

[Review] Patrizia Gentile, Gary Kinsman, and L. Pauline Rankin (eds) *We still demand!: Redefining resistance in sex and gender struggles*

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Patrizia Gentile, Gary Kinsman, and L. Pauline Rankin (eds), *We Still Demand!: Redefining Resistance In Sex and Gender Struggles* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2016), 324 pp. Cased. \$95. ISBN 978-0-7748-3334-9. Paper. \$32.95. ISBN 978-0-7748-3335-6.

This book is a wonderful collection of 13 pieces which draw inspiration from the feminist and queer activist ‘We Demand’ protests in Canada in the 1970s which critiqued the very limited nature of the decriminalisation of abortion and homosexuality under the 1969 ‘Omnibus Bill’. One of its objectives is to ‘be’ activist through activist scholarship (p.8) in order to resist the ‘... collective forgetting of the radical politics that forged communities’ (p.8). The concept of history scholarship as activism is engaging and given a very interesting and full discussion in the comprehensive introduction. The contributions themselves are generally quite short and focus on specific initiatives. Some pieces tell stories of collaborations between groups or explain the formation of activist groups themselves, such as Mathieu Brûlé’s piece “‘Seducing the Unions’: Organised Labour and Strategies for Gay Liberation in Toronto in the 1970s’. Others reveal the struggles within activist groups, for example Beverley Bain’s ‘Fire Passion, and Politics: The Creation of the Blockorama as Black, Queer Diasporic Space in the Toronto Pride Festivities’ discusses black queer activists, their marginalisation and sometimes exclusion from Toronto Pride’s organisation in the early years. Within these histories there is also the provision of fascinating activist backgrounds to issues that were eventually played out in the Canadian Supreme Court. Shawna Ferris in ‘Safe Sex Work and the City: Canadian Sex Worker Activists Re-Imagine Real/Virtual Cityscapes’, and Annalee Lepp in ‘Collateral Damage: Anti-trafficking Campaigns, Border Security and Sex Workers Rights Struggles in Canada’, illustrate activism that sex workers engaged in prior to the case of *Canada (AG) v Bedford* [2013] SCR 1101. Andrea Zanin in ‘Your Cuntry [sic] Needs You: The Politics of Early 1990s Canadian S/M Dyke Porn’ reveals the wider politics and activism which led to the *Little Sisters Book and Art Emporium v Canada* [2000] 2 SCR 1120 challenge. This collection also tracks changing strategies and demands of movements over time and discusses the potential for constraint where there is a shift in focus to framing objectives in explicit rights terms rather than using rights as resistance. In his piece ‘Queer Resistance and Regulation in the 1970s – Liberation to Rights’, Gary Kinsman asks ‘How the hell did smash the family and smash heterosexual imperialism become same-sex marriage as the end game of our struggle?’ (p.137).

The editors note that this collection is not comprehensive, and that many other narratives are in the process of being recorded, yet it is a varied and engaging collection which addresses the present as well as the past and explores gender related protests, and activism, addressing that ‘systematic forgetting of experiences of struggle and resistance’ (p.6). Resistance old and new is brought

together, and in the spirit of the earlier collaborations in activist struggles, Lepp's piece calls now for new allies to support campaigning sex-workers as '... they work to challenge a newly constituted and repressive legal environment ...' (p.249).

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