

## BOOK REVIEW

***Sexing the Teacher, School Sex Scandals and Queer Pedagogies.*** Sheila L. Cavanagh. Vancouver, British Columbia: UBC Press, 2007; viii+230 pages; ISBN 978-0-7748-1375-4; \$29.95 (paper).

As part of UBC Press's Sexuality Series, Sheila L. Cavanagh's provocative work critically interrogates how sex scandals revolving around female teachers in Canada, the United States and England have hinged on a few specific examples. Cavanagh examines the moral panic and reaction to female teacher sex scandals in recent years, while pointing out that there is little data showing that this has been happening more frequently than in the past (4). She traces media sensationalism through psychoanalysis to changing expectations and perceptions of female teachers, how once innocent gestures are now inappropriate, and why women are more vulnerable contemporaneously to charges of misconduct.

Carefully, and respectful of instances of assault and harassment, Cavanagh posits that female teachers engaging in relationships with their students can sometimes be read as instances of queer desire as these liaisons upset heteronormativity, heterosexual time, and gender roles. Cavanagh looks at instances when the "victim" in question disputed the dangerous and predatory designation of their lover/teacher and claimed an active role in the seduction. In these cases, the teen's ability to speak to the issue was determined impossible due to the harm they necessarily endured from the interaction. Cavanagh again treads the dangerous territory of youth and sexuality but emerges with a balanced analysis of how institutional regulation is likely harming those it wishes and claims to protect.

In this book Cavanagh uses an impressive myriad of feminist, film, postcolonial, psychoanalytic, and queer theories to explore a controversial topic leading to a seemingly airtight argument.

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