studies of the intense, emotional bonds of friendship among nineteenth-century women, O'Grady argues that it would be "culturally insensitive" to "label" these alliances as lesbian, a sexual orientation incompatible with cultural assumptions of the time.

While I agree it is best to avoid labels here, I do feel there is nothing culturally insensitive in speculating on repressed erotic desire; in fact, it seems naïve not to indulge in such speculation after a century of psychoanalytic theory. Addison's worshipful, poetic, fawning representations of her professional and social encounters with women who leave her as prostrate and head-achy as a courtly lover do carry glimpses of erotic attraction. However, I also recognize other, more concrete, possibly interconnected factors that likely shaped and determined Addison's passionate responses. These women were mentors to Addison, who, O'Grady surmises, had similar, inchoate ambitions of leadership at the time of her journey, so that meeting and networking with them would have had the potential to create an abundance of professional nervous energy and egoistic desire. No doubt, Addison was also quite simply thrilled to meet peers—fellow educators—who took her and her questions seriously. Her welcome reception at the Oxford and Cambridge women's colleges contrasts starkly with her treatment at the University of Heidelberg, where a glowering male Chancellor responded to her request for a curriculum by flinging the item across his desk with disdain before turning his back on her. Moreover, Addison's colonial mentality certainly amplified her impassioned reverence for the female figures administrating the women's university education system in England. Addison idealized most things British and cherished a view of herself as a British subject: to wit, at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris, the British Pavilion makes Addison "proud of being English," while the Canadian Pavilion is "not quite up to the mark." In the company of these powerful women, Addison appears to see herself as short of the mark because of her youth, inexperience, and colonial identity, but it is a shortcoming she is bent on remedying on colonial soil. Regardless, whatever the stimulus or combination of stimuli that galvanizes Addison's prose in the final chapters of her *Diary of a European Tour, 1900*, it makes for the most fascinating, engaging reading in the text: a climax, if you will..

WHEN MEMORY SPEAKS: EXPLORING THE ART OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Jill Ker Conway.
New York: Vintage. 1999.

BY SHERRILL CHEDA

How do we tell our life stories—as tragedies or as comedies? Are we heroines changing the world or victims being acted upon? Do we use an active or a passive voice? In *When Memory Speaks*, Jill Ker Conway, an excellent writer and thinker as well as a scholar and memoirist in her own right, focuses on the gender conventions that shape narrative and on what writers leave out. Once you read this outstanding book you will never again think of or tell your or anyone else's life story the same way.

Conway begins by discussing the archetypal life scripts for men and women in western cultures. As we know, the hero surmounts tests in an outer or inner journey and his defining characteristic is action. In contrast, the heroine is preoccupied with romantic life, marriage, and family and her defining characteristic is an emotional response. When women finally got access to education in the second half of the nineteenth century, their public silence was belied by their private diaries and letters. Even those who wrote publicly wrote about their achievements as romance.

Conway brilliantly explores male secular heroes such as Rousseau, Ben Franklin, Frederick Douglass, Henry Ford, and W.E.B. DuBois. Romantic heroines in North American autobiography were those of captivity—by Indians or slavery. Later, reformers, such as Jane Addams and Margaret Sanger, wrote in a passive voice, never admitting that they were agents for change. It was only after reading *The Feminine Mystique* in the sixties that U.S. women abandoned the romantic myth in droves.

Imperial memoirs exhibit the different ways male and female adventurers/missionaries reported their stories. For example, Livingstone's motives for exploration in Africa were a mixture of political, economic, and religious objectives and he wrote about his activities as adventure. Sarah Boardman Judson, a missionary in Burma, had many adventures and loved them but wrote home mostly about Christian conversion themes. When newspapers replaced missionary and geographical societies as sponsors of exploration, the stories became more sensational, so that T.E. Lawrence's Middle East explorations have captured our imaginations while those of Gertrude Bell or Mary Kingsley, who passed as a trader in Africa and made friends with African tribes, have not.

The two world wars changed everything for both men and women. Siegfried Sassoon and Vera Brittain alike saw the futility of war. Later, often overlooked, nurses, memoirs from the Vietnam War tell it like it was and raise difficult moral questions.

Conway then turns to feminist plots and points out that, given the culture of the times, we must read early nineteenth century feminist

memoirs as conscious acts of rebellion, no matter how disguised. As examples, she discusses those of Harriet Martineau, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Emmeline Pankhurst.

Conway brings new insights into reading memoirs and the "voice" twentieth century women find. Self-reporting in the 20th century showed little change at first with what women left out being as important as what they included. Like solving a giant puzzle, Conway pieces together the many widely divergent parts of Virginia Woolf's autobiographical writings to make a bright clear picture of some of the defining moments in her life. She also reveals what the voices of Mable Dodge Luhan, Germaine Greer and Gloria Steinem tell us when we listen between the lines.

In "Different Stories," Conway sensitively looks at Gay, Lesbian and Transsexual stories and how they deal with romantic myth as well as personal growth (May Sarton, Kate Millett, Audre Lorde, Martin Duberman, James Merrill, and Jan Morris).

Late twentieth century confessional writings share certain fairy tale qualities in that they are often tales of needy children confronting forces of evil and good. Kathryn Harrison and Mary Gordon deal with very different father/daughter relationships. Frank McCourt, James McBride, and Rick Bragg write about mother/son relationships while Mary Karr and Bruce McCall explore dysfunctional families. The story of an inadequate family is a central theme of these accounts.

In conclusion, Conway explains that how we remember the past determines how we see the future. Will we use an active or a passive voice? What roles will we accept? How do we think we can change the patterns? Conway is a wise feminist thinker and a beautiful writer.

POURQUOI JE SUIS CHIENNE DE GARDE

Isabelle Alonso. Paris: Robert Laffont, 2001

PAR CAROLINE CARON

Pour dénoncer le sexisme historique aussi solidement ancré dans l'esprit des Français que le racisme l'était autrefois dans l'esprit des Blancs, Florence Montreynaud a formé le groupe les Chiennes de gardes, chargé de surveiller l'actualité française et de dénoncer toute manifestation publique de sexisme. La nouvelle présidente, Isabelle Alonso, auteure des ouvrages *Et encore, je m'retiens!* (1995) et *Tous les hommes sont égaux... même les femmes* (1999), a signé tout récemment un ouvrage au titre polémique qui a pour but de justifier son appartenance aux Chiennes de garde.

Pourquoi Isabelle Alonso est-elle Chienne de garde? En réalité, elle répond à la question en moins de cent pages... et pour plus de trente dollars. Intéressant, oui, mais un peu court et un peu cher. Dans la soixantaine de pages qui subsistent après son exposé, car le livre compte en tout 164 pages, l'auteure présente le Manifeste du groupe, effectivement très pertinent, mais pourtant disponible sur le site web des Chiennes de garde. Par une revue de presse, elle résume ensuite l'accueil du groupe par les médias français et pour clôturer l'ouvrage, elle sert à ses lectrices un chapitre complet de commentaires, de lettres et de courriels reçus en guise d'appui. Ceux-ci sont également disponibles sur le site Internet. Bref, Alonso reprend sous sa plume la genèse des Chiennes de garde, recense et commente des extraits d'articles et d'émissions de télé, termine par des bouts de lettres redondantes et pas toujours pertinentes, puis coiffe son livre d'un titre autocentré, un titre justifié par le premier chapitre seulement.

Tout de même, il faut avouer que les lectrices ont l'occasion de rigoler, car elle est drôle et sympathique, cette Isabelle Alonso! Sous sa plume, les images loufoques défilent et l'ironie est mordante. Malheureusement, on s'attendrait à un contenu plus substantiel. Le titre pamphlétaire évoque une déclaration solennelle, une profession de foi, un discours incisif. Mais non. Le texte n'est pas du tout serré, beaucoup trop anecdotique et exagérément familier dans le ton, qui verse un peu trop dans la conversation.

Néanmoins, ce livre vous fera certainement passer un après-midi rigolo, encore davantage si vous suivez l'actualité française. Quant aux féministes bien informées, elles n'y apprendront rien de neuf. Et les intellectuelles pures resteront résolument sur leur faim. *Pourquoi je suis Chienne de garde* demeure un livre intéressant si on l'emprunte à une amie dans l'optique d'un divertissement léger; plutôt décevant si on l'achète en librairie pour nourrir une réflexion analytique.

WORKING IN WOMEN'S ARCHIVES: RESEARCHING WOMEN'S PRIVATE LITERATURE AND ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

Helen M. Buss and Marlene Kadar, Eds.
Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001.

BY BARBARA MEADOWCRAFT

All of us who are researching women's lives are indebted to Helen M. Buss and Marlene Kadar for compiling this excellent volume of essays.