

one another's experience. In Enloe's slightly romanticized coalition politics there exists the possibility of collaboration without the presumption of homogenous identity or even shared experiences. As long as women are constantly interrogating their own masculinized assumptions, there will be space for listening, understanding and advocacy. *The Curious Feminist* charts the global efforts of feminist groups contesting militarization and examines the creation of unorthodox spaces of resistance. From Enloe's childhood living room to an Iraqi hair salon, Enloe reminds her readers that "a feminized space is not the opposite of a political place."

The form and content of *The Curious Feminist* point to Enloe's constantly evolving understanding of political theory and feminist pedagogy. Her espousal of a uniquely feminist curiosity will, undoubtedly, change the way first-time Enloe readers think about the intersectionalities of gender and politics; however, one wonders when feminist curiosity will be re-envisioned as feminist action. While Enloe points to coalitional strategies for change across the globe, she has yet to outline what effective demilitarization and anti-militarization policy might look like or how it might be implemented. This is a minor criticism of what it is overall a refreshing and provocative feminist analysis, but as Cynthia Enloe reveals, "a conclusion should never sound too satisfied."

Vanessa Oliver is a Ph.D. candidate in the Women's Studies department at York University. She conducts her research in the areas of women's health and health and human rights.

PEDAGOGIES OF CROSSING: MEDITATIONS ON FEMINISM, SEXUAL POLITICS, MEMORY, AND THE SACRED

M. Jacqui Alexander
Durham, NC: Duke University
Press, 2005

REVIEWED BY ILYA PARKINS

M. Jacqui Alexander's collection of essays assembles the important work, written over the last ten years, of this transnational feminist theorist. *Pedagogies* confirms Alexander's status as one of the most rigorous and innovative thinkers in the field, as it artfully brings together meditations on contemporary and historical operations of imperialism, the mobilization of heterosexuality as a nation-building project in the Caribbean and the United States, the challenges of a politically engaged feminist pedagogy, a revisiting of identity politics for women of colour and indeed all feminists, and the place of the sacred in political praxis and everyday life.

Alexander is a theorist, to be sure—she offers articulate defenses of the need for theory at several key points in the collection – but she remains committed to the grounding of theory in everyday life, and many of the essays in this collection begin from her own life as a Caribbean immigrant, a scholar-activist, and a spiritual practitioner. Perhaps it is this willingness to excavate and critically confront experience that convinces this reader so deeply of her central point about the inalienable interdependence of individuals, collectives, ideologies, and times. It is her task to make visible this interdependence in a culture that denies it, and to use this visibility to prompt a rethinking of the terms by which we know history and politics; this is, at its core, an epistemological project.

Alexander's theoretical apparatus reveals its lineage in the Gramscian theory of hegemony: many of these essays, such as "Erotic Autonomy as a Politics of Decolonization: Feminism, Tourism, and the State in the Bahamas," trace instances of domination achieved through the state's institutionalization and de-radicalization of feminist and anti-colonial frameworks. It seems clear that Alexander also works in the debt of Foucault's theories of the discursive production of identity categories through their simultaneous articulation in institutions and everyday lives. Indeed, one of her major accomplishments in this collection is to offer detailed and convincing analyses of the material effects of discursive and ideological frameworks. Three essays on the state's codification of heteropatriarchy in the 1980s and 1990s—accomplished, in two Caribbean nations, through legislation that simultaneously toughened penalties for violence against women *and* criminalized homosexuality—effectively reveal the lived consequences of the state's sexual engineering, as well as their insidious relationship to militarization, global capitalism, and neoimperial strategies.

The essay that stands out as the centerpiece of the book and, I think, best accomplishes Alexander's aims, is "Anatomy of a Mobilization." This long piece details the activities of the Mobilization for Real Diversity, Democracy, and Economic Justice at the New School for Social Research in 1996-97. Alexander was herself contractually appointed at the New School at the time; she and other members of the Mobilization protested the ways that the institution, despite its founding in and historical commitment to a politics of social justice, continued to marginalize faculty, students and staff of colour and offered no intellectual space to emerging interdisciplinary fields that took seriously the historical and contemporary facts of transnationalism. Alexander's ac-

count is fascinating. She effectively locates in the New School the micro-operations of imperialist and anti-democratic impulses that she details throughout the book. In exploring “how ‘diversity’ is manufactured,” she paints a vivid picture of the institutional cooptation of radical discourses. This is a point she makes throughout the collection; it is made most clearly and powerfully here. In fact, “Anatomy of a Mobilization” successfully brings together all of the collection’s threads, acting as a kind of key or index to Alexander’s thought.

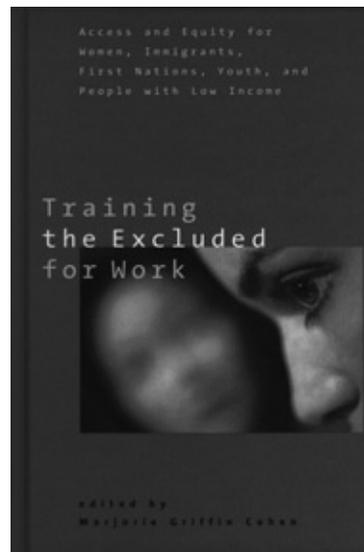
The one weakness of *Pedagogies of Crossing* is organizational. Many of the essays are very long—60 and 70 pages—and unwieldy. With the exception of “Anatomy of a Mobilization,” their length makes it difficult to maintain focus. This is in part a function of the wealth of ideas at work in them; Alexander’s great strength is in making explosive connections between seemingly disparate ideologies. Given this meeting of heterogeneous contexts, however, some tightening is needed in order to enable readers to more easily grasp the knowledge framework she is building. In some ways, this is a minor weakness, emerging as it does from Alexander’s formidable grasp of so many different ideological, historical, and geographical circumstances. In a sense, the essays’ organizational excesses speak to the current promise of transnational feminist theory as an excavator of buried connections.

Ilya Parkins is currently Assistant Professor of Women’s Studies at Trent University. She teaches and researchers in the areas of feminist theory and modern cultural history.

TRAINING THE EXCLUDED FOR WORK: ACCESS AND EQUITY FOR WOMEN, IMMIGRANTS, FIRST NATIONS, YOUTH AND PEOPLE WITH LOW INCOME

Marjorie Griffin Cohen, Ed.
Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2003

REVIEWED BY JAN KAINER



This book analyses equity skills training in the context of a rapidly changing policy environment that is increasingly less sympathetic to the specific needs of those most excluded from the labour market including low-income women, aboriginals, older workers, youth and immigrants. All fourteen essays in Marjorie Griffin Cohen’s edited volume document the negative implications of the Canadian federal governments’ policy decision to devolve responsibility for training to the provinces.

From the post WWII era until the mid ’90s, the federal government directly funded training programs, seeing this as part of its (Keynes-

ian) responsibility for promoting economic development. Under this policy, government sponsorship training programs offered training allowances covering expenses for trainees such as tuition, living expenses, transportation and daycare. Additionally, a government contracting system paid providers for the full cost (including overhead) of delivering training programs. This scheme offered considerable access to training, even for marginalized groups. By the ’80s the federal government recognized the need to accommodate those systematically disadvantaged in the labour market. As Critoph explains, by 1991 a commitment to “assisting women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and Aboriginal persons was formalized in an internal directive known as the Designated Group Policy (DGP).” Programs for disadvantaged groups under the DGP (in conjunction with the Canadian Jobs Strategy and National Training Act) were quite successful especially for women who, for instance, “represented 124,000 participants or three-quarters of designated group participants in 1993-94,” an historical high mark for women’s training in Canada. These equity programs were long-term, available to people on unemployment insurance as well as to social assistance recipients.

All of this drastically changed when the federal government transferred training to the provinces in 1996. Not only was funding lost, eligibility criteria severely restricted, and the equity component (DGP) eradicated, but the policy framework underwent a radical shift moving away from government sponsorship for training to a neo-liberal market-driven approach. The cost of training has been downloaded to individuals who now assume responsibility for their own training through the aid of government subsidies such as Employment Insurance (EI) vouchers and loans. Furthermore, because the “federal government set up mechanisms that