only three articles that dealt with women, but, they contend that the current division between feminism and political economy is "conjunctural and not fundamental." Responding to a challenge from a 1981 conference to "put your pen where your mouth is," *Feminism and Political Economy* is an attempt to show that the two approaches need not be isolated, that the differences are resolvable, that an explicitly feminist political economy is possible.

The analyses of domestic labour developed by theorists such as Wally Seccombe, Margaret Coulson and Jean Gardiner in the 1970s have already demonstrated the usefulness of extending the traditional categories of political economy into oft-ignored "peripheral" women's areas. The 15 essays in this collection continue this important research, advancing the analysis of women's work in the home and the "pink-collar ghettoes." For example, in "Rational Capitalism and Women as Labour," Patricia Marchak asks a key question: "If employers normally seek the least-cost labour supply, and if women are the cheapest source of labour in the capitalist economy, why are men and women channelled into separate labour pools?" She arrives at her conclusion — that the division of labour under capitalism "has been rationally developed in the interest of profit accumulation, and has been an integral component of advanced capitalism between 1945 and 1980" — by using analytic distinctions such as domestic labour and service *versus* surplus-producing labour. Other essays, such as Charlene Gannagé's analysis of the gender and ethnic division of labour in a Canadian garment factory, underscore women's economic oppression with empirical investigations. Gannagé outlines the complexities of class, race and gender that must be addressed in feminist political economy. For example, both the gender and ethnic ideology of the trade are made explicit in one woman's account of her firm's hiring practices of "operators," a traditionally male Jewish job:

Another lady was come for work by machine. And she was work very nice. She finish a coat and I say "Oh, you make very nice coat," I met her in the toilet. She say "I don't think so he likes." I say, "Why?" She say, "Because I am a woman. I'm not Jewish." ... Everybody say she ... make a nice coat. It was lunchtime. After lunch the foreman say "Oh you make a nice coat. You go home. We going to call you," he say. "Now not so busy."

Many of these essays are endeavours to lay out the groundwork for future feminist research, ending on "toward" notes, such as the concluding section of Luxton and Maroney's essay, "Toward a Feminist Political Economy," and the last part of Lorna Weir's piece, "Toward a Socialist Feminist Politics of Sexuality." Weir argues for the permanent integration of sexual politics into socialist feminist theory and practice, openly confronting "a tension in socialist feminism between its class and non-class 'popular-democratic' aspects," a tension which may not be resolvable within the confines of the women's movement, according to Weir. She calls for — and begins to elucidate the conceptual framework necessary for — a non-reductionist class analysis of sexual politics. While non-socialist feminists might hold that "a non-reductionist class analysis of sexual politics" is an impossibility, Weir's call for the inclusion of the category of sexuality — and thus the inclusion of analysis of the oppression of lesbians, bisexuals and gays *as* lesbians, bisexuals and gays and not as generic class subjects — along with those of gender and class in socialist feminist theory and practice must be lauded.

In their introduction, appropriately titled "From Feminism and Political Economy to Feminist Political Economy," Luxton and Maroney present a manifesto which actually illustrates the root of the division between feminism and marxist political economy. Statements such as "[p]olitical economy, like feminism, sees social relations as conditioned by economic structures and processes" serve the purpose of prematurely suturing a debate that has not yet been resolved satisfactorily, in theory or in practice: the basic disjuction between marxist analysis in which class is the fundamental category and feminist analysis in which gender is the fundamental category.

At the end of this very broad review essay Luxton and Maroney try to assimilate all the major strands of feminist theory since the 1960s with seven "analytic and methodological theses" for their proposed feminist political economy. The theses presented here are not always nuanced enough to resolve the theoretical dilemma between class analysis and gender analysis, but this is not to suggest that the development of a sophisticated feminist political economy is an impossibility. Indeed, the empirical descriptions of women's economic oppression in *Feminism and Political Economy* show that, when put to work analyzing specific, historical moments of women's oppression, the extended categories of political economy can illuminate underlying economic structures of women's oppression that other types of feminist analysis can only hint at.

CHANGING PATTERNS: Women in Canada

Edited by Sandra Burt, Lorraine Code and Lindsay Dorney. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988.

Randi R. Warne

Those of us who teach courses outside the domain of women's studies are often dismayed to find how complacent many young women students are about the feminist project. It is not uncommon to hear feminism called "old-fashioned," or to have current feminist activists characterized as bitter women "who keep harping on the same thing over and over" when in fact all the doors of opportunity

stand open for any woman with the determination and intelligence to make something of her life. Much of this sanguine attitude may be attributed to naïveté, of course, and to the persistence of anti-feminist prejudice in the common world, and we educators both look forward to and regret that hard day when students are forced to recognize the "merit dream" for what it is. Nevertheless, it is equally true that good general materials which might introduce students to a wide range of feminist concerns and analyses are not readily available in Canada. It is this lack which *Changing Patterns: Women in Canada* admirably offsets.

The text marks an important moment in Canadian women's scholarship. It describes, in a comprehensive and easily accessible way, the changing realities of women's lives set against the historical backdrop essential for evaluation of those changes. It does so, moreover, from a perspective which is thoroughly feminist, without presupposing a similar depth of feminist commitment on the part of its readership. While some might consider this a retrograde step, others will recognize the political astuteness of conveying feminist awareness to the huge body of undergraduate students which will be this text's primary audience. In its breadth of perspective and non-polemical style, *Changing Patterns* effectively challenges the opinion, oft voiced, that feminist concerns are too "narrow," "specific," or "ideological" to warrant much consideration in the mainstream university curriculum. While undoubtedly many barriers still exist to women's full participation in the creation and dissemination of knowledge in the academy, a text such as this is an essential contribution to the task of making education accountable to all persons' experience.

Changing Patterns comprises eleven chapters written by women who both teach courses on women and are active in the women's movement in Canada. The text opens with Lorraine Code's lucid and thorough exposition of feminist theory, from the biological determinism which confined discourse on gender for centuries, through the many feminist challenges to that depiction of women's inherent inferiority. It then moves through women's history from the early European settlers up to first-wave feminism (Jane Errington), the second wave of the Canadian women's movement (Naomi Black), the changing Canadian family (Susan McDaniel), legislation and public policy (Sandra Burt), women and the law (Beverly Baines), immigrant women and institutionalized racism (Roxana Ng), women's literature (Shelagh Wilkinson), the medical treatment of women (Wendy Mitchinson), the psychology of women (Joanna Boehnert), and finally, new developments in reproductive technology which turn all the ancient patterns of biological determinism inside out (Rona Achilles).

While each chapter has a primary author in keeping with focus and area of expertise, the text as a whole was written collaboratively. The sustained conversation which produced this work is effectively underscored by the many cross-references in each chapter to points raised more fully, or addressed differently in the others. The meaning of feminist pedagogy is thus 'bodied forth' to the reader, who must engage the fact that the creation of knowledge is a cooperative venture rather than "a stone dropped from heaven." (Karl Barth's metaphor for divine revelation, too often appropriated by the guardians of 'malestream' knowledge!)

The distinction between 'public' and 'private' spheres, and women's attempts to move beyond men's narrow limitation of women to the latter, forms the text's central interpretive focus. The authors are particularly adept at illustrating the ambiguity inherent in this process. One point made throughout is that progress has its costs. Canadian women cannot simply assume that changing conditions — even the ones for which women have actively lobbied — will invariably have a positive impact upon women's lives. For example, while most would affirm the advantage of state-run medical insurance programs, making the individual's health a matter of such public concern may result in state intervention in such 'private' matters as when, and under what conditions, a woman chooses to reproduce. An additional point is that while legislated change is essential, legislation in and of itself does not guarantee substantial improvement in actual women's lives. What is required are changed attitudes on the parts of those in a position to implement legislation. Once again, this affirms the importance of the text's capacity to convey feminist concerns to a broad audience in a substantial and convincing way.

Yet another interpretive focus is the way in which biology has been invoked to justify women's exclusion from, or marginalisation in, the public sphere. While the authors note (perhaps ironically) how difficult it might be for the modern reader to understand how theories such as Freud's could have held such sway, it is abundantly clear how persistently effective the biologistic argument has been in limiting women's options. The ideological character of the ostensibly self-evident is thus brought home with full force to the neophyte reader.

The range of topics addressed by *Changing Patterns* will make it a valuable resource for a variety of disciplines. Each chapter has its excellences, no doubt enhanced by the collaborative model adopted by the authors. All cover a breadth of material, extensively documented, augmented by a list of suggested readings for those wishing to pursue the topic beyond the introductory level. Taken as a whole, *Changing Patterns: Women In Canada* is an excellent introductory text for general arts and women's studies students alike, and a useful "refresher course" for those more deeply involved in the discipline.

No work is without its flaws, of course, and while in *Changing Patterns* these are fortunately few, at least one is serious enough to warrant sustained comment. It should be first noted that almost all the authors are successful in describing a variety of interpretations with subtlety and wit, without sacrificing their own sense of perspective. One minor exception is Roxana Ng's chapter on immigrant women, which would be strengthened by a more nuanced treatment of the interactions between the patriarchal values of immigrant women's traditions and the patriarchal structures of Canadian society. The historical antecedents of current realities are also generally well-covered; in this regard, the reader should hear more from Shelagh Wilkinson on earlier Canadian women writers (Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, etc.) whose didactic style distances them from current scholarly fashion, but whose works played an essential role in creating a Canadian identity.

The central problem with the text, as I see it, is the superficial "maternalist" reading of first-wave feminism which is

given its most sustained treatment in the chapter "Pioneers and Suffragists." As historian Veronica Strong-Boag[1] has noted, scholarship on Canadian feminism has moved through at least three stages, from the virtually hagiographic through to the historically contextual studies which mark the best work today. Unfortunately, the chapter "Pioneers and Suffragists" relies overwhelmingly on materials generated out of the second stage of scholarship, which is characterized by an evaluation of the arguments and actions of first-wave feminist against a specific set of contemporary norms. By failing to engage the actual historical realities which shaped these women's lives, 'second stage' historians have produced a distorted picture of both their motivations and their possibilities, reducing to a middle-class 'maternalism' what were actually quite radical demands to have the public sphere become accountable to women's lives. When Frances Willard of the WCTU issued the order "to make the world more homelike" she was not talking about putting antimacassars into the factories. She was calling for the development of caring cooperative socialist communities, of the kind which figure so prominently in the demands of many feminists today. An essential corrective to this sort of misreading is Dolores Hayden's *The Grand Domestic Revolution*;[2] by employing her category of "material feminism," the analysis presented in this chapter could have been deepened considerably. However, all that was required was to apply the insights of other chapters regarding the ambiguities facing women seeking social reform today to the development of first-wave feminism. What better compliment to a text's depth and sophistication than to say it provides its own best corrective?

Changing Patterns: Women in Canada is more than a welcome and valuable addition to the study of women in Canada. It is an important developmental benchmark which substantiates the centrality of women to Canadian life, and their ongoing refusal to accept the innumerable limitations upon them which patriarchal society seeks to impose.[3]

[1]Veronica Strong-Boag, "Ever a Crusader: Nellie McClung, First-Wave Feminist" in *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History*," Ed. Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1986), p. 178.

[2]Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1987).

[3]I wish this text had been available when I was an undergraduate. Joanna Boehnert's chapter alone would have saved years of therapy!

CANADIAN WOMEN: A History

Alison Prentice, Paula Bourne, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Beth Light, Wendy Mitchinson, Naomi Black. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988.

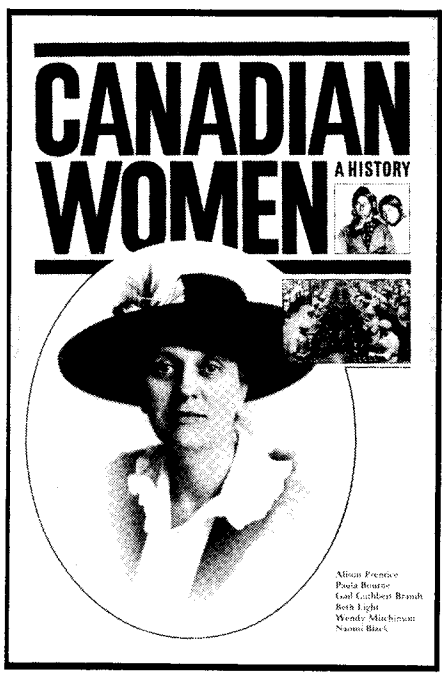
Clara Thomas

The six scholars who wrote *Canadian Women: A History* call their work a collective and, as they describe the process by which their book came into being, it was one, in the best meaning of that loosely descriptive word:

> *Chapters were initially written by one or two of us; then, gathered around seminar tables and dining-room tables, or by phone and mail, we all discussed —and often vigorously debated—every idea, word and punctuation mark along the way .... In the end we hardly knew who had written what, or where a particular idea for a change of direction might have originated.*

Accustomed to viewing with misgivings all projected plans for such committee projects, I am astonished and awed by the seamlessness of the finished book. It is a triumph of cooperation, dedication, scholarship and writing skill.

The text itself runs to slightly over 400 pages, the appendices and index to almost another hundred. The book is divided into four major and chronological sections: "The Founding Mothers: Beginnings to the Mid-Nineteenth Century;" The New Pioneers: The Mid-Nineteenth Century to the End of the Great War;" "The Promised Land? The End of the Great War to the Beginning of World War II;" and "The Unfinished Revolution: World War II to the Charter of Rights." Each section's introduction sets forth its shape and outlines its overall thesis which is then expanded in several chapters. The whole is embellished and much enlivened by numerous well-chosen and witty photographs. Their choosing was obviously a real bonus of enjoyment to the authors: each illustration fits closely, tellingly and adds a further dimension of visual comment to its accompanying text.



A pleasure to hold and a pleasure to browse through. What then of closer reading? The introductory sentence to Part I indicates a dominant characteristic of the whole: "Aataentsic, according to the Hurons, was the great mother." This is a social and cultural history. Though it partakes of the political, constitutional, statistical, all the convenient sub-sets of the discipline, its over-riding effectiveness is in its personalized, often affectionately anecdotal style. We are never doomed to an endless tedium of dates, facts and figures; the text is constantly enlivened by the names and exploits of individual women. The concept of sisterhood is an underlying, nourishing foundation to the whole. And over-riding all is the authors' constant, careful awareness of the patriarchal quality of the vast bulk of primary sources from early days to the present. They are feminists, naturally, but they do not ride one particular feminist ideology:

> *We hope to illuminate the history of women in Canada in all it diversity.*