

pègre et les politiciens. Cependant, elle ne démontre pas adéquatement les conditions de travail des prostituées. Elle ne fait que pointer du doigt la corruption policière et celle des autorités municipales.

Les chauffeurs de taxi constituent une très grande part des pourvoyeurs de maisons de prostitution. Les descentes policières ne font donc que contrôler la prostitution, elles donnent l'immunité aux clients et ainsi n'enrayent pas la prostitution. Le rôle des policiers démontre d'ailleurs l'inefficacité et l'incohérence du système. Les proxénètes sont plus souvent innocents que les prostituées et ils ne sont, pour ainsi dire, jamais condamnés à la peine maximale.

Les prostituées amenées en justice sont souvent retenues en prison jusqu'à leur procès (contrairement à la loi). On leur conseille également de plaider non-coupable, ce qui les oblige à revenir plusieurs fois en cour. Quant aux clients, c'est l'inverse. Si les peines de prison diminuent, les amendes pécuniaires augmentent. Ainsi, le cercle vicieux de la prostitution continue à exister et à mettre de l'argent dans les poches de l'appareil judiciaire.

Il a fallu attendre 1964 pour que soit fondé l'Oasis, un centre d'accueil pour prostituées. Avant cela la focalisation était sur la prévention et les filles étaient laissées à leurs déboires. La prostituée est toujours considérée comme une criminelle et les services de réintégration sont rares. L'auteure démontre bien tout au long du livre que la prostitution n'existe que par les hommes et qu'ils maintiennent cette "profession" en dépit, et sans se soucier, des prostituées elles-mêmes. L'analyse de Danielle Lacasse dénonce effectivement la prostitution comme étant une activité lucrative établie par et pour les hommes.

NINETEENTH-CENTURY STORIES BY WOMEN: AN ANTHOLOGY

Glennis Stephenson, ed. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1993.

by *Miriam Jones*

There are one or two classics such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper," but for the most part Glennis Stephenson's collection of short stories published by women in the nineteenth century will provide new material for any but an expert in popular publishing. The women represented, Stephenson is clear, are story writers, not novelists or poets who wrote the occasional short piece. This anthology demonstrates a welcome focus on the genre itself and an effort at broad representation, and it offers a cross-section of nineteenth-century periodical publishing. And it is an entrancing read.

The introduction provides some necessary historical context. Story-writers had a different relationship to the publishing industry than did other writers; the genre was seen as a woman's form, in contrast with the more respected novel or poem, and so these writers were encouraged rather than criticised. Since annuals and periodicals were lucrative, story-writers were highly professionalised. Women obtained a degree of influence in periodical publishing that was unprecedented: many writers were also editors, for example. The price for this success, Stephenson maintains, for at least the first half of century, was the strict enforcement of generic restrictions in terms of what were appropriate subjects and treatments. Recent critical practice has been more nuanced than previous dismissals, and feminist scholars now speak of the development of a feminine voice in this early period, when women wrote from positions of critical awareness from inside a circumscribed sphere. Stephenson's text is positioned within this project of recouping and rereading women's writing.

The selected stories are uniformly engaging, but it would have made the anthology more well-rounded had additional texts from the early part of the period been included; fifteen of the twenty-one stories are from the last two decades of the century, and only one, Mary Shelley's "The Parvenue," was published before 1850. The collection is more properly "Victorian" than nineteenth-century, although since American writers are represented as well as British and Canadian, the term would be inaccurate. No doubt the collection as it stands is more accessible to the contemporary reader, between the advent of literary modernism and the overt expression of feminist concerns possible by the *fin-de-siècle*. Certainly Shelley's story is one of the least readable—as one reads today—of the group, with its high-flown style and fable-like quality. By the end of century, Stephenson writes, "the female narrative voice became more assertive, and willing to address women's problems directly." There is "little trace" of the "convention-bound fiction of the early annuals." The collection could have done with more texts, however, to better illustrate this contrast. And the earlier, more genre-laden stories, full of ghosts and sentiment, have their own appeal and are no less engaged with the role of women.

Stephenson makes this point herself. She quotes Mary Kelly's term for the writers of these early stories in America: the "literary domestics" who write "a prose mostly of women." They write of women's concerns—making a living, marriage, the sexual double standard, and feminine solidarity—from within a conventional framework. Elizabeth Gaskell's "Lizzie Leigh," although sentimental, calls for a reevaluation of the category of "fallen women," and Louisa May Alcott's "A Whisper in the Dark," an example of gothic melodrama at its height, reflects on women's vulnerability. The issue of race is perhaps the most opaque of all. There are orientalist tendencies in many stories: ethnic women and women of

colour are exoticised, sometimes demonized. African-American writer Alice Dunbar-Nelson's engagement with race is sublimated into questions of the parentage and sexual danger of her orphan character in "Sister Josepha." But these stories are potentially subversive if read in context. A collection such as this allows them to achieve a cumulative effect whereby their critiques and lacunae become increasingly apparent.

The book is nicely produced. There are biographical notes and a portrait with each story. Stephenson rightly assumes that the collection will whet the appetite, and has provided much useful bibliographical material.

Stephenson ambitiously reads across national traditions and compares them, and the state of scholarship, in Canada, Britain and the United States. In her judgment, scholars are further along in the project of rediscovery and recuperation of women's short fiction in America; more critical work needs to be done in Britain; and Canadianists face very basic difficulties in even recovering much of the material. Some of this work is already being taken up, and compelling collections such as this one can only encourage us to read further.

WOMEN IN MOVEMENT: FEMINISM AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Sheila Rowbotham. New York:
Routledge, 1992.

by Jan Clarke

Women in Movement traces women's contributions to social movements in many countries from the late 1700s to the early 1990s. This book highlights ways in which women find different points of entry and access to resources for individual and collective action. There is a focus on femi-

nist and socialist political action to confront systemic oppressions, but Rowbotham never loses sight of the personal emancipation which is often so central to actions in which women choose to participate. Also, the importance of understanding feminism as dynamic is reinforced by emphasizing that the experiences of women in earlier social movements still inform contemporary feminist struggles. While this is primarily an historical introduction to women's participation in social movements, it is also an important reminder of the diverse historical underpinnings which shape current debates in feminism.

In *Women in Movement*, historical accounts follow a general chronological order based on themes such as equality, women's difference, the personal and the political individualism, collectivity, the scope of rights, and the definition of needs. Under each topic, Rowbotham links ideas and actions in many political and cultural contexts by focussing on how women's experiences have been perceived and analyzed, how social change occurs, and the different world views which shape action.

While many of Rowbotham's accounts of earlier women's movements are located in Europe and North America, she clearly includes historical accounts from Third World countries in order to further elaborate on racism, ethnicity, colonialism and imperialism. It is the many glimpses of women's lives in particular historical and cultural contexts which demonstrates both the complexity of women's movements and the persistence of women's oppressions. From her viewpoint: "although international interactions resulted in theoretical crossovers, every new beginning has assumed differing shapes. It is as if thousands and thousands of women were busy making a gigantic garment, borrowing and creating their own patterns."

In *Women in Movement* it is striking that women's political actions throughout the world are not seen as isolated. Instead, Rowbotham has

carefully traced the dissemination of ideas, and the sharing of strategies which shapes social movements, particularly ones from a socialist perspective. Since Rowbotham covers such a broad base, women in many cultures do tend to be presented as glimpses interspersed among the European and North American accounts. This is balanced, however, by detailed chapters which specifically focus on women's long history of collective action under different political circumstances in Russia, India, and China.

While Rowbotham continually points to theoretical debates to explain historical accounts, she also manages to leave women's stories to stand more or less alone. In the final sections, she returns in more detail to the 'knots' of feminist theoretical debates as a means of connecting the threads she has unravelled. By partially untangling these theoretical knots she offers some direction for ongoing political action for social change. She also makes it clear that these same knots "do not just need cutting and untangling, but provide nodular clues for making new connections and reorientating thinking."

Women in Movement is a well written, thorough introduction to feminism and social action which demonstrates the long and diverse history of women's political struggles throughout the world. Rowbotham not only sparks an interest in delving in more detail into many of the social movements she introduces, she also sheds light on contemporary feminist theoretical debates.