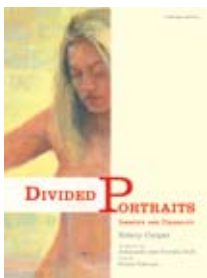




**Rethinking Global Sisterhood, Nima Naghibi (University of Minnesota Press):** Nima Naghibi is an assistant professor of English at Ryerson University in Toronto. In her new book, *Rethinking Global Sisterhood: Western Feminism and Iran*, she explores the vast differences between Western feminism and that of Third World countries. Naghibi uses texts and interviews to illuminate how women are portrayed in both cultures and shows how imported Western feminism doesn't respect these differences. Naghibi asks the question: Is it possible that not all women want to be as free as we are? ([upress.umn.edu](http://upress.umn.edu)) — Kelly Rulon



**Divided Portraits: Identity and Disability, Hilary Cooper (Umbra Editions):** Trained in portraiture, Hilary Cooper began

painting disabled subjects after she suffered an accident in which she broke her neck. Her miraculous recovery left her with a new perspective on the way that able-bodied people view those who are disabled. This book is a collection of portraits of disabled individuals in two parts: first a clear, traditional portrait of the face; and second, a separate, smaller portrait of the chair in which these subjects sit. The effect is to view the lively, proud faces as the real identities of each of these individuals and their disability as a secondary aspect. Cooper's earnest, easy prose about her experience of losing some bodily function really leaves its impression on the reader. ([umbrage-books.com](http://umbrage-books.com)) — Kamala K. Puligandla



**The Hypersexuality of Race, Celine Parreñas Shimizu (Duke University Press):** An intriguing examination of the Asian femme fatale in cinema, *The Hypersexuality of Race* focuses primarily on stag and porn films while incorporating mainstream films from both the past and the present. Celine Parreñas Shimizu delves into the histori-

cal and social aspects of Asian cinema and clarifies them in this academic, yet accessible, work. Guiding readers on a well-documented foray into the world of erotic cinema, Shimizu argues that these representations are expressions of a desire for better, more realistic representations of race and gender. Shimizu points out the perils of identification with screen representations and urges readers to think beyond what they see on the screen. ([dukeupress.edu](http://dukeupress.edu)) — Teresa Coates



**Frontier Madam, June Willson Read (Globe Pequot Press):** Passed over by historians, Dell Burke left an indelible impression on the small town of Lusk, Wyo. In 1919, Burke opened the doors of what would become one of the most famous brothels in the West. For the next 60 years, she kept the doors open and was successful enough to save Lusk from insolvency during the Depression. Though the history books do not mention Burke, *Frontier Madam* would make any feminist history buff proud. ([globe-pequot.com](http://globe-pequot.com)) — TC

## Q+A KI Thompson

KI Thompson is a woman with a wild imagination, a serious passion for the Civil War and a way with words. Her short stories have been published in various erotica and romance collections, including the *Erotic Interludes* series by Bold Strokes Books. Her latest novel, *Heart of Matter* follows in the footsteps of her first book, *House of Clouds*—a homage to her favorite historical time period, with the added twist of lesbian love. — Kamala K. Puligandla



**House of Clouds is a unique novel in that it has the elements of historical fiction but also includes a romance between two women. When you set out to write this book, what did you have in mind?**

From the very beginning, I wanted to write a love story between two women during the Civil War. I'm a huge American history buff, and the Civil War is my favorite period. The fact that it occurred during the Victorian era makes it especially scintillating and erotic—all those suppressed sexual urges and formal speech patterns are too tantalizing to ignore. I chose to write about the events leading up to the first year of the war, until the end of 1861, because in my mind it was the most exciting, tension-filled time of the war. Making Jordan Colfax, the Northern character, an actress and a spy, helped add to that tension. However, I tried very hard to balance the history with the romance, because after all, it's the women and their story we're most interested in.

**The romantic-sexual moments between the two women characters are very steamy, but also very well written. How hard was it to write those scenes?**

I debated back and forth whether to be sexually explicit with these two characters. On the one hand, it was the Victorian era, but on the other, it was their personal journeys and mutual attraction that led them to fall in love. And well, let's face it, women had sex with each other, even back then, so why not write about it? Clearly, I couldn't write a love scene with contemporary overtones; it wouldn't have been believable. Not only was this their first sexual experience with a woman, it was their first sexual experience entirely... I enjoyed writing the love scene very much and tried to make it as true to the time as possible.

**One of the main characters in the book is an actor who has a tryst with another actor. Since you made the book historically accurate, do you know of any lesbian actors from this time period?**

There were performers who had a great deal of freedom, the most remarkable being Charlotte Cushman, considered one of the greatest actresses of her day in the mid-1800s, and a known lesbian. Of course, she spent most of her time as an expatriate in Italy, living in a community made up mostly of lesbian artists. But she frequently returned to the U.S. to perform and was known for her roles as Lady Macbeth and Romeo. ■