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For Crying Out Loud: Women's Poverty in the United States. Diane Burton and Ann Withorn (Eds.). Reviewed by Tracy Maybrey, Western Michigan University.

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who seeks to understand both sides of the immigration policy debate.

Robert L. Boyd
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Diane Burton and Ann Withorn (Eds.), *For Crying Out Loud: Women's Poverty in the United States*. Boston, MA: Southend Press, 1997. \$ 22.00 papercover.

Pleasantries first. This book is a compilation of first-person and other narratives by women whose lives have been affected by poverty. As such, this volume is sorely needed in the era of welfare-reform and post-War on Poverty politics. Too often, poverty is studied in isolation from other variables or is presented in research that is murky and impersonal. The richness of this text lay in the breadth and diverseness of its contributors and in the intimacy with which most of the contributors discuss the reality of being poor and female in America.

There are many women in this book who have grown up poor and there are just as many who became poor after an ugly, life-changing catastrophe beyond that, hardly any other generalizations can be made. In this book, we learn that not all poor women are African-American and not all of the activists are European-American. And while many poverty activists break the mold of social expectations, there are still too many women who continue to work to maintain tradition and, by extension, poverty. There is great attention paid in this book to the dynamics of race and class in the fight against poverty. The most thought-provoking essay in the text was written by one of the editors, Ann Withorn, on the conundrum of women who work in the system that oppresses women (even though one of her premises, which women who oppress other women may be reacting to a homophobic fear of same-sex intimacy, appears overly-dramatic, even trite). Together, that essay and the bibliography about the political right make the book worth buying.

As a text, this book belongs on the shelves of those interested in social policy, economics, and multi-cultural practice. It

contains thoughtful analysis on a variety of issues related to poverty including welfare, immigration and violence by known and emerging scholars such as Mimi Abramovitz and Lisa Catanzarite and Vilma Ortiz. The book's true value lies in the tales that are told not by the scholars but by the survivors. As Robinson so adamantly put it ". . . clearly I do count-my story counts-along with all the other stories of all the different types of women . . ." (p. 109). So often we make sterile and far removed our discussions of social policy as to almost render inconsequential the results of intervention. We prognosticate on the aggregate meanings of legislation and agency rules without giving full attention to personal implications and individual consequences. This book puts a face on welfare reform, immigration, violence, devolution, and other large, contemporary social issues which have been the subjects of review and overhaul by legislatures and agencies alike in the name of affecting poverty. None of the contributors in this book will allow us to ignore their fate.

So here's where the pleasantries end. This book is destined to infuriate every one of its readers. One's anger is evoked continually by this book because ultimately, this is a book about failure. There is the failure to prevent poverty from which flow other large-scale failures that affect people's lives. There is the failure of the media to report the truth about so-called welfare reform, the failure of scholarship to investigate the circumstances of women of color within the context of poverty, there is the failure of laws to protect women living in violent homes, the failure of the child-welfare system to protect young girls in foster care, and the ongoing failure of the patriarchy to support the needs of mothers and their children. With failure comes either resignation or incentive. Fortunately, the editors of the text have chosen to concentrate on the later. Some of the entries in the book offer testimony of advocates and instructions even, in how to change the system. In one example, by Claire Cummings and Betty Reid Mandell, several organizing projects including an alternative newspaper, videos and a speaker's bureau have been created in effort to effect change in one agency, one neighborhood, one college classroom at a time. It all seems eminently feasible. The final section of the book is entitled "Talking Across the Tables: Moving Beyond Dialogue to Negotiation and Action". This is somewhat misleading

since other sections of the book include content on how to affect change.

Besides the ire that is naturally raised in the reading of this book, its chief criticism is that it is limited in its geographic purview. Most of the activists seem to come from the northeastern United States (Massachusetts, to be specific) and many of the activists seem to be involved in the same few grass roots organizations. This may be a case of natural social selection; the editors of the book seem active on some level in most of the efforts profiled in this text. Whatever the case, it does perhaps raise the concern of over-localization of a decidedly not local issue.

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Esther Madriz, *Nothing Happens to Good Girls: Fear of Crime in Women's Lives*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997. \$40 hardcover.

Studies of domestic and nondomestic crime against women have increased over the past 25 years, but fear of crime and the way it affects women's lives has received less scholarly attention. Fear of crime in women's lives is the topic of this new book by Esther Madriz, a sociologist at the University of San Francisco. *Nothing Bad Happens to Good Girls* follows and extends the work of feminist theorists and researchers including Griffin, Brownmiller, Dworkin, Stanko, Russell, Ehrenreich, and English by focusing on the ways in which fear of crime contributes to the social control of women. The author's attention to the complex relationship between domestic and nondomestic crime along with her exploration of class and race differences in women's fear of crime are among the greatest contributions of the book.

Madriz gathered information from 140 women through eighteen focus groups and thirty in-depth interviews. Although she does not present a systematic analysis of the data, the author does effectively use women's experiences and opinions to illustrate and support her main points. Madriz includes information on her qualitative methodology and critiques quantitative approaches in criminology in a methodological appendix. The appendix is