

providing a deeper understanding of the physical and spiritual aspects of sexual gratification in their relationships with other women.

BOOK NOTES:

Michel Dorais, *Rent Boys The World of Male Sex Workers*, (translated by Peter Feldstein) Montreal & Kingston, McGill-Queen University Press, 2005, pb, ix +110 pp, ISBN 0-7735-2903-9,

As the title suggests this book is a sociological study of the world of men, who work as street hustlers, strippers and escorts. Through a series of interviews with forty young men working in the sex industry Michel Dorais provides a vivid, in-depth and sensitive portrayal of the experiences of male prostitutes. From their responses Dorais divided male sex workers into four types according to self-esteem, control over their lives, relationship with clients and risk of HIV infection. Part-timers opted for sporadic sex work mainly to supplement their income or to pay off debts. Insiders were young men who grew up in or around the sex trade and viewed it as their primary social circle. Liberationists were young homosexuals who used prostitution as a way of living out fantasies, exploring new experiences and profiting from these discoveries. However most were Outcasts who conformed to popular conceptions of the Rent Boy. They lived in a situation of dire poverty where drug addiction and prostitution went hand-in-hand. Dorais's exposure of the differences among male sex workers provides valuable insights for clinical social workers and students interested in this field of study.

Wayne Martino & Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli, *Being Normal Is the Only Way to Be*, Kensington, University of NSW Press, 2005, pb, 194 pp, ISBN 0-86840-687-2

This book focuses on gender and power relationships in Australian high schools and the effect they have both on learning and school social cultures of masculinity and femininity. The authors surveyed 900 young people in private and public schools around Australia and asked them to express their opinions on a range of issues. These included school bullying, having a girl or boyfriend, looking good, school, teachers, social hierarchies in schools and the problem of staying 'cool' and not getting a 'reputation'. The responses were organised into chapters on boys and school, girls and school, being a boy, being a girl, boys harassing girls in school, and 'bully boys' and 'bitch Barbies'. Each chapter features extensive quotes from the surveys and concludes with professional development exercises designed to encourage teachers to reflect on their interactions with students and the adequacy of school policies. Essentially this is a book for teachers by the students who worked with Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli, and can be used to stimulate lively discussions in teacher education classes. It is also a valuable resource for student welfare workers and school policy makers.

Pamela Abbott, Claire Wallace & Melissa Tyler, *An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives*, London & New York, Routledge, 2005, (3rd edition) pb, xvii + 425 pp, ISBN 0-415-31259-0

Designed to be used as an introduction to sociology this book includes useful explanations of key sociological concepts, an exploration of ongoing debates in sociology and covers a range of theoretical approaches to sociological research. However, it differs from more conventional introductory texts through its critique of male centric social theories, which reinforce the view that men are naturally socially superior to women. The authors argue that feminist perspectives

on the position of women in society can be used to rethink this assumption. Through an examination of social institutions the authors demonstrate how these institutions systematically disadvantage women. First published in 1990 this edition contains much of the material used in earlier editions as it is still relevant. Empirical evidence has been brought up to date and feminist perspectives on new sociological debates and issues are also addressed.

Tanya Dalziell, *Settler Romances and the Australian Girl*, Perth, University of Western Australia Press, 2004, pb, 178 pp, ISBN 192069420 – X

The 'Australian Girl' featured in popular texts, newspapers and journals circulating in late 19th and early 20th century Australia. Dalziell uses the trope of the Australian Girl to highlight anxiety about conceptions of whiteness and femininity in settler society through readings of turn-of-the-century adventure fictions and ethnographies. Texts discussed include Catherine Martin's *An Australian Girl*, Rosa Campbell Praed's *Fugitive Ann*, J.D. Hennessey's *An Australian Bush Track* and the ethnographies of Katie Langlor Parker. These texts feature interactions between the Australian Girl and the indigenous 'other', and Dalziell draws on them to question popular notions of the sympathetic white woman and her right to speak for the 'other'. Also discussed are Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career*, Iota's *A Comedy in Spasms* and Tasma's *The Penance of Portia James*, which are used to explore turn-of-the-century discourses of gender and the empowerment of white middle-class women. The book will be of interest not only to feminists working on colonial and postcolonial studies and students of Australian literature, but also to scholars working on representations of the 'New Woman' or 'Modern Girl', Victorian literature and popular culture.

Valarie Bryson, *Feminist Political Theory An Introduction*, Basingstoke and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003 (2nd edition) pb, 281 pp, ISBN 0-333-94568-9

This book is a comprehensive and accessible introduction to the history of feminist political theory, and should be essential reading for students interested in feminist politics, gender studies and women's history. Bryson uses the term 'feminist' to refer to 'any theory or theorist that sees the relationship between the sexes as one of inequality, subordination or oppression, [and] sees this as a problem of political power rather than a fact of nature...'. She claims that feminist political theory is engaged theory, which seeks to understand society in order to challenge and change it. In the first edition of her book Bryson provided a wide-ranging history of western feminist thought and a lucid analysis of contemporary debates. In this second edition she incorporates recent developments in feminist thinking, pays considerable attention to postmodernist theories and their impact on feminism, and gives more space to the insights of black feminists. By expanding her gaze beyond the preoccupations of western feminists Bryson demonstrates the continuing relevance of the feminist cause, despite claims that recent developments have rendered it obsolete.