

*The European Women's History Reader.*

Fiona Montgomery and Christine Collette (eds)

Routledge, 2002, pp 380, pb, ISBN 0 415 22082 3

Reviewed by Naomi J. Andrews, Santa Clara University

In compiling the *European Women's History Reader* Fiona Montgomery and Christine Collette have done a marvelous job of filling a gap in the textbook market for upper level undergraduate and graduate students in European history. While there are several very well done and varied women's history textbooks now available, as well as a handful of other collections of scholarly articles (Marilyn Boxer and Jean Quataert's *Connecting Spheres* in particular), this book goes beyond them in the depth and range of the scholarship represented.

The book is organized into four parts: Historiography, the Late Eighteenth Century, the Nineteenth Century, and the Twentieth Century. Each part contains a number of pieces (articles and excerpts from articles or books), ranging from just a page or two up to nearly thirty pages in length. Each part is introduced with a thoughtful gloss that situates the pieces in relation to each other and to the larger field of scholarship. Though the weight of the representation is in English and French scholarship, there are a number of pieces that take a comparative approach to their subject, encompassing several nations. A good example of this is Seth Koven and Sonya Michel's article, "Womanly Duties: Materialist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States in France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States, 1880-1920."

One of the interesting and useful aspects of this anthology, especially for graduate students, is the degree to which one can read the development and current state of the field in the selections and their arrangement. This is most apparent in the excellent choice of historiographical essays presented. Historians whose work has shaped and defined women's and gender history are appropriately represented, (with the exception of Joan W. Scott, whose work is, however, discussed at length in several of the above mentioned articles).

The articles as a collection are a deliberate attempt to show the development of women's and gender history with an early piece by Natalie Davis, Sonya Rose's account of the emergence of gender as an analytical tool, and taking the reader through the debates over post structuralism, postmodernism and Black feminist criticism. Karen Offen's important article "Defining Feminism" is excerpted here as well as Deborah Thom's interesting meditation on the relationship between feminist history and

women's history. The section concludes with an article by June Purvis which, to quote the editors, "[makes] the point that women's history is not necessarily feminist." (p 10) The articles range over more than twenty years and provide a concise perspective on the state of the field and the debates that have propelled it.

Another example of the anthology's value as a historiographical snapshot of women's and gender history is the way that as a group the articles represent the energy of historical inquiry with respect to any given century or region. Thus there are two articles on Russia, both of which appear in the final section of the book on the twentieth century, while the bulk of the pieces on Great Britain appear in those sections on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This distribution is in part a result of the weight that labor and working class history are given in the anthology. In the sections on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, for example, we see the significant majority of the articles treating issues of industrialization and labor issues (articles by Maxine Berg, Judith deGroat, Patricia Hilden, Jutta Schwarzkopf, Rachel Fuchs/Leslie Page Moch, Lorraine Coons' articles all fall into this category in the Nineteenth Century section). Issues of the bourgeoisie are less amply addressed, though there are several important articles or books excerpted here, especially Catherine Hall's *The Early Formation of Victorian Domestic Ideology*, in addition to Sally Alexander's work on the writing of feminist history and Ann Goldberg's on Nymphomania.

The section on the twentieth century shifts focus somewhat, emphasizing in particular the emergence of the welfare state, socialism and the impact of the two World Wars on women both publicly and privately. Margaret Darrow's piece on French volunteer nurses is a good example of the last, as is Elizabeth Water's "The Modernisation of Russian Motherhood, 1917-1937." Both show the extent to which women's roles were the site of contestation even in the turbulent first half of the twentieth century.

Throughout the sections dealing with the last three centuries questions of feminism – its development, thrust, content and contestation – are consistently addressed, especially in the articles on Victorian feminism by Judith Walkowitz, on Madeleine Pelletier by Claudine Mitchell in addition to the works on Wollstonecraft. Feminism and women's identity is also the focus of the section on the eighteenth century, where we see a good deal of attention paid to Mary Wollstonecraft, J.-J. Rousseau and the emergence of feminist ideas. In the excerpt from Anna Clark's *The Struggle for the Breeches* the battle over representation and definition are taken into the workshop and working class home.

The editors of the volume set out their mission in their thoughtful and

historically conscious introduction. They are, they say, trying to bring together articles that both stand the "test of time" and "demonstrate the lines historians have taken over the last thirty years and the challenges posed by new lines of enquiry." (p 1) In this ambition they have amply succeeded, bringing together valuable scholarship, theoretical consciousness and, always the historians' job, a perspective on the intellectual and institutional development of their subject. In addition, and perhaps more pertinently, the editors have put together a valuable and accessible addition to the growing repertoire for teaching the history of women in Europe.

### *Revealing male bodies*

Nancy Tuana, William Cowling, Maurice Hamington, Greg Johnson, Terrance MacMullan (eds)

Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2002, pp 310 + xi, pb,  
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Reviewed by Sandy O'Sullivan, University of Newcastle, Australia

In *Revealing Male Bodies*, Nancy Tuana and a team of male graduates from the University of Oregon's feminist philosophy doctoral program, form an editorial inquiry to explore the landscape of embodied masculinity. Tuana, and her former students, noting a concern in the development of their discipline within the academy saw a 'lack of attention to male bodies in the newly emerging feminist studies of the body and embodiment' (p ix). No central question is posited in *Revealing Male Bodies*, rather the team and their writers set out to map a new theory base for the discourses of embodied masculinity, borrowing from feminist, ethno/socio-cultural and queer theories along the way. The result is a collection of essays that cross disciplinary boundaries, and examine the extremes and ordinariness within masculine representations.

As with many texts that with the passage of time prove seminal in their field, this series of essays provides a solid base for further study. The grouping of four meta areas through which the essays are sifted, allow patterns to emerge that may suggest further fields of study in masculinity. The first section examines body manifestations and incontrovertible maleness in "The Phallus and the Penis", while the second proposes definitions and redefinitions of masculinity and maleness in "Masculine Myths and Male Bodies". The connection between these two areas becomes clear as the first essays examine the external influence of cultural impositions on the masculine form, and the latter explore the problematic of these in the lived, communal experience. In fact John Zuern's "The Future of the Phallus: Time Mastery and the Male Body", can be read as a bridging text between the two, with an acknowledgement of the encultured implications of performed maleness (p 62). It would be disingenuous to indi-