

Book Reviews

**Book Review: FEMINISM: THEORIES AND IMPACT,
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The collection of essays devoted to the feminist discourse deals, as the title suggests, with its two aspects which are reflected in the book's two-partite form: thus, section I discusses the theories related to feminism, while section II exclusively focuses on the impact of the concept of feminism on the society and how women are perceived therein. In this manner, the book offers a number of intriguing and inspiring views of the feminist theory and practice.

The first section of the book is opened by the essay "An Introduction to Feminism" written by the editor, Debashree Mukherjee. It introduces feminism and traces its history. The aim of the article is to judge the significance of the concept and to measure the success and shortcomings of the theory.

The second article is titled "A Critique of Marxist Feminism" by Jonah Horowitz. It claims that Marxist feminism has many flaws, most of which stem from strictly monocausal view of women's oppression as a purely economic problem. This brief text mostly relies on internet sources, such as Wikipedia, and misspells the name of Friedrich Engels, one of the founding fathers of Marxism, which throughout this article appears as "Engel".

The essay by Sarah Page deals with "Feminism and the Third Wave: Politicising the Sociology of Religion?" It tracks the evolution of the third wave of feminism: the first was in the 19th and early 20th century; the second was in the 1960s and 1970s, while the third extends from the 1990s to the present. The essay states that this wave should be incorporated not only into the popular culture but also into institutional bodies such as workplaces, the government and religious organizations.

"Feminist Theory and Practice in the Poetry of Adrienne Rich", authored by Milena Kostić (University of Niš, Serbia) traces the feminist theory and practice in literature, namely the poetry of Adrienne Rich which, according to the author, "can straighten out some controversies in recent feminism". The essay points out the different views in the works of Anglo-American critics (women in history) and those of the French critics

(women in language) and concludes with an observation that "a pen should not be construed as a mode of expression of only male attitudes".

The next article, written by Kristin Blakely, deals with "Reflections on the Role of Emotion in Feminist Research" or as she puts it: "researching the researcher". It examines the implications of involving emotion in feminist research, which include the responsibility of placing oneself in imperfect and contingent contexts and intensifying the researcher's feelings of obligation.

"Feminism and Liberalism: A Not So Unhappy Marriage" by Carla Saenz states the obvious proximity of the feminist and liberal discourse, since the emancipatory politics of feminism find themselves at home within the liberal framework. It also aims to show that the feminist critique of liberalism relies on the misunderstanding of the distinction between normative and descriptive claims. This essay concludes the first section of the collection.

Section II of the book focuses on the impact of the feminist theories and how it has been able to emancipate the livelihood of women. It opens with "The Impact of Feminism in Today's World: A Critical Evaluation" by Debamita Nath (Guha), which focuses on the different impact of feminism on urban and rural women. Similarly to the opening essay of section I, this one also claims that a woman's accomplishment should be measured by that of men, i.e. that they should be content if and when placed "beside their male counterparts." Thus, implicitly, the male remains the measure for the female accomplishment, or lack thereof.

The next article, "Feminism and the Politics of Representation: Towards a Critical and Ethical Encounter with 'Others'" by Amy Hinterberger, examines, among other issues, how within feminist epistemology the differences between 'others' are being represented as culturally incommensurable in potentially problematic ways. Of special note is its conclusion, which stresses the attention to how, through references to 'liberation/oppression' and 'western/non-western', practices of representation end up reproducing the very categories that they seek to escape.

"Generations, Feminist Beliefs and Abortion Rights Support" by Terri Susan Fine, points to how the feminist movement managed to bring about a change in public opinion. Especially illuminating is the remark that "public opinion (...) reflects general public sentiments," with radical implications for further theories which choose to build upon it.

The tenth article in this collection is written by Patricia Williams Lessane and is titled "Women of Color Facing Feminism – Creating Our Space at Liberation's Table: A Report on the Chicago Foundation for Women's 'F' Series". It examines the findings of the 'F' series, a collaborative program which offered Asian-Americans, African-Americans and Latinas the space to voice their identification or lack thereof within feminism and its epistemologies. The author points to the reluctance many women of color feel to call themselves feminists which reflects their cultural background and its perceptions of what feminism is.

The final, eleventh article is titled "The Global Women's Rights Movement: Power Politics around the United Nations and the World Social Forum" and the honor to conclude this book comes to Wendy Harcourt. Her essay examines the discourse, inputs and reorganization of strategies that emanated from the lobbying of women's rights movements in the global agencies like the United Nations and the World Social Forum. Among other issues, it questions whether there is such an entity as a global women's movement and asks about the role of global agencies, their effects on the autonomy, legitimacy and actual benefits for women around the globe.

Feminism: Theories and Impact offers a wide variety of views on the feminist theory and practice, and, as such, it lives up to its ambition of showcasing what feminism today is and what it can be.