

Stanford argues, made possible through an actively engaged social network which works in tandem with medicine: a strategy which is successfully elucidated throughout the text.

## **WOMEN AND THE HISTORICAL ENTERPRISE IN AMERICA: GENDER, RACE, AND THE POLITICS OF MEMORY**

Julie Des Jardin  
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

REVIEWED BY JENNIFER HARRIS

The central premise of Julie Des Jardin's *Women and the Historical Enterprise in America: Gender, Race, and the Politics of Memory* is that American women have a long-standing tradition of contributing to the practice of history, a tradition that has variously been welcomed by men, derided by male academics, and used as a template for other female historians and researchers of American social history. Des Jardin locates the origins of women's historiography in mid-nineteenth-century practices which privileged the morality of white women and their role as educators of children and preservers of culture. That such women widely interpreted this role to include cultural history, extending their analyses from portraits of "important" men to the women who birthed them, suggests their rejection of dominant political and economic national narratives. For Des Jardin, these early female pioneers serve as a point of departure from which to consider the rise of the academic social science discipline of "History" and how its male practitioners attempted to devalue the "unofficial"

past previously chronicled by women in favour of the public political sphere designated "official"—only to witness a return to such practices by the 1930s.

Des Jardin might have considered more substantially the importance of the historical novel, and how women often undertook the revisionary writing of history through the practice of writing fiction—as Nina Baym does in *American Women Writers and the Work of History*. However, the backdrop she does provide works to foreground the period immediately preceding her timeframe of 1880-1945. Within this timeframe Des Jardin identifies several trends, beginning with the professionalization of the discipline; the relationship between women and the academy—and the obstacles placed before them; as well as the "varied social agendas of American women in the twentieth century and the need to construct new versions of the past to carry them out," particularly suffrage (177). With examples drawn from published and archival materials Des Jardin's study aims not to be exhaustive but rather representative, and thus is far more readable.

What ultimately proves most interesting is her consideration of the ways female scholars approached subjects decreed marginal. Des Jardin writes, "Our designation of these regional scholars is rarely simple...we acknowledge the margins as sites of disempowerment and limitation, but also as spaces of opportunity, experimentation, and perspective for women historians...[Some] found that the margins could be a vantage point from which to expose power dynamics between elites and nonelites in the American past" (93). She continues, "When we view women's production of history from the margins and outside the historical establishment, the emergence of social and cultural perspectives in the 1930s no longer looks like a shift into uncharted waters but a resurfacing of a tradition of history started

and perpetuated by women" (94). Funded by WPA programs, women of the 1930s collected and itemized things previously deemed irrelevant by academic historians—everything from the diaries of Mormon settler women to oral histories of First Nations peoples to African American folktales in Florida, the last collected by famed writer, Zora Neale Hurston. Such methodologies had the potential to produce histories that disrupted traditional Eurocentric assumptions and narratives—particularly about indigenous peoples. Yet, while male scholars were beginning to do the same, it was women Des Jardin asserts "who suffered professionally for their questioning" (115). As she demonstrates, there existed an uneasy tension between the insights such a liminal position enabled, and the punishments articulating them invited.

Des Jardin's most thoroughly developed discussion occurs in chapters four and five with the consideration of African American history. This is the first consideration of non-white women as agents of research. The impetus for such was their desire to inculcate racial pride through the revelation of histories unacknowledged by the mainstream and to establish social respectability through countering predominant representative paradigms. Interestingly, this same racial uplift premise led to black women being concentrated in disciplines "more conducive to community reform" (131), and accomplishing their historical work through different means. Nevertheless, Des Jardin documents the significant contribution of women to the New Negro History Movement through their roles as educators, librarians, archivists, community leaders, and fundraisers. Importantly, it is this section that most fully realizes her earlier premise that women have historically accomplished history in non-traditional ways. Moreover, it most fundamentally demonstrates her assertion that history and politics have been fundamentally intertwined for

many women—a point made in the following section on suffrage that feels almost anticlimactic after reading about the work of black women to establish archival collections, or to recover Sally Hemings almost a century before mainstream history acknowledged her. The stories of these pioneering female historians prove the import of Des Jardin's work, as well as providing retroactive validation for and asserting the ongoing import of, theirs.

### UNEQUAL FREEDOM: HOW RACE AND GENDER SHAPED AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP AND LABOR

Evelyn Nakano Glenn  
Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard  
University Press, 2002.

#### REVIEWED BY SANDRA TAM

In *Unequal Freedom*, Evelyn Nakano Glenn offers an exploration of gender and racial relations within the structures of labor and citizenship in the United States from Reconstruction to the Progressive Era (1870 to 1930). Glenn's main argument is that both systems "have been constituted in ways that privilege white men and give them power over racialized minorities and women. Simultaneously, citizenship and labor have been arenas in which groups have contested their exclusion, oppression and exploitation." (p.1) Glenn addresses *how* the state has developed through interactions of social, political, and economic processes with local levels, to support "unequal freedoms". Pointing to the "worker citizen" as central to what it means to be "American", Glenn makes a major contribution to the study of racial and gender oppression by examining the linkages between labor and citizenship in American

society. Glenn's work is a historiography and comparative case study. While this is a work of American history, the analysis has international appeal, as readers will want to consider the connections between labor and citizenship in their national contexts.

First, Glenn presents a theoretical perspective that race and gender are socially constructed, relational concepts in an interlocking system framework. This approach allows Glenn to focus her analysis on the *processes* of racialization and gendering by examining people's qualitative experience, which get produced at the intersection of oppressions, and takes historically specific forms. Glenn's methodological challenge is to find data (mainly government documents and secondary accounts) that investigates the impacts of gender and race simultaneously. She examines the local experiences of dominant and subdominant racialized groups in three case study regions: whites and blacks in the south, Anglos and Mexicans in the south-west, and haoles and Japanese in Hawaii. Glenn compares and contrasts the various forms in which oppression and exclusion are manifest across the sites but she is also careful to capture the diversity within the racialized groups in terms of their ethnicity, class and political affiliations.

In chapter two, Glenn offers a general definition of citizenship and explores its intent of "universality." She assesses what is actually experienced for different groups—exclusion and uneven access to citizenship rights. Exclusion involves both differential treatment, where racialized and gendered groups are denied citizenship formally in laws and policy, and differential impacts, where formal citizenship status is granted but local practices enforce standards differentially for groups, or where lack of material resources prevents meaningful participation and exercise of rights. Arguing that gender and racial exclusion is integral to citizenship positions Glenn in the company

of scholars who oppose a liberal definition of citizenship where rights are assumed to be fairly and equally distributed to individuals by a neutral state. Making a distinction between formal and substantive citizenship, and seeking examples of discrepancies between the two, becomes a preoccupation in this work.

In chapter three, Glenn traces the history of paid labor from when labor was a system of slavery to when free labor is the assumed, normative and universal state of workers. By explaining labor as a system that is organized by and actively organizes gender and race hierarchies, Glenn argues against traditional economic-based theories of the labor market like human capital or dual labor market theory.

Glenn theorizes links between labour and citizenship that maintain control of non-white workers. Coercive labor practices such as debt peonage, contract and convict labor systems, and vagrancy laws in the south and south-west were supported by the American concept of citizenship, which included the obligation to work as a central feature. This obligation was differentially reinforced so that a "compulsory system of free labor" was considered necessary for black males racially characterized as lazy. Coercion in the labor system meant workers were not really free and substantive citizenship rights were not realized.

In each of the case studies in chapters four to six, Glenn describes how gender and racial ideology were used to naturalize hierarchy and stratification in the labor system. Quoting labor force statistics, racialized men and racialized women were consistently over-represented in unskilled, domestic, lowly paid, physically demanding positions at the bottom of the labor market. Glenn also examines racialized gender constructions contrasting white women's valued reproductive labor against black and Mexican women's alleged "employability" that was enforced by local administrators who disqualified them