

# WOMEN at the CENTER

Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture  
Duke University Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library

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## Jean Fox O'Barr: "A Promise Kept"

*"Jean Fox O'Barr is a promise kept—a woman who made her name into a statement about all of us and whose life represents our collective forty year journey into a different place in the University and the world."* – Ann Curry WC'65, President, Coxe, Curry, and Associates

Political scientist and women's studies scholar Jean Fox O'Barr has been building community at Duke University since 1969. After directing Continuing Education for eleven years, she established the Women's Studies Program in 1983.



Jean O'Barr, left, reflects on remarks given during the symposium in her honor

O'Barr has done groundbreaking work to foster connections among faculty members and with students while fulfilling her roles as an administrator, as the long-time editor of feminist journal *Signs*, and as a scholar. Although O'Barr retired in 2008, she maintains her connection to Duke by teaching the senior seminar for the Baldwin Scholars each fall.

Almost 250 people registered for the recent symposium in honor of the 40-year career of Dr. O'Barr. A co-founder of the Bingham Center, O'Barr worked closely with us to plan our 4th biennial symposium, "What Does It Mean to Be an Educated Woman?" During the course of the symposium, participants explored the topic through the lenses of activism, pedagogy, and scholarship, each central to Jean's work and the work of the Bingham Center.

Lisa Yun Lee, Director, Jane Addams

Hull-House Museum, kicked off the weekend with her keynote lecture, which included this observation: "The incredible legacy of scholarship, sustained over 50 years that blurred the lines of so many of our private and public lives and where we

experienced the personal as political and the political as pleasurable. This is what I consider... Jean O'Barr's legacy."

Judith Ruderman, former Vice Provost for Academic and Administrative Services, reflected on Jean's tenure as Director of Continuing Education. "What a perfect, concise descriptor for Jean herself the word 'catalyst' offers! She made things happen ... by dint of her foresight and commitment, her energy and savvy, her modus operandi of cooperation rather than competition."

We invite you to experience the symposium by visiting our website where you'll find links to videos and photographs of the program. The Bingham Center will serve as the repository for all speaker remarks in print as well. We're also happy to report that *Duke Magazine* will feature our program in one of its upcoming issues.

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**SALLIE BINGHAM CENTER**  
FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY AND CULTURE

## New Acquisitions

### National Coalition of Abortion Providers

NCAP was founded in 1990 to represent the political interests of over 200 independent abortion providers throughout the United States. The collection includes NCAP newsletters and administrative files as well as pro-life organization files and partial birth abortion legislation and debate information.

### North Carolina Association of Women Attorneys

NCAWA works to increase the effective participation by women in the justice system, in public office, and within the legal profession. Records in this collection include meeting minutes, correspondence, publications, and conference materials.

### Southerners on New Ground (SONG)

SONG, co-founded by Mandy Carter, currently works to build, connect, and sustain those in the South who believe in liberation across all lines of race, class, culture, gender, and sexuality. The collection includes organizational files as well as materials from retreats, training, workshops, and community events sponsored or promoted by SONG.

## Documenting the Work of Pauline Bart

The Bingham Center recently acquired the papers of activist, sociologist, poet, and writer Pauline Bart. One of the most prolific contemporary feminist writers, Bart is Professor Emerita at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and a scholar at UCLA's Center for the Study of Women. She has written on a wide range of issues including depression in middle-aged women, female sexuality, women's studies as a discipline, women and violence, rape, menopause, and pornography.

The collection includes many drafts of

her influential papers as well as notes and audio recordings from an extensive study on women who were attacked and either raped or resisted rape. The collection also contains extensive interviews with women who were members of Chicago's Jane Collective, an underground abortion service in operation from 1969 to 1973.

Due to the sensitive nature of many of the materials, access to Pauline Bart's papers will be restricted until the collection is fully processed.

## Snapshots from the Symposium



Sallie Bingham, third from left, and other audience members listen intently during the panel on activism.



Nancy Hogshead-Makar, Miriam Peskowitz, and Amy McDonald all spoke on the topic of activism and education.



Panelist Melea Greenfeld, left, enjoys lunch with symposium attendees.



Margaret Taylor Smith and Anne Firor Scott catch up during a break.

<http://library.duke.edu/specialcollections/bingham/education-symposium>

## Introducing Megan Lewis

In July 2009, Megan Lewis joined our staff as the Technical Services Archivist. Megan has worked with rare books and special collections in a variety of settings since 1990. She has been with the Special Collections Library since 2002, and is excited to have this opportunity to focus on archival work. Megan will be processing archival collections, such as the Sara Evans papers, and continuing to catalog the center's artists' books collection.

In October, Megan presented on a panel at the Feminisms & Rhetorics conference at Michigan State University, sponsored by the Coalition of Women Scholars in the History of Rhetoric. During the panel "Popular Culture and Feminist Scholarship," she discussed the challenges and opportunities of archiving popular culture. The panel also included Elizabeth Hatmaker of Illinois State University, who discussed the difficulty she faced trying to find primary source materials to support her research on women and the B-movie culture of the 1970s.

During her talk, Megan pointed out that the Bingham Center's collections of zines, comics, prescriptive literature, lesbian pulp fiction, and girls' literature are



**Megan Lewis, Bingham Center  
Technical Services Archivist**

all examples of successful popular culture collecting. As the field of popular culture studies continues to expand, she predicted that these collections will continue to be sought after. The Bingham Center's collections, along with the Murray Collection of Pulp Culture and the advertising materials in the Hartman Center, help make Duke's Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library an excellent place to study the stuff of everyday life that makes up popular culture.

## Catching the Devil's Tale

The Devil's Tale, the new blog of the Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, is now online. Events from the Bingham Center, as well as the other research centers, news about notable collections, and more are posted regularly. Subscribe through your favorite RSS service or visit often to keep up with the latest news from the Bingham Center and the rest of the Special Collections Library.

<http://library.duke.edu/blogs/rbmscl>



## New Acquisitions

### Women Work!

Founded in 1978 as the Displaced Homemaker Network, this organization became Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment in 1993, recognizing the range of economic transitions women face throughout their lives. In 2009, Women Work! closed its doors. These records document their nationwide efforts with lawmakers, business leaders, nonprofit organizations and labor unions to improve policies for working women.

### Personal Papers

The Bingham Center has had the good fortune to acquire many collections of personal papers over the past few months. These include:

- Pauline Bart
- June Blum
- Muriel Henderson
- Bertha "B" Holt
- Lisa Jervis
- Claire Keyes
- Patricia Miller
- Victoria Tepe

Additions to these collections have also recently arrived:

- Betsy Alden
- Robin Chandler Duke
- Anne Firor Scott
- Elizabeth McMahan
- Margaret Taylor Smith

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Women's History and Culture

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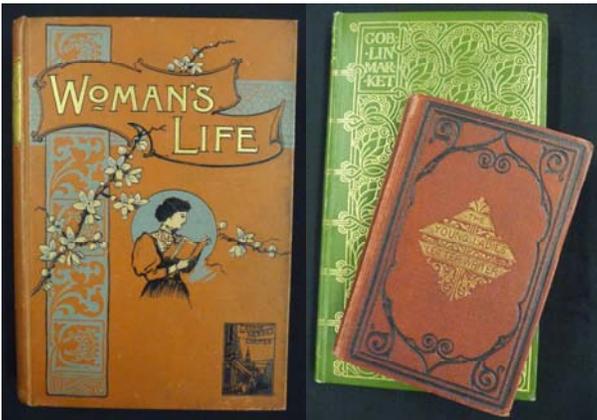
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## I Take Up My Pen: 19th Century British Women Writers



Three beautifully bound titles from the exhibit include the serial *Woman's Life* (1895-1934), Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* (1893), and a prescriptive title from Mrs. Alexander Walker called *The Young Ladies' Letter Writer: Containing Outlines of Letters Adapted to the Habits and Minds of Young Ladies of All Ages* (c1875).

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was a time of industrialization, social reform, and debate about women's place in society. These changes and tensions are reflected in this winter's exhibit, "I Take Up My Pen: 19<sup>th</sup> Century British Women Writers," which will be on display in the Perkins Library Gallery from December 15, 2009 through February 21, 2010.

The exhibit will display items from the Bingham Center's collection of fiction by 19<sup>th</sup> century British women and documents the wide range of writings produced by female writers: novels, poetry, prescriptive literature, textbooks, political pamphlets, feminist writing, magazines, diaries, and travel literature. It also shows the tremendous variety in publishing formats, from "triple decker" novels to periodicals.

Highlights include a book of poetry by the Brönte sisters, a women's suffrage pamphlet by Frances Power Cobbe, Frances M. Harvey's illustrated diary from a trip up the Nile River, and a beautifully-illustrated copy of Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* (pictured at left).

Offering an in-depth look at 19<sup>th</sup> century women's lives through their writing, this exhibit challenges conventional Victorian stereotypes, showing women as suffragists, world travelers, professional writers, poets, publishers, and labor reformers.

<http://library.duke.edu/specialcollections/bingham/news>