

relevance to her own life.

Margaret Atwood uses her unique brand of disturbing humour to illustrate some of the absurd ways the female body has been manipulated and commercialized. For example, "It's been used as a door knocker, a bottle opener, as a clock with a ticking belly, as something to hold up lampshades, as a nutcracker, just squeeze the brass legs together and out comes your nut."

An especially moving story is Lucy Grealy's "Mirrors" which describes her experience with facial disfiguration caused by jaw surgery she had undergone as a child to prevent cancer from spreading. After several unsuccessful reconstructive surgery operations, she went for almost an entire year without looking in a mirror—too afraid to see what others saw: "Society is no help; the images it gives us again and again want us only to believe that we can most be ourselves by looking like someone else, leaving our own faces to turn

into ghosts that will inevitably resent us and haunt us."

In "Out of Habit, I Start Apologizing" Pam Houston contemplates the "if I were really thin I would be happy" theory until she faces the possibility of having cancer. Waiting for the doctor's diagnosis, "a wave of love for my body that is as unfamiliar as it is terrifying washes over me. I'm afraid at first it is desperation love... but this is more penetrating, all encompassing; a love so sad and deep and complicated I am left, for a change, without words."

Every contribution in *Minding the Body* is thought-provoking and charged with sincere emotions. It's hard not to feel a sense of sharing—each writer talking openly and honestly about an intimate aspect of her own body. The book is not so much about each individual topic, whether it be cosmetic surgery or multiple sclerosis, as it is about learning to understand the connection between our physical and emotional selves.

THE DIFFERENCE: GROWING UP FEMALE IN AMERICA

Judy Mann. New York: Warner Books, 1994.

by *Sharlene Azam*

"Somewhere in adolescence, our daughters are silenced. They are overwhelmed and submerged, just as we were. They become uncomplaining and compliant. They learn to wait." In her book, *The Difference: Growing Up Female in America*, Washington Post columnist, Judy Mann says young girls are emotionally and spiritually "disabled" in their adolescence. They become women who are in denial in their twenties, in depression in their thirties and in recovery and discovery only in their forties and fifties.

Although Mann is writing about the experiences of American girls, according to Mary Templin, Executive Assistant at the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, "Canadian girls also experience a loss of self-esteem around the time of puberty."

What happens? Why do girls between the ages of 11 and 13 lose their self-confidence? Why do they believe they have fewer options about what they can do in life than boys do? Mann lays much of the blame for the "disabling" of young girls at the steps of the public school system. "From the first years of elementary school through college and graduate schools, girls receive destructively different treatments in their classrooms. Boys are at the centre of the whole educational process, while our daughters sit on the side lines, waiting their turn, after all these years." Kari Dehli, Assistant Professor of Sociology of Education at OISE in Toronto says that, "there are many indications that either overtly or in the hidden curriculum teachers talk to boys differently and they are given far more attention than girls either positively or negatively."



Toronto, Ontario

Faculty of Arts Department of Political Science

Applications are invited for a tenure-track position in **Russian and post-Soviet politics** at the assistant or associate professor level. Appointment to commence July 1, 1995.

Requirements: PhD or equivalent; Russian language fluency; ability to teach comparative politics; and research interests in democratic transitions. The successful candidate must have demonstrated research, teaching and publication abilities.
Salary: commensurate with qualifications.

Applicants should send a CV, appropriate samples of their scholarship, teaching evaluations, and arrange to have three letters of reference sent to: Prof. H.G. Simmons, Chair, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts, S669 Ross, York University, North York, Ont. M3J 1P3. *Deadline for applications* is Feb. 15, 1995.

This appointment is subject to budgetary approval. York University is implementing a policy of employment equity, including affirmative action for women faculty. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada.

Like many parents and educators Mann believes same-sex schools hold important clues about how to instill confidence and a drive toward achievement. Priscilla Winbarlow, Principal of Havergall College in Toronto explains, "in an all girls school, girls have a better chance of not learning to keep quiet. The cultural overlay of girls not speaking up because it's not feminine is absent. A single-sex school gives them a better chance of developing who they are because they are not concerned about boys watching them. Here they have the opportunity to develop self-confidence and concentrate solely on their studies while they are in class."

Studies done as early as the 1960s and 1970s have shown that a single-sex environment helps girls develop more self-confidence and a firmer sense of identity. However, many educators say that the model of a single-sex school is not a realistic way to deal with the problem of girls' loss of self-esteem. Al Fleming, the Principal of University of Toronto Schools, one of the most successful co-educational high schools in Canada says, "in 1972 UTS changed from being a single-sex school for boys to a coeducational facility. Our school is successful because "everyone knows why they are here and all of the students set out to achieve because they are expected to perform well academically." Fleming says he is an advocate of coed schools because "girls and boys need to learn how to interact, that is what society is all about."

Mann writes that "to intervene effectively and change the direction of girls' thinking we have to change just about everything in the current educational system so that mental barriers never get erected in the first place." While Templain agrees that educators must be vigilant in considering and working on an equal dignity model, she agrees with Fleming and says that "single-sex schools are inappropriate as a model for public education. We need to address the problems that boys and girls have in a fluid, comprehensive manner. Our

society isn't single sex. However, single-sex classes are a good alternative. Single-sex classes give teachers a way of focusing on a specific problem. If a school identifies a high female drop-out rate in their upper-level math or science classes, they can offer an all-girls math class and measure its success, without incurring all the problems, both political and financial, that would be entailed in creating single-sex schools."

Mann does make an important distinction between the public and private domain. She suggests that a complete overhaul to the educational system is necessary so that if in the private domain of the family girls are not taught their value, at least in school those ideas will not be reinforced so that girls "pursue the grail of popularity in our sex-obsessed society that requires the deadly progression from too-soon maturity to too-early sex as the price of social acceptance." However, Professor Sandra Acker in the Department of Sociology and Education at OISE says "single-sex schools may be good for girls and bad for boys. An all-boys school may generate hostile and negative attitudes toward women. There are no clear cut answers or magic solutions."

The danger of not re-evaluating the entire educational system is in part that schools deal with many issues apart from gender. Those schools that must spend more time focusing on poverty and violence may not have the necessary resources to establish single-sex classes. Consequently, those girls who do not have access to single-sex classes or whose parents cannot afford the tuition fees at single-sex schools will continue to be emotionally and psychologically "disabled." Ironically, now that more women of all classes are working, their taxes are funding an educational system that is helping to silence their daughters.

While Mann spends a great deal of time observing the girls in single-sex American schools, she also cites the Asian educational model. Shin-Ying, a researcher at the centre for human

growth and development at the University of Michigan told Mann that "Americans stress innate ability. Asians stress hard work. And, more than half of the schools in Japan are single-sex schools, that promote an atmosphere in which boys and girls pay attention to their work as opposed to the opposite sex." While that may be true, Mann fails to include the fact that Asian students at the secondary level suffer one of the highest rates of suicide. However, that may have more to do with the Asian work ethic than the premise of single-sex schools. In Asian countries there is a well-known saying that is far-removed from the North American experience: "The nail that sticks out gets hammered in."

Mann wrote this book in an attempt to help her own daughter through adolescence which "for too many girls is a disaster—psychologically and often physically." Why are girls taught about their 'place' in society? How did women become so devalued? Mann writes, "after a long quest, I have come to understand how it is that girls and boys grow up in America in a system predicated on the premise that males are superior: religion. Patriarchies are recent man-made social contrivances. The worship of a single male God is a relatively recent event, about two thousand years in the making, compared to ten thousand years or more of female worship."

In 1945, Elaine Pagels discovered the Gnostic Gospels in Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt. Mann points out that those texts are quite different from the traditional teachings in the censored bible. The texts reveal that women were treated as equals and the sects celebrated the feminine forms of discoveries, which show that women played a central role in the early church.

Mann concludes her book with several recommendations. One of the most important ones is that, "we must teach our daughters that they must expect to support themselves. They should never expect anyone else to support them. They must also

understand that they have the power to make their own life choices and that they must learn to exercise that power."

Mann has done an excellent job of shedding some light on why girls begin to measure their self-esteem by popularity and their ability to please others. It is well-researched and documented. And it can be read over the course of a few hours. Mann includes many personal anecdotes and transforms what are otherwise dry academic studies and statistics into a journey into the lives of several adolescent young girls who talk about everything from "going to third [a blow job] with a guy" to be popular, to their dreams and aspirations.

OUR VISION AND VALUES: WOMEN SHAPING THE 21ST CENTURY

Frances C. Hutner, Ed. Westport: Praeger, 1994.

by Jan Clarke

Our Vision and Values is a selection of articles on a range of feminist topics by members of the Princeton Research Forum, a multidisciplinary organization of independent researchers. By drawing on an analysis of the present and recent past, this publication aims to provide a vision of the 21st century that includes women's contributions and accounts for women's values. While the idea of envisioning a more optimistic 21st century for women is welcome, the predictions in this book may be far more meaningful to white middle class women in the U.S. than to most women in Canada and elsewhere.

Articles in this volume are quite uneven and topics switch in an odd order from one chapter to the next—issues of work, management and poli-

tics are followed by spirituality and therapy, then switch to literary criticism, followed by risks and finally to sexuality. The main connecting thread for the articles is the argument that women live in a world defined by men, but this is certainly not an insight which is original enough to link such diverse topics. Most of the articles are general overviews of an issue with limited feminist analysis of the present, and often individualistic solutions suggested for shaping women's lives in the 21st century.

The two articles on women's spirituality stand out because they draw on vivid and insightful accounts of women's experiences to link personal lives with political action. Rosemary O'Brien traces the ways in which women have challenged the patriarchal hierarchy of Christian and Jewish traditions in the U.S. from the 1960s to the 1990s. Women speak of their commitment to organized religion, the ways religion helps them make their lives meaningful, reasons for an interest in goddess theology, and strategies to individually and collectively transform organized religion from within. Francesca Benson draws on women's personal reflections to demonstrate the links between politics and spirituality for women initiating alternatives to organized religion. By creating their own rituals within a network of spiritual communities, women are developing effective feminist alternatives to traditional practices.

Gail Walker's article on women's sexuality encourages women to empower themselves by articulating sexuality from inside their own experiences. While Walker does challenge the objectification of women and encourage an embodied notion of sexuality, unfortunately discussion of gender identity and sexual orientation are sidestepped. Violet Franks and Hanna Fox also challenge the way women are routinely viewed as commodities and suggest a non-sexist understanding of feminist therapy. Details of women's stories demonstrate the many ways women in psychotherapy have attempted to over-

come oppression to gain personal strength.

Since the introduction of *Our Vision and Values* cites the Montreal Massacre as the kind of murder we must take action to avoid in future, I anticipated subsequent discussion of violence against women and reference to Canadian issues. Instead, all the articles are based on US politics with seldom a reference to other countries and cultures. Further mention of the Montreal Massacre and detailed analysis of violence against women are absent.

Our Vision and Values is useful as a general introduction to a variety of feminist topics in the US during the Second Wave of the Women's Movement. The analysis of current and future women's issues is formative, even though the limited analysis of class, ethnicity and heterosexism are serious oversights. While the vision for shaping the future for women in North America is incomplete, *Our Vision and Values* does offer strategies to confront inequalities most women still routinely experience.

ENTRE L'OUTIL ET LA MATIÈRE

Lélia Young. Toronto: Éditions du GREF, 1993

par Christine Klein-Lataud

On pourrait prendre comme définition de son art poétique quelques vers du recueil récent de Lélia Young :

« Les mots prennent forme
les sons deviennent visuels
et le dialogue s'ouvre
sur les solitudes »
(« Sous l'immobilité », p. 122)

Au chaos du monde, à l'insatisfaction de la vie, à la fragmentation sociale de la modernité, elle