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**Peter C. Rollins, Susan W. Rollins, eds.** *Gender in Popular Culture: Images of Men and Women in Literature, Visual Media and Material Culture.* Cleveland, Okla.: Ridgemont Press, 1995. iv + 272 pp. $16.50 (paper), ISBN 978-0-9641755-0-1.

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The Popular Culture Association's new Director of Development, Peter Rollins, is half of a Mom and Pop team. This lively new book shows that they intend to keep us all popping.

A collection of papers originally delivered at our national meeting, they boldly enter the Gender War and emerge triumphant. The eleven essays do what the subtitle promises. They indicate how popular culture reflects aspects of gender issues often missed in the more "official" and "academic" material. Instead of officialism we have focus, insight, and balance. As Jane Bakerman claims in her Preface, they "avoid useless speculation and concentrate on analysis and information."

Part One deals with "Star and Reverential Images" and includes case studies of Madonna, Ethel Waters, and Anais Nin. There are also essays on women in baseball films, clothing and self image, and cross-dressing. Misty Anderson argues that most accounts of Madonna "reveal only a political schizophrenia that misses the innovative twist in Madonna's post-modern, popular culture work. She offers not content but forms that challenge traditional s structures of visual pleasure." Wendy DuBow's essay on "The Diary of Anais Nin" suggests that Nin's diaries "highlight important tensions within contemporary feminism and, therefore, deserve close attention." She finds in the diaries an ambivalence about popular success and the accompanying public life it demands. Nin dislikes the idea of hostility between the sexes, "I love men, I think the most courageous thing to do today is to conquer ourselves from within–not to blame others."

Part Two, entitled "Books and Their Readers," ranges from Edith Wharton to Dorothy Parker, and even includes "The Case of the Vanishing Role Model: The Judy Bolton Mysteries." If there is an over-all challenge, it is put forth by Cathy Fagan: to create equitable, gender-free expressions of authority. "That challenge," Ms. Fagan writes, "assures us that pretty women and their handsome princes have not yet rescued each other."

There is much that is new and fresh here. The writers begin at the present (which is the key to popular culture) but show the relevance of the past. In Jane Bakerman's syllogistic summary: they simplify as they amplify.

The writers and editors have done their job well, and the books should find readers everywhere.

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