

actually functioned. This is an extraordinary accomplishment and an important addition to the writing of institutional history.

Antoine, however, does not sympathize with the disorder provoked by the *Parlements* and their opposition. He clearly argues for the need to preserve a strong monarchy and sees the opposition as threatening the actual stability of the State. As he asserts, "The superior seemed...to disown [their role as pillars of the monarchy] and to give themselves no other vocation than to destabilize the State, to seize the scepter while confining the prince to a role of supernumerary, inert and mute" (610). He welcomes the end of the conflict and convincingly presents the king's new grasp on monarchical authority. With the Jesuits banished and the Dauphin dead, Louis finally gathers new strength to dominate the *Parlements*. The author considers this action, this *coup de majesté*, to be the king's political testament for his grandson — a declaration of Bourbon strength and solidarity.

Antoine's interest in the monarchy leaves him less time for a discussion of the impact of the Enlightenment on the opposition. He acknowledges Montesquieu's writings as part of the parliamentary platform, and examines the role of the *avocat* Le Paige as popularizer of the ideas of Boulainvilliers and Montesquieu and as the creator of the "mythic past" (574) of the *Parlement*. He does delineate the formation of public opinion among the "robins" and sees the increasing espousal of this opinion by court nobility to be very menacing to the king's authority. In keeping with the demands of royal biography, Antoine does not see the emergence of opposition as a positive development in the eighteenth century.

The rhythm of the rituals of kingship is very clearly defined in Antoine's book and one cannot help but appreciate the complexity and the richness of monarchy after reading this lucid and evocative work. One of the most striking images is the author's description of Louis' return to Versailles in 1722. After chasing around the gardens with his court behind him, the twelve-year-old king throws himself on the floor of the hall of mirrors in order to look at LeBrun's paintings of Louis XIV on the ceiling. The image of an orphan king, alone, regarding the achievements of his predecessor conveys both the loneliness of Louis XV and the burden of inheritance. Antoine has rescued Louis from the philandering king who profited from the grain scarcity and has presented us with a troubled intelligent man who, after all, displayed the strength to preserve the absolute monarchy for his grandson Louis XVI.

Katherine Stern Brennan  
Loyola College, Baltimore

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Katherine Arnup, Andrée Lévesque and Ruth Roach Pierson, with the assistance of Margaret Brennan — *Delivering Motherhood: Maternal Ideologies and Practices in the 19th and 20th Centuries*. London and New York: Routledge, 1990. Pp. xxv, 322.

In 1976, Adrienne Rich published *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*. *Delivering Motherhood*, the first comprehensive survey about motherhood in Canada, is part of her legacy. Sixteen scholars contribute fourteen chapters dealing with the medicalization of childbirth, hospitalization and midwifery, birth control, abortion, and reproductive technology. They also discuss the role of the

state, institutions, and private organizations in shaping maternal ideologies. While, as the dust jacket suggests, the work is one of women's studies, feminist studies, women's history, and sociology, it is also a social history of medicine.

Eight of the chapters appeared between 1983-1986 as conference papers or articles. This first generation work deals with childbirth as a contested terrain where a male-dominated medical profession, through a process of medicalization and hospitalization, takes control of childbirth. At the same time, this process acts to discredit a powerful symbol of women's culture, midwifery. This idea is neither new, nor does it move beyond the fine medical histories of Sue Fisher, Judith Leavitt or Regina Morantz-Sanchez, except that, as Jane Lewis' overview reminds us, it is the functional definition of motherhood, not women's real circumstances, that defines access to resources in a gendered social structure. At times, by focusing on the mechanisms of male oppression, the research is in danger of becoming a rather strange form of male history, told by the victim. It spends little time on exploring the degree to which women might have favoured this shift to hospital birth. The best chapters, second-wave research, examine the experience and interaction of groups of women in the past, while integrating theory, the role of male agendas and institutional pressures. It is research formed upon, but not subservient to, theory.

The discussion of the rise of physician-controlled hospitalization over midwifery-assisted homebirth is a long sequence of four chapters with some repetition in sources and arguments. In C. Lesley Biggs' discussion of the history of midwifery in Ontario prior to 1900, she argues that the male medical profession seized control of childbirth from midwifery and women by acting on a number of levels, such as professionalization and the exclusion of non-licensed individuals, with midwifery being tolerated in rural regions found unprofitable by the medical profession. While Biggs concludes that male doctors succeeded in prohibiting midwives from practise, we are not told by what legislative act and on what date midwifery became illegal. H el ene Laforce's history of midwifery is more successful. We learn that midwifery in New France had the support of both state and physicians. In New France, women not only had more children than in France, they also lost fewer (38). After 1760, midwifery continued as a respected profession and its legal status was endorsed in 1788. Midwifery was slowly displaced in the late 19th century, in part because male doctors took control of the medical education process. Interestingly, it was women in religious orders who fought to preserve midwifery, while nursing associations rejected it as part of their duties and supported physician-controlled obstetrics.

Childbirth in Ontario between the world wars is discussed by Jo Oppenheimer. After 1938, hospitals were the primary locations for birth in Ontario. Oppenheimer argues that this shift increased intervention by doctors, resulting in higher mortality rates for hospital births than rural homebirths. However, the argument does not provide the evidence needed to deflect this reader from the overwhelming correlation between the decline in maternal deaths per 1,000 births after 1938 (Figure I, 53) and the corresponding increase in hospital versus non-hospital locations for births (Figure III, 54). One key to her argument is Figure VI (69), which unfortunately has a legend which makes it difficult to distinguish between rural and city maternal mortality rates. Veronica Strong-Boag and Kathryn McPherson make similar arguments for British Columbia in a survey of confinement and childbirth at the Vancouver General Hospital, arguing that hospitalization did not decrease mortality rates and discussing the class component of public and private wards. Vancouver had neither an established medical school nor a midwifery tradition and, while the institutionalization of

birth took place rapidly, the chapter fails to draw comparative connections between the women of Vancouver and the experiences of women elsewhere.

Andrée Lévesque's excellent study of Montréal's Hôpital de la Miséricorde, an institution run by women for single mothers, looks at the specific experiences of women. At la Miséricorde, pregnant single women were admitted anonymously and required to repay their treatment with service to the institution. Lévesque places the women in the context of their families and circumstance and their ambivalent relationships with the women running the hospital.

The role of the state in promoting models for motherhood through publications by women on "mothercraft" is the subject of Katherine Arnup. (Mothercraft, the organization still active in Canada after sixty years, should be examined in light of the issues raised in this book.) The impact of these publications on women is problematic. Québec's *instituts familiaux* were, as Sherene Razack points out, an attempt begun in the 1940s at creating maternal models through education, but the numbers of women involved were very low, making the influence of the *instituts* difficult to ascertain. Of more importance may be the social debate that brought down Adélarde Godbout's Liberal administration for having extended the vote to women in 1940 and making elementary education compulsory for all Québec families, issues seized upon by Maurice Duplessis.

Arguing that neither class nor gender analysis is in itself sufficient to examine the birth control movement, Dianne Dodd presents two groups involved in disseminating birth control information in Hamilton, one male-dominated with a eugenics agenda, the other representing a small group of middle-class women physicians and nurses. Both groups dealt with a community of suspicious working-class women. Cecilia Benoit, drawing on oral history, captures the life experience of rural women in pre-1945 Newfoundland in a manner useful for historians of 19th-century families. While other chapters discuss rural/urban differences, hers is the only one to actually look at a rural community.

Deborah Gorham and Florence Kellner Andrews' feminist perspective on the La Leche League is brilliant, building upon a survey of theoretical literature and current social debates on feminism, anti-feminism, the nature of the family, working women and motherhood. It is both informative and thoughtful in its manner and is a work which deserves to be widely read. Angus and Arlene Tigar McLaren contribute a scholarly analysis of the use and discrepancy between official figures for deaths resulting from abortions in British Columbia, in a manner as important for its methodological discussion as for its results. The concluding chapter by Rona Achilles gives a good introduction to the issues investigated by the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies, focusing primarily on the last ten years changes in reproductive technologies and their social implications.

The inclusion of Ruth Roach Pierson's contribution on a Swedish pacifist is puzzling. It may have been an attempt to move the debate in new directions, but it is out of place in this collection, seemingly more a reflection of an earlier editorial project. The book would have been better served by a study of Charlotte Hanington, superintendent of the Victorian Order of Nurses and midwifery advocate. References to her appeared in the work of Hélène Laforce on Québec (46) and Veronica Strong-Boag's on Vancouver (83).

The book is somewhat frustrating in what it does not do. Ethnicity is mentioned briefly only by Lévesque (109), and the experience of Native women is but a footnote in the MacLaren study (fn. 17, 141) and is absent elsewhere. Otherwise, we learn about white middle-class and working-class women. Most of the women are in urban centres, with the exception of Cecilia Benoit's community. Nothing is said of the small hospital movement in the prairies, the experience of women on farms, or childbirth in the North. On the issue of midwifery, despite the heavy emphasis on its history, there is no discussion of the modern movement to re-legitimize it. Unlike Valerie Fildes' collection *Women As Mothers in Pre-Industrial England* (also Routledge 1990), there is, regrettably, no thematic bibliography.

*Delivering Motherhood* takes a narrow view of the term motherhood. While focusing on childbirth, there is little interest in concepts such as life cycle, fertility, and birth interval; even the word pregnancy is uncommon here. The cultural importance of the ceremony of birth and the passage into motherhood is not pursued. There is almost no discussion of the impact of the Pill or demography on maternal ideologies. Infanticide, child abandonment, foster parenting, child care, adoption, and divorce are not discussed, nor, with the exception of the Cecilia Benoit and Graham/Andrews chapters, are the roles played by other members of the family such as husbands, mothers-in-law or grandmothers.

The collection is also slightly unwieldy due to the editors' failure to choose between a collection of first generation work and new second-wave research. The chapters which have moved directly into the study of women's experiences and the interaction of various groups of women are for this reviewer the best and, in general, they are also the more recent ones. These reservations aside, *Delivering Motherhood* brings together the complex, often controversial web of social relations concerning the control and shaping of the reproductive experience and the social ascription of motherhood in Canadian society.

Lorne Hammond  
University of Ottawa

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Paul Axelrod — *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada during the Thirties*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990. Pp. xi, 269.

Using newspapers, university records, anecdotes and the limited statistics available, Paul Axelrod has drawn a depressing picture of student life in English Canada's universities during the thirties.

Universities largely accepted their utilitarian role of career training, using the humanities merely, as they had once used religion, to enforce convention. Professors were stodgy and aging, though not quite so stodgy as the students. Noting people like Frank Scott and Eugene Forsey, for example, Axelrod suggests that some five percent of professors may have been involved in reform activities. But what a crashing lot the students were!

Ridden with insecurity, self-centred, politically ignorant and parochial, they passed through university little touched by the academic part of the experience. In