

FEMINIST HISTORY IN CANADA

New Essays on Women, Gender, Work, and Nation

Edited by Catherine Carstairs and Nancy Janovicek



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Contents

Acknowledgments / ix

Introduction: Productive Pasts and
New Directions / 3

Catherine Carstairs and Nancy Janovicek

1 James Douglas, Amelia Connolly, and the Writing of
Gender and Women's History / 23

Adele Perry

2 Using Diaries to Explore the Shared Worlds of
Family and Community in Nineteenth-Century
New Brunswick / 41

Gail G. Campbell

3 "A Little Offensive and Defensive Alliance":
Friendship, Professional Networks, and
International Child Welfare Policy / 58

Karen Balcom

- 4** “The Necessity of Going”: Julia Grace Wales’s Transnational Life as a Peace Activist and a Scholar / 77
Lorna R. McLean
- 5** Feminist Ideals and Everyday Life: Professional Women’s Feminism at Victoria College, University of Toronto, 1900–40 / 96
Catherine Gidney
- 6** Singleness and Choice: The Impact of Age, Time, and Class on Three Female Youth Diarists in 1930s Canada / 118
Heidi MacDonald
- 7** Sexual Spectacles: Saleswomen in Canadian Department Store Magazines between 1920 and 1950 / 135
Donica Belisle
- 8** Gender and the Career Paths of Professors in the École de service social at Laval University, 1943–72 / 159
Hélène Charron
- 9** Teaching June Cleaver, Being Hazel Chong: An Oral History of Gender, Race, and National “Character” / 178
Kristina R. Llewellyn
- 10** The Ontario Women’s History Network: Linking Teachers, Scholars, and History Communities / 200
Rose Fine-Meyer
- 11** Fighting the “Corset of Victorian Prejudice”: Women’s Activism in Canadian Engineering during the Pioneering Decades (1970s–80s) / 218
Ruby Heap
- 12** Ad Hoc Activism: Feminist Citizens Respond to the Meech Lake Accord in New Brunswick / 237
Anthony S.C. Hampton

- 13** To Help and to Serve: Women's Career Paths in the
Domestic Services Sector in Quebec City, 1960–2009 / 259
Catherine Charron

Contributors / 275

Index / 279

Introduction

Productive Pasts and New Directions

CATHERINE CARSTAIRS AND NANCY JANOVICEK

At the end of August 2010, feminist historians from across the country gathered in Vancouver for a conference sponsored by the Canadian Committee on Women's History/Comité canadien de l'histoire des femmes (CCHW-CCHF). "Edging Forward, Acting Up: Gender and Women's History at the Cutting Edge of Scholarship and Social Action" attracted more than a hundred participants for four lively days of papers, art, theatre, wine, and conversation. Delegates paid tribute to several of the pioneers of women's history in Canada, discussed the links between feminist history and activism, and explored new methodologies and topics in feminist history.¹ Although this was the first stand-alone conference sponsored by the CCWH-CCHF, it built on almost forty years of feminist scholarship. The CCWH-CCHF, founded in 1975 as an affiliated committee of the Canadian Historical Association, has long nurtured feminist historians through its dinner and reception at the annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, its sponsorship of the Hilda Neatby and Barbara Roberts Prizes, and its website, which provides a bibliography, links to syllabuses, and our newsletter.²

Attending the Vancouver conference and editing this associated volume, which you have here, provided us with an opportunity to reflect on how forty years of feminist scholarship has shaped women's and gender history and to assess its impact on the broader field of Canadian history. It has been almost a decade since there has been a new collection of essays in Canada devoted to

gender and women's history. This is not because women's history or gender history is in decline. Quite the opposite: there have been numerous specialized collections that focus on immigrant and Aboriginal women, women and health, and on women in particular regions.³ The Oxford University Press collection, *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History*, first published in 1986, continues to be released in new editions (the sixth edition came out in fall 2010), although recent editions reprint already-published work rather than publishing new work in the field. This volume, by contrast, provides a sampling of exciting new work. At the same time, it recognizes that the cutting-edge research of today builds on over forty years of scholarship. We were intrigued by how many of the papers delivered at the conference were on topics that the founders of the CCWH-CCHF had researched in the 1970s: paid and unpaid work, professional women, women's political action, and women's experiences of marriage and family. In the end, four themes emerged as focal points: biography, women's work, activism, and transnationalism. Informed by developments in feminist theory, the chapters included here have been enriched by recent attention to the importance of transnational travels and identities, new feminist theorizing about the body, critical race studies, and the resurgence of interest in biography as a lens for understanding culture and society.

The early scholarship on women in Canada sought to write women into the national story. Scholars focused on women's involvement in politics, including the right to vote and their involvement in turn-of-the-century reform movements. The development of women's history in Canada ran parallel to the growth of social history, prompting considerable interest in women's work experiences and the life cycle, especially the experiences of motherhood and child rearing.⁴ Scholars critically examined the rhetoric that stated that woman should be in the home while also pointing out the contradictions: working-class women often worked for wages; the history of nuns showed their important role in education and health (especially in the province of Quebec); and even in the late nineteenth century, women were joining the ranks of the professions, albeit with difficulty.⁵ This scholarship showed that women had made important contributions to the economic, social, and cultural life of the country. By the 1980s, the first textbooks in the field appeared: *Histoire des femmes au Québec depuis quatre siècles* (1982) and *Canadian Women: A History* (1988).⁶ Feminist history began finding its way into survey texts, most notably when Pearson hired Margaret Conrad and Alvin Finkel to produce *History of the Canadian Peoples*, first released in 1993. Veronica Strong-Boag's *The New Day*

Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English-Speaking Canada, 1919–1939 (1989) and Joy Parr’s *The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men, and Change in Two Industrial Towns, 1880–1950* (1991) both won the John A. Macdonald Prize, the most prestigious book prize awarded by the Canadian Historical Association, a recognition that feminist scholarship was becoming part of the canon. By the early 1990s, most history departments taught women’s studies and had hired at least one women’s historian. Many of these historians were active in founding women’s studies programs, thus establishing a fruitful dialogue among feminist scholars from different disciplines as well as an important network in which to advocate for equity programs on campus.⁷ Historians working in other fields turned to feminist theory to deepen their analysis. Immigration historians, historians of the welfare state, and rural historians all began paying attention to the experiences of women.

Incorporating feminist scholarship and women’s issues into academe did not occur without struggle: feminist historians sometimes fought lonely battles for respect and recognition within their departments. Canada’s constitutional crisis of the early 1990s also led to considerable hand-wringing by a few male historians who criticized social and gender historians for focusing on “housemaid’s knee in Belleville” instead of the history of nation building, which had been the traditional focus of Canadian history.⁸ Feminist historians countered these criticisms by pointing to the important role women had played in establishing social services and their important behind-the-scenes role in early Canadian politics, and they urged political historians to be more cognizant of the ways in which gender ideologies shaped political practices and institutions.⁹

Indeed, by this time, Joan Wallach Scott’s call to use gender as a category of historical analysis instead of focusing exclusively on women was transforming the field.¹⁰ In Canada, several collections drew attention to the advantages of gender history: these benefits included a better understanding of the complexity of power in people’s lives and identities, greater attention to issues of class and race and to divisions among women, and a deeper understanding of how political and economic structures were formed.¹¹ Gender history was not without controversy: gender historians’ call to theorize and understand the relational constructions of masculinity and femininity caused some to worry that women’s experiences would again be marginalized. Others argued that focusing on symbolic meanings of gender would cause historians to ignore the material conditions of women’s lives. Some historians feared that a focus on gender would depoliticize women’s history

and that gender historians were misrepresenting the scholarship of an earlier generation of historians.¹²

As these debates raged, exciting new scholarship emerged, by those who embraced the new gender history and by those who did not. New attention to how leisure and culture were gendered resulted in innovative studies of women's magazines, honeymooning practices, and roller rinks, just to name a few examples.¹³ Critical race theory and queer studies compelled historians to examine how changing conceptualizations of race and sexuality are integral to understandings of nation, citizenship, and economic and social change. Scholars investigated the experiences of Aboriginal, Asian, and African Canadian women to demonstrate how racialized thinking has pervaded the feminist movement in Canada as well as feminist constructions of citizenship.¹⁴ Historians examined the construction of sexual identities and the experiences of women who lived their lives outside of or on the margins of sexual respectability.¹⁵ Related to this was a deep interest in the moral regulation of women's lives that prompted many to scrutinize social work and criminal case files.¹⁶ More recently, several historians have examined adoption and fostering in a way that analyzes intimate family stories within the context of international political, economic, and cultural transformations.¹⁷ The growing breadth and diversity of the field means that, as Rebecca Edwards describes for the United States, "it is hardly possible, today, to identify any single central conversation that is taking place among historians of women and gender."¹⁸ Gender and women's history have become important parts of every field in Canadian history: gender historians work on environmental history, food history, agricultural history, political history, the history of the welfare state, the history of international development, and military history.

For us, one of the most striking aspects of the conference in Vancouver was the return to some of the questions that have long interested feminist historians: the lives of individual women, women's work experiences, women's activism, and women's relationship to government. Although scholars have never abandoned these topics, they have been given new life by growing interest in transnational and global history, flourishing interest in a political history that goes beyond the tales of great leaders to focus on the messy details of policy making and the influence of social movements, a renewed interest in the challenges and strategies of professional women, growing attention to workplace culture, and our greater understanding of race and sexuality. While the linguistic turn has made scholars far more attentive to the ways in which language creates meanings and shapes lives, this

collection also shows that women's and gender historians in Canada have maintained an ongoing interest in an empirical scholarship grounded in the rich details of people's daily lives. It also demonstrates that Canadian feminist historians continue to be interested in how region shapes identities and lives. Many of the chapters focus on a single province or city, while others capture experiences from throughout the country to paint a fuller picture of how economic and social developments have played out across the nation. Combined with attention to border crossings and transitions, this collection provides a portrait of the diversity of Canadian women's experiences while still acknowledging that state structures, both provincial and national, have dictated and continue to dictate the contours of women's lives.¹⁹

This volume has a strong focus on biography, reflecting growing interest in using biography as a way to provide rich descriptions of local conditions and experiences.²⁰ Historians in Canada, including some of the first feminist historians, have always written biographies, including important histories of some of Canada's first female doctors, artists, and suffragists, but there has been unease about the methodology in some quarters because some historians believe that biography lacks critical perspective compared to other types of historical work.²¹ The biographies included here involve a careful and reflexive examination of sources and approach biographical writing as a process that locates women "in complex and contradictory ways, even within the span of a single life."²² Biographies written in such a way reveal much about the culture and society of particular times and places while enabling the author to present a nuanced portrait of the ways social forces shape individuals.

In [Chapter 1](#) in this volume, Adele Perry provides a joint biography of James Douglas, the first governor of the colony of British Columbia, and his wife, Amelia. She examines how Douglas, the child of a mixed marriage and a colonial upbringing in the British Caribbean, thought about marriage and family in colonial British Columbia. Unlike his father and father-in-law, who discarded their "Native" wives when they returned to metropolitan settings, Douglas remained with his well-connected Metis wife, Amelia Connolly. Douglas defended the sanctity of their marriage when Protestant missionary Herbert Beaver attacked it, and he described Connolly affectionately. Unfortunately, we know less about Connolly's experience of their marriage and family life. Perry draws attention to the role of the colonial archive in deciding which papers and, by extension, whose stories were important. In [Chapter 9](#), Kristina Llewellyn describes the career of Hazel Chow, a home economics teacher in postwar British Columbia, and shows how she invoked

feminine respectability to carve out a place for herself in a racist environment. When she reflects on the disappointment she felt when Chow refused to discuss racism, Llewellyn realizes that she had imposed her own research goals on Chow's identity and self-conceptions. In [Chapters 3 and 4](#), Karen Balcom and Lorna McLean investigate Canadian women who were involved in international work during the interwar period. They examine their close relationships with American colleagues and show the significance of friendship and networking to women's activism and professional careers.

Other chapters, while not focused on a single individual, likewise explore individual lives in some depth as a way to better understand collective experiences. In [Chapter 6](#), Heidi MacDonald uses three diaries from across Canada to explain women's decision to marry or remain single during the Great Depression, while Gail Campbell, in [Chapter 2](#), uses diaries to explore the lives of eight New Brunswickers in the mid-nineteenth century. Campbell stresses that people kept diaries for different reasons and shows that although men's and women's diaries differed in their telling of daily events, women and men still shared a great deal in their day-to-day lives. Both Campbell and MacDonald emphasize the importance of age and life stage in determining what was important to an individual diarist.

There has been an ongoing interest in women's work in Canadian feminist history. In its more recent iterations, historians combine a focus on the factory, office, or department store floor with an interest in working-class women's leisure and political activities, thus providing a broad perspective on their lives and concerns.²³ Some of the earliest members of the CCWH-CCHF examined women's labour and produced fine studies on domestic servants, cotton workers, and women's paid and unpaid work during the Second World War.²⁴ Knowing that much of women's work has taken place within the home, historians also paid careful attention to washing, cleaning, childrearing, and other home-based work activities such as piecework and taking in boarders.²⁵ From the 1980s onwards, historians examined women's position within the labour movement as both auxiliaries and unionists.²⁶ There has also long been interest in the lives of nuns and professional women, especially doctors, teachers, social workers, and lawyers.²⁷ More recently, this interest has extended to work on nurses, physiotherapists, pharmacists, and nutritionists.²⁸ In the 1980s and 1990s, historians, often women who were part of the community under consideration and who spoke the necessary languages, completed studies of immigrant and racialized women workers and showed how ethnicity and race had shaped women's employment patterns and opportunities.²⁹ Historians who

studied the paid labour of Aboriginal women explained their marginalization in the labour force but also demonstrated that these women made significant contributions not only to the economic histories of indigenous peoples but also to the development of provincial and national economies.³⁰ More detailed studies of women's work during the Great Depression and after the Second World War explained how working outside the home became a norm for the majority of women. Recent work has also expanded definitions of labour by examining women's unpaid work as consumers and by taking seriously the work involved in jobs such as exotic dancing.³¹

Nearly every author in this collection pays some attention to women's labour. Gail Campbell's chapter on nineteenth-century New Brunswick calls into question the idea that there were separate spheres of responsibility for middle-class men and women. She shows that although men and women did perform different tasks, they were well aware of each other's work and that women often took more public roles than we might expect: Catharine Cameron Gillespie took over the management of her family's busy farm during her husband's frequent absences while Lucy Morrison ran her own commercial gardening business while also carrying out family responsibilities. In [Chapter 13](#), Catherine Charron examines paid domestic work in Quebec since the 1960s and shows that although women are participating in the labour force in ever-greater numbers, their work is often low-paid and insecure. This is particularly true for women who have extended their traditionally defined "nurturing roles" to take on jobs outside of the home as housekeepers, nannies, and caregivers for the elderly. In [Chapter 7](#), Donica Belisle uses the in-house newsletters of department stores to describe the workplace culture of retail workers. Women enjoyed the pleasures of display offered by the newsletters: they chose to dress attractively and to pose for seductive photos. At the same time, their presentation as sexual objects shows that they were valued more for their looks than for their brains.

This collection continues the strong tradition in Canadian women's history of examining the lives of professional women, including the women described in the aforementioned chapters by McLean, Llewellyn, and Balcom. In [Chapter 5](#), Catherine Gidney explores the experiences of women who worked as deans of women, doctors, nurses, dietitians, and physical-training instructors at Victoria College in Toronto between 1900 and 1940. She shows that these women conveyed mixed messages about work outside the home to their female charges: they told women that motherhood was their highest calling, and yet they themselves were empowered by their professional work and responsibilities. H  l  ne Charron, by contrast, in

[Chapter 8](#) looks at the gendered career trajectories of male and female social work professors in Quebec City. She demonstrates that the male professors often used their professorial positions as a stepping stone to positions of responsibility in Quebec's expanding social welfare state; female professors, by contrast, were relegated to community studies, which university officials deemed to be less prestigious. This trend occurred while the Quiet Revolution was transferring responsibility for health care and education away from nuns, who had previously played a key role in providing these services, into the hands of male bureaucrats. Although many of the professional women studied in this volume entered professions that have become female-dominated or at least equal in our own time, Ruby Heap in [Chapter 11](#) examines the growing number of women in engineering, a field that is still male-dominated and is often regarded as hostile to women.

The authors in this collection pay careful attention to how work affected or influenced women's decisions to marry, remain single, engage in intimate relations with other women, or find other ways of building family and community. The first generation of professional women rarely married, as Lorna McLean, Catherine Gidney, and H  l  ne Charron demonstrate. Some of these women, such as Marion Hilliard or Charlotte Whitton, established intimacies with other women. By the latter decades of the twentieth century, as H  l  ne Charron, Kristina Llewellyn, and Ruby Heap reveal, some women combined a career with heterosexual marriage. Heidi MacDonald's chapter shows that her middle-class diarists often prioritized work over marriage during the Great Depression. While most scholars argue that the low marriage rate during the Great Depression reflected young men's unemployment and their inability to provide for a family, MacDonald's research suggests that the low marriage rate might have had something to do with female choice. These women were ambivalent, or at the very least cautious, about marriage; in contrast, Donica Belisle suggests that many young department store workers were eager to court and marry and hoped that their paid work would enhance their romantic opportunities. Catherine Charron's chapter shows how marriage and raising a family affected working-class women's participation in the workforce. Her oral histories of women who worked as caregivers show these women deeply enmeshed in caring for their children and husbands. Their poorly paid work was frequently an extension of their work in the home. At the same time, her chapter draws attention to the devastating economic effects of divorce on many working-class women: their need to care and provide for their children left them with few opportunities for training for or seeking better paid and more secure work.

Building on several decades of scholarship, the contributors also pay careful attention to women's activism. Early feminist history focused on women's efforts to win the vote and be recognized as full citizens, the battles of Canada's early female politicians, and women's involvement in reform at the turn of the century.³² Some of this scholarship discussed the class and racial biases of many of these female reformers.³³ Women's involvement in the labour movement and on the left demonstrates that working-class women employed class-based feminist analysis when they engaged in debates about the woman question.³⁴ Studies of local struggles to develop social services such as orphanages and hospitals, gain better quality education, improve children's health, and increase the safety of local communities demonstrate how women's community-based activism was a crucial component of local governance and social policy.³⁵ These studies include important research on women's political action in the nineteenth century.³⁶ Although we do not know enough about the political work of women from marginalized communities, historians have explored the tremendous efforts of African Canadian, indigenous, and immigrant women to gain equal rights and fair treatment for themselves and their families.³⁷ More recently, the literature on social movements and human rights has reinvigorated the literature on women's politics and activism. We now know much more about women's activism in the years between the winning of the vote and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and especially about the strategic utility of maternal and liberal feminism during the Cold War.³⁸

Contributors to this volume focus on feminist activism in the late twentieth century. Ruby Heap's chapter about women engineers in the 1970s and 1980s points to the tenuous links between the women's movement and women engineer organizations. Although prominent feminist activists, such as Ursula Franklin, were involved in projects to remove barriers to women in science, younger women insisted that they were equal, even though they recognized the need to increase the number of women in the profession. These women also benefitted from federal government initiatives to promote technology and science, and they did not always sympathize with the women's movement, which was becoming increasingly opposed to government policies, such as free trade and the Meech Lake Accord. In [Chapter 12](#), Anthony Hampton explains how New Brunswick's protest against the Meech Lake Accord began at the kitchen tables of feminists who drew on their political connections among elected representatives and in the women's movement, labour groups, and political parties. Feminists mobilized people in the province against the constitutional deal because it was unfair not only to women but also to Atlantic Canadians. Hampton

explains that ad hoc feminist groups were effective in addressing immediate political issues. In [Chapter 10](#), Rose Fine-Meyer examines the efforts of the Ontario Women's History Network/Le réseau d'histoire des femmes to connect university-based researchers to teachers to facilitate curriculum reform and to provide teachers with the materials they need to teach women's history.

Many of the chapters in this volume place Canadian women's lives in the context of transnational networks of politics and friendship. Inspired by the postcolonial literature on empire, historians have been thinking more critically about Canada's history of colonialism, about its status as a colony of the British Empire and, more importantly, about its status as a colonial power in its own right. This scholarship has elucidated the links between metropole and empire, compared the experiences of empire within various white settler societies, and made us all more aware of how the legacies of colonialism affect Canada today.³⁹ Scholars of colonialism and borderlands also argue that a narrow focus on "the national story" fails to explain the experiences of the people who moved and lived within shifting international borders.⁴⁰ Indeed, in North America, the border cut through indigenous communities' existing territorial boundaries, dispossessed them from their land, and fractured their nations. Canadian history is replete with stories of women and their families who moved back and forth across borders for better opportunities or who were forced to leave their homes. Historians of migration and diasporas demonstrate that immigrants have maintained connections to their families by sending money to them, by encouraging them to immigrate, or by following their families to places they hoped would be more welcoming.⁴¹ Understanding these stories in the context of a transnational migration of peoples makes more sense than analyses that make them part of the Canadian "mosaic." As Elizabeth Jameson puts it, "We all have multiple identities, only some of which are rooted in where we live or the passports we carry."⁴²

Many of the chapters in this book analyze the complex relationship between local circumstances and global trends. Adele Perry's chapter, which emerged out of her keynote address to "Edging Forward, Acting Up" conference, follows the movements of James Douglas, Amelia Connelly, and their kin. She argues that the multiple racial and gendered identities that shaped both their public and intimate lives were not contained within what would become provincial or national borders. Other chapters show how global feminist debates influenced Canadian feminists and how, in turn, Canadian feminists shaped debates.⁴³ In her chapter about Julia Grace Wales, a peace activist and Shakespearian scholar who was born in Canada and spent most of her adult life teaching in Wisconsin, Lorna McLean argues that scholars

have overlooked this prominent peace activist because her transnational life does not fit into the national story. Wales used her multiple identities strategically in her political lobbying but forged a transnational identity through her educational and religious connections with other women. In her chapter, Catherine Gidney also stresses the importance of Methodist connections to the international friendships and alliances of the non-academic professional women who worked at the University of Toronto. Karen Balcom shows how North American child welfare activists used the League of Nations to build alliances to promote what they saw as “modern” child welfare practices and to counter Catholic practices that they deemed to be backwards. H el ene Charron follows the careers of social work professors at Laval University, many of whom were trained at the University of Chicago; their transnational training and connections influenced their social work practice and differentiated them from colleagues at the Universit e de Montr eal, who were trained at home.

There were many exciting papers delivered at “Edging Forward, Acting Up,” and not all of them could be included in this collection. This volume has less material on sex and race than we would have liked. This is not because these themes were absent from the conference or because there is a slackening of interest in these topics. Some participants presented research in its earliest stages, and we look forward to hearing and reading more about their research in the future. Reflecting a broader trend in Canadian history, this collection does not have many chapters about the pre-Confederation period. As Allan Greer pointed out fifteen years ago, few historians are working in the field, especially in English-speaking Canada.⁴⁴ Moreover, scholars of early Canadian history are not well-represented within the ranks of the CCWH-CCHF. Only three of the papers presented at the conference focused on the pre-Confederation period. The vibrant interest in borderland and colonial studies has meant that many scholars of earlier time periods have found their academic homes elsewhere. Many historians find that they have more in common with their international peers than with Canadian historians, who are heavily focused on the twentieth century. The diminishing number of scholars working on the pre-Confederation period and their drift away from the Canadian Historical Association (and, by extension, the Canadian Committee on Women’s History) is a significant loss to historians of the more recent past. We need to better understand women’s lives and gender relations in earlier periods in order to construct more complete portraits of recent times.

More encouraging has been the increasing participation of a new generation of francophone scholars in the CCWH-CCHF. Indeed, the CCWH

has always attracted members from both linguistic communities, although for the past fifteen years, at least, the meetings have been almost uniformly English. This book includes translations of chapters by two early career francophone scholars – Hélène Charron and Catherine Charron. A third chapter, by Ruby Heap, pays careful attention to francophone engineers. Although three chapters out of thirteen is far from ideal, it is a positive trend.⁴⁵ In our view, there is much to be learned by increasing the dialogue between francophone and anglophone scholars.⁴⁶ This is partly because they draw on different historiographical traditions: francophone historians draw more on the insights of European scholarship while anglophone historians tend to reach for the literature from the United States and Britain. Francophone scholars have a much longer tradition of collaborative historical work, something which granting councils are now encouraging all of us to do. It is important to acknowledge how linguistic, cultural, and religious differences between French- and English-speaking peoples created tensions and sometimes very different experiences. However, focusing on these differences too often occludes analysis of how Québécois experiences can shed light on trends and patterns in other parts of Canada and around the world.

Since beginning work on this collection, we have both served on the executive of the CCWH-CCHF. As we read the chapters, the importance of feminist networks in the professional and personal lives of women in the past resonated with us. The CCWH-CCHF is an organization that has been vital to our own development as historians, and we hope that it will continue to nurture future generations. We feel that the CCWH-CCHF has far to go in advocating for and helping to bring about a more diverse profession. We need to continue to foster a meaningful dialogue between anglophone and francophone historians, and we need to reach out to the broader community of people who believe in the importance of women's history, including teachers and feminist activists. To this end, the royalties from this book will be donated to the Barbara Roberts Prize, which promotes the study of feminist perspectives on peace, social justice and human rights, workplace and unions, and women's studies education.

NOTES

- 1 Colleagues, friends, and former students organized sessions to celebrate the contributions of Jean Barman, Andrée Lévesque, and Veronica Strong-Boag.
- 2 Veronica Strong-Boag, "Work to Be Done: The Canadian Committee on Women's History," pamphlet, no publisher, 1995; Deborah Gorham, "Women's History: Founding a New Field," in *Creating Historical Memory: English-Canadian Women*

and the Work of History, ed. Beverly Boutilier and Alison Prentice (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 273–97.

- 3 Georgina Feldberg, Molly Ladd-Taylor, Alison Li, and Kathryn McPherson, eds., *Women, Health, and Nation: Canada and the United States since 1945* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003); Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, ed., *Gender, Health, and Popular Culture: Historical Perspectives* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011); Mary-Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend, eds., *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Aboriginal Women's History in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003); Sarah Carter and Patricia A. McCormack, eds., *Recollecting: Lives of Aboriginal Women of the Northwest and Borderlands* (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2011); Judith Fingard and Janet Guildford, eds., *Mothers of the Municipality: Women, Work, and Social Policy in Post-1945 Halifax* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); Sarah Carter, Lesley Erickson, Patricia Roome, and Char Smith, eds., *Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West through Women's History* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005); Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus, eds., *One Step over the Line: Toward a History of Women in the North American Wests* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press/Athabasca University Press, 2008); Marlene Epp, Franca Iacovetta, and Frances Swyripa, eds., *Sisters or Strangers? Immigrant, Ethic, and Racialized Women in Canadian History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004); Myra Rutherdale, ed., *Caregiving on the Periphery: Historical Perspectives on Nursing and Midwifery* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010); Myra Rutherdale and Katie Pickles, eds., *Contact Zones: Aboriginal Women and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Pasts* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005); Janet Guildford and Suzanne Morton, eds., *Making up the State: Women in 20th-Century Atlantic Canada* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 2010); Bettina Bradbury and Tamara Myers, eds., *Negotiating Identities in 19th- and 20th-Century Montreal* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005).
- 4 Catherine Cleverdon, *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950); Veronica Strong-Boag, *Parliament of Women: The National Council of Women, 1893–1929* (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1976), Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s–1920s* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1979); Joy Parr, ed., *Childhood and Family in Canadian History* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982); Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice, eds., *The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977); Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice, eds., *The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History*, vol. 2 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986); Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman, eds., *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1986); Veronica Strong Boag, *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919–1939* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pittman, 1988); Meg Luxton, *More Than a Labour of Love: Three Generations of Women's Work in the Home* (Toronto: Women's Educational Press, 1980).
- 5 Marta Danylewycz, *Taking the Veil: An Alternative to Marriage, Motherhood, and Spinsterhood in Quebec, 1840–1920* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987); Micheline Dumont and Nadia Fahmy-Eid, with Johanne Daigle, *Les couventines: L'éducation des filles au Québec dans les congrégations religieuses enseignantes*,

- 1840–1960 (Montreal: Boréal, 1986); Veronica Strong-Boag, *A Woman with a Purpose: The Diaries of Elizabeth Smith* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).
- 6 Clio Collective, *Histoire des femmes au Québec* (Montreal: Les Éditions de l'Hexagone, 1982); Alison Prentice, Paula Bourne, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Beth Light, Wendy Mitchinson, and Naomi Black, *Canadian Women: A History* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Javonovich, 1988).
 - 7 Wendy Robbins, Meg Luxton, Margrit Eichler, and Francine Descarries, eds., *Minds of Our Own: Inventing Feminist Scholarship and Women's Studies in Canada and Quebec, 1966–76* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008).
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 - 9 Gail Cuthbert Brant, "Presidential Address: National Unity and the Politics of Political History," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association/Revue de la Société historique du Canada* 3, 1 (1992): 10. Shirley Tillotson's examination of tax policy is an excellent example of scholarship that demonstrates how women participate in "high politics." See Shirley Tillotson, "The Family as Tax Dodge: Partnership, Individuality, and Gender in the Personal Income Tax Act, 1942–1970," *Canadian Historical Review* 90, 3 (2009): 391–426, and "Relations of Extraction: Taxation and Women's Citizenship in the Maritimes, 1914–1955," *Acadiensis* 39, 1 (2010): 27–57.
 - 10 Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91, 5 (1986): 1053–75.
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 - 12 Joan Sangster provided an important critique in "Beyond Dichotomies: Re-assessing Gender History and Women's History in Canada" *Left History* 3, 1 (Spring 1995): 109–21, and in the introduction to *Through Feminist Eyes: Essays on Canadian Women's History* (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2011).
 - 13 Lynne Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Karen Dubinsky, *The Second Greatest Disappointment: Honeymooning and Tourism at Niagara Falls* (Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 1999); Valerie Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

- 14 The focus on Aboriginal women has a long history. See, for instance, Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Society, 1670–1870* (Winnipeg: Watson and Dyer, 1980) and Jennifer Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1980). Other books include, but are by no means limited to, Karen Anderson, *Chain Her by One Foot: The Subjugation of Women in Seventeenth-Century New France* (London: Routledge, 1991) and Sarah Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada's Prairie West* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997). There is less research on African Canadian and Asian women, but see Peggy Bristow, Dionne Brand, Linda Carty, Afua P. Cooper, Sylvia Hamilton, Adrienne Shadd, eds., *We're Rooted Here and They Can't Pull Us Up: Essays in African-Canadian Women's History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); Afua Cooper, *The Hanging of Angelique: The Untold Story of Canadian Slavery and the Burning of Old Montreal* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 2006); and Karen Flynn, *Moving beyond Borders: A History of Black Canadian and Caribbean Women in the Diaspora* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011). For Asian women, see Pamela Sugiman, "A Million Hearts from Here': Japanese Canadian Mothers and Daughters and the Lessons of War," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 26, 4 (2007): 50–68, and "Memories of Internment: Narrating Japanese Canadian Women's Life Stories," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 29, 3 (2004): 359–88; Lisa Mar, "The Tale of Lin Tee: Madness, Family Violence and Lindsay's Anti-Chinese Riot of 1919," in *Sisters or Strangers: Immigrant, Ethnic, and Racialized Women in Canadian History*, ed. Marlene Epp, Franca Iacovetta, and Francis Swyripa (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 108–29. For more on race and citizenship, see Veronica Strong-Boag, ed., *Painting the Maple: Essays on Race, Gender, and the Construction of Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998) and Sherene Razack, *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society* (Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 2002).
- 15 Karen Dubinsky, *Improper Advances: Rape and Heterosexual Conflict in Ontario, 1880–1929* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880–1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Becki Ross, *The House That Jill Built: A Lesbian Nation in Formation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Mary Louise Adams, *The Trouble with Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Elise Chenier, *Strangers in Our Midst: Sexual Deviancy in Postwar Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998); and Cameron Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women: Lesbian Lives in Canada, 1900–65* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).
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- 18 Rebecca Edwards, “Women’s and Gender History,” in *American History Now*, ed. Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2011), 337.
- 19 Joan Sangster, “Archiving Feminist Histories: Women, the ‘Nation,’ and Metanarratives in Canadian Historical Writing,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 29 (2006): 255–64.
- 20 Historians did not abandon biography as can be seen in Mary Kinnear, *Margaret McWilliams: An Interwar Feminist* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1991); Terry Crowley, *Agnes MacPhail and the Politics of Equality* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1990). For some recent examples, see Veronica Strong-Boag and Carole Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe: The Times and Texts of E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Andrée Lévesque, *Eva Circe-Côté: Libre penseuse* (Montreal: Les Éditions du remue-ménage, 2010); Terry Crowley, *Marriage of Minds: Isabel and Oscar Skelton* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003); Jean Barman, *Sojourning Sisters: The Letters and Lives of Jessie and Annie McQueen* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); and Roberta Hamilton, *Setting the Agenda: Jean Royce and the Shaping of Queen’s University* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).
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- 22 Gillian Whitlock, *The Intimate Empire: Reading Women’s Autobiography* (London: Cassel, 2000), 3.
- 23 Joan Sangster, *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Postwar Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013); Donica Belise, *Retail Nation: Department Stores and the Making of Modern Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011).
- 24 Marilyn Barber, “The Women Ontario Welcomed: Immigrant Domestic Workers for Ontario Homes, 1870–1930” *Ontario History* 72, 3 (1980): 148–72; Ruth Roach Pierson, *They’re Still Women after All: The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986); Gail Cuthbert Brandt, “The Transformation of Women’s Work in the Quebec Cotton Industry,” in *The Character of Class Struggle: Essays in Canadian Working Class History*, ed. Bryan Palmer, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 115–37. This, of course, is just a sampling of the fine work completed by labour historians such as Joan Sangster, Linda Kealey, and Suzanne Cross. A fine example of the work of feminist labour historians in Quebec

is Marie Lavigne and Yolande Pinard, eds., *Travailleuses et féministes: Les femmes dans la société québécoise* (Montreal: Boréal Express, 1983). The Clio Collective also paid important attention to women's work in *L'histoire des femmes au Québec*.

- 25 Some of the most important work here is as follows: Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993); Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*; Luxton, *More Than a Labour of Love*; Denise Baillageron, *Ménagères au temps de la crise* (Montreal: Éditions de Remue-Ménage, 1991); and Marjorie Griffin Cohen, *Women's Work, Markets, and Economic Development in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).
- 26 Nadia Fahmy-Eid and Lucie Piché, *Si le travail m'était conté autrement: Les femmes dans la Confédération des syndicats nationaux depuis 1920* (Montreal: CSN, 1987); Sylvie Murray, *À la jonction du mouvement ouvrier et du mouvement des femmes: La ligue auxiliaire de l'Association internationale des machinistes Canada 1903–1980* (Montreal: Regroupement des chercheurs-chercheuses en histoire des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec 1990); Ruth Frager, *Sweatshop Strife: Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Jewish Labour Movement of Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Pamela Sugiman, *Labour's Dilemma: The Gender Politics of Auto Workers in Canada, 1937–1979* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); Gillian Creese, *Contracting Masculinity: Gender, Class, and Race in a White-Collar Union* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1999); and Nancy M. Forestell, "The Miner's Wife: Working-Class Femininity in a Masculine Context, 1920–1950," in *Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity and Masculinity in Canada*, ed. Kathryn McPherson, Cecilia Morgan, and Nancy M. Forestell (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1999): 139–55.
- 27 Hacker, *The Indomitable Lady Doctors*; Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice, eds., *Gender and Education in Ontario: A Historical Reader* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 1991); Constance Backhouse, *Petticoats and Prejudice: Women and Law in Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 1991); Patricia T. Rooke, *No Bleeding Heart: Charlotte Whitton, A Feminist on the Right* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1987); Sara Z. Burke, *Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Marta Danylewycz *Taking the Veil: An Alternative to Marriage, Motherhood, and Spinsterhood in Quebec, 1840–1920* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987); Heidi MacDonald, "Who Counts? Nuns, Work, and the Census of Canada" *Social History/Histoire sociale* 43, 86 (2010): 369–91; Dumont and Fahmy-Eid, with Johanne Daigle, *Les couventines*.
- 28 Kathryn McPherson, *Beside Matters: The Transformation of Canadian Nursing, 1900–1990* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996); Meryn Stuart and Jayne Elliott, eds., *Place and Practice in Canadian Nursing History* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2008); Ruby Heap, "Training Women for a New 'Women's Profession': Physiotherapy Education at the University of Toronto," *History of Education Quarterly* 35, 2 (1995): 135–59; Nadia Fahmy-Eid, Aline Charles, Johanne Collin, Johanne Daigle, Pauline Fahmy, Ruby Heap, and Lucie Piché, *Femmes, santé et professions: Histoire*

- des diététistes et des physiothérapeutes au Québec et en Ontario, 1930–1980 – L'affirmation d'un status professionnel* (Montreal: Fides, 1997); Elizabeth Smyth, Sandra Acker, Paula Bourne, and Alison Prentice, eds., *Challenging Professions: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Women's Professional Work* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).
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- 30 Mary Jane Logan McCallum, "Labour, Modernity and the Canadian State: A History of Aboriginal Women and Work in the Mid-Twentieth Century" (PhD diss., University of Manitoba, 2008); Joan Sangster, "Making a Fur Coat: Women, the Labouring Body, Working-Class History" *International Review of Social History* 52, 2 (2007): 241–42; Robin Jarvis Brownlie, "'Living the Same as the White People': Mohawk and Anishinabe Women's Labour in Southern Ontario, 1920–1940," *Labour/Le Travail* 61 (2008): 41–68; Paige Raibmon, "Indigenous Women at Work in the Hop Fields and Tourist Industry," *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 3, 3 (2007): 23–56; and John Lutz, *Makuk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008).
- 31 The scholarship is far too vast to include all of it. Some recent studies are Becki Ross, *Burlesque West: Showgirls, Sex, and Sin in Postwar Vancouver* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); Belisle, *Retail Nation*; Joan Sangster, *Transforming Labour*; and Katrina Srigley, *Breadwinning Daughters: Young Working Women in a Depression-Era City, 1929–1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).
- 32 Cleverdon, *The Women Suffrage Movement in Canada*; Kealey, *A Not Unreasonable Claim*; Linda Kealey and Joan Sangster, eds., *Beyond the Vote: Canadian Women in Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989); Crowley, *Agnes MacPhail*; Linda Carty, ed., *And Still We Rise: Feminist Political Mobilizing in Contemporary Canada* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1993). See also the website *Women Suffrage and Beyond*. This site, launched by Veronica Strong-Boag, Genevieve LeBaron, and Kelly Christensen, examines the connections between past suffrage campaigns and today's democratic deficit and illustrates the ongoing importance of transnational connections among feminist activists. Available at <http://womensuffrage.org/>.
- 33 Carol Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877–1918* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983).
- 34 Linda Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour, and the Left in Canada, 1890–1920* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998); Janice Newton, *The Feminist Challenge to the Canadian Left, 1900–1918* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995); Andrée Lévesque, ed., *Madeleine Parent, militante* (Montreal: Remue-ménage, 2003). On working-class women's contribution to late-twentieth-century feminist politics, see Meg Luxton, "Feminism as a

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- 35 Carmen Nielsen Varty, "'A Career in Christian Charity': Women's Benevolence and the Public Sphere in a Mid-Nineteenth-Century Canadian City," *Women's Review of History* 14, 2 (2005): 243–64; Mariana Valverde, "The Mixed Social Economy as a Canadian Tradition," *Studies in Political Economy* 47 (Summer 1995): 36–60; Cynthia Comacchio, *Nations Are Built of Babies: Saving Ontario's Mothers and Children* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993); Denyse Baillargeon, *Un Québec en mal d'enfants: La médicalisation de la maternité, 1910–1970* (Montreal: Remue-ménage, 2004); Aline Charles, *Travail d'ombre et de lumière: Le bénévolat féminin à l'Hôpital Ste-Justine, 1907–1960* (Quebec, IQRC, 1990); Chenier, *Strangers in Our Midst*.
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- 42 Elizabeth Jameson, “Connecting the Women’s Wests” in *One Step over the Line: Toward a History of Women in the North American Wests*, ed. Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus (Athabasca: Athabasca University Press, 2008), 22.
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- 44 Allan Greer, “Canadian History: Ancient and Modern,” *Canadian Historical Review* 77, 4 (1996): 575–90.
- 45 Denyse Baillargeon “Des Voies/x parallèles: L’histoire des femmes au Québec et au Canada anglais (1970–1995),” *Sextant* 4 (1995): 133–68. *Gender Conflicts* contains nothing about French Canada while *Gendered Pasts* has only one article out of eleven. *Great Dames* has one article out of fifteen. *Rethinking Canada* has always had significant content on French-speaking Canada, but most of it is written by anglophones rather than francophones.
- 46 Magda Fahrni, “Reflections on the Place of Quebec in Historical Writing on Canada,” in *Contesting Clío’s Craft: New Directions and Debates in Canadian History*, ed. Christopher Dummit and Michael Dawson (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas, 2009): 1–20.

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