

understand that they have the power to make their own life choices and that they must learn to exercise that power."

Mann has done an excellent job of shedding some light on why girls begin to measure their self-esteem by popularity and their ability to please others. It is well-researched and documented. And it can be read over the course of a few hours. Mann includes many personal anecdotes and transforms what are otherwise dry academic studies and statistics into a journey into the lives of several adolescent young girls who talk about everything from "going to third [a blow job] with a guy" to be popular, to their dreams and aspirations.

OUR VISION AND VALUES: WOMEN SHAPING THE 21ST CENTURY

Frances C. Hutner, Ed. Westport: Praeger, 1994.

by Jan Clarke

Our Vision and Values is a selection of articles on a range of feminist topics by members of the Princeton Research Forum, a multidisciplinary organization of independent researchers. By drawing on an analysis of the present and recent past, this publication aims to provide a vision of the 21st century that includes women's contributions and accounts for women's values. While the idea of envisioning a more optimistic 21st century for women is welcome, the predictions in this book may be far more meaningful to white middle class women in the U.S. than to most women in Canada and elsewhere.

Articles in this volume are quite uneven and topics switch in an odd order from one chapter to the next—issues of work, management and poli-

tics are followed by spirituality and therapy, then switch to literary criticism, followed by risks and finally to sexuality. The main connecting thread for the articles is the argument that women live in a world defined by men, but this is certainly not an insight which is original enough to link such diverse topics. Most of the articles are general overviews of an issue with limited feminist analysis of the present, and often individualistic solutions suggested for shaping women's lives in the 21st century.

The two articles on women's spirituality stand out because they draw on vivid and insightful accounts of women's experiences to link personal lives with political action. Rosemary O'Brien traces the ways in which women have challenged the patriarchal hierarchy of Christian and Jewish traditions in the U.S. from the 1960s to the 1990s. Women speak of their commitment to organized religion, the ways religion helps them make their lives meaningful, reasons for an interest in goddess theology, and strategies to individually and collectively transform organized religion from within. Francesca Benson draws on women's personal reflections to demonstrate the links between politics and spirituality for women initiating alternatives to organized religion. By creating their own rituals within a network of spiritual communities, women are developing effective feminist alternatives to traditional practices.

Gail Walker's article on women's sexuality encourages women to empower themselves by articulating sexuality from inside their own experiences. While Walker does challenge the objectification of women and encourage an embodied notion of sexuality, unfortunately discussion of gender identity and sexual orientation are sidestepped. Violet Franks and Hanna Fox also challenge the way women are routinely viewed as commodities and suggest a non-sexist understanding of feminist therapy. Details of women's stories demonstrate the many ways women in psychotherapy have attempted to over-

come oppression to gain personal strength.

Since the introduction of *Our Vision and Values* cites the Montreal Massacre as the kind of murder we must take action to avoid in future, I anticipated subsequent discussion of violence against women and reference to Canadian issues. Instead, all the articles are based on US politics with seldom a reference to other countries and cultures. Further mention of the Montreal Massacre and detailed analysis of violence against women are absent.

Our Vision and Values is useful as a general introduction to a variety of feminist topics in the US during the Second Wave of the Women's Movement. The analysis of current and future women's issues is formative, even though the limited analysis of class, ethnicity and heterosexism are serious oversights. While the vision for shaping the future for women in North America is incomplete, *Our Vision and Values* does offer strategies to confront inequalities most women still routinely experience.

ENTRE L'OUTIL ET LA MATIÈRE

Lélia Young. Toronto: Éditions du GREF, 1993

par Christine Klein-Lataud

On pourrait prendre comme définition de son art poétique quelques vers du recueil récent de Lélia Young :

« Les mots prennent forme
les sons deviennent visuels
et le dialogue s'ouvre
sur les solitudes »
(« Sous l'immobilité », p. 122)

Au chaos du monde, à l'insatisfaction de la vie, à la fragmentation sociale de la modernité, elle

répond par des mots porteurs de musique et d'images.

Non qu'elle crée pour nous un univers parallèle moins problématique que le nôtre. Pour elle, le poétique est non pas un ailleurs mais une autre appréhension de la vie. Et si l'on trouve dans *Entre l'outil et la matière* une évocation du paradis, c'est celle d'un paradis perdu, celui de l'enfance, sous des cieus plus cléments :

O mer des jours heureux
forte insouciance de l'enfance
dans mes malheurs tu étais là
(...)
Loin de toi aujourd'hui
je refroidis
(« Amilcar », p. 98)

Ce qu'elle nous offre, c'est, comme elle le dit ailleurs, « un regard lucide sur la fragilité des choses ». Ses textes dénoncent le « cancer atomique » (titre d'un de ses poèmes), les horreurs de l'Histoire, l'usure de la culture dominante :

O pâle enseignement
les traits tombent dans la nuit
Il n'y a pas de jouissance
dans l'empire branlant
d'une mémoire muette
(« Le coursier magique », p. 42)

On ne peut opposer aux angoisses et aux frustrations que la plénitude de l'amour et de la poésie, chantés tous deux en des « mots qui font naître », qui nous rendent le « torrent des merveilles » perdu depuis l'enfance.

Les images sont souvent fortes et surprenantes, comme celle qui ouvre ce poème :

Du côté de l'essentiel
un oiseau aveugle
sous les vents
habite l'aile d'un faucon
Du côté de l'essentiel
il se dresse un barrage
et
à l'extase de l'être
où sommeille l'éternité
s'ouvre

le monde de l'abrégé
(« Du côté de l'essentiel », p. 13)

Poème puissant, qui ne se laisse pas déchiffrer aisément. Il garde sa part de mystère, de par l'étrangeté de l'image. C'est d'ailleurs l'inattendu des images et de certaines alliances de mots qui retient le plus dans les poèmes de Lélia Young. En la lisant, on pense au précepte de Verlaine :

Il faut aussi que tu n'aies point
Choisir tes mots sans quelque
méprise :
Rien de plus cher que la chanson
grise
Où l'indécis au Précis se joint
(Paul Verlaine « Art poétique »,
Jadis et Naguère)

Sauf que ce recueil n'est pas gris mais plutôt moiré, évocateur de moments et d'humeurs variés, allant de l'horreur à la sérénité.

Toutefois, si les thèmes sont parfois tragiques, le dernier mot est à la vie, et à la poésie qui l'incarne :

Le poème est le rappel
du vivant
(« Mailles », p. 129)

Un beau recueil, qui nous ramène « du côté de l'essentiel » et devrait toucher les lectrices des *Cahiers de la femme*.

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU: ESSAYS AND POEMS AND SIMPLICITY, A COMEDY

Robert Halsband and Isobel Grundy,
Eds. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

by Miriam Jones

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762) is an intriguing character. She

was an aristocrat and a well-travelled woman of letters, a self-educated scholar concerned with women's education, a conservative political journalist and a medical pioneer who helped spearhead the smallpox inoculation campaign in Britain. This new edition of the 1977 collection of her writings, revised and with an excellent new preface by Isobel Grundy, is particularly topical in light of Grundy's forthcoming biography and the widespread growth of interest in the writing of 18th-century women in general. Many texts have been unavailable until recently and non-fiction, with few exceptions, has been even less accessible, so this edition of Montagu's poetry, essays and a play is most welcome.

Enamoured as we currently are with finding the subversive or radical voices from the past, to immerse ourselves in the writing of someone as comfortable with her privilege as Montagu may initially seem less than congenial. These pieces are politically conservative and emphatically situated within clearly defined 18th-century generic conventions. Given this double-axis of containment, Montagu's critical stance as a woman—a stance that helped her, as Grundy indicates, to transform the functions of the various literary forms she practised—stands out in stark relief. Montagu's play, *Simplicity*, is emblematic of the difficulties in reading her now without grappling with our own received ideas about "originality" in art. *Simplicity* is a loose translation of Marivaux's *Le Jeu de l'amour et du hasard*, about a quarter of which, according to the editors, is original. Many of her poems also use borrowed or conventional themes and must be read in the context of the classical education of her class; the interest for the critic lies in the uses to which these inherited literary discourses are put.

Of her poems, Grundy remarks that they "set out to explore multiple viewpoints rather than define a normative one; but complaint against men is a *leitmotif*." Her writings could be termed a series of explorations that