Winter 1976

Review of Feminist Literary Criticism: Explorations in Theory

Florence Howe

Follow this and additional works at: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/wsq

Part of the Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
https://academicworks.cuny.edu/wsq/202

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Archives and Special Collections at CUNY Academic Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Women's Studies Quarterly by an authorized administrator of CUNY Academic Works. For more information, please contact AcademicWorks@cuny.edu.
NONSEXIST EDUCATION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN: A PRACTICAL GUIDE, edited by Barbara Sprung (New York: Citation Press, 1975, $3.25). I can sum up my response to this publication in four words: Buy it! Read it! Although primarily designed for teachers and administrators of early childhood education programs, it will interest the parents of young children, particularly those involved in cooperative or parent-directed early childhood programs. However, all persons interested in the reduction and elimination of sexism in the educational process will find this book well-written, well-documented, and sound in its views of past and present early childhood education. The commitment to equality of educational opportunity for all children is evident throughout the book. I enjoyed immensely Chapter II on Psychological Theory and Child Development, written by Harriett Cuffaro. I was particularly impressed by the discussions, elsewhere in the book, of how to release boys' interest in dolls and girls' exuberance and vigor in play. I have but one personal reservation about the book: it is too conservative on preschool curriculum for my taste. It shows in useful and creative fashion how traditionally sexist early childhood curriculum can be replaced with an egalitarian structure. Although forceful in its notions of allowing children to view, accept and appreciate alternative family structure, it does not challenge the heavy family focus endemic in preschool education. The book suggests better ways to use the "doll corner" and "dress-ups" and it suggests ways of helping children appreciate women who've chosen the "homemaking role." It doesn't challenge the whole family focus, nor the whole notion that the primary focus of early childhood education should be social-emotional. However, my very quarrel with the content's "orthodoxy" may make it particularly effective for present day early childhood educators. (Selma Greenberg)

FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM: EXPLORATIONS IN THEORY, edited by Josephine Donovan (The University Press of Kentucky, 1975.) 81 pp. Five essays never before published plus the editor's brief preface and afterward, this slim volume is a useful addition to the growing shelf of feminist criticism. As its subtitle indicates, the essays raise more questions than they can answer. The uninitiated will be grateful for the categorical and bibliographical approach of Cheri Register. Woolfians will appreciate the "polemic preface" to her criticism (by Barbara Currier Bell and Carol Ohmann). And feminist critics will be delighted and maddened (in turn) by the terse debate between Carolyn Heilbrun and Catharine Stimpson, identified only as "X" and "Y." One may legitimately wish that the volume had been twice its size so as to broaden the spectrum of practising critics represented. (Florence Howe)

WOMEN IN PERSPECTIVE: A GUIDE TO CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES, by Sue-Ellen Jacobs (University of Illinois Press, 1974: $3.45). It's hard to believe that an extended bibliography could be an underground classic, but in a sense this one was until this inexpensive paperback edition came out. Before that it circulated as a two-inch thick mimeographed 8½ x 11 tome. As a reference, this book is invaluable and should be useful to people in many fields—anthropology, sociology, political science, etc. This first half is organized by geographical area, each section subdivided into texts, general references, and specific sub-areas; the second half is organized into 27 subjects, which range from primates, to the family, to women and religion, women and war, biographies, and so on. More than 3200 authors are listed, some with more than one reference. There are a few entries in French, German, Spanish, and Russian. So much is being published on women that one only hopes that this invaluable bibliography will be revised periodically. (Susan Lowes)

NEWSBRIEFS

Pioneers for Century III, an interdisciplinary bicentennial conference sponsored by the University of Cincinnati, April 22-24, 1976 for research on women and gender issues. The theme is power! Three-page abstracts of papers in all disciplines focusing on the trends, problems and challenges of change in power distribution of men and women should be submitted to: Office of Women's Studies, 1116 Crosley, University of Cincinnati, 45221.

The Emerging Woman in Management, a three-day confidence and skills-building workshop, and The New Management Alternative . . . Women and Men Working Together, a three-day team-building experience workshop, are scheduled regularly across the country. Both use experiential format with lecture and film content. Often co-sponsored with colleges and universities. Participant fee, which includes lunch, materials, resources, one-on-one consultations is $275. Certification to conduct these workshops for your organization or association is possible. Write for information, including how both workshops can be co-sponsored by your organization. Response and Associates, P. O. Box 333, Chicago Heights, IL 60411. (312) 758-4600.

Associate or Full Professor in Women's Studies/Social Science (anthropology, economics, political science or sociology). Fall 1976. Teaching and scholarship in women's studies and social science discipline expected. Prefer interest in administration. Equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Send vita to: Jane Piliavin, 290 N. Brooks St., University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 53706. (608) 263-4703.

Director of Women's Studies, Fall 1976. Position is half time in department of English, history, anthropology, psychology, philosophy or sociology and half time as director (teaching two courses in women's studies and administering program). Appointment at tenure level. Contact respective departmental chairperson, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90024.

By special arrangement, Magic Circle Press offers Unmasking: Ten Women in Metamorphosis ($3.00, hardcover); The Poetry of Women in Prison ($2.00); N.O.W. Convocation/ Women in Writing ($3.95); 10 Hyde Ridge Rd., Weston, CT 06880.

For books on women, by women and translations, write to Cesi Kellinger, Bookseller, 735 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg, PA 15301.