

Trillin has noted in the *New Yorker*, is "that rare term which appears at first glance to be positive but is always negative." In *Border Crossings*, Giroux describes the use of this term as an example of the "politics of erasure" in which all manner of problems are "no longer addressed in serious terms; instead, it has become commonplace to deflect or mask one's complicity with these practices by labelling those who argue against them ideological tyrants." Giroux looks for new models for dialogue which will lead to real solutions to real problems, and he focuses on the critical role of the "cultural worker," that individual who creates symbolic representations that have a pedagogical dimension and can foster liberation and enhance democracy. He includes lawyers, artists, journalists, but especially teachers. Librarians, nurses, country western singers and waitresses never make it in to his text, but presumably he would approve of their inclusion.

In eight dense, theoretical chapters and two lighter interviews, Giroux skillfully advocates a "discourse of possibility," reaching for a perspective that ignores or denies rigid boundaries or borders. As one of the leading advocates of critical pedagogy, Giroux struggles to formalize theory that draws inspiration from many ideologies and rejects rigidity: "Any pedagogy that acts in the service of only one outcome generally constitutes a form of terrorism." The chapter, "Modernism, Postmodernism, and Feminism" is a useful summary of the strengths and contributions of each, and it nicely articulates their evolution. Giroux's border pedagogy is particularly useful to the extent that it provides an antidote to the "limited-good" mentality that assumes that the only solution is money, and since there isn't enough to go around, we'll solve my problem, but yours will have to wait.

The danger that critical pedagogy presents to the library is that its advocates will assume that the content of libraries represents yesterday's canon (see Mark Cyzyk's article, "Canon Formation, Library Collections, and the Dilemma of Collection Development," in the January

1993 *C&RL*) and needs ruthless reconstruction to flourish, rather than understanding what libraries really represent: the interplay of culture, ethnicity, gender, and language across time and generations. Librarians need to pay attention to the debate and attempt to deepen the dialogue. Although Giroux does not mention the library, it is clearly one place on campus and in our society where the exchange of ideas is open and free. Neither tests nor grades nor time constraints come between the reader and the record. New technology and access to worldwide resources leave any attempt to confine the academic library to monocultural or monolingual content as hopeless as keeping mosquitoes out of the house with fishnet. But what, then, if we set out to collect the world's diversity? A few university libraries try to. They quickly panic, not from the rush of dangerous ideas and alien truths, but from the implications for space, staff, and budget. The other constraint on the capacity of university libraries to assimilate the world's diversity is time—faculty time. Big collections can intimidate scholars who cannot possibly know or read everything or search every database. The logical extension of border pedagogy is limitless humility, which is, after all, the ultimate empowerment. Giroux is hoping for dialogue and the exchange of ideas and narratives. As librarians, we need to speak up, meet his challenge, and join the discussion.—Ellen Brow, *University of Nevada, Reno*.

Thomas, Gillian. *A Position to Command Respect: Women and the Eleventh Britannica*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1992. 212p., alk. paper, \$24. (ISBN 0-8108-2567-8).

In the 1992 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* over 250 women are listed among the contributors. Although this represents a small percentage of the total contributors, it is nonetheless a reflection of the major impact women have made on modern scholarship. Yet, as Gillian Thomas ably demonstrates in her feminist study of the influential and still revered eleventh edition of the *Britan-*

nica, the intellectual position of women was very different in the early years of this century. In 1910, the year of publication of the eleventh edition, there were a mere 35 women contributors out of 1,500. In her book, Thomas examines the lives and careers of these women and offers a unique perspective on the social history of the time.

The editorial work at the *Britannica* itself comes under close scrutiny as Thomas dissects the content and emphases of the eleventh edition. She finds, for example, a consistently heavy reliance on German scholarship, though this is tempered by the emergence of a "distinct American influence" (12 percent of the contributors were American, including at least one woman, the novelist Gertrude Atherton). What Thomas finds most significant about the eleventh edition is that the nature of the women's contributions had undergone an important change from previous editions. For the first time, women had actively assisted in "compiling and preparing" the scholarly essays, though they were still not recognized as "cultural authorities in their own right." Most of the women academics among the contributors "were young scholars without strongly established reputations or positions of authority." Not one, at the time, was teaching in a university.

Thomas looks beyond the *Britannica* and considers both the education of women in England (in a chapter entitled "The Symbolic World of Man") and their public role in English society. She touches on the importance of the periodical press in providing a voice for literary women and on travel literature as a vehicle for women writers. She notes that "some of the *Britannica* women contributors [notably Gertrude Bell, Isabella Bird, and Bertha Philpotts] fall into the familiar late-Victorian category of intrepid lady travelers." Yet, the authority of father figures prevalent in the culture at large underscored the notion that "knowledge was a male preserve. . . ."

If a central figure emerges from this book, it is Janet Hogarth, a lower-level supervisor at the *Britannica*, who was not

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a contributor but rather was responsible for administering the team that prepared the *Encyclopaedia's* index. Previous historians have suggested that Hogarth might have been the mysterious "X" who wrote the article on "Women" for the eleventh edition, but Thomas deduces that the real author was most likely Hugh Chisholm, the edition's editor. But it is Hogarth who best represents the possibilities and the limitations for women who worked on the *Britannica*.

Thomas does not muster much enthusiasm for the work of the thirty-five women contributors. She is certainly sympathetic to their "uncomfortable public role of exemplars of women's intellectual capacities," but finds the extent of their scholarly contribution limited. Indeed, she notes that "some of the . . . women contributors make their sole appearance in the Eleventh Edition as collaborators on entries either written with husbands or fathers or providing a redaction of their work." While she applauds women's efforts to overcome limitations placed on their participation in scientific work, she finds that much of the work of women scientists was "subsumed under the activities of male co-workers" (which is not surprising to anyone who has studied the history of science.) She concludes that the only women contributors who attained full recognition for their work

were those who "pioneered some entirely new field of study," such as Alice Gomme (children's games) and Victoria, Lady Welby (significs).

The final portion of the book consists of biographical sketches (or "outlines") of the women contributors. The best-known of these include Gertrude Atherton, Mary Bateson, Gertrude Bell, Isabella Bird (Bishop), Alice Meynell, and Mary Augusta Ward (who was better known as the novelist "Mrs. Humphrey Ward"). Each sketch amounts to just one paragraph on the contributor's life and career. Most of the listings contain at least one bibliographical reference. While this kind of limited information is useful for the unfamiliar names in the group, it falls far short of the "collective biography" Thomas promises in her introduction. Rather, the overall effect is more like a slice of intellectual history.

Thomas has thoroughly documented this work with over 400 notes and a nine-page bibliography of both primary and secondary sources. *A Position to Command Respect* deserves a space on the shelf next to standard histories like the *The Great EB: The Story of the Encyclopaedia Britannica* by Herman Kogan (1958) and *The Circle of Knowledge: Encyclopaedias Past and Present* by James Wells (1968).—Thomas A. Karel, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.