

## Women, Utopia, and Narrative: Toward a Postmodern Feminist Citizenship

ROBIN SILBERGLEID

*Feminist utopian novels reconstruct citizenship by interrogating ideological assumptions at the root of civil rights theory, particularly its reliance on the sexual contract and the family romance narrative. While many feminist citizenships still depend on such assumptions, utopian fictions deconstruct the logic of natural rights and replace traditional governments and nation-states with social structures based on community and global-ecological awareness. They thereby underscore the importance of narrative for feminist philosophy and political theory.*

As Rachel Blau DuPlessis argues in *Writing Beyond the Ending*, the romance plot—one that ends with either heterosexual union in marriage or the sexual failure of the heroine, marked by death—has served as the predominant mode of narrative since the eighteenth century. The contemporaneous emergence of this narrative model with the rise of industrial capitalism and the foundation of liberal citizenship is hardly coincidental. Rather, functioning as an *ideologeme*, or “a symbolic resolution to a concrete historical situation” (Jameson 1981, 117), the romance narrative fosters the newly defined bourgeois family, with its necessary emphasis on sexual difference and a gendered division of labor. Following a trajectory of heterosexual desire, these stories serve both to shape and to perpetuate middle-class values, including a gendered vision of citizenship. By using courtship rituals to propel its diachronic structure, the romance launches the reader toward the ideologically correct end: marriage and (re)production. In order to ensure “the narrative of familial productivity,” Judith Roof explains, “the self-perpetuating motives of bourgeois capitalism rope sexuality into the service of the family” (Roof 1996, 35). The elision between capitalist production and familial reproduction within this formulation provides the foundation for what Carole Pateman describes as the sexual

*Hypania* vol. 12, no. 4 (Fall 1997) © by Robin Silbergleid

contract and, in so doing, secures the position of woman as a second-class citizen (Pateman 1988).

While the discourses of narrative and citizenship may at first seem antagonistic, I contend that a reconsideration of narrative is imperative for developing a feminist model of citizenship by interrogating the ideological assumptions that have supported liberal citizenship since the Enlightenment, and which continue to dominate feminist debates about citizenship. The most significant assumption, as evidenced by the work of major political thinkers including Pufendorf, Montesquieu, and Rousseau, is that the preservation of civil society depends on “undisturbed passage of property along family lineages” (Vogel 1994, 77-83). Such masculinist discourses of citizenship claim that liberal democracy requires virtuous women to protect the social order, beginning in the home. The rise of the romance thus serves to protect the interests of capitalist democracy by selling citizens the story that everything will turn out okay if girl marries boy, and if girl stays home and raises little boys to be good capitalist workers, establishing a correlation between the family romance and mercantile success. As such, this narrative trajectory becomes inextricable from the assumptions of liberal citizenship.

To date, however, feminist revisionary work on citizenship has done little to move beyond such assumptions. While feminist revisions usefully point out the patriarchal inclinations of traditional citizenship and propose alternative models, they ultimately remain trapped within the sex-gender system enabled by romance narratives and the logic of the sexual contract. On the one hand, equality feminists strive for a gender-neutral vision of citizenship, asking that women be given the same rights and responsibilities as male citizens. In her essay “Citizenship and Feminist Theory,” Anne Phillips advocates this position, arguing that because the concept of the citizen is inherently public, it is universal and thus gender-neutral. “Being a good citizen,” Phillips explains, “is not the same as being a good mother” (Phillips 1993, 86-87). On the other hand, difference feminists emphasize women’s special needs as primary caregivers and suggest that equal rights is not the same as identical treatment. Wendy Sarvasy, for example, explains that a central argument in feminist projects on citizenship is that “as caregivers, underpaid workers, and unpaid domestic workers . . . women need a new gender-differentiated and equal conception of citizenship supported by a nonpatriarchal welfare state” (Sarvasy 1992, 332). Neither one of these visions, however, dissociates the needs of an embodied individual from the patriarchal-capitalist narratives of family and nation which construct them. So long as these discussions perpetuate patriarchal assumptions, woman’s story will necessarily be that of the second class citizen.

In contrast, feminist utopian narratives written during the era of second-wave feminism envisage a new relationship between women and the nations of which they are members, calling into question the overdetermination of the

bourgeois family and replacing traditional governments and nation-states with social structures based on community and harmony with the natural world. Joanna Russ's *The Female Man* and Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time*, in particular, serve to further feminist critiques of liberal citizenship by forefronting the imbrication of patriarchy with industrial capitalism and technology. In their pursuit of a new epistemology of sexual difference, they elaborate a postmodern, ecological vision of citizenship, asking whether the term "citizen" is ultimately compatible with a feminist worldview. Their profound insights into feminist philosophy suggest that, as more than simply fantastical stories, utopias may offer a prescription for social change, while, conversely, theoretical evaluations may be nothing more than utopian dreams.

#### HETEROSEXUAL NARRATIVES, PATRIARCHAL CITIZENS

The "sexual contract" theorized in Carole Pateman's landmark study provides the crucial hinge between narrative theory and feminist interventions in citizenship by highlighting the inextricable binding of capitalism, as the dominant mode of production, and a narrative of reproduction, the ideological union at the root of liberal citizenship (Pateman 1988). In short, the sexual contract arises to ensure that each male citizen has access to a wife who, in turn, safeguards the well-being of the family and the home; the sexual contract thereby enables men to take advantage of the social contract that grants them status as citizens free to exchange property in the capitalist marketplace. Because the very conceptualization of the "individual" (citizen) fundamentally depended upon one's ability to own property and head a family, the subsumption of wives in coverture, as Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon suggest, "actually helped to define civil citizenship" (Fraser and Gordon 1994, 98). By denying women the traits of an individual, then, the sexual contract divides civil society into public and private spheres, allowing for both productive and reproductive prosperity; in this formulation, sexual difference is tautologically invoked to account for the gendered nature of citizenship. According to Ursula Vogel,

the liberal-bourgeois project of social progress and political emancipation (for men) was parasitic upon the traditional family to ensure stability against the potentially disruptive dynamic of a liberated society. The complementarity of male and female nature, and the insistence on women's special identity, had thus the function to provide an enclave of stable roles and value orientations amidst a rapidly changing world dominated by self-interest, competition and conflict—the very

world for which freedom was thought to require the guarantee of equal rights. (Vogel 1988, 154)

Vogel's explanation implies that, given the tenuous relationship between the sexual contract and the social contract, ideology (ideally) stabilizes the economic base. The tautology of the sexual contract—that gender difference is the cause of a gendered citizenship—obviously demands a great deal of ideological policing to connect the division of labor in the home with the division of labor in the public sphere. Toward this end, the marriage contract emerges to secure woman's subordination in the bourgeois family and civil society, positioning her both inside and outside the logic of democracy. As Pateman usefully explains, only by separating civil society into public and private spheres—with the latter included in civil society but subordinate—can "the original contract be upheld" and men "receive acknowledgment of their patriarchal right" (Pateman 1988, 180). Thus, under the pressure to reproduce (more workers and therefore more capital) as well as to produce good citizens, a narrative emerges to structure the "proper" trajectory of the family—from courtship through marriage and ultimately birth.

Adopting the ideology which fosters the sexual contract, the paradigmatic narrative of Western culture since the emergence of industrial capitalism has centered on the maintenance and reproduction of the bourgeois family through heterosexual coupling and marriage. Because courtship, as Igor Webb notes, "carried an implicit progressive promise of freedom and fulfillment within a reformed society" (Webb 1981, 175), the romance narrative helps tighten the logical leap from heterosexual love to economic prosperity to democratic progress. Indeed, as a "form of ideological coding specific to each mode of production" (Jameson 1981, 89), narrative generally, and the romance specifically, yields one way that culture reproduces its ideology and transmits its dominant system of values. The romance thus emerges as a "compensatory social and narrative practice" at the historical moment when capitalism demands a restructuring of the family and the gendering of citizenship (DuPlessis 1985, 2), and narrative becomes a guide to the civic rights and responsibilities of the citizen, including woman's duty to convey proper values to her children.

Although narrative exists as a space in which to reproduce the cultural dominant, it also serves as a valuable medium for contesting that ideological program. Given the entrenchment of heterosexual union and the romance narrative in the foundation of liberal citizenship and the social contract, any reconsideration of citizenship requires a new narrative of family and civil society. As Joanna Russ profitably outlines in her essay "What Can a Heroine Do? Or Why Women Can't Write," plots are "dramatic embodiments of what a culture believes to be true—or what it would like to be true" (Russ 1972, 4): seen through this lens, the longstanding tradition of romance in Western

culture suggests that we are only beginning to revise women's stories, to envision alternative plots of women's lives. Toward this end, feminist literary critics, including DuPlessis, Nina Auerbach, Judith Newton, and Marilyn Farwell, interrogate the patriarchal tradition of narrative, suggesting ways that women's writing can subvert this paradigm and, in the words of DuPlessis, "write beyond the ending" of heterosexual coupling (Auerbach 1978; Newton 1981; Farwell 1996).

Such revisionary work on narrative furthers feminist constructions of citizenship because what is at stake for these theorists, as for Pateman, in the stories told by Western culture is precisely the position of woman as a second-class citizen, the role constructed for her by heterosexual romance narratives. By redefining the stories our culture produces about women, feminist interventions in narrative advance feminist philosophy and politics; if we accept that narrative is our governing epistemology, the very mode of human consciousness, then any amount of social change or subversion necessitates a new narrative structure, a new way of envisioning the world. This is not to suggest, quite reductively, that any new stories written about women's lives necessarily imply a corresponding social change. Rather, counternarratives are the precondition and possibility for imagining politics differently, for opening a site of ideological struggle.

Within late twentieth-century feminism, one important site for such struggle is feminist utopian fiction. Emanating from the political objectives of their authors, these texts use imaginative and futuristic settings to test alternative relationships between women and civil society, working through dilemmas about embodiment that feminist political theory has yet to resolve. "Theory," after all, derives from the verb "to view," making the visionary worlds of feminist narrative some of the most theoretical texts around.<sup>1</sup>

#### REWRITING NARRATIVE, REVISIONING CITIZENSHIP

Emerging from the second wave of the women's movement, feminist utopian novels of the twentieth-century provide an alternative story for women, one that opens a space for feminist constructions of citizenship through its critiques of patriarchal capitalism and heterosexual coupling. In addition to developing a world they would like to see achieved, or even representing the struggle between patriarchal and feminist ideologies, utopian narratives serve a vital political function by providing a prescription and approach for social change. As what Rachel DuPlessis terms an *apologue*, utopian fiction invokes a discourse of didacticism, overtly calling attention to its political project. Therefore, while these texts may not always lay out a step-by-step program for political intervention, they do make clear what the outcome of such a program might be. In so doing, these narratives offer a useful theoretical apparatus: specifically, because of their contemporaneity with the women's movement,

feminist utopian narratives envisage a public role for women and theorize a feminist view of the nation-state. Their critiques of the existing sex-gender system further reconceptualize woman's position as a citizen, since gender difference is fundamentally enmeshed within the project of liberal citizenship and democracy.

Sally Gearhart's description of a feminist utopia begins to account for the political function of utopian writing, suggesting that it:

- a. contrasts the present world with an envisioned idealized society (separated from the present by time or space),
- b. offers a comprehensive critique of present values/conditions,
- c. sees men or male institutions as a major cause of present social ills,
- and d. presents women not only as at least the equals of men but also as the sole arbiters of their reproductive functions. (Gearhart 1984, 297)

Novels as diverse as Joanna Russ's *The Female Man*, Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time*, Monique Wittig's *Les Guerilleres*, and Suzy Charnas's *Motherlines* thus exemplify the traits Gearhart ascribes to utopian narratives. The unifying feature of these works is their development of a feminist worldview. As Russ argues, "utopias are not embodiments of universal values, but are reactive; that is, they supply in fiction what their authors believe society . . . and/or women, lack in the here-and-now" (Russ 1981, 81). Chiefly antipatriarchal in their pursuit of a sexually egalitarian society, these feminist utopias theorize societies which derive from communal or tribal ties rather than from the nuclear family; which emphasize ecological well-being more than technological advancement or economic gain; which eliminate racial and economic prejudice; which divide labor (in particular household chores) according to skill and desire, not gender; which de-centralize the role of large-scale government and repressive law; and which subvert the sex-gender system by disembodying sexuality from reproduction, thus legitimating, if not endorsing, alternative sexual practices.<sup>2</sup>

While the explicit project of utopian writing is the creation of a gender-free (or at least antipatriarchal) society, it also provides an implicit critique of the founding assumptions of liberal citizenship by undercutting the codependent systems of gender and industrial capitalism, the systems that allow the construct of the citizen to come into being. In place of that construct, these novels posit an alternative model of civic duties, one dependent on neither gender nor the traditional nation-state. Russ's and Piercy's works are particularly instructive because they employ subversive narrative structures to highlight the problems of patriarchal culture and advance an alternative construction of civil society and feminist citizenship. Both texts augment feminist critiques of citizenship by pointing out the inseparability of patriarchy and capitalism, imaginatively undoing the logic of the sexual contract and its role in the

democratic nation-state. Moreover, because they take distinct approaches to the establishment of a gender-free society—*The Female Man* advocates a world entirely of women, while *Woman on the Edge of Time* rethinks the existing sex-gender system—they offer insight into the on-going feminist debate over embodiment and equality.

In *The Female Man*, Russ uses four versions of a “genetically” identical protagonist (Janet-Jeannine-Joanna-Jael) to provide a sustained critique of her own culture and present visions of alternative feminist worlds. The most idealistic of these worlds is Whileaway, an all-female, futuristic Earth of approximately 2600 A.D. Unrealistic as Whileaway might be, it enables Russ to build a gender-free world from the ground up and imagine what a citizenship not premised on sexual difference might look like. Having eliminated men as a result of a “plague” (which turns out to be a literal war between the sexes), citizens of Whileaway reproduce through the union of two ovum; each child thus has a “body-mother” and a second mother who contributes to parenting (Russ 1975, 49). The life story of a female citizen on Whileaway goes something like this: after being brought up in a “common nursery” with other children in the kin group until the age of four or five,

these independent, blooming, pampered, extremely intelligent girls are torn weeping and arguing from their thirty relatives and sent to the regional school where . . . they are cared for in groups of five and taught in groups of differing sizes according to the subject under discussion. Their education at this point is heavily practical: how to run machines, how to get along without machines, law, transportation, physical theory, and so on. They learn gymnastics and mechanics. They learn practical medicine. (Russ 1975, 50)

Once they reach puberty (or “Middle Dignity”), they “have the right of food and lodging wherever they go” and are not required to return to their biological families. By age twenty-two, a Whileaway citizen “achieve[s] Full Dignity,” which enables her to become an apprentice for various positions or to decide on marriage; at twenty-five, she chooses a family, which determines her “geographical home base” (Russ 1975, 52); and, when she reaches thirty, she has a child of her own. This description of the Whileawayan life cycle suggests the rights and responsibilities of Russ’s ideal citizen. Having eliminated sex and gender, Russ breaks the sexual contract and commences with the assumption of equality; consequently, the economic system no longer determines a female citizen’s civic duties and rights. Instead, as part of a larger kinship unit, the Whileawayan has the responsibility to care for herself and her community and the right to health and individual prosperity.

As such, Whileaway’s contribution to reconstructing citizenship arises from its elimination of the problems of patriarchal-capitalist culture and the sexual

contract, a task Russ accomplishes by juxtaposing Whileaway against a satirical view of American culture during second-wave feminism. The characters Joanna (appropriately, the author’s first name) and Jeannine exemplify the status of woman under patriarchy: either she fulfills the ideal of femininity, or she vies for independence and becomes a man. Jeannine’s only ambition is to remain a librarian and get married, claiming “I wouldn’t give up Cal for anything. I enjoy being a girl, don’t you? I wouldn’t be a man for anything” (Russ 1975, 86). Joanna is a literature professor who insists “there is one and only one way to possess that in which we are defective, therefore that which we need, therefore that which we want. Become it” (Russ 1975, 139). By illustrating the dual roles of women under patriarchy, these characters enable Russ to grapple with the pertinence of sexual difference in models of citizenship, asking whether universal or gender-specific treatment best promotes democracy. Russ thereby productively supplements the separatist vision of Whileaway with the pragmatic concerns of contemporary women.

By playing the four social visions of her characters off one another, Russ reveals that if Whileaway’s apparent success arises from its lack of sexual difference, the downfall of contemporary culture derives from its insistence on the sexual contract. Consider, for example, the following satire of the division of labor under capitalism:

HE: Darling, why must you work part-time as a rug salesman?

SHE: Because I wish to enter the marketplace and prove that in spite of my sex I can take a fruitful part in the life of the community and earn what our culture proposes as the sign and symbol of adult independence—namely money.

HE: But darling, by the time we deduct the cost of a baby-sitter and nursery school, a higher tax bracket, and your box lunches from your pay, it actually costs us money for you to work. So you see, you aren’t making money at all. You can’t make money. Only I can make money. Stop working.

SHE: I won’t. And I hate you.

HE: But darling why be irrational? It doesn’t matter that you can’t make money because I can make money. And after I’ve made it, I give it to you, because I love you. So you don’t *have* to make money. Aren’t you glad?

SHE: No. Why can’t you stay home and take care of the baby? Why can’t we deduct all those things from your pay? (Russ 1975, 118)

This excerpt clearly draws attention to the structural connection between capitalism (or economic prosperity) with patriarchy; romantic love creates a situation in which women "don't have to make money." Or so goes the myth of the family narrative—its adamant refusal to question why he "can't stay home and take care of the baby." In contrast, by jettisoning men from the planet, Whileaway replaces the family romance of industrial capitalism with a new narrative of kin, a substitution vital to Russ's vision of society and her project of citizenship. In place of an urban-capitalist society with a central government, the women of Whileaway have fostered an agriculturally based socialist society, one that Russ compares elsewhere to an Israeli kibbutz (Russ 1981, 81). Arguing that "there is no one place from which to control the entire activity of Whileaway, that is, the economy" (Russ 1975, 91), Russ reasserts the significance of Whileaway's rejection of capital and its concomitant dissolution of the nuclear family. In a move that anticipates postmodern feminism, Russ uses Whileaway to underline the inextricability of gender from other structures of power. Thus, while discussions about Russ tend to concentrate on her lesbian separatism, it is her critique of patriarchal capitalism that undergirds her alternative vision of citizenship.

By dismantling the sexual contract and the financially driven narrative of family romance, Russ disentangles sexuality from reproduction and substitutes lesbian separatism and a choice of kin. Although all sexual relationships on Whileaway are lesbian and monogamy is not requisite, the force of Russ's censure of heteronormativity becomes even more clear when she offers lesbianism as the most successful mode of relation on Earth; the most fully developed and productive sexual relationship occurs between Whileawayan Janet and contemporary Earth girl Laura Rose, a relationship considered taboo not for its homosexuality but its intergenerationality.<sup>3</sup> Russ thereby reinforces the extra-textual connection between her fictional project and a 1970s lesbian feminism that favored separatism (see Shugar 1995). Although Russ's appeal to separatism might be criticized on the grounds that it fails to offer a pragmatic program for feminist citizenship, it does lend insight into feminist political theory by underscoring the need to separate sexual orientation, gender, and reproduction in analyses of citizenship. Thus, while Diane Griffin Crowder is correct in her critique of the separatist tendencies of much utopian fiction on the grounds that "our authors choose to eliminate men in fantastic ways that do not satisfy our need for a concrete blueprint for action" (Crowder 1993, 243), we should read Russ's own eradication of men as metaphorical, standing in for an ideological razing of patriarchal institutions more generally.

While the genetic extermination of men pushes Russ's satire to the bounds of believability, she does offer a more realistic, though still fantastical, social program through a description of a war between the sexes on Jael's world. In contrast to both Jeannine's insistence on heterosexual romance and Janet's idyllic separatism on Whileaway, Jael's sexual aggression and control repre-

sents Russ's rethinking of traditional gender roles. Through Jael, Russ argues that anger may function strategically to provide an "antidote to every cultural situation that women experience: silence, voicelessness, invisibility, loss of identity, passivity, rape" (DuPlessis 1985, 184). Because sex, as an act and a trait, provides the outlet for Jael's aggression, her narrative illuminates Russ's post-gender politics. For instance, in one of the only developed sex scenes in the novel, Jael dominates—physically and emotionally—her cyborg companion Davy, boasting afterward "I'd had him. Davy was mine" (Russ 1975, 198). Thus, in writing beyond the ending of heterosexual coupling, Russ presents a radical vision of a sex-free society, challenging traditional narrative structures as well. Though her critics might condemn the novel as a "shapeless book" with "no characterization, no plot" (Russ 1975, 141), as Russ confides in a self-conscious metafictional moment, *The Female Man* suggests that even without recourse to heterosexual union as a method of closure, narrative can be *productive*, if not reproductive.<sup>4</sup> Situating the book as an overt political project, Russ presents an altern(arr)ative for women's lives and uses narrative to effect social change. Sending her treatise out into the world like an adolescent on Whileaway, Russ says in a joyful moment of didacticism, "Live merrily, little daughter-book, even if I can't and we can't; recite yourself to all who will listen. . . . Do not complain when at last you become quaint and old-fashioned. . . . Rejoice little book! For on that day, we will be free" (Russ 1975, 213-14). For those who will listen, *The Female Man* presents a radical critique of the sex-gender system and offers multiple possibilities for political change through its thorough subversion of narrative form and content.

In contrast to Russ's call for a sex war in *The Female Man*, Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* presents an alternative paradigm through which to undermine the romance narrative and to redefine citizenship by interrogating the self-interest and competition at the heart of industrial capitalism and technological advancement. Ironically, the escape for Piercy's poverty-stricken Chicana protagonist Connie Ramos arises in her entrapment in a mental institution in New York. Committed against her will for her supposed violence (in the first chapter she breaks the nose of her niece Dolly's pimp in self-defense), Connie envisions Luciente, a visitor from Mattapoisett, Massachusetts who escorts her back to the year 2173 A.D. Like Russ's futuristic vision of Whileaway, Mattapoisett represents an idealized world that has surpassed the institutional problems of late capitalism. Similar to Whileaway's elimination of sexual difference, Mattapoisett abolishes the sex-gender system, replacing heterosexual union with mechanical "brooders" used for reproduction. In this way, Piercy interrogates the relation between reproduction and sexuality necessary within the sexual contract. Birth, rather than providing the ideal end of heterosexual union, serves the communal good; for this reason, Mattapoisett carefully controls population, requiring that birth take place only

following the death of a citizen. After gestation, the child is raised by three "mothers," a term that includes both male and female parents. Granting men the biological capacity to breastfeed, Piercy's Mattapoisett fosters a completely egalitarian method of childcare. Thus, unlike Russ, who does away with men altogether, Piercy demonstrates that patriarchy poses a social, not biological, problem, and she consequently breaks down the sex-gender system in its entirety. Parenting on Mattapoisett is a chosen profession, along with entering the armed forces or devoting one's life to science or art. Furthermore, by allowing men to mother, Piercy moves beyond the essentialism which underlies many feminist constructions of citizenship that emphasize woman's special needs as reproducer.<sup>5</sup>

Instead of drawing attention to the biological state of motherhood, Piercy suggests what a citizen who *mothers* would need to care for his or her child. This shift is evident in her description of a Mattapoisett mother breastfeeding his child: "He had breasts. Not large ones. Small breasts, like a flat-chested woman temporarily swollen with milk. Then with his red beard, his face of a sunburnt forty-five-year-old man, stern-visaged, long-nosed, thin-lipped, he began to nurse. . . . An expression of serene sensual enjoyment spread over Barbarossa's intellectual schoolmaster's face" (Piercy 1976, 126). Seeing his bliss, Connie remembers her own experience of nursing, hateful that he has "the peaceful joy to which he had *no natural right*" (127; emphasis added). If they had "abandoned to men the last refuge of women" then what, Connie wants to know, "was special about being a woman here?" (126). The answer Piercy's novel seems to provide is nothing, suggesting instead how it is special to be human, to be a citizen and member of a community. The insignificance of the sex-gender system in Piercy's utopia is also manifest in Mattapoisett's gender-neutral language, which uses "per" in place of both "him" and "her." By breaking the sexual contract, Mattapoisett thus opens up enormous possibilities for social roles—for both men and women. As Luciente scolds Connie (who remains stuck in the family narrative of the twentieth-century), "Birth! Birth! Birth! That's all you can dream about! . . . Romance, sex, birth, children—that's what you fasten on. Yet that isn't women's business anymore. It's everybody's" (243). Luciente's didactic criticism shows that instead of being the biological responsibility of women, childcare is a choice offered to all citizens of Mattapoisett. In her feminist welfare state, Piercy holds up childrearing as a social good rather than a liability to encumber women's advancement.

With the exception of sexuality and reproduction, however, Mattapoisett appears strikingly similar to *Whileaway*. Both novels provide analyses of industrial capitalism and technology, including an emphasis on the nuclear family: as the family provides the foundation for capital gain under the sexual contract, the socialist worlds of Mattapoisett and *Whileaway* hold open the promise of alternative family structures for its citizens' prosperity. In place of

nuclear families, Mattapoisett citizens live in small kinship units with their chosen family members (called "mems"). And as in Russ's technologically advanced society, Piercy's civilization is ecologically minded and critical of all problems resulting from industrialization, including waste, pollution, and disease. In Mattapoisett, everything can be either reused or recycled, from biodegradable evening wear called "flimsies" to diapers made from cornhusks and cobs which can be turned into compost. This emphasis on a citizen's responsibility to "per" environment provides a crucial supplement to feminist work on citizenship by working against self-interest and by reinscribing an emphasis on the public good. By juxtaposing her description of the "environmentally correct" vision of Mattapoisett with a critique of contemporary U.S. culture, Piercy uses her futuristic citizens to provide a program for social change, examining the relationships between individuals, institutions of power, and environmental well-being. Describing Connie's world, for example, Barbarossa states, "technology is imbalanced. Too few have too much power" (Piercy 1976, 189) and thereby points out the inevitable connection between industrialization and hierarchies of social power. Barbarossa's home of Mattapoisett, on the other hand, retains a skeptical view of most technology, particularly any that attempts to control human life, a view reinforced by comparison with Connie's own situation. Confined in a New York hospital, she is subjected to scientific experiments that seek to modify behavior through electrodes planted in her brain. Despite her obvious trouble with capitalist institutions, however, Connie refuses to accept her futuristic friends' explanation that the scientific community is corrupted by financial greed. As one mem tells her in frustration, "But Connie, in your day only huge corporations and the Pentagon had enough money to pay for big science. Don't you think that had an effect on what people worked on? Sweet petunias! And what we do comes down on everybody. We use up a confounded lot of resources. Scarce materials. Energy. We have to account. There's only one pool of air to breathe" (Piercy 1976, 269). If Connie's powerlessness seems to result from her status as a single woman controlled by the whims of her elder—and wealthier—brother, she also demonstrates that the fruits of the Enlightenment—liberalism and technological advancement—cause many of the problems experienced by its citizens.

To further this position, Piercy connects her extended critique of technology and industrialization to the class hierarchies associated with capitalism; she portrays Connie as a lower-class woman on welfare, so poor she drinks hot water throughout the day to trick her stomach into believing it is full. While the myth of liberal citizenship is that one's rights are tied to one's social position and prospects of capitalist gain, Mattapoisett shows harmony with the natural world to be a more productive social structure. Unlike what she describes to be "the age of waste and greed" in Connie's present, Luciente explains that Mattapoisett limits luxuries: in their successful welfare state, no

one lacks necessities, although "there are things no one needs that people enjoy. We try to spread them around" (Piercy 1976, 240). Describing her community as "part of the web of nature," Luciente states "the gift is in growing to care, to connect, to cooperate. Everything we learn aims to make us strong in ourselves, connected to all living" (Piercy 1976, 269, 241). By shifting from capitalism to a utopian socialism, Mattapoissett appears to have eliminated many of the problems of liberal citizenship. And because the sexual contract is linked at its root to capitalism, Piercy's alternative socialism advances her feminist project as well. Making her utopian society work against the greed and self-interest associated with industrialization and capitalism, Piercy demonstrates that social ills are a larger, systemic problem—not simply the effect of male-biased institutions. She furthers this theory by linking Connie's second-class status with her race, class, and age, as well as her gender, an association made rather late in feminist philosophy. By providing such a large-scale critique of American culture at the end of the twentieth-century, *Woman on the Edge of Time* reveals that, in order to be successful, a feminist reconstruction of citizenship needs to consider the foundational union of patriarchal institutions with a capitalist mode of production; it needs to rewrite its social narrative.

In its resistance to the linear, teleological impulse of the heterosexual romance, *Woman on the Edge of Time* subverts both dominant understandings of citizenship and narrative. Piercy employs metonymic or spatial connections in place of linear narrative, using a memory or image to send Connie into an alternative universe.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, by replacing the traditional narrative ending of death or marriage with Connie's decision to murder the psychiatrists controlling her, the novel avoids the patriarchal impetus of closure altogether. Because the reader learns of Connie's physical demise in the present through an omniscient narrator who details her medical history, the reader is free to imagine her roaming in Mattapoissett forever—outside narrative, outside time.

#### THEORIZING UTOPIA: A POSTMODERN FEMINIST CITIZENSHIP

As idealized visions of the world, the altern(arr)atives of Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* and Joanna Russ's *The Female Man* lend insight into current conversations among feminist political theorists about the masculinist underpinnings of citizenship. Reading their utopian narratives within and against several dominant strains of feminist thinking on the problem of the citizen reveals the necessity of recourse to a postmodern epistemology for the success of this political project (see Yeatman 1994). As demonstrated in Russ's and Piercy's novels, such a postmodern position entails several interrelated aims: problematizing essentialist-maternalist assumptions; breaking down hierarchies contained in all cultural discourses, not merely gender; undermin-

ing capitalism and the logic of natural rights; and theorizing citizenship on a global ecological level. Although postmodern citizenships have been productively theorized by Bryan Turner and Bart van Steenberg, among others, their discussions have not yet been linked with existent feminist scholarship. Following Piercy and Russ, the goal here is therefore to unite the discourses of postmodernism and feminism to forge a narrative of citizenship outside the logic of the sexual contract. As feminist reconstructions of the citizen demonstrate, however, this goal may be impossible to attain.

Weighing the desirability of constructing a politics that recognizes women's differences from men, many feminist understandings of citizenship ultimately remain trapped within the heterosexual narrative of family romance and its gendered division of labor. Thus, what appears to be an impasse over the issue of sexual difference in feminist work—whether it factors into (or should factor into) a theory of the citizen, and to what extent—is really a struggle to construct an alternative story of family and nation that recognizes the particularity of the individual body. If the character Joanna in *The Female Man* illustrates the problem of merely adding women to a previously patriarchal notion of citizenship, asking her to "become a man," a large strain of criticism advocates what Kathleen Jones describes as "maternalism." Yet neither vision moves outside the heteronormative impulse of the family romance. Beginning with the assumption laid out by Carole Pateman that the discourse of citizenship is already gendered, the maternalists raise the concern that "women cannot be seen in public space as women citizens who act politically on their own ground" and thus seek to validate women's differences from men as legitimate in the public sphere (Jones 1990, 794).<sup>7</sup> Instead of making women citizens within a male conceptualization of citizenship (as the equality feminists advocate), these "difference" feminists, including Pateman, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Sara Ruddick, and Iris Young, work toward achieving recognition for women's "special" needs, particularly in the area of reproductive rights, asking that citizenship "be redefined to accommodate women's bodies in their concrete, historically changing forms" (Jones 1990, 794). Unlike Piercy, whose genderless world vision asks that certain life stages, such as motherhood or advanced age, be taken into consideration in conversations about citizenship, maternalists tend to rely on an essentialist logic which suggests that, socially and psychologically, women's participation in the public sphere necessarily takes a different form from men's.

Following Carol Gilligan's work on the psychological distinctions between women and men, the difference feminists situate an "ethics of care" in opposition to the male "ethics of justice" and, according to Chantal Mouffe, thus "defend a set of values based on the experience of women as women," including the assumption that women are mothers who mother, acting as the biological and social agents for family growth and care (Mouffe 1992, 373-74). Despite the biological determinism of these models, their goal is commend-

same  
but  
equal  
different  
but  
equal  
see  
next  
page

able. As Kathleen Jones explains, these projects disavow "the individualist, rights-based, contractual model of citizenship" and replace it with "the virtues of commitment to relationships, love, and caring for others" (Jones 1990, 810), virtues which work against the competition and conflict associated with natural rights. In addition, these projects present narratives of community and kin "as ideal bonds between citizens" (Jones 1990, 810), the same narratives that emerge in Russ's and Piercy's fictions. Rather than interrogating the logic that has retained women's differences from men as a form of exclusion from the public sphere and from discourses of citizenship, however, these theorists reify such differences and, consequently, end up privileging the very characteristics assigned to women in patriarchal cultures. As Jones herself notes, "ironically, the feminist citizen model may validate the idealized image of an all-nurturing, all loving woman even as it rejects the patriarchal system that created that image" (809). Patriarchal logic, it seems, still controls the stories theorists tell about women and their position in culture.

As we've seen, feminist utopias offer an alternative story, however. In contrast to the maternalists, Joanna Russ avoids the equality versus difference argument by insisting on separatism and even the extermination of men. A closer examination reveals, however, that a complete denial of sexual difference stunts rather than advances her theory of citizenship. Instead of recognizing the importance of embodiment in theories of citizenship, Russ establishes a situation in which everyone possesses civil rights because no pronounced cultural differences exist: in addition to a complete elimination of gender, Whileaway appears to avoid race and class stratification. In *The Female Man*, conflict centers on individuals, not discursive positions, and bodies have nothing to do with civil rights and responsibilities. While Russ usefully repudiates the sexual contract by making the two primary romantic relationships (between Janet and Laura, and between Jael and Davy) fall outside the bounds of normative sexuality, she does not yet dramatize a world in which sexual difference can be pragmatically rethought. Moreover, although Russ recognizes the constructed nature of the individual through her fragmented protagonist Janet-Jeannine-Joanna-Jael, her model of citizenship fails to account for the inscription of social discourses on the body; in other words, her constructed bodies have nothing but their essence. Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time*, by contrast, offers a more pragmatic examination of gender and citizenship, not by avoiding the problem of embodiment but by breaking down the sex-gender system that undergirds the classic model of the citizen and by stressing the imbrication of patriarchy and capitalism. In abolishing the family narrative and the legacy of liberalism, Piercy moves beyond the equality versus difference debate and works toward a global-ecological model of feminist citizenship.

Two significant features distinguish Piercy's *Mattapoisett* from Russ's *Whileaway*: a dismantling of racial and class hierarchies and an overt critique

of capitalism and the assumptions of liberal democracy. In short, on *Mattapoisett*, men can breastfeed, everyone has access to necessities, and almost every child is born racially mixed. Coupled with Connie's problematic status as a lower-class Chicana, these traits suggest that, for Piercy, a feminist utopia calls into question the larger social structure of industrial capitalism and the philosophical project of liberalism. In so doing, Piercy's utopia realizes a valuable theory of citizenship, a theory grounded in a gendered and race-marked body. Chantal Mouffe's explication of a radical democratic politics thus provides a theoretical discourse to clarify Piercy's project.

Working against the maternalism of the difference feminists, Mouffe lays out a postmodernist construction of citizenship that suggests a new narrative about civil life, one based on *articulation* and a community developed of political agents. While gender remains an important concern for Mouffe, she highlights the structural connections between gender and other cultural discourses, such as class and race, elaborating Piercy's cultural pluralism. Rather than ignoring or erasing gender difference, Mouffe advocates an embodied subjectivity composed of various discursive positions which may be articulated in a given moment for a specific political purpose. Thus, the issue for Mouffe is not disavowal of sexual difference—as Russ desires—but a disavowal of the logic of citizenship itself.

I am not arguing in favor of a total disappearance of sexual difference as a pertinent distinction; I am not saying either that equality between men and women requires gender-neutral social relations, and it is clear that, in many cases, to treat men and women equally implies treating them differently. My thesis is that, in the domain of politics, and as far as citizenship is concerned, sexual difference should not be a pertinent distinction. I am at one with Pateman in criticizing the liberal, male conception of modern citizenship but I believe that what a project of radical and plural democracy needs is not a sexually differentiated model of citizenship in which the specific tasks of men and women would be valued equally, but a truly different conception of what it is to be a citizen and to act as a member of a democratic political community. (Mouffe 1992, 377)

Mouffe's description of her position highlights the theoretical distinctions between a model of citizenship that may be taken to be postmodern and the equality-difference models, both of which rely on a modernist epistemology. As a postmodern project, Mouffe's democratic politics construes the subject as an articulation "of an ensemble of subject positions, corresponding to the multiplicity of social relations in which it is inscribed" (Mouffe 1992, 376). Instead of an essentialized maternalism which suggests that women should

fight for citizenship as women unified by their corporeal difference, and instead of a gender-neutral concept of citizenship that ignores the significance of embodiment, Mouffe elaborates a social vision which favors "egalitarian social relations, practices, and institutions" (Mouffe 1992, 380), asking what each citizen, as an individual in a raced, classed, and gendered body, needs for her or his welfare. In so doing, Mouffe recognizes both the inherently communal project of citizenship and the inevitable particularity of its manifestations, asking what it means to be a citizen in a multicultural world.

As divulged in Piercy's novel and Mouffe's notion of articulation, a reconceptualization of citizenship that merely inserts women into the system without questioning the very structure of that system is bound to fail. Because women's role in the narrative of classical citizenship is fundamentally connected both to capitalism as a mode of production and to other cultural discourses such as race and class, a feminist citizenship must consider the entire system of liberal democracy under capitalism.<sup>8</sup> In essence, the shift in mode of production necessarily demands a narrative that moves beyond (re)production, that understands sexual difference outside the family romance. Given our own shift toward a global (or at least multi-national) economy, a postmodern revision of citizenship provides such an alternative. In addition to problematizing essentialism and introducing the concept of articulation, the discourses of postmodernism interrogate the foundation of modernity and thus the underlying assumptions of liberal democracy. As Bryan Turner argues, the very concept of citizenship exists as "an essential component of the Enlightenment and hence a necessary feature of the project of modernity" (Turner 1994, 155), intimating that a successful reconsideration of citizenship necessarily entails a postmodern epistemology that discredits the assumptions of modernism and the capitalist economy that supports it. Thus, in addition to uniting citizens through political action, as opposed to corporeal differences (as in Mouffe's concept of articulation), the shift to a postmodern citizenship entails a radical heterogeneity. This shift thereby calls into question the hierarchies at the root of natural rights theory, recognizing differences "not only among women and ethnic and racial minorities, but among all citizens—on the basis of class, gender, ethnicity and race, stage in the life cycle, sexuality, ability, and more," a recognition which, according to Nira Yuval-Davis, deconstructs the very concept of citizenship (Yuval-Davis 1991, 65). Bryan Turner likewise calls into question the possibility of citizenship in his essay "Postmodern Culture/Modern Citizens," suggesting that the "celebration of difference" associated with postmodernism "may in the long term signify the eventual demise of the concept of citizenship as relevant to a period in history in which nation-state came to dominance" (Turner 1994, 166). Considering Turner's caveat, it is significant that the utopian worlds of Piercy and Russ both ask what it means to be a citizen in something other than a traditional

now  
what  
is  
time  
it's  
mel  
a  
sh  
chang

nation-state—and the answer will very possibly be a concept altogether different from liberal citizenship.

If traditional citizenship corresponds with modernism and the advent of the nation-state, a postmodern citizenship derives from global human rights which, according to Turner, "are not tied to any specific nation-state framework" (Turner 1994, 166), and which transcend multi-national or transnational conceptions of citizenship as well.<sup>9</sup> Bart van Steenberg's essay "Towards a Global Ecological Citizen" details a new model of citizenship that goes well beyond industrial capitalism, the nuclear family, and the nation-state, and that pushes the very notion of democratic politics to its limit (see also Falk 1994). As both Russ's *The Female Man* and Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* reveal, such an ecologically and globally oriented view of citizenship combats the foundational assumptions of liberal humanism and the philosophy of natural rights. Furthermore, by linking their economic and environmentalist critiques with their critiques of patriarchy, the novelists show a global-ecological vision to be instrumental in constructions of citizenship.<sup>10</sup> Noting that "capitalism has definitely promoted certain aspects of citizenship," van Steenberg pits the modernist "value systems of the classic citizen" against a postmodernist dismantling of the hierarchies of natural rights and, in so doing, points out the necessity of interrogating the entire system that undergirds citizenship (van Steenberg 1994, 148, 143). Thus, against the philosophy of natural rights, which privileges the property-owning, colonizing male as the only person deemed an "individual" free to rule his household, van Steenberg presents an ecological paradigm that recognizes the necessity of restraining "human actions and interventions" (van Steenberg 1994, 143). In order to detach the concept of the citizen from the larger systemic problems of industrial capitalism and the colonizing nation-state, van Steenberg calls for a global ecological citizenship.

Although van Steenberg's project is not explicitly feminist, it productively deconstructs the philosophy of natural rights, a critical maneuver without which any feminist project would remain trapped in the patriarchal logic of the sexual contract. Based on this deconstruction, he offers three overlapping views of ecological citizenship. First, ecological citizenship challenges the assumption that "only existing mature human beings can be citizens," calling for increased inclusion based primarily on animal rights. Second, it demands not only "responsibility for society but also for nature," asking citizens to take responsibility for their actions in the natural world. Finally, it is also fundamentally global, because ecological well-being represents a worldwide concern (van Steenberg 1994, 143-44). As a group, these theories of ecological citizenship challenge the assumptions that citizenship is something only for white, middle-class men, problematizing "the primacy of society over nature" (van Steenberg 1994, 146) and working to be globally inclusive. In so doing, ecological citizenship delegitimizes the hierarchies implicit in citizenship's

modernist, liberal conception—a conception which values men over women, slaves, and the “natural”—and calls into question the dominant position of humans in the world.<sup>11</sup> To take up a Mouffian vocabulary, van Steenberg’s theories ask us to recognize the articulation of humans with nature, a recognition literalized in the fictional successes of Piercy’s *Mattapoisett* and Russ’s *Whileaway*.

In its emphasis on globalism, this vision of citizenship radically subverts the concept of nation which undergirds even many postmodern conceptualizations of citizenship, such as the neonational and postnational versions Miriam Feldblum offers in her recent essay “Reconfiguring Citizenship in Europe.” This antinationalist tendency is significant because, as van Steenberg notes, merely expanding the notion of the nation-state will not remove the concept of citizenship from the hierarchical nature of capitalism; environmental awareness, however, seeks to provide one way of accomplishing this task. The necessity of a global ecological view for a feminist revision of citizenship can be seen most clearly in van Steenberg’s assessment of global capitalist citizens who constitute “a de-nationalized global elite that at the same time lacks any global civic sense of responsibility” (van Steenberg 1994, 149). Looking to *Whileaway* and *Mattapoisett* as examples of a global ecological citizenship, it appears that, on a pragmatic level, what is necessary to sustain such retheorizing is a firmly grounded understanding of a “per’s” responsibility to the community as a whole. While my goal here is not to lay out a specific list of duties required for citizenship, I would suggest that, as in *Mattapoisett*, a sense of individual responsibility works to combat the self-centered tendency of capitalist citizenship, asking each citizen to do his or her part for the communal good. Rather than a reductive utopianism, this move recalls the interdependency at the root of civil society—a group of embodied individuals joined together for a specific political goal. Severed from its economic ties, this shift entails an emphasis on the responsibility of citizens toward each other and toward “the earth as breeding ground” (van Steenberg 1994, 151), asking for his/her/per active participation in the creation of a radical democratic politics on the global level—a politics more feminist than woman-friendly.

As the utopian worlds of Marge Piercy and Joanna Russ reveal, a global ecological awareness furthers feminist visions of citizenship by moving beyond a request for woman-centered treatment, because such treatment invariably perpetuates a family narrative that strives to subordinate women. Instead, by undermining the logic of natural rights and by offering a new narrative of kinship and community, these utopias posit an alternative episteme through which to perceive the world and provide a directive for social change. Thus, while critical theory heretofore has been the privileged location from which to advance a feminist model of citizenship, *Woman on the Edge of Time* and *The Female Man* reveal that political change is ultimately dependent upon telling

the story of our lives differently, exposing many theoretical projects to be wishful thinking. If we are to reach *Mattapoisett*, it seems, we must consider individualism, citizenship, and social structure through new narrative eyes.

## NOTES

1. The *Oxford English Dictionary* explains that the modern usage of the term “theory” derives from a Medieval Latin appropriation of the Greek “*theoria*,” whose root “*theor*” means “to look at,” “to view,” or “to contemplate.” The etymology of “theory” thus emphasizes a visual metaphor.
2. For a thorough discussion of the characteristics of feminist utopian narratives, see Friebert (1983); Sargent (1983); Russ (1981); Pearson (1981); and Gearhart (1994).
3. The terms “heteronormative” and “heteronarrative” come from Judith Roof (1996).
4. Susan Lanser (1986) describes how women’s writing has traditionally been understood as plotless if it goes against the masculinist norm. See also Russ (1972).
5. Kathleen Jones (1990) offers a useful survey of the work on essentialist or maternalist constructions of citizenship.
6. Although Piercy’s interrogation of narrative structures is a topic that falls outside the scope of the present analysis, her subversion of linear time through spatial connections is interesting apropos of theories of narrative that emphasize temporality. See, for example, Scholes (1980). For a thorough discussion of time in Piercy’s work, see Kress (1981).
7. For a helpful introduction to the equality versus difference argument in citizenship debates, see Jones (1990).
8. For instance, Anne McClintock (1996) and Philip Cohen (1996) both describe the complicity of gender and racism in nationalist discourse. In so doing, they reveal the necessity of looking at the articulation of gender to other cultural discourses, including race and class.
9. See Feldblum (n.d.) for a discussion of neonational and postnational concepts of citizenship, both of which, I would suggest, are fundamentally grounded in the traditional nation-state.
10. Despite their environmental awareness, Piercy and Russ do not seem to perpetuate the problematic association between women and nature in many earlier feminist projects.
11. Although I find value in dismantling the hierarchy between nature and culture in the concept of a global ecological citizenship, like van Steenberg, I do not advocate the inclusion of animals in civil society as *citizens*, because they cannot uphold the duties required of an active citizen-subject. As he states, “although there are good arguments for the idea of animals as citizens, it is doubtful whether such an extension would be fruitful, particularly in the interpretation of citizenship as an office, with entitlements and obligations” (van Steenberg 1994, 151).

## REFERENCES

- Auerbach, Nina. 1978. *Communities of women: An idea in fiction*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Barr, Marlene S., ed. 1981. *Future females: A critical anthology*. Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Press.
- Barr, Marlene, and Nicholas D. Smith, eds. 1993. *Women and utopia: Critical interpretations*. New York: University Press of America.
- Bartkowski, Frances. 1989. *Feminist utopias*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Cohen, Philip. 1996. Nationalism and suffrage: Gender struggle in nation-building America. *Signs* 21(3): 707-27.
- Crowder, Diane Griffin. 1993. Separatism and feminist utopian fiction. In *Sexual practice, textual theory: Lesbian cultural criticism*, ed. Susan J. Wolfe and Julia Penelope. Cambridge: Blackwell.
- DuPlessis, Rachel Blau. 1985. *Writing beyond the ending: Narrative strategies of twentieth-century women writers*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Falk, Richard. 1994. Towards a global ecological citizen. In *The condition of citizenship*. See van Steenberg 1994.
- Farwell, Marilyn. 1996. *Heterosexual plots and lesbian narratives*. New York: New York University Press.
- Feldblum, Miriam. Nd. Reconfiguring citizenship in Europe: Changing trends and strategies. In *Challenge to the nation-state: Immigration in Western Europe and the United States*, ed. Christian Joppke. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fraser, Nancy, and Linda Gordon. 1994. Civil citizenship against social citizenship? In *The condition of citizenship*. See van Steenberg 1994.
- Friebert, Lucy M. 1993. World views in utopian novels by women. In *Women and utopia: Critical interpretations*. See Barr and Smith 1993.
- Gearhart, Sally. 1994. Future visions: Today's politics: Feminist utopias in review. In *Women in search of utopia: Mavericks and mythmakers*. See Rohlich and Baruch 1994.
- Jameson, Fredric. 1981. *The political unconscious: Narrative as a socially symbolic act*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Jones, Libby Falk, and Sarah Webster Goodwin, eds. 1990. *Feminism, utopia, and narrative*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- Jones, Kathleen B. 1990. Citizenship in a woman-friendly polity. *Signs* 15(4): 781-812.
- Kress, Susan. 1981. In and out of time: The form of Marge Piercy's novels. In *Future females: A critical anthology*. See Barr 1981.
- Lanser, Susan. 1986. Towards a feminist narratology. *Style* 20(3): 341-63.
- McClintock, Anne. 1996. "No longer in a future heaven": Nationalism, gender, and race. In *Becoming national: A reader*, eds. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mellor, Anne. 1982. On feminist utopias. *Women's Studies* 9(3): 241-62.
- Mouffe, Chantal. 1992. Feminism, citizenship, and radical democratic politics. In *Feminists theorize the political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott. New York: Routledge.
- Newton, Judith Lowder. 1981. *Women, power, and subversion: Social strategies in British fiction, 1778-1860*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

- Pateman, Carole. 1988. *The sexual contract*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Pearson, Carol. 1977. Women's fantasies and feminist utopias. *Frontiers* 2(3): 50-61.
- . 1981. Coming home: Four feminist utopias and patriarchal experience. In *Future females: A critical anthology*. See Barr 1981.
- Phillips, Anne. 1993. *Democracy and difference*. Pittsburgh: Penn State University Press.
- Piercy, Marge. 1976. *Woman on the edge of time*. New York: Knopf.
- Roemer, Kenneth, ed. 1976. *America as utopia*. New York: Burt Franklin.
- Rohlich, Ruby, and Elaine Hoffman Baruch, eds. 1984. *Women in search of utopia: Mavericks and mythmakers*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Roof, Judith. 1996. *Come as you are: Sexuality and narrative*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Russ, Joanna. 1972. What can a heroine do? Or why women can't write. In *Images of women in fiction*, ed. Susan Koppelman Cornillon. Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Press.
- . 1975. *The female man*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- . 1981. Recent feminist utopias. In *Future females: A critical anthology*. See Barr 1981.
- Sargent, Lyman Tower. 1983. A new anarchism. In *Women and utopia: Critical interpretations*. See Barr and Smith 1993.
- Sarvasy, Wendy. 1992. Beyond the difference versus equality policy debate: Postsuffrage feminism, citizenship, and the quest for a feminist welfare state. *Signs* 17(2): 329-62.
- Scholes, Robert. 1980. Language, narrative, and anti-narrative. In *On Narrative*, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Shugar, Dana R. 1995. *Sep-a-ra-tism and women's community*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Steenbergen, Bart van, ed. 1994. *The condition of citizenship*. London: Sage Publications.
- Turner, Bryan S. 1994. Postmodern culture/Modern citizens. In *The condition of citizenship*. See van Steenberg 1994.
- Vogel, Ursula. 1988. Under permanent guardianship: Women's condition under modern civil law. In *The Political interests of gender: Developing theory and research with a feminist face*, ed. Kathleen B. Jones and Anna G. Jonasdottir. London: Sage Publications.
- . 1994. Marriage and the boundaries of citizenship. In *The condition of citizenship*. See van Steenberg 1994.
- Webb, Igor. 1981. *From custom to capital: The English novel and the industrial revolution*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Yeatman, Anna. 1994. *Postmodern revisionings of the political*. New York: Routledge.
- Yuval-Davis, Nira. 1991. The citizenship debate: Women, ethnic processes and the state. *Feminist Review* 39: 58-68.

---

**Books in Review**

---

Doug Barbour	103	Ann Pearson	145
Neil Besner	105	Joseph Pivato	146
Neil Bishop	106	Beverly Rasporich	147, 148
Dennis Denisoff	108	Norman Ravvin	150, 151
Susan Rudy Dorscht	110	Catherine Sheldrick Ross	153
Jo-Ann Elder	112	William J. Scheick	155
Jane Ennenberg	114	Sue Schenk	156
Susan Fisher	116	Jim Snyder	158
Jill Franks	118	Susan Spearey	160
Bryan N.S. Gooch	120	K.P. Stich	162
Gabriele Helms	121	Nora Fraser Stovel	164
Henry Hubert	123	Jane Tilley	166
Marilyn Iwama	124	Brian Trehearne	167
Michèle Kaltemback	126	Gernot Wieland (with	
Jon Kertzer	128, 130	Alexandra Wieland	169
Janice Kulyk Keefer	131	Marion Wynne-Davies	171
Dorothy F. Lane	133	Lynn Wytenbroek	172
Alan Lawson	135	Mick Burrs	174
Valerie Legge	137	Lesley Ziegler &	
Hartmut Lutz	138	Peter Dickinson	175
Kevin McNeilly	141	Dominique Perron	177
Michael Mason	143	A.M. Forbes	179, 181, 183, 184

---

**Opinions and Notes**

---

Henry C. Phelps	
Nick's Picture in <i>A Jest of God</i>	186

---

Publications Mail registration  
number 1375

GST R108161779

Publication of *Canadian Literature*  
is assisted by the University of  
British Columbia and the SSHRCC

*Canadian Literature* is indexed in  
*Canadian Periodical Index* and  
*Canadian Magazine Index*. It is  
available on-line in the *Canadian  
Business and Current Affairs  
Database*, and is available in micro-  
film from University Microfilm  
International, 300 North Zeeb Road,  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106

For subscriptions, back issues (as  
available), and annual and cumula-  
tive indexes, write: Circulation  
Manager, *Canadian Literature*, 2029  
West Mall, University of British  
Columbia, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z2

SUBSCRIPTION \$30 INDIVIDUAL;  
\$45 INSTITUTIONAL; PLUS \$10  
POSTAGE OUTSIDE CANADA  
ISSN 0008-4360

Design: George Vaitkunas  
Illustrations: George Kuthan  
Printing: Hignell Printing Limited  
Typefaces: Minion and Univers

**Editorial**

## Facing the Future

With this issue, *Canadian Literature*, now in its 35th year of publication, acquires a fresh look. Since 1959 the journal has appeared in the letterpress format that Robert Reid shaped so elegantly when the journal was founded. His worthy successor is George Vaitkunas, who has designed a stylish computer-set page for the 1990s and the next decades. The journal's working categories remain the same—*Articles, Poems, Books in Review, Opinions & Notes*—and the new page size maintains the visual effectiveness of preceding issues. The new paper, however, is recycled as well as acid-free. In addition, the new layout—in a combination of Minion and Univers fonts—emphasizes authors' names in the Reviews section, and moves reviewers' names forward, increasing clarity and the ease of access to information.

Visually, the new design highlights the shape of language—through a series of strong horizontal and vertical patterns—in contrast to the previous design, which employed block format and initially used coloured inks as an ornament to words. In some ways the new emphasis on vertical and horizontal can also be read metaphorically. The journal has always been committed to a wide range of subjects that relate to literature in Canada; it has also provided space for treating in depth a great variety of ideas, texts, writers, and critical and social questions. As always, it depends for its contents primarily on submissions. The "emphasis" in each issue derives from current trends in commentary and current interests among members of the writing community. With a fresh face for the future, *Canadian Literature* will continue to be a forum for current critics—and for current critics who are interested in the past and present as well as those who wish to express their cautionary warnings and hopeful aspirations about things to come. w.n.