experiences and systemic inequality.

The book documents the historical changes in Canadian families as well as the plurality of and contradictions in family experiences. The collection includes diverse experiences such as divorce, same-sex couples, minority families, poverty and violence. It is surprising, however, that issues such as age as a source of family oppression, intergenerational conflicts, children's interpretation of family experiences and aging in (and outside) families were not included.

Despite these omissions, this textbook is both useful and effective in challenging students to raise politically contentious issues about intimate and personal matters. The questions at the end of each chapter are helpful in stimulating classroom discussions, enabling students to identify personal or biographical experiences and to connect these experiences to social and political realities. Each chapter provides an extensive bibliography and a list of additional readings for those wishing to further explore a particular issue. The book is valuable to those who seek an understanding of Canadian families. It can be readily adopted as a main text for undergraduate family courses and as a supplementary resource for courses on women and Canadian social policy.

WHO STOLE FEMINISM? HOW WOMEN HAVE BETRAYED WOMEN

Christina Hoff Sommers. Simon & Schuster, 1994.

by Carol Margaret Davison

Within the present backlash climate, the publication of Christina Hoff Sommers' *Who Stole Feminism? How Women Have Betrayed Women* was largely foreseeable. Like its 1993 sister text, Katie Roiphe's *The Morning After: Sex, Fear, and Feminism On Campus* which depicted feminists as frigid hysterics who created the date rape crisis, Sommers' controversial *J'Accuse* provides an extremely uncomplimentary portrait of feminists as a group of frenzied "gender warriors" in quest of recruits, vindication, and ammunition. Predictably, most North American feminists have relegated this book to their overcrowded backlash shelf, a justified reaction to Sommers' smug, often shortsighted liberal idealism, and occasional McCarthyite rhetoric. Apart from her stale critique of the chimera known in backlash vocabulary as "victim feminism," however, Sommers does advance at least one legitimate criticism which the feminist movement, recently plagued by exceptionally bad press, cannot afford to ignore.

An associate professor of philosophy at Boston's Clark University, Sommers takes her book's title from her main contention that "gender feminists have stolen feminism from a mainstream that had never acknowledged their leadership." It was the ascendancy of this new feminism, characterized by gynocentrism and misandrism, over liberal "equity feminism," and not a media backlash as Susan Faludi has claimed, that led to women's large-scale defection from the movement. Upholding Naomi Wolf's utopian presentation of women's status and opportunities in *Fire With Fire*, Sommers maintains that gender feminism (the equivalent of Wolf's "victim feminism"), is both reprehensible and superfluous in 1994 when, as she claims, "artistically gifted women do have their level playing field," and women make eighty cents to a man's dollar.

In the light of these generally unacknowledged advancements, Sommers muses over two issues: why "everyone" is so credulous of gender feminism, and why its adherents are so eager "to put men in a bad light." Alongside Sommers' failure to clearly define gender and equity feminism, her latter observation is nowhere supported. She does gesture toward answering the former, however, in her contention that academics are so credulous of gender feminism because it promotes the shedding of their passive ivory-tower skins. "By supporting and promoting transformationism, not only do school administrators build up their résumés, they get to feel they are participating in the educational equivalent of the storming of the Bastille." The intriguing issue raised here of the academy's concern with social activism over the past few decades unfortunately remains, like Sommers' few speculative ideas, unexplored.

While the existence of hard-core misandrist feminists in the academy is as undeniable as the existence of their hard-core misogynist counterparts, they are by no means in the feminist majority, nor are they dictating the academic agenda. Sommers' main problem is her simple extremist perspective. She denies the existence of abusive men, unfairly implies that only the feminist movement has its extremists, and consistently makes the exception the rule by tarring every feminist attentive to factors of social conditioning with the same brush—they are dangerous, man-hating, Marxist ideologues who threaten liberal academic freedoms. In the face of this treacherous situation, Sommers effectively yearns for the good old days of some twenty years ago before the traditional liberal humanist agenda was subjected to scrutiny. In its implications that liberalism is devoid of an agenda or blindspots, and that "feminism is fascism," Sommers' unoriginal book joins the ranks of many recent publications.

Ironically, Sommers' study is often guilty of the hysteria which she ascribes to gender feminism. Maintaining that most American women's studies programs do nothing but brainwash, for example, she suggests in true Pat Buchanan-style rhetoric that the following cautionary note for parents should preface the curriculum bulletins—Your daughter "will very likely reject the religious and moral codes you raised her with. She may well distance herself from family and friends. She may change

her appearance, and even her sexual orientation. She may end up hating you (her father) and pitying you (her mother). After she has completed her reeducation with us, you will certainly be out tens of thousands of dollars and very possibly be out one daughter as well."

Despite such alarmism, Sommers does score a few points in her exposure of some flawed feminist scholarship. A startling and noteworthy example includes Gloria Steinem's claim, later bandied about by Naomi Wolf, that 150,000 women die every year as a result of anorexia nervosa. As Sommers reveals, the well-documented facts show that less than 100 women actually die annually from this disorder. Similarly, the popular claims that domestic battery dramatically increases during pregnancy and on the day of the Super Bowl game are also exposed to have no factual basis. About such misleading statistics, Sommers astutely asserts that "Feminism is not well served by biased studies or by media that tolerate and help to promote them."

In the final analysis, the terrible and ironic shame is that Sommers fails to bring this statement to bear upon her own book. While feminism may still have a long way to go—it must, for example, strengthen its guard both against misandrists advancing their claims in its name and ardent advocates who sensationalize statistics in order to garner crucial media attention—it is certainly not well served by a self-righteous, generalizing study intent upon laying blame rather than advancing viable and constructive suggestions for reform. Such a book plays into anti-feminist hands and fuels the backlash. *Who Stole Feminism?* may advance the justified claim that feminists who disseminate false statistics give the movement a bad name, but it unfortunately exemplifies its subtitle—women have betrayed women.

THEORIZING FEMINISM: PARALLEL TRENDS IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Anne C. Herrmann and Abigail J. Stewart, Eds. Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, 1994.

by Kathleen A. O'Grady

The contemporary women's movement is best understood by the genre that it has adopted and perfected: the anthology. The anthology form is the only appropriate response to the pressures of a feminism based on a celebration of plurality, multiplicity and, sometimes even, dissonance; it has a structure which demands difference. Together, various women can organize their thoughts and views without having to preserve a rigid ideology. As a form, the anthology offers women the opportunity to create a space where all types of women can meet, in full voice, and simply listen to one another: "Hear each other into speech" (Nelle Morton).

Theorizing Feminism makes a remarkable contribution to the growing stock of good feminist anthologies. Herrmann and Stewart have actively aspired to dismantle the barriers of discipline and specialization, creating a compilation of easy-to-read essays from various fields in the social sciences and humanities. Though the text includes essays from diverse disciplines, ranging from current feminist debates in psychology and economics to literary criticism and the natural sciences, the writing remains free of jargon and exclusive rhetoric, composed specifically for women outside of the particular discipline. All essays included in the text have been previously published, chosen not for the fame of their authors or for their original, "groundbreaking" material, but for generating interdisciplinary discussion and demonstrating analogous feminist concerns and insights from disparate fields of research.

The book is organized into four main sections. Each section is provided with a concise introduction, outlining the parallels between the essays included in the chapter. The first section, "Inventing Gender," supplies an opening to the debates in contemporary feminist theory. Several of the essays also play with creative rhetorical devices and autobiographical content, dismissing the "objectivity" of the traditional essay form. In her essay, "Fragments of a Fashionable Discourse," Kaja Silverman takes the reader into the often humorous land of gendered fashion trends. Here, she unites psychoanalytic issues of subjectivity with the popularity of particular fashions. She refers to the post 18th-century male rejection of ornate dress as the "Great Masculine Renunciation," suspecting that famous novels like *Pamela*, *Madame Bovary*, *Sister Carrie*, *Remembrance of Things Past*, and *Lolita*, provide a voyeuristic description of the female body as a mere pretence for lingering over her elaborate silks and laces. Silverman's highly theoretical essay is contrasted by Cherríe Moraga's essay, "From a Long Line of Vendidas: Chicanas and Feminism," which is a beautifully written autobiographical-analysis of growing up Chicana and lesbian.

The second section, "Gender, Race, and Class," discusses the male bias in academia, perpetuated by and through the hierarchy of knowledge in the institution, excluding women both as subjects and as thinkers. Carolyn Wood Sherif writes about "Bias in Psychology," characterizing the fundamental flaws in the acquisition of traditional knowledge. Linda Nochlin's essay, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" details the operations of a male bias that effaces women as creators of knowledge and art, working to keep women from the great canon of producers.

The third section, "Sex, Gender, and Sexuality," explores the relationship between gender as a social construct and biology as an objective science. Here, Arleen Dallery discusses the much contested "écriture