

the white female health care professional (psychotherapist) and how her position as an elite authority, as health care “knower,” contributes to the normalization of racialized social relations. This normalization, this institutionalization of difference, is enacted particularly through the use of empathy. Empathy is most successful as a healing and educational tool when the class and gender backgrounds of the clients are similar to her own, and success is undermined when difference makes empathy more difficult and less convincing. The result: “the majority of people are regulated out of psychotherapy by the very nature of empathy.” And in this way, the privilege and domination of whiteness is simultaneously reinforced. Roger’s solutions, however, are less insightful and are familiar to liberal thought. She encourages the anti-racist education of health care professionals so as to disrupt the sense of white normativity. In addition, she urges that more non-white, cultural, and racial “others” be present in the health care professions so as to challenge the historical racism in these professions. Acknowledging that this may seem naïve, but arguing its necessity anyway, Roger offers little encouragement for deep structural change. As such, Roger may simply help to reinforce a sense of white guilt for hogging the upper end of the system.

Other chapters provide analyses of racial segregation in occupations. In a fascinating account of resistance to segmented labour markets, Agnes Calliste joins historical material (on railway porters) with contemporary example (nurses) to explore both men’s and women’s experiences in anti-racist struggles. She emphasizes the linked ideological processes of sexism and racism to legitimize and normalize labour market segmentation, both between and within occupations. Resistance, which took the form of class action suits in some cases (CN railway porters) and pressuring management and filing of official complaints in others, came at

high emotional, psychological and financial cost to those engaged in the struggle. Compensatory packages were too low and sometimes too late. Calliste therefore encourages racial minority nurses today to take more overt political action in an effort to transform the social and economic institutions of capitalist society.

In “The Case of Émile Ouimet” Helle-Mai Lenk studies the re-inscription of racist nationalism in media coverage of an “event” in Quebec—the expulsion of a (white) student for wearing an Islamic head scarf (*hijab*). In her detailed account of French and English press coverage of the story, Lenk suggests that the incident drew attention not so much because of the *hijab* itself but because of the implications for a burgeoning Québécois nationalism. (The incident, by the way, occurred during a provincial election campaign). In a new form of nationalist racism where “race is coded as culture,” Émile Ouimet highlights the constructedness, the very fragility, of such an a-historical nationalist project, rooted in imperial notions of racial purity, and highlights the exclusivity of that discourse. Lenk concludes with little confidence that the press will provide a locus for paradoxical discourses on representation and nationalism. She does not, alas, suggest ways and means by which that discourse can be promoted.

In “The Hindu Woman’s Question,” Enakshi Dua traces the history of the debate surrounding the migration of South Asian wives into British Columbia after the turn of the century. Here the “imagined” whiteness of a burgeoning Canadian nation helped to institutionalize what Agnes Calliste in her essay has labelled gendered racism. The arguments for the migration of these wives reinscribed notions of gender superiority and racism, in that a sexually serviced Asian male need not prey on the population of white females. Nation-building was fundamentally gendered, and as much as Asian women were constructed as wives for

the servicing of the male South Asian community, the debate helped to constitute white women as mothers of the nation and confined and contained their sexuality as well. Dua stops short of analyzing how capital was also “serviced” in the process.

Generally, as a classroom text, *Anti-Racist Feminism* offers an excellent opportunity to introduce students to anti-racist critique. It is, however, something of a mixed blessing. It is a profoundly historical text that encourages examination of the imperialist roots of Canadian nation-building. Individual contributions provide useful insights into the changing contexts of “race” in Canada, but the introductory and concluding chapters which summarize these perspectives tend to be convoluted. More problematic, however, is the lack of attention to issues of class politics in some (but certainly not all) of the contributions and to the adhesive possibilities inherent through class struggle. More attention to this matter would have made this work more exceptional. In addition, more emphasis on racialization of masculinity would strengthen the justification for the “gender” subtitle.

READING RIGHTS: A WOMAN’S GUIDE TO THE LAW IN CANADA

Rahat Kurd. The Canadian Council of Muslim Women. Kingston, Ontario: Quarry Women’s Books, 1999.

BY SUSAN MURPHY

Reading Rights is not about our right to read but about “empowering” women through legal rights education. Sponsored by the Ottawa chapter of the Canadian Muslim Council

of Women, the work presents a wide ranging, basic introduction to Canadian federal legal rights, providing brief explanations of individual laws. A number of areas are addressed, including universal human rights, *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, employment, immigration and visa rights, marriage, separation and divorce, discrimination and harassment, legalities concerning abuse, and the rights of the elderly. Many sections include practical guidelines intended to enable women to protect various individual rights but these guidelines suggest no specific alternative measures if the action taken proves unsuccessful. For example, although seeking a restraining order against an abusive partner is a valid suggestion, such legal restraints are often subject to repeat violations. Rahat Kurd's most helpful advice in this and other situations is to seek out professional advice so that alternate measures can be explored.

A second valuable suggestion is to make accurate, detailed records of incidents where individual or group rights are violated. The writer does not suggest that consulting the Canadian legal system is always successful, commenting that rights violations sometimes go unprosecuted, jail times for crimes against women are frequently inadequate, and the legal system often lags behind or (less frequently) leaps ahead of public opinion on certain legal issues. Despite the inadequacies of the system, Kurd reports that documentation submitted to the appropriate authorities is a significant component in constructing a successful legal case.

The author also discusses *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* although there are some puzzling gaps in this commentary. Kurd lists only six of the seven categories of rights defined under the Charter, excluding mobility rights (the rights of Canadian citizens to enter and leave the country and to move to and work in any province). Of the six categories listed in the text, the writer defines and explains only

four types of rights: fundamental freedoms, democratic rights, legal rights, and equality rights. Absent is an explanation of the rights accorded the official Canadian languages and minority language education rights. No explanation is given for these omissions, although possibly the author's intended audience are female Muslims with the perception that the French/English languages and associated education rights would be of little interest to this group. However, given the mobility of Canadians, it is highly probable that many women will at some point be directly affected by such issues depending upon the environment in which they live. One might argue that all Canadians are affected in some manner by the contentious issue of French/English language rights, a subject that continues to shape our politics and culture. Therefore, it is surprising that Kurd does not provide an introduction to this issue in her work.

Reading Rights is a short, simply-written text which can be used as a resource manual or educational tool for those seeking an introduction to Canadian federal legal rights. It does not provide detailed information about legal history, legal rights, or how to cope with rights violations, and generally excludes provincial legislation from discussion. Women searching for such information should seek professional advice or they can check the listings at the back, which include addresses where one can obtain legal pamphlets and information regarding public legal education and family and civil law issues. The appendices also contain copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (Part I), as well as listings for human rights' commissions and women's organisations across the country.

Throughout the text, Kurd emphasises that women as individuals and as a group need to take a proactive role in asserting and claiming their rights, noting that many laws that previously discriminated against

women were changed by the intervention of women in their struggle for justice. Today's woman needs to continue that fight for the betterment of all.

CASTING STONES: PROSTITUTION AND LIBERATION IN ASIA AND THE UNITED STATES

Rita Nakashima Brock and Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996

BY SHARON
FERGUSON-HOOD
AND MARIE TOVELL
WALKER

Brock and Thistlethwaite are feminist theologians who are skilled in analysis. Before writing *Casting Stones*, they undertook an exhaustive study of the sex industry in five Asian countries—Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines—as well as in the United States. This broad context offers the reader insight into the worldwide ideologies that allow prostitution to flourish and that allow women and children to be victimized.

The authors begin their book by relating the ethos of the military to the practice of prostitution. Military success depends on a de-humanization process. In a pattern that is ancient and persistent, military personnel are socialized to objectify people, devalue relationships, and value extreme masculinity. Not surprisingly, prostitution flourishes in areas where there are military bases. *Casting Stones* describes this pattern in detail and also explains that these locations involve increased risk for sex workers. Violence against sex workers is higher in military zones