



More Books for Women

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About BTWOF

Books To Watch Out For publishes monthly e-letters celebrating books on various topics. Each issue includes new book announcements, brief reviews, commentary, news, and, yes, good book gossip.

More Books for Women

covers the finest in thinking women's reading, plus mysteries, non-sexist children's books, and news from women's publishing. Written by the owners and staff at Women & Children First, and friends.

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- September 2006 -
Volume 2 Number 8

Dear Subscribers,

My great news (and my sad news) is that I've been offered - and have accepted - a fantastic position as the Director of *Mslexia*, a British magazine about women and writing. It's a superb magazine, rich and dense with information, insight about writing, community, and yes, fermenting social change. It reminds me a bit of *Feminist Bookstore News*, in those respects except that it's glossier and better looking than *FBN* ever was, and of course that the orientation is women writing, rather than bookselling and publishing. It's a publication that I wish I'd thought of myself, and I'm very pleased to be able to work with the *Mslexia* staff, board of directors, and the outgoing publisher/editor/founder to take it to its next level of development.

The sad news is that, of course, I won't be putting my 24/7 energy into Books To Watch Out For.

But the very good news is that Suzanne Corson, whom many of you know from Boadecia's Books and from her stint as Managing Editor of *On Our Backs* and Executive Editor for H.A.F. Publications, will take over the administration and management, as well as editing, for Books To Watch Out For. She's worked for BTWOF in the past, and occasionally for *Feminist Bookstore News*, and brings a wonderful vitality to promoting and distributing our literatures, to writing, and to getting the exact right book into each reader's hands. And she's meticulous with the details (essential to subscribers) and very, very good with the technical side. I couldn't imagine a better fit for BTWOF, and I wouldn't felt free to take the new position if she hadn't been available to take on BTWOF.

And me, I'll be in my dream position of being able to read and write for *TLE & MBW* as much as I want (while exploring Northern England) - without having to spend my time managing the pesky details of running a business. What a luxury! So I'm off to Newcastle in early September, and Suzanne will keep the issues rolling off the press. I'll continue to get email at BTWOF, but email Suzanne@BTWOF.com for BTWOF business.

And check out *Mslexia* at www.Mslexia.co.uk.

I'll be back with more reviews as soon as I get settled there.

Yours in spreading the words,
Carol Seajay

A Bit of Housekeeping

If your email copy of *More Books for Women* contains little boxes, stars, or other odd characters where apostrophes and dashes should be, you may have a compatibility problem with your email browser. We know such problems exist with Gmail accounts, for instance. If your eyes are tired of navigating around such characters, consider switching to the "text" version of *MBW*. Just request the switch, and instead of receiving the full issue in your mailbox, you'll receive a short email with a link to both the web (HTML) version of the issue and a printable PDF. Email me at editor@BooksToWatchOutFor.com to request the change.

To aid booksellers who must convert to the new industry standard thirteen-digit ISBNs, we now lists the longer ISBNs with each book instead of the ten digit ISBNs.

BTWOF finds it interesting that, as of this writing, neither Amazon.com nor BN.com lists the new ISBN13s yet, and if the longer numbers are input in search

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boxes, the books in question are not found. Booksense.com, on the other hand, and all of the independent bookstores who use booksense.com websites (such as Women and Children First and Charis Books), list both ISBN13s and ISBN10s and both sets of numbers are searchable. Leave it to the indies to be ahead of the game!

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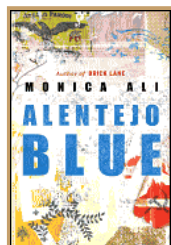
Kris Radish's Literary Garden Keeps Growing

Kris Radish, author of book group favorites *The Elegant Gathering of White Snows* and *Dancing Naked at the Edge of Dawn*, as well as the current *Annie Freeman's Fabulous Traveling Funeral*, has signed on for three more books with Bantam Dell. The deal was arranged by Ellen Geiger at Frances Goldin Literary Agency. Look for *The Sunday List of Dreams*, about a woman who discovers that her estranged daughter is part-owner of one of the most successful sex-toy shops in the U.S., in February. Learn more at the author's website, www.krisradish.com.

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Ann Christophersen recommends...

I have read - and loved - all five of Alice McDermott's previous novels. Fifteen years after my initial reading of *At Weddings and Wakes*, I still remember marveling at the first paragraph, a paragraph that is one breathtakingly long sentence that, as it turns out, introduces virtually all the themes in the novel. A "topic sentence," perhaps, but one the likes of which I've not seen before or since. McDermott takes her time writing her books, and it shows: the craftsmanship is superb, all the details carefully wrought but apparent only if you're interested in studying how she does what she does; otherwise, you simply experience their wonderful effects. *That Night*, *The Bigamist's Daughter*, *Charming Billy*, *Child of My Heart* - I highly recommend all of them. But be absolutely certain to read her new one, *After This*. I hesitate to use this cliché - but will, anyway: Alice McDermott is at the height of her considerable powers in this book. The setting and subject will be familiar to her fans: it takes place on Long Island and concerns itself with a family. It is sweeping in scope, covering the beginning of the parents' courtship to the early pregnancy and marriage of their youngest child, a high school-aged daughter who has brought great pain to their middle class, Catholic-minded sensibility in the era of the Vietnam War, to which they have lost one of their sons. But allowing her characters to come through such family heartaches with tenderness and grace is what McDermott is so good at. She doesn't shy away from the things that are real and difficult in the lives of families, nor does she moralize or show just one character's point of view. What she does is elevate ordinary families and family members to their proper height, revealing the profound significance of matters at the heart of their everyday lives. Her generosity flows through her prose, and one finishes *After This* feeling something like blessed. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, \$24, 9780374168094.



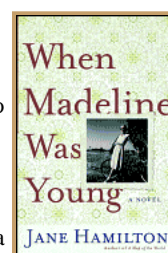
Monica Ali's first book, the novel *Brick Lane*, was universally heralded as a terrific debut. Her new book *Alentejo Blue*, a collection of short stories so closely connected that it feels like a novel, has inevitably been compared to the first book and just as inevitably found to suffer a bit in the comparison. I haven't read *Brick Lane*, so I can't offer a critical opinion on the matter. What I can say, however, is that if that book is even better than this one, it just jumped to the top of my bedside stack. *Alentejo Blue* is set in a village in a region of Portugal known as the Alentejo. It's a dusty, slow-paced place that at first glance seems like it has never changed and probably never will. But then enter the characters. The book opens with an old man cutting down the body of his old friend from a nearby tree, from which he has recently hung himself. What follows is a story about their lifelong friendship and the political struggles the dead friend has spent his life engaged in. But part of the story, too, is that the survivor has been in love with his friend his whole life, a dimension that is explored here and returned to subsequently. Each story introduces new characters or circles back to reveal much more about an earlier character who is given the opportunity to tell her or his own story (some stories are told in the third person, some in the first). The first person narratives offer satisfying detail and surprisingly different perspective. Eventually, all the characters impinge on each

other in greater or lesser ways and create a portrait of this village with considerable depth and complexity. And in the end, as is the case with novels, there is resolution, a classic comic one at that: a yearly festival that celebrates the village, bringing all the diverse newcomers, outsiders, and old-timers together to parade the changes they have made during the relatively brief time span of the book, to move on, or simply to resume their old lives. The main literary device Ali uses is suspense: every single chapter begins with the reader questioning for a paragraph or two who and what the focus will be, whose story this story will be. And each chapter ends with the reader wanting to know where this character or set of events is going - and whether she's going to find that out now or have to wait a bit, and if she has to wait, knowing that in the meantime she'll at least have the great pleasure of meeting somebody new. And Ali's use of language is powerful. After underlining about the thirtieth great metaphor, I understood something new about how metaphors work: just as a picture can say a thousand words, so can an effective word-image. I go on too long, but as you can tell, I highly recommend this book. Simon & Schuster, \$24, 9780743293037.

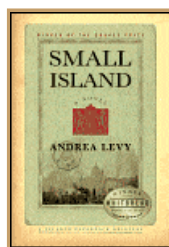


Linda Bubon loves...

Jane Hamilton's novels have provided me with many hours of reading pleasure over the years, and her new book, **When Madeline Was Young**, is no exception. Set in a middle-class Chicago suburb (Oak Park), and narrated by Mac, the elder of two children of an ornithologist (he works at the Field Museum of Natural History) and a nurse, the novel spans the past five decades and covers the family's progress through the Kennedy years, the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement, and into the present when Mac attends the funeral of his cousin Buddy's son, a victim to the war in Iraq. Through it all, Madeline, the title character, is a constant: a beautiful, Grace Kelly-like woman, who, as a result of a bike accident at 25, is left with the mind of a seven-year-old in a slender, gracefully aging body. Madeline is also Mac's father's first wife; Julia, Mac's mother, was Madeline's nurse and best friends with Mac's Aunt Figgy. Mac's parents marry and decide to care for Madeline as their child.



We see this original family story unfold through Mac's eyes, loyal and defensive of his parents' choice. While a wonderfully complex and nuanced story of family relationships, rich in endearing and interesting characters, the political and social issues of the sixties and seventies are woven in seamlessly. My only complaint is that I wished it were longer. Like all the best books, I didn't want it to end. Doubleday, \$22.95, 9780385516716.



Another rich read I enjoyed recently - and one which provided our book group with much to discuss - is Andrea Levy's **Small Island**, winner of the Whitbread Prize and the Orange Prize. Narrated in four voices, two women's, two men's, two Jamaican-born, two British-born, the novel focuses on the 1940s, and begins and ends in 1948, when the Jamaican couple are trying to establish themselves in London. Levy, who was born in 1956, is a born writer, capturing four very different and distinct voices brilliantly, and coloring the London blitz and the war in Burma equally vividly. There are wonderfully comic scenes sprinkled

throughout a generally tragic story of racism, classism, and war. Levy's wisdom, maturity, and sensibility are very impressive; we all loved this book. St. Martin's/Picador, \$14, 9780312424671.

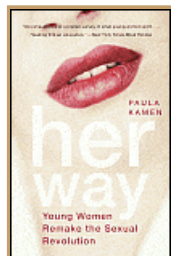
Karen Russell is about to make her mark on the literary scene with a stunning collection of short stories, **St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves**. This wunderkind (she's 24) writes, in a brazenly assured voice, wild, almost surreal stories about young people forced to deal with challenging, tragic, and sometimes dangerous situations. The opening story, "Ava Wrestles the Alligator," is narrated by a thirteen-year-old girl, left alone with her mentally disturbed older sister in a deserted theme park in the Florida Everglades called Swamplandia. Another story features two boys, aged ten and twelve, searching night after night in underwater caves for the ghost of their little sister, drowned two years before. And then there is the title story which concerns the human daughters of werewolves being rehabilitated by Catholic nuns, narrated in a totally believable voice. Russell's language and idioms are wholly original, fresh as a spring morning, yet surprisingly



familiar. These stories made my scalp prickle, unnerved me, and absolutely compelled me to read on. I will be haunted by several of them for a long time. Knopf, \$22, 9780307263988.



Tish Hayes suggests...



As Paula Kamen reports in **Her Way: Young Women Remake the Sexual Revolution**, women today own their sexuality in ways that previous generations could not imagine. Although the open discussion of sex and desire can be traced to the consciousness raising efforts of the second wave feminist movement, young women today take their right to sexual fulfillment as the starting point. This new generation is confident and educated about the choices they make regarding sex and rarely judgmental of other women's choices. However it appears that this individualism has led to a less politicized view of sex and fewer collective actions to address the continuing issues of birth control, abortion, and sexual violence. More than just a state of affairs, *Her Way* reminds us of what we owe to the feminist movement and how much work there is left to do to gain true equality - in bed and in the workplace. Broadway Books, \$14.95, 9780767910002.



Mary Ellen Kavanaugh is enjoying...

A Marge Piercy novel - could anything make a middle-aged feminist happier? Well, perhaps a few things, but, let me tell you, this is one comfortable read. Piercy's strong suit is as a storyteller of women's lives, and, in this, **Sex Wars** does not disappoint. The characters are from our herstory - Victoria Woodhull, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the nefarious Anthony Comstock, and a host of others. There are many stories here which interweave with one another in an attention-getting way. Some of the women are immigrants, trying to feed themselves and their families, some come of money, and some make it and lose it.



What ties all their lives together is the burgeoning freedom of women and men to be open and sexual and enjoy so - the "free love" advocacy of the late 19th century. Comstock, whose name you may or may not know, was a sad, dried up, controlling man, who made it his life's work to rid society of the evils of sex - condoms, books, abortionists, and more. His success led to the death of at least one of our characters. I am familiar with some of the real life stories of these amazing women - Woodhull, who ran for president, Stanton and Anthony and their Seneca Falls convention - so the story felt familiar to me. What Piercy does here is connect the dots, being upfront about the fact that this is fiction: showing all the ways in which our lives are intertwined, how activists have long worked for women's freedoms, how activists don't always agree, how friendships are tried, and how sisterhood is fomented in small moments of victory. While I think the book is in need of one last good edit - some sentences are just too awkward and clumsy to pass for someone's style, and Piercy uses dialect ineffectually and inconsistently - the story is engaging enough to skip over the writing in some places and simply sink into the (fictionalized) lives of some of our brave foremothers. For me, one of the most heartwarming bits is seeing how Susan B. Anthony mentors the young feminists around her - I simply cannot think of another scene in literature where we get this model. I would also encourage young people working for women's rights and sexual freedom to read this - it will likely spark an interest in the real lives of the women who braved the paths so many of us now walk. William Morrow, \$24.95, 9780060789831. Paperback due November 2006, Harper, \$14.95, 9780060789879.

I came to read **Earthly Paradise: Colette's Autobiography, Drawn from the Writings of Her Life**, by Robert Phelps because Alison Bechdel talks at length about the influence Colette's writing had on her as a young woman in her stunning memoir, *Fun Home*. I first opened *Earthly Paradise* one rainy Saturday morning, sitting on a screened in porch with a cup of almond brittle tea, and the whole experience couldn't have been more lush and sensual. The first writings in the collection are remembrances of her mother and her mother's gardens in France. The language is rich and fluid and alive. I found myself reading passages out loud to

myself, just to hear the melody of them. I have not yet made it through the 500 some pages of the book, but that is intentional. I am liking having this to dip into. Today I am reading about Colette's burgeoning relationships with Natalie Clifford-Barney and company. Mata-Hari, the dancer, has just walked into a party, and I suspect this is going to be quite the event. I may never finish this collection, just to be in it - to have the sensual world of this French woman, who is, above all else, a fine observer of human beings and the 'earthly paradise' we live in. Unless you already own a copy of *Earthly Paradise*, you'll likely need to head to your local library or favorite used bookstore, since this 1966 Farrar, Straus, and Giroux edition, and apparently, every other version, is out of print.

Speaking of Fun Home, publisher Houghton Mifflin reports that it is now in its fifth printing, bringing the total number of copies in print to more than 51,000 in the three months since its June publication.



Inspired by reading *Earthly Paradise*, I also picked up the novel that Colette herself calls her best work: **The Pure and the Impure**. While I am not far into it, it seems more a character study of people than a novel with real plot and movement. The prose, while witty and observant, is not as powerful, to me, as the lush descriptions of nature that appear in *Earthly Paradise*. In the end, I am delighted to be lost in the midst of two of her works, and finally, be reading for myself, what I've only long heard about in passing. *New York Review of Books*, \$12.95, 9780940322486.

Next on my list: **What To Eat: An Aisle-by-Aisle Guide to Savvy Food Choices and Good Eating** by Marion Nestle (North Point Press, \$30, 9780865477049). I love books about food and learned a lot in Nestle's earlier *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*, so I look forward to this most recent book of hers.



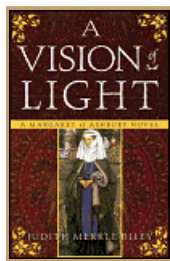
Sara Luce Look raves about...

Sara Luce Look is co-owner and book buyer at Charis Books in Atlanta. She is also mother to Zelda Jane and a femme dyke who loves to read. She enjoys all kinds of fiction by women, lesbian mysteries, and books that push sexual and gender-bending boundaries. She also loves cookbooks, young adult fiction, and beautiful children's books. We are happy to have her as an additional reviewer for More Books for Women.

I loved **The Birth House** by Ami McKay so much, I looked the author up on the web and wrote to her, which I never do. McKay, an American-born woman who moved to Nova Scotia with her family, loosely based her novel on a true story: she discovered that the house they moved into was a birth house, a place where local women used to go to give birth in the era before they were forced to go to hospitals.

Her novel is about Dora Rare, the first daughter to be born into the Rare family in five generations. Set in the early twentieth century, Dora apprentices herself to the local midwife and herbalist, an Acadian woman named Miss Babineau. (Miss B.'s herbal medicine "willow book," along with old-fashioned ads for herbal remedies, is printed in the back of *The Birth House*.) After Miss B.'s death, Dora somewhat reluctantly becomes the town's midwife. A male medical doctor in town tries to lure women away from Dora and to his maternity hospital, where he promises them pain-free labor via "twilight sleep." Dora ends up in an abusive relationship and is eventually forced to see the medical doctor competing with her. He says that she suffers from hysteria and provides treatment with a vibrator, since orgasms were then thought to cure female hysteria. Dora orders her own vibrator from a medical catalog so she can give herself home treatments. After a crisis in her midwifery practice, she travels to Boston and finds sanctuary with a group of women who live together in the same house. One is a matron of the arts, two of the women are lovers, and in a wonderful subplot, all work for women's suffrage. I highly recommend this wonderful debut novel. William Morrow, \$24.95, 9780061135859.





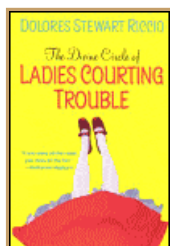
I first read **Vision of Light** by Judith Merkle Riley, another story about a midwife, about ten years ago and was pleased to learn recently that Random House is bringing this book, and the other two in the Margaret of Ashbury trilogy (*In Pursuit of the Green Lion*, due at the end of September, and *The Water Devil*, January 2007), back in print. Margaret is an illiterate woman in 14th century England who becomes a midwife. She learns about herbalism, and the book has a lot of herbalist lore and discusses what it meant to control women's bodies in that time period. The author provides period detail which feels historically accurate. It's interesting to me that when the book first came out in 1989, it was marketed as a romance, published in a mass-market edition with a cover typical of romances. The new editions are now more accurately labeled as historical fiction and are coming out in trade paper. Yes, there are romantic elements, but the book is much more than that. I can recommend it to all lovers of historical fiction. Random House/Three Rivers Press, \$13.95, 9780307237873.

The first thing you'll notice about **Full Moon Feast: Food and the Hunger for Connection** by Jessica Prentice is its gorgeous cover: woodcuts with different images from nature, earth-based and goddessy, create a beautiful border. Inside you'll first find a forward by Deborah Madison (*Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*). Then you're treated to an explanation of traditional food ways using the lunar calendar, with both recipes and narrative. *Full Moon Feast* turns popular nutrition knowledge on its head, with topics that include eating locally, superfoods such as bee pollen, fermentation, and the politics behind what happened to the food industry when milk pasteurization was mandated. Prentice wants people to eat a variety of foods rather than subscribe to a particular food program.. Great seasonal recipes, too. Chelsea Green, \$25, 9781933392004.



I enjoyed the writing in **The Thin Place** by Kathryn Davis (author of *Versailles*), the story of three teenaged girls from a New England town near the Canadian border. One of them, Mees, discovers she has the power to bring people and animals back to life after they die. She also has modern-day mystic experiences, which the author suffuses with the writings of Julian of Norwich and other mystic women. The book has a complicated plot, with religious and ecological undertones. It is concerned with the geographical sense of the town, where it was one hundred years ago and where it is today. Reading *The Thin Place* will make you think about life, death, and other spiritual matters. Little Brown, \$23.95, 9780316735049.

Brass Ankle Blues by Rachel M. Harper came to our store's attention when we noticed a blurb about it, written by Shay Youngblood (*Soul Kiss*, *Black Girl in Paris*, *The Big Mama Stories*), in the publisher's catalog. We love Shay, so we had to check out this book that she recommended. Nellie is a teenager with a black dad and a white mom. Her mom's family lives in the Midwest, and Nellie often spends summers there. When her parents are in the process of splitting up, Nellie takes a cross-country journey during which she considers the two worlds she lives in and what it means to be biracial in the U.S. This coming-of-age story was well told, examining complex issues during a complex time in a young woman's life. Simon and Schuster/Touchstone, \$23, 9780743276801.

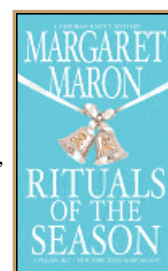


Dolores Stewart Riccio has created a mystery series about the Divine Circle of Ladies, five women in the same wiccan circle. Set in Plymouth, Massachusetts, there are four books in the series, each with a decidedly New England feel. The women are introduced in *Circle of Five* (Kensington, \$14, 9780758203007). The most recent addition to the series is **The Divine Circle of Ladies Courting Trouble**, set in October with all its Halloween glory. It's a perfect read for this fall. These books give insight into women's spirituality and also address issues such as domestic violence with a slight feminist subtext. All five of the circle members have otherworldly powers and yes, they do solve mysteries, but what I love about these books is the friendship among the women. Kensington, \$14, 9780758209870.



Suzanne Corson's Guilty Pleasures

As I mentioned in [MBW #9](#), I love Margaret Maron's mystery series featuring North Carolina judge Deborah Knott, and her huge family is one reason why. That family, including sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews, and even her former bootlegger daddy, Kezzie Knott, are big players in **Rituals of the Season**, the latest paperback. It's December, and Deborah is about to marry Dwight, chief deputy with the local sheriff's department, who has known Deborah since they were kids. Throwing a damper on the preparations for their wedding is the murder of a colleague of theirs, an assistant district attorney who had just adopted a baby girl. While the various Knotts help renovate Deborah's house to accommodate a soon-to-move-in Dwight and his visits-occasionally son, Dwight investigates the ADA's death - with Deborah's usual keen insights and intuition providing the final, disturbing answer. In the new hardcover, **Winter's Child**, the family Deborah married into becomes more of a focus when, one month after Deborah and Dwight's wedding, first his ex-wife and then his son, disappear. *Rituals*, Warner, \$6.99, 9780446617659; *Winter's Child*, Warner, \$24.99, 9780892968107.



The books in the Stephanie Plum series by Janet Evanovich are over the top outrageous and humorous. Stephanie is a bounty hunter in Trenton, New Jersey, where she works for her cousin, has an on again, off again relationship with Detective Joe Morelli, and a long-term flirtation with fellow bounty hunter and security expert, Ranger. Sexual energy runs rampant through the pages of these books, as do the entertaining supporting characters, among them spandex-wearing former streetwalker-turned-bounty-hunter-assistant Lula; pistol-packing, funeral parlor groupie Grandma; Sally Sweet, a cross-dressing straight man in a rock band; and Joe's Grandma Bella, who "gives the eye."

Stephanie herself loves cake and doughnuts, her hamster, Rex, the two alluring but very different men in her life, and in spite of their quirks, her family. She refuses to be contained or constrained - she won't settle down, or settle, for that matter, much to the discomfort of her mother and her sometime boyfriend, Joe. Though Ranger often comes to her rescue with vehicles and other assistance, Stephanie is very much her own woman, refusing to compromise for anyone. Well, except perhaps her mother, when pineapple-upside-down-cake is involved.

Eleven on Top finds Stephanie over it all, so she turns in her stun gun and quits her job. After disastrous turns at a button factory, a dry cleaner, and a fast food joint, she takes an office gig at Ranger's security empire. With the Plum family busily preparing for Stephanie's sister's wedding, her mother is thrilled that she doesn't have to worry about Stephanie any more, now that she's retired from the bounty hunting business. But Stephanie begins receiving threatening notes, her car blows up (a common occurrence throughout the series), so clearly her mother's worries are not over. In **Twelve Sharp**, the new hardcover, Stephanie is again torn between Joe and Ranger, but this time Ranger is the one in trouble: he's been accused of kidnapping his own daughter. *Eleven on Top*, St. Martin's Press, \$7.99, 9780312985349. *Twelve Sharp*, St. Martin's Press, \$26.95, 9780312349486.

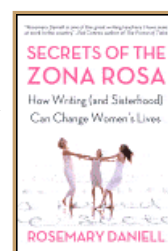


Briefly Noted

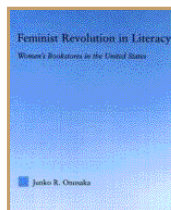
by Suzanne Corson

Rosemary Daniell (author of *Fatal Flowers: On Sin, Sex, and Suicide in the Deep South* and *Confessions of a {Female} Chauvinist*) has led women's writing workshops for more than twenty-five years. Her philosophy is that writing is more than just an expression of creativity, it is a tool for healing. In **Secrets of the Zona Rosa: How Writing (and Sisterhood) Can Change Women's Lives**, she presents many of the lessons, "exorcises," advice, and support from those workshops in book form. Henry Holt, \$15, 9780805077803.

About **Fatal Flowers**: this much-loved book, originally published in 1979, won the 1999 Palimpsest Prize, awarded to an out-of-print title



for which there is great demand to republish. Dorothy Allison said of this book, "Every girl-child should be handed a copy of *Fatal Flowers* at puberty. In telling her story, Daniell gives strength to the rest of us." Hill Street Press, sponsor of the award, republished the book in 1999. According to their website, they are now "sold out," but it may still be possible to find this edition in local bookstores. Hill Street Press, \$15.95, 9781892514264.

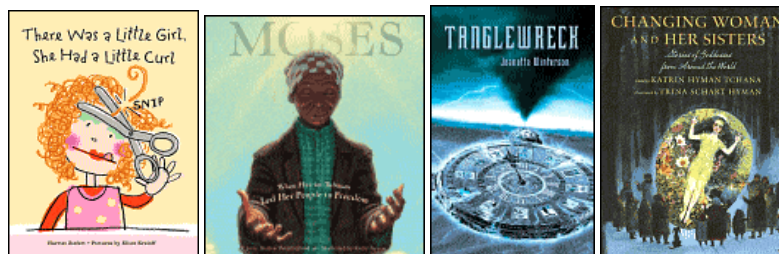


Books To Watch Out For publisher Carol Seajay figures prominently in ***Feminist Revolution in Literacy: Women's Bookstores in the United States*** by Junko R. Onosaka. This academic study of the impact of feminist bookstores focuses mostly on stores established in the seventies and eighties, closely linking them with the Women in Print movement, of which Carol was an integral part, and feminist publishing. It examines the role of these stores as de facto community centers while also acknowledging the challenges faced along the way, such as the sometimes less than smooth manner in which concerns of women of color were addressed. Onosaka also discusses the role of Carol's first publication, *Feminist Bookstore News*, as a way to disseminate information among the stores and help them network with one another. At a hefty \$75, *Feminist Revolution in Literacy* probably won't be a casual purchase for most of us, but it would make a valuable addition to your local library - suggest they order it. Routledge, \$75, 9780415975964.

Susan Faludi won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction with ***Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women***, first published in 1991. Three Rivers Press has just published a fifteenth anniversary edition of this important book with a provocative new preface that discusses what has happened since the book's initial publication. Her disturbing conclusion is that while there may not be the same kinds of backlash today, that's not necessarily good news, since there are things worse than backlash, such as the blatant misogyny demonstrated by the increasingly in power radical right. Sigh. If you happened to miss this book the first time around, there's no time like the present to pick it up. Three Rivers, \$14.95, 9780307345424.

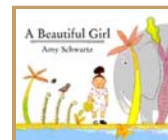


For the Kids



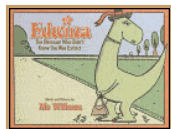
Recommendations from Linda Bubon

I just love the title ***A Beautiful Girl***, by Amy Schwartz, who first won my heart with *Bea and Mr. Jones*. On her way to market, Jenna chats with an elephant, a robin, a fly, and a goldfish who think she has a funny trunk, a silly beak, odd eyes, and goofy gills. Jenna's witty responses win her four new friends. This is a lovely, imaginative, self-esteem-building story with charming illustrations, just right for reading over and over. Roaring Brook, \$16.95 hardcover, 9781596431652.



Speaking of ***Bea and Mr. Jones***, I'm happy to say that this formerly out-of-print book has been released in a new edition. It is an absolutely charming story about Bea, a frustrated kindergartner, who changes places with her dad, a frustrated advertising writer. Dad loves kindergarten (and does quite well there), while Bea is a genius at advertising and is made "president of toy sales." Harcourt, \$13.95 hardcover, 9780152058111.

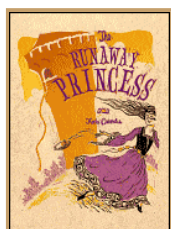
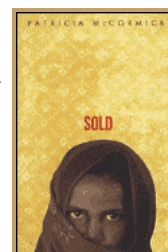
There Was a Little Girl, She Had a Little Curl, by Harriet Ziefert, with exuberant child-like drawings by Elliot Kreloff, is one of those perfectly subversive stories about a naughty girl that I so love. Isabel wakes up one morning, determined to be *very good*, and she really is for most of the day, but the temptation of Mommy's dressing table in the afternoon is just too much. And really, is it her fault that Mommy left scissors out there too? A little make-up, a little snip! snip! and Isabel soon looks *horrid*. Mommy takes her to the beauty shop, and the new short haircut is appreciated by Daddy. I love when accidentally naughty girls don't get punished. This is a very reassuring story for 3- to 6-year-olds trying to figure out all the rules of behavior. Blue Apple, \$15.95 hardcover, 9781593541613.



Mo Willems has done it again; the man is really on a roll. **Edwina, The Dinosaur Who Didn't Know She Was Extinct** is a hilarious story about a pleasant, helpful dinosaur beloved in one small burg, and the eggheaded little boy, Reginald Von Hoobie-Doobie, who is out to prove that dinosaurs are extinct. No one pays Reginald the least amount of attention (a very common problem if you're a kid), until Edwina herself stops to sit and listen. Having finally gotten someone's attention, Reginald feels *much* better, and neither boy nor dino care whether he's right. Hyperion, \$16.99 hardcover, 9780786837489.

The illustrator Kadir Nelson (*Ellington Was Not a Street* and the artist for Spike Lee's and Will Smith's books) has outdone himself with a gorgeous picture book titled **Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom**. The text by Carole Boston Weatherford is lyrical and tells of Tubman's spiritual journey. Weatherford writes that Tubman was a deeply religious woman who had visions and spoke with God, whom she believed called her to create the Underground Railroad. The text is interspersed with Tubman's prayers. The focus on her spirituality may make this book unsuitable for public school classrooms, but there is a strength and vitality to this book that is truly awe-inspiring. Hyperion, \$15.99 hardcover, 9780786851751.

For older children, ages 12 and up, **Sold** by Patricia McCormick is an important book about a desperately poor Nepalese girl whose family sells her into prostitution. Lakshmi's life becomes a nightmare, and she is sustained only by her mother's words, "simply to endure is to triumph." Written in spare and evocative vignettes, this tragic story, unimaginable to most American girls yet a reality all over the world, is ultimately a triumphant story which needs to be told. Hyperion, \$15.99 hardcover, 9780786851713.



On a lighter note, for girls and boys in the 8-12 group, **The Runaway Princess** by Kate Coombs is a delightful adventure about a princess with a mind of her own, a helpful maid, and a good sidekick in the gardener's son, who together help the princess escape the tower and the traditional fate of being the prize for competing princes. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, \$17 hardcover, 9780374355463.

Recommendations from Sara Luce Look

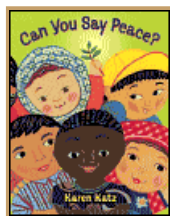
Tanglewreck is Jeanette Winterson's first book for kids. A fantasy novel with a quite complicated plot, it's marketed for middle readers, but it reads more as a young adult novel to me - it's also a bit creepy for middle schoolers. But it's good, have no fear! Set in present day England, an eleven-year-old girl named Silver lives with a "bony and bad tempered" woman who claims to be her aunt, Mrs. Rokabye, in a house with a mysterious clock known as the Timekeeper. Silver believes that her parents and sister are dead and has an intense friendship with a boy named Gabriel. Two sisters are the evil characters, using time as a commodity to sell to people. Four hundred pages long, this book explores what it means to control time and presents a powerful portrayal of a strong girl in the character of Silver. Bloomsbury, \$16.95 hardcover, 9781582349190.

AfterEllen.com recently profiled author Jeanette Winterson:
www.afterellen.com/Print/2006/8/winterson.html.

Mary Jane Auch is known for her humorous fairy tale spoofs, such as *Peeping Beauty* and *The Nutquacker*. For **Chickarella**, she teams up with her husband, Herm Auch, to illustrate this children's picture book with photographs of elaborately costumed chicken dolls. It's a Cinderellaesque tale with a few twists. Chickarella has a wicked stepmother who has sent Chickarella's father out on a wild goose chase. With the help of her fairy goosemother, Chickarella attends the Fowl ball, where she meets the prince. He is only interested in shoes and fashion. At the end of the book no one gets married; instead, Chickarella and the prince start a fashion business. Much fun! Holiday House, \$6.95, 9780823420155.



Vibrant, beautiful illustrations by Trina Schart Hyman accompany traditional stories retold by her daughter, Katrin Hyman Tchana, in **Changing Woman and Her Sisters: Stories of Goddesses From Around the World**. Many cultures and traditions are represented here, including Navajo, Egyptian, Buddhist, Celtic, Shinto, Inuit, and Sumerian. Holiday House, \$18.95 hardcover, 9780823419999.



The best-selling kids book at Charis Books right now is **Can You Say Peace?** by Karen Katz, known for her "lift-the-flap" board books such as *Toes, Ears, and Nose*. *Can You Say Peace?* is a hardcover book for three- to six-year-olds about the International Day of Peace, declared to be September 21 by the U.N. This book features brightly colored pictures of kids from around the world, and teaches how they say peace where they live. It includes the message that all children want to feel safe, be able to walk safely in their towns and cities, be able to play outside, and to live with peace. Beautifully done. Henry Holt and Company, \$15.95 hardcover, 9780805078930.



Voice: A New Mainstream Imprint

The *New York Times* recently reported on Hyperion's new imprint for women. Called "Voice," it will focus on women from their mid-thirties and older and will have a "resolutely anti-chick-lit bent" according to founders Ellen Archer, Hyperion's publisher, and Pamela G. Dorman, a nineteen-year veteran of Viking. They aim to publish both fiction and nonfiction that "better illustrate the landscape of a woman's life." In their first title, *The Feminine Mistake*, author Leslie Bennetts argues that women who "opt out" of working outside the home in order to raise families are sacrificing financial, intellectual, emotional, and physical health benefits. Nothing like stirring up some controversy right out of the gate! Subsequent titles include *The Empty Nest*, an anthology about life after children leave home.

The *NYT* article interviewed several publishing industry folks about whether or not "women thirty-five and older" was too broad a genre for a separate imprint. Disappointingly, though not unexpectedly, there was absolutely no mention about feminist publishers who have been celebrating women's words in print for more than thirty years.... And isn't it interesting that "women" is not part of the name of this imprint who intends to be visible to women? We hope for the best.

See the article here:

www.nytimes.com/2006/08/29/books/29voic.html?_r=3&ref=books&oref=slogin&oref=slogin



Ten Speed Rolls Along

Ten Speed Press, one of the last "fiercely independent" publishers in the U.S., is celebrating its thirty-fifth anniversary. The Ten Speed family includes its children's imprint, Tricycle Press, publishers of the infamous *King and King*, as well as Celestial Arts and Crossing Press. Celestial Arts publishes many women's spirituality and health titles, while Crossing Press includes in its backlist classic Audre Lorde books such as *Zami* and *Sister Outsider*.



Awards

The Quills are the newest literary awards, in which Reed Business Information (publishers of *Books in Print* and hosts of the yearly Book Expo America convention), NBC, and MSNBC teamed up to enable readers to select *their* favorite books each year. The aim is to “pair a populist sensibility with Hollywood-style glitz.” A nominating committee of more than 6,000 booksellers and librarians nominated books in nineteen categories (including graphic novels and romance, genres often excluded from literary awards). Criteria for a book’s inclusion included a starred review in *Publishers Weekly*, top spot on *PW* or *Borders’* bestseller lists, and inclusion as a Booksense pick of the year. The public votes on the finalists at quillsvote.com.

While it’s wonderful to see *Fun Home* and *Water for Elephants* receive much due recognition here, the mystery category is especially disappointing. To have, for instance, a new annotated collection of (old) Sherlock Holmes tales take the place of, say, Laurie R. King’s *The Art of Detection* is discouraging.

You can vote for your favorites - and help increase the visibility of women's words - by voting online at quillsvote.com, now through September 30.

We’ve listed the nominees of several categories below; the complete list can be viewed online at www.thequills.org/2006.html. We’ve linked to our reviews of the nominated books:

Graphic Novel

[Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic](#), Alison Bechdel, Houghton Mifflin
[Maximum Fantastic Four: A Visual Exegesis of Fantastic Four #1](#), Stan Lee, Marvel Enterprises
[Mom's Cancer](#), Brian Fies, Abrams
[Naruto](#), Masashi Kishimoto, Viz Media
[Hellsing](#), Kohta Hirano, Dark Horse Comics

General Fiction

[Black Swan Green: A Novel](#), David Mitchell, Random House
[A Dirty Job: A Novel](#), Christopher Moore, William Morrow and Company
[March](#), E. L. Doctorow, Random House
[Suite Française](#), Irene Nemirovsky, Knopf
[Water for Elephants](#), Sara Gruen, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill

Debut Author of the Year

[\\$64 Tomato](#), William Alexander, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill
[Julie and Julia: 365 Days, 524 Recipes, 1 Tiny Apartment Kitchen](#), Julie Powell, Little, Brown & Company
[The Last Templar](#), Raymond Khoury, Dutton
[The Madonnas of Leningrad: A Novel](#), Debra Dean, William Morrow and Company
[The Ride of Our Lives: Roadside Lessons of an American Family](#), Mike Leonard, Ballantine Books

Poetry

[Amazing Peace: A Christmas Poem](#), Maya Angelou, Random House
[Good Poems for Hard Times](#), selected by Garrison Keillor, Penguin
[New and Selected Poems, Volume Two](#), Mary Oliver, Beacon Press
[Still Another Day](#), Pablo Neruda, Copper Canyon Press
[The Trouble with Poetry and Other Poems](#), Billy Collins, Random House

Mystery/Suspense/Thriller

[The Lincoln Lawyer: A Novel](#), Michael Connelly, Little, Brown
[The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes: A Study in Scarlet; The Sign of the Four; The Hound of the Baskervilles; and The Valley of Fear](#), Arthur Conan Doyle, W.W. Norton
[Promise Me](#), Harlan Coben, Dutton
[Tomb of the Golden Bird](#), Elizabeth Peters, William Morrow and Company
[Twelve Sharp](#), Janet Evanovich, St. Martin's Press

Science Fiction/Fantasy/Horror

[A Breath of Snow and Ashes](#), Diana Gabaldon, Dell
[Cell](#), Stephen King, Scribner
[A Feast for Crows](#), George R. R. Martin, Bantam
[Labyrinth](#), Kate Mosse, Putnam
[The Stolen Child](#), Keith Donohue, Doubleday

Children's Illustrated Book

Fancy Nancy, Jane O'Connor, illustrated by Robin Preiss Glasser, HarperCollins
If You Give a Pig a Party, Laura Joffe Numeroff, illustrated by Felicia Bond, HarperCollins
John, Paul, George & Ben, Lane Smith, Hyperion
Walter the Farting Dog Goes on a Cruise, William Kotzwinkle, Glenn Murray, and Elizabeth Gundy, illustrated by Audrey Colman, Dutton Juvenile
Winter's Tale: An Original Pop-up Journey, Robert Sabuda, Little Simon

Children's Chapter Book/Middle Grade

Flush, Carl Hiaasen, Knopf Books for Young Readers
Inkspell, Cornelia Funke, Scholastic
The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane, Kate DiCamillo, Candlewick Press
The Penultimate Peril, Lemony Snicket, HarperCollins
Ptolemy's Gate, Jonathan Stroud, Miramax Books

Young Adult/Teen

The Book Thief, Markus Zusak, Knopf
Dairy Queen, Catherine Gilbert Murdock, Houghton Mifflin Company
Eldest, Christopher Paolini, Random House Children's Books
Elsewhere, Gabrielle Zevin, Farrar, Straus & Giroux
King Dork, Frank Portman, Delacorte Books for Young Readers

Biography/Memoir

Dispatches from the Edge: A Memoir of War, Disasters, and Survival, Anderson Cooper, HarperCollins
Marley and Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog, John Grogan, William Morrow and Company
Mockingbird: A Portrait of Harper Lee, Charles J. Shields, Henry Holt & Company
The Tender Bar: A Memoir, J. R. Moehringer, Hyperion
The Year of Magical Thinking, Joan Didion, Knopf

Business

Bait and Switch: The (Futile) Pursuit of the American Dream, Barbara Ehrenreich, Henry Holt & Company
The Girl's Guide to Being a Boss (Without Being a Bitch): Valuable Lessons, Smart Suggestions, and True Stories for Succeeding as the Chick-in-Charge, Caitlin Friedman and Kimberly Yorio, Broadway Books
Good to Great and the Social Sectors: Why Business Thinking Is Not the Answer, Jim Collins, Collins
The Number: A Completely Different Way to Think about the Rest of Your Life!: From Debt to Wealth on \$10 a Day, Lee Eisenberg, Free Press
The Wal-Mart Effect: How the World's Most Powerful Company Really Works - and How It's Transforming the American Economy, Charles Fishman, Penguin

Cooking

Heat: An Amateur's Adventures as Kitchen Slave, Line Cook, Pasta-Maker, and Apprentice to a Dante-Quoting Butcher in Tuscany, Bill Buford, Knopf
Julie and Julia: 365 Days, 524 Recipes, 1 Tiny Apartment Kitchen, Julie Powell, Little, Brown
My Life in France, Julia Child, Knopf
Rachael Ray 365: No Repeats: A Year of Deliciously Different Dinners, Rachael Ray, Clarkson N. Potter Publishers
The Silver Spoon, Phaidon Press Editors, Phaidon Press

All nominated books in each category are eligible for the Book of the Year Award. Winners will be announced at a televised ceremony on October 28.

The Quills initiative includes a literacy program and fundraising for libraries in New Orleans. Learn more at www.thequills.org/2006.html.



Sabbaticals for Activists of Color

We all know that working for social, racial, economic, and environmental justice is hard, demanding, and exhausting work. And when is there time to read and write? Are you, or do you know, an activist of color who could benefit from a sabbatical? The Alston/Bannerman Fellowship Program issues awards of approximately \$15,000 to ten activists for sabbaticals of three months or longer. No "product" is required of sabbatical recipients, though some do use the time to write. The deadline for the 2007 awards is December 1, 2006. For applications and more information, visit their website: www.alstonbannerman.org.



We hope you've enjoyed this issue of **More Books for Women**.

If you like it, please tell all your friends and colleagues about More Books for Women (and our sister publications, The Lesbian Edition and The Gay Men's Edition) and encourage them to subscribe as well. And of course subscriptions make great gifts for any occasion - from birthday to retirement.

Yours in spreading the words,

Carol Seajay
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415.642.9993



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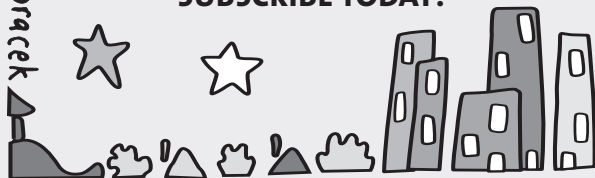
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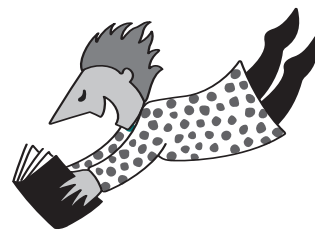
★ The Gay Men's Edition ★ The Lesbian Edition

Books to Watch Out For™ magazines help you get a handle on the best new GLBTQ and women's books.

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