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Philosophy: Feminism
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Quote: "The range of topics helps illustrate the significant contributions feminist philosophers have made to the development of theories addressing systematic oppression, and social and ethical injustices."

Those who teach feminist philosophy to undergraduates will find *Philosophy: Feminism* a welcome addition to the options for a course textbook. Offering introductory yet comprehensive explanations of a wide range of topics comprising feminist philosophy, this text serves its purpose well. It is prepared for undergraduate students who have had little exposure to philosophy, but many chapters could also be effectively integrated into interdisciplinary feminist theory courses.

The book is part of a series of interdisciplinary textbooks, each designed to provide an introduction to a subfield of philosophy. In surveys of philosophy, whether in the form of one volume or a book series, feminist philosophy is often neglected or appended as an afterthought, so it is notable that feminist philosophy is included as part of Macmillan's ten-volume series. The series takes an interdisciplinary approach by using material from other disciplines in an effort to present illustrations of human experiences that raise the crucial questions philosophers try to address.

In what follows I will first comment on the strengths of the volume, and then briefly highlight three chapters that merit praise. I will then consider a few minor weaknesses.

The most obvious strength of *Philosophy: Feminism* is its breadth. The textbook is full of well-crafted chapters that present comprehensive expositions of the issues they address. The sixteen chapters, each written by a different author, cover topics that comprise feminist philosophy, that is, topics found at the intersection of oppression studies (gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, reproduction, and intersectionality) and traditional philosophy (epistemology, philosophy of science, ethics, social/political philosophy, philosophy of language, religion, and environmental philosophy). The range of topics helps illustrate the significant contributions

feminist philosophers have made to the development of theories addressing systematic oppression, and social and ethical injustices.

Chapter 5, "Intersectionality: Locating and Critiquing Internal Structures of Oppression within Feminism," may be one of the most notable in the volume. Author Grayson Hunt begins by providing a careful history of intersectionality arising out of black feminist thought, including the work of the Combahee River Collective, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Audre Lorde. Hunt then proceeds to engage in the tricky business of explaining the nature of multiplicative oppression. Hunt uses characters from the Netflix show *Orange is the New Black* to explain that the qualitative experience of dealing with more than one oppression is best described as multiplicative instead of multiple. "Intersectionality reveals that the qualitative experience of oppression is not captured by performing a simple sum; we can't simply add up oppressions to get a full picture of harms endured" (133). Hunt uses the term coined by Black feminist scholar Moya Bailey, *misogynoir*, to describe the amplified level of hatred black women experience as a result of intersecting oppressions. Hunt does an excellent job of explaining a complex concept.

A second exceptional chapter is chapter 3, "Feminist Perspectives on Human Nature." Author Lori Watson explores the nature/nurture controversy as it relates to the problem of sex differences. She provides a substantive review of feminist perspectives on the sexed body. This may be one of the few chapters in the volume that is legitimately interdisciplinary. Watson uses scholarship from evolutionary psychology, biology, sports studies, sexuality studies, and anthropology to explore understandings of sexed bodies and intersexuality in the Western world, as well as in cultures that offer the possibility of third and fourth genders. This chapter offers a thorough and contemporary introduction to problems arising out of biological essentialism.

Yet another chapter that merits attention is chapter 16, "Feminist Environmental Philosophy: Ecofeminism." Environmental ethics and environmental philosophy textbooks do a notoriously poor job of including ecofeminist perspectives. When ecofeminism is included, the textbooks rarely do the subject justice, as they fail to consider the range of frameworks, approaches, and concerns that comprise ecofeminism. In this volume, Erin McKenna delivers a deep, rich, and comprehensive overview of the subject. McKenna manages to provide a useful historical account of the central figures associated with ecofeminism, as well as summaries of central issues and concepts. In the last section McKenna takes up critiques of ecofeminism and explores future directions. Here McKenna focuses on the recent development of queer ecology, tying it back to the "queer" roots of ecofeminism, which include visions of worlds that radically challenge traditional notions of gender, reproduction, sexuality, and relationships.

Ecofeminism reached its first peak in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Fortunately, in recent years, interest in this area of study has experienced a resurgence. Not only is the study of the conceptual links between systematic exploitation of nature and oppressed people (for example, women, racialized people, queers) an effective avenue for illustrating the connection between epistemological and spiritual frameworks and concrete lived consequences, but understanding and addressing these links has never been so vitally critical as it is now.

The strengths of this volume overshadow its weaknesses. That said, I would like to briefly review three aspects of the text that I found disappointing: insufficient targeted attention on the

body and sexuality, a weak enactment of interdisciplinarity, and the use of the feminist-wave narrative to frame feminist history.

Of course, no volume can cover every topic, but only two chapters target topics specifically focused on the body: disability and reproduction. In response to the persistent neglect of the body in traditional Western philosophy, feminist philosophers have pioneered foundational investigations of issues related to embodiment. The volume would be enhanced by chapters reviewing the feminist philosophy literature on the body/embodiment, emotions, and especially sexuality. Systems of oppression operate through the definition, regulation, and control of material bodies, often through sexual norms, sexual practices, sexual stigma, and sexually objectified representations. Feminist philosophers have made valuable contributions to discourses on sexual harassment, sex work, consent, and S/M, to name a few. Arguably, contributions to this topic merit their own chapters.

It is commendable that this series of textbooks aspires to present an interdisciplinary approach to each topic. Lamentably, genuine interdisciplinary explanations are challenging for most people trained in one discipline. Very few chapters in this volume provide interdisciplinary perspectives on the topics they address. Most chapters use characters and situations from fictional films, novels, and TV shows to illustrate points. Undoubtedly, using examples from popular stories and narratives plays a critical role in making the text more palatable and lucid for students, but the use of examples from film, novels, and shows does not constitute an interdisciplinary approach. A genuine interdisciplinary approach integrates two or more modes of inquiry, such as theoretical analyses, empirical findings, historical accounts, and ethnographic reports. With respect to praxis, connecting concepts found in feminist philosophy to world events, sociological facts, and scientific findings would have been instructive in some chapters. Although the use of interdisciplinarity is not essential for the success of this text, describing it as interdisciplinary is inaccurate.

Finally, I would like to address the use of the feminist-waves narrative to frame feminist history. The first chapter of the book is entitled "A Historical Introduction: The Three Waves." For a book published in 2017, this is disappointing. To be fair, the chapter is a well written, critical exploration of the waves narrative. Of course, students of feminist theory should study the waves narrative--but as a historically situated description that we have moved beyond due to its problematic nature. The waves narrative should not serve as a historical introduction to feminism, feminist theory, and especially not feminist philosophy. Not only does the wave narrative do a poor job of adequately explaining the development of the feminist movement in the US, it almost completely fails to explain the development of US feminist philosophy.

First, the wave framework is based on the feminist political movement in the US, which is structured largely by liberal feminism. The first wave (1848-1920) ends with women's suffrage. The second wave (1960-1989) focuses on women's equality to men. The third wave (beginning in 1990) focuses on intersectionality. These all describe developments in liberal feminism, and fail to capture the complicated nature of competing approaches to feminism during any given historical period. Second, the development of feminist philosophy does not mirror these waves of liberal activism. Any attempt to understand the development of feminist philosophy through the waves framework would lead to a distorted, piecemeal, and incomplete account of this history.

There is little feminist philosophy associated with either the first or third waves. The development of US feminist philosophy does not linearly trace its foundations to "first-wave" feminism. For example, the US-centered waves narrative fails to account for the impact of French feminist philosophy on the development of feminist philosophy in the US. Much of the feminist philosophy written during the "second wave" addresses and provides alternatives to the masculinist and androcentric nature of traditional Western philosophy. The political and legislative efforts of the US feminist movement do not take center stage in US feminist philosophy. Finally, there is generally very little theory associated with the "third wave," let alone feminist philosophy. Chapter author Judy Whipps expands the third wave by beginning in the 1980s and by including postcolonial and transnational feminists, but it is unlikely that these feminist philosophers would locate their work within the US-centered waves narrative.

With respect to providing an accessible introduction to feminist philosophy, *Philosophy: Feminism* does an excellent job. It should prove useful to traditional philosophers who are interested in learning more about feminist philosophy, and to faculty members who teach courses in feminist philosophy and feminist theory.