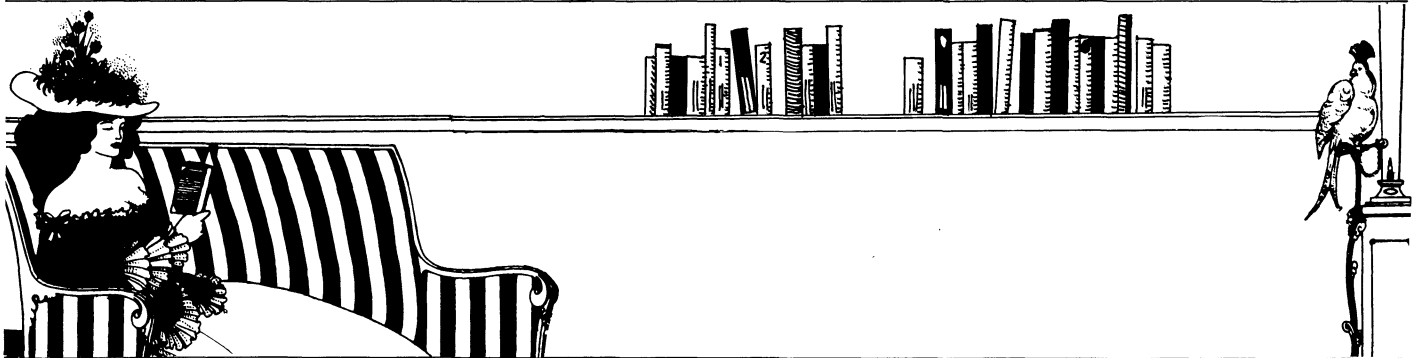


In one very spirited discussion like this, we found ourselves pitted against a group of grade thirteen boys who had already acquired all the attitudes of the 'macho male'. Afterward, the leader of the hecklers came up to us quietly and confessed, 'Logically, I understand that women deserve equal rights, but how can I change the way I act with girls? The other guys would laugh at me.' Spurred on by comments like this from students, we will be extending our coverage of Women's History with two new presentations this year. One explores the lives of pioneer women. The second spans the period from suffrage to the present, including the problems of sex-role stereotyping as they are found in society today.

*Two Persons Called Sarah* has been seen by five thousand teachers and students (grades eight-thirteen) in the Toronto area. Audiences have also included community-college classes, and teachers of History, Women's Studies, Social Studies, Theatre Arts and Family Studies. We have performed for Federation of Women Teachers groups and for the annual convention of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women in Ottawa. Scenes from the play have also been presented on CBC television. During the 1978-9 season, *Two Persons Called Sarah* will be available for touring to schools and libraries around Ontario through Prologue to the Performing Arts.

## What Libraries can do for Women's Studies

Sherrill Cheda



### Le Rôle des bibliothèques dans les programmes d'études de la femme

L'auteur nous renseigne ici sur l'apport possible des bibliothèques aux programmes d'études de la femme. Son article comprend aussi une courte bibliographie féministe annotée qui fournirait une base utile aux professeurs.

We often talk about curricula, methodology, students, teachers, and criteria, without considering back-up resources. Nevertheless, it's fairly difficult to develop a theory, plan a course, make an assignment, show a film, or even find an address without resources, resourceful people, and access to these resources.

Women's Studies cannot be developed and taught without books, magazines, bibliographies, films, and other audio-visual materials; consequently, the librarian is a key individual in any Women's Studies planning. I would like to discuss here how an ideal resource back-up might work and I expect readers to pick and choose those situations which would be applicable to them.

There are three basic positions from which to start:

1. The librarian has to create the demand for the materials.
2. The librarian meets the needs of the teachers and students.
3. Both teachers and librarian develop the resources together.

(These three positions can also be seen as three distinct steps in sequential order). This article of course, predisposes that Women's Studies is a positive force meeting the needs of the student population on different levels for a variety of reasons.

Before creating the demand for Women's Studies materials, the librarian has to build up a collection in this area; consequently, it helps if she is a specialist in these materials or has an interest in the subject and is willing to read and use the bibliographic tools for collection-building. In either of these processes her consciousness will have been raised. A second step might be making the collection known. Hundreds of books on a subject may be in the library, but if the users aren't aware of them they can easily be overlooked. Displays of books are one way libraries have of bringing books to their users' attention, and displays of books by women or about women's issues guarantee their circulation and use. Usually books are snapped up from these displays so quickly that it is necessary to have a good back-up selection of even more titles. Other public-relations techniques are bookmarks listing recent Women's Studies books or 'pathfinders', short annotated booklists on specific subjects such as women's bodies, women and the law, feminist criticism, or any other topical issue such as rape, abortion, or wife battering. These are of great assistance to students who are working on debates or research papers. Suggesting these topics to them if they are undecided is another way to create a demand.

An active vertical file chock-full of clippings and pamphlets on women's issues will be well used in any library if the material collected is relevant. One idea for making it even more useful is to clip pertinent community information to the front of the file. For example, the person writing a term paper on rape would find a listing of rape-crisis centres with phone numbers on top of the file. The birth-control file would list planned-parenthood offices and numbers as well as hassle-free clinics in the area. This makes it possible for a student to have access to community information without having to ask for it.

If there are some teachers in your school who you suspect are teaching courses in which women's issues come up, suggest to them that you come to their classroom with books appropriate to the course and liberally sprinkle the selection with resources about women. Often it is necessary to provide access to materials outside traditional library surroundings. Another appropriate time to take Women's Studies materials out of the library to where people are is during professional development days. If the librarian can give a talk on resources generally, bringing in Women's Studies materials specifically, to groups of teachers during their professional development, the teachers will begin to think of the librarian as resourceful, the resource centre as friendly, and the materials as important.

Non-book material plays an important role in Women's Studies as it is usually more up to date than books. Films that speak to the particular problems of women have proliferated in the last few years, and there are some very fine filmographies. Planning a noon-hour film program around a 'women's' theme is a way the librarian can play an important role in the learning environment and also allow teachers and students to see the library as more than just a depository for books.

Sharing of information from her office also gives the librarian a channel of communication with teachers. The routing of lists of publications and publishers' catalogues to appropriate teachers as well as photocopying of reviews pertinent to their work will not only ensure a transference of information but help establish a good relationship between the two professions.

If the institution already has Women's Studies courses, the librarian's role is somewhat easier but requires imaginative use of resources and the bending of traditional library procedures. Many students on limited income, a large number of whom are women, cannot afford expensive Women's Studies textbooks or numerous individual texts; consequently, the library can play an important role by purchasing multiple copies of specific required-reading texts in the Women's Studies field and placing them on reserve so that all students can have access to the material.

The library can also be a depository for the course outlines and reading lists of Women's Studies courses in your institution and others. By providing access to these, both teachers and students can broaden their outlook.

If there are women's conferences or women's days sponsored by the schools in which you work, displays of books and other resources, women's films, and posters contributed and arranged by the library staff would be a real asset. At other times, the biggest help a librarian can be is to get the resources together for Women's Studies people. This means doing the research, searching the indexes, the publications catalogues, and community resources, and ferreting out information from tables of contents and book indexes.

Women's Studies is a relatively new field; it may seem that there is a lot of current material in this area and that it's only a fad. Remember that ninety per cent of all the materials in libraries are about 'men' or men's pursuits. The Library of Congress's subject heading for women said, until last year, 'Women; see also Charm.' As librarians we can never do enough; but, given our resources, we can do a lot.

Following is an annotated list of a few basic feminist works that should form the beginning of any Women's Studies collection in high school, college, university, or public library.

The first book in English, by a woman, concerning itself politically with feminist issues was Mary Wollstonecraft's

*Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (London, Source Book Press, 1971), initially published in 1792. It called for a revolution in female manners and made a fervent plea for education for women. Wollstonecraft went on to point out that the sexual distinction upon which men insist is arbitrary. This is startlingly perceptive and a brave claim at a time when no biological, sociological, or psychological studies had been conducted. Her most original and, some think, revolutionary theory was that love between unequals cannot exist; consequently, women and men cannot love each other, under any system of inequality.

Sometimes overlooked as feminist theory because it's assumed to be specifically about writing and literature is Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (London, Hogarth Press, 1929). Basically, understanding that economic independence is necessary for women before they can live lives of their own, Woolf documents the mirroring patterns that have prevented this kind of independence. 'Women have served all these centuries as looking-glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size'. She ends her book with her speech about Shakespeare's sister: 'Now my belief is that this poet who never wrote a word and was buried at the cross-roads still lives. She lives in you and in me, and in many other women who are not here to-night for they are washing up the dishes and putting the children to bed'.

Almost never referred to is Virginia Woolf's even greater polemic writing, *Three Guineas* (London, Hogarth Press, 1938). In this work, she connects war, politics, education, religion, and the professions, and their male ceremonies, as part of the patriarchal control on society; even more importantly, she introduces the idea of men as a class and women as a separate class.

This idea is closely connected to Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (Knopf, 1964) in which she first described woman as 'other'. Using biology, psychology, and history, she showed women's perceived secondary position in society and was the predecessor of Masters and Johnston and the new feminism in many ways. Everything that has come after *The Second Sex* owes a debt to Simone de Beauvoir's exhaustive and brilliant study.

While Betty Friedan, in *The Feminine Mystique* (New York, Norton, 1963), refused to call 'the problem that has no name' oppression or patriarchy, she certainly described women's, particularly housewives', discontent well and analysed their contemporary problems. Her major plea, like Wollstonecraft's, Woolf's, and de Beauvoir's before her, was for women to be allowed an identity of their own.

Nineteen seventy was a milestone year for feminist writing, as some of the greatest ideas of the new feminism were published at that time. Germaine Greer, in *The Female Eunuch* (London, MacGibbon & Kee, 1970) showed how women had been systematically castrated and cried for them to try to become whole again. Shulamith Firestone in *The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution* (New York, Morrow, 1970) grappled with a radical feminist philosophy which encompassed strategies for the future dealing with living arrangements, child care, and birthing. Kate Millett in *Sexual Politics* (New York, Doubleday, 1970) was the first to state that the relationship between the sexes at all levels is a political one, and continued to divest literature of its patriarchal myths. Lawrence, Miller, and Mailer, in particular, came under her scalpel. Eva Figs in *Patriarchal Attitudes: the Case for Women in Revolt* (Fawcett, 1970) documents the history of patriarchy in all its horror and exposes it for what it is: a sham. 'After all, a man's sense of his own masculinity is as false in a patriarchal society as a woman's sense of her own femininity'.

Juliet Mitchell in *Woman's Estate* (New York, Vintage, 1971) tried for a synthesis of feminist and socialist politics. She posited the idea that there is no scientific theory for the feminist assumption of the primacy of sexual oppression and went on to expound that it was the profound contradictions in the position of women that caused the rise of the Women's Liberation Movement. She points out that women are doubly oppressed, both in the work force and as wives.

Mary Daly's *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1973) stands in a class by itself. The author, a theologian and philosopher, reaches beyond politics toward transcendence: '... women have had the power of naming stolen from us. We have not been free to use our own power to name ourselves, the world, or God. . . ' She speaks of 'God the Verb' and 'Be-ing' in an effort to free culture, religion, and language of its patriarchal bias and make way for the future.

One of the most important feminist analyses has concerned an exhaustive study of rape (Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape*, Musson, 1975) which lays to rest forever the circulating myths about rape, most particularly the one that saw rape as a sex crime rather than a crime of violence against women. 'Against Our Will' means just that: any sex act that women are a part of to which they have not consented constitutes rape. Susan Brownmiller makes some thought-provoking connections between rape and pornography and rape and prostitution.

Adrienne Rich's *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* explores both her own experience as a mother and motherhood as part of the patriarchal oppression of women. Particularly interesting are her chapters on mothers and daughters and mothers and sons. Both Adrienne Rich and Susan Brownmiller carry the feminist analysis of the early 1970s one step further by exploring one particular subject in depth.

Magazines often provide the perfect resource for students because (1) the material is up to date, (2) articles provide information in shortened form, (3) they arrive regularly throughout the year, and (4) they are a wise budget decision.

There are many valuable and interesting women's magazines. I have listed a few which I think may meet the Women's Studies needs of a variety of libraries.

*Atlantis: a women's studies journal*, Box 294, Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, \$7 individual, \$12 institutional (twice a year). Of interest to teachers of English and Women's Studies at the high school, college, and university levels as well as their students. Each issue of 200 pages carries scholarly articles, art, poetry, book reviews, and review essays by university and college teachers, writers, and artists. A recent issue carried an interview with Simone de Beauvoir, and articles on the female labour force, feminism and class analysis, and the education of women in nineteenth-century Ontario, as well as several articles on women in literature, reviews of eleven current books, and three review essays. The illustrations and the layout make it an easy journal to read.

*Canadian Newsletter of Research on Women/Recherches sur la Femme-Bulletin d'Information Canadien*, c/o Margrit Eichler and Marylee Stephenson, concentrates on the social sciences and humanities. It lists and abstracts ongoing research in Canada, research reports, periodicals, bibliographies, book reviews, conferences, and courses. Outlines and abstracts of courses on women and sex-roles in Canadian universities help keep readers in touch with the format and con-

tent of other courses as well as the people who teach them. Each issue usually has a special bibliography. This is the most complete source of Women's Studies information in Canada.

*Chrysalis: a magazine of women's culture*, The Woman's Building, 1727 N. Spring Street, Los Angeles, California 90012, \$10 individual, \$15 institutional (quarterly). *Chrysalis* carries scholarly articles, poetry, book reviews, interviews, and listings of feminist resources in a most attractive format with illustrations and photographs. Its editors, Kirsten Grimstad and Susan Rennie, are well known for their *New Woman's Survival Sourcebook* and have gathered some outstanding writers for their magazine. Recent contributors have included Robin Morgan, Lucy Lippard, Elizabeth Janeway, Susan Griffin, Adrienne Rich, and Florence Rush. Each issue has articles on women as artists, fine poetry, and original creative contributions. In the latter category, an excerpt from Susan Griffin's yet-to-be-published new book, *Women and Nature*, and Robin Morgan's 'Art and Feminism: A One-Act Whimsical Amusement' are outstanding examples. Of interest to public libraries as well as college and university ones.

*Heresies: a feminist publication on art and politics*, 105 Hudson Street, New York, New York 10013, \$10 individual, \$16 institutional, single copy \$3 (quarterly). *Heresies* is an idea-oriented journal devoted to the examination of art and politics from a feminist perspective. Beautifully designed and illustrated, each issue runs to about 120 pages. The issues are developed around specific themes with Winter 1977 devoted to 'Art and Politics' and Summer 1977 to 'Patterns of Communication'. Outstanding contributors make this journal a joy to read. The first issue featured a short, but far-reaching article on feminist ethics by Adrienne Rich entitled 'On Honor' and the second issue's finest selection was the well-researched 'Women and Anarchy' by Liz-zie Borden. The words 'art' and 'politics' are defined broadly and there is material here for almost every feminist studies class. This should attract the high school reader as well as college and university readers.

*Isis: international bulletin*, Case Postale 301, CH-1227 Carouge, Switzerland, \$10 individual and women's groups, \$20 institutional (send cheques to: Account no CI-605.667/0 in the name of ISIS, Société de Banque Suisse, 11 rue de Marché, 1227 Carouge, Switzerland). Born out of the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women, *Isis* is the only consistent source of international feminist information and as such is of vital importance. It covers women's groups not only in Europe but also in Africa, Asia, Australia, and Latin America. Every issue is formed around a theme, the most recent ones being 'Battered Women' and 'Feminism and Socialism'. Each issue runs to about forty pages and includes bibliographies, resource lists from around the world, news, researched articles, and notices of meetings and conferences with feminist communication and information exchange being the goal. For all libraries.

*Signs: a Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, The University of Chicago Press, 1103 Langley Avenue, Chicago, Ill. 60628, \$15 individual, \$20 institutional (quarterly). *Signs* is a very fine scholarly feminist journal devoted to the humanities, social sciences, and science. Each issue runs to nearly 300 pages and includes academic and research articles, interviews, criticism, and book reviews by well-known feminist scholars. Edited by Catherine Stimpson, it covers a wide range of topics: film, women in the professions, art, literary criticism from various points of view and an opinions exchange. Their special issues, 'The Women of China' and 'Women and Religion' could stand as textbooks in their own right. Each issue is divided into an articles section, review

essays, reports, book reviews, international notes and letters/ comments. Of consistently high quality, a journal useful with upper-level university students and women's studies professors.

*Women's Studies Abstracts*, P.O. Box 1, Rush, New York, 14543, \$12 individuals, library editions \$25 (quarterly).

*Women's Studies Abstracts* is the brainchild of hard-working editor Sara Whaley and has been going since 1972. A complete run of WSA provides the most thorough, up-to-date index to articles about women, ranging from the most scholarly to the popular, that exists in North America. In addition to abstracts of those articles that appear in the US and Canada, they also include abstracts of special periodical issues on women, book reviews, and a subject and name index. Excellent for keeping up in personal areas of research or interest as well as giving an overview of the Women's Studies field. A must for all libraries.

While libraries should have many women's resource materials, you may want more specific resources or information links. For further research, there are women's resource centres throughout the country. Call, write, or drop in and see their collection if you're in the area.

#### *Alberta:*

Calgary Status of Women Action Committee, 223 12th Avenue S.W., Calgary T2R 0G9, (403) 264-0774.

#### *British Columbia:*

Women's Centre, S.U.B. Box 103, Room 130, University of British Columbia, Vancouver V6T 1W5.

Women's Resources Centre, Centre for Continuing Education, University of British Columbia, Vancouver V6T 1O5.  
Vancouver Status of Women, 2029 West 4th Avenue, Vancouver.

#### *Manitoba:*

Women's Resource Centre, Y.W.C.A., 447 Webb Place, Winnipeg, 943-0381, Ext. 32.

#### *Ontario:*

Y.W.C.A. Resource Centre, 40 Thorne Street, Cambridge N1R 1S6.

Womanpower Inc., 120 Carling Street, London N6A 1H6, (519) 438-1782.

North Bay Women's Resource Centre, Box 891, North Bay P1B 8K1.

Women's Place (St Catharines & District), 9 Salina Street, St Catharines L2R 3K2, (416) 684-8331.

Women's Bureau Resource Centre, 400 University Avenue, Toronto M5G 1S5, (416) 965-1537.

Women's Resource Centre, YWCA, 15 Birch Avenue, Toronto M4V 1E1, (416) 925-3137.

Women's Research and Resource Centre, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto M5S 1V4, (416) 923-6641.

Thunder Bay Women's Place, 316 Bay Street, Thunder Bay P7B 1S1.

The Centre For Women's Interests and Concerns, 19 Vanier Hall, University of Windsor.

#### *Quebec:*

Centre de documentation féministe, 4801 Henri-Julien, Montréal H2T 2E2.

#### *Saskatchewan:*

Regina Women's Community Centre, #7 1843 Broad Street, Regina, (306) 522-2777.

Women's Resource Centre, Women's Division, Saskatchewan Department of Labour, 1914 Hamilton Street, Regina S4P 2Y5, (306) 565-2452.

#### *Yukon:*

Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, 302 Steele Street, Whitehorse Y1A 2C5.

Materials on books in this article appeared in a slightly different version in *Emergency Librarian* V4 #5, May-June 1977, and that on magazines in altered form and expanded in *Atlantis* V3 #2, part 1, Spring 1978.

