world social forum: "another world is possible." Thus the book's title, *The Future of Women's Rights*, encourages women's movements to reframe their strategies towards the creation of a more just world.

Included in the collection are feminist academics and activists. Articles and interviews bridge the gap between feminist theory and practice. The book is not organized thematically, but the editors have ordered the articles in such a way as to highlight the dialogues that emerge. Joanna Kerr's article, "From 'opposing' to 'proposing': finding proactive global strategies for feminist futures," frames the rest of the book as it calls for women's movements to lead global change, rather than adopt a reactionary position. Bisi Adelye-Fayemi's article, "African feminism and trends in the global women's movement," discusses how African feminism can play a role in the "glocalization" of women's movements. The term "glocal" refers to a linkage between local concerns and global struggles. Adelye-Fayemi's discussion of the concerns of African feminists gives context to themes that recur throughout the collection. Adelye-Fayemi's concerns such as poverty and globalized trade are echoed throughout the other essays in the book. The writers then are in dialogue; they model glocalization and coalition building amongst women's movements, as they discuss the particularities of their local concerns in the context of these global trends.

Many of the writers in the collection focus on the divisions within feminism(s) resulting from the politics of difference. Sarah Bracke's piece, "Different worlds possible: feminist yearnings for shared futures," discusses the politics of collectivities and alliances in globalized spaces. Thus she posits, as do many of the theorists included, "alterglobalization" – a world in which human rights and equity are globalized, instead of a corporate-driven trade. Bracke's piece leads in nicely to Ana Criquillion's article, "Diversity as our strength, transforming power, public policy and popular culture." The editors have ordered the book in a way that highlights the connections between diverse women. Criquillion uses her activist work in Nicaragua to discuss the politics of global trade, cultural imperialism, and the need to see difference amongst feminists and feminisms as a source of strength. Thus, many of the essays in the collection echo one another, while offering their local or personal experience. This collection contributes to feminist theory by demonstrating concrete strategies for the re-energizing of women's movements towards increased relevance and power.

One potential pitfall of the collection is that the editors do not attempt to explain or resolve the contradictions between the articles. For example, Alda Facio's evocative piece calls for "feminist political spirituality," whereas other contributors take a strong stance against religious practice as combined with politics. Another example is Mahnaz Afkhami's claim that "the concept of women's rights is rooted in history rather than culture," which contradicts Criquillion who suggests that changing popular culture can lead to increased women's rights. The contradictions within the book highlight areas in which women's movements may need continued dialogue. Thus the pitfall of contradictory stances can be seen as one of the book's strengths: the editors have provided the space for this dialogue amongst diverse women. Another problem with the collection as a whole is the absence of any discussion of ecological and environmental feminisms. Surely concerns such as militarization and globalized trade are related to issues like the continued degradation of the environment. Despite this omission, the collection is otherwise comprehensive and details strategies for combating a range of issues within the context of an inspiring and joyful resistance for and by diverse women.

The collection ends with Rhonda Leeson's summary of an international survey of women taken to collect data concerning "the future of women's rights." Leeson's discussion of the data provides a useful conclusion to this book in which diverse women discuss their "visions and strategies." The conclusion therefore provides some hope in believing that "another world is possible" and provides the direction towards glocalized and alterglobalized coalition building that can help turn the visions and strategies in this collection into action.

Denise Handlarski is a Ph.D. candidate in the English department at York University. Her research is on South African women's literature. She is particularly interested in gender and postcolonial theory. Denise has published on South African women writers, as well as on women's testimony at South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

JACKFISH, THE VANISHING VILLAGE

Sarah Felix Burns
Toronto: Inanna Publications and Education Inc., 2007

REVIEWED BY REBECCA ROWAN

Rarely does a character (particularly one whose life and circumstances are so disparate from my own) latch onto my heartstrings with such tenacity, but that's exactly what Clemance Marie Nadeau, narrator of Sarah Felix Burns debut novel, has done.

Jackfish, The Vanishing Village, is a stunning work of fiction that reads like a memoir, as Clemance tells us her story in a series of flashbacks - from her impoverished youth in Jackfish, a northern Ontario village which has become a ghost town, to the small city of Coalville, Colorado, where she now finds herself - unemployed, separated from her husband, and pregnant at the age of forty-two.

In between lies a painful, some-

times harrowing journey, for Clemance is consumed with guilt about an incident which occurred in her childhood, a guilt that leaves her feeling so unworthy of love that not only has she sabotaged her only good relationship (with her husband Bernie, ever patient and kind), become deeply and dangerously addicted to drugs and alcohol, but she has also allowed herself to become the victim of horrible, vicious abuse at the hands of another man.

It's that abuse which is so difficult to read about, revealed midway through the story when the reader has developed a relationship with Clemance, prickly and defensive as she can sometimes be. I occasionally needed to set the book aside for a moment, to separate myself from the violence- but only for a moment, because I was entirely captivated by Clemance's story and was hoping against hope she could find her way out of this terrible relationship into a life of freedom and possibility.

For Clemance is just as much a prisoner as the convicts in the penitentiary near her home in Colorado, or her childhood boyfriend who was killed while trying to escape a life sentence for murder, or any of woman who has been victimized in an abusive relationship. "When you grow up with the rawness of guilt devouring you from the inside you have few defences against the outside world. To fill the void left from the rampaging badness, you take on the retribution, the punishment, and feel it is rightly deserved."

If there is redemption to be found for Clemance, it will come from family—not the family of her birth, but the one of her creation, with Bernie and their daughter Miette, whose birth seems to provide Clemance with some measure of the peace she needs to allow herself to be happy. "I look at the baby cuddled up beside me … she smiles up at me and blows bubbles. Jesus Christ, she's alive. I am alive. And I gave life to her."

It's easy to become so engrossed in this story that you almost fail to notice what a good writer Burns really is. Her descriptive prose is just as vivid when applied to the real world as to her character's emotional turmoil.

> Each summer night in Jackfish, the long black train would pass. It was the freight carrying cargo up north or out west. You could hear it coming up the tracks an hour away. Its rumble slowly grew closer and deeper, becoming so ominous it sounded like the train would explode right through the house. Then it would race by, sometimes for hours it seemed, because the train was so long. Finally, you could hear it fade off into the distance until the night sky was filled again with only the sound of crickets and the waves breaking on the shore.

Clemence's life story is indeed painful, yet Burns handles these deeply troubling epidsodes without ever falling prey to sensationalism or sentimentality. And she provides moments of warmth and peace which soothe the readers emotions while illuminating Clemence's own needs for comfort and stability.

Ultimately it is Clemance's strength and determination the reader latches on to, as we continue devouring her story, cheering for her as she scramles from the pit of worthlessness and degradation. Through it all, she clings to the memories of her hometown, believing that "at some spiritual level the physical land where we are from is always part of who we are, even if we are separated from it."

The village of Jackfish may have disappeared off the map, but it left a lasting impression on this character's heart and psyche.

And this novel will do the same for everyone who reads it.

Reprinted with permission from Rebecca Rowans' blog, Bookstack <http://ravenousreader.wordpress.com>.

THE BOOK OF EMMA

Marie-Célie Agnant. Translated by Zilpha Ellis
Toronto: Insomniac Press, 2006

REVIEWED BY RAMANJIT DHILLON

"To live in the skin of a black woman", writes Marie-Célie Agnant, "is to live permanently in a night without stars…a dense night that weighs on us like a burden. That's why we want to get rid of it, to distance ourselves from it without looking back. We want to run away from our black woman's skin like one shuns the night and its demons." This passage from *The Book of Emma* encapsulates the story that the author, tries to convey. Through her poetically written words, she sows together the harsh realities that black women have faced throughout history, and continue to face in the present day world.

The Book of Emma tells the story of a black woman, Emma, who is put under psychiatric care after murdering her daughter, Lola. Once at the hospital, Emma chooses only to speak in her mother tongue. Thus, Flore, a translator, is called in to interpret Emma's dialogue, and to help the doctor in determining whether or not she is capable of standing trial. It is through her interaction with Flore that Emma retells the story of her female ancestors; starting from the time of the slave ships, until she eventually reaches her own story. Through Emma's reciting of her history, the reader learns that much like her ancestors, who struggled to make it in a world which allowed very little mobility to women of colour, Emma also continues to face similar obstacles. For instance, at several points in the book, Emma refers to the frustration of having her dissertation on slavery rejected. The only justification she is given for this rejection was that she is lacking textual work to support her thesis. However, as Emma retells her family history, it