

as an excellent treatment of the structure and dynamics of power relationships between men and women. It should prove a valuable resource for women's studies teachers seeking to integrate their students' first hand experiences of power discrepancies into a more theoretical framework. It should also suggest new avenues of research for social scientists and areas for discussion for both women and men interested in the factors mediating the acquisition and maintenance of interpersonal power.

Joan E. Norris
University of Guelph

Between Women: Lowering the Barriers.
Paula J. Caplan. *Toronto: Personal Library, 1981. Pp. 207.*

This is an extremely enjoyable and thought-provoking examination of the intradynamic development and interpersonal relationships of women. Caplan's primary objective is to explore some of the psychological and social factors that have created barriers between women. It certainly does not require much reading between the lines to understand the significance of these factors to women's interpersonal relationships with men and the difficulties created for women in society at large. This is one of the first works that has dealt with the positive and negative aspects of female-female relationships. Hopefully, Caplan's work will stimulate the debate, research, and interest by women that she intends.

The background for her analysis is provided in Part 1. Freudian theories are briefly reviewed in terms of the mother-daughter relationship. The significance of these theories for the view that women are inferior is discussed concurrently with the reasons why women-women relationships have been neglected. All

of this is in the introductory chapter. The second chapter of Part 1 is devoted to four big myths about women: 1. Males are better than females; 2. Females are naturally constrained and orderly; 3. Females have unmeetable needs for love and assurance; 4. Females are naturally, endlessly nurturant. These are the myths we must carry on our shoulders. Undoubtedly Caplan could have added other myths as well; however, these are important to her further analysis based on the role of nurturance in women's lives.

Caplan argues that the difficulties developed between women is constructed around the life-span development of the mother-daughter relationship. The cornerstone of her thesis is based on the psychological impact for women of being nurtured, losing the mother's nurturance, and then being expected to fulfill the primary role as nurturer for her mother and later for males. The development of the conflict over nurturance is begun in early infancy. The female infant's mother is part of a cyclic pattern. The presence of her daughter brings back memories of the earlier neglect that she herself received. The mother bears a feeling of anger and loss. Her feelings influence her relationship with her daughter and the daughter comes to feel a lack of nurturance, loss and anger. The cycle thus comes full circle.

The research literature that Caplan uses for support of her argument is minimal. Indeed, the literature on sex differences in neonatal eye contact (Hittleman & Dickes, 1979) shows that female neonates engage in more eye contact with the mother than do males. Eye contact is a very pleasurable and fascinating source of contact for mother and child. Although limited, there is a literature on infant sex differences that could be used to argue for or against her thesis. For example, female newborns' oral sensitivity is greater than males. Korner (1978) states that girls are both more frequent and

more persistent thumbsuckers than boys. Perhaps mothers intuitively sense a girl's affinity for oral comforting. This may provide a partial explanation for the discomfort Caplan states that mothers feel over feeding daughters.

It appears that the author is an exponent of critical period theorization and the irreversibility of effects of early behavior. Even though this sounds very negative, the author does see light in the dungeon. However, we are more than damsels in distress and her suggestions for improvement are based on changing stereotypical ways of reacting, primarily through increased communication amongst women.

This conflict over nurturance continues throughout childhood, adolescence and adulthood. The subsequent difficulties between women wrought by the mother-daughter relationship are fears of homosexuality, concern of women about social disapproval by other women who are the guardians for society and general alienation of women from their own needs. Caplan sees the adult woman moving into working relationships and friendships with other women, and as she goes on to have daughters of her own, she carries with her the often still unmet needs, fears and hopes that informed her developing relationship with her mother.

The third section of the book deals with women's personal relationships and women in society. In this section Caplan discusses the bind women are in. Women find themselves divided against themselves in every kind of work.

The book is delightful to read as the author moves from personal observations, to attribution, Freudian and social-cognitive theories, and clinical observations. Although her style is engaging and her ideas stimulating, the support and argumentation for her position is often not fully developed and sometimes con-

fusing. Since her argumentation is based on a life-span analysis, deletion of discussion of menopause and old age seem to be major gaps. Yet female-female relationships are believed to be critical for the aging population. Caplan's brief comments on aging are extremely superficial. Also, different styles of mother-daughter interaction are only acknowledged in the section on adulthood. Caplan states in her preface that her observations do not apply to all women. Nevertheless it is easy to lose sight of this comment in the body of the book where there is little discussion of individual differences or multiplicity of patterns.

At an intuitive and clinical level Caplan's propositions ring true. For instance, the "Queen Bee" has suffered greatly in the literature, but is treated rather sympathetically by Caplan who realizes that the "Queen Bee" is also caught and dissatisfied. This volume is a treasure-trove of untested hypotheses waiting for those engaged in research on women. I have already encouraged many of my friends (male and female) to read the book.

M. Kaye Kerr
University of Winnipeg

REFERENCES

- Hittelman, J.H. & Dickes, R. Sex differences in neonatal eye contact time. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 1979, 25, 171-184.
- Korner, A. The effect of the infant's sex on the caregiver. In H. Bee (Ed.), *Social Issues in Developmental Psychology*. Harper and Row, 1978.

My Mother the Judge. Elsie Gregory MacGill. Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1981. Pp. 248.

Originally published in 1955, *My Mother the Judge*, a biography of Helen Gregory MacGill (1864-1947), has been reissued in paperback with an introduction by Naomi Black. Although so closely related to her subject, Elsie Gregory MacGill has succeeded in balancing