interprets lesbian spectators' investment and fascination with these filmic figures as linked to a nostalgia for abjection. Premised upon the notion that (lesbian) subjectivities are at least partially constructed through cultural exclusion and otherness, Whatling envisions representations of lesbian otherness and abjection in film as actually capable of affirming lesbian identifications as sites of resistance to compulsory heterosexuality. In other words, the lesbian viewer, although presented with the image of the vampirous, pathological, or dejected lesbian, may simultaneously experience lesbian identity as seductive, rebellious and even heroic in the face of homophobia and oppression. Furthermore, Whatling views this recovery of abjection as resisting an idealization of lesbianism. Idealizing lesbian figures in film, she believes, is limiting to the spectatorial identifications and pleasures of a diverse lesbian audience.

Although engaging at various points throughout the text, as a theoretical narrative, *Screen Dreams* is ineffective in making its chapters poignantly relevant to each other. Whatling's convoluted discussion in Chapter Two, "Psychoanalysis and the lesbian supplement," for example, is not only extraneous in consequence to much of her other analysis, but serves as an impediment for readers who may find the remainder of the text relatively accessible. As a result, Whatling's more important ideas are disconnected and, thus, undermined through her inconsistent theoretical movements.

As a contribution to contemporary lesbian film criticism, *Screen Dreams* is unique in that it is both optimistic and grounded in the personal. Whatling familiarizes her project to her readers by drawing from sources that have informed her own lesbian spectatorial fantasies and desires. Consequently, however, the analysis remains preoccupied with the viewing of relatively popular Western films and figures, most of which have been similarly discussed by other theorists. Nonetheless, this account is worth reading, especially for those few seductive and intriguing insights dispersed throughout the rest of the text.

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Re-reading the "Teen" Years

The Company She Keeps: An Ethnography of Girls' Friendships. Valerie Hey. Open University Press, Buckingham, UK, 1997; ix +165 pages; ISBN 0-335-19406-0; $28.95.

Mothering Teens: Understanding the Adolescent Years. Miriam Kaufman. gynergy books, Charlottetown, PEI, 1997; 319 pages; ISBN 0-921881-46-0; $16.95.

Current moral panic over teen pregnancy and addiction tends to scapegoat teens for societal problems, and the depiction of teens in popular culture no doubt makes many parents, especially mothers who identify with feminism, wince. Valerie Hey and Miriam Kaufman redirect attention to the personal, emotional and social conditions of teen-age life. Neither author over-romanticizes, over-politicizes, nor over-simplifies her task. Both authors challenge traditional approaches in their respective fields. The similarity in their work probably stops here.

The Company She Keeps is an ethnographic account of girls' friendships. Most earlier studies of youth culture have either ignored girls, essentialized their experiences, romanticized their acts of resistance, or portrayed girls as victims. Hey's book makes an important contribution to poststructural feminist work that explores the contradictions and paradoxes of becoming a girl/woman. *The Company She Keeps* is also a useful exemplar for research methods courses or anyone contemplating doing ethnographic work in schools.

Hey spent a school year with 11-14 year old girls in two London comprehensive schools, gathering personal notes girls left behind in classrooms, soliciting saved notes, observing girls' informal interactions, and talking with the girls, and their teachers. Through case studies of working-class and middle-class girls' groups, Hey explores how schooling provides a material base where girls' "identities are practised, appropriated, rescued and negotiated" and she theorizes about how girls "do

the cultural" (30), through their talk and writing, and their friendships with each other.

The Company She Keeps exposes girls' friendships as sites of ambivalence, power and powerlessness; identity is always incomplete, in process, in flux, mediated through discourse, desire, and the material conditions of girls' lives; "power is always conditional - reputations are on the line" (75). I particularly liked how Hey captured compulsory white racist heterosexuality, and the shift from becoming a girl's friend to becoming a heterosexual girlfriend. But, I am not convinced of Hey's reasoning that as a white woman she should focus only on white girls. Also, although Hey does write about the girls' "textual flirtation with lesbian positioning" (83), she might have questioned her own heterosexism in not searching out lesbian and bisexual friendships specifically.

Nevertheless, Hey provides an exemplary model of how to write up ethnographic research. She lays out a helpful theoretical framework. She works against positivist ethnographic approaches by drawing reflexively on her own experiences of girls' same-sex friendships, and she paints an honest picture of some of the dilemmas she faced as a researcher: I was particularly fascinated by her negotiation of the male gatekeepers who viewed her with suspicion from day one, and I empathized with her struggles to gain access to girls' groups.

At the same time, I was disappointed with Hey's approach to some of the ethical issues this kind of work raises. For example, in the body of the text Hey portrays the gathering of girls' notes as rather fun; questions about invasion of privacy or stealing are footnoted. Also, Hey does not raise questions about her implication, or point of intervention, had a girl's note included, for example, a threatened suicide or a suspicion of incest. Or what she would have done had the incident in the park, where a girl threatened to smash another girl's face in, resulted in serious injury. In my view, such questions should not be taken lightly.

In *Mothering Teens* Miriam Kaufman, MD, promises not to follow the traditional "recipe book," "cookie cutter" approach to parenting. Rather, her aim is to help parents understand themselves and their children "through an understanding of teens, their lives and their world" (10). Kaufman claims to "offer a guide to the cultural, political, developmental and social context of adolescence," one that fits with the feminist concept "the personal is political" and, conversely, the "political is personal" (10). Unfortunately, Kaufman's contributors do not come through. The essays, for the most part, offer little in the way of feminist critique.

Mothering Teens is an edited collection of 21 essays, all by women with experience, interest or professional expertise in parenting teens. The volume covers a range of topics organized into three sections: Basic Issues (adolescent development, gender, health, spirituality, sexuality, violence), Teens in the World (alcohol use and misuse, advocacy, aboriginal teens, racism, class, divorce, grief), and Parenting Different Kids (activist teens, gay and lesbian teens, adolescent mothers, teens with chronic illness, and teens with development delays). Kaufman says she envisions her book "being passed across back fences...discussed in line at the bank or being argued about at church potlucks" (10) - a 90s version of Dr. Spock perhaps?

In some ways Kaufman achieves what she sets out to do. The essays are not patronizing, and they do not use obscure language. Many of the essays are based on first-hand experience which makes them interesting and believable. But for me the book does not work because most of the essays lack a political take on the issues. Also, whereas Kaufman's attempt at issues of diversity are commendable, her chapter heading Parenting Different Kids raises alarm bells for me - different from what? "Normal"? Also, the issues addressed are not as discrete as the authors depict them, and, Kaufman, as editor, makes little attempt to make connections across the essays.

Of further concern to me is the underlying assumption that the issue in question lies with the parent and the teen with the "problem." For example, in "Racism: Sharing Experiences, Taking Action," Pat Watson speaks to parents of visible-minority teens. But she mentions little about issues of white privilege, thereby giving the impression that white parents do not also have a responsibility to deal with racism. Similarly, in

"Coming Out - Parents of Lesbian and Gay Teens" Margaret Schneider gives advice to the parent of the gay/lesbian teen, while avoiding the point that heterosexism and homophobia are issues for all parents and their teen children. Unfortunately, I have a feeling that parents might skip through the book looking for the "issue" that appears to fit them directly, and leave the rest. This would be a pity because, despite a lack of feminist analysis, the essays as a whole do raise topics applicable to all teens and their parents.

My reading of these two books, of course, says something about who I am. My experience of doing doctoral ethnographic work in schools was similar to Valerie Hey's. In hindsight, I now feel a sense of responsibility to address concerns about using students as research fodder, no matter how entertaining and rich the "data." There was a time when Miriam Kaufman's work might have been useful. But as my colleague and children's literature specialist Lissa Paul says, it is just impossible to "go home" to work that is ahistorical and atheoretical. I have to say, however, that I am not a parent, and if I were, I might be reading the reports about teens in the newspapers as truth, "turning off" the Spice Girls, and grasping at anything that might shed some light on the "teen" years!

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Feminism Meets Queer Theory. Elizabeth Weed and Naomi Schor, eds. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1997; xiii + 341 pages; ISBN 0-253-21118-2 ; $17.95 US (cloth).

Overall, this text is a continuation, or a furtherance, of an existing conversation. One has the sense of having dropped into the party shortly after the third round of cocktails has been served: if you know everyone there, you can grab a glass and join the conversation(s) underway; a newcomer might find herself pressed up against a wall, hoping no one notices her presence as the dizzying panorama unfolds. However, the newcomer should be bold; the authors in this text are not merely visiting old ground, but opening new questions and possibilities for excavation and exploration. The bold, patient, and discerning newcomer to this on-going conversation will find places to situate herself and to join in the fray.

The party metaphor continues as one reads the articles. Many of the authors refer to one another in their conversation: Judith Butler refers to the work of Biddy Martin; Martin refers to Gayle Rubin's writings; Butler interviews Rubin; Trevor Hope and Rosi Braidotti engage in a three-article conversation with one another based on Hope's critique of an earlier piece of Braidotti's writing; and Elizabeth Grosz and Teresa de Lauretis engage in a similar discussion of Grosz's review/commentary on de Lauretis' (then recently) published *The Practice of Love: Lesbian Sexuality and Perverse Desire*. These connections would be reassuring for the neophyte reader. Additionally, although perhaps less reassuring for readers new to this area, most of the authors regularly refer to the same collection of theorists: Lacan, Foucault, Sedgewick, and Freud show up consistently throughout the text.

One of the most heartening and encouraging aspects of this collection is the way in which the writers themselves point to and call for an interrogation of samenesses and differences. Many of them are uncomfortable with static categories, and call into question issues of boundaries or totalizing categories, which operate in such a way as to close discussions rather than open them for further exploration; the authors variously challenge one another and in some instances themselves. The interview between Judith Butler and Rosi Braidotti emphasizes that, for these women, the point of the discussion is the discussion - neither is particularly swayed into another "camp," nor is either attempting to do such swaying. Again, in Butler's interview with Gayle Rubin, the notion of movement is clear - Rubin herself has shifted "position" over the years, and embraces this shift as positive.

One of the difficulties of this text is its limitation in terms of audience. For those who are excited by discussion, who enjoy a passionate roll around with semantics and semiotics, the text is marvelous - a furthering - an adventure in discourse!