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

movement wrought is testimony to the effectiveness of political mobilization around a shared identity. However, the work presented by Du Pleiss and Alice's volume suggests another possibility – the power of feminists to affect social change can also stem from differences and debates among women. Ethnicity, sexuality, and religion are three of the points of difference that are explored productively in the first of the four parts of the book. *Part One: Feminism, Colonialism, and the Politics of Difference*, includes eight chapters, each attends to the presence of a particular 'Other' group of women residing in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Highlighted in Part 1 is a particular difference that is foundational in Aotearoa/New Zealand; that between Maori (the indigenous people of New Zealand) women and Pakeha (New Zealanders descending from Anglo-Celtic settlers) women. The Treaty of Waitangi, an agreement between Maori and the British Crown, established Aotearoa/New Zealand as a bicultural nation state. However, the principles of The Treaty have been repeatedly breached by generations of politicians and settlers; a situation that has led Maori women to confront Pakeha feminists as being handmaidens of the colonizing process. Two chapters in Part 1 are notable for their engagement with the problems of Pakeha feminism for Maori women. Laing and Coleman (chapter 1) consider Maori women's charge. They draw upon writings of early colonial women to argue that they were not straightforwardly complicit to the wills of powerful Pakeha men. Early women settlers did manage to subvert aspects of the colonizing process by, for example, supporting Te Reo (the Maori Language). From a Maori woman's perspective, Johnston (chapter 4) explores Maori women's marginalization, which are clearly experiences that are missed by a Pakeha feminist framework.

Nine chapters are collected together in the second part of the book *Part two: Political Scholarship/Politicised Teaching*. These chapters discuss feminist practices in knowledge production and dissemination. The unique issues for Maori continue as an important theme in this section of the book. For example, Matahaere-Atariki (chapter 9) considers the particular challenges for Maori women in universities and other educational institutions. She argues that researchers and lecturers employed by the state simultaneously represent and oppose the problematic relationships between the native subject and the colonial object. In the context of a study of Maori children's cultural literacy Tuhiwai Smith (chapter 13) also examines the contradictions that arise from the pedagogical processes of representation and knowledge transmission. Tuhiwai Smith discusses the dilemmas that arise from attempting to promote discourses of Maori knowledge, language and culture, when the authenticity of the discourses can be questioned because they arise from the process of colonization.

Several chapters in Part 2 critically engage with the question of what constitutes feminist research. For example, Pattison and Rosier (chapter 12) argue that a link between theory, research and activism is a key characteristic of feminist work.

They suggest that the critical edge of feminist practice is lost when it is located within patriarchal institutions. Armstrong and Du Plessis (chapter 14) usefully document some of the changes in feminist social research over the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. One shift explored is from the certainty of 1970s research, which documented hitherto hidden 'truths' about women's experiences to the uncertainty of work conducted in the 1990s where there was a crisis in the notion of representing women's experiences. Dupuis and Neale (chapter 16) make a case for quantitative analysis in feminist research. Finally, detailed examples of the feminist research in practice are provided by descriptions of two projects – one on chronic pelvic pain (Grace, chapter 15), the other on women's stories about feminism (Court and Court, chapter 17).

Bodies, Sexualities and Identities is the title given to the seven essays collected in Part 3 of the book. The essays all challenge singular notions of women's identity but do so in a broad range of contexts. Sexuality as a contradictory site for the negotiation of an active, desiring identity is addressed in a reflexive piece by Alice and friends (chapter 18) and in an empirical study by Ryan and Gavey (chapter 19). Women body builders, pregnant women (Longhurst and Johnston, chapter 20), women with disabilities (Morton and Munford, chapter 21), obese women (Carrier and Rhodes, chapter 22) and menstruating women (Tennant and Brookes, chapter 23) are illustrative of the breathtaking array of identities that were discussed as illustrating various relationships between bodies and sexualities. In the final chapter of Part three Star (chapter 24) considers the politics of identity in the context of feminist films and media criticism in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The fourth and final part of the book, *Politics and Policy*, is made up of six chapters. The distinctive position of Maori women in relation to politics is addressed by Rei (chapter 25). Rei outlines Maori women's activism in the context of their involvement with the Treaty of Waitangi. A feminist theoretical perspective on economic policy is explored by Briar and Cheyne (chapter 26) and Hyman (chapter 27). On a more practical level Wilson (chapter 28) assesses the effectiveness of mobilizing the concept of equality in feminist campaigns to improve women's status in employment. Torrie and Jones (chapter 29) discuss the tensions and complexities arising from their experiences of formulating and implementing Equal Employment Opportunity policies in public service organizations. General policy issues for the issue of women's health is explored by Bunkle (chapter 31). The specific case of midwifery practice discussed by Tully, Dallenbach, and Guilliland in the final chapter serves to illustrate how health policies can support a feminist model of maternity care.

This collection of essays is of interest to an international feminist audience of any persuasion. The topics addressed encompass the broad sweep of theoretical, practical, and political issues relevant to studies of the status of women. The strong focus on the tensions that arise when Maori women engage with feminism makes this book particularly relevant to those concerned with post-colonialism. A

novel and refreshing aspect of the book is the clear feminist spirit captured by the writing styles. Examples include Alice's chapter (chapter 18) that is presented as a conversation between her and her friends, and Middleton and Summers-Bremner's contribution on feminist pedagogy (chapter 10) written as an intergenerational dialogue. In conclusion, I think that this volume should be part of any respectable international collection of feminist work.

Ann Weatherall

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Gendered nations: nationalisms and gender order in the long nineteenth century

Ida Blom, Karen Hagemann and Catherine Hall, editors; Berg, Oxford, 2000, 347 pp, HbK ISBN 1-85973-2593 £42.00, PbK ISBN 1-859-732-264X £14.99

This edited volume brings together a collection of essays that are a product of the necessary and intense engagement by feminists on the complex connection between the rise of variegated nationalisms and the enmeshing of gender relationships within this. The period is a watershed for the futures that were mapped out for the globe, both in terms of the rise of democratic political movements in Europe, Britain and America (within which women were embedded in a fraught way), relationships between the nations-states of Europe and Britain, and above all for the profound impact it had on colonized peoples all over the world, where imperialism left a lasting legacy. The collection of papers were those that had initially been brought together in a Berlin symposium to evolve an 'international perspective' on *'Nationalisms and Gender Order in the Long Nineteenth Century'* (preface, xv).

The book is divided into four distinct parts: Part 1 titled *'Nations, Nationalisms and Gender'* contains more conceptual essays by Ida Blom, Geoff Eley, Ruth Roach Pierson and Silke Wenk. While designed to lead overviews of the entire volume, they situate these in methodological debates of our times (Blom has herself contributed to the forging of a women's 'world history' or 'global history' paradigm) and to the critical importance that culture, mythology and the question of representations has acquired in our disciplines (Eley, Roach Pierson and Wenk.) Part 2 is titled *'Nations States, Ethnicity and Gender Order'*, and contains an analysis by Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff of two paintings by Anne-Loius Girodet (*Endymion* and *Jean Baptiste Belley*), which ends with a rather unsatisfactory interlinking with de Sade's defence of 'the discourse of republican sodomy' and the claim that both took 'subversive positions within this discourse' (page 100).