

## *Heads Above Water*

My book, *Heads Above Water: Gender, Class, and Family in the Grand Forks Flood*, was published by the State University of New York (SUNY) Press in the fall of 2004. *Heads Above Water* analyzes women's experiences in the 1997 Grand Forks, North Dakota flood, and explores the importance of class, race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability in their disaster recovery. In the book I describe and analyze the ways in which the women experienced and coped with social and familial upheaval, emotional and physical trauma, precarious economic and social status, and feelings of loss and violation.

*Heads Above Water* was nominated for the Eastern Sociological Society's Mirra Komarovsky Book Award.

*Heads Above Water* was reviewed in seven journals: *American Journal of Sociology*, *Teaching Sociology*, *Social Forces*, *Great Plains Quarterly*, *Choice*, *Contemporary Sociology*, and *Gender & Society*. Here are excerpts from several of them:

- *American Journal of Sociology* (AJS): "One of the most important elements of Fothergill's book is the cogent integration of sociological theory and discussion of social roles, role accumulation and negotiation, stigma, and culture....A second fascinating aspect of Fothergill's book is a discussion of social mobility, which has received very little attention by disaster scholars....This is a very valuable book, filled with powerful narratives of women's experiences during and after the Red River Valley floods of 1997. It is also a good example of how to situate ethnographic accounts of women's flood experiences in sociological theory. This book should be required reading for all students and researchers interested in the sociology of disasters. It will also be useful for scholars and students in the areas of inequality and gender studies."
- *Social Forces*: "Like Kai Erikson's *Everything in its Path*, this book documents a disaster through the words of those who lived through it. Rather than simply following in Erikson's footsteps, however, Fothergill builds substantially on his work by documenting the ways in which natural disasters can affect victims in positive ways as well as detrimental ones. The result is a multi-dimensional portrait of the often conflicting experiences of women after a natural disaster....Overall, Fothergill successfully tackles a subject within disaster research that has been too-long overlooked, and the result is a gripping look at the unequal and sometimes conflicting ways in which natural disasters leave their mark on the lives of women."
- *Contemporary Sociology*: "Sifting through the ways gender as well as class, race, disability, and sexual identity mattered in women's experiences in the wake of the flood, Fothergill imbues devastating human circumstances with gendered expressions that are nuanced and energized under her gaze. Offering an array of examples, from women's discomfort entering sandbagging lines, decidedly gendered masculine, to women's heightened vulnerability to male violence in the flood's aftermath, Fothergill's analysis

grants depth and texture to existing understandings of the gendered reverberations of trauma.”