

# arts/entertainment

## Female writers cope with time, style frustrations

By Patti Wieser

**Editor's Note:** This is the first of a three-part series on local women authors.

Dealing with lack of time, changing writing style from column-writing to book-writing and overcoming the frustrating process of writing are obstacles which face Nebraska women writers.

Chairwoman of the Women's Studies Program at UNL, Moira Ferguson, said, "The level of the work is more than I have time for." She later added, "Sometimes I have to decline invitations for reviews and occasional articles because I have so many

teaching and other professional responsibilities, nationally and locally."

She writes in the library, in the study at home and for a few weekend hours in the office, often polishing drafts over morning coffee at assorted restaurants, she said.

Ferguson's writing mainly centers on author Mary Wollstonecraft, women's literature, the birth of feminist writings by women and the birth of feminism, she said.

Ferguson, Midwest delegate to the National Coordinating Council on the National Women's Studies Program, said she is putting together an anthology. Entitled *First Feminists*, it is to be pub-

lished jointly by Indiana University Press and Feminist Press, she said.

### Women's rights

The anthology centers on women writing about women's subjugation and women's rights in general, usually focusing on education, the role of marriage and later on the overall limitations on women's rights, she said.

The anthology contains an excerpt, dated 1739, by a washer-woman who complained of the oppressed situation of working women at a time when most women were illiterate.

A distinction between the exploitation of working class women and the exploitation of bourgeois women was seen by Wollstonecraft, said Ferguson, explaining that working class women were under a double oppression—economics and sex.

Ferguson said she has been researching the history and development of women's studies in the United States and its relationship to the civil rights and antiwar movements.

### Political feminist

She said her writing interests resulted from being a political feminist and her interest in the history of progressive thought.

"I view writing as a conscious political act, of particular importance in women's studies where the patriarchy has dominated a set of guidelines for all literature for so long," Ferguson said. "The history of women of all classes, races and of different sexual orientation recorded honestly,

analyzed, and understood can help provide solutions for women's future political, social and sexual emancipation.

"This rewriting of history to correct racist, sexist and classist bias seems to me a pre-condition for the liberation of oppressed and exploited people in this country and throughout the world. I mean of course, and the categories obviously overlap, women, all people of color, lesbians, homosexuals and working class people."

### Scottish writer

A native of Glasgow, Scotland, Ferguson said this is her fifth year in Nebraska.

She said, "I find the conditions relatively peaceful (in Nebraska) and this is conducive to my style of writing . . . I like to write in silence."

Ferguson has done reviews for a number of journals. An article about Rebecca West for the *Minnesota Review Journal* is expected to be published in the fall, she said. Ferguson is a Wollstonecraft contributor and a contributor at large in the 18th- and 19th-century for the annual bibliography of *English Language Notes*, an English language periodical.

She has done reviews for *Prairie Schooner* and is on the advisory board of the *Feminist Press*. Ferguson is now working on a review for *Women and Literature*, a women's studies periodical.

In 1978, she wrote an article on the *Female Reader* for *Signs*, an interdisciplinary women's journal at the University of Chicago.

## Movie gallops in grandeur

By Peg Sheldrick

If ever there was a movie with a potential to be schlocky treacle, *The Black Stallion* is it. Not only is it billed as 'a film the whole family can enjoy'—it involves a child and an animal. A horse, no less. Shades of *My Friend Flicka*. Hollywood almost always uses this sort of premise as an excuse for trotting out the most maudlin and hackneyed of clichés.

### movie review

But *The Black Stallion* fails to live down to these expectations. Like the glorious beast of the title, *The Black Stallion* breaks away from the common herd and gallops off to genuinely exhilarating adventure.

Based on the novel by Walter Farley, the film tells the story of a boy, Eric, and the Arabian stallion he befriends. The two are the sole survivors of a shipwreck that leaves them stranded on a strange shore. The relationship that burgeons there continues even after civilization has reclaimed them.

### Words used wisely

Melissa Mathison, Jeanne Rosenberg and William Wittliff owe thanks to director Carroll Ballard for his deft handling of their eloquent, intelligent screenplay.

The tale is told with a minimum of dialogue, with none of the chatty, inane narration that one might be tempted to use. The film's reliance on visual exposition is a major factor in lifting it above the average boy-and-his-pet film.

Director of photography Caleb Deschanel and his crew have done such beautiful work that dialogue would be more of an intrusion than an enhancement. From the first moments aboard the ship to the climactic horse race that ends the film, the cinematography is superlative, telling the story with tower-

ing grandeur as well as the simplest of silhouettes.

Kelly Reno is engaging and credible as Eric, a boy of remarkable resourcefulness. The supporting cast contains many familiar faces and fine performances. Teri Garr appears in yet another mother role, fine as usual (for all that she is a primary talent in perennially secondary roles). Mickey Rooney does a nice job as Henry, the old trainer who helps Eric and the Black enter the world of racing. Singer Hoyt Axton did a good job in a brief appearance as the boy's father.

### Horseplay

However Cass-Ole as the Black Stallion runs away with the show, and more than a few hearts. Whether cantering gracefully through the surf or responding shyly to the boy's friendly overtures, he is a beautiful creature to watch.

Die-hard romantics may find it a little saddening that the boy and the horse wind up back in civilization, where the boy decides to turn this almost mystical animal into a racehorse. But then, you can't keep a legend in a suburban backyard.

Carmine Coppola's music is exotic and evocative, without being intrusive. In a movie where dialogue is so infrequent the score is especially important, and Coppola has risen to the occasion.

Another Coppola, Francis Ford, is the film's executive producer, and his association with it may attract older viewers skittish of anything labeled family fare. They will not be disappointed.

*The Black Stallion* is simple without being simple-minded. It may even stir memories of *The Red Balloon*, another "children's" film with appeal for all ages. Tuesday's preview night audience was more than once moved to applaud, and it contained at least as many adults as children.

*The Black Stallion* will open soon at the Stuart Theatre.

## Women in media course set

Images of women that are created by the mass media will be studied and discussed in a new class to be offered next semester, "Construction of the Self: Images of Women in the Mass Media."

The class will be taught by Sociology Assistant Professor Mary Jo Deegan and Terry Nygren of the Centennial Education Program.

Deegan said sexism in television, films, ads, music and other media forms will be critiqued in a sociology and film studies perspective. Deegan said she will teach theories of society to "look into the whole system of things that try to reinforce each other" in the media, including who has the money and power for productions.

She said Nygren will teach the class from a Freudian analysis point of view.

"Most of the mass media show women in very traditional roles," Deegan said, because people grow accustomed to a certain style of program and most production companies are run by men.

The portrayal of women in the media in both positive and negative ways will be studied in the class, Deegan said.

"Some films are more supportive of women's rights," she said.

Deegan said she hopes the class will create the atmosphere of a feminist forum where both men and women who are feminists can meet and discuss the things that they are concerned about.

"Construction of the Self" is offered through the Centennial program. The class will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. next fall.

## Professor wins two awards

A rare honor for an author has come to UNL History Professor William L. Sherman, who has had the second of his two recently published books selected as an "Outstanding Academic Book for the 1979-80 Year."

Co-written by Sherman and Michael C. Meyer of the University of Arizona, "The Course of Mexican History" received the distinction from "Choice," a publication of the Association of College and Research Libraries which is used in virtually all academic libraries in the United States and Canada.

Only days earlier, Sherman had been

notified that his book, "Forced Labor in Sixteenth Century Central America," a full-length study of New World Indian slavery, had been awarded the same honor by "Choice."

"The Course of Mexican History" was cited by "Choice" as "A comprehensive history of Mexico (which) belongs on the shelves of all public, high school, and graduate libraries."

The book has already been adopted at 150 Universities within a year.

"We hope the award will mean acceptance for the book at more institutions," Sherman said.

## Andy Pasto's atmosphere reflected in pasta, wines

By Lyle George

I hopped into my car, with no place in particular that I wanted to review. I decided to just drive around until I encountered something which caught my eye. As my car crossed the West O viaduct an Andy Pasto's sign caught my eye. I responded to their advertising plea and very soon I was on their doorstep at 701 P St.

### viandese

The neighborhood is a refurbished rundown area of town. It's right next to the railroad yard. I always count my hubcaps.

Andy Pasto's is on the second floor of the Emporium. The building has a lot of empty halls and gives one the impression of being partially abandoned.

The interior is very pleasant—the walls are covered with wood and the ceiling and light fixtures look like they are right out of a pre-1940 grocery store.

The lighting is a little dim. Hanging plants brighten up the atmosphere. The view out the north windows is a rather intriguing parking area in front of the Burlington Northern depot.

### Novel decorations

There are a lot of novel things about the decoration. The cashier is located behind a teller's window that looked like it came from a bank or some sort of ticket office. Next to the cashier is an antique washing

machine, but I don't really know what it has to do with atmosphere in a restaurant.

There is much room for exploration of the Italian food scene at Andy Pasto's. For appetizers, you can order zucchini fingers for \$2.35, broiled mushrooms or the Andy-pasto, a selection of assorted meats and relishes.

They have a large choice of pizzas, Italian breads and veal dishes. If you're feeling hungry and well-to-do, the house special, at \$14.95, would be a good four-course meal if there are two or more people who want it. On Fridays and Saturdays, they also feature prime ribs.

### Nice wine

Andy Pasto's also has a nice wine list, with nearly 20 wines. Their wine rack is enclosed in an old phone booth.

I had their Italian Sampler for \$8.50. Included was ravioli cannelloni, manicotto meatball and Italian sausage, as well as bread and the soup and salad bar.

The meal was generous enough to more than satiate my hunger. I happened to find the salad bar particularly enticing—there weren't as many toppings available as I have seen at other places but the toppings and relishes they did have were very good and allowed me to put together a great change-of-pace salad.

The pasta and meat dishes I had were good. The only problem might depend on your own personal taste. The tomato sauce that was on all of these dishes gave them a degree of sameness that I didn't particularly care for. Other people might find it very acceptable.