

events of Canadian society. Its presentation of women as powerful forces in the decision-making process, rather than the powerless victims of distant socio-political forces makes this book, in spite of its flaws, well worth reading.

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Women and Work: Inequality in the Labour Market. Paul Phillips and Erin Phillips. *Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1983. Pp. 205.*

Has the economic position of women improved since the Royal Commission on the Status of Women filed its report in 1971? According to Paul and Erin Phillips disparities remain between men and women and the social attitudes and institutions on which these inequalities are based also remain in place. Historical and contemporary data on income levels and occupational profiles are presented to prove this point.

The scope of the book, then, is narrowly focused on women doing paid work and does not deal with women's work in the home. The authors, however, begin with the assumption that the characteristics of women's labour market participation is "directly related to their primary responsibility for work in the home." The issue of the effect of this double ghetto on women in the labour market is addressed by synthesizing the evidence available in books, articles and government sources. As well as documenting the unequal position of women, the authors systematically evaluate alternative explanations. These include overt male discrimination, failure of women to acquire skills, biological differences as well as the social attitudes and institutions that wittingly or unwittingly discriminate.

Instead of relying solely on either orthodox economics, feminist or radical frameworks they draw on these alternative approaches to develop

their own analysis. In practice, this means that for each question, the authors assess whether the explanation offered by alternative frameworks corresponds to reality. They, then, answer the question by incorporating the most useful explanations with their own insights. What is missing is a concluding examination of the fit between each of the theoretical approaches and the issue raised on women in the Canadian labour market.

The authors group the issues into five sections. They begin with a rich chronology of the indispensable participation of women in the fur trade to the computer age. The questions raised in this section are crucial to understanding the position of women in the labour force. Have social and economic changes increased job and income opportunities for women? The number of jobs has increased but the differentiation in type of jobs and income levels remain. Why has the percent of married women in the labour force increased? Married women work to maintain real family income, to gain independence and because of the dissolution of marriages.

Why does wage and job discrimination exist? It is due to inhumanity of unregulated markets, imperatives of industrial capitalism, social institutions and attitudes of patriarchal society, the assignment of women to do unpaid domestic work and their role in reproduction. These factors are distilled into a systemic explanation. Women take low wage, transitory jobs offered by the marginal sectors of the economy because they have little formal training and child rearing responsibilities require integrated intervals at home. These jobs keep women dependant on a male wage earner and, thus, they have few choices but to continue fulfilling the role of reproduction of the family. This, in turn, reduces the cost of the male worker for the employers. In short, the current position of women in the labour force still exists because it is profitable.

This conclusion leads the authors to examine the origins and functions of inequality in the

economic and social system, more generally, to explain the inequalities experienced by women. In this section, they examine the origins of the dual market, persistence of dualism even after women express permanence, the lack of a dual market in the clerical sector and the consequences of the dual labour market for men and for women.

The authors, then, examine if concerted action by the union movement can improve the position of women in the labour force. Here, they are more optimistic. Unions can be a positive force for equal wages and equal job opportunities, but unions will be ineffective unless more women are unionized, more women take leadership positions and more emphasis is placed on women's issues. The struggle will not be easy. Employers, recognizing the advantage of a non-unionized female labour pool, are prepared to ferociously resist unionization.

In their conclusion, Phillips and Phillips are pessimistic whether legislative reforms are a solution given "the dominance of men in our political and economic institutions and the economic advantages arising from discrimination to employers and to many groups of more privileged male workers." The reader is left with a feeling that inequalities are inevitable in the future because equality would involve a fundamental restructuring of attitudes and institutions that are currently organized in the interests of specific powerful groups. The authors fail to provide us with a strategy for action.

The breadth of information covered in the book material is acceptable as a survey of women in the labour force. Thus, it is very useful for undergraduate education. Students will gain a perspective on the topic of the unequal position of women and men in the labour market. They will also learn to use major concepts and develop a sense of significant questions and ways to investigate them.

On the whole, the book engages the reader. The ideas are central to contemporary social concerns, the book is readable and the tables are understandable. The decision to completely avoid footnotes in favour of a comprehensive literature review increases the readability of the book. This view also compensates, in part, for the absence of an index.

The book is tedious, at times, because of a rigid adherence to a question and answer format. I do not want to make too much of this criticism because this format enabled the authors to coherently synthesize a large body of literature. This logical and critical synthesis is the major contribution of the book.

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For we are Sold, I and my People: Women and Industry in Mexico's Frontier. Maria Patricia Fernandez-Kelly. *Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983. Pp. 217.*

This book focuses on the role of gender discrimination in the labour force. More specifically, it describes and analyzes the phenomenon of offshore production along the Mexican-American border and the incorporation of large numbers of women into direct production. According to the author (following Mandel 1975), the tendency towards the transfer of production centres from core countries to underdeveloped areas is the result of the requirements of capital accumulation on the international scale. Ciudad Juarez, located near the Mexican-American border provides a good illustration of this phenomenon.

In 1965 the Border Industrialization Program was implemented and followed by the "In-Bond Plant Program" or "Maquiladora Program" in 1970. These two programmes were promoted by the Mexican Government to encourage foreign