

women, continue to be worth the toil.

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Women Teaching, Women Learning: Historical Perspectives. Elizabeth M. Smyth and Paula Bourne, editors. Toronto: Inanna, 2006; illustrations; 236pp; ISBN 0-9736709-3-2; \$24.95 (paper).

Despite the subtitle "Historical Perspectives," *Women Teaching, Women Learning's* historical focus is limited almost exclusively to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Canada. The two exceptions are Marjorie Theobald's examination of the legal contexts for early twentieth-century Australian teachers and Inga Elgqvist-Salzman's article on a nineteenth-century Swedish teacher. Even Susan Mann's article on nineteenth-century Canadian women who travelled to Europe focuses on how those women "harnessed travel to a domestic agenda" (179). Eventually, I developed an appreciation for the volume's tight historical focus, but still wish that the subtitle were more precise.

The volume's strength lies in the subtle persuasions of feminist social history methodologies. What often begins as the biography of one or two women builds, in essay after essay, to consider wider social and political implications of women's educational and employment opportunities in shifting ideological contexts, with a strong recurring argument for women's active roles in shaping those ideologies rather than simply working within them. This is particularly true of Rebecca Coulter's fine analysis of Donald Dickie's role in curriculum development.

I can't help but feel I have been charmed, at least in part, by Alison Prentice, the educator and historian to whom this volume is dedicated and whose influence is evident throughout. Diane Hallman and Anna Lathrop take up Prentice's work most explicitly. They write, "Prentice held that the close examination of individual scholarly women shed light on commonalities and

controversies in the relatively brief history of women in higher education and the professoriate" (45). Hallman and Lathrop turn Prentice's attention to women of "scholarly passion" to two more women, Irene Poelzer and Mary Hamilton, who took her educational projects outdoors. They conclude that the academy is but one site of scholarly engagement for women, and one that is always informed by institutional practices and contexts that may not be in the best interests of women. Alison Mackinnon's essay on the attitudes and opportunities of women who attended elite, women's colleges in the 1950s explores the historical and intellectual milieu that nurtured Prentice herself. Despite the decade's hackneyed reputation for conservatism, Mackinnon argues that the 1950s were also "the time when significant numbers of women first fully engaged in the changing and confusing struggle to be both intellectual beings and feminine selves" (209).

There are a couple of issues that could have been pushed further. Coulter's fleeting analysis of Dickie's positive although "somewhat sentimental and anglicized" representation of Aboriginal peoples in her textbooks is likely worthy of a separate discussion (32). Moreover, some contributions are marred by an unfortunate tendency to take women's words at face value. Mann, for example, insists that travelling women's diaries were "free of the exigencies of editor, publisher or even reader" (179). Diaries have not always been strictly "private" documents, nor have the boundaries between public and private been either impermeable or ideologically neutral. Despite her rejection of post-modern and post-colonial "invasions" into women's travel writing, Mann's own analyses of travelling women who "moved about quite comfortably within an empire, a class, a gender...[and] showed little inclination to explore, much less step beyond those confines... [because] they did not see them as confines" evinces Simon Gikandi's "complicity/resistance dialectic" articulated in *Maps of Englishness*.

Overall the volume's focus on larger ideological contexts, at work either at the

individual and/or institutional level, makes this a valuable collection. In this regard, Wendy Mitchinson's analysis of the impact of early twentieth-century medical views on women's educational possibilities and Harry Smaller's analysis of women teachers' resistance to increasing state control stand out.

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Queering Gay and Lesbian Studies.

Thomas Piontek. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006; 132 pages; ISBN 0-252-07280-4; \$33.95US (paper).

Thomas Piontek's *Queering Gay and Lesbian Studies* is an accessible and engaging study on the development of the tensions between gay and lesbian studies and queer theory. Aligning with current debates within the field, Piontek discusses the ways in which gay and lesbian studies have constructed queer identities and sexualities according to a linear, historical narrative, whereas queer theories generally seek to problematize the notion of a fixed sexual identity. Piontek focuses on the 1969 Stonewall riots, particularly how Stonewall has been articulated as the inauguration of America's gay rights movement. Undeniably, Stonewall acts as an adhesive force, foregrounding pride marches and celebrations, however, as Piontek argues "the rhetorical positioning of Stonewall as an originary historical moment...implies that all gays and lesbians are fundamentally alike and share a common history" (29). He further claims that the commitment to this shared history has resulted in a limiting discourse within gay and lesbian social movements, rendering them dependent upon heteronormative models of identity, rather than allowing for the diversity - of race, class, ability, gender - that queer theory has the potential to offer.

To illustrate the potentialities offered by queer studies, Piontek engages in a dynamic queering of key topics in gay and lesbian studies including HIV/AIDS and the

debates that surround gay male promiscuity, the internalized surveillance of gay male identity, and performative drag identities. Revealing that each of these areas has been plagued by heteronormative conceptions of gender fostered from within the gay rights movement, Piontek argues that gay and lesbian studies' allegiance to fixed gender categories works against "the very legitimization of homosexual subjects that it hopes to effect while contributing to the continued oppression of transsexuals and other queer border dwellers" (80). A queer reading of these topics, then, involves destabilizing binary identities, revealing the moral agendas that lie beneath gay and lesbian rhetoric, and proliferating public representations of gender, sexuality, and identity. In his final chapter, Piontek turns to practices of BDSM as they have been associated with queer communities. Although similarly constructed through limiting moralistic doctrines by both gay and lesbian texts and more mainstream discourses, Piontek argues that a queer reading of BDSM offers an alternative to heteronormative and homonormative ideologies as it reconfigures desire as not dependent upon gender (or more specifically on genitalia), but rather on the realm of fantasy and artifice. As just one example of how lesbian and gay studies can be queered, this reading of BDSM offers a starting point for discussions of sexuality and identity that do not rely on fixed gender categories but instead reveal their contingency.

The development of restrictive practices within political movements will be familiar to feminists as they recall the numerous times that the women's movement has had (and will continue) to re-invent itself in response to well-versed and much-needed criticisms from those who do not see themselves reflected in both its theory and practice. It was these histories of feminist struggles that nagged me as I read Piontek's text, which both lacked discussion of the issues salient to women, lesbians and trans-persons, and failed to credit the intersections between gay and lesbian studies