victims of infanticide from antiquity into the middle ages. The father was reborn in his son; such rebirth was denied mothers of daughters. In adolescence, a daughter rejects the mother, as if by taboo. Sensual and emotional energies flow towards men, the 'worthy.' A reuniting with the mother is achieved in female bonding, either as comrades or mates, the author believes. Reference material for this section includes Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Plath and Margaret Atwood.

'Violence: The Heart of Maternal Darkness' confronts the pathological stress in institutional motherhood. A case history of infanticide emphasized the pressures, the community indifference, that broke the mother of eight.

Exploitation and callousness cheapen life. Women bonding together, trusting in instincts, tenderness, passion, and applying intelligence, experience and education will find the courage to confront the human battle. The goal is not to abolish motherhood, but to elevate it to the realm of difficult but chosen work.

Ourselves and Our Children, by the Boston Women's Health Collective, Random House, 1978, pp. 288, paperback $8.95.

Brenda Roman

Most books on raising children make me feel guilty. Their questions nag. Is it because I'm overprotective that my children are fearful at night (the unreconstructed Dr. Spock)? Do I listen actively enough to them (Dr. Thomas Gordon)? Do I provide enough order in their young lives (Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs)? Although these experts raise unsettling issues, they all seem to have missed something – that most of us are parenting under bad working conditions.

Ourselves and Our Children: A Book by and for Parents grants these conditions at the outset. We are parents, they say, 'in a society which gives us too little support: we worry because we are alone on the job in certain important ways.' A major theme of the book is that we cannot parent alone, that we need support, not only from friends and relatives, but from the society as a whole.

We are alone on the job both because the raising of children is considered to be a private, family responsibility which must not interfere with the important business of our society and because our work lives are organized inhumanely. The 'myth of separate worlds,' whereby employees are required to act on the job as if they have no other loyalties, no other life, keeps parents from being able to work out a balance between time inside and outside the family.

The authors don't just analyze these problems; they present the testimony of parents who are trying to meet them on a daily basis – the mother training as a child therapist who asks to work near her home and whose supervisor advises her to 'never again mention in this program that you are a mother,' the father who phones in to work, saying that his car is stalled, because he can't tell his employer that he's helping his son with a school exhibit on the Hopi Indians.

It doesn't have to be like this, the authors say. They point to societies such as Sweden and the Soviet Union which take collective responsibility for child care and cite creative measures taken in those countries to reduce the separation between children's lives and the work lives of their parents. But how can we bring about such collective responsibility here?

Although the writers locate the problems accurately in the 'structures of work and profit,' they quickly move to more manageable problems – 'the condition of our neighborhoods' and 'the isolation of the nuclear family.' It is hard to do otherwise. The problems – and the power that stands in the way of solving those problems – are enormous. But creating our own support networks, organizing on a local level to demand that supermarkets remove candy machines and hoping that a 'parently consciousness' will emerge among decision-makers once there are more women in the work force are not enough. Such solutions point to a concern I have with the focus of the book.

Some of the authors wrote *Our Bodies, Ourselves: A Book By and For Women,* the audacious women's self-help book that expressed some of the aims of the women's movement in the 1960s. But the 'ourselves' have changed. In this book women as mothers are subsumed under the cross-gender category 'parents.' Just as we for so long have felt that our humanity was unrecognized in the term 'mankind,' so here we may well feel unrecognized in the category 'parent.' Our experiences as mothers are different from those of fathers. In the last analysis it is *we* who are today alone on the parent job.

Despite their wholly admirable vision of shared parenting in a context of supportive services, the authors, by concentrating on 'parents,' have bypassed the opportunity to particularize our struggles as mothers and to help mobilize the power of the women's movement (in concert, as such a large struggle must ultimately take place, with other movements for social change) to make our society truly responsive to human needs.

The Battered Woman, by Lenore E. Walker, Harper & Row, 1979, pp. 270, hardcover $14.95.

Eleanor Ross

In the course of my work as a public health nurse, I have been visiting weekly a hostel for women (and their children) who are leaving their marriages. Seventy-five percent of these women are battered.

What is a battered woman? According to author Dr. Lenore Walker, she is one who is 'repeatedly subjected to any forceful physical or psychological behavior by a man in order to coerce her to do something he wants her to do without any concern for her rights.' This includes wives or women who have intimate relationships with the men involved. To be classified as 'battered,' a woman must go through the assaulting cycle at least twice.

Historically, wife beating has been considered an acceptable resolution to marital disagreements as long as the violence is confined within the home. Only recently has the practice come into the public consciousness. Hostels or safe houses for battered women are now springing up all over North America, England, Western Europe and Australia to provide a place of refuge for these women and their children.

Laws are gradually being changed to assist the battered wife and books like Dr. Lenore Walker's are being written. Several years of intense research have gone into the wife beating theories she has developed. There is the 'learned helplessness' syndrome, which keeps the battered woman trapped in an impossible relationship. The 'cycle theory of violence' has three distinct phases: the tension-building phase; the brutal, acute battering incident; followed by the loving, contrite behaviour phase. All this is well illustrated by sad and rather horrifying first-person case histories.

The myths about abused women are many and persistent: she is usually seen as poor, uneducated and with few job skills. It is assumed that she can always leave home, and that this syndrome affects only a small percentage of the population. In fact, according to Dr. Walker, 'most battered women are from middle-class and higher-income homes and many are highly competent workers and successful career women.' Like rape, wife beating is a seriously under-reported crime. Statistics are difficult to obtain because battering generally occurs at night, in the home, without witnesses. Yet Dr. Walker maintains that a battered woman is psychologically unable to leave after being assaulted and that she cannot end her victimization without assistance.

Dr. Walker goes on to describe the characteristics of the battered woman and her man. Low self-esteem is something they both have in common. Women become victimized by feelings of powerlessness and helplessness. Marriage does not appear to offer equal power to men and women. Dr. Walker states that 'the marriage license in our society also seems to serve as a license to violence.'

The law tends to perpetuate the notion of male supremacy and does not in fact protect married women. Dr. Walker be-

lieves that marriage laws, plus cultural conditions, plus economic realities all go together with physical inferiority to teach women that they have no control over the circumstances of their lives. For the battered woman, who is usually a tradionalist about her home, the situation becomes an almost impossible one to escape.

The new hostels which provide a temporary shelter for these women to work out their problems are one reason why Dr. Walker is hopeful that we are entering a new egalitarian age – one in which patriarchy will be overthrown. As she points out, the family unit becomes terribly distorted in a violent relationship. Children are seriously damaged, both physically and emotionally. Frequently, wife batterers have come from violent homes themselves. It has been shown that many of these families can become reasonably healthy when the mother, as a single parent, acquires adequate economic and emotional support. Parent education classes will help to reduce the amount of violence committed against children.

Batterers usually deny they have a problem (even though they are aware of what they are doing). Therefore, attempts to help them have been scant. *The Battered Woman* sheds light on a hidden corner of society: let us hope that it will lead to a better understanding and treatment of those involved, men as well as women.

Dr. Walker is director of the Battered Women Research Centre in Denver, Colorado. Her studies have shown that very little has been done on the psychology of battered women as victims. Written from a feminist viewpoint, the contents of *The Battered Woman* are timely, thought-provoking and as pertinent to Canada as to the United States.

Career and Motherhood, by Alan Roland and Barbara Harris, Human Sciences Press, pp. 212, hardcover $16.95.

Esther Greenglass

This book is about a timely and significant issue, namely the psychological implications for women who choose to combine career and motherhood. Specifically, the book addresses itself to the struggles that contemporary women have on three fronts: the social, the familial and the inner. The nine papers in the book also deal extensively with the conflicts, stresses and strains that often result when women combine both roles. The purpose of the book is twofold: to educate its readers about the historical and psychological factors associated with dual-role identity and, on a more personal level, to help dissipate the guilt and conflict working mothers are bound to feel.

The majority of the papers in the book attempt to synthesize basic psychoanalytic principles with the contemporary feminist position on the changing role of women. Sometimes the synthesis is achieved, other times it is not. In this respect it is noteworthy that five out of the seven contributors are psychoanalytically-oriented. The difficulty with the approach associated with the psychoanalytic position is the assumption that women (and men as well) who have difficulty coping, are 'sick' and need extensive 'treatment' to 'work through' their problems. While granted, the authors don't push this view, it is ubiquitous in most of the articles. Frequently, a contributor who is discussing conflict in women, for example, will illustrate a point by referring to something said by a patient in treatment.

While modifying and extending basic psychoanalytic principles to include social and cultural premises, most of the contributors still dutifully refer to the genitals as the centre of one's inner psychic conflict. The concepts of penis envy as well as Freud's fallacious views of women remain in the background despite protestations to the contrary by various contributors. This is illustrated very well in Doris Bernstein's article entitled 'Female Identity Synthesis,' where she talks about the function of the penis as an aid in individuation. Some other articles are, however, of historic interest. For example, Barbara Harris, in one of her papers, discusses the legacy of the cult of domesticity. It is significant that the home was not considered the peculiarly feminine sphere until the economy moved out of it. Moreover, the cult of domesticity developed recently in our culture. In another paper, Esther Menaker examines some inner conflicts of women as a result of changing roles. Here the emphasis, predictably, is on the individual woman and the problems she has in adjusting.

While acknowledging the need for more day care and greater male participation in the home, the emphasis throughout the book is on the woman's inner conflicts and how *she* is going to work through them. In these times of significant role changes, particularly for women, no one would argue that women are not experiencing conflict and anxiety. However, many of the 'problems' experienced by women are not unique to them. They are in fact societal in origin and, as such, could be ameliorated through social means. Sure, women need to shed their guilt – as it is now, we feel guilty if we mother, if we don't mother, if we work or if we don't work; and we feel the most guilt when we try to do both. But this is not an individual problem. This is a widespread phenomenon among women who have simply internalized society's ambivalent attitude towards them and their evolving role. Women, compared to men, have traditionally spent far more time thinking about themselves and their nature. It is time now for women to *do more* and *think less.* Psychoanalysis encourages thought at the expense of action. Traditionally, this form of thinking has been reserved mainly for middle and upper class women who are some of the few people in our society who have both the time and the money to analyze themselves. Instead of asking whether their superegos have developed sufficiently, women might better ask how assertiveness training can improve their ability to cope with their multiple roles and their associated demands.

Out of the Frying Pan, by Karol Hope and Nancy Young, Doubleday, 1979, paperback $6.50.

Lynne Kositsky

Out of the Frying Pan is the type of book that tends to make me gain weight, although in spite of its title it is emphatically not a cookery manual. Supposedly delineating 'a decade of change in women's lives,' and divided into sections utilizing such titles as *'Satisfying Work'* and *'Self-Sufficiency,'* the book seemed to me to be so boring and repetitive that I kept escaping to the kitchen for a quick snack to relieve the monotony of its contents.

To begin with, this book is at least ten years out of date. Back in the late Sixties when many of us were taking our first tentative steps in the direction of liberation, the autobiographical experiences of more than twenty-five women might have been passably useful as a consciousness-raising guide. But to whom would this appeal in 1979? Feminists have all trodden this ground before, and the often disjointed, disorganized and rambling narratives of the women in the various subsections are unlikely to convert anybody else.

The interviews which comprise the book are quite obviously taped and then transcribed, and I frequently found myself wondering about the function of the editors. Surely they could have corrected the shoddy sentence construction and atrocious grammar that continually mar the narrative? 'Different than' may be all very well in colloquial speech but looks dreadful on the page, and I couldn't stop counting the eternal use of the word 'into,' which seems to have supplanted every other word in the English, or at least the American, language. On a single page, for example, I found the following: 'into women's culture' (used twice), 'into matriarchal, spiritual and ceremonial trips,' 'into natural foods,' and 'into telling you about it.' On the same page the same woman is *not* into farming and *not* into animals! Later in the book I discovered the rather doubtful and unintentionally funny image of a lesbian who was 'into other women'!

Perhaps these are small grievances;