

Now I work from any hour in the morning to any hour at night and I am a woman of 'no occupation'... Are we farmer's wives to be dumb, driven cattle in the eyes of the government?" (1916) "I am only fifteen but that doesn't matter I hope... My mother died last winter, I am keeping house for my eight brothers and sisters" (1918).

By the end of this period, women had achieved the provincial and federal vote with the exception of Aboriginal and Asian women. Some legislation had been enacted to ensure that wives could not be left totally disinherited or homeless. The impact of the devastation of the first world war with its decimation of the male population had begun to be evident and a new period of change began. Throughout, many women derived support from each other through the women's pages and created a history for us to admire.

*Dear Editor and Friends* would be excellent required reading for any history of Canada, equally useful for a women's studies program and a general interest book for anyone drawn to learning about the proud heritage of Canadian women. The courage and tenacity shown by these letter writers and editors and thousands of other women of that period, made a tremendous contribution to our country. This book helps remind readers of all that we have to celebrate about our grandmothers and women of previous generations.

## PAS À PAS POUR CHANGER LE MONDE: MOSAÏQUE EN HOMMAGE AUX LUTTES DES FEMMES DU MONDE

La marche mondiale des femmes en l'an 2000. Montréal: Fédération de femmes du Québec, 2000

PAR JEANNE  
MARANDA

En octobre 1998, 143 femmes de 65 pays se rencontrent à Montréal pour préparer la Marche mondiale des femmes de l'an 2000. Les participantes désirent savoir ce que font les femmes d'ailleurs pour combattre la pauvreté et la violence. Elles veulent aussi partager leur propre expérience avec le plus grand nombre possible de femmes. L'idée d'un recueil qui serait une mosaïque d'actions entreprises par des femmes dans le monde entier au chapitre de la pauvreté et de la violence est bien accueilli. Les actions présentées inspireraient d'autres activités d'action populaire et de mobilisation.

En avril 1999, le comité de coordination de la Marche mondiale fait appel par courrier électronique, au comité de liaison international, aux instances de coordination nationale et à bon nombre de groupes participants afin de rassembler des exemples de luttes, de projets et d'actions d'éducation populaire liées aux revendications. Il en reçoit plus d'une certaine.

Les actions retenues pour le recueil sont réparties selon douze thèmes inspirés des revendications et publiés sous le titre «Pas à pas pour changer le monde» sous-titré Mosaïque en hommage aux luttes des femmes du monde. On y parle des économies mondiale, informelle et solidaire, des droits et conditions de travail, des droits et accès aux ressources, d'éducation et de citoyenneté, de violence en temps de guerre et de

conflit armé, de trafic sexuel et de prostitution, de violence conjugale et familiale ainsi que celle justifiée par les traditions et les coutumes. Enfin on parle de santé reproductive et du contrôle du corps et des droits des lesbiennes.

Ce recueil est traduit en trois langues, français, anglais et espagnol et est disponible pour la somme de dix dollars (\$10) auprès de la FFQ au 110 rue Ste-Thérèse, Montréal, Québec H2Y 1E5.

## WOMEN AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN CANADA

Manon Tremblay and Caroline Andrew, Eds. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1998.

BY CHRISTINE  
SAULNIER

The twelve articles in this collection were originally presentations at a conference of the same name held at the University of Ottawa in September 1994. The authors address tensions within feminist activism and scholarship, such as between women's organizations and the government (see Sandra Burt's thorough analysis of the legacy of the CACSW), and regarding the mandate of feminist organizations themselves. Sue Findlay analyzes how the "politics of representation" itself constrains possible strategies because it is really about being recognized by the state. Accordingly, even strategies aimed at "more and better representation" are problematic because they only extend the same politics in which a ruling class of feminists who have skills as lobbyists, policy analysts, etc. is created. The tension is thus over

the strategic importance of partisan and electoral politics, as discussed in Jocelyne Praud's article on affirmative action and the Ontario New Democratic Party; in Lynda Erickson's article on the underrepresentation of women in the House of Commons and the parties' effect on women's participation; and in Lisa Young's article on NAC's (dis)engagement with partisan and electoral politics.

Related to this tension is one regarding topics of research and whether feminists need to go beyond what Rankin and Vickers call "barrier research"; research focused on removing barriers to women's selection and election. Jane Arscott demonstrates why it is so important to examine effective representation not in numerical terms, but in terms of the influence of women and the results of their efforts to represent women's interests and feminist values. She challenges the traditional conceptualization of representation as "more women" and shows how it resulted in the dismissal of innovative proposals from the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. Most importantly, as Rankin and Vickers state, we must decide how to engage and what strategic choices to make in the face of political, social, economic and geographic constraints.

Janine Brodie describes how the neoliberal state form (recognizing the state as but one societal institution) has placed the terrains of the political, the workplace, and private lives and thus gender relations in flux. She warns of the dangers that feminists face when making claims because, as the public sphere (state) shrinks and the private sphere (market, family) expands, responsibilities may simply be privatized and re-familialized. Similarly, Lise Gotell examines the evolution of the state discourse on "violence against women." She provides insights into the dangers of politicizing a problem and getting it onto an agenda that is antithetical to gender equality and transformative social change.

Julia S. O'Connor's analysis of current representations of employment equality bears witness to the limits of advancing egalitarian demands. Attempting to improve the quality of work when the labour market has been restructured, so that more people work at "bad" jobs and for low pay, only helps some women in certain sectors of the labour market.

This collection is stronger in its theorizing about the "politics of representation" than about women. Though, it does not attempt to discuss "woman" as an abstract quality, and does present the problems in "representing" women's interests, it does not adequately address diversity and identity. The diversity in this collection refers to the differing approaches of the authors (though they are almost all trained political scientists), who do claim "in varying degrees and according to the problems they address, to take into account the diversity of women" (Tremblay and Andrew). Linda

Trimble's article purports to examine diversity, and focuses on the ability of women elected to the Alberta legislature to represent women's diversity and the goals of the feminist movement. However, the reader is left not knowing the identity of these women. The problem in this collection reflects Susan Judith Ship's concern that diversity and more particularly "race" and ethnicity are inadequately addressed unless we are considering issues specific to multiculturalism.

Various authors in this book underline the importance of evaluating our strategies, and not silencing dissension in the face of threats from neoliberalism. As such, there is some excellent critical examination of feminist strategies and research in regards to representation. This collection contributes to the crucial project of understanding where to focus our resources and of recognizing tensions as creative pressures for change, so that our strategies are transformative for more women.

No one knows about the need  
for change more than us.



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