

The books reviewed in this section explore feminist politics in a global frame. We aim not just to include writings in feminist international relations, but also to feature multi-disciplinary scholarship pertaining to global gender relations. The section is usually made up of a combination of several distinct elements: Rethinking the Canon, Feminist Classics/Many Voices, review essays and book reviews. 'Rethinking the Canon' gives space for an individual to reflect on one text that they feel ought to be essential reading for feminists working on global issues, but which is likely to be marginalized by existing disciplinary boundaries: they are invited to bring the text to our attention and to explain why it is essential reading. 'Feminist Classics/Many Voices', by contrast, includes several short appraisals of a book already widely considered a classic for feminists working on global issues. Reviewers draw on their distinct disciplinary, geographical and personal locations to offer diverse readings of the classic text. Review essays survey several texts on a single theme, aiming either to explore a recent debate that has generated a range of new publications or to survey the best of the literature covering a more established area of research. The book reviews provide brief introductions to, and evaluations of, as broad a range of new publications as space allows. Anyone with suggestions for texts to be reviewed, or requests to contribute to the section, is encouraged to contact the Reviews Editor, Juanita Elias, Juanita.elias@adelaide.edu.au, School of Politics and History, The University of Adelaide, SA 5005, Australia.

Review Essay

UN-DISCIPLINING INTERSECTIONALITY

Stephanie Gilmore (ed.). *Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second-Wave Feminism in the United States*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0-252-07539-1.

Kathleen Dolan and Aili Mari Tripp (eds). 'Critical Perspectives on Gender and Politics: Intersectionality', *Politics & Gender* 2007 3 (2): 229-80.

Deborah Orr, Dianna Taylor, Eileen Kahl, Kathleen Earle, Christa Rainwater and Linda Lopez McAlister (eds). *Feminist Politics: Identity, Difference, and*

Agency. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007. ISBN 978-0-7425-4778-0.

Janet Siltanean and Andrea Doucet. *Gender Relations in Canada: Intersectionality and Beyond*. Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0-19-542320-4.

It has been twenty years since legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality, a concept that has captivated the progressive scholarly imagination. Intersectionality was designed to explore 'the various ways in which race and gender interact to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women's . . . experiences' (Crenshaw 1991: 1244). Yet in recent years, intersectionality has taken on a host of additional meanings: as an anti-exclusion tool that foregrounds the experiences of women of color, as a political strategy for combating oppression, and as a sophisticated analytic grappling with how race, gender, class and sexuality intersect to shape experiences of identity and oppression.

It is intersectionality's analytical breadth that has made it ripe for scholarly revision (Gimenez 2001; Kwan 2002; Brah and Phoenix 2004; McCall 2005; Hancock 2007; Nash 2008). Scholars from a host of disciplinary traditions – sociology, law, political science, philosophy – have developed rigorous intersectional approaches that grapple with a wide range of questions. In so doing, they have transformed intersectionality from its almost exclusive interest in 'women of color studies' into a broad theoretical and methodological innovation (Hancock 2007).

While intersectionality has functioned as a path-breaking analytic, it has also become a point of departure for feminist political organizing. During the early 1990s, third-wave feminists celebrated the advent of their 'new' feminism, marked by a distinctive approach to feminist politics (Walker 1995; Heywood and Drake 1997; Baumgardner and Richards 2000; Dicker and Piepmeier 2003; Berger 2006). Fundamental to third-wavers' political agenda is a steadfast commitment to creating an intersectional and transnational feminism movement which treats difference as an organizing principle rather than a stumbling-block.

Stephanie Gilmore's eminently readable collection *Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second-Wave Feminism in the United States* treats third-wave feminism's distinctiveness as a testable proposition. Her volume contests third-wave's foundational narrative – an insistence that third-wave feminism is unique in its commitment to multi-racial coalition building – by revealing that second-wave feminist politics was also marked by organizing across difference. In fact, Gilmore argues that third-wavers have positioned themselves against second-wavers by perpetuating a mythology of the second wave as a 'white woman's movement'. In so doing, third-wavers have made second-wave feminism a 'convenient foil' for their distinctive political identity. The result has been that second-wave feminism has been

trapped in a 'historical – or rather, *ahistorical* – amber' (p. 2, emphasis in original). Ultimately, the volume reveals that the idea of a homogeneous second-wave feminist movement is a fiction which elides the hard-earned alliances feminists constructed to achieve political goals.

Essays like Maria Bevacqua's 'Reconsidering Violence against Women: Coalition Politics in the Antirape Movement', Wendy Kline's 'The Making of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*: Rethinking Women's Health and Second-Wave Feminism' and Amy Farrell's 'Attentive to Difference: *Ms.* Magazine, Coalition Building, and Sisterhood' exemplify the volume's commitment to revealing second-wave's diverse partnerships. For example, Farrell's convincing close-reading of *Ms.* Magazine demonstrates that the magazine's editors were committed to attracting a wide readership, and invested in transforming *Ms.* into a forum through which a panoply of women's voices could be heard. Indeed, *Ms.* readers held the magazine's editors accountable for producing a publication that reflected women's varied, and at times competing, interests. Farrell's essay demonstrates that even seemingly mainstream feminist cultural products like *Ms.* self-consciously worked to forge connections between women across lines of difference.

Gilmore's contributors rightfully establish that third-wavers often rely on a simplistic feminist narrative in order to stake out their own distinctiveness. Indeed, it has become a common critique that third-wave feminists are selective about how they categorize feminist history, critiquing second-wave feminism's imagined homogeneity while borrowing heavily from second-wave women of color feminisms (Henry 2004). If second-wave feminism is posited as a racially homogenous project, then third-wave's commitment to intersectionality seems particularly striking in comparison.

While the essays in Gilmore's edited volume skillfully marshal historical evidence to chronicle second-wave coalitions, I was left with lingering questions about the text's analytical structure. Most significantly, I wonder why the book relied on the problematic and oft-criticized waves characterization, a way of describing the history of feminist thought in the United States. Rather than blaming third-wavers for the tendency to construct simplified feminist historiographies, Gilmore's volume could make a more compelling argument by problematizing the wave structure altogether. Ultimately, (some) third-wavers' insistence on distinguishing themselves from their feminist predecessors hinges on a highly constructed conception of feminist history which requires each generation to stake out a new identity in opposition to the generations preceding it. Gilmore's text could be enhanced by examining how wave historiography obscures historical nuance, denying the existence of coalitions like those her volume documents.

Moreover, Gilmore's volume could be strengthened by engaging with primary sources from the second-wave period which document mainstream feminists' systemic disregard of women of color. These sources suggest that the myth of second-wave feminism as a white women's movement is not simply a fiction crafted by third-wavers, but might also have been a prevalent perception

during the second wave. Donna Kate Rushin's 'Bridge Poem' (which opened the now-canonical *This Bridge Called My Back*) detailed the frustration some women of color felt with functioning as 'bridges' between white feminists and men of color, with 'do[ing] more translating/Than the Gawdamn U.N.' (Rushin 1984: xxi). doris davenport echoed this sentiment, arguing that 'the feminist movement is racist, but that news is old and stale by now. It is increasingly apparent that the problem is white wimmin' (davenport 1984: 85, emphasis in original). Sustained consideration of primary sources would not undermine Gilmore's efforts to document the presence of second-wave multi-racial coalitions. Instead, these sources could help the volume complicate the notion of second-wave feminism as a 'white women's movement' that emerged during the third-wave era, instead suggesting that the second wave was perceived – at least, by some – as marked by exclusion and hierarchy even as it was unfolding.

While Gilmore's collection seeks to recover second-wave feminism's intersectional politics, *Politics & Gender's* 'Critical Perspectives on Gender and Politics: Intersectionality' issue uses intersectionality as a set of methodological approaches that political scientists can draw upon while crafting research agendas and imagining social change. Ange-Marie Hancock's article 'Intersectionality as a Normative and Empirical Paradigm' convincingly advocates uncoupling intersectionality and 'women of color studies' (p. 253) and harnessing intersectionality to think through larger research questions with a new degree of complexity. Similarly, Julia Jordan-Zachery's essay attempts to shift intersectionality from a 'politics of survival for black women' (p. 256) to a strategy for conceptualizing and realizing political liberation. Both pieces emphasize the analytical value of intersectionality, even for scholars whose research agendas do not focus on women of color.

The transformation of intersectionality theory from 'women of color studies' into a broader research agenda is perhaps more significant than either Hancock or Jordan-Zachery acknowledge in their essays. Intersectionality theory has generally been preoccupied with investigating black female subjectivity so that black women have become quintessential intersectional subjects (or quintessential intersectional metaphors). Intersectionality's preoccupation with black women has produced a body of scholarship that often posits black women as the paradigmatic marginalized subject, neglecting the host of ways that black women's experiences are often marked by the complex simultaneity of privilege and oppression. In shifting away from intersectionality as 'women of color studies', scholars have analytical space for rigorous engagement with intersections beyond race/gender. In fact, Julie Anne White's article 'The Hollow and the Ghetto: Space, Race, and the Politics of Poverty', also included in the *Politics & Gender* issue, epitomizes the analytic potential of a broader intersectionality. Her examination of the intersections of whiteness, poverty and rurality suggests the importance of space as an overlooked marker of identity and oppression. Indeed, White's essay reveals that a broader conception of intersectionality enables scholars to ask new questions about the production and maintenance of both inequality and privilege.

The *Politics & Gender* essays are most promising in their call for scholarship which is 'interdisciplinary in [its] study of intersectionality' (p. 261). Indeed, a rigorous application of intersectionality theory requires traversing disciplinary borders, and necessitates marshalling an array of theoretical and methodological approaches to studying identity and inequality. As I read these essays, I couldn't help but think how these pieces might be informed or amplified by a more interdisciplinary perspective. For example, Jordan-Zachery's essay suggests the importance of measuring intersectionality by asking whether identities are actually experienced as a set of intersections. Jordan-Zachery's queries point to a broader set of methodological questions about intersectionality theory: why have intersections – rather than convergences, crossroads, connections, etc. – become the primary metaphor for theorizing complex identities? What does the intersection metaphor reveal, and what does it obscure or elide? What is the relationship between intersectionality theory as an analytic, and subjects' daily lived experiences of the complexity of identity and the brutality of inequality? These very questions have been asked by a number of scholars working in the legal academy – Jerome Culp, Robert Chang, Peter Kwan, to name a few – who have inaugurated a 'post-intersectional' moment (Chang and Culp 2002; Kwan 2002). This 'post-intersectional' moment has birthed a number of new terms, including 'cosynthesis' and 'symbiosis' (Ehrenreich 2002; Kwan 2002) which are fundamentally invested in adding a new kind of rigor to intersectionality theory, and in pushing intersectional theory beyond its tendency to romanticize black women. Ultimately, the *Politics & Gender* essays could benefit from practicing the interdisciplinary version of intersectionality they advocate, drawing on the insights of scholarship in a host of fields to develop an intersectional theory that is particularly useful for political scientists.

Deborah Orr *et al.*'s edited volume *Feminist Politics: Identity, Difference, and Agency* approaches questions of identity and difference from a different disciplinary tradition: philosophy. The volume's essays are concerned with revealing the fluidity between the personal, the political and the philosophical, and with restoring the place of subjects to feminist philosophy in the wake of postmodernism. Moreover, the book's political goal is alliance building, with Orr emphatically arguing that the book's contributors 'display the deeply held conviction that building bridges among differently identified feminists is not only important but a necessary and achievable goal' (p. 5).

The volume's commitment to 'building bridges' across difference is epitomized by Marie-Claire Belleau's chapter 'L'intersectionnalité: Feminisms in a Divided World; Quebec-Canada'. Belleau introduces a concept called 'strategic intersectionality' (p. 51) which describes how activists routinely and skillfully negotiate the interlocking nature of seemingly disparate political struggles. 'Strategic intersectionality' enables Belleau to analyze the intersection of feminist politics and national identity politics in Canada, and allows her to conclude that 'playing the intricate, if dangerous, game of strategic intersectionality can empower us to imagine innovative tactics and create new

coalitions' (p. 51). Rejecting both essentialism and universalism, Belleau suggests that fruitful political organizing often happens across difference, yielding productive and creative coalitions. Similarly, Alison Bailey's 'Locating Traitorous Identities: Toward a View of Privilege-Cognizant White Character' couples standpoint and intersectionality theories to examine subjects from racially dominant groups who 'resist the usual assumptions and orientations of those groups' (p. 142). By theorizing race-traitors as 'privilege-cognizant whites who refuse to animate the scripts whites are expected to perform and who are unfaithful to worldviews whites are expected to hold' (p. 142), Bailey examines the productive political possibilities of traitorousness. Both Belleau and Bailey use intersectionality theory to craft new understandings of feminist political strategies and progressive social change.

While *Feminist Politics* embraces intersectionality theory, some of the volume's essays seem to under-theorize the significance of race in shaping contemporary feminist politics. For example, Cathryn Bailey's 'When Girls Just Wanna Have Fun: Third-Wave Cultural Engagement as Political Activism' celebrates third-wave feminism's consistent engagement with popular culture. Indeed, Bailey suggests that in a moment where 'much of our reality is mediated through ... images' (p. 83), third-wavers' interest in popular culture has produced a relevant brand of feminism. While Bailey champions third-wave icons like Ani DiFranco, and celebrates the production of third-wave feminist zines, her essay neglects to analyze either the relevance of these products to a diverse range of feminist subjects or the accessibility of these cultural products to a multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-class feminist constituency. Ultimately, Bailey's conception of the third wave seems too narrow, inattentive to the host of third-wave black feminist scholarship and hip hop feminist scholarship also committed to creating a grounded, inclusive feminism (Morgan 1995, 1999; Walker 1995; Zook 1995; Springer 2002; Pough 2004; Sharpley-Whiting 2007). A more expansive engagement with third-wave cultural production would allow Bailey to account for the true heterogeneity of the third-wave moment, and to study the multiplicity of forms third-wave cultural production has taken.

Janet Siltanen and Andrea Doucet's *Gender Relations in Canada: Intersectionality and Beyond* treats gender relations in Canada as a case study for exploring the intersection of sociology and intersectionality theory. The book, which seems to anticipate an undergraduate audience, begins by tracing shifts in contemporary sociology of gender scholarship, from a 'gender matters' perspective to an intellectual formation that rigorously interrogates the primacy of gender in feminist thought (p. 4). This new perspective, emerging in the early 1980s, can be thought of as intersectional insofar as it recognizes that gender is constructed alongside and through other social processes including race, ethnicity, class and sexuality. The book then draws on an intersectional framework to demonstrate the variety of ways that the life-course is shaped by the interplay of gender, race, class, nation and sexuality.

The book is most analytically promising in its final chapter, 'Analyzing the Complexity of Gender: Intersectionality and Beyond', which promises to reveal the importance of moving 'beyond' intersectionality toward more complex theories of identity and oppression. The authors rehearse many of the current critiques of intersectionality, asking what aspects of identity need to be included in an intersectional analysis, and whether all dimensions of identity are indeed mutually constitutive. Perhaps their most powerful insight is that intersectionality theory has yet to resolve whether it describes structure or experience, as it continuously moves between analyzing identity and theorizing inequity. This insight could be deepened and expanded to explore the implications of intersectionality theory's dual labor. Is intersectionality theory impoverished or somehow diminished by aspiring to describe identity and oppression? Could intersectionality theory specialize in identity without also grappling with the workings of oppression? Ultimately, Siltanen and Doucet conclude that 'while intersectional analysis has become a widely accepted form of analysis within sociology and feminist scholarship, . . . its uses and applications have been hardly straightforward' (p. 186). This conclusion certainly points to ongoing debates about intersectional methodologies and implications, yet does not indicate what moving 'beyond' intersectionality theory will mean for feminist sociology or for feminist policy interventions.

Despite the pervasive anxiety that intersectionality is an exercise in impossibility, that the sheer complexity of lived experience cannot ever fully be captured, these four texts ambitiously strive to craft a more robust intersectionality theory. Yet all four texts brush up against the limits of disciplinarity in their imaginings of intersectionality's future. Indeed, each text mobilizes the methodological and theoretical tools of its respective discipline – history, political science, philosophy and sociology – to re-think intersectionality. However, the texts reveal that disciplinarity itself is a hindrance to the radical border-crossing thinking that intersectionality requires. Creative thinking about subjectivity and inequity in an era increasingly marked by contingent, shifting, hybrid identities necessitates scholarly exchanges across the at-times heavily policed disciplinary borders that shape the contemporary university.

Intersectionality has a long and deeply interdisciplinary history. The power of intersectionality to *transcend* disciplinary borders suggests that it might also have the power to *transform* disciplinary borders. The panoply of scholarly interventions committed to re-thinking and revising intersectionality suggest that it is an opportune time to un-discipline intersectionality. Un-disciplining intersectionality will allow scholars to harness the tools of a wide array of disciplines in our ongoing attempts to capture the messy social construction of identity.

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Reviews

Carol Hardy-Fanta (ed.). *Intersectionality and Politics: Recent Research on Gender, Race, and Political Representation in the United States*. New York: Haworth Press, 2006. ISBN 978-0-7890-3667-4.

Dara Strolovitch. *Affirmative Advocacy: Race, Class, and Gender in Interest Group Politics*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007. ISBN 978-0-226-77741-2.

Why do advocacy organizations committed to achieving social justice emphasize the interests of their most rather than their least advantaged constituents? Why are women of color attaining elective office at a faster rate than minority men and white women? Dara Strolovitch's *Affirmative Advocacy* and Carol Hardy-Fanta's edited volume, *Intersectionality and Politics*, posit intersectionality – an analytical framework that illuminates the status of persons at the junction of race, gender and other categories of difference – as the best means of answering these questions. Both books specifically focus on the US context.

Strolovitch begins *Affirmative Advocacy* with the following two pronged claim: (1) that anti-racist groups, labor unions and other advocacy organizations construct the concerns of their most advantaged constituents as typical of their constituents as a whole; and (2) that in doing so these organizations ignore the needs of the intersectionally marginalized subgroups they claim to represent. Such subgroups include but are not limited to impoverished Latinas who face interlocking racial and economic burdens not necessarily borne by all women and gay black men whose experience of mutually constructing racism and heterosexism is unrepresentative of blacks as a whole. In chapter two, Strolovitch describes the shortcomings of her data and theoretical constructs. Chapter three examines advocacy organizations' professed goal of attaining social justice. The next chapter details these organizations' low levels of activism on behalf of their most marginalized constituents. Strolovitch attributes this disturbing reality to advocacy organizations' flawed presumption that addressing the needs of their more advantaged constituents ultimately benefits or 'trickles down' to their less advantaged counterparts. Chapters five and six discuss advocacy organizations' inadequate political representation of or failure to pursue effective judicial and non-majoritarian strategies for their intersectionally marginalized constituents. Strolovitch concludes by positing affirmative advocacy as the

best way to remedy these organizations' inattention to intersectionally disadvantaged subgroups. Such advocacy involves: (1) fostering a sense of 'intersectionally linked fate' (p. 62) whereby privileged subgroups associate disadvantaged subgroups' interests with their own; and (2) pursuing best practices such as integrating marginalized subgroups' needs into advocacy organizations' formal mandates.

Intersectionality and Politics casts intersectionality as a framework that reveals how race and gender interlock to shape the descriptive and substantive representation of non-white women legislators. The first two essays describe changes in the descriptive representation of African American, Latina and Asian-American female legislators and explore the context in which these changes are occurring. These essays reveal that non-white women are attaining electoral office at a faster rate than white women and minority men and, consequently, that women of color represent an increasingly large proportion of all women and non-white legislators. Of equal interest is that minority women's electoral gains are occurring in a context that is anything but self-evident – namely, in states with predominantly white populations, above average per capita incomes, single member districts and low numbers of self-declared liberals. The essays in *Intersectionality and Politics*' second section explore the substantive impact of minority women's increased presence as legislators. One essay focuses on black female legislators' simultaneous inclination to introduce women's interest bills in legislatures with few female members and disinclination to introduce black interest bills in chambers with few black members. Another essay demonstrates that Latina legislators are more likely than their male counterparts to emphasize conflict resolution and consensus building within both the Latina/o caucus and the legislature as a whole.

Affirmative Advocacy and *Intersectionality and Politics* embrace intersectionality not just as an analytical framework but as an empirical tool. In doing so, these texts reject the oft repeated assertion that intersectionality's emphasis on destabilizing race and other social categories makes it inimical to empirical research. Manuel's argument in *Intersectionality and Politics*' final section, that impoverished women of color, except Latinas, have changed their leave taking behavior since the Family and Medical Leave Act's 1993 passage, is an example of how to apply intersectionality to an empirically observable phenomenon – in this case, how women's interlocking race and class identities shape their use, or lack thereof, of a tangible public policy. Fellow *Intersectionality and Politics* contributor Becki Scola explores the growing presence of women of color lawmakers, in part, by compiling an original dataset of state level legislators' race, gender and ethnicity and by calculating bivariate correlations for each of the independent and dependent variables she identifies.

Strolovitch's *Affirmative Advocacy* uses multiple empirically grounded methods to demonstrate how advocacy organizations fail to represent their intersectionally disadvantaged constituents and to understand why this is so.

First, to determine how well advocacy organizations represent their intersectionally marginalized constituents, Strolovitch conducted a telephone survey of 286 leaders of groups that advocate for racial minorities, the poor and women. In addition, she completed in-depth interviews with the leaders of forty advocacy organizations. Second, in an effort to make meaningful comparisons about how different organizations represent intersectionally marginalized subgroups, Strolovitch utilizes a 'policy typology' (p. 29) comprised of: (1) universal issues that apply to and affect all constituents; (2) majority issues which affect most constituents; (3) disadvantaged-subgroup issues which influence those constituents who are intersectionally marginalized compared to the broader constituency; and (4) advantaged-subgroup issues that affect persons who are intersectionally privileged compared to the larger group.

Affirmative Advocacy and *Intersectionality and Politics* are significant not only because of their empiricism but because they suggest important areas for future research. *Affirmative Advocacy's* discussion of 'intersectionally linked fate' raises key questions about the distinction, if any, between marginalized groups' pursuit of their own interests and their broader quest for social justice. *Intersectionality and Politics* invites us to consider the relationship between minority women's increased legislative presence and their socio-economic power beyond state and local elected bodies.

The two texts, however, are not without their limitations. Strolovitch's discussion of the legislative strategies that advocacy organizations pursue on behalf of their marginalized constituents could benefit from what *Intersectionality and Politics'* contributors make clear – that women of color represent a growing proportion of elective office holders. What, if anything, does the increasing presence of minority female legislators mean for advocacy organizations? Does this growing diversity of state and local level office holders make advocacy organizations' current legislative strategies more or less effective? Asking these questions would enhance Strolovitch's already nuanced exploration of the quantity and quality of the political representation that advocacy groups provide to disadvantaged subgroups. *Intersectionality and Politics'* contributors, in turn, might benefit from more attention to what *Affirmative Advocacy* emphasizes – that substantive political representation, be it on the part of advocacy organizations or legislators, is truly substantive when it addresses the needs of a marginalized group's most disadvantaged members.

Affirmative Advocacy and *Intersectionality and Politics* should ultimately interest scholars of political representation, public policy researchers, as well as feminist and critical race theorists not only because both texts demonstrate how to apply intersectionality empirically but because, in the process, they raise important questions about the extent to which putting intersectionality into practice fosters opportunities for life in a more just polity.

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Anne Phillips. *Multiculturalism without Culture*. Princeton, NJ & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007. ISBN 978-0-691-12944-0.

Anne Phillips' *Multiculturalism without Culture* is a formidable contribution to the debates on the virtues and limits of multiculturalism. The title is somewhat misleading – but finding out what lies behind this provocative and intriguing title is well worth the effort. The book offers a lucid and strong defence of multiculturalism driven by 'an unashamed normative commitment to the principle of equality' (p. 2). Interestingly, the author achieves this by redefining culture and by heavily qualifying its importance in people's lives.

On the one hand, she argues that culture is important, but not *that* important – that is, a force that influences but does not determine people's lives. The analysis of the role of culture enables her to reveal the double standard used to explain the impact of culture in different people's lives. Namely, she shows how culture is viewed as determining the lives of non-westerners, but not the lives of westerners. The impact of this double standard is effectively to deny agency to non-westerners.

On the other hand, she argues that we must 'recognise that culture is a stereotype, just like gender or class, a rough generalisation that can be a useful way of condensing information, but should never be mistaken for the truth' (p. 98). Importantly, Phillips shows how cultural stereotypes have been reproduced not only by the enemies of multiculturalism but also, somewhat paradoxically and almost inevitably, by its supporters, who have been often reliant on static and strong conceptions of culture which have exaggerated cultural differences as well as their importance in shaping people's decisions, as part of their strategy to achieve justice for non-western or minority groups.

Phillips argues that our understanding of cultural difference and cultural influence would improve significantly if we extended to culture the same qualifications of fluidity and relativity that have become the norm in terms of gender and class. That is, culture needs to travel a similar conceptual path to the one which led gender and class to evolve into concepts that serve to account for important but far from decisive influences on human behaviour. In short, Phillips retains a notion of people as cultural beings, with culture being both inescapable but also contingent. As a result, she supports multiculturalism, albeit a multiculturalism without culture, that is, a regime of strong toleration that dispenses with static and strong notions of culture.

Phillips articulates her points in a lucid fashion, both when she engages with other authors as well as when she uses examples to illustrate her argument and further the debate. She engages in a genuine and generous dialogue with major figures on the field, such as Will Kymlicka, Chandran Kukathas, Susan Moller Okin and Bikhu Parekh, among others. This, added to the use of specific examples of her own, mostly drawn from legal cases and decisions, contribute to clarify and advance the theoretical debates and to reveal practical implications of the different positions on multiculturalism.

The book brings together multiculturalism and feminism in a mutually constructive fashion that reflects the author's interests in social justice in general and gender equality in particular. In this sense, Phillips argues that multiculturalism can contribute to strengthen autonomy and equality, for culture continues to be part of the way people give meaning to the world and, therefore, its denial (as much as its treatment as a static and strong code of conduct) fails people, limiting their ability to express and explain themselves as full human agents. Indeed, it is to the author's credit that she treats minority group members as free moral agents, not as cultural puppets at the mercy of reified and monolithic cultural beliefs.

One does not need to concur with all the author's conclusions to appreciate the clarity and sophistication of her arguments. Given her preference for a multiculturalism without culture over 'a cosmopolitanism with an improved sense of cultural diversity' (p. 72), perhaps she could have extended the discussion of *culture as enabling* (derived from the work of Kymlicka). In any case, it is impossible not to concur with the praise for this book included in its back-cover, which accurately presents this text as an 'important intervention into the debate on cultural difference and social policy' (Richard Ford), and 'the finest presentation yet of liberal democratic bafflement over culture and culturalism' (Wendy Brown). In short, *Multiculturalism without Culture* is a major achievement, an illuminating and stimulating defence of multiculturalism for the twenty-first century.

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Evelyn M. Simien. *Black Feminist Voices in Politics*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006. ISBN-10: 0791467902.

In her book, *Black Feminist Voices in Politics*, political scientist Evelyn M. Simien attempts to fill a hole in the existing literature on political attitudes about feminism in the United States. Using responses from three national surveys conducted in the mid-1980s, mid-1990s and mid-2000s, Simien focuses on the attitudes of Black women and men in regards to questions about the relative importance of feminist issues and racial issues. She links these responses to other answers from Black community members about political behavior, such as voting, signing petitions and the like. Her project is ambitious: to insert awareness of Black women's experiences and political thinking into the discourse of political science, which as a discipline, has scrupulously avoided discussion on the matter.

As noted, Simien used three different surveys as the data for this book, although most of the analysis of Black women's and Black men's political attitudes relies on the 1993–4 National Black Politics Study. Using a set of questions about the situation of the Black community to which respondents

were asked to agree or disagree on a scale, Simien argues that a distinct Black feminist consciousness exists among Black women – and interestingly, among most Black men – and that this consciousness has grown over the past few decades, stabilizing in the mid-2000s. While she sees the need for more analysis of the specific co-determinants of Black feminist consciousness, much of what Simien finds in her analysis of the surveys will not surprise readers. Simien finds that Black women care about racial matters *and* gender matters, and see these issues as interconnected; Black women and men with higher levels of education and higher levels of income are more supportive of feminist issues and more likely to vote, sign petitions and engage in political activism; church-going correlates somewhat with a more socially conservative attitude about women's issues. Perhaps her most surprising set of results stems from the fact that Black women and Black men largely agree on the importance of an intersectional view of problems confronting the Black community.

Most scholars and students of Black women's history will find the biographical synopses of African-American women activists that bookend the chapters familiar, and most will undoubtedly be familiar as well with the feminist theory of intersectionality that Simien relies on in part to ground her survey data analysis. But despite its title, *Black Feminist Voices in Politics* is less about activism – electoral or otherwise – and largely about attitudes. It is important to document attitudes because public opinion tells us something after all about the extent to which social movements like Black feminism have been able to shape people's responses to political issues. It is especially important to document Black community attitudes regarding feminism given that the question of how or whether Black feminism has mattered in the lives of Black women and men on the ground is one that has of late sparked some debate (Radford Hill 2000; Hill Collins 2006). My overall response to Simien's ambitious attempt in this book, however, is that she relies too heavily on one single method of data collection – that of survey research – to carry the burden of her argument about the appeal of feminism to Black women and men. The questions about gender and race that Simien uses to document feminist attitudes constitute a relatively small subset of responses to questions in the national surveys. Although the surveys she uses were especially designed to sample the Black community in meaningful numbers, US national surveys often do not sample enough people of color to make meaningful assessments. I would question whether we can make the kinds of claims that Simien does about the existence of a unique Black feminist consciousness based on a unique relationship among attitudes concerning race and gender. Attitudes may be evidence of consciousness, but they are not the same thing as consciousness. Matters of situated identity (because I think situated identity is what Simien wishes to document, ultimately) cannot be captured by surveys alone. I would have liked to see her conduct some focus groups, for example, to 'test' how or whether the connections suggested by the surveys seemed to occur in conversation.

Another potentially useful avenue that Simien could have explored is that of community networks. She uses surveys that ask respondents about a fairly typical and reductive list of political behaviors: voting; petition signing; letter-writing; attending meetings; demonstrating; and aiding campaign activities. But feminist scholars like Cheryl Townsend Gilkes (1994) and Nancy Naples (1998) have noted that community organizing is central to Black women's feminist work. There are no measures at all in these surveys about memberships in community organizations or ongoing volunteerism. Even if the hurdles of data collection prevented the easy accumulation of these data, a case study of a community network might have both enlivened the text, and challenged political scientists to open up their surveys to new kinds of questions.

It is interesting to me, as a qualitative social scientist, that Simien takes political scientists as such to be her audience even as she asserts that they have failed to explore political attitudes about feminism in the Black community. Her solution is to use the most central method of the discipline – surveys of political attitudes – to address this failure. A more ambitious multi-method approach would have convinced me much more about the question of to what extent Black feminist consciousness existed in the Black community. It also would have made for a more broadly accessible book. I hope that Simien continues her research into the subject of Black feminist consciousness with approaches designed to speak to challenge her discipline and speak to those outside it.

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Over the past three decades, a large body of literature has emerged in developed democracies suggesting that feminism is no longer active as a social movement, is 'dead' or at the very least, in a state of 'abeyance'. The editors of these two collections take this assumption as a starting point for exploring the trajectories of contemporary feminist movements, and call into question normative social movement theory, in particular, 'life-cycle' theories of social movements. By questioning the way in which the term 'social movement' is understood, and through use of illustrative case studies, the authors in these collections demonstrate that feminist movements are indeed flourishing, and in doing so, challenge normative understandings of the function and role of social movements.

As Grey and Sawyer point out, the theory of 'abeyance' was introduced by Rupp and Taylor (1987) to examine contemporary women's movements. Amid cries of the 'death' (p. 3) of feminism in the mid-1980s, Rupp and Taylor – who also contribute a preface to the Grey and Sawyer collection – agreed that abeyance was the term which best explained the lack of feminism's public presence and drew attention to the 'hibernation' (p. xii) of many women activists. While these feminists were busy campaigning behind closed doors there was less of the vocal, confrontational activism witnessed during the 1960s and early 1970s. The theory of abeyance is congruent with Tarrow's (1995) examination of the life cycle of social movements, whereby social movements utilize political opportunity structures at certain moments to achieve their goals, but as these goals are met and institutionalized, the movement loses momentum and inevitably disbands or disappears.

Divided into three parts, the authors in *Women's Movements: Flourishing or in Abeyance?* critique both the abeyance and the life-cycle models, calling for a more nuanced model better suited to contemporary social movements. The predominant theme throughout this collection is a redefining of how the term social movement is understood by society, rather than an endless questioning of whether feminism is 'alive' or 'dead'.

The collection begins by examining the course of feminism in developed democracies (Australia, Britain, Canada, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, the United States) where the media and public opinion has often labelled it effectively dead as a social movement. The strongest critique of both the abeyance and the life-cycle models is provided in Gwendolyn Gray's chapter on women's health activism in Canada and Australia, which charts how women activists continue to utilize both confrontational (rallies, strikes, picket lines) and institutional (policy reviews, lobbying, government and legal reforms relating to women's health) tactics and thereby hardly constitute a movement that is in abeyance. Similarly, in part two's study of 'new' women's spaces, C. J. Rowe's chapter on women's online activism, or 'cyberfeminism', provides evidence that, via the Internet, feminism has garnered enormous support and increased the potential for transnational women's organizing. While there are, of course, shortcomings within the cyberfeminism model (due to technological and linguistic access, affordability and online safety, for example), Rowe

nonetheless demonstrates the importance of the Internet for providing a space in which feminism has been able to grow and develop, and include a new generation of feminist activists. Finally, part three of this collection is given over to young feminists from the case study countries to share their own experiences of growing up in a so-called 'post-feminist' age. This part of the book is particularly effective in giving voice to a section of the contemporary feminist movement, and in illustrating the ways in which young feminists are combating the many challenges feminism currently faces, such as neo-liberalism (America, Japan); conservative government (New Zealand, Britain and Australia); the loss of institutional feminist memory and the ensuing 'generational divide' (p. 144) in the movement; and the damaging effects of public and media opinion regarding the 'death' of feminism.

In *Building Feminist Movements and Organizations: Global Perspectives*, editors Lydia Alpizar Duran, Noel D. Payne and Anahi Russo also use the experiences and voices of global feminist organizations in ways that challenge the notion that women's movements are in a state of 'abeyance'. While the authors in this collection do not often directly engage with social movement literature, the empirical experiences of women activists provided in this collection support the argument made by Grey and Sawyer that women's movements are, indeed, flourishing. The sentiment in this collection is that, 'building a strong organization can, in itself, contribute to strengthening the movement' (p. 4), and as such, the collection is comprised of twenty-six brief chapters which offer snapshots of the work carried out by women's organizations around the world, which, when viewed together, can be seen as evidence of a strong global feminist movement. Arranged into six parts, this collection is ambitious in its scope: case studies range from women's writing groups in Zimbabwe; campaigns on sexual rights in Nigeria; resource groups for Latin American women migrants in Germany; women trade unions in Korea; to a study of the subversion of traditional, patriarchal understandings of 'motherhood' to empower women in Indonesia. There is a clear emphasis on empirical data and *experience* in this collection and, as such, the authors generally do not use theoretical frameworks in their pieces. While there is minimal engagement with some of the concepts of social movement theory (such as the life-cycle and abeyance theories, which would have been appropriate in this collection), the strength of the chapters in this collection is in the illustrative case studies, which show that women's organizations – from the grassroots to the transnational – are actively engaged in building a global feminist movement.

Both *Women's Movements: Flourishing or in Abeyance?* and *Building Feminist Movements and Organizations* challenge classic social movement theory and call into question normative understandings of social movements. Through a multitude of case studies in both books, the authors (whether deliberately or inadvertently) actively critique Tarrow's (1995) 'life-cycle' theory, arguing that while movements may not be publicly visible they may still achieve great gains for women. This is especially true in cases where women's groups have succeeded in reforming institutional, legal and governmental policy,

resulting in dramatic changes for women citizens. Equally, this is not to suggest that women's movements have become overwhelmingly institutionalized: as the writings of younger feminists in part three of *Women's Movements: Flourishing or in Abeyance?* and the case studies presented throughout *Building Feminist Movements and Organizations* suggest, by using a combination of confrontational and more institutionally focused tactics, and by working from 'inside' and 'outside' the movement, feminism has never fit a traditional life-cycle mould and therefore cannot be said to be in a state of 'abeyance'. Both books illustrate the need to redefine how social movements are understood by academics, movement actors themselves and in society more generally so that future debates on feminism might move beyond questions of whether the movement is 'alive' or 'dead', 'flourishing' or 'in abeyance'.

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