

ness. This charge is an easy one to make when the assumption of woman as caregiver and nurturer is ingrained into the dominant moral and social codes. In addition, voluntary childlessness belies the "maternal instinct" theory on which so much of our psychosocial assumptions are based. "Implicit in the accusation of self-centeredness leveled against those without children is the assumption that child rearing has greater moral value in a woman's life than any other activity." Lisle perceptively acknowledges that similar charges have not been made against childless men, and childless women have even been subjected to severe criticism from the community of feminist mothers. (She gives the example of Jane Lazarre, who referred to the childless woman as a "dark lady.")

Undaunted, Lisle encourages her child-free readers: "We are part of an old and respectable—and even inspiring—social tradition which, like other aspects of women's history, has been neglected and forgotten." As part of her effort to correct this imbalance, Lisle finds positive examples of childlessness throughout history. From the powerful goddess Artemis, to Chaucer's Wife of Bath, to the "New Woman" of the turn of the century, Lisle frequently cites examples from mythology, art, literature, and drama. She also points out that in the present time, nonmothers tend to be in more egalitarian marital relationships and "continue to have the most education and the best-paid jobs of all American women."

Lisle also devotes much time to emphasizing the positive role that nonmothers have played in the general welfare of mothers and children. Nonmothers are not necessarily child-haters and she expands on the roles that childless women have played in the development of families, what she calls "social mothering." For example, during the last century it was common practice for an unmarried, single woman (perhaps a sister or aunt) to move in with her brother or niece's family to assist with house-keeping and/or childrearing. Even

today, single women act as objective counsel and support for extended family members; often a young person needs someone with an objectivity that is not always available in their parents, and childless activists devote their time and energy in trying to improve conditions for mothers and children alike. She briefly tributes women such as Florence Nightingale, the Brontës, Virginia Woolf, Georgia O'Keefe, Judy Chicago, and Mother Theresa.

This book is also a deeply personal account of Lisle's own journey. "The realization that I will never give birth to a child has enveloped me gradually and aroused in me an intense, combustible mixture of emotions that follows no existing script." She offers her own story in creating a script for nonmothers, and her personal insight and experience illuminates the discussion of sexuality, perceptions of femininity, work, the idealization of children, and relationships with men. Her relaxed and inclusive narrative style make this a pleasant book to read (even if some of her points are repeated unnecessarily) and would serve as an excellent tool for both nonmothers and mothers. As Lisle states: "If we as childless women can courageously accept all our inclinations and interests as unquestionably legitimate and womanist, we can enlarge what it means to be a woman."

**MODÈLES DE SEXE ET  
RAPPORTS A L'ÉCOLE—  
GUIDE D'INTERVENTION  
AUPRÈS DES ÉLÈVES DE  
TROISIÈME SECONDAIRE**

Pierrette Bouchard, Natasha Bouchard, Jean-Claude St-Amant, et Jacques Tondreau. Montréal: les Éditions du remue-ménage, 1996.

**PAR DIANE GÉRIN-LAJOIE**

A partir de leur recherche portant sur les stéréotypes et la réussite scolaire (*Garçons et filles : stéréotypes et réussite*

*scolaire*, aux Éditions du remue-ménage, Montréal, 1996), Pierrette Bouchard et ses collègues ont rédigé un guide d'intervention pratique pour les élèves de troisième secondaire au Québec. Ce guide comprend trois parties. La première situe les résultats de recherche obtenus par les auteurs dans le contexte de la réussite scolaire des filles et des garçons. Intitulée «Pour contrer l'exclusion sociale», cette section met particulièrement l'accent sur l'impact du milieu socio-économique des élèves en ce qui a trait à leur rendement scolaire, sur l'existence de stéréotypes sexuels et sur la relation pédagogique. L'information que l'on retrouve dans ces quelques pages est concise et bien présentée. La deuxième partie du guide comprend quatorze activités à faire en salle de classe. Ces activités ont été conçues pour rencontrer les objectifs pédagogiques des divers programmes du ministère de l'Éducation du Québec. La démarche y est bien expliquée et le personnel enseignant devrait pouvoir s'en servir sans grande difficulté. La troisième partie du document, présente des outils de références et un lexique contenant des définitions ayant trait au contenu du guide.

Dans l'ensemble, ce guide est bien structuré et peut s'avérer utile en salle de classe, quoique bien souvent ces guides d'intervention y soient peu utilisés, à moins que le personnel enseignant ait bénéficié d'une formation en cours d'emploi sur les problématiques traitées à l'intérieur de ces documents. Il est donc à espérer que la promotion de ce guide a été faite afin d'en maximiser l'utilisation par le personnel enseignant, pour le plus grand bénéfice des élèves.