

successor, who served from 1919 to 1945 (check out Valerie Giles' 1994 UBC Ph.D. thesis on Willis). Another obvious omission is the absence of a chapter on George M. Weir, whose influence as Minister of Education on the province's public education system extended from the mid-1920s for another two decades. Nonetheless, this collection makes a major contribution to the understanding of the governance of the B.C. school system since 1872.

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**Valerie J. Korinek. *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000. Pp. 512.**

“What to Wear When You're Tall, Short, Thin, Curvy, Athletic, Pregnant,” “75 Sex Moves to Thrill A Man,” “619 Best Fashion and Beauty Buys,” blared the most recent crop of popular American women's fashion magazines, *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Bazaar*. Not to be outdone, Canada's *Elle* enticed readers with the question: “Is Love Really All You Need?”

It is not surprising that many feminists have considered women's magazines to be detrimental to feminism. According to the standard argument, women's magazines are dominated by male executives, advocate a conservative role for women, foster general insecurity about women's appearance and relationships, appeal to a homogeneous readership, and encourage consumption of the products advertised in the magazine. Valerie Korinek attempts to debunk this line of reasoning by focusing on *Chatelaine*, Canada's premier anglophone women's magazine in the fifties and sixties.

Korinek holds that during its heyday, *Chatelaine* was a feminist text disguised as a suburban women's magazine. For

Korinek, this “closet feminist magazine” contributed to the development of Canadian second-wave feminism, sandwiching covert and then overt liberal feminist messages amongst advertisements, recipes, and advice columns.

Korinek's claim is compelling. Its strength lies in the detailed evidence—cover pages, editorials, articles, artwork, letters, fiction, departments, and advertisements—she organizes into three main sections on *Chatelaine's* origins, material content, and subversive fare. Korinek traces *Chatelaine's* growing identification with feminism in skilful and innovative ways. For example, in the 1950s, Korinek looks at the gendered conflict between the magazine's conventional messages and the growing feminist editorial content. This conflict led to modest profits. But it also resulted in a tightly knit community of female staffers and readers that made both parties more receptive to second-wave feminist values. Her analysis of the fiction published by the magazine highlights similar tensions between conventional boy-meets-girl romantic narratives and plot twists that threaten to upend the heterosexual status quo. Despite many storybook endings, *Chatelaine* fiction tackled controversial subjects such as work-place harassment, marital difficulties, and even lesbianism. By the late 1950s, *Chatelaine* was already discussing the malaise of the suburban housewife, pre-dating the publication of Betty Friedan's 1963 blockbuster, *The Feminine Mystique*.<sup>1</sup>

*Chatelaine's* feminist content blossomed into full flower under the editorship of Doris Anderson in the 1960s. Although Korinek gives Anderson the title of unofficial leader of the Canadian feminist movement for including punchy editorials and articles on women's rights, women's roles in Canada were already in flux. As Korinek points out, at the beginning of the decade a *Chatelaine* survey on homemakers revealed that most women were more content to choose marriage and motherhood over career. By the end of the decade, the majority of the 11,000 women polled from all over the country by the magazine said they would prefer marriage, children, and a career, would

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1 Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1984 [1963]).

support birth control clinics for women, and would agree with the need for improved legislation on equal-pay-for-equal work, abortion, and divorce. With Anderson at the helm, *Chatelaine* was clearly tapping into a wellspring of discontent among its readership.

This readership, as Korinek notes, was overwhelmingly white, middle-class, and married, with strong regionalist points of view. On the one hand, readers' reactions to deviations from their normative value systems could be fierce. A cover photograph of a brunette Quebecois woman captioned "Is she a typical Canadian beauty?" was denounced by readers who argued she resembled a "squaw." Not surprisingly, only thrice in 20 years did the magazine use cover girls who were not of Anglo-Canadian origin. On the other hand, *Chatelaine* also challenged readers' normative value systems by employing authors such as Jewish-Canadian Barbara Frum and Chinese-Canadian Adrienne Clarkson, by publishing exposés on racism and poverty in Canada, and by featuring popular advice columns by Dr. Marion Hilliard, a closeted lesbian, on married and single women's sexuality.

Occasionally, the detailed evidence that is the book's strength detracts from Korinek's claims when it is not adequately contextualized. In one instance, Korinek notes that advertising about women's body image rose in the sixties and describes a number of ads featuring diet foods and products as their theme. Yet she does not posit an explanation for the increase. Is it possible, as Naomi Wolf has argued,<sup>2</sup> that the advertisements' growing fixation on slimness was symptomatic of the backlash against women's growing demands for political, economic, and sexual equality? In another instance, Korinek notes that a tale about teenage marriage generated the largest amount of reader feedback in the same decade. She recognizes that the work of fiction was a "thinly disguised morality play" on the difficulties of young love and young hormones. However, the story and the letters written by readers to the story deserved further analysis.

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2 Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth* (Toronto: Random House, 1990).

Korinek could have approached both as examples of many Canadians' moral panic over the rise in unwanted pregnancy among young, single, white, middle-class girls during the so-called sexual revolution.<sup>3</sup>

In and of itself, Korinek's book is a valuable contribution to the history of feminism in Canada. But it is best read alongside other works dealing with North American women in the fifties and sixties. Together, these texts point to the growing consensus over the enormous significance of the swell before the feminist second wave.<sup>4</sup>

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**Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock. *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998. Pp. viii, 621.**

Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock set out to accomplish the formidable task of uncovering the history of immigration policy in Canada over four centuries, focusing on the last 150 years. In 621 pages the authors seek to identify who was allowed in to Canada and who was not, and the reasons for these decisions. The focus of the book is on describing and

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3 Christabelle Sethna, "'WE WANT FACTS NOT MORALS!' Unwanted Pregnancy, the Toronto Women's Caucus and Sex Education," in *Ontario Since Confederation: A Reader*, ed. Lori Chambers and Edgar-Andre Montigny (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 409-28.

4 For example, see Wini Breines, *Young, White and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992); Dan Horowitz, *Betty Friedan and the Making of the Feminine Mystique: The American Left, the Cold War, and Modern Feminism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998); Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin, 2001 [2000]); Doug Owsram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Barbara M. Freeman, *The Satellite Sex: The Media and Women's Issues in English Canada, 1966-1971* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2001).