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Never Married Women. By Barbara Levy Simon. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987, 198 pp., \$24.95.

Demographers project that more than 20 percent of college-educated women currently in their thirties will never marry, representing a dramatic increase from any previous cohort of American women. Yet this trend emerges in a cultural void in which we have few positive models for single womanhood across the life span. With that in mind, Barbara Levy Simon has set out to uncover the reality of the lives of an earlier generation of never-married women, a reality that has remained largely hidden behind pejorative stereotypes. These women were "rebels" who "disobeyed patriarchal preference" at a time in which 93 to 95 percent of women conformed by marrying (p. 28). This clearly written but unsurprising book illustrates that the women "rebels" went on to lead lives both rich and varied, belying stereotypes of the lonely, embittered spinster and the "old maid."

Based on qualitative interviews with 50 never-married women born between 1884 and 1918, Simon has carefully included women of diverse racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds in her sample. In six chapters covering the topics of work, family, friendships, and aging, her main theme is to explore such diversity. For example, while family of origin played a significant part in the lives of all the women, the 4 Puerto Rican women and 12 Black women interviewed were deeply enmeshed in extended kin networks as well. Also, individual families varied in the amounts of support mixed with criticism, or encouragement mixed with constraint, which they provided these nonconforming women.

Female friendships represent another rich source of intimacy in the lives of the never-married—again, experiences are diverse. Only 14 in this group had shared a home with another never-married woman, raising questions about the possibilities for lesbian relationships in this generation. Unfortunately, the author concluded that she could not explore the topic of sexual intimacy with her respondents because some were offended and few would readily agree to answer such questions. While I empathize with the problems of the in-depth interviewer, we are left with a large gap in this portrayal of the never-married, particularly as the stereotypes the author wishes to debunk rest on images of women with deeply repressed, frustrated sexuality.

There are common threads in the lives of these single women as well, found in the social constraints each had to endure over the life course. The author emphasizes two such threads, familiar to scholars of gender relations. Most limiting for these women were the unequal familial division of labor and caretaking and the societal division

of caretaking between the state and family. Never-married women, even more than other women, face an inordinate burden of care for dependent, aged, or ill family members, and this unequal situation is exacerbated by the lack of a strong welfare state. Fully 42 of the 50 women in this study had served as the primary caregivers for ailing parents, and 36 had taken charge of the family household for extensive periods.

If never-married women continue to be seen as lacking other legitimate roles because they are neither wives nor mothers, they will be particularly vulnerable to this extreme form of gender bias in the future, for they may be expected to pick up the slack as the elderly population grows, and public welfare spending increasingly comes under attack. Thus, although Simon conjectures that never-married women do better on limited resources and experience greater well-being in later life than other women, such nonconformists are likely to be more harmed by the public and private gender division of labor than other women.

Those with backgrounds in gender relations, family, and aging will find little new in Levy Simon's study, but I recommend the book for general readers. In introductory courses aiming to debunk stereotypes and expose students to diverse paths for women, it could be quite effective.

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Feminism and Anthropology. By Henrietta L. Moore. Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 1988, and Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989, 246 pp., \$39.50, \$15.95.

The back cover of Henrietta L. Moore's *Feminism and Anthropology* bears a glowing endorsement from Marilyn Strathern, internationally renowned English feminist anthropologist (a category fraught with impossible contradictions, as she herself has pointed out). According to Strathern, the book offers an excellent overview "of the scope and substance of feminist scholarship within anthropology." She is right.

In six clearly written chapters, Moore provides a brief, reflective overview of the stages in the development of a feminist anthropology, reviews what she sees to be the four central areas to which feminist anthropologists have made contributions, and assesses the problems and possibilities for the future of its theoretical and practical concerns. This highly synthetic exercise is handled with subtlety and clarity, making the book an excellent choice for anthropologically informed audiences wishing to survey one "growth pole" of the discipline and women's studies' scholars wanting an assessment of recent developments in a sister field.

Moore's methodology and presentational style are complex: she sets the stage in virtually every chapter by reference to classic theoretical traditions in social (and, to a lesser degree, cultural) anthropology, then illustrates the development of feminist perspectives that are at once critiques of, and limited by, their relation to the