

la leur. C'est là le véritable rôle de l'historien, comme le rappellent Lamonde et Livernois dans cet essai dont la démonstration est claire et bien argumentée.

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LLEWELLYN, Kristina — *Democracy's Angels: The Work of Women Teachers*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012. Pp. 107

I'm assuming that I've come by this review of this remarkable study at least somewhat honestly. In addition to my own long standing scholarly interests in state schooling and teachers' work, I began my teaching career in Ontario schools in the latter part of the 1945-1970 era covered in this study. Memories of themes and activities during that time (albeit through the eyes of a white heterosexual male) certainly congrue with much of what Llewellyn describes and analyzes. Not only that, but it turns out that one of her respondents was a long-favoured aunt of mine (even though pseudonyms were used, the mini-bios provided clearly gave her away), and my own memories of her stories – especially those told to me “in real time” during the latter part of her teaching career – added much to my take-up of this book.

In addition to lengthy interviews with 20 women from Ontario and British Columbia who taught in secondary schools during the immediate post-war era, Llewellyn accesses an enormous range and volume of primary sources relating to schooling and teaching – Ministry and school board records and reports, teacher federation documents, newspaper accounts, as well as drawing contemporary schooling studies and commentaries. In addition, her wide review in the introductory chapter of relevant post-structural, feminist, Marxist and neo-Marxist works clearly speaks to the wide theoretical lens she employs in her analysis of her data. While some might prefer a more singular application of a specific theoretical dictum, or even be bothered by her somewhat “on this hand...” approach to explicating her findings, I for one appreciated this wide-set view, drawing from across a range of approaches to help tease out possible meanings and understandings.

Llewellyn chooses to explore the “relationship of gender, education and democracy” by examining three broad aspects of schooling – curriculum, character education and school administration – in order to “provide a primarily gendered examination of how each major trend in education shaped a limiting role for women teachers within secondary schools” (p. 19). She begins this, in the first chapter, by unpacking the “purpose of educational democracy” and the ways in which politicians and the schooling elite attempted to develop a “nationalist platform of democracy” which “reaffirm a conservative ideal of citizenship” – patriarchal, white, English, middle class and heterosexual. Given the post-war pressures arising from demographic, economic, increased immigrant, and feminist and cultural upsurges, this certainly posed a challenging problem for those in power, and Llewellyn does an admirable job of documenting these challenges – through the words and actions of the elites, as well as in her respondents' reflections on these changes. A number of themes are explored in the ensuing chapters – school structuring/streaming, the increasing numbers of immigrant and working-class students entering secondary schools, changing women's roles in the post-war era, centralized vs. local control of curriculum, modes of teacher supervision, student vs. teacher-centred pedagogy, etc. In addition, the renewed post-war call for anti-totalitarian modes of governance provided further tension and conflict for both

teachers and schooling officials – contesting the meanings of “citizenship” and the seeming contradictory role of schools in meeting both individual and national “needs.”

While Llewellyn certainly seems to maintain a critical approach to much of what her respondents told her, and clearly draws on the critical oral history methods literature noted in her introductory chapter, I must say that I found myself still questioning what it really means for someone to “remember” and relate an event, in interview contexts like these. What does it tell us about that person – who she might have been then, and who she is now? What is the relation between the purported event, the memory of it, and the present context in which this memory is being evoked? What are the limitations of this methodological approach, and in what ways can they, if at all, be addressed?

I was reminded once again of these questions when I read my aunt’s mini-bio in the book, and noticed several factual errors in her story – not important in themselves, to be sure, but serving as a further source of reflection for me. Assuming (perhaps wrongly) that this information was gleaned mainly or solely from the respondents themselves, it does add to the discussion about the complexities and complications of this methodological approach, and oral history generally. Certainly my aunt’s overall assessment quoted in the book about the “teamwork” which she claimed she evidenced in most departments of her school, and the fact that “administration and teachers communicated” (p. 122) doesn’t necessarily reflect my memories (for whatever they’re worth – given my critique here) of her stories at the time. At the same time, Llewellyn’s extensive exploration of the ways in which “professionalism” worked to shape, not only the work, but also the identities and demeanors of teachers, provided me with a better understanding of who my aunt was, and had become, partly as a result of these workplace relations. This is particularly poignant in relation to my new insights gleaned from this reading, of the reasons why she, quite unexpectedly in our minds at the time, decided to retire early, in June of 1975 (not 1977 as stated in the book) – just months before the start of the first, and lengthy, Toronto secondary school teachers’ strike. There was certainly much lead-up to this strike, and I can see even more now, how much it would have served as an imposition, perhaps an affront, to how she had come to see herself as a teacher – something that she would have found very difficult to deal with on a picket line.

Llewellyn is to be congratulated on this volume – one which opens up new vistas for understanding the circumstances in which female teachers worked during the immediate post-war decades, and the ways in which they served, and resisted, the interests of the elite in promoting “proper” forms of citizenship among high school students of the times – “democracy’s angels” indeed!

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MAIDMENT, Brian — *Comedy, Caricature and the Social Order, 1820-50*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013. Pp. 256.

“Respectability” is under attack. In recent years, a number of scholars have set out to expose the complexities inherent in respectable culture, redefine the Victorians’ relationship to it, and question the extent to which its emergence between 1820 and 1840 signalled such a decisive break with the past. The latest challenge comes from Brian Maidment’s book, *Comedy, Caricature and the Social Order, 1820-50*. Contrary to the belief held by a