

a shared-rule federalism that recognizes and respects cultural diversity. Under the rubric of citizenship, Cairns believes that multiple Aboriginal identities and a Canadian identity can co-exist.

Rejecting the nation-to-nation paradigm, recommended by the RCAP and supported by many Aboriginal leaders, Cairns advocates a "citizens plus" approach. The phrase "citizens plus," coined in the 1966 Hawthorn Report, defined Aboriginal people as citizens "who possessed the same rights and responsibilities as other Canadians, in addition to those rights guaranteed through treaties and initial occupation of North America." "Citizens plus" status, according to Cairns, is the best vehicle through which Aboriginal people can ameliorate the conditions they experienced under colonialism without giving up the benefits of citizenship in a modern state.

As a researcher who helped produce the Hawthorn Report, which was never endorsed by the government, Cairns has a personal interest in promoting its findings. His support of the "citizens plus" approach is naïve. Cairns regards citizenship as the ultimate panacea for the ills which affect Aboriginal society. And although his work recognizes and discusses the ideological underpinnings of previous assimilationist policies of the government, he fails to grasp the pervasiveness of racism. Cairns believes that Aboriginal peoples exclusion from the supposed benefits of Canadian citizenship was a major element in their disenfranchisement, but does not acknowledge the day-to-day operation of racism in today's society. Thus, he fails to perceive colonialism as something beyond an institutional structure.

Cairns wants to find a "middle ground" and citizenship represents that. Citizenship will, Cairns maintains, provide Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples with a shared empathy, a common bond. He refuses to consider the "citizens plus" approach as another means of sup-

porting assimilation. Cairns defines citizenship entirely in terms of Euro-Canadian traditions and values, making the words citizen and Canadian synonymous. Thus, an Aboriginal identity is something separate or different from a Canadian identity, making assimilation a prerequisite for citizenship.

Although Cairns' perception of the power of citizenship is somewhat unrealistic, his work does raise serious questions about the realities of Aboriginal self-government. Self-government has been premised on a perception of an Aboriginal identity that is collective and land based. This identity presumes a certain degree of homogeneity among Aboriginal people regarding their opinions, experiences, and social, political, and economic aspirations. In emphasizing that over sixty percent of the Aboriginal population live in an urban environment Cairns raises serious questions regarding identity; is identity created through a shared territory and the collective transmission of culture or is it the day to day lived experience of being regarded or treated as an Aboriginal person? Such questions are particularly important because self-government is regarded as a means of preserving traditional Aboriginal culture, but only as the culture is associated with a specific territory. Cairns mentions that some women within Aboriginal communities have also expressed serious concerns regarding the impact of self-government on their status and are uneasy about issues of patriarchy and social and economic inequality on reserves. Beyond briefly acknowledging women's issues Cairns does not consider how gender relations have been affected by Indian policy. He ignores changing patterns of Aboriginal women's participation in political leadership that resulted from colonialism. Indeed, Cairns might have raised stronger questions about whose perspective the Report represents.

Cairns wrote this study in order to investigate the contentious de-

bate surrounding Aboriginal self-government. The nation-to-nation model that the RCAP Report presented, Cairns fears, will further isolate and marginalize Aboriginal peoples. But this marginalization is already a reality for many Aboriginal people, both on and off the reserve. Cairns also believes a shared Canadian identity will provide the necessary "middle ground" to build a solid nation that respects cultural diversity. Aboriginal people have constitutionally been citizens since the sixties and it is doubtful that the right to vote was the determining force behind improvements in their social, political, and economic well-being. Rather it is the continuing political and legal activism of Aboriginal people that has forced their issues to be placed on the national agenda. Ultimately, Cairns' concerns regarding the detrimental impact of self-government on the integrity of the nation is a moot point, because the federal government has almost completely ignored the Reports' recommendations.

FEMININE FASCISM: WOMEN IN BRITAIN'S FASCIST MOVEMENT, 1923-1945

Julie V. Gottlieb. London and New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2000.

BY EVA C. KARPINSKI

Written by a young Canadian scholar stationed in Britain, this book traces the main developments in the history of British women and fascism during the inter-war period, with a separate chapter dealing with the internment of fascist women from 1940 to 1945, under the Defence Regulations. Women's participation in the British

fascist movement reveals an ongoing fascination with militancy. From the British Fascisti, launched in 1923 by an ex-servicewoman, Miss Rotha Lintorn Orman, to the British Union of Fascists BUF, started in 1932 by Sir Oswald Mosley, fascist organizations attracted not only former members of female auxiliary services and some former suffragettes, but also large numbers of "ordinary" women from different classes. During the 1930s, one-fourth of Mosley's supporters were women, and Mosley is quoted as saying that his "movement has been largely built up by the fanaticism of women."

Gottlieb's book aligns itself with recent feminist studies on German and Italian women and fascism that challenge earlier assumptions regarding patriarchal underpinnings of the movement. She focuses on fascist women's agency in propagating an anti-democratic, male-centrist, anti-Semitic, and racist creed. She also foregrounds a major paradox: although the BUF is associated with reactionary gender politics and anti-feminist assertions, yet it provided a forum for specific forms of women's activism and leadership. Women joined the movement out of "choice, free will and personal rebelliousness." Gottlieb counters a tendency to concentrate on fascist men's understanding of the function of women members and to see women as acquiescent victims of male supremacy and misogyny. Instead, she tries to untangle the ambiguities of the movement's sexual politics. Looking at women's roles and activities, she examines gender constructions as well as "the psychology and pathology of fascist sexuality," in particular the effects of the cult of the masculine leader on female membership, eroticization of the uniform, and a sexually charged atmosphere of the movement. The politics of provocation and violence attracted fascist women as much as men. Women were trained in self-defence and physical fitness. In preparation for propaganda work, they practiced the art of oratory. BUF

women served as canvassers and prospective parliamentary candidates.

Between 1932 and 1940, BUF women and men elaborated their own regulative norms of femininity, masculinity, the family, "normal" sexuality, the sexual division of labour, and imperial paternalism and maternalism. The study defines the ideology of "feminine fascism," which was developed in opposition to bourgeois and liberal-democratic culture. Feminine fascism offered a revised image of femininity, an end to women's cheap labour, a return to family values and to a narrowly defined national community, and a radical political representation. The author offers an insightful discussion of fascist politicizing of domesticity through validation of motherhood and housekeeping and through marketing women as breeders of race and nation. Women's domestic sphere and men's public sphere were seen as separate but complementary. The fact that both the private and the public sphere were political does not mean that the BUF adhered to any kind of feminist agenda. Advocating gender segregation and offering women their own politicized private sphere, the BUF was far from any commitment to the equality of the sexes although it certainly paid attention to women's demands. Rather than seeing the movement as aggressively anti-woman, we need a better critical understanding of how "the ideology of feminine fascism" was integrated into the masculinist creed.

Finally, of particular interest to women's studies is the connection between feminism and fascism. Women's part in fascism during the inter-war period parallels the successful enlistment of women in the British party system following the franchise. Some suffragettes saw the possibility of advancing women's position under fascism, but they grew disillusioned. Others, like ultra-patriotic and pro-empire Flora Drummond, who opposed the BUF, shared with fascists a fear of communism, strikes, and unions. While

Gottlieb investigates the legacy of three former suffragettes to British fascism—Norah Elam, Mary Richardson, and Mary Allen—she stresses throughout the differences between British feminist writers of the time and fascism.

The author has done meticulous research on the subject, using a variety of sources: oral testimonies, personal interviews and correspondence with former members, archives in England and Canada, and public records. The appendix called "Who's Who in the History of Women and Fascism in Britain" makes for a fascinating read, providing further details on connections between suffragettes and fascists. It also shows that the movement attracted not only former suffragettes, but also women with socialist sympathies, women defying constraints of sexuality (sexual rebels, lesbians, transvestites), as well as members of the British aristocracy. Throughout her discussion, the author employs an analytical approach that integrates gender with class analysis, paying attention as well to the context of race and empire.

This book is a humbling lesson in "perspectivism." No concept, no idea is intrinsically "good" or "progressive" or worth supporting in itself. Rather, each term has to be seen in its context and cannot be detached from its particular usage and circumstances. For a feminist reader, concepts such as "feminism," "pacifism," "women's activism," and "agency" are curiously defamiliarized as they get filtered through the fascist propaganda. Indeed, we must agree with Gottlieb that the subject of women and fascism remains "contentious and emotionally-charged."