

pivotal in bringing about the pre-Roe repeal laws in New York and the restrictive laws in Pennsylvania. The book is thrilling and suspenseful. It reads like a cliffhanger but instead of passively sitting in my chair waiting to witness the killer's next move, I read of yet another court decision or the story of the battle turned to war between the Clergy Consultation Service and the Catholic Conferences. But the fight I was reading about was taking place over my body and the body of all women.

Nossiff identifies three key results that came out of the years preceding Roe: (i) the emergence of women as key political figures; (ii) the power and federalist structure of the judicial branch; and lastly, (iii) the monumental decision of *Roe v. Wade*.

In the end, Nossiff reminds us that the abortion conflict remains unresolved. Abortion policy post-Roe has witnessed a backlash and in many states access to abortion has been severely curtailed. I read *Before Roe* as a call to action—to all women to know our history, to be aware of the contested terrain and weak ground upon which we sit, and to continue fighting for what is left of our civil liberties. The book also points to the power of broad based coalitions. Without coalitions, the gains in abortion rights would have been merely a dream, a timely reminder in today's political climate.

## **Hollywood Moms: Photographs by Joyce Ostin**

Joyce Ostin  
New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001

### **Reviewed by Alison Bartlett**

This is a handsome coffee table book of 50 black and white glamour shots of Hollywood mothers and daughters. All proceeds from the book go towards breast cancer, which is perhaps one of the book's most redeeming features. The photographer is a survivor of breast cancer and writes in the preface that this is her gift back to the world: "a photography book about the celebration of life. And the love between mother and daughter." Joyce Ostin had an interest in photography for only three years before embarking on this project which, she suggests, involves all people she knows. If this is the case, the range of stars is quite formidable: from Madonna, Goldie Hawn, Carol Burnett, Susan Sarandon, Michelle Pfeiffer, Melanie Griffith, Joanna Poitier, k.d. lang, and so on, to lesser known actresses, show hosts, writers, designers, and partners of famous actors. All the subjects were asked, "What are the most nourishing moments you've shared with your mother or daughter?" and all answer in the most positive and loving way, of course. Often the photographer adds her impression of the love she felt in the family she was photographing.

While the preface speaks of the fear and uncertainty involved in surviving cancer, and the introduction by Carrie Fisher speaks of the tensions, flammability, flaws and intermittent difficulties in her relationship with her mother Debbie Reynolds, this is soon passed over in favour of the honeyed imagery of mother and daughter stars. Like a Hollywood production, this imagery contributes to the fantasy that there is a perfect relationship we are all seeking. There is a lot of blonde, white and lace; everyone is smiling, many of the mothers have their eyes closed or half closed in an expression of bliss; sunshine often comes streaming through the background so that the warm fuzziness of mother and daughter love is woven into the photographic technique. Why are there no photos of mothers and daughters in cold environments, being icy to each other, or in wild, disgraceful positions? Because this is an extension of Hollywood and the reputation of its stars as mothers and daughters. Mothering and daughtering, however, involves much more than this book represents, as it once again reminds us mere mortals how inadequate our relationships are in comparison to those offered by Hollywood.

## **Writing in the Feminine in French and English Canada: A Question of Ethics**

Marie Carrière  
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002

### **Reviewed by Jill Scott**

In *Writing in the Feminine in French and English Canada: A Question of Ethics*, Marie Carrière invites her readers to imagine an ethical space of intersubjectivity and, guided by five poets, dares us to dream alternative material possibilities and negotiate new ways of being beyond the limitations of fixed notions of gender and sexual difference. In this beautifully written and exquisitely crafted book, Carrière fills a significant scholarly lacuna by treating the experimental poetry known as “writing in the feminine” or “écriture au féminin” by writers in both English and French Canada: Nicole Brossard, France Théoret, Di Brandt, Erin Mouré, and Lola Lemire Tostevin. The project transcends the barriers of linguistic and cultural differences to chart a much-needed literary history of a particularly charged period for feminist poetic production from the seventies to the early nineties.

Much more than a critical introduction to these poets' works, *Writing in the Feminine* proposes a theory of relational ethics based on the philosophy of Emmanuel Lévinas, Paul Ricoeur, and Luce Irigaray. Carrière is justified in her choice of theorists since the poets in question have all been informed by post-structural thought and often self-consciously invoke their influences, which