

maleness of Church leaders, as theoretically interesting while practically irrelevant to the real lives of Catholic women.

Sexing the Church is essential reading for those invested in understanding the Catholic Church's stance on marriage, sexuality, reproduction and gender roles. Kalbian provides an in depth study of the primary sources and pulls out the underlying imperatives facing the Church in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. However, throughout most of the book, one is left wondering about the assumed heterosexuality of sexuality. For example, sexual pleasure is consistently collapsed into sexual intercourse. That she leaves the issue of same-sex marriage to her concluding chapter (addressing it alongside a consideration of the sexual abuse of children by priests), leaves the reader wondering if Kalbian sees this as a marginal issue. Additionally, Kalbian's intentions are somewhat opaque. She claims that she wants to uncover the logic in the documents she is examining, but to what end? She neither supports nor challenges the order maintained by the Catholic Church. The reader is left with a valuable resource of information with little theorizing. For some this may be an asset. For this reviewer, the lack of positioning left the account dry and unengaging.

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*Big Sister: How Extreme Feminism has Betrayed the Fight for Sexual Equality.* Neil Boyd. Vancouver, British Columbia: Greystone Books, 2004; 215 pages; ISBN 1-55365-001-8; \$22.95 (paper).

According to Neil Boyd, *Big Sister* is equivalent to George Orwell's *Big Brother*: "the supreme leader of the 'party' who effectively created conformity and stifled freedom of speech, thought, and action"(4). Relying on mostly anecdotal evidence - largely gleaned from his experience as a male chair of the Simon Fraser University harassment tribunal, as well as his interactions with the "overtly political" character of certain feminists - Boyd claims *Big Sister* can be found in virtually every university in North America, especially in departments of sociology, law and women's studies. He attests she manipulated the law, courts, psychiatry, psychology, academia and

social work in the 1980s and 1990s and fundamentally changed the laws that control sexual conduct on our continent. In a nutshell, Boyd believes radical feminists have undermined the quest for true gender equality.

This being said, it is not necessary to read further than the following five chapter titles in the table of contents section to grasp Boyd's agenda: 1) Pornography: It's All About Masturbation; 2) Sexual Harassment: If You Feel Uncomfortable, You're a Victim; 3) Sexual Assault: Collateral Damage; 4) Domestic Violence: Fact and Fiction; and 5) Tolerance: Reclaiming the Future. My suspicion that this book would not amount to anything more than unfounded anti-feminist rhetoric was confirmed upon reading the chapters and then re-reading them to determine whether or not I actually missed any pertinent information or productive analyses. Unlike the analytical prowess and provocative arguments demonstrated by Catharine MacKinnon in *Towards a Feminist Theory of the State*, Boyd's book is whimpering and impotent in comparison, not to mention poorly researched and completely devoid of a comprehensive analysis of masculinity, the unequal distribution of power between men and women, and the gender blindness of the law.

To explicate, regardless of extensive feminist research and analysis to the contrary, Boyd insists "the law of sexual harassment, unknown a generation ago, is now well established, but with a frighteningly inadequate burden of proof and a dangerously vague test of liability"(6) and "*Big Sister* has mischaracterized the nature and exaggerated the extent of domestic violence in our culture"(6). Given the most recent Statistics Canada findings in *Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends 2006*, it is preposterous for Boyd to claim that sexual harassment legislation has become an "industry"(56) and the extent of domestic violence has been exaggerated when, according to this Stats Can report, in 2004, 52,127 women and 36,840 children were admitted to shelters for abused women across Canada, and only thirty-six percent of female victims of spousal violence and less than ten percent of victims of sexual assault reported these crimes to police (Statistics Canada - Catalogue no 85-570 2006, pg. 14).

More so, even in light of the fact that ninety percent of the offenders of spousal violence are male and that women are more likely than men to be the victims of the most severe forms of assault (Statistics Canada - Catalogue no 85-570 2006, pg. 13), Boyd devotes an entire chapter arguing that sexual harassment, even rape, is not sexual discrimination! Rather, Boyd seems more content focusing on certain sexual harassment and domestic violence cases in which he can paint the women involved as jaded and conniving lovers seeking revenge for relationships gone sour.

Boyd does an even greater disservice to the issue of the status of female professors in academe. According to him, "there is no systematic exclusion of women in the halls of higher learning or from any other important avenue of social or intellectual life in North America"(6). Considering he does not base this statement - among others - on any data or research, how can he say this when, for example, of the 478 tenured professors in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University, less than 19% are women (<http://www.thecrimson.com/article.aspx?ref=515123>)? Ironically, it is precisely his conclusions about the status of women in North American academia and society in general that illuminate the dire need for more women's studies departments in universities and for a louder Big Sister's voice in all other areas of life.

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Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture. Ariel Levy. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005; ix + 224 pages, notes, appendices; ISBN 9-780743-249898; \$25.00US (paper).

What do Paris Hilton, college co-eds in Florida, pole-dancing career gals and young San Francisco lesbians have in common? According to American journalist, Ariel Levy, they embody a worrisome trend sweeping North America. Her book *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture*, explores how female attractiveness and sexuality have morphed into a culture of "raunchiness" in contemporary society. This phenomenon represents an increased exhibitionism and self-exploitation amongst young women and the rise

of a new sexual revolution which equates exploitation with empowerment.

Levy suggests that "raunch culture" is everywhere - the classroom, the Internet, television, magazines, even exercise class. She argues that women are expressing their sexual liberation in some peculiar ways: strip-aerobics classes, thong underwear, Brazilian bikini waxes and PhD's flashing for the cameras of *Girls Gone Wild* (whose camera crews prowl North American bars and beaches offering free hats to college girls willing to pose topless). Levy argues that women are co-opting the aesthetics of porn culture, which, once underground, has become mainstream - the feminist movement has been subverted. Levy states: "If Male Chauvinist Pigs were men who regarded women as pieces of meat, we would outdo them and be Female Chauvinist Pigs: women who make sex objects of other women and ourselves."

Levy's book is an engaging and thought-provoking rallying cry, albeit a lightweight one. But it does pose some important questions about the state of feminism in North America. Her argument is consistent whether she is interviewing drunken co-eds, sophisticated New Yorkers pole-dancing at CAKE parties, or urban "boi" lesbians who demean their "fem" partners: women have internalized the mores of misogyny, expressing their sexuality under the banner of "empowerment." Is this the only power worth having? Levy quotes Erica Jong: "Let's see the Senate fifty percent female; let's see women in decision-making positions - that's power. Sexual freedom can be a smoke-screen for how far we haven't come."

Levy makes a strong case that adolescent girls, in forming their own identities, face great pressure to flaunt their sexuality. Intensely engaged with popular media, they are vulnerable to influences for which they have no historical contexts or filters. The re-inscribing of patriarchal codes has impacts unforeseen by earlier generations of feminists; women not only want to "perform" for men, but to be like men in expressing their sexuality. Shows like *Sex in the City*, and CAKE parties make the point.

Levy appears too readily dismissive of CAKE, an organization which endeavours to create a non-judgemental forum for women to experiment with sexuality. Granted, these experiments often run