

mediated connections." Furthermore he explores the subjective transformation of the spouses. Perhaps one of the major contributions of this analysis is the understanding of marital sex relations as a site of gender struggle in the movement toward the modern form of family limitations as well as toward women's personal intimate liberation.

This book makes a significant historiographical contribution in terms of knowledge and methodology. It shows the richness of historical materialism when it is removed from positivistic interpretations. It provides a new basis for a discussion of hegemony as a process and the generation of the hegemonic articulating principle of the value system. The author makes clear how the concept of the so-called traditional family acquired a universalizing quality and became a hegemonic principle, one that the bourgeois class found useful and in its own interest. There was even such "spontaneous consent" that the trade unions embraced the concept in their own discourse. Within this context the reader can understand why the feminist movement, certainly a middle-class one, articulated a discourse that contained great tensions and contradictions between the emphasis on maternal duties and related non-problematic assumptions about women's superior moral characteristics and the pursuit of autonomy. The author provides important material to help comprehend the shift of women's reproductive responsibility from procreation to mothering within the framework of the new traditional family.

Finally, this book is an indictment of the uses and abuses of the historical past by the New Right to refashion capitalist hegemony. The author clearly differentiates the nuclear family from what is called in retrospect the traditional family. The latter is a rather recent construct, conceived as a peaceful counterweight to the market, based on the male bread-winner model, and a segmented division of work between spouses.

*Weathering the Storm* is a timely book that rescues human agency from the darkness of unexamined human experience and challenges those who distort the past in an attempt to ensure a world safe for profit.

Rosa del C. Bruno-Jofre  
The University of Manitoba

**Lesley Johnson. *The Modern Girl: Girlhood and Growing Up*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993. Pp. 184. \$29.45 Cdn. paper.**

When first I picked up this slim volume whose cover features a photograph of "Miss Teenager of 1955," I was expecting a light-hearted look at youth in Australia in the post-war years. On the contrary, the book turns out to be a major analysis and critique of the modern western concept of growing up as a woman. Johnson uses historical evidence, social definitions of the "proper" transition from girlhood to adulthood of Australian women during the 1950s and 1960s, to

show that the concept of what it means to grow up is a cultural and historical construction. She uses this analysis to argue that contemporary feminist theorists have largely failed to recognize and to incorporate this understanding in their critiques of the norms of human growth and development.

In *The Feminine Mystique*, published in the early 1960s, Friedan initiated the debate on the question of "What does it mean for women to grow up?" She claimed that women in post-World War II America were prevented from growing up, that is from developing fully as individuals in control of their own lives, by the mass marketing of consumer goods for the home. The feminine mystique manipulated women into "confining their need for self-expression to the shallow and inauthentic choices offered to them by the marketplace. They did not seek to determine their own lives and identities." This, according to Friedan, was a "refusal to grow up, a failure to become an individual in the modern world."

Some twenty years later, Carol Gilligan, in her work, *In a Different Voice*, disputed Friedan's analysis. She argued that there was not so much a "crisis of women growing up" as a problem with trying to force women into the models of human growth and development based upon the "ideal of the self-determining, autonomous individual." Friedan's model of growth, Gilligan asserted, rested on psychological theories of human development which, though claiming to be universal, were actually about men's development and adulthood. While psychology traditionally had viewed

the process of growing up as involving a necessary separation from others, Gilligan suggested that for young women, growing up was more about conflicting loyalties as they sought to respond to the needs of others while being responsive to their own needs. Women were thus not the developmental failures that Friedan had claimed; they simply had an alternative way of growing up.

In *The Modern Girl*, Johnson claims that both these accounts of what it means for women to grow up, and subsequent elaboration of these models, assume a dissociation of the "individual" from the "social." Friedan's analysis is based on the existence of a human essence whose proper development is suppressed by social conditions while Gilligan presupposes that women, because of their gender, possess "essential truths" which are overlooked in so-called "universal" theories of human development. "In both accounts, then, the social constrains the individual and liberation requires its removal or rejections."

This, Johnson states, is an impossibility. Using post-structuralist theory, she postulates that individuals cannot transcend social constraints because forms of individuality are creations of particular socio-historical contexts. Characteristics which are deemed to comprise a "human" (or "female") essence, like those of the "self-determining, autonomous individual," for example, are not natural. They are instead products of the individual. "The competence and the desire to take responsibility for one's own actions in specific situations result from a set of trainings of the indi-

vidual rather than from the maturation of certain pre-existing human potentials of the individual. Similarly, the need and the ability to define oneself or determine one's own identity are not qualities of the pre-social individual, but attributes produced in definite social arrangements."

According to Johnson, feminist literature has not explored the ways in which the creation of identities and notions of the self have changed over time. In *The Modern Girl*, she addresses this lacuna by examining "the terms in which the tasks of the modern individual—the tasks of making oneself—confronted, and were made accessible to, young Australian women." She accomplishes this by analyzing a wide variety of "texts" which defined what it meant for young women to grow up. Included in these "texts" are documents outlining the educational rhetoric and policies which accompanied the expansion and reorganization of the Australian secondary school system after the war, advice columns and feature articles of the print media, and product marketing ads directed at adolescents. Sources are not restricted, however, to documents which spoke only of the lives and identities of young women; the author also includes discourses on modernity, capitalism, and national development which, she argues, did not necessarily exclude girls.

Johnson concludes that "young women clearly learnt the importance and significance of growing up," but they faced conflicting, and at times contradictory, messages about "the tasks involved." For example, on the one hand, girls were included in the

modern project of adolescence, which increasingly defined youth as a separate category of person and the adolescent years as a distinct and crucial phase in the developmental process. The teenage years were seen as a time of experimentation and growth during which young people, both male and female, were to acquire "a stable, coherent identity," that is, a modern adult self. On the other hand, the appropriate conclusion of the adolescent phase was clearly gendered. Young women, once grown up, were to embrace the roles of wife and mother. These outcomes were ensured by the policies and practices of schools, especially by the provision of domestic education for all girls in the late 1950s.

Johnson pays much attention to the organization of her material. The theoretical framework is carefully laid out. In fact, three of the seven chapters are devoted strictly to theory: the first to feminist theory, the second to women's relationship to modernity and consumerism, and the third to the development of the concept of adolescence in the 1950s. The last four chapters take up the specific historical context. In spite of the careful organization, this book is not an easy read. The different strands of analyses combined with the discipline-specific language of post-structuralist theory, cultural studies, and gender studies render more than a few passages difficult to disentangle. A solid grounding in post-structuralism and its uses for feminism would be useful before approaching this work.

Well-prepared readers, however, will be amply rewarded for their efforts. For beyond the study's obvious

contributions to feminism and to the history of childhood and adolescence—Canadian youth in the post-1945 years has yet to be examined in such depth—it has much to offer all historians. *The Modern Girl* is an excellent example of a multi-disciplinary study in which history and theory hold equal importance. Too often, history is disconnected from any theoretical framework and the resulting analyses tend to be shallow. For example, notions of resistance and subversion, divorced, as they often are, from the theories of false-consciousness from which they derive, manage to do little more than describe embattled individuals coping in a harsh world.

Johnson's study is also important for its methodology. By choosing to include documents that did not define women "first and foremost by their sex," she widens the study's perspective to incorporate rhetoric, such as "manpower needs" and the "wastage of talent," which also addressed women but in quite different forms than the language which spoke of and to only "girls" and "women." She challenges the assumption that women in the past felt themselves excluded when the "sex-neutral 'he'" was used. Such an approach allows her to detect much more complex messages about growing up as a woman than would have been otherwise possible.

Anne Gagnon  
University College of the Cariboo

**Barbara Rose.** *Tsuda Umeko and Women's Education in Japan.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992. Pp. xiv, 208, illus. \$25.00 U.S. cloth.

Through a fascinating biography of Tsuda Umeko, a prominent Japanese woman educator, this eminently readable book examines the education of women and their place in Meiji Japan, incidentally presents material on similar matters in the United States, and offers a case study of a woman whose education was entirely outside her own culture.

As part of its westernization programme, the Japanese government in 1871 sent five girls to the United States "to study for the good of our countrywomen." The youngest, Tsuda Umeko, the daughter of a former samurai, was not quite seven years old. She spent most of the following decade in the Washington, D.C. home of Charles Lanman, a secretary of the Japanese legation, and his wife, Adeline, and attended local girls' schools. When she returned to Japan, Tsuda was so westernized that she had difficulty conversing with her mother. Indeed, most of Tsuda's closest friends were Americans and the biography is based largely on her extensive letters to them. In Japan she was frequently so lonely and disoriented that Rose describes her as "an alien in her own land" whose uncertain cultural identity was "richly symbolic of Japan's predicament."

Rose makes passing references to the Christianity which Tsuda adopted as a child in Washington. Although her father and other members of her family joined the Methodist church and she