

homogeneous population, a powerful bourgeoisie, or a confident state sector. Historians of education who approach the study of educational reform as if only westerners were involved in state formation would do well to consider the broader significance of the activities documented for the first time by Bailey.

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Le Collectif Clio. *L'histoire des femmes au Québec depuis quatre siècles.* Montréal: Le Jour, éditeur, 1992. Pp. 646. \$34.95.

Having read the first edition of this book and reviewed the English translation (*Resources for Feminist Research*, March 1989, p. 42), I eagerly awaited this "édition entièrement revue et mise à jour" (front and back covers, p. 14). Sadly, this edition is not significantly changed from the original and in many ways the book is a disappointment.

Le collectif Clio implies at the outset a much more substantial revision of the original than is actually realized. The time frame of the book has been extended from 1979 to 1990, which resulted in a reworking and expansion of the last part of the book covering the period 1965-90. Generally, the new material is little more than a recounting of a very broad outline primarily of the activities of leading francophone québécoises,

labour patterns, legal, economic, and social changes. A chronology of events unfolds but little analysis of any major issues is evident. The larger Québec and Canadian context receive occasional passing mention but no sustained consideration. With only some specific, and limited, exceptions the remainder of the book (which is to say everything dealing with the period before 1965) is taken word for word from the first edition as a simple textual comparison makes clear. There have been changes in the pre-1965 material but nothing that could be described as being brought up-to-date except in the most restricted sense of the term.

Some of the changes in *L'histoire des femmes* are puzzling, not entirely successful, and probably reflect unpalatable choices imposed by a cost-conscious publisher. While this new edition has been enhanced by the inclusion of many more wonderful photographs and other illustrations, it has been weakened by the deletion of some of the "boxes" that contained extracts from documents and by the bewildering disappearance of all the statistical tables. The bibliographical sections at the end of each chapter have been augmented by including references to materials published after 1982. While not entirely comprehensive, the broad outline of the story of women in Québec and the expanded bibliographical sections make the new edition, like the first, a useful source book. Yet, a sense of disappointment lingers.

In the first edition of this book, native, anglophone, and immigrant women were largely ignored. Their absence has been remedied now by

specific and often pointed inclusion. This new edition begins with the native people, and especially native women, unlike the first which began with the exploits of French men engaged in commerce in New France. But this hopeful beginning is not sustained. Native women appear frequently in the new edition—sentences, paragraphs, and pages added to the 1982 text—but their story is not told in detail nor integrated with those of other women. Likewise, anglophones and women of other ethnic backgrounds are mentioned here and there—sometimes for even a paragraph or two—but completely separate from the main line of the story of les québécoises. This token acknowledgement of the existence of other than francophone québécoises in the province guarantees that the book in no way meshes the shared experiences of *all* women in Québec. In fact it is not clear whether all women living in Québec are les québécoises; if so, some are certainly considered by le collectif Clio to be of more significance than others. Since this book is substantially a reproduction of the first edition it is not surprising that this fundamental weakness of the original work remains.

The book is disappointing in another troubling way: it is strong on description but weak on analysis. When the original version appeared in 1982 it was understandable, given the undeveloped state of the writing of women's history, that the book stress a narrative approach, i.e., telling the story. So much work has been done in the last decade expanding our knowledge of the subject, above all in Québec, that rather than just telling the

story, it is time to get on with explaining the meaning of the story. But there is no consistent overriding theme or themes around which this book is organized.

One particularly striking example of this is the absence of a sustained examination of the effect of nationalism on the lives of women in Québec over the last 150 years, and especially over the last 30. Le collectif Clio raises the issue forcefully by highlighting questions linking the liberation of women and of Québec (p. 475), and by drawing attention to the contemporary debate about long-range demographic patterns and a governmental natalist policy (pp. 540-41). However, if one were to look closely and historically at the phenomenon of nationalism at work in Québec's history, one could argue it has produced devastating consequences for women. Women in the province have been exhorted to live in ethnic solitudes in the name of nationalism; this book typifies the consequences. Nationalism does not hesitate to require the betrayal of women by women. Is it surprising that francophone and anglophone women who share so much in common in the struggle to secure their legal and political rights, control of their reproduction, and equal value assigned to their work have failed to work together to achieve these goals? Or that both of these groups of women have found it easy to ignore and exclude the needs of native and immigrant women? Nationalism has taught them to see each other as enemies, not as sisters.

Historically, in Québec as elsewhere, nationalism has insisted that

women subordinate all their individual and collective interests to those of the nation, that women must not play an active and public role in the running of the nation, and that the prime contribution of women to national life can be only maternal, bearing and nurturing successive generations of committed nationalists. The success that women in Québec have enjoyed in the last quarter-century in achieving a greater role in the economic, cultural, and political life of the province has occurred when, collectively and individually, they have given the highest priority to the needs of women rather than those of the nation. What nationalism has done to, and meant for, women in Québec receives no methodical or critical consideration in this book.

There are other issues of similar importance that this book raises but does not examine. Class and ethnicity, for instance, run throughout the history of women in Québec, yet neither merits systematic examination in this book.

L'histoire des femmes remains a useful guide to the general shape of the past shared by women in Québec but it provides few explicit insights and none of the essential explanations of that past. The past is meaningful in our lives when we know and understand more than just the chronological detail; we achieve meaning through explanation. Ten years after the original edition of this book, it is no longer enough to tell a story to make women angry; it is time to explain why the past reveals such a dismal story. In failing to do so this book, despite

bringing the story up to 1990, is a disappointment.

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Joseph E. Illick. *At Liberty: The Story of a Community and a Generation: The Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, High School Class of 1952.* Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989. Pp. xvii, 349, illus. \$38.95 U.S.

Joseph E. Illick graduated from Liberty High School in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1952. By the 1970s Illick, a professor teaching American history at San Francisco State College, had developed an interest in the history of the family. When he learned that his high school class was to have a twenty-fifth anniversary reunion, this event triggered his determination to "gather the family histories of my classmates...and write a broad social history of my generation that would appeal not only to scholars but to anyone interested in contemporary America" (p. xvi). For a variety of reasons Illick took far longer to complete the project than he had originally intended, but he eventually produced this very fine book.

Although Bethlehem had been founded by Moravians from Germany in the middle of the eighteenth century, the Bethlehem in which Illick and his classmates grew up was very much a modern industrial city, dominated by the giant Bethlehem Steel Company.