Goodbye, 2011. You’ve been rich.

The online Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary offers eight definitions of *rich*, and four of the eight have at least two sub-parts. When I tell the Old Year it’s been rich, I think I personally mean it in the sense of definition 7b: “meaningful, significant,” which of course can broadly cover both positive and negative richness. When I think about the big picture — you know, politics, the economy, the general state of the world — I think 6c might be just about right: “high in the combustible component.” In the world at large as well as in my small one, some aspects of the year have been 7a: “entertaining; also: laughable,” some even 3: “magnificently impressive” (think certain protest movements). On many levels I can even see 4c as apt: “having a strong fragrance,” but I won’t elaborate on just what that fragrance might have been.

Certainly I, myself, have not felt rich this year in the sense of definition 1 — “having abundant possessions and especially material wealth” — and I’m sure at least ninety-nine percent of our readers haven’t either — even though I’m well aware that as a citizen of the U.S., in no matter what percentile, I have far more wealth than the average citizen in many other places in the world. By my own standards, which are not primarily material, I have to say that my life has been rich in the sense of 2a — “having high value or quality” — and 2b, “well supplied,” especially with love and support and lots of humor and adventure. Those riches have helped to balance the ways in which the catch-all 6d rings true: “high in some component” (emphasis mine), where the example given is “cholesterol-rich foods” but I would make it “stress-rich challenges.” I really can’t point to anything about myself or the past year that I’d call “pure or nearly pure”; but hey, that’s way down at the bottom of the Merriam-Webster entry, in definition 8.

In terms of this issue of Feminist Collections, I very much hope our readers will find it rich in the sense of 4a — “vivid and deep in color” (meaning “color” figuratively, of course, as we still print in black and white) — and 4b, “full and mellow in tone and quality.” Oh, and don’t forget about that 7b we began with, and maybe you’ll even decide this issue is 7c: “lush.” It’s a double issue, rich with six feature-length resource reviews that look at global Islamic feminisms, controversies about veiling, women in law enforcement, women in combat, and women in sports. We even had to create a new category: “reviews of multiple media,” as one of our reviewers critiqued a combination of books and films and another, films (both DVD and streamed online), podcasts, and blogs. I think you’ll find this issue’s batch of reference reviews to be 4b (“full and mellow…”) as well.

May your 2012 be rich in the best possible ways. We’ll see you again soon with our Winter issue.

J.L.