daily, literally, at our fingertips and in front of our noses?" That image can and does perpetuate racism and violence against women, because it *is* violence against women and racism, and it is today more ubiquitous than MacKinnon and Dworkin could have ever anticipated in their earlier days of anti-pornography activism.

Boyd's fourth chapter on domestic violence is possibly the most troubling of the book. He insists that society's definition of "battered" is far too broad. He insists that only severe beatings and physical violence should fall under the category of "battery." Boyd's position fails to take seriously the findings of many clinical studies of domestic violence which observe that it is not so much the severity of individual assaults that characterize woman battering, but it is often the pattern of coercive control in which women's mobility and choice becomes ever more restricted by her male partner. In most cases it is the degree of entrapment rather than the severity of individual incidences of assault that is determinative of the level of danger a woman is in. Without networks of support, she is far less likely to leave a situation of abuse alive.

The other problematic argument in this chapter is Boyd's discussion of the mandatory pressing of charges in domestic abuse calls. The truth is, however, that spousal/domestic abuse is a crime. It is not up to the victim to press charges against the aggressor. A murder victim, or rather the family of the victim, does not have the option of pressing charges; that is up to the Crown. So why would we place this kind of pressure on the wife or partner of an abusive spouse? Would fear not shade her decision? Taking the decision out of her hands does not infantilise her, but rather frees her from guilt and fear of a vengeful husband.

Boyd never quite defines radical feminism, nor does he offer an account of a more "acceptable" form of feminism. His book is filled with caricatures of feminism, choosing less than moderate feminist theorists as his primary partners for dialogue. Yet all those feminists who work toward a safer life for women bear the brunt of his uneven polemic. What I found immediately problematic about Boyd's book is that, although I agreed with most of what "Big Sister" was advocating, I would never even remotely define myself as a radical feminist. And while Boyd was critiquing the radical movement for accusing anyone who challenged it as heretics and traitors to the fight, and for generalizing and taking over the mainstream feminist movement, he himself managed to over-generalize and also silence and label anyone who does find validity in the position that "Big Sister" takes on certain issues.

The concluding chapter reiterates the points Boyd makes throughout the book. It remains unclear if one who opposes Boyd's thought falls into the "Big Sister" category. More than a network of evil radical man-hating extreme feminists out to turn society into a matriarchy, or a gynocracy, it is more likely that society is over-compensating for gender discrimination in a patronizing, better-safe-than-sorry fashion. It would seem that agreeing with some or any of what "Big Sister" is fighting for, simply choosing to be "mushy-headed" or placing too much faith in our justice system, makes you a radical. The good news is that Boyd states he is just trying to start a dialogue with this book. If that is the case, certainly there will be many people who will want to continue the dialogue.

FUTURE GIRL: YOUNG WOMEN IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Anita Harris
New York and London: Routledge, 2004

REVIEWED BY SHERRILL CHEDA

Covering politics, citizenship, and employment, Anita Harris, lecturer in sociology at Monash University in Australia, explores the idea of "the new girl," explodes the myth of "girlpower," and describes how girls are actually participating in society from a global perspective. In fact, the pressures on young women today may be more difficult than aging. "This book explores the idea that in a time of dramatic social, cultural and political transition, women are beings constructed as the vanguard of new subjectivity." Power, opportunity and success are all modeled by the "future girl." There is a process of creation and control at work in the act of regarding young women as the "winners" in a new world, for by holding them up to this standard, we also construct them to perform this role. The author defines late modernity as complex global capitalist economies with a shift from state support and welfare to the private provision of services. So, the world these girls have inherited sees the disappearance of full-time jobs and only short-term, part-time, temporary contract work. As collective ties and longstanding social relationships fall away, girls do not have any fixed place or identity and must face risks as they negotiate the world individually. Not all young women live lives that match this model of success. "In the move to cultivate young women as the new success story of our times, the struggles, disappointments and barriers experienced by many young

women are put to the side as the aberrant experiences of a minority of youth." The first chapter of this book tells us how women have emerged as the central subject of discourses on how to prevail in a late modern world. Chapter two looks more closely at education and employment. Chapter three looks at how women are invested in as symbols of ideal citizenship. Chapter four explores some of the more significant places in the lives of young women and how these spaces have become more regulated. Chapter five examines the idea that young women are not only perceived to be seen everywhere but heard everywhere as well. Harris explores the idea that this new emphasis on eliciting young women's voices constitutes a kind of surveillance. In the future, young women will have to find new public and private spaces for their politics, where the politics of choice for women can be debated. Networking, cell phones, zines and e-mail can be very effective in organizing responses to political issues. Young women today have new ways of being activists.

MARIAN ENGEL LIFE IN LETTERS

Christl Verduyn and Kathleen Varay, Eds.
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004

REVIEWED BY CLARA THOMAS

The editors of *Marian Engel: Life in Letters* might well have called their book *Life and Letters*, so skilfully done are their biographical introductory chapters to the book's five parts. Arranged chronologically, these are: "Woman Travelling, 1960-1965"; "Waiting for Honeyman, 1965-1970"; "Growing Up at Forty.

1971-1975"; "Changing the Landscape, 1976-1980"; and "A Woman among Friends, 1981-1985." The reader is left with a vibrant, satisfying sense of Marian Engel as a many faceted woman—writer, student, teacher, mother, wife, competent organizer, and staunch and beloved friend. First, of course, comes the writer: from her youth she wrote, and whatever else she was doing, her dedicated work was always writing.

She was very much a part of her fellow-writers' "tribe," the name given to them by Margaret Laurence. The first President of the newly founded Writers' Union, she was an exceptionally able organizer and activist: "My thinking time has got absorbed by Public Life... and my rhetoric is used up mostly writing long letters to people like the Bureau of Intellectual Property, so it will be some time before I get down to serious work again." She called the struggle for the very important Public Lending Right her "baby" and many many writers owe her a great deal for her determination and endurance. We have all been financially much better off since its inauguration.

In 1978-9 she was Writer in Residence at the University of Alberta and in 1980-81 at the University of Toronto. She served on the Board of the Toronto Public Library for several years, following one of her most memorable letters, to the Chief Librarian, in 1965. She had paid a fine of $3.50 and writes: "Please use it to decide whether you're a good library or not and review your prejudices." These include American novelists, detective novelists, domesticity (cookbooks), and literature. "We need your literary section to be at least as scholarly as your public affairs section." Anyone familiar with the TPL in the '60s will applaud its frank and funny indictment.

With a B.A. from McMaster and M.A. from McGill, she taught for a year in Montana and from 1958-60 at a Montreal private school. Then to her great delight, for she longed to travel, she was awarded a Rotary Foundation Fellowship in France at the Université d'Aix-Marseilles. The early sixties were her travelling years, in England, France and Cyprus, with side trips all over Europe, much of the time with Howard Engel whom she married in 1962. All the time, of course, she was writing; in Cyprus she was also teaching. There were four unpublished novels in these years. Obviously she wrote quickly and was never at a loss for subject matter. In 1964 the Engels returned to Canada and the next year their twins were born, William and Charlotte. From then on she was a tirelessly productive writer, publishing five novels, a book of short stories, two children's books and numerous occasional articles, all this as well as bringing up her children and enduring the stress of a gradually failing marriage. She and Howard divorced in 1977. Her novels, *Sarah Bastard's Notebook*, *The Honeyman Festival*, *Monodramos*, *Bear*, and *Lunatic Villas*, all published after the return to Toronto, were well read and well reviewed, particularly *Bear*, which won the Governor General's Award in 1976, and *Lunatic Villas*, which won the City of Toronto Book Award in 1982. Her major contributions to the cause of Canadian literature and its writers were recognized by the Order of Canada in 1982.