

on the more institutional and ideological focus adopted. This is, however, a venial sin. Historians of education who can read Spanish will definitely benefit from this book.

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**Prue Rains and Eli Teram. *Normal Bad Boys: Public Policies, Institutions, and the Politics of Client Recruitment*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992. Pp. 187. \$39.95 Cdn., cloth.**

One aim of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century North American middle-class progressivism was to make good boys and girls of the wayward by rehabilitating, and not criminalizing and punishing them. As S.L. Schlossman explained in *Love and the American Delinquent*, a new ethos of caring eventually reformed the reformatory, forcing a gradual shift from the congregate to the cottage institution headed by parent role models. It also established a juvenile court and alternatives to the reform school. Thus, probation officers made home visits and judges passed down a suspended sentence, or delivered a "little talk" to a boy or girl.

*Normal Bad Boys* is rooted in that progressive movement. It brings together two case studies of the policies affecting the disposition of delinquent, neglected, and emotionally disturbed anglophone youth in Montreal be-

tween 1912 and 1984. In Parts One and Two, Prue Rains employs provincial reports as well as a rich archive to construct a history of recruitment policies of one private reform institution, the Boys' Farm and Training School (hereafter BFTS), from 1912 to 1971 when Quebec legislation transformed it to a public institution. For decades, BFTS' Board of Directors, comprising prominent and well-connected Montreal anglophone businessmen such as E.W. Beatty, president of CPR, fought to maintain the reform school's non-prison image. BFTS clung stubbornly to the ideal of providing boys with abundant fresh air, wholesome food, and a lack of fences and closed doors on its two hundred and fifty acres of forested land forty miles northwest of Montreal.

Rains features BFTS' struggle for control over its population. When the reform school faced its first population crisis around the time of World War I, it did two things. First, its Board of Directors lobbied the province for the "indefinite sentence," winning, instead, a significant increase in the length of term boys would serve. Second, BFTS began recruiting its own clients through advertisement, and for a time was especially successful. From 1924 to 1928, for example, about half of its population (in 1924 a quarter of the population of Quebec reform schools) were "voluntary boys" (p. 22).

Rains argues that BFTS, conscious of its traditional non-prison orientation, and with a view to specializing in youth populations it felt best able to handle, continued to resist having inappropriately placed clients

foisted upon it by the courts. From the 1930s on, when judges sought to keep older youth clear of adult courts and prisons and so sent them to this facility, it continued to refuse to build lock-up facilities despite increased costs incurred in runaway recovery. In 1950 it was designated as a "Youth Protection Centre," and forced to accept "protection" cases owing to the acute shortage and high costs of foster and group homes, which were considered more "natural" placements for emotionally disturbed boys. Thinking itself best able to serve *delinquents* and not "protection" clients, many of whom had to be sedated, BFTS resorted to initiating external reviews by experts in order to make things plain to the outside that it was clearly in receipt of inappropriately placed clients. Ironically, BFTS faced closure by 1967 due to the courts' lack of confidence in the institution's ability to handle the youth they did send its way.

In Part Three, Eli Teram extends both personal social work experience and familiarity with inter-organizational theory in an ethnography of Montreal's mandated anglophone youth-protection network, including Shawbridge Youth Centres (formerly BFTS). Budding professional autonomy together with the growing preference for the "individual assessment" of "clients" and their circumstances became the "building block" of centralized admissions procedure. Individual social workers brought individual cases before a joint committee. From there, actual placements of youth were affected by personalities around the committee table, a sense of fairness in client distribution to all available

placements, as well as by professional "discretion."

While Rains only had access to surviving written records, Teram's actual presence at multi-level meetings allowed more personal observations that were considered to be "more reliable than documents": for example, actual minutes of meetings "did not represent what actually transpired in meetings," and "omitted the interactions" that led to solutions (p. 137). Rather than seeing "progressivism" in institutions, Teram notes a bureaucracy seeking internal equilibrium. Practices such as "consensus reporting" by the institution led to compromises in professionalism. The legitimacy of professionally held assumptions was never really challenged because under external scrutiny, institutions worked to make their practices and decisions appear correct and clinically justified.

Though BFTS ultimately failed to control its population, reception centres gained considerable control over the disposition of clients in placement meetings, especially when a representative "expressed interest in a client. Thus statements such as 'I'll take it,' 'he looks OK for me,' or 'I have a bed for him' ended the discussion" (p. 84). Placement decisions left social workers frustrated while adolescent clients and their parents remained "mystified by the language of treatment and by their exclusion from the discussions and settings in which important decisions about their lives are being made" (p. 121).

In their conclusion, Rains and Teram reflect upon recent policy developments in juvenile justice. They

think that the Young Offenders Act of 1984, which replaced the Juvenile Delinquents Act of 1908, marks a shift in control of young offenders back towards the courts: "In this sense, the Young Offenders Act is criminal legislation, cut-and-dried" (p. 124). They suggest, however, that sensitized judges might actually act in the best interests of a young client, and not a youth-processing institution. No one will be surprised when they also argue that when institutions work to appear to be "doing good" out of fear of fiscal strangulation, they play into government hands since "it buffers external demands for change, improvement, and spending of more money on alternatives" (p. 124).

*Normal Bad Boys* is particularly suited for specialists interested in the critical view of social work policy and inter-organizational theory, and how policy affects, and is itself affected by, institutions. In order to be more useful to an even broader readership (including undergraduates in social work, sociology, and history), who seek a more concrete, less theoretical orientation, Rains and Teram might consider expanding the task of future versions of this book. First, they might engage more substantively with the terms, "neglected," "delinquent," and "emotionally disturbed," or undertake some systematic analysis of the use of these terms over eighty years. Second, they might reconsider their tight focus upon recruitment policy and provide more glimpses of "normal bad boys," and their treatment *within* an institution. We need more examples of real boys such as Ralph Kirby who Rains em-

ploys to exemplify "inadmissible children":

Toward the end of July it became apparent that Ralph could not be retained by his employer—a poultry farmer some miles north of Shawbridge—since the boy had been discovered choking chickens to death "because their noise bothered him and it made him feel better after he had killed them" (p. 56).

Enticing and useful material of this sort is sometimes left embedded in long endnotes. Only the diligent will read in a note, for example, that one twelve-year-old had been beaten with a rubber hose causing his mother to want to get him out (p. 154). Such anecdotes are necessary, not to satisfy voyeurism, but in order to breathe life into this survey and analysis of policy development. Third, though Rains and Teram encourage more local case studies such as theirs, they might consider brief comparisons (or suggest points of departure for comparisons) with other youth-in-trouble networks, perhaps the francophone one in Montreal.

Any criticism of this book, including the foregoing, must be considered in light of the book's ambitious temporal scope and its short length (129 pages exclusive of appendix and notes). Given those two limitations, this is a good little book. It is clearly written and scholarly. Each part and chapter is well introduced and summarized and each chapter is conveniently broken down further into labelled sections. Continuity through and be-

tween the two complementary case studies is maintained for the reader via a tight commitment to the theme of the politics of client recruitment, as well as by repetition of points raised in previous chapters.

Overall, this book should cause professionals and institutions claiming exclusivity of privilege to judge because of *a priori* "supposed ownership of exclusive, useful knowledge," to reassess that view in light of their possible political, financial, and professional allegiances. It should raise eyebrows among those of us in education, for example, who in moments of weakness for the postmodern, speak so glibly of "collaboration" among "stakeholders"—as if all stakeholders are even accounted for at that table; and as if that table is ever really level.

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**Wendy Chmielewski, Louis J. Kern, and Marlyn Klee-Hartzell, eds.** *Women in Spiritual and Communitarian Societies in the United States*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993. Pp. 296. \$17.95 U.S., paper.

Essays in this collection explore the social history of women participants in alternative communities. First and foremost, the essays examine the nature of power and control in communities, raising provocative questions about progressive movements. As presented in this text, spiritual leaders'

attempts to create alternative societies have historically offered women a mixed blessing, even when those communities were designed to improve the lives of women. A central question in these essays is: *who* had the power to decide what was improvement, and did women agree that their lives were improved by these decisions?

Given the sobering lessons in these essays about the problems faced by women in alternative communities, the book is curiously misadvertised with a cover photograph of early twentieth-century Shaker sisters laughing gaily on an apple-picking trip. Equally misplaced is the visionary, liberatory quote by Susan B. Anthony that prefaces the book: "Away with all your man-visions! Women propose to reject them all, and begin to dream for themselves." In only one of the dozen communities described were any women successful at creating the opportunity to dream for themselves, and then only by rejecting not only man-visions, but men themselves. In this case, an all-female religious community founded in late nineteenth-century Texas (quite near Waco, Texas, site of another visionary utopia), women used the strength of their own religious vision to leave unsatisfactory marriages for the Woman's Commonwealth, a community of women and children that survived for over one hundred years. Only by organizing intentionally an all-female environment did these women create a community that privileged women.

In most other communities described here, including the Shaker, Owenite, Oneida, and Brook Farm communities, patriarchal structures