

A physician's life is often portrayed as one of power and control. Mitchinson contends that the growth of medical specializations left many regular physicians feeling they lacked both training and the respect of their colleagues and patients. Few feminist scholars have recognized these constraints. As Mitchinson notes, many authors have "concluded that medicine seemed to be targeting women's bodies" (3). Doctors have been accused of depriving women of agency at one of the most important events of their lives, the moment of giving birth. In contrast, Mitchinson is committed to understanding physicians' motivations and practices. Through patient records and physician interviews, Mitchinson examines what "physicians actually did" (16) rather than what their official journals or textbooks told them to do.

Key to the feminist critique of physicians is the role of midwives. Mitchinson argues that feminist historians have "romanticized midwives." "Too often we have compared the best midwives to the worst physicians" (11). Mitchinson reminds us that midwives ranged from a helpful neighbour to a nurse/midwife attending thousands of births. Furthermore, many midwives worked closely with physicians, welcoming their expertise, scientific equipment, and access to hospitals. Whether they did this because they were deprived of scientific training themselves remains at issue.

During this period, Canada witnessed enormous changes in all areas of pregnancy and childbirth. Once a rarity, prenatal care became available to most Canadians by the 1950s. Hospitals replaced homes as the preferred site of childbirth. Mitchinson argues that feminists have romanticized homebirths: in reality, a homebirth could entail giving birth under rudimentary, unsanitary conditions, isolated and without medical or personal support. For their part, physicians increasingly came to believe in the need for vigilance and intervention in childbirth for the safety of mother and baby alike. Hospitals provided access to medical technology, nursing care, and, eventually, sanitary conditions and standardized procedures. While hospitals also enabled physicians to schedule births, thereby reducing their waiting time, and to dictate the conditions of birth, Mitchinson concludes that physicians' primary concern was patient safety.

Coupled with the transition to hospitals

was a growth of obstetrical interventions. Once again, Mitchinson challenges feminist orthodoxy, noting that "[t]oo often we have overly dichotomized (bad) intervention and surveillance and (good) natural birth" (11). Mitchinson reminds us that midwives also intervened in labour. Furthermore, women themselves frequently demanded intervention, including drugs for pain relief and the attention of a specialist. Thus, over the course of this period, "there was an inexorable drift toward increased medicalization of childbirth" (229).

Critics have blamed physicians for their increasing use of technology and surgery and for the resulting "theft" of childbirth. Mitchinson argues that it is not intervention that matters but the nature of that intervention. Each intervention carried risks as well as potentially life-saving benefits. For physicians, fear of losing a patient was ever-present, and many chose to intervene to prevent that outcome. Mitchinson reminds us that physicians operated under severe constraints: "legal, professional, institutional, moral, and personal" (302). Most physicians were decent, hard-working people, who cared far more about their patients' health than about power or the size of their fee.

*Giving Birth in Canada* makes an important contribution to the literature on women's health in Canada. As women today comprise nearly fifty percent of medical students, entering all areas of specialization, a renewed dialogue on childbirth is essential. Mitchinson's book will ensure that that dialogue is informed by a rich and balanced sense of history.

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***Selling Diversity: Immigration, Multiculturalism, Employment Equity, and Globalization.*** Yasmeen Abu-Laban and Christina Gabriel. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2002; 202 pages; ISBN 1-55111-398-8; \$27.95 (paper).

Reading *Selling Diversity* made me think about the bank where I am a customer. About a year

ago I received an unexpected call from a woman at the bank who asked me in Chinese some questions related to my account. I was quite disoriented for a few minutes. What a change it was from the day when I arrived in Canada from China and struggled with my English to tell the bank staff that I wanted to open an account. And yet it conjured up an unsettling awareness of being perceived as part of a niche market, a racialization process at work, and indeed the class-based boundary of racial/linguistic tolerance. *Selling Diversity* effectively demonstrates that a discourse of diversity emphasizing the business value of racial/ethnic minorities in the global marketplace has permeated the making of immigration, multiculturalism and employment equity policies in the past decade. Chapter One comments on several concepts involved in the book: globalization, internationalization of policy-making, neo-liberalism, diversity, and gender analysis. Chapters Two to Five take up the three specific policy areas of immigration, multiculturalism, and employment equity, which relate to different aspects of citizenship and equality. The analysis draws on textual material including policy reviews, consultation papers, speeches, legislative debates, and commentaries. Discussion of each policy area generally consists of three parts. It starts with an account of the historical evolution of each policy. The second part turns to policy changes in the contemporary period (1993-2001). It draws readers' attention to a diversity discourse framed by a desire to exploit markets outside North America and neo-liberalism and then provides an assessment of the implications for the status of gender equality. The last part examines the extent to which internationalization of policy-making has happened in these three policy areas. Chapter Six concludes that "[t]he recent emergence of the 'marketing and selling of diversity' within these three areas marks a clear retreat from the post-war ideal of a 'just society'" (171). The authors contend that the conceptualization of diversity that they have discerned considers diversity, and people to whom this label is applied, as little more than "trade-enhancing commodities" (173). Furthermore, this new direction perpetuates class- and gender-based inequality. While the book does a superb job of identifying and critiquing the "selling diversity" discourse, the discussion of assumptions about the public/private dichotomy in the three policy areas

makes a less obvious contribution to the overall argument of selling diversity. As well, the book sheds limited light on the status of the Canadian state sovereignty in policy-making vis-à-vis the authority of international bodies and other nation-states; instead, the examination of the internationalization of policy-making is mainly focused on information sharing, co-ordination, and the diffusion of policy models between Canada and other countries. Despite these limitations, this book not only is an excellent source for those interested in immigration, multiculturalism and employment equity policies, it is also an important empirical and theoretical contribution to studies grappling with shifts in diversity politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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***Women and War.*** Jenny Matthews. Forthcoming, U Michigan Press; 192 pgs; 120 photographs; ISBN 0-472-08964-1; \$29.95T (paper).

For the past twenty years, Jenny Matthews has kept a portrait-diary of women's lives in struggles as far afield as Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Burma, Chechnya, Haiti, the United Kingdom, Guatemala, and the Sudan. This collection of her photographs and text is in turn startling, horrifying and moving; the emotions it evokes are as complex and wide-ranging as the struggles, losses and triumphs of the women she depicts.

Women's lives in wartime, as feminist researchers have argued, are not always lived that much differently from the way they are in peace; and it is the ordinariness of the women Matthews has photographed that reinforces this fact. Whatever the political situation in which they are caught, women must carry on their work. Matthews' book offers a series of images of how they manage this when all around them is dissolving into mayhem. Her photographs show all the cruel ambiguity of war: seeing them, we are reminded that when conflict erupts, women continue to give birth and tend the dying, plait hair, cradle young children, work as stevedores, plant fields. We see also that