

edges this issue in a footnote early on, the absence is sorely felt given the book's stated mission to provide an intersectional platform for the voices of underrepresented Canadian women. In addition, the book features surprisingly little discussion of diverse sexualities. Overall, the project's primary concern with dominant forms of Western feminism and popular culture does not allow for much consideration of the formative influence of non-Western culture and/or cultural artefacts not aimed primarily at white, straight, cisgendered women.

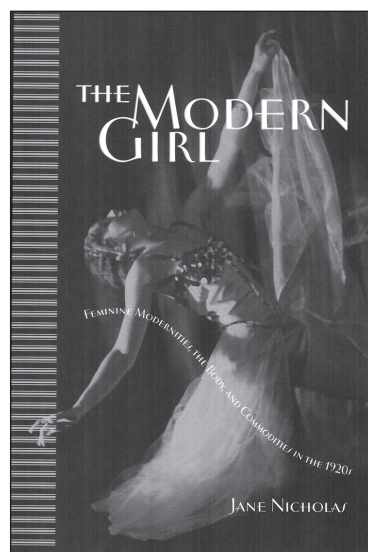
One hopes, however, that these weaknesses could be addressed by future work from Rice, or by scholars building on her work's strong foundation. Ultimately, this should be a useful book for those studying intersections of gender, race, disability, and visual culture, whether in a Canadian context or a broader Western context. More importantly, though, it should be a useful book for the women that it is about—namely, those still struggling to negotiate their embodied identities within an increasingly visual culture in which the ideas and gains of feminism remain both ingrained and controversial.

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THE MODERN GIRL: FEMININE MODERNITIES, THE BODY, AND COMMODITIES IN THE 1920s

Jane Nicholas
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015

REVIEWED BY TASIA ALEXOPOULOS



In *The Modern Girl: Feminine Modernities, The Body, and Commodities in the 1920s*, Jane Nicholas examines the centrality of the Modern Girl in 1920s Canada. Nicholas argues that the proliferation of the Modern Girl and the emphasis on her physical appearance was inextricably linked to anxieties over shifts in the social, economic, and cultural landscape of a modern Canada. Nicholas' approach to the topic is multidimensional, employing a range of methodologies from feminist historiography to visual content analysis to explore the complex and fraught place of the Modern Girl in Canada. Nicholas argues that the figure of the Modern Girl was central not only to the construction of gender and femininity in Canada

in the 1920s but was integral to nation building and the formation of a Canadian national identity. *The Modern Girl* is informed by and firmly situated within literature on the body, feminist theory, and art history.

Nicholas frames her discussion of the Modern Girl within modernity, urbanization, the commodification of women's bodies, racialization, and class stratification. Her theoretical framework is built over the first three chapters; the remaining three chapters explore specific facets of 1920s culture: beauty pageants, modern art and the female nude, and automobiles and film projectors. Nicholas's content analysis of advertisements, magazine articles, and newspaper media is enriched by earlier discussions of theory, is very engaging, and provides a balance to the more theoretical chapters.

The Modern Girl is an important contribution to feminist history and historiography. Nicholas firmly positions her book within a wider project of feminist theory that seeks to uncover and re-write the ways in which history has been naturalized as masculine. Nicholas argues that feminine modernities were a noteworthy facet of English-Canadian narratives of modernity, highlighting the centrality of notions of race and racial purity in the perpetuation of the Modern Girl as an ideal of feminine beauty. Nicholas' engagement with the personal politics of the Modern Girl strengthens her argument as she demonstrates how women themselves would have experienced modernity. Women, Nicholas argues, were not simply "victims" of consumer culture but were active in its construction and perpetuation. While Nicholas aptly demonstrates the roles race, racialization, and Orientalism played in the construction of the Modern Girl and in Canadian national identity, the ways in which women of colour,