

Karen L. Anderson — *Chain Her By One Foot: The Subjugation of Native Women in Seventeenth-Century New France*. London: Routledge, 1991. Pp. 247.

Karen Anderson's *Chain Her by One Foot: The Subjugation of Native Women in Seventeenth-Century New France* is a significant contribution to the growing body of feminist scholarship examining changing gender relations in arenas of cultural contact. Anderson considers the effects of European colonization in the New World by reviewing the intervention of Jesuits in Huron and Montagnais societies in the early seventeenth century, particularly with regard to the imposition and construction of new institutional structures regulating gender relations. Her focus is on what she maintains is a specific instance of change in the status of women, an unprecedented subjugation of women in Huron and Montagnais societies brought about by the internalization of a "new regime" of gender constructs. With this focus, she notes that her study is part of a larger project concerned with the "description, explanation and analysis of how women came to be dominated by men" (p. 5).

Her evidence comes from a comparison of material from several volumes of *Jesuit Relations*. Building on earlier feminist scholarship on gender relations in pre-capitalist societies and post-structural and contemporary Marxist theories on production and social relations, Anderson finds in her reading of the *Jesuit Relations* decisive indicators of transformation of gender relations among the Huron and Montagnais:

In a period of just over thirty years [leading up to the mid-1640s], what had been previously true about men and women in both Huron and Montagnais societies, the qualities that characterized their interactions, the way in which they were defined as individuals as well as in relation to each other, had been profoundly altered. (p. 12)

These are strong assertions, reiterated repeatedly throughout the book, and to convince her readers she systematically works through the background and impact of Jesuit-Huron and Jesuit-Montagnais interactions in ideological, social, economic, and other areas. The first half of the book is concerned with the workings of the Jesuit order. Anderson examines the soteriological views of the Jesuits and finds their work in the New World was envisaged as a contest with evil. For them, their success indicated victory over Satan. According to Anderson, the attitudes of the Jesuits towards women reflected Christian doctrine of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which viewed women not only as inferior to men, but also as potential allies of Satan. The independence of women and the sexual licence the Jesuits found in Huron and Montagnais societies showed fertile ground for Satan's work, to be counteracted by the introduction of Christian morality, accomplished through rigorous regulation of women's sexuality, conjugal relations, and even the emotional lives of native women and men. Included is a review of the Jesuit order's relationship with the developing French state and its expansion of state apparatus both in France and in the New World to control and manage its citizens.

The second half of the book explores Huron and Montagnais societies and their response to European intervention. In taking note of sexual division of labour and

access to production, the different domains of authority of women and men, and the central role of kinship and gender in all aspects of social being, Anderson describes Huron and Montagnais societies at the time of contact as relatively egalitarian. Gender relations were complementary, but contact with Europeans initiated a process culminating in the subjugation of women. Anderson notes the effect of the fur trade and the introduction of European trade goods, but unlike Eleanor B. Leacock, who argued that the subordination of women followed from the undermining of their economic base, Anderson sees other causes. Outlining how famine, inter-tribal warfare, and the ravages of European diseases contributed to collapse of the traditional social structure and displacement of Native religion and the coping mechanisms it offered, Anderson shows the conditions that allowed ideological assaults on women to succeed. With the adoption of European moral order, women were reconceptualized along Christian lines; as potential embodiments of evil, they became the objects of fear and aggression. Social aggression, previously channelled outward in warfare and in ritualized torture of captives or safely expressed internally through practices such as sorcery and dream-guessing, was redirected towards women. Coupled with the effects of the Jesuit project of reorganizing social patterns, this resulted in the unprecedented control and subjugation of women.

Anderson's argument is only partly convincing. She covers much ground in this work and marshals an impressive amount of theory. Her discussion of the material, ideological, and social crises in Native society that provided the conditions for individual and collective reformulations of subjectivity and social relations warrants careful consideration. At the same time, many of her claims seem somewhat extravagant. She tends to turn what other scholars might draw as tentative conclusions into absolute claims. Inspired by Leacock's work, she maintains that pre-contact gender relations were egalitarian, but that it took only a short period to change these social patterns entirely. In effect, she is proposing that Huron and Montagnais societies today bear little relation to or continuity with their pre-contact past. In her statement of radical change she overlooks both the possibilities of gender violence and restrictions on women's behaviour in pre-contact times, and the question of whether the change was so complete and so successful as she implies. Likewise, she maintains that Native women staunchly resisted Christianity, but ignores some of the very evidence she cites that suggests certain women for various reasons embraced Christianity, sometimes in defiance of their male relatives. While quite critical of the Jesuits, she is uncritical of her main source, the *Jesuit Relations*. She accepts what is written on gender relations at face value, without considering the subjectivity of the Jesuit recorders or how their awareness of their readers, who were often their sponsors, might have affected their reporting, or even whether their comments can be generalized to apply to all Huron and Montagnais. It seems to me that one must be very cautious when using the *Relations* to determine what Huron and Montagnais women and men actually did or thought. Her conclusions about transference of social aggression to women are based mainly on conjecture. Examples that Anderson provides to support her argument can be read in several other ways. Evidence of both pre-Christian patterns and of change come through in the *Relations*, but careful and tentative readings are required to sift through the

material; Anderson, however, is quick to draw only one conclusion. As Nancy Shoemaker has noted elsewhere (*American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 4) there are also problems with the dating of evidence Anderson uses to document change.

Nonetheless, I believe Anderson's work is an important contribution to gender studies and to studies of the early-contact period. It provides a challenging reading of early Jesuit-Native relations.

K. I. Koppedrayer
Wilfrid Laurier University

Louise Gagnon — *L'apparition des modes enfantines au Québec*, Québec, Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, coll. « Edmond-de-Nevers », n° 11, 1992, 230 p.

In a climate of increasing emphasis on gender in historical analyses, an insightful study on the construction of gender in children's clothing gains special ascendancy. Louise Gagnon successfully explores the symbolic meaning of clothes and the place childhood occupied in the nineteenth century. Awarded the Edmond-de-Nevers prize by the Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, this well-researched and innovative study provides an important contribution to the growing scholarship on clothing in Canada.

L'apparition des modes enfantines au Québec begins with a discussion of childhood and children's costume drawn from Philippe Aires and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Gagnon affirms that a case study of clothing reveals the bourgeoisie conception of childhood, since parents were responsible for selecting children's attire. The second part of the book examines how children's clothes symbolized innocence and investigates the similarities between women's and children's clothing styles. The final section looks at the distinctiveness of bourgeoisie boys' clothing in a gender- and class-based comparison.

Throughout the book, Gagnon brings the rigour of ethnographic inquiry to her analysis of urban bourgeoisie children's clothing in nineteenth-century Quebec. Richly illustrated with photographs from the William Notman collection and paintings by Théophile Hamel, Cornelius Krieghoff, and Antoine Plamondon, the book supplements these sources with artifacts, postmortem inventories, store ledgers, and prescriptive and travel literature.

Following Gagnon, nineteenth-century styles reflected an individual's economic role in society. Drawing on evidence from costume collections and photographs, Gagnon analyzes how clothing for girls and boys differed according to their economic contribution. Since women and children were economically inactive, their clothing was similar and reinforced their inferior role in the family economy. A transition occurred for boys when they began to contribute to the economy and hence donned appropriate elements of traditional masculine attire (p. 121). During this stage, boys' dress displayed the dual influences of gender as they moved from the female world to the masculine: "son costume, à la fois différent de celui des