

"Coming Out - Parents of Lesbian and Gay Teens" Margaret Schneider gives advice to the parent of the gay/lesbian teen, while avoiding the point that heterosexism and homophobia are issues for all parents and their teen children. Unfortunately, I have a feeling that parents might skip through the book looking for the "issue" that appears to fit them directly, and leave the rest. This would be a pity because, despite a lack of feminist analysis, the essays as a whole do raise topics applicable to all teens and their parents.

My reading of these two books, of course, says something about who I am. My experience of doing doctoral ethnographic work in schools was similar to Valerie Hey's. In hindsight, I now feel a sense of responsibility to address concerns about using students as research fodder, no matter how entertaining and rich the "data." There was a time when Miriam Kaufman's work might have been useful. But as my colleague and children's literature specialist Lissa Paul says, it is just impossible to "go home" to work that is ahistorical and atheoretical. I have to say, however, that I am not a parent, and if I were, I might be reading the reports about teens in the newspapers as truth, "turning off" the Spice Girls, and grasping at anything that might shed some light on the "teen" years!

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***Feminism Meets Queer Theory.*** Elizabeth Weed and Naomi Schor, eds. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1997; xiii + 341 pages; ISBN 0-253-21118-2 ; \$17.95 US (cloth).

Overall, this text is a continuation, or a furtherance, of an existing conversation. One has the sense of having dropped into the party shortly after the third round of cocktails has been served: if you know everyone there, you can grab a glass and join the conversation(s) underway; a newcomer might find herself pressed up against a wall, hoping no one notices her presence as the dizzying panorama unfolds. However, the newcomer should

be bold; the authors in this text are not merely visiting old ground, but opening new questions and possibilities for excavation and exploration. The bold, patient, and discerning newcomer to this on-going conversation will find places to situate herself and to join in the fray.

The party metaphor continues as one reads the articles. Many of the authors refer to one another in their conversation: Judith Butler refers to the work of Bidy Martin; Martin refers to Gayle Rubin's writings; Butler interviews Rubin; Trevor Hope and Rosi Braidotti engage in a three-article conversation with one another based on Hope's critique of an earlier piece of Braidotti's writing; and Elizabeth Grosz and Teresa de Lauretis engage in a similar discussion of Grosz's review/commentary on de Lauretis' (then recently) published *The Practice of Love: Lesbian Sexuality and Perverse Desire*. These connections would be reassuring for the neophyte reader. Additionally, although perhaps less reassuring for readers new to this area, most of the authors regularly refer to the same collection of theorists: Lacan, Foucault, Sedgwick, and Freud show up consistently throughout the text.

One of the most heartening and encouraging aspects of this collection is the way in which the writers themselves point to and call for an interrogation of samenesses and differences. Many of them are uncomfortable with static categories, and call into question issues of boundaries or totalizing categories, which operate in such a way as to close discussions rather than open them for further exploration; the authors variously challenge one another and in some instances themselves. The interview between Judith Butler and Rosi Braidotti emphasizes that, for these women, the point of the discussion is the discussion - neither is particularly swayed into another "camp," nor is either attempting to do such swaying. Again, in Butler's interview with Gayle Rubin, the notion of movement is clear - Rubin herself has shifted "position" over the years, and embraces this shift as positive.

One of the difficulties of this text is its limitation in terms of audience. For those who are excited by discussion, who enjoy a passionate roll around with semantics and semiotics, the text is marvelous - a furthering - an adventure in discourse!

For readers not quite familiar with the various discussions underway, it is a tough slog. This text is most useful within a critical frame of lesbian/gay studies, feminist studies/theory, and/or women's studies.

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***Lesbian Lifestyles, Women's Work and the Politics of Sexuality.*** Gillian A. Dunne. University of Toronto Press, Toronto and Buffalo, 1997; x + 231 pages; ISBN 0-8020-7951-2; \$18.95.

*Lesbian Lifestyles* is a life-history based study that explores the relationship between a woman's sexuality and her work choices and experiences. The author interviewed 60 British women from a variety of class and racial backgrounds. Dunne's analysis of the respondents' narratives concludes that questioning and resistance of heterosexual, feminine gender norms - in terms of sexuality and education - results in the need for financial self reliance. This need leads these women into non-traditional and/or highly skilled fields of employment.

Although the introduction to *Lesbian Lifestyles* displays the author's awareness of the largely uncharted subjectivity of personal memory, the text seems to ground its analysis on some problematic assumptions as to how individuals remember. In particular, the interviews appear to have been conducted through a chronologically organized line of inquiry (early childhood to present). Such an inquiry, ultimately, cannot display any factual revisions or thematic/emotional associations that may have links to both the respondents' past and present experiences.

Dunne does make excellent use of previous studies that explore the relationship between family, and work choices and opportunities amongst heterosexual women in both Britain and North America. In doing so she reveals the need for her own and similar future inquiries into the relationship between gender and sexuality, and

individuals' educational and work choices. This is an accessible and well-organized volume that proceeds thematically and makes sufficient use of respondents' words for readers to get a feel for the tone of the original interviews.

Throughout the text Dunne ably directs readers' attention to the various class perspectives of her respondents and offers compelling analysis of instances where other variables such as educational success or feelings of difference appear to most dramatically inform respondents' views. Unfortunately, attention is not likewise given to the various racial and ethnic perspectives of respondents. Only the remarks of non-white respondents are explicitly marked. This inconsistency is a reading distraction and analytical short-fall.

*Lesbian Lifestyles* is valuable, both for its accomplishments and failings, as methodological background reading for researchers utilizing oral history (or other participatory styles of interviewing) or working in the general area of gender and sexuality. As well, resulting from the relative accessibility of Dunne's text, chapters of the book are ideal excerpts for use in undergraduate courses on "women and work," "gender and sexuality" and related inquiries.

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***Madonna: Bawdy & Soul.*** Karlene Faith. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Ontario, 1997; xv + 217 pages; appendix: Selected Works of Madonna, Frances Wasserlein; ISBN 0-8020-8063-4; \$19.95.

Karlene Faith's highly readable postmodern critique of pop icon, po-mo (and pro-mo) artist, Madonna, displays both the appreciations of fandom and the rigors of feminist cultural studies scholarship. The reader, therefore, is offered a rare, balanced view which takes seriously Madonna, the artist and person, and which also acknowledges both the political limits and possibilities of her work.