

Thankfully, it is punctuated with good poetry which transforms some of the more mundane realities of menopause into wonderful imagery and removes some of the tedium of hearing about yet another 'hot flash' (or flush), mood swing, excessive bleeding, estrogen replacement therapy, etc., etc.

Menopause, to a woman in 'full flush', pardon the pun, can be an all encompassing absorption, almost an obsession for those who move through it at a snail's pace, experiencing all the symptoms of hormonal surges. For some, their batteries seem half-spent, for others their batteries are on constant charge and they will come out literally crackling with electricity and eager to move on to their new and unencumbered lives.

Most of the women writing in *Women of the 14th Moon* fall into the latter category; the 'whiners' are mercifully few, but most lay heavy blame on the medical professional for a lack of sympathy and understanding of their problems.

Ann Mankowitz, in an interesting essay called "The Neglected Crisis," points out that in the Roman Empire the life expectancy of a woman was twenty-five; in the fifteenth century it was thirty years of age and by Victorian times it was still only forty-five. In light of these statistics it isn't hard to understand why society, history, mythology and religion have been so neglectful of the menopausal woman—why, until now, there has been so little written about this period in a woman's life.

Elizabeth Claman, the editor of *Each In Her Own Way*, has been a little more rigorous in her selection of material than the editors of *Women of the 14th Moon*. The volume begins with two quite vibrant, almost 'bloody' poems, literally written at the full-flood of menopause, followed by two interesting post-menopausal pieces that talk more of memories.

These head up the section, "Blood Journey, The Body's Transformations." The poems are then followed by a "Menopause Diary" by Celia Tesdall, and an evocative poem by Rachel Loden called "The Stripper":

i begin
to pare my body,
rolling the soft breast
down to the belly, over the hips,
peeling down my legs
until my body lies
in a circle around my ankles...

In "Clearing The Path," the second section which deals with changing relationships the writers see their daughters ripen as they themselves age, they see husbands change, as in the wonderful poem by Elizavietta Ritchie, "Clearing The Path":

My husband gave up shovelling
snow at forty-five because, he
claimed, that's when heart attacks
begin.
Since it snowed regardless, I—
mere forty—took the shovel, and
dug. Now fifty, still it falls on me
to clean the walk.

He's gone to warmer climes and
younger loves, who will, I guess, keep
shovelling for him.

The last section of the book, "Matriarchs Grow Old, Wise Women," is perhaps one of the most satisfying sections. Faye Moskowitz has written a moving essay, "The Matriarchs Grow Old, My Models," which relates the passing of an ageing aunt, and records her own feelings about the process of growing old.

A story, "Between Floors," by Hannah Wilson, relates the story of a woman in an Old Folks' Home who finds out by accident how to stop the elevator between floors. Much to the outrage of her daughter, she escapes there when she feels like some privacy either to read or write letters. It's a

touching story which says much about the dignity of old age.

WORKING WITH WOMEN AND AIDS: MEDICAL, SOCIAL AND COUNCELLING ISSUES

Judy Bury, Val Morrison and Sheena McLachlan, eds., London: Routledge, 1992.

by *Darien Taylor*

Working with Women and AIDS is an interesting but uneven collection of essays produced out of four conferences held by the Scottish Women and HIV/AIDS Network between 1988 and 1991.

In the early 1980s, the Scottish public health system "solved" the challenge of HIV and drug use by restricting access to needles. As a result of this disastrous decision, Scotland has a disproportionate number of women infected with HIV compared to other developed countries, many of whom continue to use drugs.

By concentrating on the AIDS epidemic as it affects Scottish women, *Working with Women and AIDS* produces a serious and informative discussion of the issues of women who use injection drugs. But missing from this collection are the issues of visible minority women, of women from various ethnocultural communities, and of lesbians and bisexual women.

Working with Women and AIDS is accurate and current. For women who are looking to educate themselves about these issues, this book is a fair source. But for women who are already working in the field, there is not much that is new. The overall tone is polite and cautious, with certain welcome exceptions, like Edith Springer's strong, angry essay on women with HIV/AIDS in the United States, or

Correction

CWS/ct regrets that in the Spring 1994 issue, the name of Toronto artist Grace Channer was misspelled in the review of Dionne Brand's film, Long Time Comin'

Netta Maciver's detailed and practical "Developing a Service for Prostitutes in Glasgow."

Thus, *Working with Women and AIDS* does not further our understanding of many controversial issues relating to women and AIDS. There is no discussion of how or whether a woman discloses her HIV status to her sexual partner/s. On the hot topic of safer sex, Judy Bury wonders why women can't "avoid intercourse" in favour of "the varieties and pleasures of non-penetrative forms of sexual activity." Such questions fail to grapple with the complicated, intertwined issues of power, pleasure, reproduction and sexuality. Most straight women are not willing to and cannot "avoid intercourse" for the rest of their sexual lives and we need to move our discussions of safer sex ahead on the basis of realistic assumptions and attainable goals.

Reproductive issues form another controversial topic for HIV positive women and our caregivers. There is much detailed, though perhaps overconfident information about contraceptive choices in Bury's "Pregnancy, Heterosexual Transmission and Contraception." But Bury's discussion lacks thoughtful connection to women's lives. For example, her recommendation of injectable progestogens for "current or ex-drug users," without mentioning the interest of the state in non-reversible, long-term contraception methods for women receiving welfare benefits, or having certain medical conditions, or convicted of certain crimes, is irresponsible.

Mary Hepburn discusses HIV testing in "Pregnancy and HIV." Unfortunately, she does not connect accessible anonymous HIV testing to its health benefits for HIV positive women, instead seeing a woman's decisions to test in relation to decisions about pregnancy. Nonetheless, her defence of anonymous testing is strong.

The medical issues discussed in *Working with Women and AIDS* relate almost exclusively to pregnancy, contraception and HIV transmission. This is unfortunate, because so much re-

mains to be written about treatment and healthcare provision for women living with HIV/AIDS, and because this focus tends to perpetuate the "medicalization" of women's bodies in relation to reproduction and sexuality. However, the information about drug use, detoxification, and pregnancy is useful and supportive of the choices of women using injection drugs.

It's great to see that HIV positive women themselves were involved in this collection. In her essay, Kate Thomson of Positively Women in England discusses how "anger at people's attitudes, anger at the lack of appropriate or accessible services, anger at needs not being recognized or met" compelled HIV positive women in London to unite to provide services for themselves. Her piece is at the end of the book. It should have come first. Its plea for services relevant to women at risk or living with HIV might have helped to more clearly focus some of the essays in *Working with Women and AIDS*.

JAMAIS SANS MA FILLE

Betty Mahmoody, [trad. Marie-Thérèse Cuny], France: Fixot, 1988 [c. 1987 vers. américaine].

JAMAIS SANS MA FILLE 2: POUR L'AMOUR D'UN ENFANT

Betty Mahmoody, [trad. Marie-Thérèse Cuny], France: Fixot, 1992 [c. 1992 vers. américaine].

par Nathalie Stephens

Jamais sans ma fille est une histoire que bon nombre d'entre nous connaissons déjà, que ce soit à travers les médias ou lors de l'apparition du film du même titre dont la version originale américaine s'intitule *Not Without My Daughter*. Il s'agit de l'histoire réelle d'une femme américaine, blanche—Betty—qui épouse, aux États-Unis, Moody, un

Iranien. Leur enfant, Mahtob, a quatre ans lorsque la famille décide d'aller passer des «vacances» en Iran. Méfiante, Betty accepte quand même d'accompagner son mari dans son pays natal: après tout, «deux semaines de vacances, n'importe où, ne représentent pas de danger, quand on est sûr de revenir chez soi, dans son petit confort habituel». Seulement, sa plus grande peur se matérialise lorsque, arrivé en Iran, Moody annonce à sa femme qu'il n'a aucunement l'intention de retourner aux États-Unis et qu'il compte garder à ses côtés sa fille et sa femme.

Betty découvre alors un côté de son mari qu'elle ne connaissait pas. Moody devient violent envers Betty et Mahtob, il séquestre sa femme dans la maison de sa belle-famille et lui enlève éventuellement sa fille pendant un certain temps. Ayant de la difficulté à s'adapter à la culture iranienne, Betty et Mahtob son également victimes de violence physique et mentale. Déterminée à sortir de cet enfer, avec sa fille, Betty entreprend toutes sortes de démarches clandestines et après un certain nombre d'échecs, elle arrive enfin à s'échapper des tenailles de son mari. Dans la conclusion du récit, elle se réfugie à l'ambassade américaine de Ankara, en Turquie.

Écrite avec l'aide de William Hoffer, cette histoire expose, à travers le récit d'une femme, une réalité accablante dont grand nombre de femmes et leurs enfants sont victimes, l'enlèvement international. Ceci dit, *Jamais sans ma fille* est un texte qui fait preuve de racisme envers le peuple iranien et la religion musulmane et me semble être en grande partie, de la propagande anti-iranienne. Publié en 1987, la version américaine n'a fait qu'appuyer la politique anti-iranienne des États-Unis.

Le texte est parsemé de généralisations: «Les Iraniens font tout pour se compliquer la vie». L'auteure s'appuie sans cesse sur des comparaisons entre la vie aux États-Unis (idyllique) et celle en Iran (insupportable), nourrissant la dichotomie Ouest/Est et surtout, la dichotomie sexe/race. En dépeignant