In 'From the Cooked Timber of Humanity' philosopher Anita Silvers considers why we can find beautiful a representation of disability or anatomical anomaly (e.g., Picasso's 'Maya With a Doll') and yet avert our eyes from the same human trait when we encounter it in life. Silvers argues that disability is the binary opposite against which the normal is defined. She thus recommends that in our efforts to broaden our standards of beauty, we view those who are physically different as deepening our insight into humanity just as a distinctive artwork can deepen our comprehension of art. Noel Carroll, in his 'Ethnicity, Race, and Monstrosity' focuses on ugliness, especially in horror and humor, both of which he contends are 'rhetoric[s] of hatred' that betray racial and moral prejudices.

As for racial and sexual stereotypes, Paul C. Taylor challenges philosophical aesthetics arguing that it should focus less on art and more on human bodily beauty, and that it should be primarily cultural criticism rather than philosophy of art. Arthur Danto responds to Taylor sympathetically but with a forceful defense of aesthetics.

The other articles treat various topics: Kathleen Higgins contrasts real beauty of persons with its imitators, flawlessness and glamour; Susan Bordo discusses beauty in the image of the male body; Hilary Robinson examines Luce Irigaray's views; Kaori Chino explores the haunting photographic self-portraits of Yasumasa Morimura, a male who impersonates legendary movie actresses.

Brand has put together a varied array of high-quality essays. This excellent anthology will appeal to specialists in aesthetics, the arts, feminism, and cultural theory.

Carol S. Gould

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The Great Arizona orphan abduction

Linda Gordon; Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, London, England, 1999, 480 pp, HbK ISBN 0-674-36041-9 £21.50

Linda Gordon has achieved that unusual position of writing a highly scholarly book (winner of the Bancroft and American Historical Association Prizes) which has also enjoyed success with a general readership. The accessibility of this text is largely attained through a distinctive narrative strategy, interspersing chapters on the wider historical context with a detailed narrative of the unfolding crisis over orphan adoption in a small Arizona Anglo-Mexican mining community. Historical analysis is interwoven with the drama of a highly emotive confrontation in which race, gender and class identities play out within the charged atmosphere of attempted inter-racial adoption.

The Orphan controversy serves as the focal point for illustrating the author's major thesis that women's role in demarcating and policing racial identity is significant and understated in most historical investigations. The difficulties of documenting this influence and agency she freely admits, and while the trial transcripts give insights into the Anglo case against Mexican adoption, she is mainly reliant on secondary sources to interpret the feelings and attitudes of the prospective Mexican adopters. It is mainly, therefore, through the actions of the Anglo women that the reader comes to appreciate how a campaign to liberate Irish Catholic foundlings from placements in Mexican Catholic families turned into a struggle to maintain the colour line between white Anglos and non-white Mexicans.

Gordon's task is to retell the story of the Arizona orphans while systematically connecting the narrative with its historical context and relevant paradigms in other scholarly works. Designating the Southwest frontier of the early 1900s as a site of 'internal colonialism', she invites comparison with studies of women's agency in other colonial contexts. Her analysis of the multiple forces at work in the lives of Anglo frontier women expands our understanding of the pressures on women to maintain moral superiority, class allegiance and racial purity in the face of difficult and challenging circumstances. She also makes the link between the southern origins of many of the Anglos and the role of white women in maintaining the segregation of the American South. Finally, she connects the events of Clifton Morenci to the national priorities of women's organizations in the Progressive era, specifically their concern with child welfare issues. These connections are made convincingly and underpin the author's choice of this particular event as illuminating the central questions about the operation of race and gender.

Gordon argues that the key to the story is the force of maternalism harnessed to the exigencies of race. It is the emotive and personal power of women determined to act in 'the best interests' of the children, which projects their actions from the private to the public sphere. In marshalling their arguments against the child-rearing capabilities of Mexican families, they resort to excesses of negative racial stereotyping in depicting the dangers to which these infants have been exposed. Their motives are mixed, as arguably were those of the Mexican women in offering homes to white children. The desire to mother and protect these abandoned children from the streets of New York becomes inextricably mingled with fears of miscegenation and a blurring of the increasingly stratified society of the mining communities. That many of the Anglo women end up adopting the children underscores the multiple motives at work.

The questions raised in this book are many and thought provoking. Gordon has written a text which both enhances our understanding of women's agency in race relations in the particular time and place of early 20th century America, and also encourages the reader to ponder the lessons for today's issues of child welfare and mixed race adoptions. She rightly uses this story to illustrate how the definition of best interest for the child, a central tenet in child welfare, can be culturally

constructed and reveal much about the prejudices of an elite and controlling group. Her contention that the family should be a central concern for those studying the evolution of racial attitudes and community practice is an interesting one, although she does not neglect the external economic and social pressures which supported a racial divide.

In a well-written, highly readable and scholarly book she has achieved the difficult task of taking a footnote to history, putting it under the spotlight, and revealing its lessons for an understanding of women's agency in demarcating racial boundaries.

Without the decisions taken by the Mexican women to adopt the Irish children, and without the outraged reaction of the Anglo women, this case, which reached the Supreme Court for final adjudication, would never have happened. The tragedy of the encounter is that both groups of women were divided by what they had in common, a desire to provide a secure and safe environment for vulnerable children. That they ended up facing each other across an increasingly hostile and racialized divide is a powerful example of the interlocking forces of race and gender in history.

Kathryn Castle

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Feminist thought in Aotearoa/New Zealand: connections and differences

Rosemary Du Plessis and Lynne Alice (editors); Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1998, 326 pp, PbK ISBN 0-19-558356-6

The status of women in Aotearoa/New Zealand is, arguably, enviable. In the opening years of the 21st century the country's top political and judicial roles (Prime Minister, Attorney-General, Governor-General and Chief Justice) are filled by women. Further indicators of positive social change are recent legislative changes entitling women to paid parental leave and women in *de facto* relationships to similar rights to property as married women. It seems reasonable to propose that feminist thinking and actions drive gains made for women. Certainly, the strength and diversity of the essays brought together by Rosemary Du Pleiss and Lynne Alice are illustrative of the kind of work that is likely to fuel social change for the better.

The spirit of sisterhood was one of the hallmarks of the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The enormous impact that the women's