



# NEWS LETTER

VOL. 5 NO. 2

JUNE 1996

ISSN 1320 601X

THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY INC. PO BOX 271 NEWTOWN NSW 2042

THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY PRESENTS

# Rooms with a view



Celebrating TWL's 2ND BIRTHDAY and the OFFICIAL OPENING OF OUR NEW ROOMS

FRIDAY 21ST JUNE 7.30PM

Dress up and enjoy cocktails and nibblies provided in the LIBRARY'S NEW ROOMS

73 Garden St, Alexandria

Then...party on at TWIN PEAKS (TOP GUN, 100 King St, Newtown)

Join the Library's 'SPONSOR A COORDINATOR' Scheme and you will be invited to be our guest FREE OF CHARGE for the evening!



Library Sponsors - FREE  
Members - \$15  
Non-members - \$20  
TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED IN ADVANCE FROM TWL by 12th June  
ADMISSION TO TWIN PEAKS ONLY  
Members - \$5  
Non-members - \$7  
Tickets can be bought at the door from 10pm

# Party!

# TWL KNOWHOW

## How The Women's Library Works

### ■ MEMBERSHIP

You must become a member of The Women's Library to be eligible to borrow books.

Membership fees per year are:

- \$50 funded institutions
- \$30 unfunded institutions and waged individuals
- \$20 unwaged individuals
- \$5 high school students

The Women's Library now accepts Visa, Bankcard, and Mastercard.

### ■ LOAN PERIOD

Two weeks for all books.

Members can borrow up to six books at a time.

Videos can be borrowed for one week only.

### ■ LOAN DEPOSIT

Members must lodge a \$10 deposit with us before borrowing. This deposit is retained by The Women's Library if a book is not returned or is returned damaged. It may also be retained if a book becomes very overdue. This deposit is held by The Women's Library until you are no longer a member. Members who have done volunteer work for the library on a number of occasions (active members) are exempt from this deposit.

### ■ PERIODICALS

Serials, magazines, journals and reference materials cannot be borrowed, but may be read in the library. We have a photocopier for library users.

### ■ LONG DISTANCE BORROWING

If you live outside the metropolitan area or have a great deal of difficulty getting here, The Women's Library will be happy to send particular titles to you by mail. (You will need to contact the library to enquire about particular titles as, at this stage, we do not have a catalogue available.) This service is available to members only, and the library asks that you finance the cost of returning the books.

### ■ BORROWING VIDEOS

Videos are available for loan by members for a period of one week and require a refundable holding deposit for each loan of \$50 for institutions and \$20 for individual members.

### ■ RENEWALS

Loans may be renewed in person or by phone, unless they are on reserve.

## Ways You Can Support The Women's Library

### ■ BECOME A MEMBER

Please fill out the form attached to this newsletter; and become a member of The Women's Library. At this stage The Women's Library is unfunded and membership fees keep the library alive.

As a member you are entitled to borrow books from the library, receive The Women's Library Newsletter four times a year, and are eligible to vote at our AGM.

### ■ BUY A BOOK TO JOIN THE LIBRARY

You can buy a book to donate to The Women's Library in lieu of membership fees.

THIS IS HOW YOU DO IT...

The only books we can accept in place of fees should be purchased from the list of titles lodged with The Feminist Bookshop (address below).

This list contains titles that we especially would like to house in the library, and this system will ensure that we do not receive multiple copies of some titles and no copies of others.

Simply bring your book, membership form and receipt to The Women's Library during opening hours and we will be happy to process your membership on the spot.\*

### ■ BOOK DONATIONS

If you would like to donate books for the library's collection, drop off points are:

- The Women's Library  
73 Garden Street, Alexandria
- The Feminist Bookshop  
Shop 9, Orange Grove Plaza, Balmain Road, Lilyfield

Please contact us on 319 0529 if you need us to pick up your donation. Please note that The Women's Library has a no-strings-attached donations policy. The Women's Library reserves the right to decide whether a donated item will be integrated into the collection, discarded, exchanged or sold.

### ■ TAX DEDUCTIBILITY

To make it more inviting for you to donate money to The Women's Library, your donations are tax deductible. Similarly you can donate a collection of new books (which must be valued by an approved valuer) or any item that has been purchased by you within the last twelve months, and claim the value of that donation as a deduction on your tax return.

### ■ BEQUESTS

Maybe you would like to consider making provisions for leaving your personal library and/or a donation to The Women's Library in your will. Please contact the library if you need details on how to do this.

\* Books donated under this scheme need to be valued at a minimum of \$25.00 for waged membership, \$15.00 for unwaged membership.

## NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION

EDITOR VICTORIA HUNT

DESIGN & PRODUCTION INGRID URH

TYPING VICKI HARDING + VICTORIA HUNT

# SOUTH SYDNEY COUNCIL

## Thanks for your support!

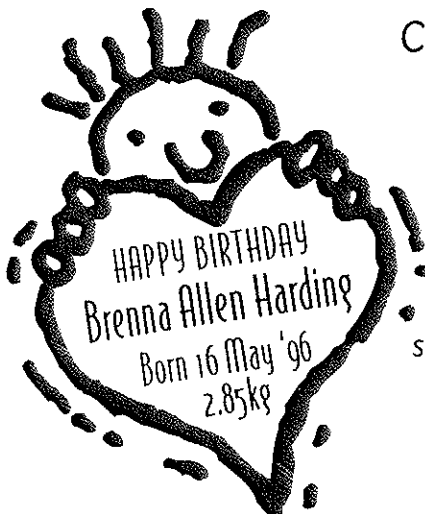
**S**OUTH SYDNEY COUNCIL has provided continued support and commitment to The Women's Library since its inception.

Council located and offered us our present Garden Street premises at a considerably subsidised rent, (saving the Library around \$7,000 per year), and came to the rescue once again as we expanded beyond the available space, by allowing us additional room in the Town Hall building.

South Sydney Council has also provided free venues for TWL functions, and agreed to cover all costs for the installation of wheelchair access.

The Library also receives invaluable information and prompt assistance from staff at South Sydney Council, all of which makes the task of running a community resource that much easier.

For the reasons outlined above, The Women's Library offers a sincere apology for the mistaken reference to South Sydney Council as "Sydney City Council" in our last newsletter, and would once again like to express our gratitude to South Sydney Council for their ongoing support.



Congratulations

to Vicki Harding  
on the birth of  
lovely Brenna.  
Your friends at  
The Women's  
Library  
send you much love  
and best wishes  
for the future.

X O X

## The Women's Library Aims

To house a comprehensive range of feminist and lesbian novels, texts, journals and magazines, and in particular to house all Australian lesbian books and magazines

To house required reading for tertiary courses in Sydney that focus on women's issues

To house the works of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

To house a collection relevant to women of non-English speaking backgrounds

To provide a comfortable and accessible space for borrowing, reading and relaxing

To act as a local women's resource centre

To provide a children's room with a range of great children's books

### THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

TUESDAY TO FRIDAY - 11AM TO 8PM  
SATURDAY AND SUNDAY - 11AM TO 5PM

*Closed on Mondays*

73 GARDEN ST, ALEXANDRIA  
PHONE (02) 319 0529

## Want to quit smoking for good?

Smokers, the internationally successful quit smoking programme, offer an effective solution to smokers who are serious about quitting for good. All welcome!

▼ No willpower. No withdrawals. No weight-gain. ▼

**Over 92% of completing participants stopped smoking!**

After successful seminars at Sirens, Ashfield Cath. Club, Penrith RSL, N. Sydney Anzac & Bondi Junction Power Centre, we are expanding. Call for details now! All facilitators are former smokers.

For details, phone 1800-021-000 [FREE CALL]

RECORDED INFORMATION:- 0055-51-000 InPho 75c/min +

**SMOKENDERS**  
Treating the entire habit,  
not just the addiction.

# THANK YOU

## STAFFING

COORDINATOR – Vicki Harding  
The Women's Library Committee and Allison Laurence, Angela Sokialis, Anna Conn, Anna Fitzpatrick, Anne Hocking, Anneliese French, Bea, Catherine Clements, Cathy Gallagher, Christine Petschler, Dianna Jett, Emily Clark, Emma Wedekind, Gina Laurie, Helen Waters, Helen Wells, Inez Gershon, Jo Angri, Joanne Roddis, Jocelyn Yem, Julie Earngey, Kate Fearnall-Heath, Katrina McCormack, Kimberly Kitchener, Leila, Lilly, Lin Watts, Lisa Mulholland, Liz Smedley, Margaret Smith, Margaret Thurgood, Marion Buckley, Marny Kilby, Maureen Cooney, Meredith Connie, Myra Flynn, Nicola O'Shea, Rhonda Lette, Rody Myers, Ros Feltham, Ruth Carman, Samia Iskander, Stacy Carter, Stephanie Sparke, Sue Williamson, Trish Spears, Ute Greiving, Wendy Holz

## MARDI GRAS FAIR DAY

COORDINATORS – Anne Jones, Donna Wilcox and Vicki Harding  
THANKS TO – The Women's Library Committee and Annabelle Lukin, Marny Kilby, Catherine Clements, Cathy Gallagher, Emily Clarke, Leila, Shelly Pearce, Sharon Luke, Ellen Shenfield, Helen Waters, Rody Myers, Lilly, Jo Angri, Kate Fearnall-Heath

## DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

NEWSLETTER – Ingrid Urh

## PLANT MAINTENANCE

Glennifer Roberts

## DONATION OF VALUABLE REFERENCE MATERIAL

The Women's Book Exchange, Melb.

## BOOK SALE

COORDINATOR – Cathy Gallagher  
The Women's Library Committee and Emily Clark, Wendy Holz, Annabelle Lukin, Kimberly Kitchener, Linda Morris, Cynthia Sneddon, Jo Angri, Kate Fearnall-Heath, Leila, Marny Kilby, Paula Wallace, Marion Buckley, Rody Myers, Maureen Cooney, Catharine Clements, Bea Kocak, Anna Conn, Sue Williamson, Samia Iskander, Anna Fitzpatrick, Anna Bailey

VAN – Phil Lambert and Peter Mason and Hospitality Horizons

TABLES – Nurses Association and Newtown Neighbourhood Centre

## MAILOUT

COORDINATOR – Vicki Harding  
The Women's Library Committee  
Marion Buckley, Anna Fitzpatrick, Samia Iskander, Jools Graeme, Ros Feltham, Jo Angri

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

COORDINATORS – Cathy Gallagher and Simone Ford

The Women's Library Committee and Maureen Cooney, Marny Kilby, the IWD Collective

## FILM FUNDRAISERS

ANTONIA'S LINE, DENDY – Lyn McCarthy, Kym Druitt, Marcella and Michael  
THE INCREDIBLY TRUE ADVENTURES OF TWO GIRLS IN LOVE, VALHALLA – Chris Keily, Anna Hill, Avice and Dale  
NEWVISION FILMS – Jane Gilman and John Cerrone

THANKS TO – The Women's Library Committee and Lourie E Seid, Emily Clark, Catherine Clements, Marny Kilby and all library members who sold tickets

## BOOK COLLECTIONS AND REFERRALS

The Feminist Bookshop



## WORKING BEES

The Women's Library Committee and Deirdra Anne, Marny Kilby, Catherine Clements, Margaret Thurgood, Shelly Pearce, Alvin Wong, Rody Myers, Anna Conn, Cathy Gallagher

## FURNITURE DONATIONS

Collingwood Pacific  
(And thanks to Michelle Hogan)  
Allison Laurence  
Elaine Alinta  
NRMA  
(In particular, thanks to Anne A'Hearn)

# MEMBERSHIP FORM

To become a member of THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY please fill out this form and enclose a cheque or money order payable to THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY INC. Membership fees are listed below.

Donation of a new title specified on a list at The Feminist Bookshop will be accepted in place of the membership fee.

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS.

NAME ..... DATE .....

ADDRESS .....

POSTCODE ..... PHONE (HOME) ..... (WORK) .....


HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY? .....

FEE ENCLOSED:  \$50 FUNDED INSTITUTIONS PER YEAR  \$30 WAGED PER YEAR  
 \$20 UNWAGED PER YEAR  \$5 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PER YEAR

PLEASE RETURN this form to THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY INC. PO BOX 271, NEWTOWN 2042

## WICKED WOMEN CRUISE LIBRARY

WICKED WOMEN magazine recently ran a feature on The Women's Library.

The article encompassed the entire collection, with particular attention being paid to sexuality and lesbian erotica.   
(No surprises there!)

So be wicked – take out a library book!  
And maybe you'll get to cruise more than just the shelves while you're down here!

## VIDEO EASY

HELP US establish a good women's video collection.

LET US KNOW the titles of videos you think are appropriate for The Women's Library to hold.

And if you see second-hand copies for sale anywhere, WHY NOT BUY THEM for the library?

## 'SEXING SCIENCE'

SEXING SCIENCE: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE  
ON KNOWLEDGE, BODIES AND GENDER

Organised jointly by History and Philosophy of Science  
and The Women's Studies Centre, University of Sydney

Saturday, 24 August 1996

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Evelyn Fox Keller on "The Biological Gaze"

ENQUIRIES

The Women's Studies Centre, University of Sydney  
PHONE (02) 351 3638 • FAX (02) 660 5300

## STOP PRESS

The Women's Library now holds a complete **hard-cover bound set** of *LESBIANS ON THE LOOSE*, from issue one in 1990 to the last issue of 1994 – issue sixty!

You will never again have to scrounge around for that particular back issue.

A very big THANK YOU to *LESBIANS ON THE LOOSE* for financing this project.

# To Parent...or

*kathy hale*

KATHY HALE presents  
an article profiling  
The Women's Library's  
collection.

"YOU'VE HAD CHILDREN HAVEN'T YOU?" asked the friend of 15 years ago on the phone. "NO!" I told her, shocked at the thought.

Being a parent is hard work in my opinion, so I'm postponing the adoption of this role, perhaps indefinitely. Yet I know that there is valuable support available for parents - The Women's Library's collection is testimony to this.

In browsing the shelves of the 'Motherhood and Parenting' section my attention was immediately grabbed by the title "Not Having Children". There must be enough of us, I thought with surprise, to write a book about this subject.

Not just one book either, close-by I found another. To realise that your thoughts and actions are shared by others like you is uplifting. This is how books on

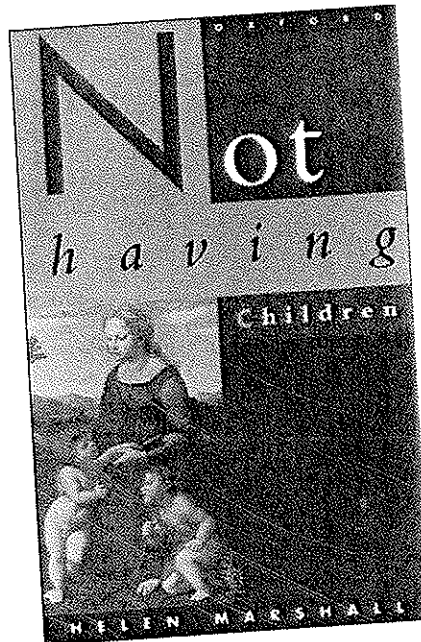
motherhood and parenting can support those affected by this topic.

Parenting is an activity that is ingrained in our society and passionately debated in the public domain. The contentious issue of abortion, the right to parent or not to parent, is a strong example of this debate.

Having recognised that books on motherhood and parenting are valuable sources of information for us all, I am surprised that the due date stamp placed in the back of the books that I borrowed was the first stamp to be placed.

The only explanation of this that makes sense to me is that TWL members are not aware of what the collection can offer them.

To address this, nine books, amongst many that you can borrow from The Women's Library, are briefly described here.



# Not to Parent?

IRONSIDE, V.

*How to Have a Baby and Stay Sane*  
Unwin Hyman, London, 1989

An unromanticised and funny snapshot of parenting, from conception through to travelling with children.

LAMPRELL, K. (Ed)

*The Greatest Adventure: Birth Stories – A Collection of Personal Experiences*

Angus & Robertson, Australia, 1991

A selection of Australian women, men and children commenting on birth. Includes discussion by Aboriginal women of traditional birth practices in Central Australia.

MARSHALL, H.

*Not Having Children*

Oxford University Press, Australia, 1993

An examination of the ideology of parenting. Contains Australian research of voluntarily childless couples.

MARTIN, E.

*The Woman in the Body – A Cultural Analysis of Reproduction*

Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 1989

Women's imaging of themselves and their bodies is contrasted with medical text descriptions of menstruation, childbirth and menopause. Very intellectual.



MORELL, C. M.

*Unwomanly Conduct: The Challenges of Intentional Childlessness*

Routledge, Great Britain, 1994

An in-depth examination of how choosing not to have children affects people's lives.

Full of the personal anecdotes of women interviewed by the author.

MOULDER, C.

*Miscarriage – Women's Experience and Needs*

Pandora Press, London, 1990

Describes the physical and emotional aspects of miscarriage and provides suggestions on how to cope with these.

POLLACK, S. & VAUGHN, J. (Eds)

*Politics of the Heart – A Lesbian Parenting Anthology*

Firebrand Books, New York, 1987

Personally recounted stories of lesbian parents.

WAKELING, L. & BRADSTOCK, M. (Eds)

*Beyond Blood – Writings on the Lesbian and Gay Family*

Black Wattle Press, Sydney, 1995

The personal experience of Lesbian and Gay parents and their children. Can't put this one down.

WELLS, S.

*Within Me, Without Me – Adoption: An Open and Shut Case*

Scarlet Press, London, 1994

Details 40 years of research on the loss experienced when giving up a child for adoption.



**The Feminist Bookshop**

Shop 9, Orange Grove Plaza,  
Balmain Road, Lilyfield, Sydney, NSW 2040

Fax (02) 818 5745

Phone (02) 810 2666

Monday to Friday 10.30am – 6pm  
Saturday & Sunday 10.30am – 4pm

For all the best in women's books, music, gifts and cards.  
Booklists available on request for postal orders.

# REVIEWS

Here is a sample of the kind of books you can find in *The Women's Library*. All of the following titles have been donated by the publishers or the author. Thank you to the following publishers, authors and reviewers for your support.

## **BEYOND CHERNOBYL - WOMEN RESPOND**

CORIN FAIRBURN BASS & JANET KENNY  
ENVIROBOOK, SYDNEY, 1993

April 27th is the tenth anniversary of the nuclear accident at Chernobyl. The ten years have been characterised by intense and rapid political, economic and social change in Europe. For many of us, Chernobyl has receded into the background, obscured by more prominent and violent change. Chernobyl continues to affect many lives, and Bass and Kenny have compiled a remarkable, powerful narrative of the silent destructiveness of radioactivity.

*Beyond Chernobyl* is an impressive anthology of personal commentary by women whose quality of life was permanently altered by the accident and the experience of dealing with the presence of radiation. There are stories of evacuation and displacement, of the many different manifestations of radiation sickness, and of changing a lifestyle because fresh food is a toxic substance. For those of us isolated from the European continent, it is hard to comprehend fruit and vegetable stalls fitted with geiger counters and milk being dangerous to consume because of the high concentration of radioactivity.

Mothers from all over Europe speak of the most beautiful Spring weather during which children could not be let outside to play, when the touching of grass and flowers was forbidden and a walk in the rain was a serious health risk. These reports are all the more chilling (and inspiring) because of the personal nature of the accounts.

The women's stories are interspersed with snippets of government propaganda which were circulating through the European communities during 1986. A noteworthy glossary of terms used in discussing nuclear technology is included. The authors also provide an outline of alternative and non-nuclear technologies based on renewable resources.

*Beyond Chernobyl* is highly recommended. It is simultaneously informative and stimulating and provides excellent material for discussion.

ROSEMARIE WINTER

## **BAD COMPANY - A STONER MCTAVISH MYSTERY**

SARAH DREYER

NEW VICTORIA PUBLISHERS INC, NORWICH VT, 1995

Another refreshing good read in the *Stoner McTavish* series. Stoner is invited to investigate some disruptive happenings as a women's theatre collective, Demeter Ascending, prepares a forthcoming feminist show, "Not Quite Titled". The question arises whether someone inside the collective is intent on undermining the venture. Stoner, at some emotional cost, eventually identifies the perpetrator, but has problems proving sabotage.

The Women's Inn where the Demeter Ascending collective resides and rehearses is the contemporary lesbian community in microcosm. Sarah Dreher raises some timely and pertinent questions about power and trust.

Have the backlash and burnout of the Greedy 90s destroyed the possibility of feminist sisterhood, of goodwill and trust amongst lesbians, and the notion of creating alternative ways of being in the world? (Can you create a collective by majority vote?) Is it possible to undermine and destroy loving trusting connections between women (the connection between Gwen and Stoner is put to the test...)?

How do idealistic lesbian feminists deal with evil and psychopathology which threatens to wreck their sense of community? (A matter explored quite differently by Gillian Hanscombe in *Figments of a Murder*.)

There are no substantial timewarps in this story, but lesbian spirituality is an important dimension in the mystery's denouement. And various crones contribute to the unravelling and resolution of the problem.

Sarah Dreher's characters are drawn deftly, with imagination, wit, and love. An enjoyable dimension of each McTavish mystery is the exploration of subtle changes that occur in each character, and the ongoing connections between Stoner, Gwen, Marylou, Aunt Hermione and Edith Kesselbaum. These characters, with their eccentricities, foibles and vulnerabilities, have a reality that enriches my life.

Sometimes my lesbian reality feels abraded by the depredations of the testosterone poisoned Brothers, and *The Age of Greed*. It is reassuring and re-moralising to read a book written by someone deeply concerned about the ethics of lesbian relating - someone I might choose as a friend.

CAROL ROSE

## **MARTHA MOODY**

SUSAN STINSON

SPINSTERS INK, MINNEAPOLIS, 1995

Amanda Linger knows the Bible like she knows her butter churn, that is, in a hands-on practised sort of way. She turns to both for the riches they offer - sweet cream butter smooth and perfect, and words of manna, heavenly fare come down to earth.

Martha Moody, owner of the general store, provider for the town of Moody, is the biggest woman Amanda has ever met. Neither the sheer magnificent size of Martha nor the weight of her presence is explained in the Bible Amanda turns to for answers. She must instead churn out her own words to describe and make sense of the mythic-shaped Martha.

*Martha Moody* is, broadly, about a woman coming to terms with herself in all her own complexity, and in so doing recognising the complexity of the other selves around her. Susan Stinson writes as though she means each word to be tasted, savoured. This is a book for readers who believe that eating scones without jam and cream is a sacrilege.

LUCY TATMAN

## SEX, POWER AND PLEASURE

MARIANA VALVERDE

NEW SOCIETY PUBLISHERS, 1987

Mariana Valverde's book is a welcome addition to a rapidly growing collection of feminist exploration and analyses of sex and sexuality. And, unlike some, it doesn't seek to separate the theory from the practice.

Valverde's emphasis is on the personal and the experiential, the desires and pleasures of sexuality as well as the power struggles that inevitably take place in and around sex. The book examines the history of sexuality as a topic of scientific, sociological and medical investigation (sexuality as a construct goes back little more than a hundred years), the continuing feminist debate (stalemate) on sexuality and pornography/censorship and looks at how and why sexuality continues to be an issue of social, religious, ethical, political and, of course, personal concern.

Valverde, using an easy blend of theory and personal accounts, systematically examines the regions of heterosexuality, lesbianism and bisexuality, exploding old (but resilient) myths and highlighting contemporary thoughts and problems – the heterosexual 'crisis', lesbian 'invisibility' and the bisexual challenge to essentialist boundaries. She takes a fresh look at the tired old 'puritans versus perverts' debate and clears some space for the female erotic, a space in which female sexuality, the speaking body, and desire, in all its difference, can be explored and given some voice.

*Sex, Power and Pleasure* is easy to read, always interesting (it's about sex, after all) and a good starting point for those readers keen to enter the theoretical arena. From here try Elizabeth Grosz, Theresa DeLauretis and anything by or about Luce Irigaray. Enjoy!

JOANNE RODDIS

## HOUSE ARREST

JERI KROLL

WAKEFIELD PRESS, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 1993

*Donated by the author*

*House Arrest* is Jeri Kroll's fourth anthology and displays versatility and dexterity in conveying to the reader an intensely personal, sensitive view of her world.

The poems are arranged in four sections, the first of which records a journey to America to reconnect the generations of one family. Primal relationships – grandmother, mother, child – are explored in poems which are articulate, direct and ironic.

*Looking in* continues Kroll's evocation of the minutiae of life, investing the ordinary with significance. In *Mammogram*, the strangeness of medical procedure is treated with understanding and acuity. In the third grouping of poems, *Hanging Out*, Kroll's empathy and concern is expressed most directly.

These poems are heartfelt and searing in their dispassionate recording of alienation, fear and disassociation of young people in society. It is Kroll's view of this wider picture which provides a launching pad for her to explore a number of issues affecting the planet. Her tone in these poems is sombre and thoughtful.

A handy volume for knapsack or gymbag, Kroll's verse gives a fresh perspective to the nature of life – personal,

societal and universal. Her most telling poems, I feel, are those dealing with the isolation of youth. The link between this view and the issues confronting us in dealing with our planet's problems is inescapable.

MAUREN COONEY

## SMALL G: A SUMMER IDYLL

PATRICIA HIGHSMITH

BLOOMSBURY, LONDON, 1995

Highsmith fans may well be puzzled by her latest book. A departure from suspense, *Small g: A Summer Idyll* is billed as both a departure and a delicacy for the reader. Not familiar with Highsmith's other work I cannot comment on the departure aspect, however I can readily say that I did not find a single element of the book to be a delicacy in any sense of the word.

Whilst Highsmith does attempt to make a case for liberalism and for the acceptance/tolerance of lesbians and gays, weak characterisation and an overall conservative attitude weakens her case considerably. I found her characters unconvincing, lacking in depth and of little interest. On more than one occasion I was unhappily reminded of the numerous morality plays I was force-fed throughout my formative years.

But perhaps even more worrying is the almost patronising attitude Highsmith takes to a range of pressing contemporary issues. I was particularly offended and alienated by her treatment of gay men with (and without) HIV. But to elaborate further would be to destroy the already sagging plot. And who knows, die-hard Highsmith fans might indeed find *Small g: A Summer Idyll* a delicacy.

HELEN GILBERT, NZ

## THEY SAID I WAS DEAD: THE COMPLETE ALTERNATIVE CURE FOR ADDICTION

ANNE MCMANUS

SCARLET PRESS, LONDON, 1993

Anne McManus was a postgraduate student when caught up in the events of 1968 in England – student revolts, anti-war demonstrations and iconoclastic liberation movements.

For Anne there suddenly opened up a world of freedom. This was an occasion for rebellion against the stultifying values of her father (in public the dedicated socialist mayor of a grim industrial area, at home an impersonal authoritarian). It was also a time of confusing conflict. To be working class and female in academia,

## The Bookshop

### SPECIALISTS IN LESBIAN LITERATURE

We also stock an eclectic range  
of feminist and women's titles

THE BOOKSHOP  
DARLINGHURST  
207 Oxford Street  
Darlinghurst NSW 2010  
PHONE 02 331 1103

THE BOOKSHOP  
NEWTOWN  
186 King Street  
Newtown NSW 2042  
PHONE 02 557 4244

especially in a climate of unreconstructed misogyny among male liberationists\* and then to be let-down by the oppression of the Thatcher era, was all too much. There followed years of alcohol, nicotine and minor tranquilliser addiction, which Anne McManus looks back on both as degradation and as a commendable attempt to resist a sick society.

Unable to find help, Anne McManus found her own way out of addiction. This book is the culmination of her self-cure and ten years of living addiction-free.

The book has three strands; the first is autobiographical. The second presents a historical materialist analysis of addiction, in terms of the intersection of sociopolitical (macro) forces (capitalism, consumerism, hedonism) and psychological (micro) vulnerabilities (low self-esteem). The third, dominant, strand is a guide to withdrawal and recovery from addiction, presented in helpfully concrete detail and in a didactic "headteacherly" but remoralising tone ("I actually did it. So can you" p128).

Anne McManus is uncompromising in insisting that the way to health is to give up all addictions at once and immediately to adopt a new routine, including diet, meditation, yoga, exercise. The cure entails self-transformation – complete re-education of the nervous system, new values and new friends, so that drugs no longer attract.

My reaction to the book is mixed. I like much of what Anne McManus says – her macro-micro theoretical analysis, her vision of the individual ex-addict as part of a broader struggle against global toxic influences, and her practical recommendations (consistent with the "cognitive-behavioural" approach). On the other hand, the uneasy interweaving of the three strands of the book makes for somewhat jerky reading and, despite her directness and humour, the author seems to hold the reader at a distance (like a speaker on a platform).

Would women with drug problems find the book helpful? Some, but probably many would find the changes she prescribes difficult to enact without strong social support. Some would find McManus' theoretical explorations interesting (set as they are in England –1968-onwards) and I have no doubt there are some who would be ready to give her challenging program a committed go.

\* Note: Local versions of this phenomenon can be seen in the SBS documentary *Nearly Normal Nimbin*.

JANET GREVILLEA

### DAUGHTERS OF THE PACIFIC

ZOHL DE ISHTAR

SPINIFEX PRESS, MELBOURNE, 1994

Zohl De Ishtar's book is the product of many interviews with indigenous women of the Pacific. It includes some extraordinary accounts by women concerning their experiences with colonialism, such as in relation to nuclear testing in the Pacific.

As the work was completed during her involvement with *Women Working for a Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific*, it has a particular emphasis on nuclear campaigns. A problem I did have with the text is that for a book that intends to convey the voices of indigenous women, there is a great deal of De Ishtar.

In several passages, it appeared that the stories of the indigenous women were distorted if read alongside the author's commentary.

The research involved in recording the voices of this diverse group of indigenous women is a significant achievement in itself. *Daughters of the Pacific* is a book which involves stories from women which are moving, shocking and inspiring. It would be significantly better if only the author had curtailed her own opinions and given a greater voice to the women she interviewed.

MELINDA CONRY

### WOMEN'S WORK: THE FIRST 20,000 YEARS

ELIZABETH WAYLAND BARBER

WW NORTON, 1994

In prehistoric times women's work developed so that simultaneous child care could be performed – spinning, weaving and sewing, along with food cultivation and preparation. *Women's Work* traces the history of cloth through archaeology, linguistics and mythology. It employs a devious and exhaustive approach to find previously overlooked clues. Too often the assumption that cloth and food do not leave tangible remains results in huge and unnecessary gaps in women's history.

Elizabeth Wayland Barber tells stories about women spinning, weaving, running businesses, and providing a main source of income and currency for past civilisations.

Her book is rich in the practical details of cloth making, and finds links within many cultures through to our very recent history. It is as if Elizabeth Wayland Barber is herself sitting at the loom spinning a tale in the oral tradition of our ancestors, relating to us our heritage in a pleasantly direct style.

This book does not allow us to underestimate the importance of cloth making and the women who made it.

MEREDITH CONNIE

### GIVE MY SECRETS BACK

KATE ALLEN

NEW VICTORIA PUBLISHERS, NORWICH VT, 1995

*Give My Secrets Back* is the second book in the *Alison Kaine Mystery Series*. The first book of the series, *Tell Me What You Like*, received rave reviews for both style and content and was particularly praised for its thoughtful and humorous exploration of the controversial lesbian S/M debate(s).

Unfortunately, as I have not read *Tell Me What You Like* I can't compare it to *Give My Secrets Back*. I was, however, struck by the fact that the components as mentioned in reviews of Allen's first book are strongly echoed in the second – mystery, humour, S/M, lesbian community, violence towards women, homophobia...

The potential for a good read is there but ultimately I was not convinced by either the characters or the plot. It just did not come to life.

But, as I've mentioned, I haven't read Allen's first book and maybe therein lies the missing link.

JUDITH ION



# INFORMATION PAGE

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### ■ FIJI, WOMEN ONLY RETREAT

Man Friday Resort, Coral Coast  
June 15 to 29

ENQUIRIES Silke's Travel (02) 380 6244

### ■ WOMEN IN PUBLISHING AGM AND NETWORKING PARTY

July 1 ENQUIRIES Women in Publishing  
PO Box 1515, North Sydney 2059

### ■ WOMEN IN PUBLISHING - TRAVEL WRITING

August 13 ENQUIRIES Women in Publishing  
PO Box 1515, North Sydney 2059

### ■ LOVE IS IN THE AIR

17TH ANNUAL GAY & LESBIAN PARENTS  
COALITION INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Minnesota, USA

July 4-7 ENQUIRIES Minnesota Families GLPCI 96  
PO Box 11970, St Paul, MN 55111-0970

### ■ BIRTH CENTRES CONFERENCE

"Current Issues, Future Directions"

Hyde Park Plaza Hotel

August 24 ENQUIRIES Penny (02) 638 0074

### ■ NATIONAL BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS CONFERENCE

Hobart

October 1-4 ENQUIRIES FAX (03) 9277 5500

## RESOURCES RECEIVED

### RESOURCES DONATED BY AUTHORS, CONTRIBUTORS, AND EDITORS

- *Yalnizca Siz Degilsiniz*. (You are not the only one) – video from Immigrant Women's Speakout Association
- *Women Travellers Accommodation Directory* – donated by Kaye Johnston and Andrea Lofthouse
- *Making the Link 5 & 6* – donated by Edward M Davis
- 14 Affirmative Action Agency publications – donated by Affirmative Action Agency
- *The Adventist Woman in the Secular World* – donated by Merolyn Coombs
- *Something to Sing About*, videos of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Choir – donated by Marguerite Grey (producer)
- *Gay and Lesbian Perspectives III* – edited by Garry Wotherspoon
- *Wildlife in Newtown* – Colleen Burke
- *Doherty's Corner* – Colleen Burke
- *Abortion Care in the '90s* – Abortion Providers' Federation of Australia
- *The friendly grrls guide to getting on the internet* – geekgirl

## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- The Aust. Council for Educational Research *Newsletter*
- *An Australian Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*
- *The Bulletin of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom*
- *Child Abuse Prevention*
- *Community Consultation Project* – Department of Community Services

- Department for Women Information Services *Newsletter*
- Equal Opportunity Tribunal *papers*
- *Every Other Week* – Australia's Child Care Newspaper
- Feminist Library *Newsletter* (UK)
- *Final Draft*
- *Gayzette*
- GLPCI Network – Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International
- *Grapevine*
- *Honeycomb* – UTS annual women's resource book
- *Hooter*
- *HQ*
- Immigrant Women's Speakout Assoc *Annual Report, 1994*
- *Inner Voice*
- Jessie Street National Women's Library *Newsletter*
- *Lesbiana*
- *Lesbians on the Loose*
- *Lezbiz Focus*
- *Lifesaver* – Journal of the lesbian and gay Anti-Violence Project
- *Making Known* (Newsletter, Older Women's Network)
- *Media Centre News*
- *Mountain Lesbian News*
- *National Library News*
- Northern Rivers Writer's Centre *Newsletter*
- *Peace and Freedom*
- *Public Library News*
- *Queensland Pride*
- *The Rationalist News*
- *Refractory Girl*
- *Rural Women's Network*
- *Screaming Hyena*
- *Strategic Directions in Child & Family Services* – NSW Dept of Community Services
- *Streetwise*
- *Sydney Star Observer*
- *Sydney Women's Liberation Newsletter*
- *The Volunteer Issue*
- *WEL-Informed*
- *Wicked Women*
- *WIP About* (Women Into Politics)
- *Women and Work*
- *Women in Film & Television Newsletter*
- *Women in Focus*

## NOW ACCEPTED



The Women's Library  
now accepts  
Bankcard, Mastercard  
and Visa

# The Gay and Lesbian Worldwide Travel Service

## Women only Retreat – Fiji

24–29 June

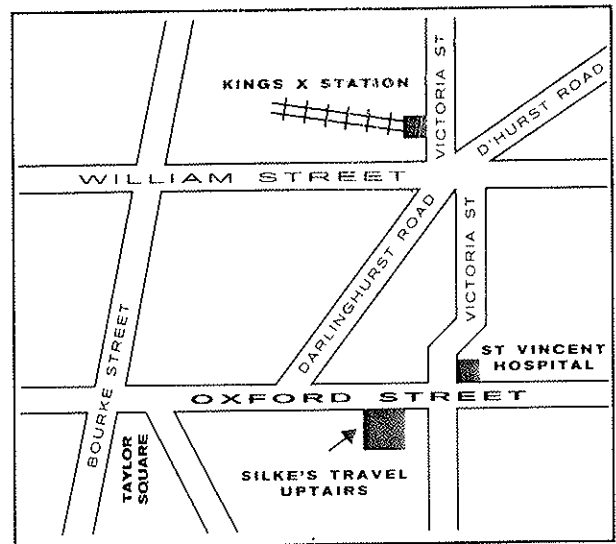
From \$1,099.40 per person...

Includes 5 nights accommodation, return airfares, breakfast, transfers and use of all facilities

## 21st Michigan Womyn's Music Festival

13–18 August

- • Flights,
- Domestic/International
- • Visa Applications
- • Bus Tickets
- • Women's
- Accommodation,
- Worldwide/Interstate
- • Women's only Tours



*Travel is our business!*



**SILKE'S TRAVEL**

2TA004042

agta  
member

263 Oxford Street Sydney NSW 2010 Australia

Phone 02 380 6244 Fax 02 361 3729

**IGTA**  
member