

situations that all females will understand. Burton's narrative is casual, direct, and at times hilarious, as she explores her attitudes toward marriage, children, housework, "sisterhood," her own femininity, teenage sexual hang-ups, abortion, day-care, the Church, monogamy, the nuclear family, and brute self-preservation (in a side-splitting account of her experience as the only female member of a karate class). Above all, this is not a book about "running away"—at least not in the literal sense. Gabrielle Burton has a strong love for her husband and five daughters, a good marriage and home, and no desire to leave them, not even for a career (which happens to be her writing, done comfortably at home). Her quest for freedom is an inner one—a freedom from the shackles of roles, stereotypes, and built-in self-doubts that hobble all women, from girlhood on and keep them from reaching their full potential as human beings. The author slowly learns internal independence, ultimately using it not to run away but to improve her existing situation.

Letty Pogrebin and Gabrielle Burton seem to have much in common. Both have stable marriages, warm family relationships, and extremely supportive husbands without whom (as they readily admit) their respective accomplishments would have been much more difficult, if not impossible. And yet there is a recognition in each book of the urgent need for a strong women's movement, an organizing force to help the millions of girls and women who are groping for self-realization but without the personal or financial advantages of these authors. Pogrebin in particular cautions against the "Queen Bee Syndrome" of many successful women who tend to think, "I made it in a man's world (while running the house and family with my left hand); if I could do it without a whole movement to help me, so can all these other women." This attitude does even more damage to the status of women than plain male chauvinism; it amounts to the "Uncle Tomism" that has for so long plagued the black movement. Indeed, both authors point out that women are often their own worst enemies, for many will embrace the chauvinist line with a vengeance when it contributes to their own "specialness." The main difference between the two works is that Pogrebin finds the key to independence in a rewarding career, while Burton suggests that it may come from new attitudes about social and family structures.

Is there a place for either of these books in the high school curriculum? Definitely. Although the issues raised in them are complex and controversial, the approach in each is simple, direct, reasonable, and will strike a chord of response in every high school girl contemplating marriage, groping for a career, or unsure of her future place in the big wide world. The authors share a passionate belief in the potential of women (and

men—who, by the way, also suffer from our traditional limiting roles), tempered by a wry, self-critical tone that provides a healthy framework for analyzing these new and volatile ideas.

Reviewed by the CAS Staff.

### WOMAN'S EVOLUTION

Evelyn Reed

Pathfinder Press, Paper Cover

Grade Level: 11-12, 491 pp., \$4.95

This monumental study on the history of womankind is both an important anthropological statement on the transition from matriarchal to patriarchal societies, and a basic text on how formalized social patterns tend to be accepted as "givens" when the evidence suggests otherwise.

Evelyn Reed deftly takes on some of the most quoted experts in cultural anthropology and sociology and shatters their premises about women. If Reed's own scholarship were not so convincing, one might question her role as a "monument toppler," but her evidence is unquestionably valid and seems to be more sensibly interpreted than those of her adversaries. The author's own drive to place women in the center of the prehistoric saga can be more readily accepted when one realizes that the whole body of traditional studies on the evolution of societies has been so unthinkingly male-dominated.

*Woman's Evolution* provides ammunition for all persons who need intellectual tools to refute those who have placed women in a subservient position. The bibliography is current and includes sources that have never been included in traditional anthropology textbooks. The index, too, is designed for immediate reference, and aids the student in finding alternative arguments at a moment's notice.

The study is divided into three parts: "The Matriarchy," "The Fratriarchy," and "The Patriarchy." Each section may be treated as an entity, or used in sequential fashion. The book is very readable, but the vocabulary throughout is college level and quite complex; the average high school student will not easily cope with the materials. However, a class of well-motivated, interested, and bright high school juniors or seniors, under the direction of an informed teacher, could grasp the basic concepts involved.

"The Matriarchy" stresses the existence of such a system as the original form of social organization, with woman as the key to successful social groupings. Intriguing concepts about individual and sexual identity within the matriarchal framework are developed, and

the author takes time to note how certain nineteenth century anthropologists either ignored or deliberately misinterpreted materials that would place major importance on women.

"The Fratriarchy" notes the expanded relationships of kinship lines deriving from women, and the roles that males played within the matriarchal system. The fact that "brotherhood" was based on female lineage will be rather disconcerting for those who share a male-oriented line of thought and belief. Reed considers many of the complex factors related to social interchange and the secondary roles played by males in the power structure of those tribal interrelationships. Reciprocation of gifts and the meaning of these as "property" highlight the evolution of property-consciousness. The author sees women's power declining because of the growth of private ownership, and the evolution of patriarchy along with it.

"The Patriarchy" carries the reader to the beginnings of recorded history, and illuminates various male-oriented institutions and customs in the cold light of evolving personal ownership of land and tools. Women gradually lost their roles of protectors of lives and communal property and became mere chattels (the derivation of this word is quite interesting; it is related to the Old French root for "cattle").

A section on "The Father-Family in Greek Tragedy" is especially provocative; Medea, Oedipus, and Orestes are examined as characters who are caught in the forces of the great transition from the matriarchal to the patriarchal-based world, which is known as civilization. Enough is suggested here to elicit exciting discussions in any literature course.

There is a real need for this book; its use would be most advantageous in elective courses related to the nature and rise of civilizations. All teachers concerned with women and their history should read this volume; it could cause drastic changes in curriculum. The volume is not only recommended, it cannot be ignored.

Reviewed by John Farrell, Ed.D.—Chairman, Social Studies Department, Briarcliff High School, Briarcliff Manor, N.Y.

### WOMEN IN FOCUS

Jeanne Betancourt

Pflaum Publishing Co., 1974, Paper Cover  
Professional Reference, 186 pp., \$7.50

This is a thorough and comprehensive guide for purchasing or renting films on the subject of women. The author has seen every film reviewed, and gives honest comments on what each teacher will want to

know before ordering. In addition to the age-grade level for which it is best suited, she also notes the degree of sensitivity in each film, and how certain groups may react to such materials.

Betancourt has arranged the films in various indexes by theme, title, and filmmaker to aid in making selections. Most valuable is the list of film distributors and their addresses for convenient ordering; anyone who has had to struggle to obtain this basic information will recognize the advantage of this service alone. The latest rates are also included.

The individual reviews are very satisfactory; the reader feels that he is given enough information to make a careful selection. Excellent still-photos from many of the films add to the quality of the review, and the cross-references to other films and readings are very worthwhile, especially for students who wish to do a thorough study on filmmaking. In addition, there are short comments made by those who have used each film.

The films are chosen for what they have to say as well as how well they say it. This volume should be on the shelf of every teacher or department who uses film for instructional purposes. And who doesn't?

Reviewed by John Farrell, Ed.D.—Chairman, Social Studies Department, Briarcliff High School, Briarcliff Manor, N.Y.

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### WOMEN'S JOB RIGHTS

The U.S. government pamphlet, *A Working Women's Guide to Her Job Rights*, provides a summary of Federal legislation concerning the legal protection of a woman's employment opportunities. The booklet includes a digest of laws affecting pre-employment, post-employment, and on-the-job rights. Also listed are the locations of various State and Federal agencies that provide personal assistance in the attempt to obtain job equality.

92G  
1974

40 pp.  
\$0.60

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