

ensorship polemics. She also deals with the image, the nuance of the facial expression etc. Similarly her work could also have benefited from appropriate accompanying illustrations. Diamond also allows her own ambivalences to come through which is a refreshing change from some of the more didactic essays which follow, and she acknowledges the intense power of pornographic imagery. But she tempers this with the assertion "that there is a wide gulf between fantasy, no matter how grotesque and the reality." (p.48) Her comments about women's fantasies are reminiscent of the reflections on female sexuality in Carol Vance's new book *Pleasure and Danger*: "There is a wide gap between the fantasies of submission that we construct for ourselves and those that porn fabricates for us." Diamond's work really tries to dig deep into the phenomenology of pornography and sexuality for women while refusing to accept the victim view of relations implied by state censorship.

"The women's movement is currently devoting vast economic and human resources to fighting existing pornography and other media imagery. It is my feeling that we would gain more by seeking resources to allow women to flood the market with feminist productions..." (p.53)

And like others, in the volume Diamond is vehement about the power and necessity of sex positive imagery.

Interestingly enough, the notion of sex positive imagery is mentioned by the editor and several contributors but nobody does much with it. And I can't help asking myself whether the energies that were put into this book could not have been better spent cultivating this particular domain. If it is true that censorship is really a non-issue, then feminists, WAC in particular could do better to preach by example. In fact, there is no need to address censorship at all. Rather we should be addressing by analysis or even better by example the relationship between

gender, sex, power and violence. Perhaps a book titled *Beyond Censorship* would better get to the crux of the matter.

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Jean Webster, Storyteller, by Alan and Mary Simpson with Ralph Connor. *Little Compton, Rhode Island: Tymor Associates, 1984.*

There are so many reasons to rediscover Jean Webster. The most successful of her childrens' books, *Daddy Long-Legs*, is still in print today, 74 years after it was written, giving continued pleasure to generations of children and adults in its book, play and three film versions. Webster's subject is the "emancipated" woman—going to college, participating in social reforms, and discovering her own definition of relationships. The grand-niece of Mark Twain, Webster possesses in her books many of the same characteristics as her revered relative, but with a feminine and feminist slant that deserves to be rediscovered and reexamined. Most important, she was a practical, independent, liberated, happy woman—and this positive attitude toward life provides the reader of her biography with a rare philosophy for a rewarding existence.

Why there has been so little written about her has long been a mystery to me. As a child, I polished off *Daddy Long-Legs* and *Dear Enemy*, then, discovering that none of her other books were in print, went about looking for information on the author. I assumed, as did all the girls I knew, that Jean Webster was the heroine, Jerusha Abbott, who had escaped from the oppressive environment of her orphanage with the help of an anonymous benefactor as attractive and mysterious as "Daddy Long-Legs," and when we found no biography to contradict us, were content with the one she wrote. The recent Bantam edition of *Daddy Long-Legs* promotes this mistaken assumption, stating explicitly that Jean Webster was an orphan.

But an association of the writer with the work is only partially possible. Jean Webster was the daughter of Charles Webster, who went into the publishing business with his wife's uncle, Mark Twain, and ruined his health trying to deal with the temperamental "King." He died when Jean was 15, leaving his wife with sufficient income to maintain a house on Long Island as well as one in Fredonia, and to send Jean to Vassar to polish her writing skills.

Jean Webster used her experiences at Vassar College to depict the life of the wide-eyed orphan in an educational institution of boundless opportunity, where basketball teams and swimming lessons were as new and exciting as courses in anatomy and German. Her descriptions clear up many misconceptions about women at the beginning of this century, their abilities, attitudes, and anticipations. The desire of the orphan heroine to be loved, like that of Huckleberry Finn, does not interfere with her determination to achieve intellectual and financial independence. Jerusha's decision to become a socialist, to promote the kind of society where equal opportunities exist for all human beings, turns her individual awareness into a larger one, one that Webster herself was trying to promote in her novels and her participation in socialist and suffragette marches. These were not idle or literary thoughts. Webster earned her degree in Economics as well as English at a time when Economics at Vassar meant the examination of social institutions, and she wrote her senior thesis on poverty in Italy by spending a semester there and examining the situation first hand. In the 1900 elections she and her friend Adelaide Crapsey marched for Eugene Debs, and were the only Vassar girls to "vote" socialist.

Much of *Daddy Long-Legs* is also concerned with the development of relationships between men and women, in a world in which the woman is unfranchised and financially dependent upon the man. Jerusha is freed from the deadening fate of assistant in an orphanage by

an anonymous millionaire, who directs her education, deceives her as to his identity, and finally marries her. And yet, despite this extremely limiting context, the book suggests a particularly mature approach to love—the continuous conviction that the independent individual is capable of loving, reiterated in the work philosophy of the heroine. Only when Jerusha Abbott has sold her novel, and has made herself financially and emotionally independent from "Daddy Long-Legs," can she consider a relationship with him. This approach is reflected in the letters of Webster to her fiancé, the wealthy Glenn Ford McKinney.

Webster married McKinney late, when she was almost forty, at the peak of her career. Not only was *Daddy Long-Legs* a literary success, but the play she had written from the novel was a smash hit on Broadway. Her other books, such as *When Patty Went to College*, *Just Patty*, and *Dear Enemy*, were also extremely well known and her fame was insured. Nine months later she died in childbirth.

It is no longer necessary to associate Webster with her heroine, Jerusha, no longer necessary to assume that she only wrote from experience, no longer necessary to dismiss her books as heart-warming children's stories.

For now the biographical materials are available, although at present only in a limited memorial edition. Alan and Mary Simpson together with Ralph Connor have selected letters, articles, journal excerpts, and photographs from the Jean Webster McKinney collection of papers at Vassar College, and used these materials to tell and illustrate the story of her life. The voices of the authors are deliberately muted, and the attempt is made to allow Webster to speak in her own delightful way whenever possible. At random I reproduce here an excerpt from his sketches of a visit to a convent in Palestrina:

The *poveretti* all have new shawls of blue, the virgin's color, sent out from Rome by the Mother Superior. I gave each a chocolate Easter egg, and they are "molto, molto contento!" This is a *festa* all day long and they have nothing to do but play, says the *Madre*, though I notice they are attending masses and services pretty assiduously. They have been learning something to recite the last two or three days. Yesterday *Suor Prisca* had them out for exercise, she with her breviary, they each with their little books. Sabina climbed a knarled olive tree - reciting verses all the way up - the refrain was in Italian, "The Lord is risen, Halleluia, halleluia". "Come down out of that tree," said Sister Prisca. "The Lord is risen, Halleluia," said Sabina, affecting not to hear. "Descend yourself - descend," said Sister Prisca, raising her voice. "Halleluia, Halleluia," chants Sabina, still not hearing.

The passage concludes with a description of the races run by the sisters, their veils flying. Here, as elsewhere, is evident Webster's insistence on portraying women as natural creatures, in passive rebellion against their severe roles, providing living portraits of the turn of the century female that belie the stereotypes.

While her satire may be less biting than that of her great-uncle, her sketches seem no less purposeful than his *Innocents Abroad*, and her descriptions of the situations that a woman of that time would have to deal with are always more interesting than his. Explaining how to prevent unwanted strangers from intruding on the train compartment occupied by five women travelling through France, she offers suggestions such as wrapping up a camera in a blanket and walking back and forth with it, solitiously patting it on the back. Since no man, she points out, would want to share an apartment with a crying baby, the women are never interrupted. When Webster

explains her life and travels, she is always entertaining and enlightening.

But it isn't always possible to let Webster speak herself. Despite the fact that she seemed to have been an extremely prolific writer who enjoyed communicating, many of Jean Webster's letters were destroyed by friends or have just disappeared. Letters and anecdotes from others help to fill in. Jean's mother writes:

Jean was to engage a maid before I went to Far Rockaway [presumably in March 1905]. When I reached the house she said, "I went to the Italian Commissioner of Immigration. I told him exactly what I wanted; one from the north of Italy who spoke good Italian, who could sing Santa Lucia and would wear coral ear-rings." I gasped, "Did you ask about her work?" "Why," she said, "I never thought of that."⁸⁴

Letters from others sometimes tell their own tales. Her first book was rejected by McClure's publishers with this letter: "Dear Miss Webster: If you had read our magazine as carefully as we have read this manuscript, you would know that it is not fitted for us...." After the book had been published by Century, another letter came from McClure's: "Dear Miss Webster: Have you not something to offer us in the line of 'When Patty Went to College?' I have been searching for years for just such a manuscript...."⁶¹

With stories as entertaining as this, it is not surprising that the authors maintain a transparent style, focussing the attention on Webster herself, and ignoring analysis. Unfortunately, however, the biographers, in attempting to make this a book for the general reader, leave out all scholarly apparatus, and since there is no other bibliography or source listing, further work on Webster will be hindered by this compromise.

The dedication in *Jean Webster, Storyteller* reveals it was written in memory of Webster's daughter, who lost her mother when she was born. Perhaps at her own death, the daughter—Jean Webster McKinney Connor—may be the cause of her mother's rebirth in the literary world.

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Money, Sex, and Power, Nancy C.M. Hartsock,
New York: Longman, 1983.

The purpose of this book is to argue that a new analysis of power is required to account adequately for its manifestation in (our) social structure. Its purpose is not to provide such an analysis, although the direction it should take is certainly indicated: a feminist historical materialism. The argument that a new analysis is necessary fundamentally takes the form of demonstrating the inadequacies of previous analyses. Thus the first half of the book concentrates on the inadequacies of exchange, market and class theories of power, and the second looks at, among other things, a variety of feminist theories of power. Underlying the critique is a clear commitment to a Hegelian/Marxist analysis of social structure, emphasizing the importance of community rather than individuality in understanding the nature of this structure. There is also of course a commitment to feminist values.

As a survey of analyses of power, this book has much to be said for it, although in places it goes into rather too much detail, in the sense that theories which are very similar are subjected to separate but closely related criticisms, when they could more succinctly have been dealt with together. Nevertheless, the criticism is often insightful. Much of what the author says, for example, about exchange analyses in the social sciences could with equal force be said about a number of currently popular theories in politi-

cal and moral philosophy. The theory that society is to be understood in terms of autonomous individuals on an initially equal footing entering into social arrangements on the basis of the individual gains to be made certainly underlies modern contractarianism of the Rawls variety as well as earlier social contract theories. To point out the inadequacies of this assumption is an important step in the formulation of a political philosophy which accurately takes into account the realities of the situation. Equally important for political philosophy as a whole as well as for an analysis of power is the author's revelation of the male values which underlie these assumptions and her insistence on the need to produce a theory which encompasses female values as well.

It is in terms of this latter point that the author includes in the second part of the book an analysis of the origins of Western social structure, in terms of the male conception of eros. Her account incorporates the view, held as well by such theorists as Mary Daly, that male concepts of sexuality are bound up with concepts of separation, individuality, competition and death. An understanding of this, she claims, leads to a deeper comprehension of the true nature of our social structure. Female conceptions of sexuality are more involved with union, continuity and life. Obviously a society structured on female values would be quite different. But it is here in the book that a slight lack of clarity of purpose becomes obvious. There is a difference between providing an analysis of the extant power structures of our society, where it is relevant to point out that any analyses which do not take into account not only the relationships of power between the sexes but also the different values they espouse will be inadequate simply in terms of understanding the nature of the current situation; and providing an account of an ideal society, where the relevant consideration is what values *should* be incorporated into the structure. The intent of the book is apparently the former, but we find also elements of the latter, which confuse the issue somewhat.