

## Culture



# Stanley R. BARRETT, *Paradise. Class, Commuters, and Ethnicity in Rural Ontario*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994, 315 pages

Augie Fleras

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grams for French minorities) shuts down. Fieldwork shows that such an informal francophone world can even survive within mixed Anglo-French families. Stebbins thus concludes that the future of French in anglophone Canadian cities is less endangered than is usually thought.

The book is interesting and clearly written. Except for a very few sections (for example the digression on the various types of leisure activities (pp. 54-58), which is too long and not really useful), I really enjoyed reading it. The description of the four goals of the Canadian *francophonie* seems sound enough, although a discussion of the underlying social foundations of these goals (what social and cultural phenomena motivate them?), one drawing on ethnicity and identity theories, would have been appreciated.

Stebbins breaks new ground in the study of Canadian francophones. Current research appears to confirm his findings. For instance, an ongoing M.A. study (by Stéphane Cloutier, Université Laval) of the francophone community in Iqaluit (formerly Frobisher Bay), the "metropolis" (with 3,500 inhabitants!) of the Canadian Eastern Arctic, shows that leisure activities play a crucial part in maintaining this tiny *francophonie* well alive. Another M.A. thesis (submitted to Université Laval by Michel Bouchard in 1993) outlines the demise of the rural francophone communities in the Peace River area (northern Alberta), and their replacement, in a new semi-urbanized setting, by various types of individual French or bilingual identities. Stebbins' book thus exemplifies a new type of exciting studies on modern Canadian francophones.

Stanley R. BARRETT, *Paradise. Class, Commuters, and Ethnicity in Rural Ontario*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994, 315 pages.

By Augie Fleras

*Department of Sociology, University of Waterloo*

Ethnographies are best when they "grapple" with commonly held misconceptions about the nature of social life. This study by Stanley Barrett of a rural Ontario community near Toronto falls into that envied category, and confirms again that riveting styles of field research – as exotic and bizarre as anywhere in the world – can be conducted in our own backyards.

In general, the ethnography addresses the nature and meaning of "community" in a changing and diverse world. More specifically, the research focuses on the dynamics of social change when filtered through the variables of stratification, migration, and ethnicity, and their collective impact on a small community that Barrett calls "Paradise." The magnitude of these transformations is revealed through a "controlled" comparison of Paradise during the 1950s decade with that of the 1980s. Particular emphasis is directed at how power shifted from a handful of established families to that of an outside bureaucracy, with a new breed of merchants to complicate matters; how the flow of migration was reversed as people from the city moved to Paradise (and back again) for various reasons; and how the Anglo-dominated elite – however reluctantly – had to move over and make space for racial and ethnic minorities. Three themes anchor this "before-and-after" ethnography. The first, entitled "Paradise Lost" delves into the demise of Paradise from the perspectives of the "natives." Conceptual issues pertaining to stratification and social class are introduced, then applied to prevailing patterns of inequality in Paradise. The second part called "Paradise Found" explores the often ambiguous experiences encountered by "newcomers." Efforts by commuters to balance the demands of "community" with pull of the "city" are analyzed and discussed. The third and last part, "Perfect Strangers," revolves about the ethnicization of Paradise. Minority viewpoints are contrasted with majority perceptions, in the process exposing prejudicial discrepancies and barely concealed dislikes.

Barrett takes considerable delight in debunking several myths about rural living. Romantic notions of a quaint folk, both honest and generous, do not hold up to scrutiny. Instead of a bucolic and tranquil community, Paradise then and now is pervaded by a rigid stratification, with undercurrents of hostility that pit elites against the poor, natives against newcomers, British against non-British, women against men, and young against old. Commuters are shown to have chosen Paradise not because of an anticipated improvement in the quality of life, but to enhance domestic purchasing power or to escape big city problems. Indifference towards outsiders is not what many would expect in rural community; curiously enough, newcomers tend to outpoint the natives in demonstrating dislike of certain racial and ethnic minorities. Even the distinction between rural and

urban has unravelled to some extent because of migration and commuters, with many lamenting the collapse of "community" into something resembling a pastiche of competing interest groups. This "grounding" of rural life with a dollop of "harsh" reality not only makes for fascinating reading, it also serves to remind readers that similar patterns may lurk beyond the sometimes idyllic façade of traditional communities associated with anthropologists.

As a lapsed anthropologist (I received all my degrees in Anthropology and Maori Studies, but my current devotion is sociological), I was both reassured yet surprised by Barrett's ethnography: Reassured, because of the conventionality of his enterprise; surprised, because of his reliance on an anthropologist-centred narrative, with its reluctance (which Barrett duly acknowledges) to move over and make space for the voices of others. In other words, those who hope to find something different in terms of ethnographic discourse may be disappointed. For those looking to find a well crafted ethnography of a community in transition, this book should rank near the top of any list. That alone suggests this theoretically-informed ethnographic work will further bolster the fortunes of the *Anthropological Horizons* series under the auspices of the University of Toronto. Whether it is destined to become a Canadian classic remains to be seen.

June E. HAHNER, *Emancipating the Female Sex: The Struggle for Women's Rights in Brazil, 1850-1940*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990, 301 pages, paper.

By Margo L. Matwychuk

University of Victoria

Now available in a paperback edition, historian June Hahner's *Emancipating the Female Sex: The Struggle for Women's Rights in Brazil, 1850-1940* is likely to become a much used text in courses on Latin American women, on women's history, and on feminist movements internationally. For those adventurous enough to venture outside disciplinary, geographical, and topical boundaries, however, the book promises to challenge other (and at times, its own) simplistic and ahistorical formulations and to expand social science perspectives on a variety of topics. These include: family forms and

ideologies; women's roles and experiences; gender stereotypes; the impacts of modernization and development on women, on class composition and relations, and on cultural behaviors, values, and diversity. Based primarily on archival research in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, the book might be better subtitled "the struggle for elite and middle class women's rights in southern Brazil," although Hahner does, at times, raise significant issues relating to working class women in Brazil.

Hahner sets out to explore the history and development of feminism or organized women's rights movements in Brazil; according to the author, these are movements composed of opponents of gender inequality and those seeking to end this inequality. With this aim, Hahner begins with a discussion of the class and racial dimensions of women and society in the mid-nineteenth century. From there, she turns to a discussion of the changing social, economic, and political context of the late nineteenth-century in which female pioneers for women's rights began to develop their own press and address a variety of issues including education, abolition, employment, and suffrage. Following a discussion of the different roles and experiences of upper and middle class women as compared to lower class women, Hahner explores the suffrage movement, a particularly middle and upper class woman's concern, at the beginning of the twentieth century. She concludes her book with an examination of the continuities and contrasts of women's movements in Brazil from the 1970s on. The appendices provide several rich examples of women's writing from the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Hahner's discussion in Chapter Three of "contrasting women's worlds in the early twentieth century" is perhaps the most anthropologically relevant and exciting chapter in the book. Here Hahner contrasts the diverging economic and gender roles, ideologies, and concerns of primarily urban, upper and middle class women with those of lower class women. In relation to recent work on women and development (particularly studies of the impact of industrialization and modernization on women), the growth of the informal sector, and on contemporary changes in gender and familial roles and ideologies, several points raised in this chapter bear reiterating. One simple but often neglected point is that working class women have usually worked and that gender stereotypes and ideologies – such as *marianismo* in Latin