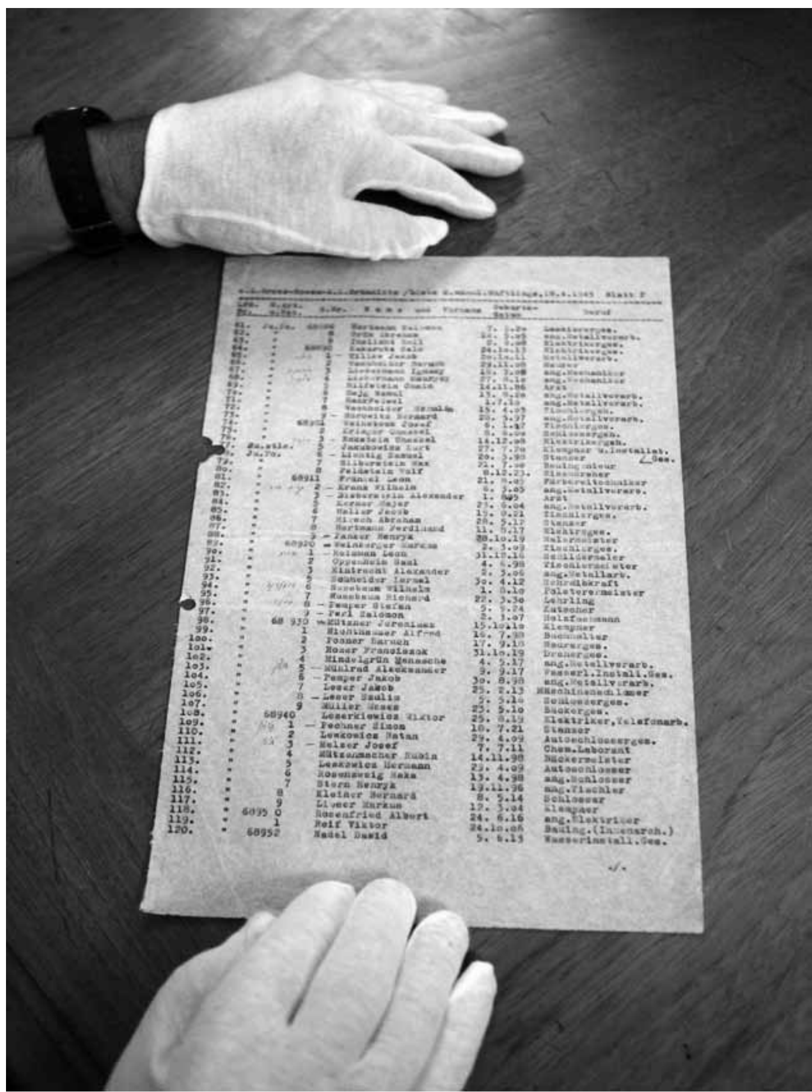

A carbon copy of Oskar Schindler's 1945 list of 801 Jewish workers who he saved from the Holocaust by employing them in his factory during World War II. PHOTO BY SERGIO DIONISIO/GETTY IMAGES

Schindler's list document on sale for $2.2 million

By JAMES BISHOP

The historic document that inspired the Academy Award winning film "Schindler's List" has been listed for sale at $2.2 million. The document is said to be one of the only surviving copies of the full list now in civilian possession.

The list that documented the names of Polish Jews who were being kept from the Nazis during World War II was drafted by business owner Oskar Schindler and his Jewish accountant, making the work a valuable piece of Holocaust history. The list is a monumental artifact from World War II and many historians are reported to be interested in the existence of the list as well as its availability for purchase.

"It's the only one remaining in private hands, arguably the most important World War II document," historical expert Gary Zimet told AFP News.

Other copies of the extremely rare list are kept exclusively in museums in the U.S. and other countries.

German businessman Oskar Schindler employed 1,200 Jews in his privately owned ammunition and enamelware businesses in Germany to save them from persecution by the Nazis. His heroic efforts were later depicted in the Academy Award winning film directed by Steven Spielberg and starring Liam Neeson and Ralph Fiennes.

The film, which was among the most critically lauded films that Spielberg directed, won seven Oscars, including the Academy Award for Best Picture and Best Director in 1993.

Dolls and drudges don pants

An Interview with New York Times columnist Gail Collins

By MARTHA ROSENBERG

New York Times columnist Gail Collins' new history of the women's rights movement in the 1960s, ''When Everything Changed'', has just been published by Little Brown.

Q: Your new book, ''When Everything Changed'' (Little, Brown) covers the cascade of rights women won between 1964 and 1972 from equal pay and the right to their own credit rating to the right to wear pants and to be called by the honorific "Ms." Why was this second women's rights movement necessary fifty years after women won the right to vote?

Gail Collins: While the suffragists succeeded in getting the Nineteenth Amendment ratified in 1920, they also believed that women's role should be at home as mothers and wives. Without the economic power of participating in the workplace and positions of influence in society, women's status after getting the vote could really not change much.

Q: Here in Chicago, suffragist Frances Willard is remembered for becoming the first Dean of Women of the Women's College at Northwestern University in 1886. Yet her feminism and temperance stances sometimes put her on the wrong side of abolitionism.

Gail Collins: Certainly when women's right to vote was not forthcoming after the Fourteenth Amendment some feminists were embittered. My book recounts the story of the women's rights parade in Washington in 1913 in which the feminist leader Alice Paul, not wanting to alienate Southern sympathizers, ordered black suffragists to march at the back of the parade. Ida Wells-Barnett, the Chicago suffragist, waited on the side of the parade and when the white Illinois delegation passed by, joined and integrated it.

Q: Recently Nona Willis Aronowitz, daughter of feminist writer Ellen Willis and Emma Bee Bernstein took the pulse of feminism on college campuses in their book, Girl drive: Criss-Crossing America, Redefining Feminism. They found that many young women were hostile to the term.

Gail Collins: That is no surprise. There have only been about three seconds in history when women weren't hostile to the term, which was always linked to images of unattractive man-hating women in ugly shoes, though its precepts–equal rights and opportunities–were widely accepted. Even in the days of Sarah and Angelina Grimké, who were feminists and abolitionists in the 1830s, people were shocked when Angelina married the good looking abolitionist Theodore Weld. Even then the attitude was: you mean you can work for women's rights and still land a handsome hunk?

Q: College women, and even women born since 1980, seem to lack appreciation for the rights that were won for them–and even awareness of what it was like for their mothers and grandmothers.

Gail Collins: I get uncomfortable with the idea of needing to be thanked. Working for an issue that you knew was right and knew was going to win was a lot of fun! The lives of women today are more complicated and lack those clearly marked lines. As far as not remembering what it was like, young people are not particularly comfortable focusing on a time when their rights or freedoms were not there.

Q: You've shared in your columns in the New York Times about the experience of having breast cancer. In light of what seems an epidemic and the hormones women were encouraged to take, which are now known to cause cancer, do you think it is another example of discrimination against women? That if men got breast cancer more would be done?

Gail Collins: You certainly can't say that breast cancer doesn't get it's share of attention. Look how adamantly Congress took up the mammogram debate recently. The entry of women into the medical professions has also been remarkable. I don't know much about the science or medicine involved; though taking a lot of drugs can have its harmful side.

WHEN EVERYTHING CHANGED
THE AMAZING JOURNEY OF AMERICAN WOMEN FROM 1960 TO THE PRESENT
GAIL COLLINS
New York Times Op-Ed Columnist

LITTLE BROWN

Q: Recently, we've seen two governor's wives engulfed in infidelity scandals, former New York Governor Eliot Spitzer's wife Silda and South Carolina Governor Mark Sanford's wife Jenny. Did these women handle the situation differently than they would have before everything changed?

Gail Collins: I think the Spitzer case marked the end of the days when the wife would stand next to her straying husband, looking brave. Mrs. Spitzer is a pretty formidable woman and if her disaster had happened about six months down the line we probably wouldn't have seen her standing there either. But the bottom line in any marital crisis is always the question of whether you think your life would be better with or without him. From what Jenny Sanford has said, it's pretty clear she's decided happiness is going on her own and leaving her ex-husband to pick up the pieces of his mess. Silda Spitzer seems to feel she and her daughters are better off with Eliot in their lives, and I'm not prepared to second guess that decision.

Q: 'When Everything Changed' and America's Women: 400 Years of Dolls, Drudges, Helpmates, and Heroines, published in 2003, are playful but they are still history books– a subject that makes many eyes glaze over. How did you transform from editor of the Times Op-Ed page to history writer?

Gail Collins: As the year 2000 approached, the Times asked me to write an introduction for their Millenium issue and I was astonished to realize the breadth of changes US women had undergone as I did the research. In less than ten years, over 1000 years of dogma about women was reversed! Writing 'When Everything Changed' gave me a chance to interview some of these women who did amazing things that are still having effects today.

Martha Rosenberg is a journalist who lives in Chicago.

Book Review: 'The World is What it is: Authorized Biography of V.S. Naipaul'

By CYRIL DABYDEEN

A curmudgeon, there's no question, as far as rumours go about V. S. Naipaul, Nobel Laureate and Booker Prize winner, knighted by the Queen for being litterateur par excellence. He's both celebrated and derided, all at the same time. But why? The recent authorized biography by Patrick French is still being hotly discussed in literary circles. Mention the name V. S. Naipaul, and you're bound to get a terse reaction, even with vitriol, often contrapuntal or just contrarious.

Many Caribbean intellectuals are fraught over him for his damning comments about race and Africa; at conferences I've heard the call for his books to be burned. His spat with the other Caribbean Nobel Laureate, Derek Walcott, is well-known (a la "V. S. Nightfall"); yet Walcott has acknowledged Naipaul's superb craftsmanship as a master stylist bent on changing the novel's "bastardized form"—as Naipaul sees it.

Naipaul has said, "I became a writer to be free." And maybe too free he is: his earliest books about India such as "An Area of Darkness" and "A Wounded Civilization" caused quite a stir. But Naipaul's novels from the earliest, such as "A House for Mr. Biswas," to the later books like "The Enigma of Arrival" and "A Bend in the River" are classics, or near classics. Indeed the Nobel Prize Committee's citation of Naipaul's award was for his "incorruptible scrutiny in works that compel us to see the presence of suppressed histories," and singling out "The Enigma of Arrival" (1987) for its "unrelenting image of the placid collapse of the old colonial ruling culture and the demise of European neighborhoods."

Maybe therein lies the problem or dilemma, jaundiced as Naipaul's view may be. And the Muslim fundamentalist world has come in for much of his criticism in books such as "Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey" and "Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions Among the Converted Peoples." Late distinguished post-colonial critic Edward Said would describe what he calls Naipaul's "funny moments ... at the expense of Muslims, who are 'wogs' after all as seen by Naipaul's British and American readers, potential fanatics and terrorists, who cannot spell, be coherent, sound right to a worldly-wise, somewhat jaded judge from the West."

Yet Said acknowledged, in his Reith Lectures, Naipaul's "extraordinary antennae as a novelist," of his "sifting through the debris of colonialism and post-colonialism, remorselessly judging the illusions and cruelties of independent states and the new true believers ..." This distilled view is juxtaposed with Naipaul's earlier expression in "Middle Passage" (1962): "History is built around achievement and creation; and nothing was created in the West Indies," which caused furor among some West Indian intellectuals; and Naipaul has gone on to speak of "the colonial smallness [of Trinidad] that didn't consort with the grandeur of my ambition."

Naipaul has influenced a whole slew of writers, including this writer, as well as many modern-day Indians like Amitav Ghosh. Indeed, "it was Naipaul who first made it possible for me to think of myself as a writer," Ghosh has said as he grew more comfortable with the indwelling life of the mind. The most well-known Chinese-American writer, Ha Jin, told us (when I was a juror of the Neustadt International Prize for Literature at the University of Oklahoma), how he would read Naipaul all the time on his train journeys in the United States, with a similar response to Ghosh's. Ha Jin was a fellow juror.

Recent book reviewers of French's biography have commented on Naipaul's treatment of his wife, Pat (he met her at Oxford), and perhaps she was his best editor and confidante. French quotes Naipaul as saying "I have killed her"; Pat died of breast cancer. Naipaul's unsentimental self is what we have, and being unequivocal about art as well as equally satirical about politics as he assesses old and new societies, often unsparing about the latter.

About himself and India, Naipaul has said: "I cannot belong to India for the simple reason that I don't know the language." Naipaul, of course, is of Indian forbears: the grandson of an indentured sugar cane worker—of Brahmin caste—brought from Uttar Pradesh by the British to the Chaguanas plantations in Trinidad. And you would think that Naipaul would hate the British for this. But he has said, in 1979, perhaps too forthrightly: "I do not write for Indians, who in any case do not read. My work is only possible in a liberal, civilized western country." And the enigma echoes: "The thing about being an Indian, and it remains true of Indian writing now, is that it seems to work without history, in a vacuum."

Misanthropic, if not satirical, Naipaul continues to excite or intrigue, perhaps for just being outrageous with trenchant utterances like his egregiously famous, "The dot means my head is empty" referring to the bindi Hindu women wear; or on Pakistan, "The Pakistani dream is one day there'll be a Muslim resurgence and they will lead the prayers in the mosques in Delhi"; and of Britain, it's a country of second-rate people—bum politicians, scruffy writers and crooked aristocrats."

In French's Biography, there are touching elements, such as Naipaul's obsession and praising of his writer-father Seepersad Naipaul, and about the family squabbles pitting the Capildeo clan (on his mother's side) with the Naipauls (on his father's), all which rivets the attention, as one is also acutely aware of Naipaul seeing "mimic men" in the colonial setting with all that's banal or incongruous.

V. S. Naipaul keeps seeking out other meanings in a diasporic new world order by setting his gaze on more than imaginary homelands (as Salman Rushdie does), always with troubling enigmas and, on occasion, mutinies, of a million or more in India, which still beckon. Indeed, he is the sum of his books; the novels always tell more than the biography; and Naipaul affirms Marcel Proust's axiom: of "the secretions of one's innermost self, written in solitude and for oneself alone that one gives to the public," seen in his own imaginative outpouring. But maybe with Naipaul controversy never ends: the latest is about his Pakistani-journalist wife Nadira Naipaul's spat with Winnie Mandela over an interview-article in the U.K.'s Evening Standard touching on Nelson Mandela's patriarchal image. Read on!

Cyril Dabydeen's novel, "Drums of My Flesh" (TSAR Publications) won the Guyana Prize for Best Book of Fiction and had been nominated for the prestigious IMPAC/Dublin Prize for Literature. His latest poetry collection is "Unanimous Night" (Black Moss Press, Canada).