessary, but MacKinnon goes to the other extreme: she portrays women merely as instances of a gender defined in turn solely through its oppression. Thus her whole approach to sexuality neglects to inquire about individual desires and fantasies, or for that matter about collective struggles to redefine the terms of sexual discourse and experience. For her, sexuality is not permeated by contradictions and tensions (as it is for most other theorists): it is simply dangerous, simply oppressive. This feminism is "the night in which all cows are black," to use Hegel's words.

This brings us to the other 'enemy' who ought not to modify feminism, namely socialism. (Incidentally, MacKinnon seems to be unaware of the fact that much of her critique of liberalism was developed over a century ago by Marxist and non-Marxist socialists). Socialist-feminism is dismissed as simply a male-left approach to 'the woman question' lacking any alternative analysis of women's very real class situations. In her list of the 'practices' that supposedly make up patriarchy, women's economic subordination through both paid and unpaid labour is conspicuously absent. The fact that only a middle-class white woman could possi-

bly make this omission does not occur to her — for after all, she declares, "you will notice that I equate 'in my view' with 'feminism.'"

The other possible modifier of the noun 'feminism' — 'anti-racist' — is not even mentioned. Her comments about women of colour regard exclusively their representation in pornography; one gets the impression that MacKinnon believes that race is important only as one more trick in the pornographer's bag, and is irrelevant to women themselves and hence to feminism. That someone could publish a feminist book in 1987 as though black feminism did not exist, as though the whole idea of "feminism unmodified" had not been demolished by critiques from women of colour, is simply astounding. Equally appalling is the fact that in her discussion of legal precedents and legal tactics MacKinnon constantly makes parallels between civil rights cases and feminist concerns that rely on the assumption that racism is and has been adequately addressed in the American legal system, and that women are far behind black people in their access to legal redress. The constant refrain, 'they wouldn't allow that to be done to blacks' betrays a wilful disregard for the realities of racism (whatever the legal situation may be), and certainly helps to perpetuate violence against blacks, Chicanos and other people of colour.

Liberalism, individualism and idealism are certainly problematic elements in American feminist thought and practice. They deserve criticism, and not only from a socialist perspective. However, radical feminists who are grassroots activists will not get any help from MacKinnon's apocalyptic and demoralizing speeches about women's "victimization" under a monolithic patriarchy undivided by race, class, and nationality. The grassroots radical feminists, who do believe that resistance is possible even if it is never 'pure', need to develop their own theory, one that is not hostile to the class and race struggles of women and one that does not equate 'feminism' in general with the views of one legal theorist. Progressive radical feminism is still awaiting its theorist.

ONE WAY TICKET: MIGRATION AND FEMALE LABOUR

Edited by Annie Phizacklea. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983.

Daiva K. Stasiulis

The appearance of *One Way Ticket* in 1983 won a warm reception amongst the growing numbers of feminist scholars who were hankering after studies that would address the rich complexity of migrant and immigrant women's lives. The vast majority of extant literature on migrants simply assumed that migration was a male phenomenon. When women were mentioned in migration research, it was their domestic roles as wives and mothers or their function as bearers of "traditional" culture, rather than their participation in waged and non-waged labour, that received attention.

One Way Ticket, the focus of which is the migration of women from the European periphery and Third World to western Europe, directly confronts the labour market position of female migrant workers and considers the numerous economic, politico-legal and ideological factors which subordinate these women inside and outside waged work. Since the 1960s, the numbers of migrant women in the waged labour force of industrial western Europe have swelled, constituting by 1980 over one quarter of the foreign labour force. In countries such as West Germany, state efforts to expel "guest workers" during the period of recession, many from the Mediterranean littoral, have been counteracted by the entry of wives, husbands and children under regulations which grudgingly permitted family reunification. A large percentage of this recent migration has been female. In Britain (the context for four of seven chapters in this volume), large numbers of women from New Commonwealth countries have arrived as independent workers, in addition to women from these and non-Commonwealth countries who have come to join husbands.

Notwithstanding the diversity in national origin, culture, and entry and subsequent legal status, the employment situations of the various groups of migrant and immigrant women examined in this book are oppressively similar. West Indian, South Asian and Greek-Cypriot women in Britain are concentrated in dirty, hazardous and poorly-paid manual jobs in the garment trades and other backwaters of capitalist production or in lower-level, non-manual occupations and professions with acute labour shortages, such as nursing. Turkish women in the Netherlands, many forced to work illegally, find low-skilled jobs in laundries, clothing, textile and food production. Burdened by high living costs, child-care responsibilities and the obsessive protectiveness of husbands, many migrant women become trapped in highly exploited and stressful homeworking.

The position of migrant women workers in western European economies is both similar to and divergent from that of male migrants and non-migrant women. As migrants, they experience the racism inherent in immigration and nationality laws, employer and union practices and popular mythology. As women, they are subjected to similar policies, practices and ideologies which serve to channel women generally into low-paid, low-skill female ghettoes. Phizacklea maintains that this intermeshing of racism and sexism in advanced capitalist economies relegates migrant women to a subordinate position, a "new layer of segmentation" within the sexually divided labour market.

In the absence of aggregate statistical data on the labour market positions of migrant and non-migrant women across western European economies, it is difficult to assess the accuracy of Phizacklea's portrayal of migrant women as a subordinate fraction of the working class. Each chapter, however, provides a bleak picture of labour market prospects for migrant women, especially under conditions of economic crisis and industrial restructuring.

Thus, Stone's examination of the employment situation in Handsworth, Birmingham of West Indian, South Asian and white female workers reveals that the three groups of working class women share the same confinement in low paid, low status and gender-specific work. The very small samples of women interviewed by Stone, however, make it hazardous to generalize these results or to demonstrate the role racism and cultural precepts (*purdah*, traditional Moslem dress) are alleged to play in posing additional constraints on the employment options of black and Asian women.

Basing her analysis on broader, longitudinal British survey data, Dex argues that racial disadvantages extend to second-generation West Indian women, who in comparison with white counterparts, are "last in the hiring queue and first in the firing queue." The strength of Dex's analysis resides also in its focus on compensatory strategies of young black women who, in their determination to avoid the manual jobs held by their immigrant mothers, were more apt to seek further education and training than young