

terms "homosexual" or "gay." This is the same phenomenon as women's obscurity under the term mankind or humanity. Women lose out, in civil rights and in much of Queer theory, both of which are androcentric and eurocentric.

Miller concludes with a call for a need to address the social construction of *all* sexualities towards a more pluralistic *versus* dualistic conceptualization. The infusion of a lesbian feminist perspective is presented as key in enhancing the sophistication and precision of a *new* civil rights discourse... one that shifts, responds, and truly accords a "Freedom to Differ" to all.

CITIZENSHIP AND THE ETHICS OF CARE: FEMINIST CONSIDERATIONS ON JUSTICE, MORALITY AND POLITICS

Selma Sevenhuijsen. Trans. from Dutch by Liz Savage. London and New York: Routledge, 1998.

BY MELINA BUCKLEY

Care and women's emancipation have often been opposed, resulting in the belief that in order to participate fully in political and moral life women need to abandon their caring selves. Selma Sevenhuijsen challenges this opposition, and in so doing, makes a significant contribution to the debates surrounding the whole nature of care and democratic citizenship.

This discussion of feminist morality and concepts of justice is situated in an understanding of care as a social practice. Sevenhuijsen argues for the need to develop a broad and diverse perspective on care as a form of human agency. The starting point should be the recognition of conflicting and contested notions of care—a mixture of caring about and caring for, being cared for and re-

specting the care of others, but centred on key values of attentiveness and responsiveness.

The context of care as a social practice is highlighted from the start with opening scenes recounting media depictions of caregivers' lives: the daily routine, joys and sorrows, the heavy burdens, stress and loneliness, and an account of caring gone awry where a nurse has killed several of her patients. These scenes are evocative of the fact that women carry out this work with great responsibility but little power.

Sevenhuijsen's project is to contribute to the building of a contextual and situated form of feminist ethics that can accommodate both care and justice. The ethics of care should be placed in a context of citizenship so that it acquires significant political meaning without being slotted into identity politics or interest-promotion. In her view, when the ethics of care are located within such a notion of citizenship, discursive space is created for carers to bring their expertise and moral considerations into public debates without their being associated with a fixed caring identity or with associated claims to moral truth or moral goodness.

The author demonstrates how feminism has become associated with liberal socialism and the political idioms of modern citizenship: the language of freedom and equality, redistribution, autonomy and individualism. She explores the apparent dichotomy between care and justice and makes a strong argument for the need to reflect on, and rethink, this normative framework.

For example, she shows how the ideal of abstract autonomy in fact overlooks what it is that makes care an element of the human condition—that is, the recognition that all people are vulnerable, dependent and finite, and that we all have to find ways of dealing with this in our daily existence and in the values which guide our individual and collective behaviour.

Sevenhuijsen reviews recent writings on possible relationship between ethics of care and justice, and concludes that the two should be integrated in a fundamental way.

Of particular interest to those concerned with legal issues is Sevenhuijsen's provocative argument concerning the problematic concepts of equality. She explores the continuing power of the notion of equality as sameness and the resultant negative evaluation of difference. It is neither an easy nor an inviting proposition for feminism to relinquish the norm of equality, but she concludes that this is not inevitable. Our problems are principally ones of application. As she points out, if there were no differences it would be pointless to take equality as an ideal.

We need not dispense with deliberation on issues of equality, justice, and rights—in fact the opposition of care and justice is precisely one of those fruitless polarizations which need a great deal of rethinking. Feminism would benefit from concepts of justice which are not exclusively framed in distributive terms and which do not automatically lead to taking sameness as the norm where differences would make a better starting point for political argumentation. This model of distributive justice should be replaced with one of social justice for oppressed groups.

To move away from the focus on distributive justice and rational choice, we need to allow more discursive space for values associated with trust, respect for differences, and the encouragement of respect. One way to accomplish this is to open up space for reflection and moral deliberation on these values—to listen to and interpret the moral deliberations about care expressed by the providers and receivers of care. In this way Sevenhuijsen subscribes to Jane Tronto's view that care of all is the premise of justice. Care demands that we continually assess the position we occupy as we begin to make judgments.

Sevenhuijsen applies this inte-

grated framework on care and justice to two issues in Netherlands law and politics: child custody and health-care policies. These case studies elucidate her approach and provide an interesting comparison to Canadian experience.

Sevenhuijsen's book provides a stimulating account of the potential of integrating care into conceptions of democratic citizenship and social justice. Fundamentally she argues that a feminist ethic of care offers a radical alternative to the liberal justice idiom—a relational image of human nature, not an atomistic, individualized one. Her book makes an important contribution to legal and healthcare issues and more generally to what it means to live, work and participate in a democratic society.

A DANCE WITH DEATH: CANADIAN WOMEN ON THE GALLOWES 1754-1954

Frank W. Anderson. Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1996.

BY CHRIS MCCORMICK

Over 100 women have received the death sentence in Canada during its short history, for crimes ranging from theft to murder. *A Dance with Death* is a fascinating account of some of those women. Anderson limits the book to looking at those cases where a defendant was convicted of murder, and where a new trial was not ordered on appeal. In the 49 cases dealt with in this book, the sentences were commuted in 31 instances, and in 18 cases the women died on the gallows.

At the time of writing this book, the author must have been 80 years of age. He received his MSW in 1957, and was appointed to the National Parole Board in 1974.

However, perhaps what most distinguishes his career is that, with his wife Edna, he began Frontier Books in 1960, chronicling western history and winning many awards in the process. It is in small regional presses that the history of Canada is being preserved.

This book is very much a chronicle, divided up into various categories of murder: poisoners, murder for profit, love and profit, and infanticide, for example. It is an easy read, belying with its style its macabre topic. However it is a chronicle written from a point of view that leaves me wanting more. What I was hoping for in reading this book was some understanding of why women commit murder. Most women, when they kill, kill members of their families, but they constitute a small percentage of all murderers. In 1996, for example, of almost 500 cases of homicide that were cleared by the police, 90 per cent were committed by men. If so few murders are committed by women, what drives them to kill their children and their husbands?

In many of cases there are "good" reasons for the lethal crimes that women commit. For example, it is now recognized that sometimes women kill in self defence, even when they are not facing an imminent threat, in reaction to men who abuse them in the first place. Canada is virtually unique in recognizing the so-called "battered woman's defence." Similarly, since 1948, Canada has separated the killing of children under one year of age into the special category of infanticide, recognizing that there might be medical reasons for this crime which require a different treatment from the criminal justice system.

What is novel about this book is the focus on women killers. However, including more of their voices would have fleshed out the accounts. For example, there is the case of Sophie Bosclair, the first woman known to have used poison in committing a homicide. In 1866 she was convicted

of murdering her husband and lover's wife, but we don't know what her words of defence were. Her sentence was commuted to life, her child was taken from her, and after she served her full 20 years she was released with "unsound mind" and died in poverty. We never find out if her crime was motivated by unusual lust or abuse, or if it was more mundane, based in a more common unhappiness or despair.

In the case of Marie McCabe, orphaned at the age of six in 1871, there was little doubt about the motive. She drowned her child in a cistern in 1883 because her employer found it difficult that she was a single mother. She knew that her troubles would only continue as long as she had her child. And while she admitted that she had "done a bad deed," her case was treated with leniency, and after serving over five years she was released into charity. More of the discourse with which her case was dealt would strengthen the account, and help us understand the morality of the time.

In conclusion, while overall we don't get access to the offenders' viewpoint this book is rich with details of cases which would otherwise fade into obscurity. While it would benefit more from the accounts of the women themselves, it includes a great deal that is missing in criminology textbooks.

MURIEL DUCKWORTH: A VERY ACTIVE PACIFIST

Marion Douglas Kerans. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1996.

BY JANET FREEMAN

Gloria Steinem once wrote about the lack of positive public role models for western women to look to as they consider their senior years. Canadian women need look no further than *Muriel Duckworth: A Very Active*