

Blake, Jason

**[Gadpaille, Michelle. "As she should be": codes of conduct in early Canadian womens writing]**

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author does not take into account the same desire of Quebec filmmakers to affirm distinctiveness and their specific sensitivity to questions relating to identity as was observed in the literary analysis of Francophone literature of this book. Thus, it cannot be said that Pospíšil fully succeeds in avoiding the pitfalls of the selective and imbalanced approach toward Quebec cinema. Pospíšil's opinion that "Canadian feature film production (...) survives on the margins, mostly neglected by the Canadian general public (...)" (p. 209), neglects the box-office numbers of the successful Quebec home-grown film industry, whose share is about 10 times the share held by domestic English-language features across Canada (Yakabuski, 2009). Despite this criticism, the strength of Pospíšil's essay is the wealth of information it provides about an impressive variety of themes, genres and authorial approaches in Canadian cinematography and the importance of state-supported

institutions and their role in "cultivating and educating the public" (p. 243) in order to affirm Canada's own national identity.

In conclusion, all chapters are well written and represent a lucid exploration of the theme of identity. Chapters I, II and VI might also be useful for non-literary oriented readers and can be highly recommended also to students of the history and politics of Canada. The authors' search for identity through a reading of Canadian history and philosophy and its reinterpretations in a wide range of literary texts and film is a compelling cross-disciplinary attempt to build a bridge between the traditional approaches to capturing the newly emerging postmodern multi-faced reality of Canada. Some methodologies leave to future scholars important opportunities to follow the path undertaken and to reinterpret other angles and features of Canadian identity in literature and film.

**Michelle Gadpaille**

### **"As She Should Be" – Codes of Conduct in Early Canadian Women's Writing**

Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter. 129 pages. ISBN 9783825355562

**Jason Blake**

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Michelle Gadpaille's *"As She Should Be" – Codes of Conduct in Early Canadian Women's Writing* is a highly commendable and readable academic study. A stellar piece of research in its own right, it fills a research gap in both Canadian literary history and "conduct book literature" of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This monograph is a truly new and fresh contribution to literary studies – a welcome addition to Canadian social and literary studies.

Despite being relatively short, *"As She Should Be"* is not wanting in detail or argument; it is stylistically impressive, flows well and is thus accessible to all readers. Gadpaille avoids jargon in her hunt for literary and social meaning. Another positive is that the book is not hampered by any ideological bias, and neither is it limited in scope by the methodology chosen. Moreover, Gadpaille manages to address the broader social context of

both Europe and the United States as well as the conventions of this very didactic literary genre. Conduct books, after all, were meant to teach young ladies how to behave.

The chapters move the argument forward in a convincing and easy-to-follow manner. They are: 1) "Conduct Books and the Discourse of the Lady," 2) "Improper Reading, Proper Conduct," 3) "Conduct in Action: Grace Morley," 4) *The Pattern Heroines: Antoinette de Mirecourt and The Cromaboo Mail Carrier*, 5) "Subversive Conduct: Alice Sydenham," 6) "Challenging Conduct: New Women and Newer Girls," and 7) "Conclusion: Excluding Conduct from the Canon". Gadpaille's choice of both primary and secondary literature is apt. She looks at lesser-known authors such as Mary Herbert and Rosanna Leprohon, while also including more canonical authors such as Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill.

In her Introduction Gadpaille provides a lucid rationale for the books studied as she examines the social changes that influenced literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For example, she writes that there was a move to a "moral emphasis" in books aimed particularly at young women, and a "privileging [of] the general over the specific, the didactic over the romantic and the collective ethos over individual experience" (7). In her Conclusion she explains why these female authors were excluded from the Canadian literary canon – even when the Canadian canon was being constantly reshaped with an eye to national identity, and even when other female authors *were* (increasingly) included in literary anthologies. At the same time, it becomes clear that this exclusion was not due to a lack of literary quality (despite the clearly "popular" nature of the works studied). Throughout her book Gadpaille shows that, unlike the Dan Browns and the E.L. Jameses of today, these are fun works that also invite going beyond the surface.

Gadpaille re-examines Canada's precarious position within the literary and social traditions of the United States and Great Britain (especially England). She convincingly shows that conduct books reflected a range of social mores that were not mere imports from "Mother England" and not mere adoptions of United States conventions. This new view of a burgeoning Canadian identity is best seen in Chapters 4 and 6 ("The Pattern Heroines" and "Challenging Conduct: New Women and Newer Girls"). An example can be found in Chapter 4, as Mary Leslie (actually a pseudonym) strives to "balance the social and economic realities of rural Ontario life with the requirements of romantic plot, and to harmonize traditional behavioural maxims with both strict Methodist temperance teachings and a new, wider social and economic role for women" (66).

*"As She Should Be" – Codes of Conduct in Early Canadian Women's Writing* shows the changing genre conventions of the conduct book over the 19<sup>th</sup> century. More interestingly, it highlights instances of irony and double-readings – hardly characteristics one might expect of didactic literature aimed at young ladies of the time! Especially in Chapter 5 ("Subversive Conduct: 'Alice Sydenham's First Ball'"), Gadpaille provides close readings of textual passages that clearly send different messages to different types of readers. This is particularly fascinating in light of the fact that early conduct books considered fiction in general to be *dangerous* to young ladies (shades of, if not grey, then at least *Don Quixote*). When outlining and interpreting a scene in which a child hides in the wings in order to listen in on a conversation, Gadpaille notes that the speaker may in fact be talking to a double audience: "Miss Templeton may be perfectly aware that Alice is standing close by and may be directing her conversational



barbs through the cloth to a listener who cannot protest because of her own compromised position [i.e. because she cannot reveal her eavesdropping]. Mimicking a child's playfulness, Miss Templeton forces gaiety in her discourse [...]” (77). There is more in these books than meets the eye.

Both professorial and student scholars of Canadian social and literary history will benefit immensely from “*As She Should Be*” – *Codes*

*of Conduct in Early Canadian Women's Writing*. Feminist and post-colonial scholars will also find this work of great value. The work is free of jargon and accessible to all readers, even those without a firm grounding in Canadian literary history. This short book includes an impressive bibliography, and Gadpaille seems to have left no stone unturned in her research. To end with another laudatory cliché: sometimes less really is more.

**Diana Yankova (ed.)**

***Canada: A View from Without / Canada: Un Regard D'ailleurs***

Sofia: New Bulgarian University Press. 182 pages. ISBN 978-954-535-469-4

**Asya Sotirova**

New Bulgarian University, Sofia, Bulgaria

At last, here it is! A product of hard work and independent studies, *Canada: A View from Without* is the latest contribution to the field of Canadian Studies in Bulgaria. Seen and explored from the viewpoint of “outsiders” who are interested in the vast and diverse culture that makes up Canada, the book carefully leads the reader through the highly varied aspects of Canadian culture. The ever-growing interest in Canadian Studies in Bulgaria seems unstoppable. This volume is another demonstration of that inquisitiveness of Bulgarian professors, lecturers and explorers of the unknown.

Edited by Diana Yankova, professor of Canadian and American Studies at the New Bulgarian University and Vice-President of the Central European Association for Canadian Studies, the book impresses with the variety of topics organized in its various chapters, each written by a different author. The reader

is introduced to subjects such as history, language, religion, new acts and regulations in the political system of the country and, last but certainly not least, literature and its influences and inspirations.

Our attention is piqued quickly at the beginning of the book, in the preface written by the editor. The Introduction ends with one of the subjects taken into consideration and up to be voted in the House of Commons in Canada – “A Mari ad Mare ad Mare” / “From Sea to Sea to Sea”. What is this? A resemblance to the original national motto on the Coat of Arms of Canada that reads “A Mari usque ad Mare” / “From Sea to Sea”? No! The editor uses the statement to draw attention and awareness to changes and current issues in Canada. It is not surprising that northern Canadians feel somewhat excluded from the national motto, and thus more or less underestimated. The motto change would not only