

bly make this omission does not occur to her — for after all, she declares, “you will notice that I equate ‘in my view’ with ‘feminism.’”

The other possible modifier of the noun ‘feminism’ — ‘anti-racist’ — is not even mentioned. Her comments about women of colour regard exclusively their representation in pornography; one gets the impression that MacKinnon believes that race is important only as one more trick in the pornographer’s bag, and is irrelevant to women themselves and hence to feminism. That someone could publish a feminist book in 1987 as though black feminism did not exist, as though the whole idea of “feminism unmodified” had not been demolished by critiques from women of colour, is simply astound-

ing. Equally appalling is the fact that in her discussion of legal precedents and legal tactics MacKinnon constantly makes parallels between civil rights cases and feminist concerns that rely on the assumption that racism is and has been adequately addressed in the American legal system, and that women are far behind black people in their access to legal redress. The constant refrain, ‘they wouldn’t allow that to be done to blacks’ betrays a wilful disregard for the realities of racism (whatever the legal situation may be), and certainly helps to perpetuate violence against blacks, Chicanos and other people of colour.

Liberalism, individualism and idealism are certainly problematic elements in

American feminist thought and practice. They deserve criticism, and not only from a socialist perspective. However, radical feminists who are grassroots activists will not get any help from MacKinnon’s apocalyptic and demoralizing speeches about women’s “victimization” under a monolithic patriarchy undivided by race, class, and nationality. The grassroots radical feminists, who do believe that resistance is possible even if it is never ‘pure’, need to develop their own theory, one that is not hostile to the class and race struggles of women and one that does not equate ‘feminism’ in general with the views of one legal theorist. Progressive radical feminism is still awaiting its theorist.

ONE WAY TICKET: MIGRATION AND FEMALE LABOUR

Edited by Annie Phizacklea. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983.

Daiva K. Stasiulis

The appearance of *One Way Ticket* in 1983 won a warm reception amongst the growing numbers of feminist scholars who were hankering after studies that would address the rich complexity of migrant and immigrant women’s lives. The vast majority of extant literature on migrants simply assumed that migration was a male phenomenon. When women were mentioned in migration research, it was their domestic roles as wives and mothers or their function as bearers of “traditional” culture, rather than their participation in waged and non-waged labour, that received attention.

One Way Ticket, the focus of which is the migration of women from the European periphery and Third World to western Europe, directly confronts the labour market position of female migrant workers and considers the numerous economic, politico-legal and ideological factors which subordinate these women inside and outside waged work. Since the 1960s, the numbers of migrant women in the waged labour force of industrial western Europe have swelled, constituting by 1980 over one quarter of the foreign labour force. In countries such as West Germany, state efforts to expel “guest workers” during the period of recession, many from the Mediterranean littoral, have been counteracted by the entry of wives, husbands and children under regulations which grudgingly permitted family reunification. A large percentage of

this recent migration has been female. In Britain (the context for four of seven chapters in this volume), large numbers of women from New Commonwealth countries have arrived as independent workers, in addition to women from these and non-Commonwealth countries who have come to join husbands.

Notwithstanding the diversity in national origin, culture, and entry and subsequent legal status, the employment situations of the various groups of migrant and immigrant women examined in this book are oppressively similar. West Indian, South Asian and Greek-Cypriot women in Britain are concentrated in dirty, hazardous and poorly-paid manual jobs in the garment trades and other backwaters of capitalist production or in lower-level, non-manual occupations and professions with acute labour shortages, such as nursing. Turkish women in the Netherlands, many forced to work illegally, find low-skilled jobs in laundries, clothing, textile and food production. Burdened by high living costs, child-care responsibilities and the obsessive protectiveness of husbands, many migrant women become trapped in highly exploited and stressful homeworking.

The position of migrant women workers in western European economies is both similar to and divergent from that of male migrants and non-migrant women. As migrants, they experience the racism inherent in immigration and nationality laws, employer and union practices and popular mythology. As women, they are subjected to similar policies, practices and ideologies which serve to channel women generally into low-paid, low-skill female ghettos. Phizacklea maintains that this intermeshing of racism and sexism in advanced capitalist economies

relegates migrant women to a subordinate position, a “new layer of segmentation” within the sexually divided labour market.

In the absence of aggregate statistical data on the labour market positions of migrant and non-migrant women across western European economies, it is difficult to assess the accuracy of Phizacklea’s portrayal of migrant women as a subordinate fraction of the working class. Each chapter, however, provides a bleak picture of labour market prospects for migrant women, especially under conditions of economic crisis and industrial restructuring.

Thus, Stone’s examination of the employment situation in Handsworth, Birmingham of West Indian, South Asian and white female workers reveals that the three groups of working class women share the same confinement in low paid, low status and gender-specific work. The very small samples of women interviewed by Stone, however, make it hazardous to generalize these results or to demonstrate the role racism and cultural precepts (*purdah*, traditional Moslem dress) are alleged to play in posing additional constraints on the employment options of black and Asian women.

Basing her analysis on broader, longitudinal British survey data, Dex argues that racial disadvantages extend to second-generation West Indian women, who in comparison with white counterparts, are “last in the hiring queue and first in the firing queue.” The strength of Dex’s analysis resides also in its focus on compensatory strategies of young black women who, in their determination to avoid the manual jobs held by their immigrant mothers, were more apt to seek further education and training than young

white women.

Anthias' examination of Greek-Cypriot women employed in small Cypriot-owned clothing firms in London provides a richly textured analysis of the pivotal and highly exploited role played by migrant women in the success of male ethnic "middleman" entrepreneurs. The economic niches filled by Cypriot businesses are either those in decline or abandoned by earlier minorities and whose success depends overwhelmingly on the procurement of extremely cheap and docile labour. The latter objective is achieved through the extension and manipulation of ethnic and "fictive" kin loyalties and patriarchal relations of the Cypriot family (especially norms of female sexual innocence and obedience) in the domain of shop floor relations between male bosses and female workers.

But Anthias also reveals how the consent of Cypriot factory workers to employer practices such as illegal denial of benefits, failure to meet safety regulations, lay-offs just prior to holiday times, etc., is ingrained in the attitudes these women hold towards work. Wage-work is viewed as a vehicle for making contributions to family homes, large cars and consumption-oriented social display; factory workers' self-definitions as wives and mothers negate self-definitions as "legitimate" workers and thus inhibit collective action to ameliorate working conditions.

The failure for women of the migration process and entry into waged work to lead to emancipation from ethnic community strictures and male authority is a conclusion shared by Anthias and Brouwer and Priester — the latter in their study of the migration of Turkish women to the Netherlands. In the Turkish village of Arpa, the fairly strict sexual division of labour results in a separate women's sphere indirectly controlled by men, but one in which

women enjoy a certain autonomy, freedom of movement and self-esteem.

The nuclear family structure of Arpa villagers in Amsterdam means that wives are subjected to more direct, unmediated male control. Moreover, their relegation as wage workers to unskilled manual work in small inner-city clothing sweatshops, laundries and food industries provides *less* independence and means for self-development for Arpa women than offered by their diverse involvement in domestic production back home.

Through their detailed ethnographic field work conducted in both Turkey and Amsterdam, Brouwer and Priester effectively dispel the prevalent assumption (replicated in much feminist and left analyses) that participation in waged work necessarily leads to emancipation for migrant women. The larger methodological point raised by their conclusions is the necessity in comprehending the *effects* of migration on women to probe the concrete and historical circumstances which govern and shape their lives *prior* to migration. Their analysis also draws attention to the significance of familial authority patterns and control mechanisms, which themselves manifest both continuities and breaks in the migration process, in mediating the effects of wage labour on migrant women.

Hancock's study of transnational production in the electronics industry provides a global context for viewing the creation of a low-wage, female and largely migrant labour force. The global division of labour in this industry consists of a predominantly male professional and technical workforce in the U.S., supported by semi-skilled, predominantly female assembly workers in the U.S. and to a greater extent in offshore sites in South-East Asia. The existence of a pool of readily exploitable young women from rural areas in Pacific Rim countries has

been a key factor in the migration of transnational capital to Third World free trade zones. The large-scale targeting and super-exploitation of women by corporations and local states is justified by racially and culturally specific ideologies of femininity emphasizing, for instance, the fabled "manual dexterity of the oriental female." Hancock conveys the litany of health and safety hazards associated with assembly work in the electronics industry, with permanent, debilitating injury to sight among young women being the most common tragic outcome of their work of bonding tiny, hair-thin wires to silicon chips through microscopes for eight-hour, daily shifts. Unfortunately, her chapter is based on by-now familiar, general portrayals of transnational capital's naked, crude and extreme exploitation of anonymous legions of young, female Asian workers and is devoid of fresh insights.

The essays comprising *One Way Ticket* do not represent a common theoretical position beyond a shared conceptualisation of migrant women workers as "bearers of a triple burden — as women, as migrants and as workers." The absence of a consistent line of analysis is understandable given first, the relative newness of scholarship about and by migrant women, and second, the tremendous difficulties in synthesizing an understanding of so many axes of subordination — colonialism, class, gender, race, ethnicity, migrant status and kinship relations — within which migrant women's lives are implicated. In documenting the processes by which female migrant workers are relegated to and maintained in low-skilled, poorly paid sectors in advanced capitalist economies, *One Way Ticket* provides a pioneering effort to comprehend, with a view to unravel, the multiple sources of oppression experienced by migrant women.

FOR ALMA MATER: THEORY AND PRACTICE IN FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP

Edited by Paula A. Treichler, Cheris Kramarae and Beth Stafford. Urbana Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1985.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM

Edited by Gayle Greene and Coppélia Kahn. London: Methuen & Co., 1985.

Andrea O'Reilly

For Alma Mater, Theory and Practice in Feminist Scholarship and Making A Difference, Feminist Literary Criticism are a "must read" for anyone committed to feminism in academe and/or through activism. The first anthology is multi- and interdisciplinary in its focus. While some of the articles empirically report and/or theoretically speculate upon the development of feminist scholarship in the academic disciplines of English, History, Linguistics, Medicine, Sociology and so forth, others examine the need for feminist activism in the "real" lived situations and experiences of women: education in

"developing" and "developed" countries; women in the military; pelvic and breast examinations; female obesity; rape; and the function of propaganda in the feminist movement. Interfaced with this multiplicity in the anthology's feminist concerns is a plurality in its contributors. Unlike most anthologies, this collection is not exclusively educated white middle-class in its authorship. Rather, its participants are different in their class, colour, race and profession and, as a result, the anthology makes visible the divergences in women's socioeconomic circum-