

mark in the title of the book not only questions the meaning of these terms but stresses the ambiguity in the women's agendas.

One of the real strengths of the work is that in tracing white women's interventions we grasp a sense of the urgency of the broader humanitarian concern, as feminists joined other humanitarians in an attempt to right the wrongs of the past. Throughout the work Paisley draws interesting parallels between the discourse of past wrongs and national amendment then and now. In chapter 6 we see the culmination of this campaign in the Moseley Royal Commission in Western Australia into the condition of Aboriginal lives in that state, which had been the locus of feminist agitations. As she shows it was called largely in response to feminist pressure.

The chapter was a wonderful description of the events surrounding the inquiry. Newspaper coverage in London and Australia was crucial to the success of the campaign at the time. Paisley manages to recreate a sense of immediacy, transporting the reader to the political machinations of the day. She reminds us of the way such investigations are often cynical exercises by Governments. Indeed, it was hoped that the inquiry would shut the humanitarian fraternity up for good. In a sense, this chapter was also the climax of the book. Paisley shows how what followed was the collapse of both the feminist campaign and the broader humanitarian one as governments determinedly pursued their vision of assimilation.

Her book is therefore highly relevant to contemporary debates, and at the same time it fills an important niche in feminist historiography.

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Prostitution: Prevention and Reform in England

Paula Bartley; Routledge, London and New York, 2000; ISBN 0-415-21456-4 (hbk); ISBN 0-415-21457-2 (pbk)

This book gives a thorough, comprehensive picture of reform and prevention institutions that were founded in England between 1860 and 1914, aiming at eradicating prostitution from society. Bartley reveals not only how daily life was run within these institutions, but also the motives behind reformers' actions and their attitudes towards prostitution. She also evaluates the limited success of each of these reforms – success that has been heretofore largely mystified.

The first part of this work focuses on the various types of reform organizations. It makes use of a new interpretative model and aims to demonstrate that categories of gender, class and religion are crucial in the understanding of the process of

moral reform. Bartley claims that the various types of reform institutions shared much in common: reform was, ultimately, about middle-class women saving the working-class by reshaping them into honest, morally upright, hard-working domestic servants. Moreover, she shows that lifestyles offered by such institutions were markedly similar.

The second part focuses on the relationship between gender and class within the development of Ladies' Associations. Bartley illustrates how the question of class undermined the aim of female solidarity, as middle-class women sought to control the lives of the working class. It is argued that Ladies' Associations' motivations and practices were complex, since on the one hand they helped numerous young girls and single mothers but on the other hand they categorized single mothers as either deserving or undeserving, a division which was consistent with the contemporary class ideology. The Ladies' Associations enjoyed a limited success: not only did the working class have little desire to take on the values of the middle-class, but prostitution also continued.

During the last part of the nineteenth century, prostitution became heavily associated with 'feeble-mindedness'. The third part of Bartley's book focuses on the relation between prostitution and the feeble-minded within the context of the 'psychiatric revolution' of the nineteenth century. Bartley also argues that although homes for the feeble-minded were founded due to compassionate gestures of some philanthropists, these gestures were undermined by class ideology, cost-conscious philosophy and material concerns; those involved with the 'feeble-minded' women believed that the latter meant a potential danger to the social fabric and to the British nation.

Part IV covers a fourth solution to restricting prostitution, which was advocated by social purity groups in the 1880s. Bartley outlines the miscellaneous purity groups and demonstrates that, although their official intents were protective, social purists actually sanctioned a policy of repression. These groups undeniably challenged the moral double standard by shifting some of the blame for prostitution from women to men. They also raised awareness of child sexual abuse. However, they advocated a repressive moral orthodoxy: children as well as adults were punished, children's testimony was not believed, and men were rarely persecuted for soliciting. Thus, it becomes evident, from Bartley's analysis, that there existed a complex mixture of radicalism and moral conservatism within these social purity groups. More importantly, according to Bartley, child abuse and prostitution continued, and although these groups attempted to change the law and have it enforced, the police were not always on their side.

Bartley accurately observes that 'the moral values and motivations of those involved in the debates around and approaches to prostitution continue to be complex and contradictory' (p.197). The dichotomy between good and bad women, so pronounced in the nineteenth century, as this book shows, still exists today. This

distinction, according to Bartley, 'makes the gap between the prostitute and other women widen further, and confirms the existence of an outcast group and an underclass' (p.199). Thus, as Bartley points out, 'more vestiges of the past survive than have been lost' (p.201).

Using an interpretative model different from previous historians, Bartley successfully demonstrates that concepts of gender, class and religion aid our understanding of moral reform in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – as well as the debate about prostitution in our days. Her clear, straightforward study is a great contribution to the history of prostitution, a subject so often neglected.

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