

were promoted, or not promoted. I am left with very mixed feelings about for whom, other than novices, this book is intended.

—William S. Cole
Dartmouth College

Angela Y. Davis. *Women, Race and Class*. (New York: Random House, 1981) 271 pp., \$13.50.

You won't find her listed in *Notable American Women* beside Frances Elliott Davis who won Eleanor Roosevelt's admiration by challenging racial barriers to become the first black nurse enrolled by the American Red Cross. Nor is this Black Power activist found before theatrical educator Hollie Mae Ferguson Flanagan, encouraged by her artistic German mother and dynamic Scot pioneer father to "set a stout heart to a steep hillside." But Angela Y. Davis deserves recognition when this Harvard Press publication goes into a second printing, because seldom in the history of American justice has a criminal court heard a civil libertarian plea to "Free Angela" so forceably expounded as in June of 1972.

Born of school teacher parents in Birmingham, Alabama, she could read at four, went to Brandeis College, spent her sophomore year in Paris and became caught up in the civil rights movement. Emotionally disturbed by the bombings of private homes in her family's middle-class neighborhood, by the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968, she "lost the faith" and joined the Communist Party.

She was fired from her college teaching position when she was accused of supplying weapons to the Jackson brothers which they used in a fatal escape attempt from Soledad Prison. She wrote that "George's [Jackson's] death [was like] a disc of steel deep inside me, magnetically drawing towards it all the elements I needed to stay strong and fight . . ." After months as a fugitive, she was caught and later acquitted following a trial lasting one month longer than a year. Her *Autobiography* was published two years later in 1974, and she was her Party's nominee for Vice-President when a fellow Southerner was elected to promote human rights. She now teaches ethnic studies in San Francisco.

Her new book *Women, Race and Class* gives fresh insights into the feminist cause of a century ago during which whites and blacks united

to fight lynching and voting injustices. Angela contends that contemporary feminists are failing because they are repeating the same mistakes their sisters made.

Her scholarship is subjective and militant; overkill is a frequent problem in an otherwise well-researched historical analysis of why and how the goals of middle and lower class women will continue to differ. But Angela may be right in asking, "how can whites understand the humiliation of women used as breeders, of slaves unable to prevent their mulatto sons from being sold and never seen again?" Even Eliza's gentle Christian morality in Harriet Beecher Stowe's best seller is not what made mothers defend their children. Instead their passionate abhorrence of slavery made some like Margaret Garner kill. So Angela concludes that blacks, not whites, should tell their own story. *Women, Race and Class* is such a primary source, although she appreciates Gutman's scholarly assertion that the black family was strengthened not weakened by the rigors of servitude.

Her contributions should be acknowledged in contemporary encyclopedias, and her vehement assertions about American political history, feminism, Marxism and racism should be expressed freely.

A visiting scientist-scholar from Leningrad once compared Angela's protests with that of Solzhenitsyn, to which this reviewer responded that the comparison is not valid. "Your dissident critic, forced into involuntary exile from his beloved Mother Russia, is now a non-person, while this Marxist is permitted to teach, criticize and publish her condemnation of America's injustices."

— Edith Blicksilver
Georgia Institute of Technology

Zee Edgell. *Beka Lamb* (London: The Chaucer Press. Distributed by Heinemann Educational Books, Inc., Exeter, NH; 1982) 171 pp., \$2.95.

Formerly called British Honduras, Belize, an emerging third world country, second smallest in Central America, originally became a part of the British Empire because its coast gave sanctuary to British sailors and pirates. But a thousand years or so before, the land formed a small part of the mighty Mayan civilization. A dozen or more sites—Mayan centers—have been discovered in Belize and have offered up their