

d'une société qui, tout en se souciant de plus en plus de l'intégration des enfants marginalisés, hésite à s'engager totalement. Un tel engagement aurait en effet signifié accorder à ceux qui s'en occupent les moyens de le faire convenablement et l'abandon des paramètres traditionnels régissant l'ordre social. En ce sens, les quelques cas présentés ne rendent pas suffisamment compte des divers degrés d'évolution des établissements dispersés aux quatre coins de la province et des facteurs particuliers de développement des philosophies d'intervention. Des éléments comme l'organisation patriarcale d'une société traditionnelle ou la subordination des besoins d'un groupe aux intérêts d'un autre peuvent certes permettre d'envisager globalement la situation. Mais, ils n'exemptent certainement pas de l'examen du vécu, des pratiques quotidiennes et des motivations des acteurs, qui ne peuvent être réduits à ces déterminations générales.

Par conséquent, et Marie-Paule Malouin l'affirme dès le départ en qualifiant son étude de « tremplin » (p.17) pour les recherches futures, la synthèse offre une vue globale de l'enfance exceptionnelle au cours des décennies 1940 à 1960, qui devra être complétée par des travaux cernant des aspects ou des contextes plus spécifiques. Enfin, mentionnons l'effort louable de l'auteure pour rendre l'ouvrage accessible à un large public, ce qui est loin d'être anodin lorsqu'on vise une conscientisation sociale au sort des plus démunis. Car la société n'est pas faite que d'intellectuels et de scientifiques.

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Linda L. Clark. *The Rise of Professional Women in France: Gender and Public Administration since 1830*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

The Rise of Professional Women in France traces the history of women administrators' careers in the French national bureaucracy from 1837 to the end of the Fifth Republic. Although France in 1945 was the last western state to enfranchise all women, it admitted a limited number of women to inspectorate positions at

the national level before other countries did. When the first women inspectors were appointed, French women still lacked access to the baccalauréat and the liberal professions. For nearly a century, therefore, inspectorates were the most prestigious professional roles available to French women. This anomaly resulted from gendered assumptions about women's natural domestic and maternal instincts for certain positions. The same assumptions led France to separate boys' and girls' schooling, with women teaching exclusively in girls' schools. In North America co-educational primary schooling was the norm, but even there women's unique qualities were posited to place women in charge of all children. Clark considers the emergence of professional women in the larger context of political, social, economic, and cultural changes in France.

Although “the king's midwife” in pre-revolutionary France received a stipend to instruct midwives throughout France, the first woman to hold a “professional” position—“a post requiring extensive knowledge of laws and decrees regulating a public institution and often entailing supervisory or regulatory authority over other persons” (p. 1) was Eugénie Chevreau-Lemercier, general delegate for nursery schools in 1837. This appointment occurred during an attempt by the French state to answer demands for expanded schooling and to inculcate moral values among the masses. Although Michel Foucault has stressed the institutional repression of schools, humanitarian motives and hopes for social improvement motivated most reformers.

The choice of nursery schools as the first place for a women's inspectorate reflected a particular view of childhood and maternal instincts. Nursery schools, which were originally more like day-care centres (*salles d'asile*, later *école maternelles*), began with private philanthropic initiatives, passed then to nuns, and ultimately to the French state. Within a decade or two of their origins, the state felt a need to provide a supervisory role. Since these schools served as “substitute mothers,” women were deemed to have the “natural” instincts to understand and instruct young girls. In addition to inspecting schooling, women soon took on inspectorate roles for women's prisons (1843), children's services (1870s), and women's labour (at the end of the century). Prior to the First World War, all women inspectorates reflected the cultural imperative that only women should survey a female clientele.

The history of female access to these positions was not linear but marked by advance and retreat. Appointment of women was often controversial. When women inspectors increased their

numbers, male inspectors complained that women were taking their jobs. Worries about French depopulation following the Franco-Prussian War, unemployment during the Depression, and Nazi gender influences during Vichy fostered reactions against women in the public service. Women's positions decreased under Jules Ferry at the very time that women were gaining access to normal schools and the *baccalauréat* in gender-separated schools. After women were allowed to inspect all primary schools, a backlash in 1891 restricted their supervisory activities to girls' schools. They remained a rare breed. Feminist arguments for women moving from the domestic realm to the public sphere in the nineteenth century generally argued for "equality in difference," pointing precisely to the unique qualities of women (the "maternalist" or "relational" ethos [p. 48]). Only in the twentieth century did feminist rhetoric assert equality on an individualistic basis.

Through a careful reading of individual case files, Clark enriches her study with examples of the trials women pioneers faced, as Jo Burr Margadant did in her study of the first female secondary teachers.¹ Adaption and coping was the main strategy. Both the pioneers and women still living today emphasized positive aspects of their careers. One is impressed by these remarkable women and their accomplishments in a gendered environment.

The second part of the book picks up the story following World War I—a landmark for women's employment and reshaping attitudes. A new image of a respectable, single woman, financially independent, lay but celibate, was the one expected for the female civil servant. Women entered a variety of administrative settings in the 1920s and reached the upper-middle ranks of *rédacteurs* and *sous-chefs*. They entered male professions and tried to advance by merit. If successful, they could have secured a permanent position for women among professional elites. This golden age came to an abrupt end with gender quotas during the Depression of the 1930s. Quotas limited the number of women in service, unlike more recent ones that have encouraged the hiring of women. As in other countries, including Canada, French ministries attempted to remove financially secure married women from public employment. Women civil servants were unable to maintain the foothold gained in the 1920s.

1. *Madame le Professeur: Women Educators in the Third Republic* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990).

Although Vichy pronounced women's role to be in the home, Clark concludes that its policies increased women's awareness of public issues, furthered their politicization, and thus led to a greater role for women in public administration in the post-war period. Nevertheless, this reader would conclude that over the last half of the twentieth century gender attitudes changed less rapidly in France than in much of the West. Although one would need more comparative statistics to be certain, French women seem now to play a lesser role in government service than they do in many Western countries. They always held a small percentage of posts.

The Rise of Professional Women is a well-researched, sensitive, and incisive study. It is important for those interested in themes of education, gender, and professionalization. It offers a comparative framework, statistics, and case studies. One wonders however why the author did not include a chapter of conclusions.

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Angela Ward and Rita Bouvier, eds. *Resting on Mother Earth: The Aboriginal Experience in Urban Education Settings*. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 2001.

This book is a thoughtful and collaborative work by two educators who have produced a focused view, as well as a heartfelt and instructive anthology, on the education of urban Aboriginal students. The book explores the possibilities under which Aboriginal people might have a sense of cultural identity and belonging while living in and becoming educated in an urban environment removed from family members and other cultural influences. Their problems are exacerbated by social stratifications which are, at best, indifferent and, at worst, openly racist towards indigenous peoples. The book explores social, relational, and educational conditions which confound and also those which support students of all ages in identity-affirming work.

The question the book answers is how we might think about the education and identity formation of Aboriginal students in urban settings. Although this question of identity is not peculiar to urban settings, it brings to the fore the tension around the general