

Editorial

Welcome to Volume 36.2 of *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture and Social Justice!*

This issue consists of two clusters. The first group of articles focuses on the theme of In/Visibility: Absences/Presence in Feminist Theorizing. In addition to an extensive introduction written by section editors Ilya Parkins (Gender and Women's Studies, UBC Okanagan) and Eva C. Karpinski (Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, York University) on the topic, the articles featured in this themed cluster include Gertrude Mianda's "Reading Awa Thiam's *La parole aux Nègresses* through the Lens of Feminisms and English Language Hegemony" and Frances Latchford's "Unidentified Remains: The Impolitics of Non-Identity."

The second cluster includes a series of open topic articles that cover a broad spectrum of themes and issues. The first two articles take readers into the world of popular culture. Alana Prochuk's article, "From Monster to the Kid Next Door: Transgender Children, Cisgender Parents, and the Management of Difference on TV," analyzes a selection of American talk shows, current affairs programs, and television documentaries that, since 2007, have covered childhood gender transitions. She argues that, "[a]lthough these TV shows overtly spotlight trans kids as their stars, the youngsters serve as foils for the cisgender adults in their life, who are held out as the rightful arbiters of gendered authenticity and defenders of gendered social norms." In other words, "these shows exploit the cultural symbolism of childhood to defuse the political challenge posted by trans subjectivity." In "Beyond MILF: Exploring Sexuality and Feminism in Public Motherhood," May Friedman examines dominant discourses of motherhood and sexuality and the contemporary phenomena of MILF through the lens of "three white middle-class mothers who perform in varying sites of popular culture." In particular, she explores "the limits of MILF as a means of transcending the ongoing chasm between sexuality and motherhood, and the very real risks of blending motherhood and sexuality in ways

that deviate from the standard social script."

The following three articles explore questions generated through engagements with large social institutions such as law and medicine. In "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back?: Relationship Recognition in Canadian Law Post-Same-Sex Marriage," Megan Gaucher argues that, while the *Civil Marriage Act* (2005) did extend state recognition to same-sex relationships in Canada, "conjugal and conjugal-like relationships" continue to be privileged as "the most legitimate non-blood relationship category" and "therefore deserving of state recognition." In unpacking the possibilities and dangers of state recognition of non-conjugal interdependent relationships, she calls for reinvigorated discussions about "the role of conjugality in the politics of relationship recognition" and "[t]he adoption of a new legal framework capable of assessing whether adult personal relationships should receive recognition through state policy." Rachael Johnstone, in "The Politics of Abortion in New Brunswick," explores the historical and contemporary politics of abortion regulation in the province. She maintains that it is necessary to reframe abortion access "as a matter of equal citizenship"; such a reconceptualization would, in her view, not only establish the basis for political struggles for improved services, but also would offer a starting point to address the multiple "extra-legal barriers" that women confront when seeking to exercise reproductive choices. Pierrette Fortin, Marie-Pier Cloutier, Julie Easley, and Ryan Hamilton, in "Changements de pratique en médecine de famille: conséquences de la féminisation et des différences générationnelles," explore changing ideas about work/life balance among young general medical practitioners, asking if such shifts are the result of differences in attitudes because more women have entered the profession. They conclude that, "Il est clair que chez les médecins plus jeunes et en milieu de carrière indépendamment de leur sexe, la pratique de la médecine n'est pas leur seule priorité et qu'ils souhaitent un équilibre entre leur vie personnelle et professionnelle

favorisant leur épanouissement parentale”; that is, there is a reworking of assumptions about what it means to be a family doctor, a shifting relationship to medicine, and a redefinition of medical practice and “professionalism” that is generational and reflects changed attitudes of both women and men in family medicine.

The final two articles enter the terrain of feminist pedagogies. In “Paradox of (In)Visibility: Moving Beyond the Celebratory Rhetoric of Diversity,” Anne Wagner argues that feminist pedagogical approaches, with their emphases on critical self-reflexivity, ethical engagement with “difference,” and analyses of power and systematic inequalities, are essential in order to disrupt and challenge the celebratory neo-liberal discourses about diversity, equity, and global citizenship that infuse the rhetoric of contemporary North American universities. She discusses a number of pedagogical strategies that are designed to go beyond “institutional talk,” to contest trends toward commodifying knowledge and difference, and to emphasize questions of privilege and complicity in structures of dominance and oppression. Elizabeth Groeneveld, in “Engaging Feminist Histories,” reviews Clare Hemmings’ *Why Stories Matter: The Political Grammar of Feminist Theory* (2011), Victoria Hesford’s *Feeling Women’s Liberation* (2013), and Joan Wallach Scott’s *The Fantasy of Feminist History* (2011). She begins by suggesting that “[h]ow we speak and write about feminism and feminist histories – whether these are trajectories of theory, feminist waves, or activist histories – influences our teaching of feminism in our classrooms.” Her subsequent examination of the three texts focuses on what each “has to offer for scholarship on and teaching of feminist histories” and how they “open up pedagogical opportunities to challenge calcified knowledges and invite teaching moments for unlearning and relearning.”

Thank you to the family of Paige Kennedy for granting permission for the use of her painting, *Timeless Bonds* (1993), for the cover of this issue.

Enjoy the issue!

Annalee Lepp and Ann Braithwaite
Editors