

sent brochures with photographs of happy kids with the captions reading 'Children are our future', she is immediately shocked when instead she encounters "a tent full of angry—and adult—prostitutes" stating that "if this was the reality of Africa, it was also the reality of NGO work." Phillipsgives a biting critique of Plan's development work, exposing the glaring inconsistency between what they claim to be doing in their programs and the reality of Plan's organizational bureaucracy which has yet to benefit most children within the region. When her frustration boils over, she ends up telling one Plan employee, "you can pay for an author to come over from London to write a piece for an anthology which will make people think that if they donate it will go to the people... only it's not going to go to them because of the culture of bullshit." Overall, the collection does address the subject of child abuse, domestic violence, trafficking of women and children, as well as a host of other issues related to globalization. The extent to which each contributor captures the true stories behind the young girl's plight depends greatly however, on the varying degrees of competence by their authors.

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GENDER, HEALTH, AND POPULAR CULTURE: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, Ed.
Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier Press,
2011

REVIEWED BY JUDITH MINTZ

Feminist scholars have been exploring medical history for over 20 years. Notable monographs include Cheryl Krasnick Warsh's *Prescribed Norms: Women and Health in Canada and the United States Since 1800* (2010), and Wendy Mitchinson's two feminist history books on the medicalization and social control of women's bodies (1991; 2002). While much of English-speaking women's medical history has focused on social constructionist analyses of reproduction and the medicalization of women's bodies as a response to biological determinist arguments about women and their experiences, there has been a lack of cohesive historical writing about gender and health and how these are represented through popular culture. Krasnick Warsh's collection of 12 essays fills this void, and accurately reflects the current academic shift in several university departmental names from "women's studies" to "gender, feminist, and women's studies" by including writing that examines masculinities, as well as sexuality.

The chapters in *Gender, Health, and Popular Culture* are uniformly rigorously researched according to history disciplinary practice. The wide range of sources for analysis are not only interesting but also cover a century of historical documents that reflect the varieties of women's (and men's) experiences, as well as their representations of health through accessible media ranging from advice manuals to performance. Many of the chapters

in *Gender, Health, and Popular Culture* include footnotes that readers will find helpful. Krasnick Warsh's robust bibliography, which includes both primary and secondary sources that integrate all of the contributing authors' reference materials, is impressive. Mid- and upper-level history, women and gender studies, and health policy students and academics will find *Gender, Health, and Popular Culture* a useful resource that frequently uses Foucauldian analyses of women and men's bodies as both morally and physically regulated by the state and so-called medical authorities.

Krasnick Warsh has skillfully curated the chapters in *Gender, Health, and Popular Culture* as a conversation between contributors. This cross-referencing of each other's work makes the collection cohesive, and essays can be read together or separately. What emerges is a feminist argument that points out the dialectical nature of popular culture's messages to women and girls. The first two chapters examine Australian and American discourses around pregnancy and childbirth in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Featherstone illustrates Australian state attempts to govern white women's pregnancies and childbirth, while Forman Cody examines American prenatal nutrition advice given to women between 1850 and 1950. The difference between national identity contexts is less important than the point of understanding the gendered imagining of woman as biological, cultural, and symbolic reproducers of the nation (Yuval Davis and Stoetzler 2002). Many other feminist historians have drawn links between gender and national identity production, pointing out the biological essentialist notions of women's bodies as mothers of the nation, as well as maker and keeper of home spaces from which the nation's warriors may emerge (Arnup 1994; Comacchio 1993). The notion of women as producers of social citizens underpins the first half of *Gender, Health, and Popular Culture*.

The progressive theme of the life course from childbirth, adolescence, and womanhood follows a trajectory through the text. Vostral's chapter examines American educational films targeted at teenaged girls between 1946 and 1982, demonstrating the many contradicting and hegemonic messages that their bodies are natural but must be controlled. Young women were expected to uphold the national ideal of the rugged individualist by behaving in normative ways. Subsequent chapters provide further examples that draw out how women were expected to manage their bodies and behaviour accordingly through control of fertility, sexuality, and the risk of cancer.

The second half of *Gender, Health, and Popular Culture* examines representations of the ideal body. These bodies are rendered subversive by their refusal to fit into the prescribed norm in both illness and health. Through a variety of historical methods, contributors to this section comment on bodies that directly challenge dominant ideals of gender, sexuality, celebrity, and lifestyle. The only missing element here is a discussion on the intersection of racial ideals and health; none of the chapters in this collection overtly theorize race. References to race are indirect, and point out only that popular culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries represented the ideal body as white. Regardless of this nevertheless important omission, Krasnick Warsh's collection is an important contribution to the conversations on health discourse and gender.

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NOT DROWNING BUT WAVING: WOMEN, FEMINISM, AND THE LIBERAL ARTS

Susan Brown, Jeanne Perreault, Jo-Ann Wallace, and Heather Zwicker, Eds.

Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2011

REVIEWED BY ELA PRZYBYŁO

Stress, burnout, isolation, sleep deprivation, exhaustion, feeling overworked, stretched thin, emotionally drained, and yet “not drowning but waving”—this affective tangle is the entry point for this volume. Reflecting on Stevie Smith's well-loved poem, “Not Waving but Drowning,” and stemming from a conference on women in the liberal arts that took place at the University of Alberta in 2006, this half-comforting, half-discomforting volume, considers the interconnections of the personal and political aspects of life in the academy for women and feminists. Speaking to the difficulties of surviving academe as a feminist, this collection is also invested with hope, the spirit of collaborative scholarship, and with the conviction that “feminism is not dead yet.”

Not Drowning But Waving is structured into four sections: the first includes genealogies of women's experiences in the liberal arts and the university, often drawing on the “personal archive[s]” of the contributors; the second consists of a creative piece by Aritha van Herk; the third turns more explicitly to questions of feminist history as well as to the wave metaphor and generational metaphor; and the final section considers feminist activism. Together, these sections form a diverse collaborative effort of the meanings, contexts, and pasts of academic feminism in Canada. Acknowledging the immense efforts and successes of feminism, as well as the continuing need for feminist intervention, action, and

coalition in the university, the pieces are permeated with an urgency for social and structural change.

In many ways, the collection can be considered alongside recent critiques of the corporate university, such as for instance, Marc Bousquet's *How The University Works* (2008), with the significant addendum that it is women—“that problematic, variably representative, contested, and vulnerable category that plagues and yet underwrites the project of feminism”—who are pervasively and systematically discriminated in the Canadian university system. This discrimination of women materializes itself, as the authors discuss, through women's lower earnings, inequitable hiring and promotional practices, and severe underrepresentation in the senior professoriate and Canada Research Chairs Program. Crucially, contributors also offer personalized accounts of how this discrimination has affected their lives and how they have navigated and agitated against structural inequalities.

This impassioned collection provides inimitable insight into the histories and struggles of feminism at Canadian universities. Providing a dynamic mix of writing styles, the authors speak of the past with an eye to the present, of the personal with insight into the politico-structural, and of the university-based with a concern for the broader neo-liberal context. But for a collection that identifies as one of its main goals a diversity of perspectives, “a juxtapos[ing] [of] uneven styles and voices,” I am struck by the almost total absence of perspectives “from below,” from the pits of the academic pyramid. While the insights on the experiences of high-ranking feminist academics is indisputably integral to an analysis of women in the liberal arts, the collection would have been strengthened had it included the perspectives of those who are ‘drowning’ or perhaps ‘being drowned.’ In this sense, *Not Drowning But Waving*, while a timely and meaningful volume, speaks to and for a too narrow audience—feminists who have made