

# Poetry

## Rape

One out of three  
The statistics say  
But I never believed  
It could happen to me.

I have two sisters  
One older, one younger, you see  
But I still never believed  
The violence would ever effect me.

When I was 16  
My world fell apart  
When my older sister was beaten and raped  
By a "friend" or so she thought.

When I was 25  
I was destroyed at the core  
When my younger sister  
Told of a rape that happened long before.

She never told anyone  
for years on end  
Because, you have to understand  
It happened when she was only ten.

One out of three  
The statistics say  
But statistics lie, you see  
Because in my family, it's two out of three.

Judith McIsaac



## Insane

No words can ever express my pain  
Of living in a world that's gone insane.  
If I had the chance, my solution would be  
To let men hear, feel and see as me.

If only the men could take my eyes  
Then they would see all I despise.  
They would see the hunger, the pain and shame  
Of living in a world that's gone insane.

If only men could take my ears  
Then they would hear my silent fears.  
They would hear a symphony of pain  
Screaming of a world gone insane.

If only these men could take my soul  
Then they would feel how their violence cuts a hole.  
They would gasp...wounded and maimed  
And cry out in protest that the world's gone insane.

Rita Boudreau

## Circe Sonnet

Beware the guile of tongue bra:ve Ulysses  
For Circe's spell reveals the naked soul  
Piercing the aegis of duplicities  
Intoxicating truth: drink and be whole.  
Gird up they loins and face the mirror'd shield —  
The age has passed when false airs were benign;  
From Circe no deception stays concealed  
And sordid men are now unmasked as swine.  
Aeaea stands as both refuge and jail;  
The sea of ignorance laps on her shores  
While lonely Circe scorns each truthless male  
The flame of passion deep within her rears.  
Beware if ere a Circe you should woo  
Shed all pretense and let your love be true.

Chimène Keitner



## The Flame Inside

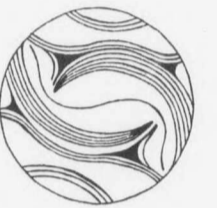
The charred body  
lay silent  
on the gurney  
from her blackened face  
and swollen eyes  
silent tears  
collected charcoal  
and splattered black stains  
on the sterile white sheets.

She wanted to fly from the hospital  
and escape the cocoon  
that seemed to follow her everywhere lately.  
She felt no pain  
Yet trapped by her barely functioning body  
she relinquished meekly  
Her heart still pumped  
the life giving juices  
She knew - she could feel it just.

Arson?  
They wondered  
She wondered  
But it was too easy  
to lay bitter blame  
on someone who loved her so much.

Though she had tried  
to be careful,  
He died  
trying to save her  
from spontaneous human combustion.

Julie Ferguson



## Feminist Classics



We compiled this list to celebrate the renaissance of contemporary feminist letters. It is not exhaustive, and is composed of nonfiction only because space precludes covering the breadth of work by feminist poets, fiction writers, and playwrights. (Asterisks denote "out of print"; write the publisher to protest.) Everyone has her own favorites, of course, but here is a sampling of books that have become classics - because they broke the silence, and literally changed women's lives. (Compiled by Ms. Magazine)

United States  
Against our Will: Men, Women, and Rape, by Susan Brownmiller (1975; Bantam revised edition, 1986).

The Alchemy of Race and Rights, by Patricia J. Williams (Harvard University Press, 1991).

All the Women are White, All the Blacks are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave, edited by Barbara Smith, Gloria T. Hull, and Patricia Bell Scott (The Feminist Press, 1982).

The Best Kept Secret: Sexual Abuse of Children, by Florence Rush (1980; McGraw-Hill, 1981).

Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman, by Michele Wallace (1979; reissued by Verso, 1990).

The Cancer Journals, by Audre Lorde (Aunt Lute Books, 1980).

Complaints and Disorders: The Sexual Politics of Sickness, by Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English (The Feminist Press, 1973).

The Creation of Patriarchy: Women and History, by Gerda Lerner (Oxford University Press, 1986).

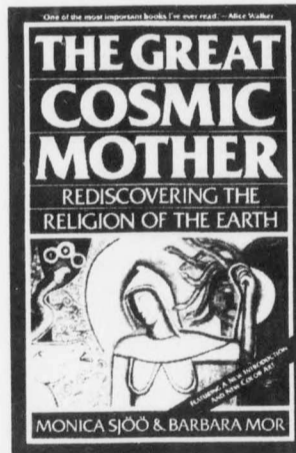
The Dialectic of Sex, by Shulamith Firestone (William Morrow, 1970).\*

The Feminine Mystique, by Betty Friedan (1963; Dell, 1984).

Feminism Unmodified: Discourses on Life and Law, by Catharine A. MacKinnon (Harvard University Press, 1987).

The Gender Gap, by Bella Abzug with Mim Kelber (Houghton Mifflin, 1984).\*

The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth, by Monica Sjöö and Barbara Mor (1987; HarperCollins, 1991).



Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism, by Mary Daly (1978; Beacon Press, 1990).

The Hite Report, by Shere Hite (1981; Dell, 1987).

How to Suppress Women's Writing, by Joanna Russ (University of Texas Press, 1983).

In Search of our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose, by Alice Walker (1983; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984).

Lesbian Nation: The Feminist Solution, by Jill Johnston (Simon & Schuster, 1973).\*

Lesbian/Woman, by Delartin and Phyllis Lyon (1972; revised and enlarged by Volcano Press, 1991).

Life in the Iron Mills, by Rebecca Harding

Davis (1861; reprinted by the Feminist Press, 1972 and 1985).

Look me in the Eye: Old Women, Aging and Ageism, by Barbara MacDonald with Cynthia Rich (Spinster's Ink, 1983).

Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution, by Adrienne Rich (1976; tenth anniversary ed., W.W. Norton, 1986).

Our Bodies, Ourselves, the Boston Women's Health Book Collective (1973; revised ed. 1976; The New Our Bodies, Ourselves 1985; all Simon & Schuster). The Politics of Women's Spirituality, edited by Charlene Spretnak (1981; Doubleday, 1982).

Pornography: Men Possessing Women, by Andrea Dworkin (Putnam/Perigree, 1981).

Rape in Marriage, edited by Diana E.H. Russell (1982; revised edition by Indiana University Press, 1990).

Sexual Politics, by Kate Millett (1970; reissued by Touchstone, 1990).

Silences, by Tillie Olsen (1978; Dell, 1989).

Sisterhood is Powerful, compiled and edited by Robin Morgan (Vintage Books, 1970).

This Bridge Called my Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color, edited by Cherré Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1983).

We Cannot Live Without Our Lives, by Barbara Deming (Grossman, 1974).\*

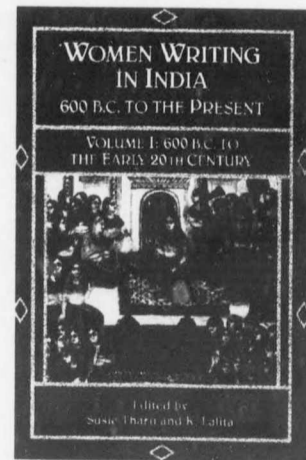
Women and Madness, by Phyllis Chesler (1972; reissued Harvest/Harcourt brace Jovanovich, 1989).

International  
Beyond the Veil: Male-Female: Dynamics in a Modern Muslim Society, by Fatima Mernissi (1975; revised edition Indiana University Press, 1987). A women's studies staple that smashed stereotypes.

Crimes Against Women: Proceedings of the International Tribunal, edited by Diana E.H. Russell and Nicole Van de Ven (1976; reissued 1984 by Frog in the Well). An early cross cultural silence breaker.

The Female Eunuch, by Germaine Greer (McGraw-Hill, 1971). Still Greer's best work: furious and witty.\*

Female Sexual Slavery: The International Traffic in Women and Children, by Kathleen Barry (1979; reissued with a new introduction, New York University Press, 1984). A searing, definitive work.



Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World, by Kumari Jayawardena (1982, Zed Books; distributed in the U.S. by Humanities Press, 1986). The book that shook up the international development community.

For the Record: the Making and Meaning of Feminist Knowledge, by Dale Spender (The Women's Press [U.K.], 1985). Comparisons of feminist theorists in different countries.

The Hidden Face of Eve: Women in the Arab World, by Nawal El Saadawi (Beacon Press, 1982). Banned for years in Egypt because of its passion and politics.

If Women Counted: A New Feminist Economics, by Marilyn J. Waring (1988; Harper San Francisco, 1989). An exposé of global patriarchal economics, and a vital blueprint for new feminist economic values.

Israeli Women: the Reality Behind the Myth, by Lesley Hazleton (Simon & Schuster, 1977). Just what the subtitle says...and an eye-opener.\*

Message from the Village, by Perdita Huston (1978; distributed by the United Nations Population Fund). For those who think feminists are all "first world" urbanites.

New Portuguese Letters (The Three Marias), translated by Helen R. Lane (Doubleday, 1974). The book that got its authors jailed - and provoked international feminist actions.\*

Russian Women's Studies: Essays on Sexism in Soviet Culture, by Tatyana Mamonova (Teacher's College Press, Columbia University, 1988). Feminism pre- and post-glasnost.

Sisterhood is Global, compiled and edited by Robin Morgan (Anchor, 1984). The first, and still definitive, international feminist anthology.

The Sisterhood of Man, by Kathleen Newland (W.W. Norton, 1979). A basic international consciousness-raiser that holds up well.

Women Writing in India: 600 BC to the early Twentieth Century and Women Writing in India: The Twentieth Century, both edited by Susie Tharu and K. Lalita (as one volume, 1990; the Feminist Press, as two volumes, 1991 and 1992). A stunning, epic, literary event.