

femmes et de celui des hommes, ait eu pour fonction latente d'évoquer l'existence d'une phase de transition entre la dépendance et l'autonomie économique" (p. 136). Gagnon argues that this practice was only relevant to boys since they experienced a temporary economic dependence on their father. Unlike her masculine counterpart, a girl's dress changed only in size, length, and colour over her life cycle. Gagnon's selection of Notman photographs lends visible credence to this hypothesis.

In a comparative analysis of clothing between *habitants* and the bourgeoisie, Gagnon demonstrates that *habitant* boys' clothing displayed a consistent masculine style. Since these boys worked from an early age and did not spend their childhood in a feminine and inactive world, their expression, and certainly clothing, adopted masculine traits. Women's dress also differed from the bourgeoisie model of Victorian innocence. Bourgeoisie girls' clothing symbolized both the purity of their premarital life by the colour white and innocence by its length, décolleté, and short-sleeve styles. Based on limited iconographic sources, Gagnon contends that the *habitants* were less preoccupied with the protection of innocence because their children were dressed identically to their parents. Krieghoff's paintings depict girls in similar clothing as their mothers and boys in the same attire as their fathers (p. 105). Worthwhile here would have been an analysis that placed more emphasis on the sources themselves. Comparisons drawn between formal, indoor clothing in photographs and paintings of everyday, outdoor rural dress must be put into context before one can draw general conclusions on gender construction in clothing. What was the desired image created in studio photographs and paintings? How representative are they of everyday or formal dress? Gagnon's conclusions assume that Notman's photographs captured the styles of everyday clothing of bourgeoisie children, as Krieghoff's paintings accurately reflected the *habitants'* dress.

Notwithstanding the obvious appeal this book will have to folklorists and costume historians, it should also be in the library of any scholar interested in childhood, gender studies, material culture, and semiotics.

Eileen O'Connor
University of Ottawa

Janice Potter-MacKinnon. *While the Women Only Wept: Loyalist Refugee Women in Eastern Ontario*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993. Pp. xvi, 199.

With this second book, the author continues her fruitful research into Loyalist refugees in the 1780s. From an earlier study of the ideology of the Loyalist elite in New York and Massachusetts, her focus has shifted to women who rarely were motivated by ideology, but became refugees through war. Their harrowing stories recounted here add texture to the brutality of war in colonial North America. Their experiences were "more disorienting" (p. xv) than those of Patriot women and the challenges far greater. If, as some argue, Patriot women's role within the North

American family altered for the better, Janice Potter-MacKinnon demonstrates that, for Loyalist refugee women, domestic life became more authoritarian and patriarchal, words with negative associations among feminist historians.

Her evidence derives from a sample of 586 women who were reported in 1784 to have settled in the townships at the eastern end of Lake Ontario. Most were illiterate and only one diary and a few personal letters have survived. Perhaps half were foreign-born, and 30 per cent German speakers. One group of Germans had previously migrated as a community from Ireland to New York. Of the foreign-born, most came from the British Isles, almost two-thirds of whom were Scots, dominated by Catholic Highlanders. The bulk of all settlers came from the Mohawk Valley, and most had been there for less than a dozen years when hostilities engulfed their lives. Three-quarters were farming families, and more than half were tenants. Most notable of all and with a quite different background was Molly Brant, who helped many Loyalists escape the Mohawk Valley.

The most common means of aiding the British war effort adopted by such women were “harbouring and helping Loyalist-Indian raiding parties” (p. 51) and providing intelligence useful to the military. Such abandoned wives of Loyalists were roughly treated by Patriot committees, who assumed that women shared in their husbands’ outrage and folly. When their property was seized or destroyed, some found flight the only acceptable avenue for survival. The incompetence of the British and Loyalist forces on the New York frontier made life untenable even for those as well placed as Molly Brant. Destitute as exiles, they petitioned for public aid. The author follows Kerber in believing that as petitioners such women became supplicants. Petitioning by women, a contrary view holds, can equally be viewed as an assertive political action, as it had long been for disenfranchised men. By contrasting the language of “feeble” women with those of literate male petitioners of the officer class, who understandably wrote with more confidence, she leads us astray. Had she instead compared her illiterate women petitioners with men who were the social inferiors of literate, well-placed male petitioners, she would have found the same overriding tone of deference to authority, the firmest glue which preserved the *ancien régime* societies from chaos. She makes a stronger point when she contrasts the contribution, largely unrecognized by male officialdom, of Loyalist women with the exalted state achieved by some Patriot women.

She further confuses her message when she reminds us that the same Patriot women remained “mere appendages to their husbands within a patriarchal power structure” (p. 100). Her overworked use of “patriarchy” and “paternalism” is unhelpful in understanding the eighteenth-century experience of such women. In railing against such cultural inequity, she misdirects her readers. If we are to admire those Loyalist women who overcame huge odds and survived, why should she expect us simultaneously to classify them as pathetic victims of male paternalism and patriarchy? The liberties proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence were not written to embrace women and children, slaves or free blacks, aboriginals, or the mass of poor men whose general dire condition remained unrelieved despite their lifetime of toil. Nor in the Loyalist camp was birth given to any social revolution, as freed black Loyalists were re-enslaved in Montreal as in Halifax and

Shelburne. It is unhistorical for her to complain that male-dominated society two centuries ago was not more accommodating to women.

Julian Gwyn
University of Ottawa

Catharine Anne Wilson — *A New Lease on Life: Landlords, Tenants and Immigrants in Ireland and Canada*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994. Pp. xiv, 313.

During the past decade Canadian historians have challenged the assumption that nineteenth-century settlers from Britain were randomly dispersed throughout the British North American countryside. Detailed local studies by Marianne McLean, Bruce Elliott, and others have revealed the importance of chain migration from particular communities in Scotland and Ireland to specific localities in the colonies. Catherine Anne Wilson's *A New Lease on Life* adds another piece to this jig-saw puzzle of pioneer settlement by tracing the migration of over 100 Irish families from the Ards Peninsula on the northern coast of Ireland to Amherst Island in the St. Lawrence River near Kingston. Dismissing the stereotype of the dour, self-assertive, individualistic "Ulster Scot" immigrant, Wilson asserts that "familial and local loyalties were just as important, and sometimes more so, as individual gains" (p. 5). Indeed, the two factors were inextricably intertwined: "Group solidarity promoted success in Canada as credit, jobs, shelter, and emotional support could all be had within the community of one's friends and relatives" (p. 5).

This study's most original feature, however, is its questioning of another commonly held assumption, namely that British immigrant settlers, fleeing the oppression of parasitical landlords, aspired above all to the independent status of landowners. Wilson argues that the practice on Amherst Island of renting land holdings from an absentee Irish landlord did not represent an anomalous or atavistic old world transfer to the new world frontier. Tenancy actually represented a pragmatic means for newcomers with little investment capital to become established. According to the 1848 census, a surprising 45 per cent of landholders in Upper Canada rented land. This was clearly a transitional phenomenon, however, for the 1871 census suggests that the ratio of tenants had declined to 15 per cent.

As its subtitle suggests, this study is about landlords and tenants in Ireland as well as in Canada. The evangelical Lord Mount Cashell and his successor as landlord, Major Robert Perceval Maxwell, were major landowners in Ireland as well as influential social and political figures in their own right. Their 21,000 acres on Amherst Island were a relatively minor concern for both men. Mount Cashell appears to have had some grandiose dynastic, patriotic, and religious ideas about the island's development, but he failed to organize migration from his own overcrowded estates. If the impecunious Mount Cashell thought of the island primarily as a financial investment, the financially astute Maxwell also took particular pains to ensure that his investment in it returned a profit. Even Maxwell was not a particu-