

# Feminism and Philosophy



FALL 2015

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APA NEWSLETTER ON

# Feminism and Philosophy

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MARGARET A. CROUCH, EDITOR

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Margaret A. Crouch  
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

This is my last issue as editor. I happily turn over the reins to Serena Parekh of Northeastern University. She will be an excellent editor. I have enjoyed editing the newsletter and thank all of you who volunteered to review submissions and to review books. I could not have done this job without the good will of my colleagues.

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## ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER ON FEMINISM AND PHILOSOPHY

The *Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy* is sponsored by the APA Committee on the Status of Women (CSW). The newsletter is designed to provide an introduction to recent philosophical work that addresses issues of gender. None of the varied philosophical views presented by authors of newsletter articles necessarily reflect the views of any or all of the members of the Committee on the Status of Women, including the editor(s) of the newsletter, nor does the committee advocate any particular type of feminist philosophy. We advocate only that serious philosophical attention be given to issues of gender and that claims of gender bias in philosophy receive full and fair consideration.

### SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

**Purpose:** The purpose of the newsletter is to publish information about the status of women in philosophy and to make the resources of feminist philosophy more widely available. The newsletter contains discussions of recent developments in feminist philosophy and related work in other disciplines, literature overviews and book reviews, suggestions for eliminating gender bias in the traditional philosophy curriculum, and reflections on feminist pedagogy. It also informs the profession about the work of the APA Committee on the Status of Women. Articles submitted to the newsletter should be limited to 10 double-spaced pages (though this is negotiable) and must follow the APA guidelines for gender-neutral language. Please submit essays electronically to the editor. All manuscripts should be prepared for anonymous review. References should follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Submitted articles are sent to two reviewers. Articles recommended for revision are returned to the author; they are then reviewed by those who recommended the revisions.

**2. Book Reviews and Reviewers:** If you have published a book that is appropriate for review in the newsletter, please have your publisher send us a copy of your book. We are always seeking new book reviewers. To volunteer to review books (or some particular book), please send the editor a CV and letter of interest, including mention of your areas of research and teaching.

**3. Where to Send Things:** Please send all articles, comments, suggestions, books, and other communications to the editor: Dr. Serena Parekh, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Northeastern University, [s.parekh@neu.edu](mailto:s.parekh@neu.edu).

**4. Submission Deadlines:** Submissions for spring issues are due by the preceding September 1; submissions for fall issues are due by the preceding February 1.

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## NEWS FROM THE COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2015-2016

As of July 1, 2015, the CSW comprises Hilde Lindemann (chair), Charlotte Witt (associate chair), Peggy DesAutels (*ex officio*), Serena Parekh (*ex officio*), Ruth Chang, Anne Jacobson, Nancy Snow, Karen Detlefsen, Colleen Murphy, Sheryl Ross, Peter Railton, Lisa Shapiro, and Yolanda Wilson. Many thanks to Nancy Bauer, Margaret Crouch, Mary Kate McGowan, and Lijun Yuang, who have just rotated off the committee, and a hearty welcome to Charlotte Witt, Serena Parekh, Peter Railton, and Lisa Shapiro. To Yolanda Wilson, welcome back!

### NEW EDITOR FOR THE NEWSLETTER ON FEMINISM AND PHILOSOPHY

Margaret Crouch, who has edited the *Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy* for a number of years, is stepping down. The new editor is Serena Parekh, assistant professor of philosophy in the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Northeastern University. On behalf of CSW and the newsletter's many readers, let me take this opportunity to express deepest gratitude to Margaret for her long service.

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## DIVERSITY CONFERENCE

The “Exploring Collaborative Contestations and Diversifying Philosophy” conference, co-sponsored by *Hypatia* and the APA CSW, was held at Villanova University, May 28-30, 2015. It’s estimated that about 250 people attended, perhaps half of them junior scholars. The CSW invited speakers were Anita Silvers and Charles Mills, and while Silvers was not able to come after all, Mills gave an exceptionally well-attended plenary talk in defense of a modified liberalism, followed by a vigorous Q&A session. Mills also spent a great deal of his time seeking out participants of color, and remarked that the diversity of the participants gave him hope for the future of philosophy. Anita Allen, the *Hypatia* plenary, also gave an extremely well-attended talk. Hers was on the extensive decline of privacy in contemporary society, and it, too, was enthusiastically received.

Additional features of the conference included professional workshops on publishing feminist philosophy, sessions by foreign SWIP representatives, and a workshop on sexual harassment and bystander training.

## SITE VISIT PROGRAM

The director and associate directors of the program led a day-long Site Visit Training Workshop on May 31, 2015, at Villanova University, in conjunction with the diversity conference. There were twenty-one participants in the workshop. Adding these participants to those who participated in the first Site Visit Training Workshop in 2013, there are now a total of forty-five philosophers trained to be Site Visit team members.

The Site Visit Program conducted two site visits in the fall of 2014 and two in the spring of 2015. Two additional visits are scheduled for the fall of 2015.

## CSW WEBSITE

The CSW website, at <http://www.apaonlinecsw.org/>, continues to feature bimonthly profiles of women philosophers. Links to excellent resources include one to a database on teaching with articles and readings, another to the crowd-sourced directory of women philosophers, and one to the APA ombudsperson for nondiscrimination, who will receive complaints of discrimination and, where possible, serve as a resource to APA members regarding such complaints.

## CSW SESSIONS AT APA MEETINGS

Plans are already underway for the CSW-sponsored sessions at APA meetings to be held in 2016. The Eastern Division session is “Women Do History of Philosophy: Recent Scholarship,” the Central Division session focuses on women and Aristotle, and the Pacific Division session is called “Women and Propaganda.”

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## ARTICLE

### *Catharine MacKinnon, Feminism, and Continental Philosophy: Comments on Toward a Feminist Theory of the State—Twenty-Five Years Later*

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## INTRODUCTION

It’s a pleasure and an honor to comment on and celebrate Catharine MacKinnon’s *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State (TFTS)*.<sup>1</sup> I first read this book shortly after it was published twenty-five years ago and have returned to it on numerous occasions, with every reading revealing another layer of depth and relevance. That feature, of course, reflects the power of major works, but it is also part of their vulnerability. For it takes a long time for writings that so profoundly move the ground under our taken-for-granted understandings to be more widely grasped. This contrasts with many works that attain immediate recognition, only soon to be forgotten as a trend, as outdated, or not as profound as many initially thought.

Hegel remarks on this phenomenon. He notes that some works “after a time [have] no audience left” while others have “an audience only after a time.”<sup>2</sup> Referring specifically to MacKinnon, Guido Calabresi, former dean of Yale Law School and senior judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, indicated something of this sort. “[Her work] was so original that law faculties did not understand its significance . . . and MacKinnon ‘didn’t have the patience to write the kind of busywork that we would have understood.’”<sup>3</sup>

I think (and hope) that *TFTS* and, more generally, MacKinnon’s deeply grounded theoretical oeuvre is that kind of work, which will have its eventual audience. It especially needs an audience that appreciates the philosophical project behind the significant real-world impact that her writings and social interventions have already had. For instance, her concept of sexual harassment was adopted by the courts, her rethinking of rape has contributed to rape law reform, and a reconceptualization of pornography with Andrea Dworkin yielded the unprecedented feminist civil rights approaches to pornography in the 1980s and early 1990s (xiv). There remains tremendous need for MacKinnon’s work given the ubiquity of pornography today, growing sex trafficking, and other sexual abuses whose physical and psychological damage and aftereffects often invisibly reverberate throughout late modern life. These are problems that MacKinnon has spent her career confronting through complex analysis and groundbreaking practical means.

Professional philosophy has begun seriously taking up *TFTS*, which I treat here as part of her wider work. Analytic philosophy has led these efforts. Early on, Sally

Haslanger, Rae Langton, Martha Nussbaum, Susan Brison, Lori Watson, and others recognized its significance. They have rigorously and more comprehensively engaged it in ways that intersect, for instance, with the philosophy of language, epistemology, moral philosophy, political philosophy, philosophy of law, and early modern history of philosophy. Often, these engagements have made creative use of philosophical concepts to frame MacKinnon's breakthroughs in new ways, for example, through Austin's speech-act theory or through Kantian moral philosophy.<sup>4</sup> Other treatments have explicated and elaborated MacKinnon's insights such as her analysis of the relationship between objectivity and sexual objectification. They have helped explain her claim that the objective stance has often concealed sexual objectification when that stance has merely mirrored, as truth, the outcome of what men's political and social power over women has so successfully manufactured.<sup>5</sup> These engagements with MacKinnon's thought have variously unpacked her breakthroughs, which has contributed to rendering them more widely intelligible.

Continental philosophy, by contrast, has generally been less receptive to MacKinnon's thought. Here, it hasn't been treated as much and as thoroughly. When it is treated, it is not unusual to find it simplified or mischaracterized. This kind of reception makes it easier to dismiss her work and to evade the philosophical challenges it poses. It especially facilitates evading the ethical summons to confront the very trying and pervasive problems of sexual violence, abuse, and objectification in their variety of forms. In continental feminism, MacKinnon's thought doesn't have that more immediately identifiable place that it has in analytic feminism, a place that might support and make it more realistically possible to engage her thought in continental terms.

One is certainly an odd person out and often falling through the professional cracks when one tries to treat her work within the orbit of continental classics such as works by Hegel, Heidegger, or Arendt. For MacKinnon's thought doesn't yet have a presence within these traditional areas. Meanwhile, trying to create such a presence there is also to go against the grain of what is usually done as continental feminism such as explicating or using the thought of Beauvoir, Kristeva, Irigaray, Judith Butler, or psychoanalysis. As I will spell out below, MacKinnon's project is unambiguously continental. Undoubtedly, she is also one of the most significant feminist thinkers. Yet it is as if her thought isn't "continental feminism," at least not in the way that it is mainly understood and conducted in academic philosophy today.

In what follows, I address this somewhat perplexing current state of MacKinnon's thought within continental philosophy. There are many ways to approach this topic. For my present purposes, my focus is not to lay out what I consider the numerous simplifications and mischaracterizations of her work and then demonstrate how she actually does *not* say this or that, or how her positions are, in fact, much more subtle, or how criticisms of positions wrongly ascribed to her are, in fact, her *own* criticisms, or how she already anticipated and addressed a given criticism. There is, of course, much benefit to this approach.

My aim instead is to show how classically continental MacKinnon's work is, especially by pointing out some of its connections to Heidegger's philosophy even though she makes no references to his work.<sup>6</sup> In so doing, I indicate a few of the innumerable ways that continental philosophy might productively engage her thought. I want thereby to help create a bridge that might make it more possible for those in continental philosophy, especially graduate students and researchers, to directly encounter her work instead of attaining "familiarity" with it in a manner filtered by a caricature of it. Facilitating more considered treatment of her thought in what seems its obvious philosophical home will ultimately make philosophy more accountable and relevant to the urgent and difficult contemporary problems that she uniquely illuminates. Pornography, trafficking in sexual slavery, and other sexual abuse and violence that abound in late modern life pose incredible challenges to thinking and desperately need the resources and intervention of philosophy.

### **CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY, MACKINNON'S CONTINENTAL PROJECT, AND HEIDEGGER'S THOUGHT**

Continental philosophy is that tradition of mainly European thought from around the time of Hegel onward that seeks to understand the humanistic domain in a manner that is more self-consciously experiential and world-involved. It is grounded in life problems as they are lived in the world. Those working within this tradition also understand their contributions as situated within the history of philosophy. The few among them who are also major thinkers advance their own original theories, but those theories are something like later parts of that common and familiar philosophical story or historical reference point. Of course, not everyone working in continental philosophy today is doing such grounded work that is so directly relevant to real-world concerns; indeed, few are. That few philosophers of every era make breakthroughs of this kind is a separate topic beyond my current scope. My point here is only to state salient features of this tradition's self-concept in some of the ways that it shifts from the more detached major philosophies of the early modern period epitomized by figures such as Descartes and Kant.

Most basically, MacKinnon's project is continental because it is self-identified as such. It reflects her doctoral training in the history of modern German philosophy and the history of political philosophy. She studied these areas through both the political science and philosophy departments at Yale in the 1970s with prominent continental thinkers such as Shlomo Avineri and Karsten Harries.

MacKinnon's work is also phenomenological through and through (38-39), which I understand in a generally Heideggerian sense as theoretical in a manner guided by, emanating from, and always anchored in lived experience. Phenomenology is her way of fundamentally questioning, testing, and rethinking governing assumptions about the areas of life she investigates and of putting forth new interpretations that better account for that experience. In addition to being an original thinker, MacKinnon is also an innovative and groundbreaking lawyer, which underscores

her phenomenological approach. For in this profession, one is often forced to face the everyday, nitty-gritty reality and details of harms as they are lived in the world. This is how she arrived at a deeper theoretical understanding of various forms of sexual abuse. That new understanding in turn guided her proposals for making law more accountable to those harms, which she has accomplished in historic ways.

Accordingly, MacKinnon's theoretical work emanates from the "minutiae of everyday existence" (38) or, as she says about her specific inquiry into pornography, "how [it] works in everyday life."<sup>7</sup> Her complex thought doesn't drift into flights of theoretical fancy that are disconnected from life, as often occurs in philosophy and other theoretical endeavors. The latter is no less an issue with many contemporary continental theorists despite this tradition's self-understanding to the contrary. Indeed, MacKinnon's theoretical and legal work might be considered a model for how to make phenomenology within philosophy, in particular Heideggerian phenomenology, truer to itself. On her understanding, original thinking and innovative law are born precisely in this way. They come from the "ground up," from out of that crucible of the interaction respectively of thought and law with life (cf. xiv). As she states this point elsewhere, "[l]egal change comes from life, not from the brow of moral readers [detached from the world]."<sup>8</sup> This notion of thinking could have come straight out of Heidegger's philosophy.

A main project of *TFTS* is to offer an original theory of women's social subordination that emanates phenomenologically from most women's experiences of various forms of sexual objectification and violation. Those experiences reflect a dimension of the human condition that is usually hidden and that her analysis—to state the matter in Heideggerian language—aims to "draw out of concealment."<sup>9</sup> A major component of her theory formation is a constructively critical encounter with the dominant contemporary and historical account of oppression, namely, Marxist thought.

This path of theory formation exemplifies Heidegger's idea of philosophy's vocation. Philosophy as such delineates usually hidden dimensions of the human condition through grappling with how they are actually experienced in the world and through the aid of a constructively critical encounter with philosophy's past.<sup>10</sup> That ground of experience and the new understanding emanating from it guide the thinker in dismantling, at their source, problematic assumptions in philosophy's history that persist into the present day and contribute to the cover up of these usually concealed dimensions of the human condition. That ground also orients the thinker toward discovering resources in philosophy's history that she may creatively adapt to this task of illuminating these dimensions. This way of responding philosophically to a contemporary problem that philosophy or theory hasn't addressed or is only beginning to address remains anchored within an identifiable historical tradition.

Heidegger scholar William Lovitt summarizes this idea of philosophy. It is "thinking within the sphere of tradition"<sup>11</sup> but that, here, elicits the "unthought" from the thought.<sup>12</sup>

"As such it is freed by tradition from being a mere thinking back, to becoming a thinking forward."<sup>13</sup> Lovitt continues, stating that philosophy so understood reshapes the past "in the next on-writing of thought" and thus "point[s] to some way or reality needed beyond what is now known."<sup>14</sup> Simon Critchley clarifies philosophy as such. It responds to a contemporary crisis "through a critique of present conditions"<sup>15</sup> and a relationship to philosophy's past that is not merely that of received experience but "a *critical* confrontation with the history of philosophy and history as such."<sup>16</sup> This "appeal to tradition . . . is in no way traditional" but grapples with "what has been unthought within [philosophy's past] and what remains to be thought by it."<sup>17</sup>

Here, a phenomenological approach goes so far as to yield insights that are of the order of groundbreaking thought or philosophy. Phenomenology gathers insights that emanate from lived experience, but as an approach, it is fairly broad. It covers a wide range of such insights, including those gleaned in this way in areas outside philosophy. In exceptional cases, however, the phenomenologist gathers and hones them in a manner that yields an original and notably deep account of the worldly area in question. This is original thinking or philosophy in Heidegger's sense. It is, of course, phenomenological but a distinct and deeper expression of it.

The main and guiding source of MacKinnon's original theory is women's experiences of sexual objectification and violation. They were first more widely revealed through consciousness raising groups, which were a key element of the feminist movement in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, and through the social studies to which they gave rise and that more systematically tracked these phenomena. We may think of these groups as constituting something like a clearing within a larger social context that so effectively denied the reality of these experiences and so successfully pilloried those who would assert that reality. As MacKinnon notes, citing Pamela Allen, "[consciousness raising] 'clears a space in the world' within which women can begin to move" (101). These groups were trusted, open, and free spaces for eliciting, making, and safeguarding such disclosures. In an often pre-articulate and groping way, here women gave voice to, named, and ultimately revealed a pervasive, though usually hidden, pattern of sexually intrusive treatment of women and the varieties of psychological, physical, and other damage that that treatment causes (83–95). This pattern was so widespread that it was simply thought to be natural, the "way things are" and thus in no need of questioning.

This manner of articulating something that so profoundly affects and limits one's life may be considered an example of what Heidegger considers phenomenology's most basic way of recovering usually concealed dimensions of the human condition, that is, of according them the status of being considered real. This recovery occurs through listening to and speaking with others to give language to that experience. Such authentic speaking, as Heidegger calls it, erupts in those moments in which one has been delivered to a heightened awareness and anxiety about one's existence. Here, one has made a decision to try to come to terms with one's life and with who one is.<sup>18</sup>

Consciousness raising groups uncovered the replication within many women's most private relations, where they were thought to be most free, "a structure of dominance and submission which characterizes the entire public order." That structure is experienced by each woman thus affected in her "own particular, even chosen, way" (94), which is not to say that all women experience that phenomenon. MacKinnon furthermore elaborates that this condition is often marked by ambivalence. She states:

Realizing that women largely recognize themselves in sex-stereotyped terms, really do feel the needs they have been encouraged to feel, do feel fulfilled in the expected ways, often actually choose what has been prescribed, makes possible the realization that women at the same time do not recognize themselves in, do not feel, and have not chosen this place. (102)

Her analysis accordingly has ample room for both feminist insight into women's condition and recognition that "women's nonfeminist perception of their situation is . . . probably as justified by aspects of the woman's experience as a feminist perception would be" (102). Yet this openness is not such that it undercuts our ability to make some manner of truth claims about women's condition, as relativism does (cf. 118). For, as MacKinnon indicates, (phenomenological) analysis of what consciousness raising reveals leads to a recognition that for something to be true about women's condition, it need not be universal in the sense of holding for every single woman or being universal in an absolute way. It also reveals that consciousness of oppression is not inevitable (102).

I think that we may interpret her conclusion as being in line with philosophical criticisms respectively of a Cartesian model of epistemology and a neo-Hegelian teleological metaphysics. Such criticism is the centerpiece of Heidegger's own major phenomenological project, especially his magnum opus *Being and Time* (1927).<sup>19</sup> Generally speaking, Cartesian epistemology assumes that our knowledge of the world can be absolutely certain. That knowledge is said to exhaust the reality of the domains that it is about and, therefore, to be definitive. Hegel extends such assumptions to the realms of human relations and history. He concludes that human history is governed by the law of freedom's inevitable progress and of our inevitable consciousness of oppression and struggle for freedom as part of that larger law of history. He considers this law to be absolutely certain and to exhaust the reality of the domains of human relations and history.<sup>20</sup> Marx carries over these basic assumptions from Hegel. In light of MacKinnon's phenomenological treatment of women's subordination and her subsequent encounter with Marxism, she is compelled fundamentally to question these assumptions, as I detail below.

Her questioning has significant overlap with Heidegger's famous criticism of this Cartesian and neo-Cartesian epistemology. He recognizes that the world, especially the humanistic domain, does not lend itself to being known in an absolutely certain, exhaustive, and definitive way, however much we may know about the world. There is simply too

much variability and flux in life to fix it in this absolute manner. There will always be previously unconsidered experiences that may lead to new understanding of the areas in question. Accordingly, one can have knowledge of these areas without that knowledge having to hold in every single case or be understood in a manner that is absolute and exhaustive. That is, we may distinguish sounder understanding from less sound understanding while still maintaining an openness to the world, namely, to other unconsidered experiences. That openness allows us to continue testing, tweaking, or, if need be, completely altering an established understanding in light of newly uncovered experiences or changed contexts. MacKinnon's treatment of epistemological issues reflects this position. That treatment also places her analysis within the orbit of contemporary continental criticisms of (postmodern) relativism.<sup>21</sup>

On MacKinnon's interpretation, feminism locates women's consciousness of inequality within our resistance to the power of male dominance to so profoundly circumscribe our lives. Consciousness, she states, arises from circumstances of "being shaped in the image of one's oppression, yet struggling against it," a resistance to "the world in [women's] . . . selves as well as toward a future" (102). The central point of her interpretation of consciousness raising as feminism's method is precisely to capture and appreciate women's power and agency against that to which these political circumstances would limit women. But she does so without minimizing the destructiveness of those circumstances.

Through consciousness raising, oppression that wasn't previously as evident, even as its harms were undoubtedly felt, became more visible. That oppression was concealed especially through the fact that women tend to experience it separately and in isolation, in contrast with how oppressed groups that are together experience their subordination; their "togetherness" makes perception of oppression more discernable and less easily undermined (8). These developments revealed that "simply being a woman has a meaning that decisively defines all women socially" even as a woman's particularities, for instance, "race or class or physiology may define her among women" (90).

One must remember that these developments were occurring at a time when it was controversial to even suggest that there is something distinctive about women's social subordination that demands its own discrete analysis emanating from these experiences. Then, it wasn't more widely recognized that women's inequality constitutes a discrete kind of subordination such as inequalities that were more recognized, for instance, race, or class, or anti-Semitism. Indeed, a significant point and outcome of these feminist efforts, especially writings such as MacKinnon's, was *to secure recognition* of the very existence of women's social subordination as a discernable type against varieties of denial that it is. The aim was to place a kind of thread around this area, acknowledging that it has a most basic shape and intelligible demarcations or boundaries. As MacKinnon's work consistently emphasizes, those boundaries, however, have a permeability to them rather than being fixed or sealed up in an absolute way.

MacKinnon sought to contribute to this recognition of the distinct existence of women's social subordination in a manner that was careful not to subsume or otherwise deny the discrete existence of other and intersecting forms of inequality such as those of race or class. That is, she did not want to do what theorists of other inequalities had often done about women's subordination. In her role in helping to secure an understanding of women's inequality as its own kind, within a contemporary context largely denying that recognition, she was especially attentive to preserve an ongoing openness to the complex context of how a woman or a group of women experience their condition. This attention is evident, among other ways, in her frequent expression of the tremendous need for and the still largely incipient state of theoretically mapping these intersecting inequalities. As she writes:

To look for the place of gender in everything is not to reduce everything to gender. For example, it is not possible to discuss sex without taking account of Black women's experiences of gender. To the considerable degree to which this experience is inseparable from the experience of racism, many features of sex cannot be discussed without racial particularity. . . . [C]omprehension and change in racial inequality are essential to comprehension and change in sex inequality. (xi-xii)

MacKinnon very meticulously, deftly, and consistently weaves concrete work on such intersectionality within her analyses. And, of course, that intersectionality is also at the heart of her legal precedents on behalf of women who live these interconnected forms of subordination.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, she respects that *TFTS*

does not pretend to present an even incipiently adequate analysis of race and sex, far less of race, sex, and class. That further work—building on writings by authors of color such as those cited in this volume, stunning efforts in fiction and literary criticism, developments in the social world and advances in political practice and analysis, and recent contributions in the legal arena by women such as Kimberle Crenshaw, Mari Matsuda, Cathy Scarborough, and Patricia Williams—will take [still more time]. (xi-xii)

Through carefully gathering, distilling, and remaining grounded in the findings of a wide range of women's experiences, MacKinnon embarked on formulating a theory that expressed what these findings suggested were the most salient features of the commonality of women's subordination, a commonality that she did not consider absolutely universal. A significant part of this procedure of theory formation was, as mentioned above, a constructively critical encounter with philosophy's past, a move, of course, placing her project further in line with Heidegger's philosophy, especially his idea of philosophy's vocation. That is, in this grounded way, she "had it out" with the dominant theory of oppression, namely, contemporary and historical Marxism, including here the thought of Engels and others.

Traditional Marxist thought claimed already to account for women's inequality. It thus obviated recognition of women's inequality as a distinct experiential domain demanding its own phenomenologically elicited theoretical responses. MacKinnon describes how, thus grounded, she set out to assess such Marxist claims and the evidence adduced for them.

I began trying to disentangle the economic from the sexual roots of women's inequality: Is it sexism or capitalism [that principally explains the inequality of women as a group, even if not necessarily every woman]? . . . In this form, the question was intractable because it referred to realities that appeared fused *in the world* and the inquiry devolved into a question about the factor to be isolated: Is it sex or class?" (x, italics added)

Out of a very productive encounter with Marxist thought, MacKinnon arrived at a clearer appreciation that, contrary to traditional Marxist assumptions, women's inequality demanded a "theory that could stand on its own" (x). She contrasts this appreciation with the totalizing claims of much Marxist thought that worked against such recognition.

The aspiration to encompass all inequality within a critique of the "totality" of social life has been a central feature of marxist theory from the beginning. Its ambition for inclusiveness has produced attempts to explain in marxist terms all inequalities marxists have perceived as real. Feminism by contrast has not typically regarded the existence of class, or any other social division or theory, as needing to be either subsumed or dismissed, or as a challenge to the theoretical viability or practical primacy of focus upon relations between the sexes. (60)

MacKinnon did not find an already existing theory of male dominance that she thought offered an account of it in the way that Marxism did of class. That is, there was no theory "of [the] key concrete sites and laws of motion [of male dominance] . . . of why and how it happened and why (perhaps even how) it could be ended" (x). Thus assessing that "[f]eminism seemed an epic indictment in search of a theory, an epic theory in need of writing," (xi) she set out to construct one.

MacKinnon's phenomenological path toward that theory consisted, of course, in gathering the indications revealed by consciousness raising and related sources. It also consisted in canvassing and gathering clues left by historical feminist works by thinkers such as Mary Wollstonecraft, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Simone de Beauvoir. The new knowledge revealed by consciousness raising—much of it uncovering the nature of the damage and the pervasiveness of sexually intrusive treatment of women—was not as available to these past thinkers. So, their theories could not emanate phenomenologically from that ground of experience but instead left this dimension of the human condition still largely hidden. Nevertheless, they provided MacKinnon's project with rich and helpful descriptions of "the variables and locales of sexism and

possible explanations for it." Andrea Dworkin's thought, which does theorize from this ground, provided even more help (xi).

Thus anchored, prepared, and oriented, MacKinnon could carry out what I claim may be described in Heideggerian terms as a "de-structuring" or "destruction" of Marxist thought or what, in Heidegger's earlier work, he refers to as a "destructive retrieval."<sup>23</sup> These are his specific terms for that part of his idea of philosophy's vocation centered on how the thinker, in constructing her own original theoretical account of a present-day problem, conducts a productive and critical engagement with philosophy's past as a key step in that theory formation. "De-structuring" or "destructive retrieval" is, of course, phenomenological because the impetus behind the theory formation is that incipient understanding emanating from the experiential domain that is newly being considered. That fledgling understanding then guides the thinker in her encounter with philosophy's past.

To use Heidegger's famous idea, this emerging new understanding helps "light up"<sup>24</sup> problematic assumptions of philosophy's past that persist into the present day and are implicated in actively concealing the dimension of the human condition at issue. That emerging understanding likewise "lights up" aspects of philosophy's past that the thinker may creatively use to help construct that contemporary theory. "De-structuring" in this larger sense refers to a particular and rarer expression that phenomenological inquiry may take, an expression that delivers us closer to original thought. As such, we may consider it an additional element of the connections between MacKinnon's project and Heidegger's philosophy.

MacKinnon thus conducts "de-structuring" vis-à-vis Marxism. Specifically, in light of the newly revealed domain of the systematic sexually intrusive treatment of women of which Marxism had no account and that it helped to conceal, MacKinnon wrested out from under Marxist thought both a clearer recognition that these experiences demanded their own account and an articulation of such a theory. She refers to this account as "feminism unmodified." This is feminism that is qualified neither by Marxism nor by liberalism (another contemporary and historical tradition that she engages in *TFTS*).

That is, hers is a theory of women's subordination that is not subsumed by and disappeared into these other theories. To be "allowed to exist," an account of women's subordination need not remain entirely under their rubric any more than do analyses of racism, anti-Semitism, class, and other inequalities. But "feminism unmodified" does not leave class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other key dimensions of a woman's experience behind. MacKinnon consistently and painstakingly insists on the contextual nature of women's subordination. She recognizes that it cannot be extricated from its intersections with other kinds of subordination as well as with social privilege and other involvements in the world.

One can have a discrete category of understanding, a category that preserves its own integrity, while at

the same time remaining contextualized in the world, as part of involvements from which we are never fully extricated. This insistence on distinction within inextricable contextualization furthermore aligns MacKinnon with Heidegger's project. For this position reflects an elemental feature of his philosophy, especially his criticism of Cartesian and neo-Cartesian ontology in *Being and Time*. Nor does "feminism unmodified" necessarily prioritize subordination based on sex in relation to other intersecting inequalities if circumstances do not phenomenologically warrant that understanding. The context and factual evidence of a given set of circumstances are what will determine whether there is such priority and what the priority may be.

As a good portion of *TFTS* so precisely, methodically, and painstakingly shows, Marxist thought (and liberalism) have not explained women's subordination but have typically assumed and concealed it in one way or another. This recognition, of course, is not to say that these traditions might not offer helpful resources for understanding women's subordination as they did, for instance, in the formulation of MacKinnon's own theory. But such approaches have especially left issues of sexual objectification and violence unchanged (11).

To express this shortcoming in Heideggerian language, these issues pertaining to sexual violation that distinctively and often cross-culturally affect women require a more "historical" approach. This means that the theorist needs to plumb more deeply into life as it is concretely experienced, at least this domain of life. She needs to re-immense inquiry in the world rather than remain on the surface of these phenomena, where one tends to reconstitute old assumptions in the absence of generative contact with this newly revealed ground under them. MacKinnon provides numerous concrete examples of this difficulty of fit between Marxism's explanations of women's inequality and many women's experiences, especially those centering on sexual abuse and violence. For instance, given that many women's class status is defined through their relations to men, how do we even determine the class status, much less the oppression at issue, when we are speaking about "a young runaway fleeing rich suburban incest [and now] being pimped downtown?" or the middle-class girl abducted into pornography? (48)

*TFTS* reflects MacKinnon's efforts to crystallize a theory that "fundamentally identifies sexuality as the primary sphere of male power" (109). Here, sexuality refers to that range of sexual objectification characterized by breaches of bodily and personal boundaries, directed mainly at women, which constitutes a lot of what sexual experience *has been made into* under men's political dominance and is subsequently read off as natural sex difference. Feminism, especially her theory, questions sexuality *as such* in order to confront its limitations on our freedom and life possibilities. As MacKinnon often emphasizes about her claim here—against careless readings of her work—it reflects a general yet clearly discernable pattern without being absolute or all-encompassing. As already indicated, she explicitly rejects that her theory can be all-explanatory or absolutely universal or an absolute science, much less essentialist.<sup>25</sup> I interpret her, in part, to be making this epistemological

point when she says that feminism, or at least her working of it, is methodologically post-Marxist (cf. 107).

In this vein, “men” or “male,” she writes, “is a social and political concept, not a biological attribute, having nothing whatever to do with inherency, preexistence, nature, essence, inevitability, or body as such” (114). It refers rather to “a gender group characterized by maleness as socially constructed” (112). She adds that “the perspective from [this] standpoint is not always each man’s opinions or even some aggregation or sum of men’s opinions, although most men adhere to it nonconsciously and without considering it a point of view” (114). Furthermore, of course, any person, male or female, can inhabit this stance in any of its variety of forms, including the most extreme. So, for instance, one of the examples that MacKinnon adduces about the sexual use and breakdown of another human being is that of one woman doing it to another woman (142). This example, however, remains firmly contextualized within the wider and unambiguous recognition that in present political circumstances, this kind of dynamic flows overwhelmingly in the direction of men towards women (and children).

MacKinnon summarizes this phenomenological path of constructing her theory of sexuality, so understood, as the primary sphere of men’s political power over women. It emerged “from consciousness raising and other feminist practice on diverse issues including rape, incest, battery, sexual harassment, abortion, prostitution, and pornography” and not “from Freudian conceptions, not from Lacanian roots” (109). These psychoanalytic theories, Foucault, and many later theories in this vein—when it became “customary to affirm that sexuality is socially constructed”—have had little relation to that ground of experience that consciousness raising and later studies uncovered (131). Instead, they have usually left unquestioned this general composition of sexuality that MacKinnon’s deeper phenomenological approach on the subject was “dismantling,” that is, sexuality that reflects breaches of the bodily and personal boundaries mainly of women.

### **FURTHER CONTINENTAL ENGAGEMENT WITH MACKINNON’S THOUGHT**

When we bring MacKinnon’s major theoretical accomplishments in engagement with the continental tradition, hidden dimensions of the latter “light up.” Indeed, my own groundedness in her work prior to my entry into professional philosophy oriented me towards Heidegger’s philosophy, towards recognizing connections between the two and the relevance of his thought for feminism. It helped me discern resources within his philosophy to creatively adapt to the task of taking our thinking about the problems of pornography and other sexual abuse and violence to new places. Those resources center on Heidegger’s criticisms of ambivalent aspects of modernity, modern freedom, and technology. Now, coming back to MacKinnon’s thought with a groundedness in the philosophy of Heidegger and other major continental figures, in turn, “lights up” even further ways of engaging the two. Sparks fly as new possible directions and tasks for continental feminist inquiry come into view. Thus moving between MacKinnon’s thought and continental classics, they redound on each other.

I have addressed only some of the most basic connections between MacKinnon’s thought and Heidegger’s philosophy. There are numerous other connections to cache out here. One such task might be to elaborate ties between MacKinnon’s presentation of consciousness raising as feminism’s method and Heidegger’s phenomenology. That project would anchor consciousness raising in its philosophical tradition while taking that tradition to places where it could be even more directly relevant to real-world concerns. The result could serve as a platform for continuing to further map how phenomenology uncovers usually hidden dimensions of the human condition in light of even more recent revelations of the role of sexual violation in women’s subordination, for instance, in such international contexts as crimes against humanity and genocide.

Given MacKinnon’s “de-structuring” of Marxist thought, there are ample opportunities for productive engagement in relation to Marxist philosophy. One scholarly task would be to detail and explicate the complex path of that “de-structuring.” That exercise would help render her philosophical project more widely intelligible, thus countering the still predominant simplifications and mischaracterizations of her work. It would also be instructive for showing, via MacKinnon’s particular path, a general model for doing theoretical and philosophical analysis that is so directly tied to real problems and ways of changing them. Furthermore, it would show how one arrives at that original thought, in this case concerning contemporary feminist topics, in ways that are consistent with, and thus benefit from, how major philosophers have arrived at it over the ages, which is through a “dialogue” with philosophy’s past. Of course, such an approach is not the only way of being philosophically relevant to feminist and other contemporary challenges.

With regard to psychoanalytic theories or Foucault’s analysis of socially constructed sexuality, it would be instructive to engage them in light of MacKinnon’s theory of the place of sexuality, as manufactured under male dominance, in women’s social inequality. That is, it would be intriguing to see a “de-structuring” of these theories in light of the new experiential ground concerning the workings of, imposition, and pervasiveness of sexually intrusive treatment of women. This hasn’t yet been done more comprehensively, including by feminist versions of psychoanalysis, as *TFTS* argues (cf. 57–59, 151–53), and by feminist deconstructions of psychoanalysis that do take these experiences into account but that are less theoretical.

There would also be an interesting project of thus engaging Irigaray’s work. MacKinnon herself indicates such a task. She appreciates Irigaray’s thought but, at the same time, recognizes that it is not connected to this particular ground. The knowledge emanating from that ground was not so readily available to Irigaray, as the work of more systematically drawing these experiences “out of concealment” was happening mainly in North America. In France, such experiences have only very recently been more widely investigated, uncovered, and treated as real against an especially effective denial of their reality. As MacKinnon analyzes: “Irigaray’s critique of Freud in *Speculum of the Other Woman* . . . acutely shows how

Freud constructs sexuality from the male point of view, with woman as deviation from the norm. But she, too, sees female sexuality not as constructed by male dominance but only repressed by it" (280). It would be intriguing to see what productive outcomes arise were Irigaray's thought, including her later work, considered in light of what I claim is MacKinnon's phenomenological "de-structuring" of the notion of sexual difference as one of dominance and her resulting complex understanding of sex equality that does *not* collapse it into sameness. The latter is something that her real-world legal work simply does not permit.

MacKinnon also indicates possible directions for productive engagement with Beauvoir's philosophy. In *TFTS*, she weaves in references to Beauvoir's analyses. Respecting her insights, MacKinnon also offers a phenomenological critique of ways that Beauvoir treats certain social conditions as universal givens that are beyond history. An example is Beauvoir's identification of "woman's biology as the source of [women's] subordination." MacKinnon explains: "[On Beauvoir's analysis,] it is not the meaning [that] society has given women's bodily functions but the functions themselves, existentially, that oppress women. . . . [A] woman's body determines her social being as a pre-social matter" (54). It would be interesting to gather these references in *TFTS* into a more concerted engagement between their respective projects. Another thread of inquiry might be to investigate Beauvoir's treatment of the Marquis de Sade in light of MacKinnon (and Dworkin's) treatment of pornography.

Many other fruitful projects come into view that are too numerous to mention here. The point is that they would be facilitated, and both feminism and philosophy would tremendously benefit, were MacKinnon's thought more present and integrated in teaching and research in continental philosophy, that tradition which her work natively inhabits. For example, it should be taught with Heidegger, Marx, Beauvoir, Hegel, Irigaray, Foucault, and psychoanalysis, among other areas, not to mention taught expressly as a part of continental feminism.

All indications suggest that the main problems that MacKinnon seeks to better understand and change, namely, the oppression associated with the physical and internal breakdown effected by sexual objectification and abuse, in all their complexity and despite gains made, have not gone away. Indeed, they are becoming worse, especially through pornography's unprecedented reach and mainstreaming in the Internet age. It is also a fact that the history of philosophy and academic philosophy today still don't have a thinker whose work more systematically addresses these problems in the way that MacKinnon's work does. We won't find these analyses in Beauvoir, Kristeva, Irigaray, Butler, or psychoanalysis, despite how helpful some of their works might be. Instead, those of us in academic philosophy who are working on these problems are drawing significant theoretical sources from MacKinnon's thought. That is where we mainly go if we want to address such problems that are so much of our contemporary landscape that they hardly stand out as such.

In this vein, I want to conclude by briefly revisiting the issue of what a groundedness in MacKinnon's work can help reveal to thought and to efforts at seeking practical solutions to contemporary crises. On a trip to Europe in the early 1990s, I took a copy of *TFTS* to Asja Armanda, a Croatian-Jewish feminist. This was just before the genocidal war in the region when Serbia attacked Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo and committed atrocities not seen in Europe since the Holocaust. Armanda responded practically and philosophically to this crisis and, with her, I soon followed suit. In our work with refugee survivors in the war zone, we phenomenologically elicited and theorized a usually hidden dimension of the human condition that we named "genocidal sexual atrocities" or "genocidal rape." This crime was not "known" to the world before this genocide and precisely for that reason needed philosophy to make it known. Key sources of theoretical guidance in our work with concentration camp survivors include Armanda's own remarkable feminist philosophical background on issues of sexual abuse and her knowledge of the Holocaust. Against all odds, she cultivated that understanding through desperately seeking clues outside the closed, Marxist-totalitarian country of Yugoslavia in which she grew up and outside the regime's official philosophers and its official positions on and by women. These sources also include ones that I brought, especially MacKinnon's thought on sexual abuse, civil rights, and law as well as African-American feminist thought on the intersections between sex and ethnicity.<sup>26</sup> This is the philosophy that we went to, philosophy that gave us real aid in our own, urgently needed, original thinking and that could help us make a real difference in the world.

However, this fledgling understanding about genocidal rape would have been snuffed out by an unimaginable and relentless campaign of genocide denial and lost to history had MacKinnon not, at my request, agreed to intervene in these events. Specifically, I asked her to represent survivors in a legal action that Armanda and I were pursuing. The three of us soon initiated a landmark lawsuit in New York (*Kadic v. Karadzic*) that would pioneer the crime's recognition under international law. Through the public voice that MacKinnon gave to making this crime more widely intelligible, we could eventually break through that denial such that this crime is now recognized in the world.<sup>27</sup>

For philosophy to be seriously relevant to such major problems of our time, we need greater availability and deeper consideration of MacKinnon's thought, especially within continental philosophy. For that is the tradition from which her thought arose: Her work is guided by the phenomenological task of gathering, distilling, and theorizing the insights of a range of feminist practices and writings and is more clearly formulated through productive and critical encounter with philosophy's past. This original thought, in turn, guided the major legal, policy, and other positive practical changes in the world that MacKinnon has delivered and continues to deliver. These changes are themselves monumental achievements of so many women's agency, changes that now offer new and previously unimagined possibilities of that agency. All of these developments were the outcome of both feminism and continental philosophy. They are continental feminism—at its best.

ENDNOTES

1. I presented a version of this paper at the Pacific Division meeting of the American Philosophical Association (April 1–4, 2015) on a panel marking the 25th anniversary of the publication of Catharine MacKinnon’s *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989). Thank you to Lori Watson for the invitation and opportunity to present these reflections. Also, thank you to the organizers of the annual meeting of the Pacific Association for the Continental Tradition, where I presented a shorter version of the paper (September 24–26, 2015). Page references to MacKinnon’s book are in parenthesis within the text.
2. G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 45.
3. Fred Strebeigh, “Defining Law on the Feminist Frontier,” *New York Times Magazine*, October 6, 1991.
4. Cf. Rae Langton, *Sexual Solipsism: Philosophical Essays on Pornography and Objectification* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Ishani Maitra and Mary Kate McGowan eds., *Speech and Harm: Controversies Over Free Speech* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).
5. Cf. Sally Haslanger, “On Being Objective and Being Objectified, in *A Mind of One’s Own: Feminist Essays on Reason and Objectivity*, ed. Louise M. Antony and Charlotte Witt (Boulder: Westview Press), 209–53.
6. In MacKinnon’s remarks during the panel presentation of this paper, she very emphatically and publically agreed with how it philosophically situates her work. She stated: “FINALLY someone got it.”
7. Cf. Catharine A. MacKinnon, “The Roar on the Other Side of Silence,” *Introduction to In Harm’s Way: The Pornography Civil Rights Proceedings*, eds. Catharine A. MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 23.
8. Catharine A. MacKinnon, “‘Freedom from Unreal Loyalties’: On Fidelity in Constitutional Interpretation,” in *Women’s Lives, Men’s Laws* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 68, 67.
9. Cf. Mark A. Wrathall, Heidegger and Unconcealment: Truth, Language, and History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
10. Cf. Martin Heidegger, *What Is Philosophy?*, trans. Jean T. Wilde and William Kluback (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003); Scott Campbell, *Heidegger’s Philosophy of Life: Facticity, Being, and Language* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012). My review of Campbell’s book draws attention to aspects of it that pertain to Heidegger’s idea of philosophy’s vocation. It also describes some of the specific ways that Heidegger engages philosophy’s past, especially in relation to figures such as Plato and Aristotle, as part of the formation of his own original contemporary thought; Natalie Nenadic, “Review of Scott Campbell, *Heidegger’s Philosophy of Life: Facticity, Being, and Language*,” *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual* 4 (2014): 96–105.
11. William Lovitt, Introduction to Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1977), xxxvii.
12. *Ibid.*, xxxviii.
13. *Ibid.*, xxxvii.
14. *Ibid.*, xxxviii, italics added.
15. Simon Critchley, *Continental Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 72–73.
16. *Ibid.*, 68–69, italics in the original.
17. *Ibid.*, 69.
18. See especially Campbell, *Heidegger’s Philosophy of Life*, 142, 163, 173; Nenadic, “Review of Scott Campbell, *Heidegger’s Philosophy of Life: Facticity, Being, and Language*,” 102–103; see also Wrathall, *Heidegger and Unconcealment*, 136–37.
19. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962, 2008).
20. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*, trans. H. B. Nisbet (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*.
21. Cf. Karsten Harries, *Infinity and Perspective* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2002); Lorenzo C. Simpson, *The Unfinished Project: Toward a Postmetaphysical Humanism* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Robert Scharff, “What Postmodernists Don’t Get” (1997), <http://www.focusing.org/postmod.htm>, accessed April 2, 2015; Catharine A. MacKinnon, “Points against Postmodernism,” *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 75, no. 3 (October 2000): 687–712.
22. For instance, on behalf of Mechelle Vinson, an African-American woman, in *Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson*, 477 U.S. 57 (1986). This case pioneered the claim for “hostile environment” sexual harassment as sex discrimination and was ratified by the Supreme Court. See also other examples such as the testimony and analysis in *In Harm’s Way* and our work on rape and genocide described on page 9 and in note 27.
23. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 41–49; on “destructive retrieval,” especially Heidegger’s own “destructive retrievals” vis-à-vis Dilthey and Nietzsche, see Robert C. Scharff, *How History Matters to Philosophy: Reconsidering Philosophy’s Past after Positivism* (New York: 2014), 164, 226–96.
24. Cf. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 105.
25. Cf. Cindy Richards, “Fighting a Lie that Just Won’t Die,” *Chicago Tribune*, May 30, 1999, accessed April 2, 2015, [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1999-05-30/news/9906030177\\_1\\_sexual-harassment-databases-journalism-ethics](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1999-05-30/news/9906030177_1_sexual-harassment-databases-journalism-ethics); “Editor’s Note,” Book Section, *The New York Times*, February 12, 2006, accessed April 2, 2015, [http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/12/books/review/12ednote.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/12/books/review/12ednote.html?_r=0).
26. Just prior to this period, I had been a student of Angela Y. Davis and had the opportunity even more rigorously to study this area of thought.
27. Cf. Natalie Nenadic, “Genocide and Sexual Atrocities: Hannah Arendt’s *Eichmann in Jerusalem* and Karadzic in New York,” *Philosophical Topics* 39, no. 2 (2011): 117–44; Catharine A. MacKinnon, *Are Women Human? And Other International Dialogues* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

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overview of the relevant literature. Abbey artfully traces the debate from the early feminist criticisms of *A Theory of Justice* (TJ), which focused largely on the principles of justice and their potential application to the family, to the polarized feminist response to Rawls's political turn in *Political Liberalism* (PL), and finally to the more recent feminist uptake of Rawls's later work. The types of feminist response laid out in the introduction are then embodied in the volume itself: Should we continue to mine Rawls for his great feminist potential, or should we dismiss his liberalism in favor of a political philosophy that is more conducive to achieving justice for women?

Falling into the latter camp are essays by Nancy J. Hirschmann and Lisa H. Schwartzman. In her essay, "Rawls, Freedom, and Disability: A Feminist Rereading," Hirschmann argues that the theory of freedom tacitly undergirding Rawls's theory of justice is both masculinist and ableist. She thus joins early critics like Iris Marion Young and Alison Jaggar in questioning Rawls's individualist ontology. She levels the familiar charge that Rawls understands society as a "cooperative venture among free individuals" conceived of as abstract, featureless citizens (102), and she concludes that this individualism, according to which the "isolated individual is the center of the universe and the basic foundation," renders Rawls's liberalism fundamentally masculinist (103). But she expands upon this early work in two important ways: she focuses her critique on Rawls's theory of freedom rather than his theory of justice (99), and she extends her discussion to include both women and the disabled. Both of these features make Hirschmann's piece a unique and valuable contribution to the debate.

For Hirschmann, Rawls's failure is due to his complete inattention to social construction, according to which "human beings and their world are in no sense given or natural but are the product of historical configurations of relationships" (103). Because, according to Hirschmann, disability is *itself* socially constructed, Rawls's theory—by design—cannot adequately address questions of disability and cannot properly secure freedom for disabled persons (112). Although Lisa Schwartzman does not take up the question of disability in her essay, "Feminism, Method, and Rawlsian Abstraction," she, too, questions Rawls's negligence of social construction. In this piece, which was previously published as part of her 2006 book *Challenging Liberalism: Feminism as Political Critique*, Schwartzman argues that Rawls's abstract, ideal theory is ill-equipped to challenge structural oppression, and thus does not hold the feminist potential that Susan Okin (for example) thought it might (41).

In their arguments, both Hirschmann and Schwartzman challenge the way that Rawls understands persons. Schwartzman argues that the "initial social positions" into which we are born are, for Rawls, "arbitrary" (52), and Hirschmann argues that "religion, like gender, sexuality, and race, can be viewed as constitutive of our 'personhood'"—a fact that Rawls fundamentally fails to understand (103). In fact, Rawls's employment of the original position suggests that he purposefully obscures those very aspects of identity that "make humans what they are" (104).

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *Feminist Interpretations of John Rawls*

Ruth Abbey, ed. (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013). 181 pages. \$29.95. ISBN-13: 978-0-271-06180-1.

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Since the publication of *A Theory of Justice* in 1971, feminists have shared a complicated and multifaceted relationship with the work of John Rawls. In *Feminist Interpretations of John Rawls*, editor Ruth Abbey brings together eight essays that demonstrate the wide range of feminist engagement with Rawlsian liberalism. Although Abbey herself does not have an essay in this volume, her introduction, which she calls a "biography of a bibliography" (1), is noteworthy. Those who have worked in feminist political philosophy for some time will be impressed that Abbey could so skillfully craft a coherent narrative from nearly forty years of feminist engagement with the work of John Rawls, and those who are new to the debate will find an immensely helpful

But one might worry about the way that Hirschmann and Schwartzman wield the fact of social construction against Rawls. After all, as Rawls explains in PL, the social positions into which we are born, as well as facts about us like our gender, sexuality, and race, are only *morally* arbitrary, and only *from the perspective of the state* (PL 22-28). So, for example, when Hirschmann cites disapprovingly Rawls's argument that a citizen remains the same person through a religious conversion (103), she ignores the most important part of the quote: "When citizens convert from one religion to another . . . they do not cease to be, *for questions of political justice*, the same persons they were before" (PL 30, emphasis added). This means that they are still just as deserving of respect as free and equal citizens as they were before their conversion. Nothing substantive about their identities is assumed. Rawls has the same reply available for Schwartzman, when she cites him as arguing that "the natural distribution [of talents] is neither just nor unjust; nor is it unjust that men are born into society at some particular position. These are simply natural facts" (TJ 102). She argues, contrary to what she reads in Rawls, that "the issue of social circumstance is anything but natural or arbitrary" (53). But the charitable way to interpret Rawls's claim is to understand that *there is* nothing just or unjust about the *fact itself* that we are born into a given social position instead of another. This is just a natural fact. What makes it just or unjust is that social institutions and structures of power treat us differently based on natural facts that should have absolutely no bearing on our status as free and equal citizens. On this, I imagine Hirschmann and Schwartzman would likely agree with Rawls.

Unlike Hirschmann and Schwartzman, Elizabeth Brake finds great feminist potential in Rawls. In her essay, "Rereading Rawls on Self-Respect: Feminism, Family Law, and the Social Bases of Self-Respect," she clarifies Rawls's notion of self-respect and argues that because of its status as a primary good, the liberal state has a duty to ensure its just distribution. Brake helpfully brings to the discussion Stephen Darwall's distinction between recognition respect and appraisal respect (61). She correctly notes that interpreting Rawls's conception as appraisal self-respect creates problems for his theory (62), and so she proposes that we interpret Rawls's conception as a type of recognition self-respect, instead. Unlike appraisal self-respect, recognition self-respect does not require a positive self-evaluation; it requires only that we recognize ourselves as free and equal possessors of the two moral powers (62). Thus, Brake argues, recognition self-respect is a better interpretation of Rawls after his political turn (64).

Brake's clarificatory comments on self-respect in general, and her utilization of Darwall's distinction in particular, are insightful and convincing. Less convincing, however, is her discussion of the "revolutionary implications" of her interpretation for family law (67). Because self-respect is a primary good, and because the state has a duty to ensure the just distribution of such goods, on Brake's account the state has a duty to protect and promote the self-respect of children. This duty will sometimes require a limitation of parental rights to "infuse children with ethical and religious beliefs" if these beliefs undermine a child's burgeoning self-respect (67). Thus, she argues, "damage to self-respect

is itself a reason to constrain parental practice, even if such damage does not lead to further inequalities in wealth, income, and position" and even, she notes, "if damage to self-respect were compatible with distributive justice" (67). There are several problems with this conclusion. First, as Brake herself notes, primary goods must be measurable and distributable (59), and it's unclear how a lack of self-respect—divorced from its tangible consequences—could ever be measured or distributed.

More troubling, though, is that even if the liberal state could measure and distribute self-respect as Brake imagines, doing so would almost certainly violate the type of liberal justificatory neutrality that Rawls defends in PL. Brake argues that the question at hand is not "whether political liberalism should regard damage to self-respect as an injustice, but . . . how a liberal state can best address the expression of negative attitudes within the family and their effects on children's self-respect" (70-71). The real question, though, is whether the policing of the expression of certain attitudes is something that could ever be justified to reasonable citizens using public reasons that they accept as *reasons*. Surely Brake is correct in highlighting feminist concerns with families who raise young girls to fulfill "'deferential wife' gender roles" (72). But whether or not we should worry about this state of affairs, and whether or not it amounts to an injustice severe enough to justify direct state intervention in the form of "parental licensing" or "the removal of children from parental custody" are two vastly different issues (72-73). I worry that Brake undermines her politically liberal interpretation of self-respect by returning to the robust conception of persons, and state endorsement of particular conceptions of the good, that the Rawls of PL finds unjust.

Janice Richardson seconds Brake's focus on Rawlsian self-respect in her essay, "Jean Hampton's Reworking of Rawls: Is 'Feminist Contractarianism' Useful for Feminism?" But while Brake sees her view as a "Rawlsian strategy" for combatting injustice in the family (73), Richardson concludes that it reveals a tension in Rawlsian liberalism (138). She ultimately rejects Rawls and his one-time utilization of a (hypothetical) contract, in favor of Hampton's repeated utilization of the "contract test" (138). Clare Chambers's piece, "The Family as a Basic Institution": A Feminist Analysis of the Basic Structure as Subject," similarly presents a tension in Rawls, between his position on justice in the family and his assertion that the basic structure, alone, is the subject of justice (76). Chambers argues that, although Okin's interpretation of Rawls—that the principles of justice apply internally to the family—is flawed, it nevertheless sheds light on this tension. She concludes that the only way for Rawls to alleviate this tension and make sense of his claims about the family is to deny that the basic structure is uniquely the subject of justice (94).

The remaining essays join with Brake in finding feminist potential in Rawls. Eileen Hunt Botting argues that Rawls's political liberalism has more potential than does Martha Nussbaum's capabilities theory for addressing global injustice, Anthony Simon Laden responds to Catharine MacKinnon's objections regarding Rawls's norm of objectivity, and Amy Baehr closes the volume with a

defense of liberal feminism as a public political philosophy. Although I have not reviewed all the essays in this volume, I hope to have provided an adequate representation of its quality, diversity, and unquestionable value to feminist political philosophy. Early in her introduction, Abbey notes that the contributions to the volume “testify to the continuing ambivalence among feminist readers about the value of Rawls’s work” (2). Indeed, if there is one unanimous message to glean from the book as a whole, it is that the relationship between feminist scholars and the work of John Rawls persists, troubled as ever. But the relationship does persist. Perhaps, then, the larger message is that as we continue to explore the feminist potential of Rawls’s liberalism, we should remain, like the early feminist critics of *A Theory of Justice*, “critical yet hopeful” (1).

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## Women’s Oppression Today: The Marxist/ Feminist Encounter

Michèle Barrett. (London: Verso, 2014). 285 pages. \$24.95. ISBN 978 1 78168 013 1.

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As Kathi Weeks notes in her foreword to *Women’s Oppression Today*, “the clocks in the world of feminist theory run at a faster rate than those in other theoretical domains” (ix). The very title of the book emphasizes the time-bound and context-bound nature of feminist theory. While political philosophy generally deals with practical problems, feminism is one of several fields of philosophy (for example, critical race theory) where theory emerges from actual, historical political movements and influences the direction of the political movement in turn. Due to this intimate connection between theory and praxis, the need for feminism to be sensitive to current events and emerging problems or new paradigms is greater than most. Thus it is perhaps unsurprising that there is a tendency to view feminist theory that is only decades-old as passé at best and oppressive or exclusionary at worst. In recent years, the second wave in particular has been singled out for special opprobrium. Unfortunately for both Marxists and feminists, Weeks notes that “the 1970s has been remembered as the time when we ‘made mistakes’, as a perhaps necessary, but by many accounts, distressingly naïve point on the road to our more enlightened and sophisticated present” (ix).

Within the context of modern feminism, this “enlightened and sophisticated present” is dominated both within and outside the academy by third-wave feminism, based strongly in post-modernism, identity politics, and what has been called “sex-positivism.” Michèle Barrett accedes in her 1988 preface that if the book were to be written only a decade later it would have to begin with the political reality of post-modernism which has overwhelmed academic discourse as well as popular politics (I). In writing a review, it would be too easy and too great a temptation to simply defer to the new paradigms within feminist theory as more “enlightened” and “sophisticated,” and to view a work—

simply by virtue of being the product of an earlier decade—as perhaps of historical interest but otherwise outdated and flawed. Of course, any work that is attempting not to posit the principles of an ideal society but an analysis of the actual, non-ideal society will be vulnerable to errors and omissions. It is undoubtedly true that we have a much wider body of empirical sociological and psychological research on the dynamics of gender subordination; that some of what we previously thought about gender dynamics has been discredited or become more nuanced; that we have new and important issues to address within feminist theory (for example, the impact of social media on the silencing of women within the public sphere); and that at least some strands of feminism (though I will not go as far as others by claiming that all feminist work prior to the third wave has been guilty of this) has been ignorant of, if not actively reinforcing, racial subordination. Instead of taking this easy route, I would instead propose that *Women’s Oppression Today* not only provides valuable critical insights on certain aspects of theory that have been absorbed into current discourse (such as psychoanalysis) and tracks trends which unfortunately remain pertinent issues to feminism today (such as the impact of women’s responsibility for dependent care on their economic prospects) but can perhaps be read as an theoretical exercise in intersectionality.

Intersectionality has become a term of art within modern feminism, describing the way in which various forms of oppression (race, class, and gender) interact and inflect one another both on the social and institutional as well as personal levels. In *Women’s Oppression Today*, Barrett addresses the uneasy relationship between Marxism and feminism and, rightly so, provides a thorough critique of a reductionist account of patriarchal to class or economic relations as some traditional Marxist theorists have been inclined to do. Barrett avoids falling into any one simplistic or simple solution to the difficult issues that one faces when looking at the way in which class has been gendered, and the way in which gender reinforces and supports class inequalities. Even though her analysis rests on empirical data which narrowly focuses upon a contemporary post-industrial Western society, and thus her discussion is understandably limited in scope by the specifics of the context upon which her investigation relies, nonetheless the intersection between the dual systems of capitalism and patriarchalism the discussion is increasingly pertinent in the wake of the collateral damages of the global economic system: economic crisis, vast disparities in wealth, and environmental degradation. This intersection can be seen, for example, in how women and children are disproportionately affected by poverty and thus are often disadvantaged by austerity measures and cutbacks on social welfare. In turn, the impoverishment of women and children is due in no small part to the continuing discrimination and pay disparities as well as the economic disadvantages that result from women being the primary caretakers of children and the elderly.

Indeed, within *Women’s Oppression Today* we can see how Barrett tracks and analyzes certain empirical sociological facts and social trends which have become the basis for important research in recent decades, for example, the way in which schools perpetuate traditional notions of femininity

and masculinity (140-142) or the way in which women's responsibility for childcare leaves them vulnerable to certain types of economic exploitation as well as economic disadvantage in contrast to their male peers (157). By now it has become familiar how women tend to occupy caretaking professions that, in a way, replicates their social role within the household (157) and that professions that tend to be more lucrative, such as those involving science and technology, tend to be gendered as male (144-47).

However, while our economic landscape has changed significantly and we have expanded our knowledge of the social dynamics which inhibit economic parity with men (such as implicit bias), the methodology of analysis which takes an honest look at the way in which we theorize class, gender, and the intersection between the two is valuable even though the specifics of social reality have changed. In the first chapter, Barrett discusses important methodological and conceptual issues when addressing the intersection of Marxism and feminism. In this chapter, Barrett describes the "object of Marxist feminism" as "[identifying] the operation of gender relations as and where they may distinct from, or connected with, the processes of production and reproduction understood by historical materialism" (9). This chapter, in a way, provides the framing for the remainder of the book as Barrett addresses more concrete and specific issues where we see the intersection of capitalism and patriarchy as she addresses the issues of sexuality and the social construction of femininity and masculinity (chapter two); ideology in relation to the construction of gender (chapter three); the way in which the educational system reproduces gender stereotypes as well as class inequalities (chapter four); the gendered division of labor (chapter five) and the dynamics of the family in relation to women's subordination (chapter six); the relation of feminism to state politics (chapter seven), and, finally, the relation between the project of women's liberation and its relation (and opposition) to the reproduction of a capitalist system (chapter eight).

Interestingly enough, the areas of most contention and revision within modern feminist theory—the ontology of gender and the dynamics of our sexual practices in relation to patriarchy—is where this work could use more critical engagement. For example, as Barrett notes in her introduction to the 1988 edition, the very concept of gender and its relation to biological differences (which some feminists argue are themselves socially constructed) is a highly controversial concept that warrants theorization (xliv): "Oppression", too, looks rather crude in terms of current feminist work. . . . As for the term "Women", it contains the kernel of a dispute that has problematized the politics of contemporary feminism and come to dominate theoretical polemic" (xxi). While I am perhaps not as quick to surrender the idea of womanhood as an oppressed class or the idea of femininity as a product of patriarchal subordination, it is true that the way in which we theorize and understand gender is going to be central to any feminist critique. It is also important that, insofar as feminism is a political project commitment to women's liberation, that any feminist work adopt a nuanced understanding of what constitutes oppression as well as how its dynamics in relation to the subordination of women.

However, this is interesting from a historical point of view precisely because of the way in which later radical feminists made gender and sexuality the focal point of their theories. Specifically, Catharine MacKinnon, a frequent interlocutor and target of contemporary feminist critique, made the Marxist methodology in conjunction with feminist political practice central to her analysis of gender, sexuality, and sexual practices such as pornography and prostitution. Through this critique, MacKinnon posited a highly contentious but nonetheless influential theory of gender.<sup>1</sup>

It is perhaps impossible to write a work on feminism that can be truly timeless; however, the analysis within *Women's Oppression Today* can still resonate and inform feminist theory.

#### NOTES

1. Catherine MacKinnon, *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

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## *Beauty Unlimited*

Peg Zeglin Brand, ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013). 427 pages. \$28.00. ISBN 978-0-253-00642-4.

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Most artists who are familiar with the contemporary art scene—especially the New York City scene—know that "beauty" is not especially hip. Unless, that is, it serves a "deeper" purpose, e.g., it helps to make a conceptual or political point. Danto's influence, it would seem, pervades and persists (31). But, as Brand points out in her introduction, in the past twenty years or so, the philosophical study of beauty has been making a comeback; she lists over fifty titles that have been written on the subject since the nineties. Brand's book, *Beauty Unlimited*, promises to add to the feminist oeuvre on the subject. The book is comprised of twenty essays, with a foreword by Carolyn Korsmeyer and an introduction by Brand. Although the majority of the essays are interdisciplinary, they are primarily written by trained philosophers. Other essays are written by practicing artists and writers, historians, and cultural anthropologists.

Korsmeyer's forward focuses on a Platonic distinction between the One and the Many. Is beauty a function of the "many," i.e., do we find beauty instantiated in particular, individual things, like human bodies? Or is it a function of the "one"? In other words, is there a purified concept of beauty that transcends the particularity of our bodies and, thus, our sexualized, politicized, and gendered selves? As Korsmeyer points out, a number of the essays in *Beauty Unlimited* focus on the notion of beauty *qua* the particularized many.

Brand explains why in her introduction. She begins by asking us to consider two recent photographs, each depicting a figure surrounded by the rubble of war. Both photographs contain striking visual elements—we might even call them beautiful. But when we understand the context of the

pictures—war destruction, loss—we realize that this beauty comes at a price; it even seems to “hurt” (3). Gone, she tells us, are the “idyllic scenes of the eighteenth century or the tempests of J.M.W. Turner” (2). Instead, these images are “records of human suffering, but not abstracted like the figures in Picasso’s *Guernica*. Instead, they jolt us back to the here and now in their function as ‘real’ scenes of actual lives” (3). These images then—these photographs of actual people—provide a more contemporary vision of beauty. Indeed, she writes, “Such images impugn core philosophical notions like aesthetic distance, disinterest, and simplistic notions of pleasure. Beauty begs for reassessment in order to propel itself forward with intent and resolve” (3). The essays in *Beauty Unlimited* are meant to expose us to contemporary, “new examples” (3) of beauty, especially as they are manifest in the human body. And thus, she writes: “The essays of *Beauty Unlimited* position the readers in the twenty-first century by pointing them forward and forcing them into the future, toward a more extensive and far flung understanding of beauty” (3).

By exposing us to instances of this new, contemporary kind of beauty, Brand hopes to reconfigure the canon. In particular, her intention is to reconfigure the notion of female “agency, mode of representation and embodied identities across cultures” such that we may “expand the concept of beauty” (11). The implication is that beauty should no longer be confined to the pleasure one may take in viewing a female body, or, at the very least, this pleasure may no longer be used as a paradigmatic instance of beauty. Rather, let us consider instances of beauty where female agency is restored—in regard to both the artist and the subject—such that we do not “objecti[fy], sexual[ize] or stulti[fy] the female on view” (13). Doing so provides us with a sense of what Brand refers to as “deep gender,” after Korsmeyer (2004). Brand writes: “A reading of deep gender provides a broader framework in which female artists create and utilize beauty to a more intense degree, reclaiming female agency from the male artists who depicted women in the past” (14). When we begin to appreciate beauty from a feminist perspective, we see that it can be, and is, much more than the beauty of a female body that is presented primarily for the pleasure of males. However, as suggested above, this kind of beauty can be complicated, and at times, “hurt.” To carry out this project, Brand divides the book into four parts: 1) *Revising the Concept of Beauty: Laying the Groundwork*, 2) *Standards of Beauty*, 3) *Body in Performance*, and 4) *Beauty and State*.

In Part 1, *Revising the Concept of Beauty*, we find five essays. Appropriately, the first addresses the Danto problem; particularly, how and why does the concept of beauty “imperil Danto’s system” (30)? For, according to Danto, “dumb beauty,” i.e., beauty that does not augment or otherwise enhance the content of the piece, is rather worthless. The remaining four essays deal with a number of historical approaches to beauty, as well as beauty in relation to race, queer theory, and feminism. In particular, in Monique Roelofs’s “Beauty’s Relational Labor,” we find a discussion of Plato, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Hume, Burke, and Wollstonecraft. Roelofs discusses the ways in which the “moral and political commitments” (73) of each

philosopher are intertwined with their respective notions of beauty.

In Part 2, *Standards of Beauty*, we are given six essays that challenge conventional standards of beauty, or, at least, standards that are generally associated with the female body. Here are discussed indigenous beauty, the notion of the female nude, the ethics of plastic surgery, the phenomenon of Vida Guerra—Cuban model and sex symbol—and the transformation of Frida Kahlo into a paper doll. Brand tells us that these essays serve to “reposition . . . the body, particularly the artist’s body, at the center of increased agency of the female depicted” (17). In other words, at least in part, these essays explore how women may, while retaining agency, use their own bodies as their subject matter.

The majority of the essays in Part 3, *Body in Performance*, explore how the female body is depicted in various kinds of performances, films, or surgeries. Here, we find Brand’s essay “ORLAN Revisited: Disembodied Virtual Hybrid Beauty.” Brand argues that ORLAN, who subjected herself to a series of plastic surgeries to make artistic/philosophical points, is not “monstrous” (306). Brand writes: “Even if ORLAN’s goal is to create a substitute for female beauty or to subvert ideals of physical beauty *per se*, does she warrant the description ‘monstrous?’ Human blood and sutures may indeed be distasteful, or even disgusting, but surely the artist’s intent is more complex than what is seen on the surface” (307).

Finally, in Part 4, *Beauty and the State*, are four essays that explore the relationship between the female body and the state. These essays explore the notion of modesty in the Middle East and North Africa, the concept of orientalism, and the role of the female body in Chinese politics and contemporary art. All of these essays address how a women’s body may or may not be used for political purposes. Brand writes: “To utilize one’s body in the service of the state, or indeed in opposition to the state, can open widening pathways to exploring deep gender in the artworks of various cultures” (19).

This is a rich and informative collection of essays. Most are accessible to anyone who is interested in the topic, regardless of whether she is a philosopher, an artist, or is interested in cultural studies. Moreover, Brand keeps her promise to make a significant contribution to the feminist oeuvre. Because of its accessibility and breadth, this book could be employed in a variety of undergraduate or graduate venues, e.g., courses on the philosophy of beauty, the philosophy of art, anthropology courses, cultural studies courses, and/or studio art courses. I do wish, though, that Korsmeyer had contributed an essay on “deep gender,” since this notion plays such an important role in Brand’s introduction, and concomitantly, the framing of the book. However, the interested reader can, of course, track down this information on her own; the reference is clearly provided.

Finally, I have a rather minor complaint about Brand’s claim that she is presenting a “new” concept of beauty. We certainly *do* need to move beyond concepts of beauty that

do not, among other things, recognize female agency—both in regard to the artist and to the subject matter. This much is obvious. But I don't think that we should call such an inclusive concept of beauty "new" or "contemporary," as Brand so often does, as noted above. Rather, we should call it "correct," or perhaps "more accurate." "New" sounds like the latest fashion, which, as soon as it gets a bit dusty, will be cast aside for something else. However, Brand's insistence on finding a "new" concept of beauty (as opposed to the correct concept) can, in part, be blamed on the art world (Brand is also a professional artist). The contemporary art scene is almost entirely obsessed with the "new," perhaps to the point of being pathological. We might even say that this obsession is, in part, a symptom of a postmodern malaise, i.e., a conviction that all we have is "the new" because there is nothing else, particularly, there is no *truth*. Indeed, because the new object/idea is old almost as soon as it is finished, many contemporary art galleries resonate with a frantic, if not occasionally *desperate*, kind of creative energy. How long can one's work possibly *stay* new? But a better, more inclusive, and less prejudiced concept of beauty need not be associated with such energy. Rather, as suggested above, it merely needs to be correct, or more accurate. Of course, unfortunately, given the way that women have been treated traditionally, this concept might initially seem new, or different. But we should not be motivated to uncover it *because* it is new. Nor should we value it *because* it is new. Rather, as already suggested, we should be motivated to articulate it, and, in turn, value it, because it is right.

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## *Philosophical Feminism and Popular Culture*

Sharon Crasnow and Joanne Waugh, eds. (Lexington Books, 2013). 210 pages. \$39.99 paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7391-9777-6.

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Given nearly two decades of feminist analyses of popular culture from *BITCH* magazine on the one hand, and over one hundred volumes from the philosophy and popular culture series from Open Court and Blackwell on the other, it's surprising that *Philosophical Feminism and Popular Culture* hasn't appeared sooner. In the introduction to their collection, Sharon Crasnow and Joanne Waugh speculate that feminist philosophy's lack of attention to popular culture stems from a widely held view that the proper domain of philosophy is that of the abstract, universal, and ahistorical. Since the study of popular culture (as well as feminism!) concerns matters that are concrete, particular, historically situated, and implicated in social change,

it is viewed as a lesser form of philosophy, if viewed as philosophy at all. Rejecting such a conception, they argue that philosophy ought to study actions, events, and inferences in the context from which they emerge. Given that popular culture is a primary vehicle for presenting and reinforcing gender roles and stereotypes, they argue that feminist philosophers who ignore popular culture fail to engage conversations about gender where they occur.

Crasnow and Waugh are not alone in their defense of the philosophical study of popular culture. William Irwin has characterized the Blackwell series as a form of public philosophy, one which disseminates important philosophical ideas to a wider audience.<sup>1</sup> But unlike many of the essays in the Open Court and Blackwell series, the essays in this volume do not aim to simply teach philosophy using examples from popular culture. Instead, these essays offer philosophical responses to popular culture. Thus, Crasnow and Waugh develop a political argument for engaging with popular culture from a feminist perspective: examining the representation of women in comedy, film, television, and popular literature enables us to challenge those representations and create possibilities for social and cultural change.

In their introduction to the collection, Crasnow and Waugh respond to several arguments against paying serious attention to popular culture. These arguments defend the view that mass art fails to be genuine art because (1) it is manufactured for mass consumption, (2) it is designed to be accessible to audiences, and (3) it is formulaic in both its means and ends. Referencing Noël Carroll's responses<sup>2</sup> to each of these arguments, Crasnow and Waugh point out that (1) mass production does not entail that a work lacks taste, sensitivity, and intelligence, (2) accessibility does not preclude active engagement on the part of the audience, and (3) plenty of "genuine" art has a formulaic character. Then, Crasnow and Waugh summarize the eight essays in the collection, identifying how each undermines arguments against the study of popular culture: Willett and Willett's discussion of the political power of comedy and Zack's discussion of the tension between the subversion and reinforcement of stereotypes in minstrelsy challenge the view that pop culture audiences are doomed to passivity. Oliver's discussion of the persistence of stereotypes and formulas in attempts to offer non-traditional narratives and Wright's discussion of the dominance of "choice feminism" in popular culture are relevant to the discussion of the formulaic character of art. The essays by Schultz, Ingle, Crasnow, and Waugh demonstrate the possibilities for a philosophical engagement with mass-produced popular culture such as television and popular literature. The narratives discussed in these essays challenge the rhetoric of choice and the use of such rhetoric to perpetuate gender inequality and interfere with feminist solidarity.

My favorite essays in this collection are those from Willett and Willett, Ingle, and Crasnow. Each of them exemplifies Crasnow and Waugh's argument for the political relevance of feminist philosophy's engagement with popular culture. In what follows, I summarize these three essays and comment on what I find most inspiring about them.

Cynthia Willett and Julie Willett's essay, "The Seriously Erotic Politics of Laughter: Bitches, Whores and Other Fumerists," offers a delightful beginning to the collection. Not only do they argue for bringing humor into academic practices and social movements, their prose demonstrates as much. Emphasizing the subversive power of feminist humor on knowledge and power, Willett and Willett provide examples from "fumerists" such as Roseanne Barr, Wanda Sykes, Margaret Cho, and Tina Fey, who disrupt oppressive norms regarding motherhood and sexuality. Moreover, Willett and Willett outline a genealogy of feminist humor by uncovering the democratic power and cathartic effects of humor, reminiscent of Linda Bell's arguments<sup>3</sup> for the revolutionary potential of play. This essay not only arouses bursts of laughter from its readers, it inspires feminist educators to integrate comedy into our classrooms as a tool for disarming the backlash against feminism.

A comparison of the representation of women in contemporary television to past representations reveals much about both what has changed and what remains the same. In "Power and Aggression: Reflections on the Women of *Battlestar Galatica*," Jennifer Ingle compares the 1978 and 2003 versions of the television series. She argues that, despite the progressive potential of the science fiction genre, both shows reflect the values, systems, and beliefs of their times. In the case of the earlier version, gender difference is prominent, and power comes to the female characters only temporarily and by default. In the later version, although there are several very prominent and powerful female leaders, they are able to achieve respect only through the adoption of masculine traits. This astute critique leads the reader to consider whether his/her favorite female protagonists have power in virtue of their emulation of masculinity instead of portraying alternative images of female leadership. Take Lisbeth Salander, the female protagonist from Steig Larsson's popular *Millennium Trilogy*, as an example. Joanne Waugh, in "The Girl Who Made Us Think about Autonomy" argues that Lisbeth epitomizes Beauvoir's "independent woman," one who is economically, socially, sexually, and morally autonomous. While Lisbeth is repeatedly victimized by *män som hatar kvinnor* (i.e., men who hate women), she refuses to be a victim. Instead, she is a "fully functioning, active, and self-sufficient individual, ready to choose her own goals and live on her own terms, neither subservient to nor dominating others, but ready to take revenge on those who wrong her" (142). In light of Ingle's critique, Waugh's characterization of Lisbeth's autonomy is arguably founded upon a masculine conception of the ideal self, one that is self-sufficient and unaffected by social relationships, rather than relationally connected to others and autonomous in virtue of those relations.

For those of us looking for new ways to understand the pervasiveness of workplace discrimination despite the improvement in the representation of women in most professions, Sharon Crasnow's "Why Does *Mad Men* Make Us So Mad?" has a lot to offer. Her analysis of *Mad Men's* depiction of gender relations in the workplace clarifies the two forms of sexual harassment, *quid pro quo* and hostile work environment, and would pair nicely with Keith Dromm's *Sexual Harassment: An Introduction to the Conceptual and Ethical Issues*.<sup>4</sup> Most compellingly, Crasnow employs Miranda Fricker's notion of epistemic injustice<sup>5</sup> to understand how the women in *Mad Men* experience not only testimonial injustice—their credibility as knowers is systematically undermined through gender stereotypes—but also hermeneutical injustice—they are unable to name the injustice they experience due to a lack of a collective understanding of their plight. Crasnow concludes her essay with a call for feminist solidarity as the foundation for building the collective resources necessary for naming and responding to injustice in our world.

This collection is aptly marketed for "feminist philosophers, students in feminist philosophy or gender and women's studies courses, and others interested in gender issues in popular media." I recently used it to great effect as the core text for an undergraduate senior seminar focused on representations of sexuality and gender in popular culture. Unfortunately, the book has a few too many copyediting mistakes, the worst of which are in the essay by Schultz. Nevertheless, it elicited serious discussion of a number of contemporary feminist concerns: How does the depiction of feminism in popular culture promote or hinder feminist aims? How can feminists use popular culture to raise awareness of violence against women without inadvertently perpetuating the representation of women as weak, helpless victims? How can feminists leverage popular culture to build a social movement and counter the current trend of "choice feminism"? While there is a lot of popular culture missing from this book—e.g., music, video games, comics, social media, reality television, news and infotainment, advertising, fashion—and the popular culture in question is distinctly American, I hope that this collection encourages more work in this area, perhaps even a series of its own.

#### NOTES

1. See, e.g., William Irwin, "Writing for the Reader: A Defense of Philosophy and Popular Culture Books," *Essays in Philosophy* 12, no. 1 (2014).
2. Noël Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
3. See, e.g., Linda A. Bell, *Rethinking Ethics in the Midst of Violence: A Feminist Approach to Freedom* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1993).
4. Keith Dromm, *Sexual Harassment: An Introduction to the Conceptual and Ethical Issues* (Petersborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2012).
5. Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

## *The Body and Shame: Phenomenology, Feminism, and the Socially Shaped Body*

Luna Dolezal (London: Lexington Books, 2015). 181 pages. \$80. ISBN 978-0-7391-8168-3.

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In *The Body and Shame: Phenomenology, Feminism, and the Socially Shaped Body*, Luna Dolezal explores the concept of body shame by drawing on phenomenological and social constructivist theories. The topic is one which women and members of marginalized groups will particularly recognize from their own experiences, and Dolezal makes a strong case for the specific shame-proneness of said groups. Her positing of shame in relation to gender, and the compulsive body management and interventionist practices developed by women to stave off feelings of shame, are now, probably more than ever, relevant to neo-liberal, Western societies increasingly obsessed with narrow beauty norms. Indeed, Dolezal assesses the increased acceptance of cosmetic surgery as a symptom of the simultaneous pathologization of women's bodies, and the scientific provision of a means of redressing shame stemming from perceived bodily abnormality. By first theorizing the phenomenon of body shame and related ideas concerning embodiment, intentionality, and objectification, Dolezal develops a framework with which to address the political and social ramifications of shame, while also noting shame's necessary and constitutive role in the formation of subjectivities.

Dolezal proceeds as follows: chapters one through three establish and then position the concept of body shame within theories of embodiment by Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, Foucault, and Elias. Chapters four to six entail an exposition of a phenomenology of self-presentation, as Dolezal further draws on work by Bourdieu and Goffman, and develops a reading of the cultural politics of shame, which finally issues in a feminist analysis of body management and cosmetic surgery. The book thus begins with a rather specific, narrow focus on the body itself—a criticism commonly made of phenomenological work on the body, noted by Dolezal for overlooking intersubjectivity and the social and political relations of embodied subjectivities experiencing, or able to experience, shame—then widens its scope to include embodiment and shame in our encounters with others, assesses the structural social and political implications thereof, and again hones its analysis by focusing in on the particular examples of a gendered body shame manifest through bodily manipulation and the surgical shaping of seemingly aberrant bodies. Dolezal moves deftly between the philosophical and sociological theories of embodiment she explores, and employs key concepts, such as normalization, internalization, and the normate, to productively further her project of describing and tracing body shame across a variety of contexts that are particularly of interest to feminists.

Her investigation of how shame functions with regard to power asymmetries of race, class, and gender is brought

to life by an analysis of cosmetic surgery that disallows appeals to false consciousness as a simple explanatory factor and that secures a place for women's agency in decisions made to ameliorate or circumvent body shame. As she concludes in chapter 6, "cosmetic surgery, driven by body shame, is being utilized by marginalized individuals—female, disabled, raced, transgendered and others—as a means to achieve recognition through (in)visibility" (146). (In)visibility, is, in Dolezal's phenomenology of self-presentation, likened to "passing," where the body is both "seen" and "not seen" (80), "'visible' in social relations . . . but at the same time . . . unremarkable," as "one's appearance and comportment are in equilibrium with normative social expectations" (81). It forms an amalgam of the previously presented concepts of "invisibility" and "visibility"—the former denoting an uninterrupted "flow" of bodily experience that allows one's awareness of the body to recede into the background (26); the latter a rupture of this "flow" that brings one's body into conscious awareness (27). Following Drew Leder, "visibility" is also termed "dys-appearance," as the body comes to be foregrounded in experience through dysfunction, caused, for instance, by injury or pain (28).

Shame, in this account, creates the unpleasant experience of "visibility," as feelings of inadequacy feed into anxiety "about one's social standing and social bonds" (81), and must, therefore, be avoided, or at least managed. For, as Dolezal argues, shame can never be entirely eliminated, despite the harsh effects it may have on one's sense of belonging and the ability to "pass" socially. Moreover, given Sartre's description of feeling shame when thinking one has been discovered while sneakily looking through a keyhole, "the Look" materializes one's seen body (31), with shame "giv[ing] rise to a self-evaluative structure in consciousness," allowing us to "see and judge ourselves" (81). Coupled with Foucault's and Elias's accounts of the disciplining and civilizing processes bodies undergo, and the threats to social belonging Goffman's "spoiled [that is, stigmatized] identity" poses, these descriptions of how the body is experienced, especially in one's social and political milieu, are convincingly constructed. For me, they become most interesting, though, when Dolezal broaches the question of whether certain groups are more or less able to deal with shame, and whether shame is experienced differently by historically privileged or marginalized subjects.

Citing Frantz Fanon's critique of "the Look," and Sandra Bartky's work on gender and shame in *Femininity and Domination*, Dolezal argues that "shame experienced by members of subordinated groups is . . . different in nature from, and . . . more pernicious than, the shame experienced by socially privileged or dominant individuals" (92). Not being the authors of a society's scripts on shamefulness, marginalized subjects are particularly prone to experience shame as a *group*, and may do so across generations as a constant "background of pain and self-consciousness" that becomes amplified in "moments of exposure" (92). Such chronic shame, Dolezal maintains, is thus disproportionately felt by members of subordinated groups, who bear the brunt of its negative effects in the form of depression and related psychological and cognitive impairment (93). In the

last couple of chapters, Dolezal builds upon this insight in an analysis of the particularly gendered experience of body shame, where themes of objectification and surveillance resurface in an elucidation of the “male gaze,” as women’s constantly visible bodies are available for consumption by a real “or imagined third-person spectator” (112).

Dolezal returns to the harms shame can wreak, and questions cosmetic surgery’s ability to redress psychological anguish that is induced by powerful industries peddling gendered, racialized beauty norms on the one hand, and seemingly ready-made solutions for living up to same, on the other. Her discussion of corrective ideals, outlined, for instance, in the plastic surgeons’ handbook, *Proportions of the Aesthetic Face*, is particularly disturbing, since it highlights so starkly the elevation of white, feminine beauty against which “‘deviant’ appearances, such as older faces . . . , the features particular to an ethnic group, or facial characteristics as a result of some genetic disorder” are deemed “aberrant” and in “need [of] ‘correction’” (134). While Dolezal laments the fact that cosmetic surgery is increasingly cast in liberatory terms, supposedly forming just one more tool for the contemporary agent’s personal self-fulfillment, she notes the power medicalization holds for shamed subjects, as a diagnosis and therapeutic framework can go some way toward relieving shame through classification, making one feel that one is not alone with one’s (perceived) shortcomings.

Drawing on critiques of Foucault’s disciplined bodies, Dolezal rejects a view of women as passive subjects, shaped by social and political forces that devalue their bodies—on the contrary, Dolezal argues, women experiencing chronic body shame are usually aware of such forces—but holds that a middle ground between passivity and free agency most truthfully reflects women’s navigation of body shame. In this, as in many other themes covered throughout the book, Dolezal proves herself to be a judicious reader of the complexities of the experience of shame, and despite her sometimes tentative language, *The Body and Shame* is a bold work that will be of interest to theorists working on embodiment and shame, and to those with a general curiosity about how shame, and the political and social structures maintaining and reinforcing shame, function in our daily lives.

While I do have some reservations about parts of her exposition—I am not entirely convinced that treating transgender cases as of a piece with other subjects desiring a physical reshaping of the body, although gender and shame may, of course, intersect in similar ways (129, 146); and it is regrettable that she fails to mention the important work feminist activists are doing to redress body shame and to highlight the denigration of women’s bodies as a structural rather than individual problem (118)—I think Dolezal is persuasive overall and presents an argument that is also affectively supported by personal reflections on body shame. Her work is carefully set out within certain parameters, stating what the book covers and what it does not, and some of the themes not fully explored here, or lying outside of the book’s remit, are definitely worth exploring, as the topic merits further investigation, especially from a feminist perspective. I look forward to reading more of

Dolezal’s work as she engages in such further exploration and hope she continues to produce exciting philosophical work that focuses on issues that are, or should be, of critical concern to feminists today.

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## *Why Race and Gender Still Matter: An Intersectional Approach*

Namita Goswami, Maeve M. O’Donovan, and Lisa Yount, eds. (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2014). 243 pages. ISBN -13: 9781848934511

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It is hardly news that mainstream feminism has often mistakenly universalized the situation of white women and then understood sexism on this basis. Dominant civil rights discourse has had a similar problem, too often viewing racism primarily as it affects men of color. The combined result, of course, is that the situation of women of color remains largely unaddressed. And as long as racism and sexism are understood in this partial way, it is not particularly helpful, and may even be misleading, to say simply that women of color experience the harms of sexism combined with those of racism and leave it at that. This realization has been a long time coming, but now, some twenty years after Kimberl e Crenshaw famously coined the term “intersectionality,” it is finally widely acknowledged that one cannot theorize about women or gender without also attending in a fundamental way to other categories of social identity and power, such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, and ability.<sup>1</sup>

Hailed by some as feminism’s most important recent theoretical advance, an intersectional perspective has for the past two decades or so provided the framework for countless feminist projects in the humanities and social sciences. Only more recently has the notion of intersectionality itself come under close theoretical scrutiny, uncovering deep questions, disagreements, and confusions about the nature of identity, experience, knowledge, oppression, gender categories, and, indeed, social categories in general. Some of the essays in this volume engage directly with these questions, some apply intersectional thinking to particular cases, and some—perhaps the best among them—do both. But this collection has an additional aim: to show how an intersectional approach, however it is understood, can help reinvigorate philosophy, a discipline in which, for the most part, the idea of intersectionality has not been debated or even discredited so much as entirely ignored. To address this problem, the editors have assembled a group of feminist philosophers who are “diverse in age, professional status, ethnic background, regional location and area of expertise,” and whose combined voices demonstrate just what an intersectional approach can offer philosophy, as well as the other way around (1).

The idea of intersectionality, the editors suggest, is necessarily fluid and open to diverse perspectives, the better to provide a “more complete picture of truth” (3). At the same time, however, this open-ended character must not dilute the original aim of an intersectional approach: to provide a remedy for the way the privilege, especially the racial privilege, encoded in categories like “woman” consigns the most marginalized women to invisibility. It’s no wonder, then, that while some of these essays celebrate the openness and fluidity of an intersectional approach, others are more concerned with anchoring it to insights and perspectives that complement this original aim. Kathryn T. Gines, for example, in “Race Women, Race Men and Early Expressions of Intersectionality,” brings to our attention just how clearly Sojourner Truth (1797–1883), Maria W. Stewart (1803–1879), Anna Julia Cooper (1858/9–1964), and Ida B. Wells (1862–1931), black women whom Gines calls “proto-intersectional” thinkers, saw that neither white women nor black men could speak for them—something, Gines shows, that even the most progressive of their male contemporaries, like Frederick Douglass and W. E. B. DuBois, didn’t fully appreciate. Incisive, clear, and informative, this discussion shows that the idea of intersectionality originated not in the academy, nor even with black feminists of the 1960s or 1970s, but two centuries ago, with black female intellectuals—race women—who, analyzing their own experiences, saw clearly that the oppressions of race and sex combined are importantly different from the oppressions suffered by either white women or men of color. This focus on experience, emphasized in Crenshaw’s original articles and widely shared by much intersectional work, is highlighted as well by Kristen Waters’s “Past as Prologue: Intersectional Analysis from the Nineteenth Century to the Twenty-First.” Also drawing on the work of black woman intellectuals, Waters argues that a “strong” intersectional approach—one that focuses on power imbalances rather than simply celebrating differences—must make use of a standpoint theory that recognizes the authoritative character of the experience of oppressed groups even as it uncovers an epistemology of ignorance that works against this recognition. Indeed, Waters suggests that standpoint theory might be useful in thinking not just about race and gender but also about the sorts of traditional, supposedly universal problems dear to mainstream philosophy.

Kristy Dotson’s thoughtful contribution, “Making Sense: The Multistability of Oppression and the Importance of Intersectionality,” maintains this focus on power even while taking a slightly more expansive perspective. Dotson’s close and penetrating reading of the Combahee River Collective’s “A Black Feminist Statement,” one of the signature works of 1970s black American feminism, reveals that document’s adherence to two conflicting understandings of oppression, one in terms of separate social systems (in particular, racism and sexism) and the other in terms of the unified experience of those jeopardized by more than one such system. However, rather than criticize this tension, Dotson argues that the Combahee River Collective models an approach that offers multiple ways to understand oppression, which is itself, in Dotson’s terminology, “multistable,” or capable of assuming different forms depending on the social location

of the oppressed. What is needed, on Dotson’s view, is an approach open-ended enough to consolidate what can be learned from these different perspectives. To demonstrate just what she means, Dotson offers a compelling reading of the Trayvon Martin tragedy as involving not just race but also the threat of racialized sexual violence.

Not all of the contributors to this volume, it should be said, accept the idea of intersectionality without reservation. Tina Chanter and Anna Carastathis both urge us to view an intersectional approach as primarily transitional or provisional. Chanter, drawing on the work of Jacques Rancière, expresses a deep suspicion of identity categories generally, including intersectional ones. While such categories may serve to empower marginalized groups in certain circumstances, inevitably they become part of the “police order,” setting up norms that confine and discipline in familiar, oppressive ways. Carastathis’s worry seems less about the nature of categories in general than about the tendency of intersectional approaches to accept without question the autonomy of the intersecting categories, especially those of race and gender. While Carastathis acknowledges that intersectional approaches may be important for uncovering hidden racism, she argues that they also inevitably fragment and misrepresent the experiences of marginalized groups. Indeed, in Carastathis’s view, it’s not surprising that white academic feminists are so quick to endorse an intersectional approach, which inoculates against the charge of racism even as it leaves matters much as they were. Whether or not Carastathis is right about the tendency of an intersectional framework to fragment the experience of women of color, it’s worth pointing out that another contributor, Heather Rakes, values this framework expressly for showing the fragmentary nature of *all* subjects’ experience. Intersectionality, on her view, understands “subjectivity to have multiple intersecting dimensions; each subject position is constructed by an identity with regard to race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, religion, age, nation and global region” (158). Indeed, Rakes’s version of intersectionality seems to accept rather than to criticize an additive notion of identities and oppressions, and so is at odds with most of these essays, which regard race and gender as deeply intermeshed.

However, the manner and extent of this intermeshing are not always agreed upon. In “Transitional Subjects: Gender, Race and the Biopolitics of the Real,” for example, Marie Draz uses Foucault’s notion of biopower as the arbiter of “the real” to rethink in interesting ways the tension between queer-feminist and transgender accounts of embodiment. But while she suggests that race, also a construction of biopower, mediates and is mediated by naturalized categories of sex and gender, other contributors regard the race/gender connection as more comprehensive and deeper, to the point where it may be misleading to abstract one from the other. As we have seen, Dotson, Gines, and, to some extent, Waters and Carastathis all understand race and gender to be fused in the experiences of women of color (and perhaps in *all* subjects’ experiences, although white privilege can obscure this). Others suggest ways that race and gender are fused on a categorial level. In “Purposeful Nonsense, Intersectionality and the Mission to Save Black Babies,” Melissa M. Kozma and Jeanine

Weekes Schroer see this categorial fusion at work in a kind of intersectional stereotype threat, which combines with “purposeful nonsense”—a close relative of both Stephen Colbert’s notion of “truthiness” and Harry Frankfurt’s of “bullshit”—to target and harm African-American women. And in “Caster Semenya: Reasoning Up Front with Race”—a truly superb essay—Janine Jones reconsiders the case of Caster Semenya, the South African track champion who was subjected to invasive and inconclusive sex-determination tests. While such theorists of sex difference as Ann Fausto-Sterling, Alice Dreger, and Judith Butler have viewed the case primarily as evidence against a realist conception of binary sex difference, Jones demonstrates how absolutely fundamental race is to the ways Semenya’s body was dissected, exhibited, and found wanting. Indeed, Jones argues, the Semenya affair, like the (white) response to Beyoncé, Michelle Obama, and Serena Williams, is a chapter in a centuries-old construction of black femaleness as oxymoronic. And if one is still unconvinced, Jones cites empirical evidence gathered from a study of “predominantly white undergraduates from a large north-eastern U.S. university” who consistently misclassified black women as men (292). So much for the idea of “woman” as a race-neutral category.

Clearly, then, these essays demonstrate how much philosophers have to offer the study of intersectionality. But the editors mean as well to show what intersectional thinking has to offer philosophy. They claim, reasonably enough, that those academic fields most likely to value intersectional approaches already “embrace pluralism and diversity” in both “practice and demography” (5). Philosophy, alas, is not one of those fields. Indeed, the title of this anthology, “Why Race and Gender Still Matter,” may itself be a bit of a misnomer, since mainstream philosophy has never quite acknowledged that race and gender, either singly or together, do matter to the discipline, at least not in any fundamental way. It might seem that philosophy, of all disciplines, would have an interest in grappling with “the problem of sameness and difference and relations of power” (7). But one can’t help but think here of Charles Mills (an important influence on several contributors to this anthology), who asks how John Rawls, in his magisterial work on social justice, could have failed to mention the institution of American slavery. Mills chalks up this pointed failure to what he calls the epistemology of ignorance—a notion referred to more than once in this anthology. Is philosophy worse in this regard than other disciplines? Jennifer Scuro, in her essay “Theory Can Heal,” relates this telling anecdote: A feminist philosopher who took Peggy MacIntosh’s interdisciplinary workshop on diversifying the curriculum found herself stymied about how to apply MacIntosh’s instructions to philosophy classes. Asked for further guidance, MacIntosh replied, “Whenever I do these workshops and a philosopher is in attendance I get basically the same questions. I just don’t know what to say to you philosophers. Philosophy is a hard case” (182). Indeed, philosophy’s problems may be deep and many, but their solution surely will involve philosophers like the contributors to this volume, whose work is guided not only by their disciplinary expertise but also by their experience, their ideals, their willingness to cross disciplinary boundaries, and, most of all, the breadth and clarity of their

vision.

**NOTES**

1. See Kimberl ee Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Anti-Discrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Anti-Racist Politics,” *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140 (1989): 139–67; and “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1241–99.

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## *Gender and Global Justice*

Alison M. Jaggar, ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014). 288 pages. \$82.00 hardcover, \$25.45 paperback. ISBN: 9780745663760.

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This book facilitates a convergence of global ethics and feminist theory by examining how sexist stereotyping and related mechanisms of social differentiation function cross culturally so that majorities participating in the global market figure not as economic players but as cheap extraction and tilling power, as cut-rate household commodities, expendable reproduction tools, versatile survival kits, and as disposable leisure toys. Alison Jaggar introduces the collection with a sturdy minimalist sketch of Western political thought about justice since the Reformation, indicating the pivotal position of Rawls’s liberal focus on equality, and the subsequent emergence of Western feminist thought and practice from critical race theory and decolonization movements of the 1960s. However, rather than raising entirely new issues, these studies of gender-based inequity rooted in transnational economic policy and praxis “break new ground” (16) by bringing to mainstream philosophical attention the way that women’s concerns have been framed in the African and Asian “Women in Development” literature since the 1970s.<sup>1</sup>

In chapter one, Jaggar emphasizes that gender inequities are not functions of isolated, idiosyncratic social formations specific to one or another non-Western cultural tradition around the world (21) but are manifestations of underlying internationalized arrangements and transcultural structures (23), which perpetuate the very most basic threats to survival and to personal integrity currently facing humankind, chiefly in the service of private multinational business enterprise, and its handmaiden neo-liberal democratic statesmanship. The most instructive chapters of this anthology amplify this point by highlighting the effects of oversimplification committed within Western political traditions by those analyzing the processes of global resource misdistribution and labor mismanagement, yet doing so without sufficiently robust conviction to provide compelling remedies for even the most blatant prevailing injustices witnessed worldwide.

In chapter six, titled “Discourses of Sexual Violence in a Global Context,” Linda Mart n Alcoff emphasizes the need to refrain from “universalizing our local frameworks” of “contract-based . . . individualistic societies” (123). She

indicates how the “overly inflated sense of individual agency” connoted by stock terms that occur in descriptions of sexual violence “meant to address oppression . . .” (specifically: “consent,” “honor,” and “victim”) nonetheless can support conservative agendas (125) elsewhere in societies that are not “contract-based.” One wishes Alcoff’s analysis would extend to other open-textured concepts that carry provincial assumptions with unintended implications beyond their home use. Such terms that figure in this very anthology without circumspection include “central relationship,” “corruption,” “legitimate political authority,” “property,” “public,” “land,” and “entitlement.” For instance, in chapter three, “The Moral Harm of Migrant Carework: Realizing a Global Right to Care,” Eva Feder Kittay sustains an inadvertently parochial conclusion about the conditions that compel a migrant domestic worker’s children to feel that their mother has transplanted her love by caring for strangers far away, leaving them behind with relatives (82). It is fairly safe to generalize that within postcolonial societies, even intimate relationships with foreigners are sustained in an amoral domain which the sociologist Peter Ekeh has labeled the “civic public.” These remain in stark contrast with relationships conducted in the “primordial public” where most individuals retain their sense of integrity, their innermost expectations, and moral obligations to other people.<sup>2</sup> The complex impact this has had for African immigrants abroad has been the focus of a rich literary, poetic, and dramatic genre. Correlatively, in societies where marriage occurs between families rather than between individuals, one’s central relationships are not negotiable in isolation. There may be several primary carers responsible for rearing oneself and one’s own children, for instance.<sup>3</sup> It would be valuable to learn Kittay’s reflections about the harm done to migrant domestic carers whose sense of moral integrity and conative attitudes are formulated in matriarchal or other kinship-based societies, who have been socialized in a “frontier or boundary situation”<sup>4</sup> between antagonistic knowledge legacies and divergent cultural traditions.

In chapter four, “Transnational Rights and Wrongs: Moral Geographies of Gender and Migration,” Rachel Silvey provides an antidote for simplistic global dichotomies like rich North vs. poor South, foreign vs. domestic, national vs. local, tradition vs. modernity. She notes the promethean nature of concepts like “nation,” “national belonging,” and “citizenship.” Silvey uses the metaphor of geographic scale, a device constructed for calibration, to illuminate the complex interdependence of global agencies with nation-state authorities and with local elites. She stresses the need to appreciate how the same patterns of abuse faced by low-wage alien workers abroad are encountered on home soil by marginalized citizens caught in the exploitive class hierarchies emerging within perverted capitalist satellites (86). The emergence of these classes can be directly linked to transnational campaigns to consolidate capital and streamline production (e.g., macro-agribusiness’s pro-poor policies have had the effects in Africa of shrinking options for smallholders and creating social inequalities that did not exist before).<sup>5</sup> To understand these global formations, Silvey cautions against the distortions generated by parochialisms such as conceiving the “nation-state as the basic regulatory actor” in defense of human rights (97).

Ironically, other chapters illustrate the basis for Silvey’s concern that “feminist writing is unwittingly complicit in creating the problems it tries to address” (90). For instance, in chapter seven’s recommendations for “Reforming Our Taxation Arrangements to Promote Global Gender Justice,” Gillian Brock expands approvingly upon the example set by WHO (153), suggesting that a comparable international body should act as a manager of taxed revenues to ensure redistribution of social goods will improve the lot of the world’s poorest. She thereby reflects a G8-centric naiveté about the increasingly subaltern role that the WHO plays in the multinational pharmaceutical monolith.<sup>6</sup>

In chapter two, “Transnational Women’s Collectivities and Global Justice,” Hye-Ryoung Kang addresses the efforts to mobilize defenses of migrant care workers transnationally. But Kang reifies a clear demarcation between national and transnational spheres of moral agency to build a theoretical framework wherein the ethical claims made by solidarity movements are irreducible to the individuated legal entitlements of their members. Kang seeks to produce a vocabulary of labor and gender rights that transcends the legal instruments of any particular nation state. So she posits the existence of working women’s “collectivities” as *sui generis* moral claimants. But without more careful work than space allows in her essay, Kang’s postulating a new type of group agency seems to distract and hypostasize rather than to resolve the obstacles posed by both the cosmopolitan model and the nationalist framework of moral entitlement that she so comprehensively critiques in the early portion of her chapter. Some blatant inaccuracies and misconceptions mar her discussion; for example, *contra* Kang, institutions of global authority do not function “by playing roles analogous to, though not the same as, those of the basic structures of nation-states” (42). Would that Kang was right about this; alas, if the current global economic system of conventions and rules did not exempt global authorities so meticulously from the arduous obligations and burdens of stewardship borne by nation-states on behalf of their citizens, then the transnational business actors could not hide behind international private trade law, remaining wholly unaccountable and irresponsible to those publics suffering the egregious costs of these global elites’ free market activities.<sup>7</sup> Kang asserts other dubious claims, such as “the integration of national economies into a global market has produced a fairly unified socio-economic unit . . . at a global level” (42). This assertion diverges widely from a range of received accounts of the relation between economically dominant metropolises and their so-called developing satellites.<sup>8</sup> Kang intimates that “fair trade labels” (49) secure improvement for otherwise exploited producers in these foreign-indebted, basically agrarian economies. But the actual consequences of fair-trade regimes are very uneven; for example, a beneficial scenario for Palestinian olive oil producers contrasts radically with the negative effects of fair-trade marketing for cocoa, cotton, and coffee producers throughout Africa.

Scott Wisor’s “Gender Injustice and the Resource Curse: Feminist Assessment and Reform” in chapter eight shares the tacit but mistaken presumption that a strict dividing line in all but definition persists between political nation-states, international regulatory organizations, research

consortia and think tanks, international business elites, and the wealthiest NGO charities functioning in the twenty-first century global economy. Thus, Wisor proposes that through an undifferentiated international gaze, the competing claims to “legitimacy” of a nation-state regime in conflict with sub-national authorities, together with their respective policies and schedules of implementation, can be adjudicated to determine whose moral right it is to extract resources and under what conditions. But Wisor’s analysis overlooks the historically and culturally embedded conflict over the very criteria of entitlement, legitimate political authority, and proper understanding of land as a community’s attribute cherished independently of any exchange value. These social concepts are essentially contestable,<sup>9</sup> particularly within postcolonial regions of the world where the very existence of centralized state authority is routinely challenged, and where the primordial public has procedures for ensuring good governance which are intentionally camouflaged from the foreign gaze. Postcolonial primordial publics are characteristically indifferent to the epiphenomena of central state multi-party politics. In primordial publics, national and foreign agents with their local insurgents continue to be morally indiscernible collaborators, responsible corporately for maintaining the worst commercial atrocities, with impunity and without ceasing, since the days of feudal mercantilism. Arguably, Wisor’s proposal for assessing legitimacy requires further development to work out appropriate criteria of legitimacy, given the varied political histories and cultural settings in which resources continue to be extracted by foreign interlopers.

Happily, it is only in a portion of one contribution where special pleading appears. In chapter five, “Global Gender Injustice and Mental Disorders,” Abigail Gosselin begins her review of the factors contributing to female self-destructive behavior with socio-economic hardship. Then she depicts the global division of creative and intellectual labor, together with the global media’s portrayal of gender norms, as disturbing women’s (initially voluntary) eating habits, compelling the shallow self-awareness and dwarfed sense of agency associated with femininity. Surely it would be morally and theoretically commendable if Gosselin’s focus upon hermeneutic injustice in the global media extended to include the vastly greater number of women who have no choice but to remain grossly overweight, who die of TB and pneumonia not because of any norms of sexual promiscuity but because their cooking stoves and ventilation are so poor that the levels of domestic air pollution they sustain in their own homes is fatal.<sup>10</sup>

While Gosselin’s analysis of the causes underlying women’s psychosomatic effects of obsessive self-control and self-harm is certainly engrossing, it is inescapably reminiscent of the Frankfurt School’s social critique of industrialized societies’ regimentation and the pressures of corporate conformity through mass-marketed culture. The theme of thwarted and diminished self-understanding in late capitalist modernity generated a whole literature of humanistic psychology inspired by Herbert Marcuse, including Erich Fromm, Irving Goffman, R.D. Laing, and Abraham Maslow. It is hard to avoid wondering whether Gosselin’s analysis of the medical commoditization of self-

worth would account just as well for the equally alarming increase in erectile dysfunction and prostate cancer, increasing rates of hypertension and cardio vascular disease among retrenched male workers, increasing suicide rates among waning star professional athletes and hopelessly indebted peasant farmers. Perhaps better understanding would unfold if both victimization and perpetration were regarded as joint yields of transnational cycles that impel men and women alike to enact different roles in violently aggressive heterosexual behavior, homophobia, the enforcement of female illiteracy, and clitoral mutilation.

Overall, to look circumspectly and comprehensively at the causes and potential remedies of gender-based injustice requires an inclusively and historically sensitive normative framework. Jaggar has emphasized over decades of work on gendered global injustice, the validity and relevance of a variety of cultural, political, and moral standpoints. However, despite the editor’s explicit insistence (22, 89, 90), this inclusive type of background framework seems to be missing from several of the analyses on offer here. But such absences are no more conspicuous in this anthology than in the more general philosophical literature concerned with global socio-economic justice to date.

#### NOTES

1. See the excellent overview of Patricia Stamp, *Technology, Gender and Power in Africa* (Ottawa: International Development Research Council, 1989).
2. Peter P. Ekeh, “Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement,” in *Reclaiming the Human Sciences and Humanities through African Perspectives*, ed. H. Lauer and K. Anyidoho (Accra: Sub Saharan Press, 2012 [1975]), 200–32.
3. Akosua Adomako Ampofo, “Whose ‘Unmet Need’? Dis/Agreements about Childbearing among Ghanaian Couples: A Critique of Standard ‘KAP’ (‘Knowledge-Attitudes-Practices’) Survey Methodology,” in *Reclaiming the Human Sciences and Humanities through African Perspectives*, ed. H. Lauer and K. Anyidoho (Accra: Sub Saharan Press, 2012), 624–42.
4. Alasdair MacIntyre, “Relativism, Power, and Philosophy,” in *After Philosophy: End or Transformation?*, ed. K. Baynes et al. (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1987), 388.
5. Kojo S. Amanor, “Global Food Chains, African Smallholders and World Bank Governance,” *Journal of Agrarian Change* 9, no. 2 (April 2009): 247–62.
6. Peter C. Gøtzsche, *Deadly Medicines and Organised Crime: How Big Pharma Has Corrupted Healthcare* (New York: Radcliffe Publishing, 2013) 30.
7. Ann Claire Cutler, “Locating ‘Authority’ in the Global Political Economy,” *International Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (1999): 59–81.
8. Samir Amin, “World Poverty, Pauperization and Capital Accumulation,” *Monthly Review* 55, no. 5 (2003): 5–10.
9. Alasdair MacIntyre, “The Essential Contestability of Some Social Concepts,” *Ethics* 84, no. 1 (1973): 1–9.
10. Jacob Songso, et al. *State of Environmental Health Report of the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area 2001* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 2005).

## *Living Alterities: Phenomenology, Embodiment, and Race*

Emily Lee, ed. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press. 2014). 300 pages. \$90.00 hardcover, \$25.95 paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4384-5016-2.

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In *Living Alterities*, Emily Lee has assembled an engaging and stimulating collection of essays written by leading philosophers of race working within, or at least sympathetic to, the phenomenological tradition. The particular thematic focus, as the subtitle makes clear, is on the significance of embodiment for our theorization of race and racism. As Lee points out in her introduction, there is a tendency to understand race as *all in the mind* in philosophical discussions of the topic—the body is there at best only passively, as that upon which race is imposed by misguided or malicious minds. Lee turns to phenomenology here precisely because it is a tradition characterized by its approach to and emphasis on embodiment. The essays overall thus take seriously the way in which subjectivity is always embodied in such a way that consciousness is shaped constitutively by that embodiment. In the case of a deeply racialized world, this means that race is not simply a *product* of consciousness but is importantly *prior* to consciousness. As Lee puts the point, the aim of the volume is to theorize “how the meanings circumscribing embodiment construct the experiences the subject encounters and consequently how the subject develops certain emotions, knowledge, ethical/moral postures, and sense of being-in-the-world” (7). This means that race “does not lie as a superficial cover over the primary later of common humanity” (7), and suggests that it is important to explore the possibility of “positive, identity-affirming reasons to recognize distinguishable bodily differences” (6). The eleven essays in this volume work together to explore this general theme, and the volume overall offers an important and refreshing intervention into the ongoing philosophical theorization of race and racism.

Charles Mills offers the first contribution to this collection of essays with his “Materializing Race.” Mills has never worked, nor claimed to work, in the phenomenological tradition, and this essay is no exception. Nevertheless, his text sets the stage nicely for what is to come and provides a kind of “soft landing,” so to speak, for readers interested in race and embodiment but less familiar with phenomenology. Beginning from the Marxist appeal to class as a sociopolitical *material*, Mills raises the question of whether race can be understood to have a similar materiality. Drawing from feminist efforts to draw upon relations of reproduction as the material basis for gender, Mills argues that “from the modern period onward (when race comes into existence), race is indeed material in that it is because of race that one is entitled to or debarred from the ‘normal’ treatment extended to white humans” (34). While class and gender, unlike race, have a basis in our fundamental *need* for production and reproduction to

survive that give them a strong mind-independence, race is nevertheless independent of our will insofar as once racial categories have been created, they take on a life of their own that forms an inescapable material basis for human *praxis* within that racialized context characterized by the normalization of the white body. Mills’s essay ultimately both serves as an accessible and well-argued introduction to the theme of this volume, as well as building upon and elaborating themes from his own significant body of work in the philosophy of race.

In contrast to Mills, George Yancy’s work has always been deeply informed by the phenomenological tradition (especially the work of Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, and Fanon), and has thus been squarely focused on issues of embodiment with regard to race. Yancy’s contribution to this volume is primarily a summary and recapitulation of some of the major themes from his prior work, including his emphasis on the ways in which racialized bodies are *constituted* as such through the intentional acts (*gazes*) of agents whose own agency is itself conditioned by their own racialized bodies. Within a racist social context (an anti-black world), this means that white bodies and thus white perspectives are normalized, valorized, and affirmed, while non-white bodies and perspectives are pathologized, marginalized, and denigrated. Yancy revisits vignettes familiar to those who have studied his work, including his examples of the elevator ride and the *click* of car doors locking, and creates what is a succinct and rich survey of this prior work. While this is valuable, he concludes the chapter by offering a new, though brief, discussion of *crisis* in relation to racialized embodiment, especially as it pertains to whiteness. If racism aims to *normalize* racist hierarchies and white-supremacist modes of being (embodiment), then perhaps one aspect of resistance to this process is to generate conditions of *discomfort* and *crisis*. “For the most part,” Yancy points out, “white people are not in crisis vis-à-vis their whiteness; they are under constant therapeutic reprieve, assured that there is nothing problematic about whiteness, about their *white selves*” (62). As a consequence, crises of discomfort that problematize whiteness can be viewed as a positive prescription for anti-racism. Yancy’s essay is a valuable introduction to his work for those who are not already familiar with it, as well as presenting a new development of his thought for those who have experience with his prior work.

Donna-Dale Marcano turns to a meta-philosophical reflection on the place (or lack thereof) of black women within the discipline (both as an institution/profession and as a body of thought) in the third chapter. Drawing from feminist philosophy’s argument for the male-ness of philosophy, Marcano builds an intersectional analysis that makes a clear case for ongoing systematic erasure of black women from the discipline. As she puts the point, “I contend that the interlocking and multiple oppressions faced by Black women in American history acts to inhibit the inclusion of their intellectual work as philosophical and philosophically relevant because they are Black and women” (68). While making a very compelling case for this claim, Marcano is careful to argue that the appropriate response is not simply to *ignore* race and gender in our philosophical practices, as if blackness and femaleness were simply superficial

coverings of an essentially genderless and raceless philosopher. Rather, she urges a deep diversification of the discipline that should be manifest not only in terms of the texts we cite and teach in our courses but also in terms of the *actual bodies* that constitute our ranks. Marcano's contribution is ideal for use in philosophy courses, offering as it does a brief but compelling summary of the state of the discipline and argument for radical intervention.

The fourth essay in this volume, Namita Goswami's "Among Family Women," returns to the debates within postcolonial feminism surrounding *Sati*, but with an important and innovative discussion of the relation between culture and the body. Goswami begins with the claim, common within postcolonial feminist discourses but all too uncommon outside of them, that there is a pronounced "'first world' privilege" in much feminist theory, such that "'Western' women emerge as the true subjects of feminism while 'third world' women are relegated to perpetual object-status" (80). The people of the so-called third world thus remain cast in the role of *nature* to Western *culture*. From this relatively familiar starting point, Goswami notes that there is a deep irony operating here that connects in an interesting way with embodiment. The way in which so-called third-world women are relegated to the role of object/nature is in part through the exercise of certain cultural practices and traditions (such as *sati*) that become overdetermined as *barbaric*. At the same time, the nature/culture divide rests on an emphasis on the human body as the organic *embodiment* of our "exceptionalism" vis-à-vis the natural world. Thus, some cultural practices are disassociated from the "natural" world and properly *human*, while others are understood as inextricably bound up with and expressions of the natural world, and Goswami draws two important implications from this. First, one way in which these different cultural practices are distinguished is not through the content of the practices themselves but rather through the kinds of bodies that undertake them, and second, this underlying irony of an embodied disassociation from the natural points to the need to radically critique the very distinction between the natural and the cultural that underlies so much of the (post)colonial relation. Goswami's essay offers a compelling exploration of these implications.

David Kim's contribution is a thoughtful and challenging exploration of specificity of Asian American relations to whiteness. Arguing first that the common "model minority" and assimilationist tropes "conceal and mystify" and ongoing subordination of Asian Americans, Kim focuses on the way in which this subordination shapes the agency of Asian Americans, especially insofar as it generates shame and other emotions connected with negative self-evaluation. It is this focus on emotions that brings Kim to the topic of embodiment, for he stresses the idea that "emotion is a feeling *through* the body *to* what matters in the world," and as such, they "are world-constituting in addition to being world-disclosing" (115). Drawing from empirical studies that focus in particular on Asian American identification with whiteness and efforts to affirm distance from those "fresh off the boat," Kim's essay is not only an important analysis racialized embodiment in the U.S. context but an implicit argument for the importance of

attending to the *specificities* of particular racialized groups (and bodies) as opposed to the one-size-fits-all tradition of the black/white binary.

Drawing on the phenomenological work of Merleau-Ponty and Bergson (among others), Alia Al-Saji offers an account of what she refers to as the "intransigent and closed logic" of racializing vision and the ways and means of its interruption (133). If vision is not a mere passive reception of the visible but rather involves "constitutive operations" that differentially render visible and invisible (and emphasize or marginalize) according to a complex network of sedimentation habituation (138), and racialization is a crucial aspect of that habitual network, then racialized perception "circumscribes and configures what is seen, so that the realm of visual objectivity is narrower than the historicity and social structure on which it relies" (139). Because these modes of seeing (and not-seeing) are a matter of embodied habits, they have an importantly *affective* dimension to such an extent that "affect and perception form two sides of the same phenomenon, linking that which is seen as racialized to its immediately felt effects on the racializing body" (140). Al-Saji's important move here is to draw our attention to the ways in which encounters that disrupt racialized visual habits, moments characterized by "hesitation," can be a crucial component of efforts to disrupt those habits. She carefully differentiates between the all-too-common moments of hesitation on the part of the oppressed generated by those racialized habits that inhibit agency and action on the one hand, and the less common moments of "responsive hesitation" that "[loosen] the net of internalized determinism and stereotype" (154). She persuasively argues that sustained generation of such moments of hesitation is an important (and perhaps necessary) aspect of any successful effort to disrupt racialized perception (and thus racism).

Mariana Ortega takes up the work of María Lugones to explore the phenomenology of "home" in relation to ambiguous, even multiplicitous, notions of *self* in the seventh chapter. As an exercise of what she refers to as "self-mapping" (173), Ortega begins with the problematic relationship to "belonging" engendered by the notion of *home*, especially insofar as the concepts of home and belonging are inherently bound up with conditions of identity. The phenomenology of home—the experience of a place or even an experience as familiar, comfortable, and significantly *mine*, is in large part a matter of standing in a real or imagined relation to those who are *like* me in a particular sense, and an exclusion of those who are not. Histories of colonialism, exile, oppression, sexism, and racism (among others), however, generate conditions wherein this experience of home and the self is complicated and modified such that it is ambiguous, multiplicitous, and even contradictory. Rather than see this as inherently problematic, Ortega takes up the challenge of abandoning the project of an integrated and unitary self (and thus an unambiguous sense of belonging) and finding a way to affirm, or at least live with, that ambiguity and contradiction. To advance this project, she introduces "hometactics," which are "everyday practices in which we literally 'make do' with what we have, [and] do not form a robust sense of belonging or familiarity" (185). Ortega's

essay points provocatively toward an open-ended process of constant negotiation and renegotiation of home(s) and the relations that constitute belonging.

The eighth chapter is Edward Casey's theorization of the concepts of borders and boundaries as they relate an actual *border*—that between the United States and Mexico (*la Frontera*). Beginning with a general account of edges, Casey quickly focuses in on a contrast between *boundary* and *border*. While both borders and boundaries "act to demarcate a given place or region," a border "is a clearly and crisply delineated entity, and is established by conventional agreements such as treaties or laws," while a boundary, in contrast, "is rarely demarcated with any precision, varying in contour and extent depending on environmental or historical circumstances" (192). Furthermore, while boundaries are porous and lacking in "exact positioning," borders are impermeable and exist in a precise and exact location. To be clear, the distinction is largely heuristic, for Casey (rightly, in my view), does not think any actual border exists as he has described it. Indeed, borders, he tells us, "are ideal and eidetic" (199), brought into (pseudo) existence by human convention, the aim of which is first and foremost a distinction between *us* on this side, and *them* beyond the border. Casey observes, however, that "borders are always already in the process of becoming boundaries" (202), such that every effort to fix an impermeable and stable border begins immediately to slip beyond our grasp, becoming porous and ambiguous. Armed with this set of theoretical developments, Casey turns to *la Frontera*, the border between the United States and Mexico. The conclusion of his essay is a careful elucidation of the way in which the *border* as an ideal aims to police racialized bodies in a way that preserves a mythologized *purity* on either side, and that the reality of *la Frontera* as a boundary reveals the way in which the racialized bodies on both sides act to dispel that myth.

In her essay, "Pride and Prejudice: Ambiguous Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Identities of Jewish Bodies," Gail Weiss takes on the work of Sander Gilman, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Frantz Fanon on anti-Semitism and Jewish identity. In particular, she offers a critical engagement with their claim that Jewish identity is ultimately a matter of the ways in which society at large (and anti-Semitic societies in particular) perceives and portrays Jewish bodies. Both Gilman and Sartre are concerned, in particular, with the ways in which Jews internalize anti-Semitic attitudes and negative stereotypes, and Weiss is especially interested in the way in which this internalization is *embodied* into what she refers to as the "intercorporeal dimensions of Jewish experience" (214). This is an important feature, she argues, but to grant the (hostile) other the ability to define one's identity undermines the agency of the oppressed. Furthermore, it disavows what Weiss considers the inherent ambiguity of identities; ambiguities that "can and should be seen as productive possibilities, expanding the range of potential ways one can access, engage, and ultimately transform Jewish experience" (218). Weiss's contribution is provocative and points toward promising avenues of further theoretical development.

In the penultimate essay, Emily Lee turns to white embodiment and, specifically, the question of *responsibility* in relation to the privileges bestowed by that white embodiment. Lee begins with Merleau-Ponty's account of the way in which bodily movement "generates phenomenological space and time" (233) to help provide an account of freedom as a responsibility for the entirety of one's situation, including significantly aspects of one's situation that one may simply have inherited. That is, because the body "possesses an immediate intertwining with the world" (237) that is conditioned by "motivational relations (242)" in which a given subject's actions are bound up within a temporal and physical horizon that both conditions and is conditioned by those actions, it becomes necessary, if we are to account for freedom and responsibility, to become response-able to that situational horizon. As Lee puts the point, "All human beings can reason, but, from a series of past decisions [not always their own past decisions], they develop into subjects who utilize their reason in varying complex ways" (244). This means that racialized subjectivity, including white subjectivity, is an integral part of a given agent's sense of self for which one must take responsibility if one is to realize one's autonomy as an agent. Though she only offers this point as a concluding suggestion, Lee makes it clear that such "taking responsibility" cannot be a strictly epistemic or intellectual undertaking, but must itself be embodied, and include "developing and accumulating different and new body movements" (248).

Linda Alcoff's essay on "The Future of Whiteness" is a challenging conclusion to this text with broad implications for the phenomenology of race. The framing question arises because of the way in which dominant discourses on race, both inside and outside of philosophy, tend to see whiteness as a kind of ontological lynchpin for racism, such that any commitment to antiracism must entail a commitment to the elimination of whiteness as such. This general line of argument holds that a just future must be one in which there is no such thing as the white race. Confronting this question at the end of this volume is an important moment, for it highlights the way in which the usual approach to race and racism cannot be maintained within the phenomenological tradition. Phenomenology foregrounds embodied consciousness and the reflexive interplay between that embodied/historically situated subjectivity and the larger social/material world, while rejecting an abstract, featureless (liberal) subject. Consequently, it must call into question the assumption that racialized subjects, including white subjects, must shed their racial specificity, and ask whether there are "any useful first-person insights that might provide a re-visioning of possibilities toward a changed national landscape that would include whites as *whites*" (262). Just as Weiss's essay takes up the way in which Jewish identity is not reducible to the view that anti-Semites have of Jews, Alcoff is here arguing that white identity is not reducible to white supremacy. Whiteness must, she holds, revise itself substantially, but this is different from calling for its elimination or abolition. Alcoff's phenomenological project here is an important one and an excellent way to conclude this volume.

The essays assembled in this text comprise a significant contribution both to phenomenology and to the philosophical study of race and racism. Lee has brought together an impressive array of scholars offering a diverse set of approaches and topics, but yet they are all clearly united under the thematic umbrella of a shared commitment to thinking through racialized embodiment. A particular strength of this text as an anthology, and of great credit to Lee as editor, is the way in which the essays collected here not only stand up as individual pieces but hang together so very well as a whole. The book should thus be of interest to scholars and students of phenomenology and to theorists of race and racism sympathetic to phenomenological approaches to the topic. It is a timely and important collection of scholarship.

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## *Living Alterities: Phenomenology, Embodiment, and Race*

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Emily Lee's edited volume *Living Alterities* brings together important contributions by philosophers of race in a text that consistently centers embodiment through phenomenological approaches. It will be a significant text for scholarship in these fields and as assigned reading for undergraduate and graduate courses in philosophy across continental and analytic approaches. The richness, breadth, and depth of the offerings in this anthology constitute a rare achievement because they find new ways to make old and still necessary critiques, as they also find ways to name new and emerging phenomena with regard to race, white supremacy, and change. Several of the essays in this collection are grappling with the presumed "post race" conditions of our current U.S. American moment. This problematic context is perhaps best summed up by Kimberlé Crenshaw Williams's rejection of what she called the "vulgarized social construction thesis," which follows a logic that since categories such as race and gender are constructed, it does not make sense to continue theorizing on these categories (Crenshaw, 1296).<sup>1</sup> Philosophers of race struggle with the realities of race and the material, bodily, social, political, economic, and psychological conditions it produces, grappling with the dominant culture's and philosophy's lack of accountability for the ways race is real, even if it is not biologically real. The contributors to this volume successfully continue these interventions.

One of the most successful elements of the anthology as a whole is its organization. Rather than having "parts" with headings, Lee has organized the book as a kind of unfolding of key related ideas and themes, as I will try to show. Thus, in what follows, I will address the volume in its chronological chapter progression while highlighting important thematic connections. More specifically, while whiteness and white

supremacy are addressed throughout in various ways, whiteness studies as a field that centers questions of whiteness is engaged in the final two chapters of the book; whiteness comes last. As Lee notes in her Introduction, the early chapters emphasize the materiality of race and its embodiment (Mills; Yancy). The chapters that follow take up phenomenology and phenomenological exercises in varying ways, but with different emphases such as race, gender, and postcoloniality (Marcano; Goswami), hesitation (Al-Saji), assimilationist demands (Kim), mapping and belonging (Ortega), ambiguities of race and ethnicity of Jewish bodies (Weiss), and, finally, individual white responsibility and the future of whiteness (Lee; Alcoff).

In chapter one, "Materializing Race," Charles W. Mills rejects a Marxist racial eliminativism, which locates race at the superstructural level, as ideological, and not existing at the base level of materiality. Engaging Alcoff's work in *Visible Identities*, he situates gender as having a basis in biological reproductive difference, whereas race has no such basis. Ultimately, he argues for an understanding of a nonbiological, rather sociopolitical, materially originating apparatus of race, which is a useful conception. It seems indisputable that race is real, material, and bodily, for all its social and political constructedness. I appreciate Mills's gesture to socialize materiality. That said, I wonder which audiences, who are not otherwise compelled as to the realness *and* constructedness of race, would be convinced of these assertions by a revisioning of Marxist materialism. My concern is that this form of materialism forces Mills into the terrain of deciding what *is* the base, or the natural, thus requiring that even if gender is not natural, sex and its biological reproductive determinations *are*.

In "White Gazes: What It Feels Like to Be an Essence" (chapter two), George Yancy begins by inviting readers into his classroom, so to speak, using scenarios with predominantly white students to offer the kinds of practices that put whiteness in crisis. A central assertion is that whiteness is opaque to itself; white people are opaque to themselves, and thus the crisis is offered as a moment of decision, a valuable condition for white people to have to inhabit and which needs to happen more often. This is Yancy's refusal to allow the bad faith of whiteness to continue on unchecked in his classrooms, in elevators, and in all other spaces. At the very least, when whiteness is put into crisis, the moment of decision is brought to the fore: white people in this instance have decisions to make about whether to change or remain the same. Of particular pedagogical interest, with broader implications for why we do philosophy, is Yancy's term explaining white students' desires for/to do philosophy. Philosophy is often thought of as "high-falutin conceptual bullshit," as "something they can learn about without any deeply personal demands made on them" (44). Yancy disallows this kind of abstraction for the student and for the philosopher.

Donna-Dale L. Marcano's "Race/Gender and the Philosopher's Body" (chapter three) follows nicely after Yancy's piece, making a neat and tidy rejection of the "supersensibility" of philosophy—its claims to be beyond the limitations and specificities of embodiment. Refusing philosophy's claims to transcendence of any kind, she

moves instead in the direction of *more* specificity rather than less (less, here, serving as a bogus universality that the history of philosophy has asserted as impossible for women and people of color). She appeals to the traditions of black women thinkers, offering an overview of this history with what I take to be the bare minimum she expects philosophers to know about this intellectual history. More specifically, she highlights the theme of black women thinkers understanding their unique location in the U.S. system “in such a way that any critiques of American oppression would fail to capture the depth, breadth, and *stubbornness* of oppression unless they *started with looking at the condition of Black women*” (72, emphasis mine). I emphasize the appeal to a starting point, along with the stubbornness of oppression, because these are insights that specificity without universality can offer and that Marcano renders in all their value.

In “Among Family Women: Sati, Postcolonial Feminism, and the Body” (chapter four), Namita Goswami enacts another kind of refusal, a refusal of the relegation of postcolonial feminism to “the task of redeeming third world culture by way of an ostensible universal feminist humanism.” (81). She rejects the human exceptionalism of universalism and of humanism and insists on the heterogeneity of nature, claiming that culture, figured as transcendent of nature, produces “the killing floor of a factory/farm” (84). Thus she claims postcolonial feminism’s role as that of making space for the rejection of human exceptionalism as that which makes *sati*, and its mis/readings, possible and impossible. Where overdetermination has ruled the day, Goswami follows Spivak’s relay, and both thinkers undermine this overdetermination and its effects.

David Haekwon Kim’s “Shame and Self-Revision in Asian American Assimilation” (chapter five) is careful to insist more than once that Asian Americans are not necessarily “shame-prone or shame-ridden” (120). Instead, he coins the terms “shameability” and “self-contemnability.” He does so in order to theorize some of the specificities of how white supremacy, “model minority” projections (“the Model Minority Myth is too inaccurate to be a truth and too harmful to be an error” [110]), and different modes of assimilation invitations come together to produce experiences of shame and self-contempt. These terms allow him to intervene in the binary sociological approaches to either assimilating or refusing to assimilate.

Alia Al-Saji argues for hesitation as an ethical requirement, while insisting it is not enough on its own, in “A Phenomenology of Hesitation: Interrupting Racializing Habits of Seeing” (chapter six). The need for hesitation is shown through her use of Fanon to expose the simultaneous *naturalization* of race by white supremacy and colonialism, and *rationalization* of racism as supposedly having its origin in “mere reaction to the racialized other” (137). More specifically, Al-Saji insists that affect and perception work in tandem, so that in one phenomenon—the racializing body encountering the racialized body—the effects felt by the racializing body are experienced as immediate to the encounter. Using Bergson, she claims delay, becoming, and tendency as opposed to a surety of the given or whole. Hesitation allows for feeling the perception,

remembering what is becoming known about racialization and naturalization, and becoming critically responsive.

In “Hometactics: Self-Mapping, Belonging, and the Home Question” (chapter seven), Mariana Ortega expresses her interest in coalitions across multiple oppressions but wants to show “another part of the story of home, location, and belonging,” what she calls “the micropractices of lived experiences” (175). In contrast to certain philosophical and theoretical moves to rank multiple identities, she theorizes the already lived, in their everydayness, multiplicities of belonging. Drawing on the works of María Lugones and Aimee Carrillo Rowe, Ortega addresses the will to belong as a multiplicitous, everyday practice of relational politics. She ends the chapter with a confession (which harkens back to another confession with which she began the piece) that her inhabiting of philosophy—a philosophy that is male- and white-dominated—is precarious. She writes, “I carve out a space for me in this philosophy that was never meant to be a home for me—this is one of my hometactics” (186).

Gail Weiss’s “Pride and Prejudice: Ambiguous Racial, Religious, and Ethnic Identities of Jewish Bodies” (chapter nine) reads Fanon and Sartre as both positioning Jewishness in problematic ways that certainly are not incidental to the fact that neither philosopher was Jewish. Her important critique is that Jewishness is a contested and complex set of aspects of identity. Moreover, she takes both Fanon and Sartre to task for suggesting a universal quality of transcendence wherein anti-Semitism is overcome by de-emphasizing one’s Jewishness. In terms of the ambiguities of race, she does not substantively address the acquisition of whiteness, however attenuated, by Ashkenazi Jewish people in the United States. She notes that Fanon assumed the whiteness of all Jewish people and expresses a certain confidence that he would have said that the skin color of Jewish people of color trumps their Jewishness. Her appeal to Butler’s recent work on the complexities of Jewishness as neither reducible to experiences of anti-Semitism nor to Zionism cites an important intervention but seems to avoid the question of the political precariousness the state of Israel enforces on Palestinian subjects, which Butler does discuss.

Emily S. Lee, editor of the collection, has her own chapter that engages “Body Movement and Responsibility for a Situation” (chapter ten). She begins with the radicality of Merleau-Ponty’s insistence on the embodiment of the subject, turning to whiteness studies as an approach that makes the radical gesture of holding white individuals accountable for whiteness as it constructs their realities and privileges—their situation. For Merleau-Ponty, freedom comes in the responsibility for the entirety of one’s situation, thus any potentiality for white individuals to be free is intertwined with the work of changing what white and of color *mean*. Using the concepts of bodily scripts and the space and time to which bodies contribute, Lee concludes that bodily movement creates significations that can change if responsibility for the situation of whiteness is taken.

In the final chapter, “The Future of Whiteness” (chapter eleven), Linda Martín Alcoff is concerned with the doom and

gloom perspective of whiteness studies, how whiteness seems essentially racist at the same time that there is an anti-essentialist appeal. Where Mills's opening chapter rejected racial eliminativism in orthodox Marxism, Alcoff rejects eliminativist appeals about the end (rather than the future) of whiteness. While on board with antiracism as a value, she seeks also "a positive agenda that addresses the white motivations for changing society," insisting that understanding such motivations "is not, indeed, rocket science" (276). Alcoff's reading of Beauvoir is especially interesting for its consideration of the inability of one antiracist white person to change what whiteness means—in Beauvoir's case, what it meant in Harlem in the 1940s. Moreover, Alcoff's chapter is in conversation with Lee's, and thus proceeds compellingly after it, in terms of the question of white responsibility in the complexities of individual, community, and structure. Lee's and Alcoff's two chapters augment each other's arguments because both Alcoff and Lee recognize that individual white people do not have the power to single-handedly change what whiteness means, but taking on the responsibility for what it means beyond one's individual power is a political and ethical necessity. On my read, Alcoff's understanding of the limits of individual white antiracism is tied to her critique of vanguardism, in which white people believe they are at the forefront of progress. Thus, to follow the lead of people of color is an important component of her more positive agenda of white antiracist politics. How fitting, then, that the question of the future of whiteness has had to wait its turn until the end of the collection.

*Living Alterities* must be credited for its powerful contributions. At the same time, I did want more engagement throughout with disability studies and transgender studies. The historical mutual imbrication of race, gender, sexuality, and "ability" produce material bodily realities that can offer insights without relying on appeals to analogy. Some of the authors' references to gendered difference would find important resources in transgender and intersex critiques of the "sources" (biological, reproductive) of gender and sex. The use of metaphors such as "handicapping" and "paralyzing" might be avoided if a disability critique were engaged to disrupt the metaphorization of bodily, material, sociopolitical conditions of lived disabilities.

**NOTES**

1. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color," *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1296.

*Feminist Phenomenology and Medicine*

Kristin Zeiler and Lisa Folkmarson Käll, eds. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014). 320 pages. \$85.00. ISBN13: 978-1-4384-5007-0.

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In *Feminist Phenomenology and Medicine*, Kristin Zeiler and Lisa Folkmarson Käll have brought together leading

researchers working in phenomenology, gender studies, medical humanities, and related disciplines which deal with the body, vulnerability, and lived experiences. Combining feminist phenomenology and phenomenology of medicine, the collection provides critical perspectives on biomedical practices and bioethical problems (e.g., illness, cosmetic surgery, organ transplants, dentistry, intersex, hormone therapy, anorexia nervosa, midwifery, and psychiatry). The contributors to the collection apply feminist phenomenology to medical and health-care practices by drawing special attention to vulnerability, embodiment, uncertainty, difference, and instability as key elements of lived experiences. It also undermines conventional discourses of medicine by bringing about dialogues between phenomenological analyses of patients, medical decisions, fictions, and narratives, and by developing "more comprehensive analyses of issues such as bodily self-experience, normality and deviance, self-alienation, and objectification" (2). The collection highlights certain embodied experiences and improves the methodological designs and theoretical framework of feminist phenomenology.

The collection demonstrates the usefulness of feminist phenomenology to medicine and, in particular, to an articulation of women's experiences of illness. In order to describe the experience of illness, this collection presents such a feminist phenomenological method and demonstrates how it could clarify the experience of illness, in particular, gender-related illness. One of the main impacts that many of the chapters bring out and that feminist phenomenology can contribute to is a bridging of the sex-gender distinction through a use of the notion of the lived body (Leib). The collection then explores the applications this approach could have in medicine, and suggests narrowing the gap between diagnostic assessments of illness and attention to lived experiences by developing a dialogue between medics and patients based on a detailed understanding of illness and embodiment.

Feminist phenomenology is the main methodology of the collection, and it reinterprets phenomenological thoughts and employs them for feminist purposes. The contributors to the collection take up feminist phenomenology to varying degrees in order to explain what it is like to be pregnant, to menstruate, to have an intersexed body, and to have bodily sensations of various kinds. As lived experience is always informed by a range of socio-culturally influenced parameters, such as gender, sexuality, age, illness, class, (dis)ability, and ethnicity (amongst others), feminist phenomenology "both unveils and scrutinizes taken-for-granted and in this sense 'hidden' assumptions, beliefs and norm that we live by, that we strengthen by repeated actions and that we also resist, challenge, and question" (1-2). Consequently, the naturalistic, normal, and fixed body is called into question in this work.

The collection has another theme, that is, medicine. An abyss often exists between the way medics think about their patients' symptoms and the way the patients experience them. Much of this separation derives directly from the medical assumptions about what constitutes illness and abnormality. The conventional medical perspective is rooted

in an anatomical and pathological view of disease that excludes a subjective understanding of the lived experience of illness. What medics need to remedy this problem is not only the caution to remember that each patient is a lived subject but also to reconsider what medics take disease to be. Phenomenology is used to inform a diagnosis of disease that incorporates a better understanding of the lived experience of being ill. Phenomenological descriptions of illness demonstrate how medics can reorient their thinking to encompass both the conventional medical paradigm and one that takes lived experience as well as biology and anatomy. In the Anglophonic philosophical world, it would not have been until the 1980s, with Richard Zaner's work (1981) on the clinical encounter, that the lived body began to make an appearance in discussions about philosophy of medicine. Then, in the 1990s, Drew Leder (1990), S. Kay Toomb (1993), and Jonathan Cole (1998) started combining phenomenology and medicine in order to examine all the ways in which the body can be ill or abnormal or passive and to understand what it is like to live with illness. A combined approach to the lived experience of being ill was seen as required.

It is obvious that the editors of the collection have engaged with the work of Simone de Beauvoir, along with other phenomenologists, in particular Merleau-Ponty and Sartre. Beauvoir understands the body as lived in the world differently for men and women, and her approach to the body has been the subject of much controversy for contemporary feminists. Nevertheless, her work offers the starting point for the collection regarding the relation between the body and the self. Following the legacy of Beauvoir, *Feminist Phenomenology and Medicine* provides a complex and lived account of the intertwining of the medical (biological), the subjective, and the socio-cultural in the process of being an embodied subject.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the focus of academic feminism moved away from the female experiencing subject and moved towards outlining the social structures of power, particularly those discursively constructed, that made oppression possible. It was concerned with finding ways to challenge and break down such structures. The dominant influence here was Judith Butler's concept of the performativity of sexed (and at the same time gendered) bodies, but with this emphasis on social construction, something was overlooked, namely, the agency and the lived embodiment of persons. The new materialism, which Butler had ushered in, makes little reference to the experiencing agent capable of action. This collection attempts to rectify both these problems. Lanei Rodemeyer's chapter, "Feminism, Phenomenology, and Hormones," asks a significant question about feminist criticism of biomedicine and the biological body, and undermines the social constructivist bent that academic feminism has taken. She questions: "What should feminism do if scientific studies do not seem to support important and/or well-established feminist claims?" (185); "How can feminist perspectives address scientific studies that show a link between prenatal hormone exposure and postnatal sexual or gender-related behaviour?" (187).

While feminism was having debates about the status of the experiencing subject, phenomenology as an academic field of study was also re-grouping. By the later half of the twentieth century, partly through engaging in debates with feminism, partly through a debate internal to phenomenology, there was a move away from Heidegger and back towards Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. But interaction with feminist scholars and those addressing bodily abilities forced attention to the specificity of the body. Phenomenology was required to extend its conceptual resources, borrowing from other academic disciplines such as feminism, narrative theory, and medicine. Despite the many scholars who have shared intellectual interests in feminism, phenomenology, and medicine, before this collection was produced there were numerous tomes dealing with the subject of feminist phenomenology or medical phenomenology, but no proper collection on the more specific subject of feminist phenomenology and medicine, so the collection fills a void for anyone's with such an interest. Zeiler and Käll invite phenomenologists to talk about a "specific subject," one that has a sex, a gender, a race, and a sexual orientation, as well as a certain level of ability.

*Feminist Phenomenology and Medicine* consists of fifteen chapters exploring a great range of medical and bioethical issues covering illness, transplants, cosmetic surgery, eating disorders, (trans)sexuality, gender, femininity, childbirth, mental health issue, and others. While the collection is arranged into sections, certain themes do emerge and many of the issues overlap. The issue of the uncanny and homeliness, for example, appears in three chapters by Nikki Sullivan, Fredrik Svenaeus, and Abby Wilkerson. Surgery and normative claims about identity are the main themes of chapters by Erik Malmqvist and Gail Weiss. Normativity and a challenge to the claims of naturalism is a recurring theme throughout the collection. Erik Malmqvist, in his paper "Phenomenology, Cosmetic Surgery, and Complicity," makes the claim that complicity, the complying with social norms, can be understood in phenomenological terms. Through a discussion of incorporation and expression, concepts he borrows from Merleau-Ponty and then makes his own, Malmqvist offers not merely a challenge to ethical debates about complicity but instead offers an entirely new conception of moral complicity, one that is sensitive to the phenomenology and the specificity of people bodies. By re-focusing on an embodied notion of complicity, based on expression, he points out that "one's action may end up reinforcing and legitimizing the norm whether or not one intends or wants to" (93).

In the chapter "Uncosmetic Surgeries in an Age of Normativity," Gail Weiss also convincingly problematizes the idea of the natural. Through a careful examination of the rhetoric of "a routine post-braces procedure" (101), Weiss shows that naturalism that can sneak in unnoticed when one uses terms like "natural." Weiss argues that the development or "expansions in medical technology often function to reinforce and further entrench the narrowness of the norms, thereby producing ever more restricted views of what counts as normal and natural" (105).

It is refreshing to find a phenomenology and medicine reader that does not focus almost entirely on the often (perhaps wrongly) related subjects of illness and disability, or simply makes the focus of the book physical ailments and nothing more. As important as physical illness is, too many edited collections give too much attention to the subject. However, an article by Linda Fisher on the subject of physical illness is worthy of note. In her article "The Illness Experience: A Feminist Phenomenological Perspective," she reminds the reader of the trajectory that philosophy has taken with regards to illness. Much research began by focusing on "the objective biomedical elements" (27) of illness, though some also pointed out that one can "distinguish between the disease-state and the subjective experience of illness" (27). Fisher views distinguishing between a biomedical condition and a subjective experience as not necessarily implying "a binary or dichotomy, although some researchers frame the distinction more strongly. . . these are interconnected aspects of one experiential horizon" (42). Fisher also gives a timely reminder of why phenomenology is a necessary intervention when writing philosophy about illness, disability, and disease. For it is all too easy to fall into a logic that to be ill is to be in a fixed state of being unwell and/or disabled. Fisher reminds us that it is quite possible to have an impairment, a biomedical condition, and yet still be well or happy.

It is also pleasing to find a reader that does not misuse the term "phenomenology," as well as "feminism" and "medicine." Every article in this collection makes good use of the accepted authorities from their discipline but also seeks to move beyond any traditional conceptions and notions they may have inherited working within that discipline. Two outstanding examples of this convincing attempt to move beyond any orthodoxy can be found in Lisa Folkmarson Käll's "She's Research! Exposure, Epistemophilia and Ethical Perception through Mike Nichols's *Witness*," which offers interesting insights into the phenomenology of being a patient, and Cressida J. Heyes's "Anaesthetics of Existence," a meditation on aesthetics and the surgical encounter, which, by employing the term "anaesthetics," both in a literal sense and as a metaphor (that recalls the work of Susan Sontag), offers an existentialist analysis of the experience of undergoing anaesthesia that will change any reader's view on the subject.

To summarize, *Feminist Phenomenology and Medicine* is a fine reader with fifteen engaging essays. The collection is a substantial and innovative contribution to phenomenology, medicine, and feminist theory. It is a necessary addition to the library of anyone with an interest in feminism, phenomenology, or medical humanities.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CFP: 2017 STIMPSON PRIZE FOR OUTSTANDING FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP

The University of Chicago Press and *Signs* are pleased to announce the competition for the 2017 Catharine Stimpson Prize for Outstanding Feminist Scholarship. Named in honor of the founding editor of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, the Catharine Stimpson Prize is designed to recognize excellence and innovation in the work of emerging feminist scholars.

The Catharine Stimpson Prize is awarded biennially to the best paper in an international competition. Leading feminist scholars from around the globe will select the winner. The prizewinning paper will be published in *Signs*, and the author will be provided an honorarium of \$1,000. All papers submitted for the Stimpson Prize will be considered for peer review and possible publication in *Signs*.

Eligibility: Feminist scholars in the early years of their careers (fewer than seven years since receipt of the terminal degree) are invited to submit papers for the Stimpson Prize. This includes current graduate students. Papers may be on any topic that falls under the broad rubric of interdisciplinary feminist scholarship. Submissions must be no longer than 10,000 words (including notes and references) and must conform to the guidelines for *Signs* contributors (<http://signsjournal.org/for-authors/author-guidelines/>).

**Deadline for Submissions:** March 1, 2016.

Please share this call with any colleagues, groups, or graduate students who may be interested. This call is available at <http://signsjournal.org/cfps> or as a PDF at <http://signsjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2017-Stimpson-Prize-CFP.pdf>. Please contact *Signs* Deputy Editor Andrew Mazzaschi ([a.mazzaschi@neu.edu](mailto:a.mazzaschi@neu.edu)) with any questions.

Papers can be submitted online at <http://signs.edmgr.com>. Be sure to indicate submission for consideration for the Catharine Stimpson Prize. The honorarium will be awarded upon publication of the prizewinning article.

Congratulations to Venla Oikkonen, winner of the 2015 Catharine Stimpson Prize, for her essay "Mitochondrial Eve and the Affective Politics of Human Ancestry," which appears in the spring 2015 issue of *Signs* (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/679527>).

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including a George Sugarman Foundation Grant and the \$10,000 Biennial Margo Hammerschlag Sculpture Award. Her sculpture has also been featured/reviewed in over 170 books, magazines, newspapers and blogs, including *The New York Times* (cover), *The Boston Globe* (cover), *The Huffington Post*, *The Paris Review*, *The New York Review of Books*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, and *The Annotated Poe* (forthcoming, Harvard University Press).