



THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY

NEWS LETTER

VOL. 6 NO. 1

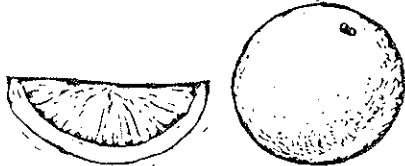
FEBRUARY 1997

ISSN 1320 601X

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

M A R D I G R A S 1 9 9 7

Citrus, Conversation & Candy



It's Mardi Gras time again and TWL is squeezing citrus, conversing with writers and doing candy to celebrate the month long festival...

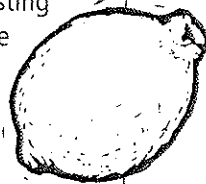
ANNUAL FRUIT JUICE STALL

Watermelon, oranges and lemons are a part of Mardi Gras' fruity theme, and particularly appropriate this year is our annual fruit juice stall at **Mardi Gras Fair Day on Sunday 9 February** held, as usual, in Jubilee Park, Glebe. We will also have an information stall, so while you relax with your freshly squeezed fruit juice you can catch up with the goings on at TWL. Fair Day runs from 11.00am to 5.00pm.

LITERARY BRUNCH

For a change of pace, TWL and Mardi Gras are hosting a **Literary Brunch on Sunday 16 February** at the Library, from 11.00am to 1.00pm.

Fiesta Carrera, literary legend of our first birthday party, will present another extraordinary performance. She will be joined by a hot list of other writerly lesbian talent, the doyennes of a multitude of styles and genres, including Susan Hampton, Natalie Varnish, Barbara Karpinski and Morgana Oliver, as well as an all-star cast of coffee and scones. Tickets \$5.00 pre-paid (including brunch) or \$7.50 at the door. Call the Library on 9319 0529 or drop in for bookings.



CHUPA CHUPS ANYONE!

And keep an eye out for TWL grrls selling those essential Chupa Chups at the **Mardi Gras Party on Saturday 1 March** at the Hordern Pavilion. We'll be the ones with the sparkling hands and stall at the showground.

We hope that you will indulge and enjoy these events, and come along and support The Women's Library and the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras.

See you there!

Inside

✿ Essential Events	4
✿ Letters to the Editors	5
✿ IWD	6, 7
✿ Reviews	8, 9, 10
✿ TWL KnowHow	11

STOP PRESS

TWL is now on-line. If you want to contact the library by e-mail, here's our address – twl@rainbow.net.au – and our web page is on the way!

THANK YOU

WORKING BEES AND MAILOUTS

COORDINATORS – Catharine Clements, Shelly Pearce, Simone Ford

WITH THANKS TO The Women's Library Committee* and Carol Arrowsmith, Marny Kilby, Cath Kevin, Emma Siounis, Paula Wallace, Margaret Gradon, Tamaris Cameron, Samia Iskander, Morgana Oliver, Kirsty Pearce

PICK-UPS AND DROP-OFFS – Anne Steng

LOAN OF PRINTER – Jo Angri

EDITING THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LISTING

Nicola O'Shea

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

REPORT DESIGN AND PRODUCTION – Ingrid Urh

FINANCIAL PREPARATION – Ellen Shenfield

WELCOME TO THE DOLLHOUSE FILM FUNDRAISER

COORDINATOR – Cathy Gallagher

Ana and Sue at the Valhalla Cinema

SHORT STORY COMPETITION TEAM

COORDINATOR – Simone Ford and Vicki Harding

The Women's Library Committee and Pearlie McNeill, Meg Coulson, Margy Burn, Paula Wallace, Morgana Oliver, Julia Hancock

DESIGN AND DTP

NEWSLETTER – Ingrid Urh

GENERAL STATIONERY, WRITING COMPETITION ENTRY

FORM AND BROCHURE – Sarah Groenewegen

BOOK COLLECTION & REFERRALS

The Feminist Bookshop

COORDINATORS OF VARIOUS PROJECTS

MEMBERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION – Ute Greiving

SERIALS – Barbara Wilson and Samia Iskander

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS – Annette Moore

PROCESSING DONATIONS – Cath Kevin

CORRESPONDENCE – Jane Phillips

CATALOGUING – Rose Bollen

PROCESSING OVERDUES – Marny Kilby

SORTING BOOKS IN STORAGE – Catharine Clements

COMPUTER UPKEEP – Anne Jones

STAFFING

COORDINATOR – Vicki Harding

The Women's Library Committee and Alex Markham, Andrea Griffin, Anna Fitzpatrick, Anneliese French, Annette Moore, Annie Holland, Barbara Wilson, Carol Arrowsmith, Cath Kevin, Cathy Gallagher, Caire Koetsier, Deanna Pearce, Ellen Shenfield, Emma Siounis, Fiona Porteous, Glennifer Roberts, Ilana Kaplin, Julie Earngey, Katalin Virag, Kimberly Kitchener, Kirsty Pearce, Kylie Lawson, Leila, Lilly, Liz Smedley, Margaret Thurgood, Marian Buckley, Marny Kilby, Megan Casey, Melissa Hook, Meredith Connie, Myra Flynn, Nicola O'Shea, Pam Rose, Rachel Moerman, Samia Iskander, Sarah Wright, Sissy Mills, Sue Williamson, Susan Jaundrell, Tamaris Cameron, Ute Greiving, Vanessa Sparrow, Weny Holz

*The previous Women's Library Committee was: Donna Wilcox, Anne Jones, Simone Ford, Shelly Pearce, Amanda Elliot, Catharine Clements and Rose Bollen

THE INBOX

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

- *Action News* – Newsletter of the Affirmative Action Agency
- *Active*
- *Agenda* – Office of the Status of Women
- *ACER Newsletter* – Australian Council for Educational Research
- *AIWRAP-UP* – The Australian Institute for Women's Research and Policy
- *Babelicious*
- *Charities Bulletin*
- *Child Abuse Prevention*
- *COAL Newsletter* – Coalition of Activist Lesbians Australia
- *Contact Newsletter* – SANDS NSW
- *Currency News* – Currency Press Newsletter
- *Earthwise Women*
- *Family Matters*
- The Feminist Bookshop *Lesbian News*
- *Gayzette*
- *geekgirl*
- *GLPCI Network* – Newsletter of the Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International
- *Go Girl* – Sydney Women's Festival
- *Grapevine*
- *HQ*
- *Inner Voice* – Inner City Regional Council

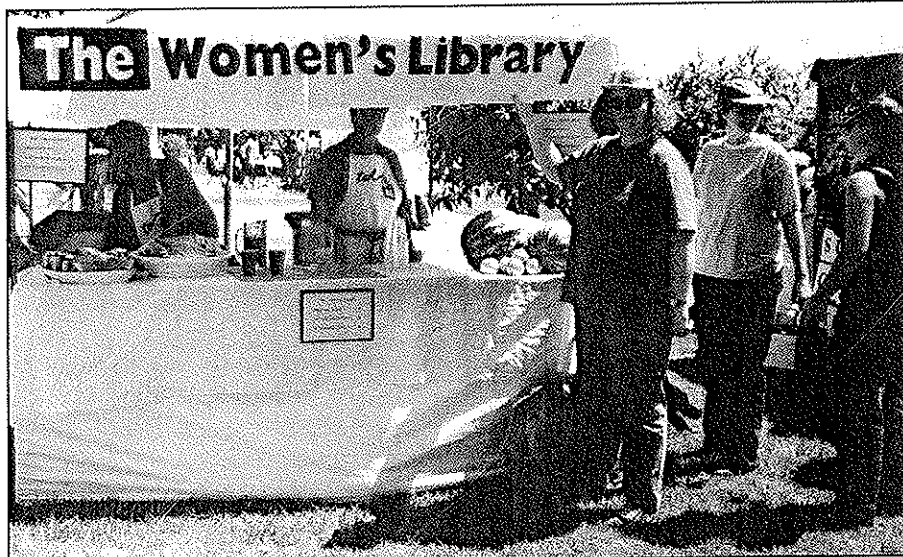
- *International Newsletter* on Women's Information Services
- *International Peace Update*
- *Jessie Street National Women's Library Newsletter*
- *Lesbiana*
- *Lesbians on the Loose*
- *Lezbiz Focus*
- *Links* – NSW Department of Community Services
- *Matrix Newsletter*
- *Mountain Lesbian News*
- *National Library of Australia News*
- *Network* – Newsletter of the Rural Women's Network
- *Newswrite* – The NSW Writer's Centre
- *Pandora Journal*
- *Peace and Freedom*
- *Public Library News*
- *Queensland Pride*
- *Queensland Woman*
- *Screaming Hyena*
- *Sisters in Crime Newsletter*
- *SWAN Happenings* – School Women Artists Network
- *Sydney Star Observer*
- *Sydney Women's Liberation Newsletter*
- *WEL-Informed*
- *Wholistic Living Matters*
- *WIFT Newsletter* – Women in Film and Television
- *WIP About* – Newsletter of Women Into Politics Inc.
- *Women and Work*
- *Women Lawyers*
- *Women's Calendar* – Department for Women
- *Womenspace* – Newsletter of the Department for Women

AGM ROUND UP

The Women's Library's Annual General Meeting on 1 December 1996 was a well-attended success. The (mainly administrative) constitutional changes were accepted with one minor amendment and the new constitution can be viewed at the Library on request.

Out-going convenor Donna Wilcox chaired the meeting and provided all present with a useful and interesting summary of why these changes were desirable, as well as of where the Library has been this year. Full summaries can be read in the Annual Report (copies available in Library).

Congratulations and thanks must be extended to all the volunteers whose dedication and hard work contributed enormously to the success of the Library's second full year of operation. We look forward to an even better 1997 with your help and greater involvement.



TWL VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION - FEATURING ROADY, MAUREEN, DONNA, ANN AND JO

Particular thanks must also go to the Management Committee and, of course, **Vicki Harding**, Library Coordinator and resident superwoman. Several Management Committee members are stepping down this year and to them - **Donna Wilcox, Anne Jones and Rose Bollen** - we extend an enormous THANK YOU.

Their tireless Committee work and ever-present support will be sorely missed, but we look forward to their contributions in many other ways, now that they have so much free time on their hands!!

NEW MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Our Convenor for this year is the ever-energetic **Shelly Pearce**; **Mandy Elliot** strides into the Secretary's position, and **Simone Ford** gallantly plods on as Treasurer for another term.

We welcome our new and super-enthusiastic Management Committee members - **Jane Phillips, Catharine Clements, Emily Clark, Stacy Carter and Jo Angri**. All are long-time volunteers with varied and exciting skills, and the Library anticipates another successful year with their help.

RESOURCES RECEIVED

DONATED BY AUTHORS, CONTRIBUTORS, AND EDITORS

- *International Review of Women and Leadership Volume 2, No 1 - Women and Politics*
Edited and donated by Marian Sawyer
- *Passion in Our Mouths Lesbian Poetry from Western Australia*
Donated by Denise, a member of the Editorial Collective
- *Volunteer Involvement Program - Sport & Recreation*
Aust Sports Commission
- *Who is She?? A Booklet of Women's Poetry on Sadness, Madness and Gladness*
Produced and donated by the Safe Place for Women Collective
- *How To Master Networking*
Robyn Henderson
- *Australian Feminist Organisations 1970-1985*

- Emma Grahame and Janette Joy Prichard Women's Studies, University of Sydney
- *geekgirl CD-ROM Netscape Navigator*
- *When a Baby Dies & Miscarriage*
from SANDS NSW
- *The Abortion Debate - The case for legal abortion*
The Atheist Foundation of Australia

DEPARTMENT FOR WOMEN

- *Directory of Organisations for Women in NSW*
- *Annual Report 1995-1996*
- NSW Government *Action Plan for Women*
- *Corporate Plan*
- NSW Government *Action Plan for Women - A Whole of Government Approach*

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 9331 1103

THE BOOKSHOP
NEWTOWN
186 King Street
Newtown NSW 2042
PHONE 02 9557 4244

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

SHELLY PEARCE, SIMONE FORD
+ AMANDA ELLIOT

DESIGN + PRODUCTION INGRID URH
LIBRARY LIAISON VICKI HARDING

ESSENTIAL EVENTS

FEBRUARY

5 Wednesday – 23 Sunday

- Eugenia plays at the Belvoir Street Theatre – a Mardi Gras Event
- ENQUIRIES (02) 9699 3444

9 Sunday

MARDI GRAS FAIR DAY

- TWL will have their fabulous annual juice stall, as well as an information stall – Jubilee Park, Glebe
- 11.00 am – 5.00 pm

16 Sunday

TWL AND MARDI GRAS LITERARY BRUNCH

- 11.00 am – 1.00 pm at the Library
- Reading from their work – Fiesta Carrera, Susan Hampton, Natalie Varnish, Barbara Karpinski, Morgana Oliver and more!
- Tickets \$5.00 pre-paid or \$7.50 at the door (includes coffee and scones)
- Call the Library for bookings

20 Thursday – 23 Sunday

- 'Thirtysomething' – Australian Feminist Legacies, Genealogies and Futures An Interdisciplinary Conference sponsored by the Institute for Women's Studies, Macquarie University
- ENQUIRIES (02) 9850 7684

MARCH

1 Saturday

TWL STALL AT MARDI GRAS PARTY

- Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade and Party
- ENQUIRIES (02) 9557 4332
- TWL stall at Mardi Gras party – look out for us and our Chupa Chups!

2 Sunday

- Sydney Women's Festival The Domain, Sydney
- ENQUIRIES (02) 9566 2302 or 9331 2278

2 Sunday

- Women in Theatresports Belvoir Street Theatre at 8.30pm
- ENQUIRIES (02) 9318 0088

5 Wednesday

- Women's Electoral Lobby IWD Luncheon
- ENQUIRIES Jane Gardiner (02) 9908 2707

7 Friday

ANNOUNCEMENT OF WINNERS TWL SHORT STORY COMPETITION

- Dinner at Balmain Boatshed – 7.00pm
- Tickets \$30.00/\$27.00 (including dinner, drinks, DJ)
- Contact the Library on (02) 9319 052
- Bookings ESSENTIAL and must be received by 21 February

MARCH

8 Saturday

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

- March under The Women's Library Banner from Town Hall Square (meet at the Queen Victoria statue by 11.00am) then join us at our stall in First Fleet Park, Circular Quay afterwards
- ENQUIRIES for march (02) 9516 1654

29 Saturday

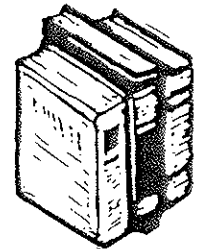
TWL BOOK FAIR

- Neighbourhood Centre, King Street Newtown, from 10.00 am
- Always brimming with bargains, so be early. Book donations are very welcome – please contact the Library or drop them in during opening hours

APRIL

10 Thursday – 11 Friday

- First National Conference on Violence in Lesbian Relationships
- Parks Community Centre, Adelaide
- ENQUIRIES B M Saraswati (08) 8384 9555



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) 9319 0529

Letters to the EDITORS

We want them!
You've got them!
Send them!

If you would like to comment on any of the articles in this issue, PLEASE SEND YOUR LETTERS to the Editorial Committee, c/- The Women's Library

PO BOX 271, NEWTOWN 2042

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

WOMEN'S LEGAL RESOURCES CENTRE

I refer to your newsletter of November 1996 (Vol.5, No.4) which has just come to me on our internal circulation. Thank you for the excellent job of highlighting issues, information and upcoming events and publications. I only wish I could keep up with it all!

In your article entitled 'Free the Night', the Women's Legal Resources Centre telephone advice number is incorrectly stated. The correct information is:

- ADVICE LINE (02) 9637 4597
- TOLL FREE NUMBER 1800 801 501

You might also be aware of the Domestic Violence Advocacy Service which provides advice and limited court representation for women in domestic violence situations. The details of that service are:

- ADVICE (02) 9637 3741
- TOLL FREE NUMBER 1800 810 784

ELIZABETH WING
PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR
WOMEN'S LEGAL RESOURCES CENTRE

DAUGHTERS OF THE PACIFIC

I am writing to express my concern about Melinda Conry's review of *Daughters of the Pacific* (Spinifex 1994) carried in your newsletter of June 1996 (Vol.5, No.2).

This book is unique in that it contains the stories of resistance of over 100 indigenous Australian and Pacific women from 22 countries. It is their book, not mine. It contains powerful oral stories of the impact of colonisation, militarisation and nuclearisation.

Colonisation has, among other things, undermined women's social, political and economic status and resulted in the birth of babies that have no human shape, and increasing cancers in children.

This alone should be enough to allow them an unhindered voice. But the book is more than that. It is a chronicle of incredible resistance against amazing odds. This book was

written at the women's request as a gift to the world – a warning and an inspiration.

Melinda Conry's review encouraging people not to bother reading the book because, wait for it, the author has an opinion (!?) is blatantly racist. Her callous act effectively silences over 100 indigenous women!

The issue of my opinion is barely worthy of a response. Every book/author has an opinion. My opinion which, by the way, is restricted to the last chapter, is that non-indigenous people can learn a lot from indigenous people about how to live with each other and this planet.

This opinion is based on working alongside indigenous people for over 15 years, living in their homes and being adopted into their communities.

ZOHL DÉ ISHTAR

RESPONSE FROM MELINDA CONRY

It is with surprise that I hear that I allegedly encouraged people 'not to bother reading' Zohl dé Ishtar's *Daughters of the Pacific*. My review stated that dé Ishtar's book contained 'some extraordinary accounts by women concerning their experiences with colonialism'.

Furthermore, I also stated that 'the research involved in recording the voices of this diverse group of indigenous women is a significant achievement in itself'.

What I did criticise was the extent of the editorial commentary throughout the text. The extent of the editor's various introductions I found unnecessary, since the women's accounts were more than eloquent in themselves. I do not see how this criticism of editorial technique – one aspect of the text – amounts to the review being 'blatantly racist' as alleged.

As I wrote in my review, *Daughters of the Pacific* is a book which 'involves stories from women which are moving, shocking and inspiring'. Aside from my disagreement with aspects of the editorial approach, I found it a rewarding book to read.

MELINDA CONRY

Social Season

Don't forget to fill up your diary with the events on page 4...

- ✿ TWL JUICE STALL – 9 February
- ✿ LITERARY BRUNCH – 16 February
- ✿ SHORT STORY COMPETITION DINNER – 7 March
- ✿ BOOK FAIR – 29 March

Women in Community HOUSING

This non-profit organisation aims to increase the type and quality of housing for older women – older women creating their own solutions, aiming to establish a housing co-op.

MORE INFORMATION
PHONE (02) 9252 0500
FAX (02) 9252 2040

ROOM Availability

A FABULOUS SPACE IS AVAILABLE FOR HIRE to community groups for women's workshops, courses, small functions and meetings in The Women's Library. Contact the Library for details.

IWD march

by amanda elliot

In our last issue we ran an article on Reclaim the Night. In this issue we are marking International Women's Day (IWD) with a brief history and guide to this year's celebrations, including how TWL intends to celebrate the event.

Inspired by socialist women in the United States, the second International Conference of Socialist Women, held in Copenhagen in 1910, declared that there be an International Women's Day.

On March 19, 1911 the first IWD was celebrated in Europe, and the annual celebrations have spread throughout the world.

IWD was first celebrated in Australia in March 1928, with a rally held at the Domain in Sydney. This rally marked the beginning of a now 69 year tradition of women gathering throughout Australia to celebrate IWD.

Despite a small start, by the 1940s nearly every capital city and many smaller towns and suburbs in Australia marked IWD with some kind of event.

The rise of the women's liberation movement in the 1960s and 1970s saw IWD in Australia expand. By this time marches were regularly held on the Saturday closest to March 8. Large marches began to take place as increasing numbers of women in Australia became politicised and joined the women's movement.

A similar increase in celebrations happened throughout the world, and in 1975, the International Women's Year, the United Nations finally gave official recognition to IWD.

In 1997, IWD is still going strong with thousands of women participating in marches, rallies, protests, dinners, vigils and dances. Events are held around Australia and all over the world.

This year the IWD march is being held on Saturday, March 8. It starts at 11.00 am at the Town Hall Square and will march to First Fleet Park at Circular Quay, where there will be music, stalls and food.

On March 19, 1911 the first IWD was celebrated in Europe... In 1997, IWD is still going strong, with thousands of women participating in marches, rallies, protests, dinners, vigils and dances.

Internationally and within Australia, International Women's Day has a long and interesting history. This article gives you just a brief glimpse.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you are interested in finding out more information about IWD, you can come into TWL and peruse our collection. Two books you might find useful are:

- *A History of International Women's Day in Words and Images*
Stevens, Joyce
IWD Press, Sydney 1985
- *More than a Hat and Glove Brigade: The Story of the Union of Australian Women*
Curthoys, Barbara and McDonald, Audrey
Bookpress, Sydney 1996

They are on

IWD MARCH 1997
SATURDAY, MARCH 8
11.00AM - TOWN HALL SQUARE
MARCH TO FIRST FLEET PARK
CIRCULAR QUAY

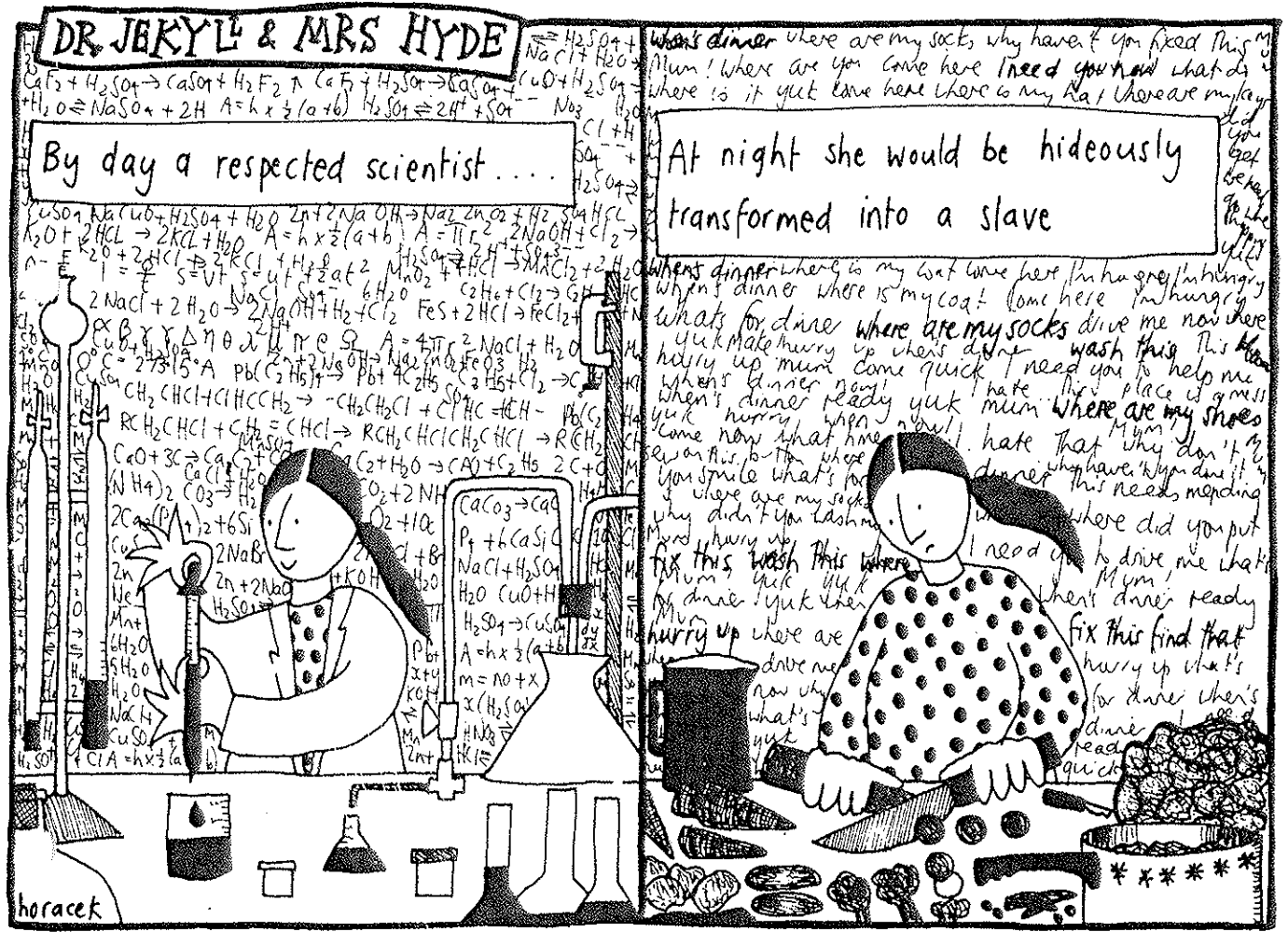


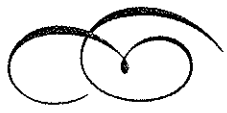
ILLUSTRATION .. REPRINTED FROM JUDY HORACEK'S LIFE ON THE EDGE, WITH KIND PERMISSION OF JUDY HORACEK AND SPINIFEX PRESS

TWL + IWD

TWL has always tried to be active in IWD celebrations and the annual march. This year we are marching again, so come along and bring your friends and children to march with the TWL banner (gather at the Queen Victoria Statue by 11.00 am – just look for the banner!).

SHORT STORY COMPETITION

TWL is also launching a national **Short Story Competition** that we hope will become an annual event linked to IWD celebrations. Through the Short Story Competition TWL hopes to encourage and support women's writing in Australia. TWL is announcing the winner of the Short Story Competition at a celebratory dinner the evening before IWD on March 7, 1997 at Balmain Rowing Club. Please contact TWL for more details.



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.

FROM THE OTHER WOMAN

JENNIFER COMPTON

FIVE ISLAND PRESS ASSOCIATES, WOLLONGONG 1993

Donated by the author

When I first started reading Jennifer Compton's poetry in her compilation *From the Other Woman*, it made me relate somehow to the strange silent spaces you may encounter with the watch on your wrist and an empty room – when you hear it ticking but look around anyway because it's too loud or strange to be your watch ticking. I'm sorry, but this is the effect Jennifer Compton's poetry has on me, and it's a magnificent feeling.

Her pedantic imagery and words of blunt reality will touch you, force you to taste every word. Compton's work is so ethereally captivating that she whips your face with her title for one of her poems – 'From the other woman left under the pillow' – a poem which echoes the title of this fine anthology and entreats us with her world of words.

Compton is sensitive to the 'everyday' and charms her reader's complete range of senses. Darn it, she makes you think more intelligently of the everyday-mundane. I want more.

ANNA CONN

THE WIFE WHO SPOKE JAPANESE IN HER SLEEP

VIVIENNE PLUMB

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO PRESS, OTAGO NEW ZEALAND

These ten 'slice of life' short stories fail to live up to their genre. These stories seem to read like lost chapters in a novel. Predictable endings are coupled with cliched scenarios. It would seem that Vivienne Plumb has intricately described the most inane stories from her closest friends and mixed in the fractured fairytales her grandmother told her at bedtime.

Absent were any revelatory insights. Described on the cover as 'quirky and enjoyable', this would more aptly be read as 'shallow and pulpy'.

Tone was very straightforward, with an exhausting overuse of dialogue. Often the stories intimated a hint of a bigger picture but Plumb did not deliver, instead she opted for the banality itself to fill our expectations.

Women throughout these stories are objectified using staggeringly medieval cliches, ie 'best friends forever', 'if you wish hard enough you will become pregnant', woman as fairy godmother, woman as baker of bread, woman as follower of men.

I put this book down hoping that if I ever go to New Zealand, where these stories are set, that I might avoid meeting anyone from whom these characters were modelled (especially anyone named Bookie or Mookie).

LISA ROMANO

THE SILICON TONGUE

BERYL FLETCHER

SPINIFEX PRESS, MELBOURNE 1996

The Silicon Tongue is a delightfully intimate and insightful novel concerning the lives of two remarkable women, Alice and her daughter Joy.

The reader is invited to join Alice as she recounts on her life experiences with sincerity and determination. Secrets of rape, murder and adoption are revealed, kinships discovered and rediscovered, lives fulfilled and characters strengthened.

A striking aspect of the novel is its treatment of language, interpretation and reality. Alice is accused of constructing a childhood from fictional stories of others, whereas her daughter Joy learns of the ambiguity between reality and fantasy through her exposure to cyberspace.

Pay attention to how each character deals with truth (the search, attainment and loss of it) as well as the issue of identity amidst social and technological change. The teenage nethead, Pixel, represents an individual struggling with identity. Having been conceived by her mother's adoptive parents, her appearance in the novel serves as a reminder of the multiplicity/ambiguity of identity.

Unfortunately, I have not read Beryl Fletcher's previously written novels such as *The Word Burners* and *The Iron Mouth* and subsequently cannot make comparisons, yet I grew attached to this novel and am looking forward to reading Beryl Fletcher in the near future.

KATALIN VIRAG

THE FALL UPWARDS: SPIRITUALITY IN THE LIVES OF LESBIAN WOMEN AND GAY MEN

DINO HODGE

LITTLE GEM PUBLICATIONS, CASUARINA, NT 1996

Dino Hodge's *The Fall Upwards* is a significant contribution to the growing body of work which looks at the relationship between sexuality and spirituality. The last twenty years have seen the emergence of a gay and lesbian culture which is beyond sexuality. This period has also seen the questioning of traditional belief systems.

The ambivalence of the Christian Churches towards the inherent relationship between sexuality and spirituality is ongoing. Those interviewed in this book share with the reader the joy, the difficulties and the anguish they have experienced in their search for a greater understanding of the question, 'What makes life worth living?' (Robert Dessaix p. 174).

For many gay men and lesbian women the denial of their sexual identity by their religion has sent them on a spiritual quest. Hodge has chosen individuals whose spiritual life journeys are as diverse as their backgrounds. Some are from traditional Christian families, others from Jewish and Islamic ones.

All mention the expectation that they would conform to the tenets of their religion, yet for most this was impossible given the nature of these institutions in ignoring or condemning the existence of homosexuality.

What emerges in these interviews is the intensity and passion with which these men and women have followed their spiritual journey. Some, like Michael Nisner and Ali Wurm, work within their chosen religions; others, like Dare Cavanagh, Georgia Carr and Susan McFarlane have explored their spirituality by recognising the essential femaleness of nature and life forces. Only one, Vera Bourne, is a minister of religion (Metropolitan Community Church). Ken Sinclair, Malcolm Cowan and Judy McDonald have contributed much to the writings on spirituality and sexuality.

The Fall Upwards has a unique place in the recent writings on homosexuality and spirituality. Spirituality is an essential aspect of our lives, often neglected or lost in the late twentieth century rush for personal fulfilment. The lives of these gay men and lesbian women revealed in these interviews does 'celebrate a universal widespread sense of joy in all things' (Mother Abbyss, Order of Perpetual Indulgence in Australia, p. 112).

Their varied spiritual paths surely show that they are older and wiser souls.

MAUREN COONEY

THE WELL-HEELED MURDERS

CHERRY HARTMAN

SPINSTERS INK, DULUTH, USA 1996

Morgan McRain is an Oregon therapist who discovers she has a flair and fascination for investigating murder after she discovers the body of the clinical psychologist who shares consulting rooms in the same building as her lover Victoria.

Putting her practice on hold Morgan teams up with police detective Sam Reynolds to track down the killer. Morgan and Sam must discern just where the truth is amongst the many lies they are told by their suspects and identify the murderer.

Although the psychology-jargon intruded a little on the dialogue at times making it seem a little stilted, overall the mystery is a satisfying one.

LORRAINE BARROW

PASSING REMARKS

HELEN HODGMAN

TRANSWORLD PUBLISHERS, SYDNEY 1996

Donated to the Library by the publishers

The title must refer to the style in which this book is written. It's laconic, lazy, and captures the essence of long summer holidays. Everything in the novel is like a passing remark, it seems trivial, something easy to ignore, but scenes end up sticking and making you think and smile.

There are no chapters, just little scenes that add up like life does. It's almost just a series of vignettes, or passing observations, tied to the main characters. There's Rosemary, an academic who's heading towards menopause. There's Billie, the epitome of a baby dyke-on-a-bike. There's Daphne, another academic, who spends the novel becoming an illustrated woman. And there's a host of other characters, each of whom bring their little scenes vividly to life, and makes the entire book frank and fun.

All in all, this novel deserves to be top of the reading list over the holidays.

SARAH J GROENEWEGEN

NO THANKS OR REGRETS

EDITED AND INTRODUCED BY JACQUELINE KENT

STATE LIBRARY OF NSW PRESS, SYDNEY 1996

Donated by the publishers

No Thanks or Regrets is a collection of short stories about women's adventures, though mostly not of the sort that entail scaling mountains or hunting wild beasts.

Instead, they are mostly the adventures of Australian women's lives, most at the very least interesting. They were written for a Society of Women Writers competition for Australian women's autobiography or biography, and so the adventures they convey are those of real life.

The stories cover a wide range of women's experiences, from the horrors of Nazi concentration camps to the experiences of the postwar immigrant to Australia, to dealing with the death of a friend, the slow decline of an elderly mother, or facing one's own mortality through the struggle with breast cancer.

There is a teenage alcoholic building a new life, a woman venturing into, and succeeding in, the macho environment of opal mining, and a transgender woman learning to live in her new gender, rebuilding the missing parts of a growing girl's life, and seeing women's oppression in a new light.

If you demand innovative styles of writing, this probably isn't the book for you. With few exceptions, most of the stories in this book are written in a simple narrative style. For me, however, the surprising thing was how compelling some of the stories were, as often the most straightforward, unembellished tellings were the most powerful, for the events of some of these women's lives simply speak for themselves.

Like many anthologies, the book is a mixed bag. A few of the stories didn't particularly hold my attention, but most contained something that made me want to keep reading, and a few will stay with me for a long time. Mostly the book shows how interesting and adventurous our ordinary lives are, whether we realise it or not.

MEGAN CASEY



Koala Books

Cathie Tasker
Publisher and
Marketing Manager

722 Bourke St Redfern NSW Australia 2016

Postal address: PO Box 285 Waterloo NSW Australia 2017

Ph: (61) 02 9310 1311 Fax: (61) 02 9310 1213

FEMINIST FAIRY TALES

BARBARA G WALKER

TRANSWORLD PUBLISHERS, SYDNEY 1996

This collection is a rewrite of 28 traditional fairy tales of diverse cultural origins, some very familiar, others more obscure. Walker states in her introduction that 'a feminist message of some kind can be found embodied in each'.

These stories are reasonably entertaining and amusing, and a few of them do challenge traditional gender stereotypes in a thought-provoking manner.

However, many of the stories in the collection left me puzzled. Although most of Walker's protagonists are female, they all too often end up happily-ever-aftering their lives away with the handsome Prince.

Although Walker claims to challenge the traditional view of woman as decorative object, she defeats her own cause by making physical appearance a constant issue. Her heroines are either very beautiful, or have qualities that compensate for their ugliness – a sort of 'she's got a nice personality' approach.

It seems to me that Walker has blown a great opportunity to really challenge some of the injustices and misconceptions on which so much sexism is based.

Fairy tales? Yes. Feminist? No.

RACHEL MOERMAN

HOW TO MASTER NETWORKING

ROBYN HENDERSON

PRENTICE HALL, SYDNEY 1997

Did you ever wonder what networking was and how to do it? Well, read this book for a practical, easy-to-read guide!

The language is simple, but the author doesn't talk down to the reader. She gives a lot of good advice and information about what networking is, and why it's so good. Then she discusses many ways of doing it, including advice from the masters.

The book starts with a quiz, then continues with many activities and points to think about. Key points are summarised in italics within each chapter.

This book could be improved by including male or unisex networking organisations, and changing the illustrations, which are mainly male. However, overall it is well worth a thorough read.

M A MACCANN

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

Contributions NEEDED

To all budding journo's – TWL Newsletter is looking for contributions. Regular areas of contribution include interviews, book reviews, and up and coming events, but we are very open to your ideas. So if you have the time, inclination and enthusiasm, leave a message for Shelly, Amanda or Simone at the Library, or send submissions to the Editorial Committee, care of the Library.

BreakOut Travel

lic 2ta004225

discounts to women's library members

10 roseby street marrickville nsw 2204
tel: 9558 8229 fax: 9558 7140
e-mail brkout@world.net http://breakout.com.au

The Feminist Bookshop

Books for a Changing World

•••••

Shop 9, Orange Grove Plaza,
Balmain Road, Lilyfield, Sydney, NSW 2040
Phone (02) 9810 2666
Fax (02) 9818 5745

Hours: Mon-Fri 10.30am-6.00pm
Sat: 10.30am-4.00pm • Closed Sunday

•••••

Issues for women in the '90's.
Resource & Information centre.
10% student discount

TWL KNOWHOW

HOW THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY WORKS

MEMBERSHIP

You must become a member of The Women's Library (TWL) to be eligible to borrow books. Membership fees per year:

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

TWL accepts Visa, Bankcard, and Mastercard.

LOAN DEPOSIT

Members must lodge a \$10 deposit with us before borrowing, as security against unreturned, damaged or very overdue books. This deposit is held by TWL 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.

LOAN PERIOD

- Two weeks for all books (maximum six books)
- One week for all videos (refundable deposit required – \$50 institutions and \$20 individual members)
- Periodicals and reference material may be read in the Library, and photocopying is available for Library users

LONG DISTANCE BORROWING

This service is available to members. Please contact TWL for more information.

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 below. At this stage TWL is unfunded and membership fees keep the Library alive. As a member you are entitled to borrow books from the Library, receive TWL's newsletter four times a year, and eligible to vote at our AGM.

BUY A BOOK TO JOIN THE LIBRARY

- You can buy a book to donate to TWL in lieu of membership fees from a list of titles lodged with **The Feminist Bookshop** (address below). Simply bring your book, membership form and **The Feminist Bookshop** receipt to TWL during opening hours and we will process your membership on the spot.*

SPONSOR A COORDINATOR SCHEME

- You can become a sponsor of the Library by donating \$10 or more on a monthly basis. This amount is tax deductible.
- Sponsors of the Library are automatically members and the money you donate goes solely toward employing a full-time Library Coordinator which will enable the Library to be a self-sufficient and effective community based service.
- Payments can be easily made through automatic deductions from a credit card or periodical payment arrangements with your bank.
- If you would like to know more or become a sponsor, please contact the Library.

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 note that TWL has a no-strings-attached donations policy. TWL 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 TWL, your donations are tax deductible. 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 tax deduction.

BEQUESTS

- Maybe you would like to consider making provisions for leaving your personal library and/or a donation to TWL 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, and \$15.00 for unwaged membership.

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 SEND ME INFORMATION ABOUT THE LIBRARY COORDINATOR SPONSORSHIP SCHEME

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

The Lesbian and Gay Worldwide Travel Service

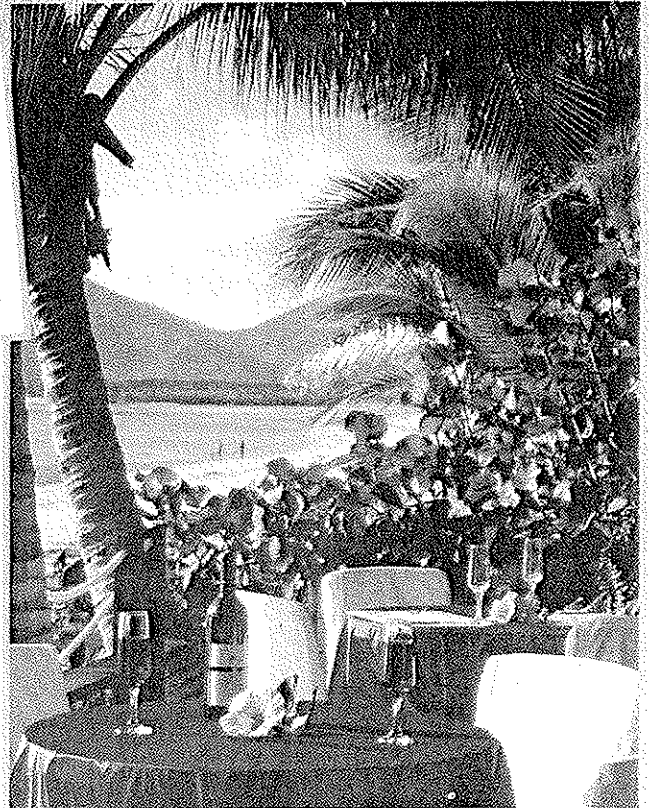
COMING UP - 1997

- **WOMEN'S WEEK**
Man Friday Resort, Fiji 5 - 12 July
- **SOUTH AMERICA**
Inca trail for women 5 - 26 Sept
- **ANNAPURNA DHANLAGIRI TREK**
Nepal 25 Oct - 13 Nov
- **BEST OF EAST AFRICA**
Safari for women 1 - 23 Jan '98

SEE US FOR ALL YOUR TRAVEL NEEDS

- **FLIGHTS**
Domestic and International
- **VISA APPLICATIONS**
- **BUS TICKETS**
- **WOMEN'S
ACCOMMODATION**
Worldwide and Interstate
- **WOMEN'S-ONLY TOURS**

51 CINDERELLA ST CAIRNS



Be pampered in the tropics

- Superb accommodation
- Creative cuisine
- Absolute beachfront
- Complete privacy
- \$65 Single / \$95 Double
includes full breakfast



BOOK THROUGH SILKE'S TRAVEL
PHONE (02) 9380 6244



SILKE'S TRAVEL

2TA004042

263 Oxford Street, Sydney NSW 2010 AUSTRALIA



PH (02) 9380 6244 or 1800 807 860 ♦ FAX (02) 9361 3729

