

Women's Philosophy Review

Joint General Editors

Helen Chapman
School of Humanities & Social Sciences
Staffordshire University
College Road
Stoke-on-Trent ST4 2XW
h.c.chapman@staffs.ac.uk

Rachel Jones
Dept. of Philosophy
University of Dundee
Dundee DD1 4HN
Scotland
r.e.jones@dundee.ac.uk

Book Reviews Editor Stella Sandford S.Sandford@mdx.ac.uk
Dept. of Philosophy, School of Humanities and Cultural Studies, Middlesex
University, White Hart Lane, London N17 8HR

Administrative Editor Alessandra Tanesini Atanesini@compuserve.com
Philosophy Section, University of Cardiff, PO Box 94, Cardiff, CF1 3XB, UK

Members of the Editorial Board

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Cover Simone de Beauvoir is on the front face of the cube (Photo © Photo:AKG London/Daniel Frasnay); Catherine Hoskyns is on the side; Kimberly Hutchings is on the top.

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ILLUSTRATIONS: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Figure 1: Computer-generated image produced by scientists at IBM. The image was originally produced to illustrate the density of the high-altitude ozone layer that protects the earth, as seen from above the South Pole. Reprinted by permission from International Business Machines Corporation, copyright 1996.

Figure 2: Portrait of Virginia Woolf, 1935, by Man Ray. Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London. © Man Ray Trust/ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 2001.

EDITORIAL

One of the key themes running through this volume of WPR is, appropriately enough, that of connections. This edition is the result of a web of productive connections. New links have been forged between the incoming editors and Book Review editor, as we have worked together to shape ourselves into an editorial team, whilst all this would have been impossible without the connections between new editors and old. And given the geographical distances involved, making connections in the sense of negotiating trains and railway timetables has also played a significant role!

As Catherine Hoskyns points out in the opening essay, 'The Feminization of Politics?', women have long been adept at thinking in terms of links, networks and connections. Indeed, the essay itself epitomizes this way of working. The author, a political scientist, draws on philosophical and literary work produced by women to explore contemporary modes of conceptualizing the political. We are delighted to be able to include this piece, which Catherine Hoskyns delivered as her Inaugural Lecture as Jean Monnet Professor of European Studies at Coventry University, in January 2000. The professorship is a worthy recognition of the contribution Catherine has made to research and teaching in the fields of women's studies, international relations and law. These interests are combined in several major publications, which include *Integrating Gender: Women, Law and Politics in the European Union* (1996) and *Democratizing the European Union—Issues for the Twenty-first Century* (2000), co-edited with M. Newman. These works examine political developments in the European Union and how these affect and respond to the situation of women, including migrant and ethnic minority women.

The inclusion of Catherine Hoskyns' lecture allows us to mark the achievement of a contemporary woman theorist who has made a significant impact on her own field. However, we are also sure that readers of WPR will find much to interest them in the rich

interdisciplinary methodology which characterizes this piece. The essay foregrounds the work of three women who each had a significant influence on twentieth-century thought, and who were important to Catherine Hoskyns herself throughout her career: Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir and Hannah Arendt.

Hoskyns argues that the emphasis on interactions, flows and their consequences to be found in the work of all three women thinkers prefigures contemporary theorization of society and the political in terms of 'networks'. However, she also shows how the model of the network—despite implying an open and egalitarian mode of political organization—in fact sets up new patterns of inclusion and exclusion. Hoskyns argues that Woolf, de Beauvoir and Arendt provide the resources for conceptualizing the public realm in terms of networks and flows in ways that are more sensitive to power relations, as well as to the need for transparency and inclusiveness. Such a rethinking of the political would also emphasize the importance of generating political solidarity without homogenizing difference and diversity between women.

Hoskyns concludes by showing how the transformative potential of such ideas would contribute to the ongoing development of the European Union. In this way, the work of three women thinkers with whom readers of WPR will already be familiar is cast in a new light. The essay also provides a stimulating way of countering the criticism—referred to in the following paper by Kimberly Hutchings—that feminist thinking which is philosophically oriented may be too abstract to be of use in thinking through concrete political change. Hoskyns argues that the work of women writers and philosophers can provide the conceptual frameworks that are necessary for the development of policies which are accountable and inclusive.

Hoskyns' interest in the extent to which contemporary models of the political can be open to conceptualizations drawn from the experience of women resonates strongly with the concerns of the feminist theorists of international relations examined in the second

essay. Kimberly Hutchings' review article is a welcome addition to the series of such articles that have been published in WPR. In ways that will be of interest to specialists and non-specialists alike, Hutchings traces the development of feminist work in international relations so as to bring out strong similarities with the broader development of feminist thought in recent decades.

Hutchings establishes that earlier feminist interventions in the field of international relations were concerned to expose the inherent masculinism of dominant conceptual frameworks and debates. They also set out to explore the difference that would be made by making a woman's standpoint central to the study of international politics. She goes on to show that later theorists working in this field—like those in feminist theory more broadly understood—are able to take the critique of the dominant tradition for granted. Instead, they develop a critical perspective that re-examines concepts earlier feminist interventions had relied upon, such as those of 'sex' and 'gender'.

Like Hoskyns, Hutchings highlights the ways in which the introduction of a gendered perspective puts particular pressure on the absence of an adequate understanding of power relations. This comes strongly to the fore in the later work examined, where Spivak is a key figure. In ways that again parallel the trajectory of feminist work in other fields, later feminist writings in international relations also emphasize the need for approaches that do not take Western historical and intellectual traditions as the norm and which are capable of doing justice to cultural diversity.

The second half of the essay will again be of interest to non-specialists. Here Hutchings focuses on the importance of the feminist theory of an ethics of care for two recent attempts to re-envision the realm of international politics, those of Sarah Ruddick and Fiona Robinson. Hutchings' critical discussion of both thinkers, and of Ruddick's elaboration of 'maternal thinking' in particular, highlights the tension inherent in so many feminist projects between respecting localized differences whilst maintaining a commitment to shared

global goals such as equality. As Hutchings concludes, the encounter between international relations and feminist theory has productively called both into question.

Many of the key themes explored by Hoskyns and Hutchings are echoed across the book reviews in this issue. For example, the concerns of both papers have resonances with Adriana Cavarero's *Relating Narratives*, here reviewed by Liz Mitchell. Cavarero is a thinker who, like Ruddick, seeks to critically deploy notions of relationality and the maternal, but rather than turn to an ethics of care, Cavarero deploys Hannah Arendt to link natality to the uniqueness of identity. The interdisciplinarity of Cavarero's approach also mirrors that of the earlier articles.

Several books discussed here continue the feminist project of rethinking the political: readers will find an unusual marriage of Habermas and Kristeva, as well as a stimulating re-examination of negativity in Dionysian and dialectical modes. Alongside such thematic continuities, we have also aimed to preserve WPR's tradition of reviewing a range of books so as to reflect the variety of work being produced by women in philosophy. However, the first of this issue's reviews deserves special mention. In it, Margaret Whitford introduces two psychoanalytic texts which importantly complement more well-known work in this field by thinkers such as Irigaray. As readers will know, Margaret is the outgoing Book Review Editor; in foregrounding her review, the new editorial team would like to once again acknowledge all her work in the past—and to offer our heartfelt thanks!

To return to the theme of connections, as incoming editors we would like to particularly thank two other people: Stella Sandford, who has taken up the editing of the book reviews to great effect, and Christine Battersby, whose advice on everything from printers to soft-hyphens has been invaluable. Indeed, there must have been moments when Christine wondered if she would ever be allowed to properly give up the editorship! As you will have noticed, this edition of WPR

is a few months later than scheduled—needless to say, the transition took longer than we had allowed, and it must be added that we have a new-found respect for Christine now that we have a direct insight into what is involved in producing each issue! But we are (still) delighted to be taking WPR forward, and hope readers will forgive us the delay on this occasion. It has been a steep—but interesting—learning curve!

Two of the book reviews in this volume can be read as concerned with the future of feminist philosophy itself. Judy Purdom links a collection on Deleuze and feminism to a turn from a politics of emancipation and identity to one of becoming and differentiation. In her review, Alison Stone examines the productivity for feminist thinking of blurring analytic and continental approaches. We hope that WPR will continue to reflect and contribute to ongoing developments in feminist philosophy by giving space to a range of views, approaches, and methodologies. We aim to continue an inclusive approach that encourages diversity and dialogue.

With this in mind, there are two areas we would like to develop further in future issues: firstly, we would like to encourage the dialogue between disciplines and philosophical approaches which marks this volume. Secondly, WPR has played an important role in fostering a network of connections amongst women in philosophy in the UK, but we are aware that—to borrow a phrase from Catherine Hoskyns—'networks need networks!' Thus we aim to develop more links with feminist thinkers elsewhere, particularly in Europe, some of whom we hope to enlist as 'overseas correspondents'. To gather your views on these, and other matters, we have enclosed a brief questionnaire: we hope that despite the endless paperwork many of you are faced with, you will have the time to complete and return this!

We look forward to reading your views, and hope that you find reading this issue as stimulating as we have found the process of working on it!

The Feminization of Politics? From Virginia Woolf to the Network State

Catherine Hoskyns

Inaugural Lecture

26 January 2000, Coventry University, UK

As the title suggests, this lecture is about connections. Connections over time and space and between academic disciplines. It attempts also to connect the personal—Virginia Woolf—with the abstract—the network state.

It is also about connections in my life. I first read the novels of Virginia Woolf in the fifties when I was taking a degree in English Literature at Oxford University. I had to read them in my spare time as she was considered 'too modern' to be included in the syllabus. Now towards the end of my career, I am working as a political scientist, and researching and teaching on the European Union, the epitome of the network state.

The focus of the lecture is on the conceptualization of the political—how we think about politics and the nature of the public space, and what values we ascribe to it. In talking about the feminization of politics in this context, I am therefore not primarily concerned with numbers of women in Parliament or in the top echelons of business, although these are important issues. What I am concerned with is something more fundamental, that is, the extent to which the political arena is open to conceptualizations drawn from the experience of women, and what the relevance of these might be. This is an issue which has considerable resonance both in the general field of international relations and in my own particular specialism, the politics of the European Union.

The terms 'the network society' and 'the network state' are used by the Spanish/American social theorist, Manuel Castells, in his recent three volume study of the interaction between economy, society and culture at the end of the twentieth century (Castells, 1996). He uses these terms to describe the social and political forms which he sees as becoming ever more dominant in the contemporary global system. These forms represent attempts by state and society to reconfigure and reshape in the face of what we now call the information age. Networks in this sense emphasize flows and interaction, are based on speed of communications and encourage horizontal rather than vertical links. As they develop they create new forms of inclusion and exclusion. Anthony Giddens made similar points in 'Runaway World'—the title of his 1999 Reith lectures.

My argument in this lecture is that an emphasis on interactions, flows and their consequences is present to a marked degree in the work of women writers and philosophers living in Europe in the mid-twentieth century. I will suggest that their thinking not only prefigures these more recent developments, but also indicates ways in which some of the negative consequences which Castells observes can be mitigated.

Three women who illustrate this thesis are: the English novelist, Virginia Woolf (1882–1941), the French writer and philosopher, Simone de Beauvoir (1908–86), and the German/American political theorist, Hannah Arendt (1906–75).

In focusing on these individual women I am not attempting to develop a 'great woman' view of history. I see them rather as expressing general if submerged trends in society which they had the sensitivity and courage to pick up, interpret and make more visible.

The Network State

The illustration on the cover of Castells' volume on the network society shows a propeller-like halo of colour springing out from the globe.

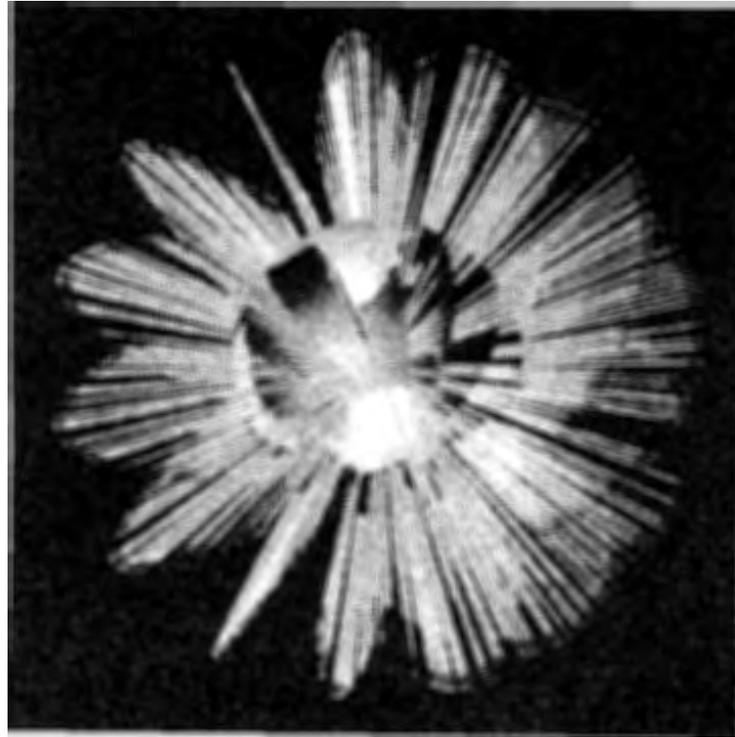


Figure 1: image generated by scientists at IBM, used on the cover of Castells' The Rise of the Network Society.

If this is a network, it appears dense at the centre, sparse at the edges (see Figure 1). Perhaps in this way it is intended to demonstrate not only communications but the power relations which lie behind them.

Castells sees the information age as representing as profound a challenge to the organization of state and society as the industrial revolution. Technological change is intensifying competition, and the rapid acquisition of new knowledge is more and more the determinant of successful production. Communications are instant and more widespread: innovation and change develop in foreshortened time. Information is more available and there are fewer restraints on its acquisition. As one radio commentator put it: 'we are all connected and no one's in charge'.

This egalitarian and open view of the network society is only part of the story. Figures from the 1999/2000 World Bank Development Report show not only that the spread of these communication networks is uneven throughout the world, but also that even within developed countries the power to access information so far is quite restricted. There is a vast difference too between having access and being accessed.

Nevertheless, the effect of these developments overall is to undermine established institutions and organized territorial space. This is part of the explanation for why in one year (1999) we saw in the UK both devolution to Scotland and Wales and the sacking of hereditary peers in the House of Lords. Clearly, we are in a time of constitutional change and widespread adjustment. But along with this shake-up go attacks on established practices of redistribution and on many of the structures which embody social responsibility. These in the past helped to create a sense of society and provided some security for the least well off.

This paradoxical situation helps explain Castells' other main finding, which is that far from cultural and national identities being blurred by globalization, local identities are being reinforced. These become more strongly articulated as people strive to keep a footing in

a world which appears more and more insecure and risky. The 'power of identity' thus develops in parallel with the 'power of flows'.

Castells' concepts and ideas have considerable explanatory power when applied to the European Union—my own area of research. The EU can be seen as the epitome of the network state, since much of its policy is developed by and through elite and expert networks whose members communicate intensely across borders, while the bulk of its populations remain attached to the traditional forms of the nation state. The result is that economic decision-making becomes increasingly separated from the political and social, and democratic control is diminished. The EU, however, also has a well developed, if unusual, institutional structure and a strong system of law which stretches out beyond the economic base. It thus has a framework which makes the contradictions inherent in the network state more visible and can in certain circumstances generate pressures against them.

What are the consequences of the development of the network society for gender relations and the situation of women? Although these are only trends, one can already see that the effect is ambiguous. As Sadie Plant shows in her book *Zeros and Ones*, open systems and easy access have advantages for those with non-standard training, ideas and circumstances.¹ Getting information in the home should be an advantage for those who are housebound or old. The undermining of tradition and of institutional rigidities can at the same time help to challenge stereotypes and embedded discrimination. It is not accidental that the EU developed a strong policy on women's rights. The fluidity of the system left a space for this which was closed off elsewhere. Feminism—in the sense of a spread of ideas as well as organized campaigns—is one of the social movements which Castells sees as most able to cope with the network age. The debate as to whether this actually is the case is still continuing.

However, open and unregulated systems tend to benefit those who already have power. Those who are marginalized, including many

women, require a rooted politics which can offer more support. The intensification of global competition has certainly brought more women into employment worldwide, but often to new forms of exploitation. Fernandez-Kelly, who worked in the *maquiladoras*, the low wage 'making things' assembly plants strung out along the Mexican/American border, shows this kind of factory work enabled women to break out of the patriarchal family, but put little in its place (Fernandez-Kelly 1997, 203–15). Although experience varied a great deal, only a very few individuals were able to use this as a stepping stone. Similarly, increasing internationalization and new forms of communication are making the trafficking of women from poorer to richer countries more systematic, creating what Jan Jindy Pettman has called 'an international political economy of sex'. Such women are temporarily at least 'out of place' in the globalized world (Pettman 1996, 185).

For most of the time, class is the dividing line. Better off women will benefit and have greater opportunities while those in poverty are likely to stay there. What is different from earlier periods is that there is more distance now between the elites and the poor and fewer mechanisms (and perhaps less inclination) to narrow the gaps.

Women Thinkers

It may seem far-fetched to enlist the arguments of Woolf, de Beauvoir and Arendt to help clarify these issues. After all, they were dealing with face-to-face not electronic relationships and lived in very different circumstances. Yet reading the novels of Virginia Woolf again a year ago drew me, to my surprise, into considering their implications for current day European politics and international relations, and suggested the theme of this lecture to me.

Before I attempt to substantiate the argument, some background is helpful. The three women thinkers I have chosen create a European triptych—one English, one French, one German. Their

lives taken together span a century—Virginia Woolf was born in 1882 and Simone de Beauvoir died in 1986. But their most important work was done before and after the Second World War—from the twenties to the sixties.

Despite their different cultures and backgrounds, they have a number of experiences in common. They all faced difficulties in becoming intellectual women. Wars caused traumatic breaks in all their lives. All of them lived in ways that challenged bourgeois norms and conventions about sexual relations: none of them had children. Finally, the ideas, writings and lives of all three have been dissected and assessed at enormous length, so that one reads them now through a haze of subsequent research and analysis. Feminists have been involved in this as much as others and have introduced new perspectives to the assessment.

Despite these similarities, the three are very different. I want to focus here on what Virginia Woolf's writings demonstrate about the way networks operate; on what Simone de Beauvoir can tell us about degrees of freedom and collective action; and on what Hannah Arendt's political theory suggests about managing complex systems.

Virginia Woolf

In a famous photograph in the National Portrait Gallery, Virginia Woolf is caught in thought, making a delicate squeezing gesture with her fingers, as though taking the measure of the intricate world around her (see Figure 2). The picture was taken in 1935 by the surrealist photographer, Man Ray. It catches her essence.

Woolf in her writings dissects the patriarchal Victorian family and draws attention to the richness of relational politics—the nuances, silences and gestures that make up everyday life. This is particularly demonstrated in her novels *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927). These revolutionized the English novel by putting the emphasis on flows and interactions between people, and their



Figure 2: Portrait of Virginia Woolf, 1935, by Man Ray.

unspoken thoughts, rather than on fixed identities, objects and plots. The result is startling. Viewed this way, status becomes uncertain and values are shaken up. Those who 'negotiated treaties, ruled India, controlled finance'—Hermione Lee's description of the largely male superstructure with which Mrs Ramsay had to deal in *To the Lighthouse*—are seen as rather fragile creatures forever needing reassurance and support (Lee 1997, 88). The life of the family and the household (interwoven with production for use, artistic creation and child rearing), despite its restricted scope, appears as a seamless enmeshing of ideas, events and actions.

By producing these perceptive and subversive accounts, Woolf undermines the hierarchies in Victorian life, without having to resort to polemics or aggression. As a result of her writings, her acute perceptions and her own situation, she became an advocate for feminist causes. She argued in books like *Orlando* (1928), *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and *Three Guineas* (1938) for a blurring of sexual identities, an end to gendered assumptions about roles and character, and for political action by women. She particularly attacked antiquated institutions which she saw not only as keeping women out but as being unsuited to the modern world.

By contrast, the informal collectivity of artists and writers that formed the Bloomsbury group to which she belonged, clustered around women, most importantly Woolf herself, and her sister, the artist Vanessa Bell. The writings and art of this group spanned and merged the private and the public.

The emphasis on flows, interactions and society in the work of Virginia Woolf is interesting, as is the attack on hierarchy and tradition which it embodies. The conceptualization of politics and social life in terms of interactions reveals aspects and links that are obscured in more traditional models based on hierarchy and opposition. This prefigures in a prescient way the kinds of debates we are now engaged in. Her perspective and techniques also make it clear how important assumptions about gender relations are both in maintaining political

systems and bringing about change. This linking of the personal to the global is beginning to be more common in political science and related disciplines—as Anthony Giddens, for example, demonstrates in his 1993 study, *The Transformation of Intimacy*.

Woolf was aware of the narrow social base from which she drew her characters and the limitations this imposed. While working on her novel *The Waves* (1931), she thought of giving one of the characters a more working class voice but felt that to do so without real knowledge would be condescending. Thus her work should be seen as dissecting a particular stratum of middle class society and both revealing and preparing for change that is taking place. This horizontal perspective matches that of elite networks today.

Woolf's suicide in 1941 is usually attributed to the despair she felt at the pain and disruption unfolding as once again war enveloped Europe. Her concern with relationships revealed and exposed intense feelings which in the end overwhelmed her.

Simone de Beauvoir

Virginia Woolf was predominantly a novelist and essayist, genres in which women already had an established position. Simone de Beauvoir was also a novelist but was moving out, though not easily in the France of the forties, into the more male dominated spheres of philosophy and public politics.

There is a photograph of de Beauvoir, taken at the end of the war, working at a table in the 'Café de Flore' in Paris, where she wrote some of her best-known books. I remember that when in the fifties I first read about her and her companion, the French philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre, the thing that most impressed me about them was that although they were an established couple they lived in hotels, wrote in cafes, and did no domestic work at all. This seemed to me to be intensely liberating.

A much broader view of society is developed in de Beauvoir's work. She saw herself as having moved beyond her *petit-bourgeois* origins and as therefore being able to absorb and synthesize a range of experiences. There are many facets to her life and one could equally well discuss her philosophy, her novels and autobiography, her authorship of *The Second Sex* (1949), her political activism or her sexual adventurism. Throughout her life she showed a concern with freedom and justice and with what creates connectedness between people.

In 1948, de Beauvoir published *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, an attempt to put her own slant on certain themes in existentialist philosophy, as developed by Sartre. What is striking about *The Ethics* is that she envisages far more possibilities for co-operation between people than is evident in the work of Sartre. She suggests that it is in this ambiguous territory between self and others that ethics resides.

At the same time as she was writing *The Ethics*, she was amassing material for *The Second Sex*, published a year later. This combined a detailed and comprehensive sociological study of the situation of women, with a passionate appeal to women to move out of the role of 'other' conferred on them by society and to become free subjects and individuals in the existentialist sense. Unlike Sartre she recognized the extent to which women were alienated from themselves and she developed in response to this the notion of degrees of freedom. Much of the power of *The Second Sex* derives from its application of philosophical concepts to the realities of women's lives. Inevitably, this has laid it open to challenge and criticism as philosophical (and feminist) concerns and precepts change. It remains however the foundation text for post-war feminism.

De Beauvoir was for all her life a political activist and woman of the left. The colonial war which France fought in Algeria from 1954 to 1962 was a major context for this. In 1960-1 she supported, with the French lawyer Gisèle Halimi, the case of Djamilia Boupacha, a young Algerian woman who had survived torture at the hands of the

French military for acting as a courier for the Algerian resistance. Djamilia refused to 'confess', or to be bought off, and in the end a successful case was brought on her behalf first in the Algerian and then in the French courts. De Beauvoir used all her networks and connections to link up with Boupacha's own supporters and break through the 'wall of silence' which existed in France on conditions in Algeria and on the complicity of the French authorities. These actions and the public outcry which followed were part of a series of events which made possible Algerian independence in 1962.

The case of Djamilia Boupacha is a good example of de Beauvoir's philosophy in action. The individual (in this case Boupacha) shows resistance and there exist sufficient connections and structures in society to generate a positive reaction. In this way the links between the self and others, the advantaged and the disadvantaged, are developed and provide ways of revealing and combating injustice. Although this may happen rarely it provides a paradigm. One of the challenges of the network society is to create these kinds of affective links in new circumstances.

In her later years, de Beauvoir lived simply and sought little material profit from her undoubted fame and status. During this time, she worked closely with feminists in France, but retained the hope that she would be remembered not only as a feminist thinker, but as a writer as well.

Hannah Arendt

In contrast to Woolf and de Beauvoir, Hannah Arendt positioned herself almost entirely within the very male world of political philosophy, where she acted as both participant and critic. She was Jewish and this was a determining fact in both her life and her work.

Arendt was an autonomous and original woman philosopher who was concerned with the way people act out their lives and relate to one another, and with how what she called the public realm should

be organized. She was also someone who used the violence and catastrophes of the twentieth century to rethink basic concepts in philosophy and political theory. She did not regard herself as a feminist and was far more concerned with Jewish identity than with gender. Nevertheless, in her political thinking she takes up many issues which have great resonance for feminists. Most striking is her concern with birth, natality, and new beginnings. This is in marked contrast to the male tradition in philosophy which in general pays more attention to mortality and death. Plato after all famously said that 'true philosophers make dying their profession'. (Plato 1993, 67e)

Arendt grew up in inter-war Germany. She recounts that she was taught by her mother to defend herself, and to 'stand up and walk out' if anti-Semitic remarks were made. This was an early lesson in both assertion and contradiction, characteristics of her later life. She came to politics through her identity as a Jew and was active with Zionist groups in Berlin in 1933. Forced to leave Germany, she sought refuge in America, where she arrived in 1941 as a stateless person. She brought her family with her: her new husband, Heinrich Blücher, and her mother, Martha Arendt.

Arendt wrote two major books in the fifties which contain the core of her thinking. These were *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) and *The Human Condition* (1958). The two books link an understanding of evil to a consideration of ways by which it can be prevented. In *The Origins* she argues, in a way that has great resonance today, that genocide is always a possible outcome of politics. It is not a 'monstrous exception', and must therefore be constantly guarded against. She also shows that concentration camps and ethnic violence are key parts of the strategy of totalitarianism (not 'add-ons' or peripheral to the main concerns as has sometimes been maintained). This is because they demonstrate to the rest of the population that 'anything is possible' and 'there are no longer any limits'. They also deny the possibility of plurality, which to Arendt is the essence of politics.

In *The Human Condition* she starts by discussing two developments that were crucial to Fifties America. The first of these is the launching in 1957 of the Sputnik, the first space satellite, by the Soviet Union. Typically, she bypasses the cold war implications of this, seeing it rather as an expansion in imaginative scope, which has the potential both to provide an escape from earth and also to give human beings a vantage point above it. (This interpretation seems to me a perfect illustration of the difference between philosophy and international relations—no international relations specialist would ever consider the Sputnik in those terms.)

The second point she discusses is the development of automation. This, she predicts, will lead not to an escape from work (like the Sputnik), but to an intensification of production and consumption.

Arendt sees active life as being divided into three components: 'labor', which is activity for survival, centering on the body and necessity; 'work', which is the making, by hand or by machine, of concrete objects which have their own independent existence; and 'action', which consists of political deliberation among human beings (or amongst their organizations and representatives) who are distinct but equal. She has been much criticized by feminists for not openly challenging, and as far as I can find not even noting, the likelihood that given such a division women will be largely positioned in the sphere of labor—having babies and doing the washing up.

However, although it is true that she does not directly take up this challenge, she does in her work confront exclusionary concepts more generally. The assumption upon which she bases her arguments is that all people have the right to engage in *all* forms of activity. What she wants to do is identify the political values and systems that both create and maintain those choices. Paradoxically, this may be an example of the strand of feminization I identified at the beginning of the lecture. She goes behind surface reality and 'talking points', and aims for the underlying concepts.

All societies involve these three activities (labor, work and action) in some form or other but they can be organized very differently and be given different weight. Arendt, however, sees the political sphere, where action takes place, as of supreme importance. For it is here that people reveal themselves through speech and argument. What happens between them creates a web of relationships, a space that both preserves distinction and creates engagement. To illustrate what she means she uses the example of the table, which gives people a unique place and separates them but also creates a common area between them and encourages exchange.

The aim of this kind of deliberation is to reach through persuasion and open argument what she calls 'common sense' decisions.² The process is inherently interactive and if successful generates immense power, because decisions taken in this way are hard to undermine. The role of the leader, she says, is to propose beginnings and set up procedures—but *not* to determine outcomes.

Studying post-war America, Arendt saw two threats to the public realm. The first came from the growing power of the market, itself a kind of deliberative forum, but one which dealt with the exchange of goods rather than ideas. The second came from the bureaucracy, which although it might practise deliberation, did so from a narrow base and in secret. Since she wrote, public debate and deliberation in the Western world has been steadily undermined, partly at least for the reasons she identifies. This goes some way to explain what is termed 'political apathy' in contemporary Western societies.

However, the demonstrations in Seattle in November 1999, before the meeting of the World Trade Organization, and the widespread growth in single issue campaigning (on genetically modified foods, for example, or third world debt) suggest not so much that people are apathetic, but that the mechanisms through which they are expected to participate (political parties, trade unions, remote and media dominated elections) are no longer appropriate or sufficient. Arendt, had she been alive, would have been fascinated by the

implications of Seattle. The events there provide a clear indication of both the collapse of the public realm and the need for its reconstruction.

Arendt was writing before the electronic age, although she could see the importance of the emerging power of technology. One test for the network society is whether its greater openness promotes democratic deliberation of a new kind—or closes it off still further.

Jewishness was always important to Arendt. She was famous in the sixties for her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, in which she castigated the Israeli Government for attempting, in the course of a show trial, to pin responsibility for the holocaust on one German clerk. She stayed with her husband, Heinrich Blücher, till his death in 1970. They had a fierce intellectual partnership which she herself described as a 'union with spaces'—a good description of long-term marriage.

The European Union

How are these ideas relevant to the current problems of the European Union? Castells calls the EU 'the network state' because he sees it as the first 'state' which has grown up in the context of globalization and which has the flexibility to respond to new demands. However, the networking of the EU does not reach very far, and in the event creates as much insecurity as security for the average citizen. There is thus an opposition and a contradiction between, to use Castells' terms, 'the power of flows' and 'the power of identity'. It is this contradiction which creates the gap between elites and people in Europe, currently referred to as the EU's 'crisis of legitimacy'. This was demonstrated forcibly by the lack of interest in and the low turnout for the June 1999 elections to the European Parliament.

Woolf, de Beauvoir and Arendt, were they here, would I think have something to say about this situation, and I shall try now to use their legacy to glean some insights.

A first point might be that 'networks need networks'. All the evidence suggests, and Woolf's imaginative reconstructions show this clearly, that networks stretch outwards but not downwards. Some people may manage to make the leap to inclusion but most do not. Woolf also shows how existing networks are supported and sustained by elements within them which remain unrecognized and largely invisible. This suggests that people will only be adequately represented in the EU when their networks, and there are already many in existence, operate at the same level of visibility and have the same degree of access as the already established elite forms. The European Commission's preference for hierarchical 'peak organizations' for popular constituencies—a grand headquarters, for example, for trade unions or migrants or indeed for women—militates against this trend. The European Parliament also lacks network qualities. It too often appears hierarchical and ineffective rather than open and expert.

The connection between levels in the European Union remains a crucial problem. The de Beauvoir/Boupacha story suggests that an awareness of history (embodying memory and hope) and of a shared context are important factors in crossing gaps and creating solidarity. The network society creates connections but is generally negative towards these more dense dimensions. At the same time, situations are produced which would seem to require their retention and re-invention.

Faced with this dilemma, the contemporary feminist movement, in its continuing struggle to construct a solidarity which can accommodate distinct identities without essentializing them, has something to offer. This is the notion of a 'transversal politics' which links people in diverse situations and attempts to establish a common space between them.³ Pioneered by the Italian/Dutch philosopher, Rosi Braidotti, and further developed by Cynthia Cockburn and Nira Yuval-Davis in their work on women in conflict situations, these ideas are now encapsulated in the phrase 'rooting and shifting'. This conceptualization of politics envisages people who are 'rooted' in

particular memberships and identities, 'shifting' to a situation of communication and action with those in different circumstances. De Beauvoir, I think, would have liked this imagery.

'Rooting and shifting' can be seen as a political response to the trends which Castells has identified. It acknowledges that people wish to keep their local identities and tries to construct a politics beyond this. It represents in another way the meaning of Arendt's table, where people had their own unique place but were able from this to negotiate in meaningful ways with others. Rooting and shifting, though developed as a way of conceptualizing women's campaigning in a globalized world, could equally well serve as a guiding principle on which to build EU citizenship.

Hannah Arendt's ideas about the importance of the public realm, involving both debate and deliberation, also have great relevance to the politics of the EU. The public realm as she conceived it hardly exists at EU level. Instead, the two threats which she identified, the market and the bureaucracy, predominate. This is clearly demonstrated by the EU system of committees, which underpins most of the policy-making. These committees, made up of national representatives, bureaucrats and technical experts, play a crucial role in both developing and implementing policy. Until very recently, their activities went largely unrecorded and accountability was minimal.

Recent research suggests that some of these committees work in a deliberative fashion in the sense that decisions are reached through persuasion and argument and in terms of a notion of the common good (Joerges and Vos 1999, ch.18). However, they clearly do not serve the purpose of creating a public space or of generating a broader debate. Discussion is now continuing as to whether this system can be made more open and accountable. Arendt would have had her doubts. Bureaucrats, she pointed out, are always likely to oppose democratic forms of deliberation, seeing them as time-consuming, unpredictable and difficult to manipulate for particular political advantage.

This is the context in which international pressure groups have developed actions based on what one French journalist has called 'the Dracula strategy'.⁴ This strategy is based on the belief that international negotiations in their present form cannot survive if exposed to the light of public scrutiny. Since such actions have proved successful on a number of occasions, the implication must be that open and representative negotiation at international level would produce very different outcomes from those that are developed now through bureaucratic process.

Arendt's model of the political, as applied to the EU, would put the emphasis on two things: the need both for transparency and open debate, and for free deliberation among as wide a range of groups as possible. Surprisingly, and partly because it does have a more developed institutional structure, the EU is beginning to make some very tentative moves in these directions. Council decisions have been adopted on transparency, public access to documents and (in 1999) on the regulation of the committee system. The resignation of the European Commission in March 1999 on fraud charges raised quite urgently the question of standards in the EU public service.

To a large extent, however, these moves are cosmetic, and there is considerable inertia evident when it comes to implementation. Many at European level still believe in what has been termed the 'two level game', namely that policy-making at international level is qualitatively different from that at national level, and that different levels of accountability and involvement are therefore appropriate.⁵ Arendt's view of politics cuts through such distinctions and acts as an effective counterweight.

The Feminization of Politics

Where are we then with the feminization of politics? My test of progress in this, as I suggested at the beginning, would be when the kinds of ideas discussed in this article, and concepts such as 'rooting

and shifting', enter as easily into the discourse of politics, and are given as much weight, as Castells' 'the network state' and Giddens' 'runaway world'. When, for example, a 'union with spaces', Arendt's conceptualization of her partnership with Blücher, can become a prescription for the development of the EU.

As can be seen from my discussion, ideas of this kind do not necessarily come from people who think of themselves only, or even primarily, as feminists. They do, however, come from people who have an inclusive rather than an exclusive view of politics and seek to bridge gaps in and between political entities, rather than increase or ignore them. My account also demonstrates the continuity of ideas and movements. One does not start from scratch in politics, even in circumstances as radical as those we are in now.

A feminization in this sense is vital, if the increasing numbers of women in public life are to be able to operate to full capacity. Otherwise, too many are faced with a choice between co-optation and marginalization.

If a wider range of political concepts does become available, then women may find themselves closer to the levers of power—or perhaps I should say nearer the hub of the network.

Such changes, and others like them, are necessary if we are to de-centre the network and (going back to the image used on the cover of Castells' book) create dense activity and interaction on its edges and intersections as well as at the hub.

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NOTES

- 1 Plant considers the rhizome which has no beginning or end and is 'always in the middle' to be better equipped for present circumstances than are 'unified upright things' like trees. She uses this imagery to draw an analogy with women and men which is the main theme of the book (Plant 1998, 124–5).
- 2 Arendt's notion of 'common sense' is strongly influenced by her reading of Kant, especially as regards the *sensus communis*. See Arendt 1982.
- 3 For the best account of transversal politics see Yuval-Davis 1997, chapter 6.
- 4 *Le Canard Enchaîné*, 8th December 1999.
- 5 I have summarized this debate in Hoskyns/Newman (eds) 2000, chapter 9, 188–93.

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Feminist Philosophy and International Relations

A Review Essay by Kimberly Hutchings

It is impossible to give an adequate account of the vast amount of work in the field of international relations (and associated fields) which has been influenced by or develops concerns taken from feminist philosophy. The aim of this article is to give readers a flavour of a flourishing area of academic research, and the ways in which feminist philosophy informs (and may potentially be informed by) that area of research. In order to do this I will begin by offering a brief overview of the trajectory of feminist influenced work in international relations and related disciplines over the past fifteen years.

This will be done by focusing on two snapshots of the field: the first is from 1988, when, following a symposium on the topic at the LSE, a special issue of the journal *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* was devoted to gender and international relations. Many of these papers were later published as an edited volume *Gender and International Relations* (Grant and Newland 1991). The second snapshot is provided by the proceedings of the tenth anniversary conference which marked that 1988 symposium and which were again published as a special issue of *Millennium* in 1998.

Having offered this overview, I will go on to look more specifically at the interface between feminist philosophy and international relations in feminist work on the ethics of international politics. The influence of feminist philosophy has opened up research agendas and shifted conceptual frameworks, but is itself inevitably affected by the translation of feminist debate into the international arena. I will conclude by suggesting that the uses of feminist philosophy within international relations are interesting not simply because of what feminist philosophy offers to the projects of understanding, explain-

ing and judging international issues, but also because the context of international politics and economics encourages constant questioning and revision of the project of feminist philosophy itself and its deep roots in the intellectual traditions of the West and North.¹

Overview

International relations was a latecomer to the group of disciplines which have been profoundly affected by feminist interventions since the 1960s. This meant that feminist work in international relations was able to draw upon the example of feminist theory in other humanities and social sciences such as philosophy, history, sociology, anthropology and politics. In 1988 the concerns of feminist interventions into the discipline of international relations were largely of two kinds: firstly, to demonstrate the gender bias inherent in the mainstream theoretical approaches and research agendas within the study of international politics; secondly, to demonstrate how bringing women and gender into analysis of the international shifted conceptual boundaries and altered preconceptions about what was relevant to understanding, explaining and judging international affairs.

In relation to the first concern, feminist international theorists drew heavily on the existing work in feminist philosophy which had demonstrated and challenged the androcentrism of the Western philosophical tradition, particularly in the realms of epistemology and political theory (Grant 1991; Peterson 1992a). One of the keynote articles in the 1988 *Millennium* Special Issue was by J. Ann Tickner, who offered a feminist analysis of Morgenthau's canonic 'six principles' of political realism. These encapsulate influential assumptions not only within the mainstream study of international politics but also in the practice of diplomacy and foreign policy. In her analysis of Morgenthau, Tickner demonstrates how he relies upon masculinist conceptual distinctions in order to ground his account of international politics (Tickner 1991, 29-32). These distinctions include

those between objectivity and subjectivity, reason and emotion, politics and morality, public and private. In Morgenthau's account, emphasis is put on the first term in each of these binary divisions in order to construct a model of the purely political realm and of purely political 'man', which is to say, man as he would be in the absence of authority (anarchy is taken to be the archetypal characteristic of the international situation). His analysis rests on an account of human nature which is fundamentally Hobbesian and which becomes the lynchpin of explanation of the behaviour of states in relation to each other. According to Morgenthau, the key to understanding inter-state behaviour is that states act like Hobbesian individuals in a state of nature pursuing interest in terms of power. This is an objective law of political behaviour which can be grasped by a rational theory.

Tickner argues that Morgenthau's principles privilege masculinity by giving priority to the terms in the binary divisions which have been traditionally associated with masculine attributes and values. In doing this Morgenthau limits the study of international relations in two respects. Firstly, he limits the study of international politics to the 'rational theory' of 'objective laws' (Tickner 1991, 30). This positions the international relations scholar as an impartial witness, passively reflecting the realities of international politics. Secondly, he occludes aspects of international politics which do not fit with his preconceptions, refusing to see either the actuality or the possibility of morality operating within politics, or of co-operation rather than competition in the international realm. Moreover, an analysis which brackets the political understood as the pursuit of interest in terms of power involves a degree of abstraction and idealization that does not allow any recognition of the ways in which gendered relations of power might play a part in the international arena. Tickner's argument is representative of a range of critical positions emerging in the late 1980's and early 1990's which aimed, amongst other things, to show that the dominant conceptual framework operating in international relations was the product of a partial masculinist tradition of thought (Peterson

1992, 1–10). Tickner, however, in common with most other feminist commentators writing in this vein was not just concerned with pointing to the limitations of existing theory, but with inventing new theoretical approaches to the study of international politics which would be less limited.

The re-visioning of approaches to international relations following the deconstruction of the masculinism of dominant theories is the second theme of work represented in the 1988 *Millennium* Special Issue. Several possibilities are put forward, but the main message which emerges from the volume is the way that a woman's, a gendered or a feminist standpoint necessarily affects the meaning of concepts and the appropriate method of research in international studies, as well as the range of material relevant to understanding the international. Feminists argued for a reformulation of conceptions of the state, power, interest, security etc. in ways which were neither trapped into hierarchical binary divisions nor assumed to be objective. For example, the traditional sharp distinction between inter-state and intra-state politics confines the relevance of social and economic structures to the internal politics of states. In the context of the international realm, states are considered as *sui generis* creatures, operating according to a logic dictated by anarchy regardless of their internal constitution.

Such a conception of state/inter-state is undermined by work such as Cynthia Enloe's, which traces the ways in which gendered relations of power enable the functioning of international politics, for instance in the roles of diplomats' wives, and prostitutes in the Philippines servicing American military bases. In this work, Enloe, in refusing to accept the traditional parameters delimiting how states are to be defined within an international context, also extends the range of material considered to be relevant to international politics (Enloe 1989, 65–123). Enloe's work is not particularly concerned with philosophy or theory, but her strategy of starting from the standpoint of women in her investigations of diplomacy, the military and

international political economy directly undermines Morgenthau's conceptual framework.

Theorists such as Tickner and Christine Sylvester seek to take the argument further by explicitly redefining concepts such as power and security from a gendered perspective. Tickner reformulates Morgenthau's principles to include a conception of power as 'enabling' and not only as 'power over' (Tickner 1991, 33). Sylvester re-thinks security/insecurity through a focus on women's peace activists at Greenham and women's co-operatives in Zimbabwe, arguing for the need for a more flexible understanding which encompasses economic and family domains as well as the realm of inter-state politics (Sylvester 1994, 169–208). In both cases the idea that theorizing is 'objective' is rejected in favour of a perspectivist approach, which links the possibility of insight to specific standpoints and political agendas.

This early stage of work bringing feminism and international relations together is characterized by a combination of a certain theoretical eclecticism and a broad consensus based on rejection of the masculinist mainstream. Although participants differ over what is meant by a 'woman's', a 'gendered' or a 'feminist' standpoint—with some commentators interpreting this empirically, others drawing on sexual difference arguments and others on postmodernist ideas of plural subject positions—nevertheless, there is considerable overlap in the assumptions as to what making the 'feminist turn' will mean for the study of international politics. It will mean that the relevance of gendered relations of power to the construction and sustaining of contemporary world politics can become the focus of study. It will mean disrupting the strict distinctions characteristic of Morgenthau's realism to open up the investigation of the relation between state and inter-state, political and moral, objective and subjective, public and private. And it will mean bringing the transformatory project of feminism to bear on the hegemonic powers which dominate both the academy and the practice of international politics.

Let us now move this exposition on by a decade and look at the characteristics of the work on gender and international relations included in the special issue of *Millennium* in 1998. There are several interesting developments. As one might expect, there is much less attention paid to the two general concerns of the earlier volume, namely to demonstrate the masculinism of the dominant tradition and to demonstrate the difference made by bringing gender into the analysis. By 1998, contributors are in a position to take for granted both the masculinism of dominant perspectives and the contribution that gender makes to the study of international relations. What they may not do is take for granted the meanings of the concepts 'gender' and 'masculinity' in the relatively naive sense in which they operated in the earlier volume.

There are articles within the volume which are reminiscent of the previous one, such as Val Plumwood's critique of masculinist rationalism in relation to global ecological issues and Simona Sharoni's study of the relation between conflict and gender equality in the contexts of Israel/Palestine and the North of Ireland (Plumwood 1998; Sharoni 1998). However, a noticeable feature of the volume is that along with a greater theoretical emphasis on the complexity and fluidity of categories such as gender and masculinity, there is an emphasis on how gendered relations of power are produced and reproduced through symbolic and cultural practices. A variety of cultural artefacts (novels, poems, photo albums) are drawn upon for the analysis and understanding of politics and so are the resources of cultural theory of a postmodernist and post-colonialist kind. There is less sense of the project of reconstructing a social science and more of the difficulty of treating gender as a straightforward way in which to understand social and political phenomena. Instead, gender is seen as imbricated in a variety of constructions of identity, such as those of nationality and sexuality, which undermine the 'women and ...' or 'gender and ...' formulation of the feminist challenge to international relations thinking of a decade earlier.

It is particularly instructive to contrast the explicit coverage of gender in non-Western contexts in the earlier volume with the articles also dealing with non-Western contexts in 1998. In the former volume, the three papers dealing with women/gender in non-Western contexts are all written within the context of development studies (Moser 1991; Newland 1991; Goetz 1991). All three engagements are critical of the treatment of women in international development policy in principle and practice, and argue for approaches which are based on women's perspectives and situations. One of the articles, that of Ann Marie Goetz, highlights the problems inherent in different cultural conceptions and evaluations of feminism. In the 1998 volume, there is no explicit focus on development. However, several articles focus on non-Western contexts as offering examples of subversion both of fixed conceptions of the meaning of gender, and of the gendered symbolism which links West with masculinity and East with femininity.

Callahan examines the 'scripting' of gender, firstly, as the reaction of Asian states to the imperialist legacy of orientalism, in which Asian values are identified with the masculine virtues of hard work and efficiency in contradistinction to the now 'feminized' West, lazy and unproductive (Callahan 1998, 1032). Secondly, he shows how gender is scripted differently in the phenomenon of the revolutionary photo album in the Philippines, Burma, China and Thailand in ways which challenge and subvert the gender dichotomies which constitute both orientalism and Asian values (Callahan 1998, 1036-50). Neferti Tadiar examines the trope of the 'prostituted Filipina' who has come to represent the crisis of culture in the Philippines brought about by globalization. Tadiar argues that there needs to be a recognition of the 'prostituted Filipina' (whether in the labour force of the export processing zone or the sex industry servicing tourists and US soldiers) as not simply the passive victim of capital but as an active producer, whose own practices may both support and subvert the exploitative relations within which she operates (Tadiar 1998, 930-5).

The keynote essay in the 1998 volume is by Gayatri Spivak. Spivak's argument encompasses a critique of both social science and history as incapable of achieving an understanding of the 'other' without cultural imperialism. Implicit in the paper is the claim that the kind of feminist approaches to international relations put forward in the 1988 volume are inherently inadequate for cross-cultural understanding because they are so clearly grounded on a Western historical and intellectual tradition. She draws in particular on her own experience of working with aboriginal peoples in India to illustrate the difficulties of translating a feminist agenda. In place of the idea of gender as a standpoint for critique and judgment, Spivak argues for *poiesis*, the art of imaginative reconstruction as the beginning of the possibility of dialogue and change (Spivak 1998, 824-7).

The trajectory of feminist work in international relations since 1988 clearly reflects developments within feminist philosophy, in which the meaning of gender and sex and the political implications of different accounts of gender and sex remain heavily contested and at the heart of debates in feminist epistemology and ethics. Even in 1988, there is already a debate about what it means to introduce gender as a critical category. Sandra Harding's well known distinctions between different forms of feminist epistemology (feminist empiricism, standpoint and postmodernism) are early on picked up by feminists working in the field of international relations to categorize different types of feminist work (Hutchings 1994, 151-5). It is interesting, however, to note that the pressure on feminist work in this field has been to move away from a single account of a feminist standpoint towards accounts of gender as complexly inter-cut by other forms of identity and always as actively, culturally produced rather than given. This tendency is reflected in a variety of work, much of it drawing on non-Western contexts to challenge epistemological and normative universalism (Mohanty, Russo & Torres 1991; Marchand & Parpart 1995; Darby 1997; Jabri & O'Gorman 1999). This is work which is influenced by postmodernism and post-

colonialism. It embraces cultural relativism and refuses to speak of women or gender as such, whether in the context of explanation or liberation.

When the project of bringing feminist insights to bear on international politics was formulated it had a clear cut set of goals. These were: to demonstrate how gendered relations of power sustain contemporary world politics and political economy; to deconstruct dominant masculinist conceptual frameworks; and to work to transform both the academy and political practice in the light of feminist values. Of these, only the second goal has proved to be relatively unproblematic. As the 1998 volume of *Millennium* demonstrates, work within this field encountered a level of complexity surrounding questions of gender identity and power relations which provoked a rethinking of the philosophical grounding of feminist work. This has resulted in ongoing and highly theoretical debate about how the categories of sex and gender are to be understood and deployed. Nevertheless, a great deal of work has been done which does illuminate the ways in which gendered relations of power underpin and are reinforced and transformed by war, development and processes of globalization (Steans 1998, 81-103, 130-57).

As far as the transformative project is concerned, there is no doubt that feminism has had an impact on the international relations academy. Feminist discourse remains categorized as a critical voice, rather than a mainstream approach, in the study of international relations. Nevertheless, it does now have an acknowledged presence as an accepted dimension of social scientific and normative analysis. The impact on political practice is much more difficult to assess. There is now a greater recognition of feminist arguments in relation to issues of security, development and human rights. However, the link between feminist political campaigning and academic debate is not wholly clear, certainly in relation to the more recent turns that feminist international theory has taken as represented by the 1998 volume.

Arguments have been made that feminist work in international relations has become too detached from political realities and too focused on abstract philosophical matters to be useful in policy formation and implementation. Once again, it becomes evident how bringing feminism and international politics together throws back challenges to feminism, this time in relation to whether it is philosophically equipped to sustain and justify political change. It is this challenge which has been taken up recently by Martha Nussbaum in her book *Women and Human Development* (2000). Here Nussbaum reasserts the importance for feminists of normative universalism, albeit a universalism which is contextually sensitive. Without this universalism, Nussbaum argues, neither critique nor change can be legitimated.

The brief and selective overview of feminist work in international relations given above raises questions about what the insights of feminist philosophy bring to understanding and judgment of the international and vice versa. There is no question that feminist philosophy has provided a crucial resource for both deconstructive and constructive feminist work in international relations. This is true both of the earlier work, much influenced by feminist critiques of the history of Western thought and the idea of a feminist standpoint, and of the later work, which draws upon postmodernist and post-colonial feminist theory, with Spivak and Judith Butler (1992) replacing Genevieve Lloyd (1984 & 1993) and Nancy Hartsock (1983) as common reference points. It is also clear that feminist work in the international arena throws back questions to feminist philosophy about sexual difference, cultural relativism and the relation between theory and practice.

In the second section of the paper, I want to explore this inter-relation again, this time in the specific case of feminist ethics in the context of the international. In order to do this I will examine the highly influential intervention into this area by the feminist philosopher Sarah Ruddick, and the more recent attempt to generalize care

ethics in the realm of international politics by Fiona Robinson (Ruddick 1989; Robinson 1999). Within the work of these two theorists, we see the particular challenges posed for feminists in using feminist philosophy as a basis for gaining critical purchase on judging and transforming international politics.

Feminist International Ethics

The most familiar link between feminism and international politics for most feminist philosophers is the link between feminism and peace politics. The early 1980s was marked by the emergence of a distinctively feminist anti-nuclear peace politics in several Western European countries as well as the USA and Australia. Although clearly sharing much ground with other anti-war and pacifist movements, this feminist peace politics was premised on the idea of a special link between women and peace. The movement was characterized by the use of the technique of relying on certain traditional stereotypes of womanhood as the basis for an evaluation of strategic and just war thinking. Essentially, these feminist peace activists reversed the dominant hierarchy of evaluation of masculine civic virtue and feminine private virtue in which the former takes priority over the latter and the latter is essentially supposed to sustain the former. As Jean Elshtain argues, in dominant thinking about war, women have been placed in the position of the naturally peaceful sex whose role is to provide comfort and care for the 'just war hero' and who are invoked (along with the children) as the party on behalf of whom resort to political violence has been necessary (Elshtain 1987).

In opposition to this, in the feminist peace activism of the 1980s, feminine private virtue was taken into the public realm and held up as the (subversive) yardstick of ethical conduct within that realm. It should however be noted that the development of feminist peace politics has been accompanied by alternative experiences of women as protagonists and victims in modern warfare over the last

quarter of a century. Research has shown that at the same time as women are gaining entry into the military and engaging in combat in increasing numbers, they also make up the vast majority of those dispossessed by war—whether as refugees or as the mediators between international sanctions and the needs of their families. Women also bear the burden of responsibility for re-building lives in the aftermath of war (Enloe 1983; Vickers 1993; Steans 1998, 81–103). Nevertheless, it is the link between women and peace politics which has had the most significant influence on the development of a feminist ethics of the international, with Sarah Ruddick being one of the most well known of a number of theorists (Ruddick 1989; see also Harris and King 1989; Cooke and Woollacott 1993; Warren and Cady 1994).

In her book, *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace*, Ruddick draws on the idea of an ethic of care as a central part of her argument for a feminist moral orientation in the context of international politics (Gilligan 1982; Ruddick 1989). The book involves a rejection of realist arguments as to the tragic inevitability or structural necessity of war and communitarian claims to the special ethical status of the collective group or nation. In addition, it develops a critique of traditional just war thinking—in both utilitarian and Kantian variants—as well as a positive characterization of how a different kind of moral judgment and political practice is possible in relation to war. There are essentially two stages to Ruddick's argument. In the first stage she offers a phenomenology of what she terms 'maternal thinking'. In the second stage she reads off the implications of using maternal thinking as a critical 'feminist standpoint' for making judgments about the ethics of war and the appropriate feminist response to war.

'Maternal thinking', according to Ruddick, 'is a discipline in attentive love', a discipline which is rooted in the demands of a particular relation of care, that between mother and child, and which reflects a particular range of metaphysical attitudes, cognitive

capacities and virtues (Ruddick 1989, 123). Ruddick is careful to insist that she is neither equating mothers with biological mothers, nor presuming that actual mothers are all good at maternal thinking. Ruddick draws a contrast between the ideals of response to threat, conflict and harm which are inherent in any practice in which violence is understood as a permissible instrument for the attainment of goals, and modes of responding to threat, conflict and harm which are premised on the unacceptability of violence. She finds paradigmatic examples of the former in militarism and of the latter in the labour of care (Ruddick 1993, 121). Ruddick is aware of the problems of simply taking and applying the regulative ideals of care-giving practices to the realm of international politics. Nevertheless, she extrapolates criteria of ethical judgment from care-giving practice which she argues do have implications for what should or should not be permissible within the international realm.

When maternal thinking takes upon itself the critical perspective of a feminist standpoint, it reveals a contradiction between mothering and war. Mothering begins in birth and promises life; military thinking justifies organized, deliberate deaths. A mother preserves the bodies, nurtures the psychic growth, and disciplines the conscience of children; although the military trains its soldiers to survive the situations it puts them in, it also deliberately endangers their bodies, minds and consciences in the name of victory and abstract causes. (Ruddick 1989, 135)

The idea of a feminist standpoint derives from Hartsock's appropriation of Marx's analysis of capitalism which she reads as being based on the standpoint—i.e. serving the objective interests—of the oppressed class. According to Hartsock, the exploitative character of capitalist relations of production becomes clear when understood from the vantage point of the proletariat. Similarly, the patriarchal character of relations of reproduction as well as production under capitalism is revealed from the standpoint of the women

who bear the brunt of those relations (Hartsock 1983). Building on this notion, Ruddick argues that maternal thinking—located as it is in the marginalized and denigrated sphere of caring labour—provides a standpoint from which the absurdity of both strategic military and just war thinking becomes evident. Although Ruddick does not claim that the feminist standpoint provides a universally valid ground for ethical judgment, she does make a strong claim for the potential of maternal thinking to illuminate the meaning of war from a critical perspective (Ruddick 1989, 135).

For Ruddick, both militarism and just war theory share a commitment to the expendability of concrete lives in abstract causes to which maternal thinking is inherently opposed. Ruddick claims that this means that the implication of maternal thinking is not just the rejection of war but the active embracing of peace politics. The latter is a fight against war that draws on the acknowledgement of responsibility and relationship, and the specificity of need and obligations inherent in a proper understanding of the labour of caring (Ruddick 1989, 141–59).

The analytic fictions of just war theory require a closure of moral issues final enough to justify killing and “enemies” abstract enough to be killable. In learning to welcome their own and their children’s changes, mothers become accustomed to open-ended, concrete reflection on intricate and unpredictable spirits. Maternal attentive love, restrained and clear sighted, is ill adapted to intrusive, let alone murderous judgments of others’ lives. (Ruddick 1989, 150)

In Ruddick’s theory the logic of domestic relations in the restricted sense of the domestic or private sphere is set against the logic of the public sphere of both state and inter-state relations, although with the acknowledgement that in practice the former has tended to support and reinforce the latter. Ruddick places realism, morality of states, Kantianism, utilitarianism and communitarianism all firmly in the realm of the logic of public ‘masculinist’ theory and

practice. Although it is clear that Ruddick does put an ethical value on humans, this is based not on a notion of inherent individual right, but on relation. Value inheres in relations to others, in particular, in the recognition of responsibility for others. For Ruddick then, the realm of international politics is primarily a realm of human relations, not of human, nation or state rights or an international state system. Ruddick assumes that ethical perspectives are the outcome of concrete practices and can never be neutral, but at the same time clearly suggests that some kinds of practice are inherently better than others. This distinction draws attention to the fact that although Ruddick presents an understanding of the international realm very different from mainstream ethical theories, nevertheless, she argues for the notion of a standpoint from which critical judgments of international politics can be made. This standpoint is inherently prescriptive and involves a commitment to the practical and political struggle against violence and for peace.

There are several different implications of Ruddick’s argument in relation to ethical judgment on the one hand and ethical prescription on the other. As far as ethical judgment is concerned the emphasis on particularity and connectedness (characteristic in general of approaches influenced by the notion of a feminist ethic of care) suggests the following features. Firstly, from the standpoint of maternal thinking, the appropriate stance to take in ethical judgment is to attempt to build on particular experiences of the practice of care to help to identify with and take responsibility for the needs and suffering of others. Ruddick frequently cites the example of the Argentinean mothers of the disappeared, whose movement gradually grew to embrace concerns with children across the world who had suffered harm: ‘This is not transcendent impartiality but a sympathetic apprehension of another grounded in one’s own particular suffering.’ (Ruddick 1993, 123) This is not just a matter of ‘feeling for’ another’s pain, but assuming an attitude of responsibility for it and therefore trying to do something about it.

Secondly, however, maternal thinking is sensitive to the specific contexts in which ethical dilemmas are embedded and to the importance of appreciating the ethical weight of the perspectives of all parties to any dispute or conflict. For Ruddick, ethical judgment has to be on a case-by-case basis, but without ready made principles of adjudication. Although the idea of maternal thinking is in principle non-violent and therefore rules out certain types of action, it also makes clear that there are no universally applicable algorithms that can be applied to any given situation to render definitive answers to ethical questions. The judgment of the maternal thinker is oriented by the ideals implicit in care, but these are regulative rather than determining in their effects.

This brings us to the third feature of ethical judgment from the standpoint of maternal thinking. In contrast to the traditional picture of ethical judgment as a matter to be worked through at the level of the individual conscience in relation to specified criteria, maternal thinking implies that ethical judgment is a matter of dialogue and relies crucially on the capacity to hear what others are saying in arriving at the criteria for judgment. Judgment can only be made after what Benhabib refers to as engagement between 'concrete others', in which it is recognized that no one party occupies a privileged position. Judgment is therefore in principle an interactive and collective rather than an individual project (Benhabib 1992, 158-70).

As well as suggesting new ways of conceptualizing ethical judgment, Ruddick's maternalist ethic of care has specific implications for practical ways of addressing classic problems of violence and oppression in the international context. At the broadest level, maternal thinking involves commitment to peace politics. In other words, violence is outlawed as a political tool, even for the righting of injustices. One of Ruddick's key preoccupations is that of working out non-violent strategies to combat violence and oppression. She is clear that such strategies are as risky as the use of violence in the contemporary world and require levels of organization and commit-

ment just as great as those used to support any military machine. But she also emphasizes the resources already present in women's lives which can be turned from sustaining political violence to resisting it. Here the case of the mothers in Argentina mentioned above is taken as exemplary. Through non-violent protest, drawing on the generally recognized private feminine virtues of motherhood, these mothers operated effectively to help to bring about political change. This example confirms for Ruddick both the connection between maternal virtues and peace politics and the potential effectiveness of peace politics.

More generally, it is clear that Ruddick's peace politics has elective affinities with a variety of examples of new ways of doing politics pioneered by peace movements, human rights movements and green movements which emphasize the idea of local non-violent resistance to the powers of states, international organizations and corporations. Such politics frequently makes use of the technique of subverting or overturning the dominant value hierarchy, by asserting the value of that which has been marginalized or excluded, whether it is women's work, traditional economic practices or particular cultural identities (Walker 1988, 26-32). Ruddick argues that the idea of maternal thinking as a feminist standpoint for ethical judgment or prescription should be understood as a possible strategy for feminist work, one amongst a range of universalist and relativist ethical theories which may contribute towards peace.

Caregiving is only one of many ordinary practices that offers hints of peace and of the price of its violation. Given the pervasiveness of warism and the multiple costs of war, peacemakers can ill afford a competition among themselves to decide who is the best peacemaker. It is enough to identify a practice whose ubiquity and emotional potency make it one distinctly valuable resource for peace. (Ruddick 1993, 124)

Ruddick is clear that the idea of maternal thinking has its origin in maternal practice, features of which, she argues, are present in the work of mothering in radically different cultures. She therefore claims that her account of maternal thinking is likely to be generalizable across contexts, providing 'at hand' an accessible basis for criticizing and resisting political violence of all kinds, as well as suggesting limitations to the kinds of strategies it is permissible to employ in critique and resistance.

Ruddick's account of maternal thinking, along with Gilligan's identification of the 'different voice' of care, has been a crucial reference point for later feminist ethicists, both critical and sympathetic (Cole and Coultrap-McQuin 1992; Bubeck 1998). Responses to Ruddick's argument have been focused on the questions of sexual difference, cultural relativism and theory and practice which I have suggested inevitably emerge in the encounter between feminism and international relations. Critical engagement with Ruddick's maternal thinking typically comes from two different directions. There is the 'justice' critique, which identifies problems that arise for feminism through the abandonment of reliance on universal principle. There is also the 'difference' critique, which argues, contrary to the justice critics, that the ethic of care remains too close to the logic of traditional ethical paradigms in the context of international politics.

The former critique is troubled by the particularism and implicit relativism of care ethics. It argues that feminist goals are better served by attributing fundamental ethical significance to the category of 'humanity' and aspiring towards universal principles of justice. The 'difference' critique is more sympathetic to the particularism and contextualism of care ethics, but argues that this very particularism and contextualism is threatened by the idealization of the perspective of care which care ethics involves. Neither critique is solely concerned with the meta-ethical issues raised by the ethics of care. They are both bound up with worries about the incapacity of an ethics based on maternal thinking to further the goals of feminism, goals broadly

conceived as those of redressing gendered inequalities of power across the international arena.

Feminist justice critics are concerned about what follows from maternal thinking for the scope and the ground of ethical judgment. How can a moral orientation which relies on actual embedded relations of care and is always relative to context be generalizable to strangers? If ethical judgment is always grounded in actual conditions of relationship—rather than in rationally derived values or rules which are in principle accessible to anyone and therefore capable of underpinning universally compelling obligations—then how can a feminist commitment to global goals such as the equality of women be justified? And how can one formulate arguments against those defending practices oppressive to women on grounds of local practices of care? In addition, justice critics draw attention to the dangers of reinforcing the legitimacy of existing gendered relations of power by making existing patterns of care and responsibility morally paradigmatic.

Therefore, the main charges made by justice critics against thinkers such as Ruddick are twofold. Firstly, there is an accusation of moral relativism (parochialism). Secondly, there is the suggestion that this ethics idealizes and thereby implicitly endorses ethical relations which are premised on a gendered division of labour and of the private from the public sphere. These are viewed as the type of ethical relations which feminism should actually be concerned to challenge and change. In both cases the charges derive from the assumption that moral critique and political improvement require judgment and action which are based on abstractly derived and generalizable principles.

At the heart of the 'difference' criticism of Ruddick is a perceived tension between, on the one hand, the idea of grounding ethical theory in a relational ontology—and thereby in specific contexts of responsibility and action—and on the other, the notion of a 'feminist standpoint' for ethical judgment and prescription (Hekman 1995, 62–70). Here we find the ongoing concern within feminist

theory (in general and in the context of international relations) about theoretical positions which rest on ideas of a 'feminist standpoint' that suggest a fixed account of the meaning of sexual difference. Over the past twenty years feminists, both within multicultural states and internationally, have been arguing that the predominant political campaigns and accounts of women's oppression within the feminist movement have reflected the position, and served the interests, of white, middle class, northern women rather than those of the majority of women. What has emerged from this debate has been a growing dissatisfaction with any feminist account which relies on a generalizable notion of a feminist perspective. It is argued that the inclusive ambition of such theories is in practice exclusive, since no single understanding of the feminist standpoint can possibly reflect the multiple and often contradictory positions in which different feminists stand. In addition, as with justice critics, difference critics are also concerned at Ruddick's apparent neglect of the power relations at work within caring practices such as mothering and at the way those practices are embedded in broader gendered relations of power.

In spite of some apparent overlap, the responses of justice and difference critics to the account of ethical judgment in care ethics are distinct. Each perspective sees problems with the idea of a feminist standpoint for moral judgment, but in the former case this is because such a standpoint is seen to be relative to context, and in the latter, because the standpoint is seen to be over readily generalized. Each perspective sees problems in relation to the neglect of power in care ethics. However, whereas justice critics theorize on the basis of an ideal ground of judgment beyond power and politics, difference critics raise the question of whether ethics and power, morality and politics can ever be clearly distinguished in either moral judgment or action.

To date there is only one major example of a feminist ethicist who explicitly takes up the challenge to develop a feminist international ethics based on central insights of care ethics but alert to the kinds of criticisms made by both justice and difference critics referred

to above. In her book, *Globalizing Care: Ethics, Feminist Theory and International Relations* (1999), Robinson makes a case for the superiority of what she terms a 'critical' care approach over traditional paradigms in international ethics. She argues this in relation not only to issues of political violence but also to questions about international human rights and global distributive justice. The breadth of Robinson's focus is matched by the breadth of the feminist theoretical literature on which her own defence of care ethics as a global ethics rests. Ruddick is only one of the feminist theorists upon whom Robinson draws and her analysis is informed by the ongoing arguments which successive waves of feminist critics have had with the ethic of care as originally developed in the work of theorists such as Gilligan and Ruddick.

Robinson's argument is concerned not only to demonstrate the far-reaching implications of taking an ethic of care as the starting point for international ethics, but also to strengthen and substantiate care ethics in response to feminist (and other) critics. Unlike Ruddick, Robinson does not rely on a concept of 'maternal thinking' but more generally on the idea of care as an everyday practice and moral orientation, embedded in a number of actual contexts. Moreover, Robinson places more emphasis than Ruddick on the significance for care ethics of the broader political, social and economic context of the international sphere. She highlights the ways in which particular patterns of advantage and disadvantage, power and oppression, sameness and difference are institutionalized within this sphere. While Robinson's work is broader in focus and elaborates a more flexible account and defence of care ethics than Ruddick's, there are strong similarities in the way in which Robinson presents an ethic of care as an orientation for moral judgment and as a distinctive moral ontology. What is less clear in Robinson's account are the specific prescriptive consequences of her argument.

As with Ruddick, Robinson rejects an understanding of the nature and conditions of moral judgment in terms of abstractly

derived principles and values. Morality is not a matter of reason or will but of modes of responsiveness to others which are embedded in actual relationships. This means that ethical judgment is always relational and contextual and, as with Ruddick's maternal thinking, there are no principles which can determine in advance the rights and wrongs even of similar situations (Robinson 1999, 41). At the same time, however, the contextual judgments which are both necessary and difficult are oriented in relation to the mode of responsiveness to others defined as 'caring'. This is understood by Robinson as a mode of responding which recognizes others as 'real' human beings—beings who are embedded in their own complex modes of responsiveness to others, with vulnerabilities, capacities, needs and values which matter (Robinson 1999, 46). Above all, the orientation of judgment in terms of care necessitates avoiding a rush to judgment and paying attention to the actual situations from which moral dilemmas and questions emerge.

This is not an abstract ethics about the application of rules, but a phenomenology of moral life which recognizes that addressing moral problems involves first, an understanding of identities, relationships, and contexts, and second, a degree of social coordination and co-operation in order to try to answer questions and disputes about who cares for whom, and about how responsibilities will be discharged. The ethics of care focuses not on the moment of rational moral judgment or of pure moral will, but on the permanent background to decision-making, which may often be characterized by apparent inaction—waiting, listening, focusing attention. (Robinson 1999, 31)

As with Ruddick, again, Robinson's view of what is ethically significant in the international realm moves away from the focus of mainstream ethics on the abstractions of individuals, states or nations to concentrate instead on the examination of relations of recognition and responsibility wherever they occur. In Robinson's case, however,

this focus explicitly draws attention to international structures and institutions and, most importantly, power relations within the international arena. Ruddick's emphasis is on using the positive relationality of maternal thinking to criticize the instrumental rationality of the institutions which enable the prosecution of war. The disposability of real people's lives in war is condemned as antithetical to the morality of care but the reasons why this attitude is possible in the first place are not a primary focus of concern. Robinson, however, insists that care ethics must go further and reflect critically upon the institutional and structural underpinnings of global violence and inequality, not simply by asserting them to be wrong but by understanding how it is that their wrongness is possible. 'Wrongness', however, is defined similarly to Ruddick as that which serves 'to undermine the ability of moral agents to identify and understand others as 'real' individuals—with real, special, unique lives' (Robinson 1999, 47).

An ethics of care is not about the application of a universal principle ('We all must care about all others') nor is it about a sentimental ideal ('A more caring world will be a better world'). Rather it is a starting point for transforming the values and practices of international society; thus it requires an examination of the contexts in which caring does or does not take place, and a commitment to the creation of more humanly responsive institutions which can be shaped to embody expressive and communicative possibilities between actors on a global scale. (Robinson 1999, 47-8)

Robinson does not pursue an explicit prescriptive agenda in relation to war as Ruddick does, and the prescriptive implications following from her elaborated global ethic of care are less clearly defined. The purpose of taking an ethic of care approach is to contribute to the transformation of the contemporary international system into one in which caring is enabled, sustained and protected.

But what does this mean? It is at this point that a certain ambiguity in Robinson's account of her own ethical theory becomes apparent.

On the one hand, Robinson is deeply committed to the idea of a critical ethic of care as a transformative project, a starting point for changing the world in the light of the regulative ideal of care understood broadly as relating to others as 'real' individuals. The idea of care, as in Ruddick's notion of maternal thinking, provides the critical perspective from which the injustices of the world become apparent and may be judged. In this sense, care emerges as a distinct alternative to the way in which international politics is usually both conducted and understood. The valorization of relations of care becomes the goal of the generalization of these relations to a broader context. On the other hand, Robinson's insistence on the importance of power relations, complexity and context sits uneasily with any notion of the moral high ground. Her argument slips between an idealization of care and an anxiety to be both realistic (in the sense of political realism) and contextually sensitive in her analysis. The latter tendency is one which undercuts the former and makes the task of prescription impossible outside of specific cases.

Conclusion

The work of Ruddick and Robinson illustrates very well the way in which feminist philosophy opens up new agendas in approaches to international relations and is itself problematized by the encounter with the international. Both Ruddick and Robinson, by introducing an ethical standpoint derived from practices of care, pose a challenge to the traditional ethical paradigms in international relations. At the same time, they are faced with the need to revise and adjust that standpoint in the light of a series of questions. These challenge their conception of sexual difference; their sensitivity to cultural diversity; and the effectiveness of their arguments as part of campaigns to transform

the position of women within the international arena in relation to political violence, human rights and distributive justice.

It is clear that the critical questions raised against Ruddick's analysis, and which continue to haunt Robinson's work, reflect the complexity and internal tensions that mark women's experience of international politics. On the one hand, radical differences between women are an inescapable part of any account of gender in an international context. On the other hand, the ways in which women suffer because they are women are brutally clear within any straightforward rendition of international statistics relating to global poverty, rape in warfare or refugee crises. Feminist scholars of international relations, therefore, find themselves caught between the desire to avoid cultural imperialism and the desire to ground a clear feminist critique of the ways in which women are excluded and oppressed in the international context. Critical engagement with Ruddick's and Robinson's work as examples of international ethics becomes the formulation of a challenge to feminist philosophy to develop the resources to both understand and normatively judge the role of gender in international politics in ways which are mutually enriching.²

NOTES

- 1 Within this article I am using the term 'international relations' as a shorthand for a variety of work in the domains of international politics and economics. Traditionally, international relations is the term used to describe the discipline specifically devoted to the study of inter-state relations, as opposed to either international political economy or development studies. The latter deal with the interface between inter-state relations and international economic relations of production and exchange, global inequalities, North/South relations and much else. One of the features of feminist work in international relations (in common with Marxist and other critical perspectives) is that it does not respect this traditional demarcation between the 'high' politics of states and the 'low' politics of economy and society. This is demonstrated well in Gillian Youngs' recent book in which the distinction between international relations and international political economy is undercut through the use of gender as a critical category (Youngs 1999).
- 2 One example of a feminist theorist in international relations who has developed an alternative approach to feminist international ethics, which draws on both post-colonial and postmodernist work, is Jabri (1996; 1998; 1999). This has also been a preoccupation of my own recent work (Hutchings 1999; 2001, forthcoming).

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BOOK REVIEWS

Généalogie du masculin

Monique Schneider, Paris: Aubier, 2000

FF 140, 2 70072409 7

The Undead Mother: Psychoanalytic Explorations of Masculinity, Femininity and Matricide

Christina Wieland, London: Rebus Press, 2000

p/b £19.99, 1 900 877 23 6

Both these books are by clinicians—Schneider is a psychoanalyst as well as a philosopher, Wieland is a psychoanalytical psychotherapist as well as an academic—and both are reflecting on the question of sexual difference after thirty-odd years of feminist theory and critique. However, they are rather different kinds of book, written for different audiences.

Since 1979, Monique Schneider has published a whole series of books in which she has carefully and painstakingly examined the phantasies of Freud's text (in French one would say Freud's 'imaginary'). She draws, not only on the official psychoanalytic texts, but also on evidence from sources such as correspondence, early poems, or the testimony of his personal physician, and crucially, on the accounts of his dreams in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. She looks at the original German, the associative connections between the words he uses, to establish a network of unconscious connections. In true psychoanalytic fashion, she looks for her evidence in the fragment and the detail. She is also interested in the gap between psychoanalytic orthodoxy—its conservative, institutional side—and the psychoanalytic unconscious, which perpetually disturbs, interferes with or pushes its way into the official version(s).

Her strength lies in her attention to metaphor. In her latest book, *Généalogie du masculin*, she pursues and recapitulates this endeavour, focusing in particular on metaphors and representations of the masculine, principally in Freud, but also in a wider cultural context, for, as she points out, Freud's code is part of a much vaster cultural code. As in her earlier books, Schneider shows how Freud's theorization of psychoanalysis is built upon the apotropaic exclusion of his identifications with an archaic feminine. In the less scientific pronouncements, one can find the implicit or explicit acknowledgment of the identification 'I = she' which Freud the scientist defended against so fiercely. In fact, both Wieland and Schneider point out that Freud's famous claim that 'the little girl is a little boy' actually covers over and conceals its reversal, that the little boy is originally a little girl.

But Freud does at least enable us to glimpse the terrifying phantasy. Although scrupulously even-handed, Schneider is much more critical of Lacan. (In Lacan's oeuvre, there is no 'dream-book', no such self-revelation.) Her reservations about Lacan were stated quite explicitly in an interview in 1988, where she comments that Lacan's theory 'places under the sign of lack what is seen in the imaginary under the sign of an uncontrollable internal abundance [i.e. woman]' (*Women Analyze Women*, E. Hoffman Baruch & L. Serrano (eds), Harvester Wheatsheaf 1988, 198). She evidently prefers the more vulnerable and less defensive figure of Ferenczi, who is more willing to entertain the maternal-feminine identifications.

For readers who do not already know Schneider's work, I recommend that you read first the translated interview (mentioned above) in *Women Analyze Women*. This gives a very clear picture of the kind of work Schneider is interested in and its focus on the imaginary (the realm of unconscious phantasy) which is no respecter of sexual boundaries. What Irigaray stated as a general point—that the female imaginary has been excluded from culture—Schneider works out in detail. Schneider is quite clear in her view that the female imaginary is not the monopoly of women only. As Freud admits, the first identi-

fication for everyone is with the mother (I = she), and men lose out when they seek to excise (or exorcise) the feminine elements. The result is a mutilated masculine, whether individually or culturally.

The mutilated masculine is her focus in the present book. The mutilated masculine is also what leads to the phantasy that one can stand outside sexual difference, as a neutral party, and define its truth. Schneider does not believe in anatomical determinism; for her, sexual difference is constituted by the constructions—whether metaphorical or social—that are built on anatomy. Psychoanalysis is not neutral either, but is itself caught up in a history of such constructions. Sexual difference, in her view, is not a question of epistemology. (Wieland puts this point quite succinctly: 'Masculinity and femininity are phantasies of one another' (64)). Schneider shares with her contemporaries (Irigaray, Geneviève Fraisse, Monique David-Ménard among others) the view that the primary position vis-à-vis the other sex should be that of the interlocutor in a dialogue; the position of 'knowledge' is a secondary, defensive one in this area.

For most of us in philosophy in the UK, the formulation of the problematic of sexual difference is inevitably associated with Irigaray, Kristeva and Cixous. Schneider does not refer to these more stellar figures at all. She is engaged in dialogue with her co-professionals—academics and analysts in France—whose recent books on sexual difference are the principal reference points in her footnotes. Many of these will not be well-known outside of France. This local engagement may be one of the reasons why Schneider's subtle and sophisticated analyses have not been much translated. This is a pity, since Freud scholars in English who do a similar kind of detailed textual work do not seem to focus much on the problems of sexual difference that interest feminist scholars. However, the issues which Schneider discusses are relevant to psychoanalysis as a discipline, since Freud's founding defensive strategies have been significant in its history. Schneider wants to show the heterogeneity of the unconscious and the permanent tension in a field of theory which attempts

to codify and theorize instinctual drives and phantasies which exceed all possible attempts to master and immobilize them.

Wieland is not writing for the interdisciplinary academics who constitute Schneider's principal readership. I think Wieland's implied audience is the analytic/therapeutic community, which has been slower to assimilate and critically digest feminist analyses than the humanities disciplines in the universities. To read and understand Wieland's account, it would be helpful to be familiar with the work of British object-relations theorists, and particularly Melanie Klein (see the essays in *Love, Guilt and Reparation*, *The Psycho-analysis of Children*, and *Envy and Gratitude*, Virago 1988, 1989 and 1988 respectively). Otherwise the language of objects and part-objects, projection and projective identification, might prove a barrier to understanding. Apart from the technical vocabulary, the style is clear and energetic, and the argument quite accessible.

Wieland's analysis of the Western psyche shows a remarkable convergence with that of Irigaray (although she does not know Irigaray's work well, and seems to have developed her account independently). Like Irigaray, Wieland describes Western culture as one which 'conspicuously lacks a symbolic parental couple in its founding myths' (177), and via fairy tales, Greek mythology, clinical examples and evocations of contemporary popular culture, she explores in detail the consequences for the male and female psyche respectively. She agrees with Irigaray—though she does not couch it in these terms—that the dominant cultural imaginary is masculine. Like Schneider, Wieland examines the boy's identification with the mother and argues that the 'separation from mother is not a smooth and easy process but a violent affair that resembles matricide' (10). The result is a culture which suffers from two major deficits; its lack of a female ideal and its inability to mourn, in particular to mourn the murdered mother who is then inevitably experienced as persecuting.

But the psychic model described by Freud (strong paternal super-ego, rigid repression barrier) has started to crumble, and

Wieland sees a 'return of the repressed' in which the ghosts and furies of the murdered mother are trying to find a voice. This creates 'a state of chaos and the unleashing of primitive anxieties, as well as new possibilities' (95). Instead of matricide and the classic defences described by Freud, namely repression, projection or phobic avoidance, Wieland argues for a slow 'working-through' of primitive anxieties, for which the models are good mothering—by either parent—of small children, and the transference therapeutic process. Wieland calls this slow 'working-through' the process of mourning.

The account of the Western psyche is clearly and cogently argued. The book is primarily about cultural models, not clinical work, and Wieland's stress on the importance of the transmission of culture via the individual unconscious is part of the strength of her analysis. In Irigarayan terms, we are living in an anal ontology which does not recognize sexual difference; in Wieland's terms, we have not reached the depressive position. (These two accounts overlap; they are not in conflict.) So how, then, as a culture, could we develop towards sexual difference and mourning the mother? Wieland's book does not (and does not aspire to) suggest how this cultural change might occur, other than through 'working-through' and 'the hope that by describing the problem we can approach a resolution' (225).

Given her stress on the 'cultural container' (127), it is disappointing that she criticizes Irigaray for having a too exclusively culture-focused approach. She argues that Irigaray needs an object-relations perspective (i.e. focus on internal psychic object-relations) to balance her cultural bias, because the Irigarayan concept of matricide is about culture rather than about the internal world of the psyche. In my view, that is not a critique which has much purchase. I think the problem lies elsewhere, in the difficulty that both Irigaray and Wieland are faced with, i.e. the question of how society and psyche affect each other, and how to bring about change: how to move beyond diagnosis and create the 'new possibilities' evoked on page ninety-five.

On a psychoanalytic model, because of the hypothesis of the unconscious, any voluntaristic programme is liable to subversion by effects outside our conscious control. In this respect it would be better to see Irigaray's work and that of Wieland as complementing each other, rather than as alternatives. For when it comes to social change, Wieland's notion of 'working-through' at an individual level (which is a basic clinical presupposition)—the idea that as a culture we need to mourn—does not take us any further than Irigaray's analysis in *Speculum* of why that mourning has been so impossible.

I would argue that it is necessary to restate the diagnosis—the matricidal nature of Western culture—in a variety of registers for a wide range of different audiences. From this point of view, Wieland's lively and more clinically-orientated book will ideally reach an audience who would find Irigaray indigestible or far too radical, and Schneider inaccessible.

Margaret Whitford
Queen Mary and Westfield College
University of London

Habermas, Kristeva and Citizenship

Noëlle McAfee, Cornell University Press, 2000

h/b £30.50 0 8014 3706 7, p/b £13.50 0 8014 8670 X

Which notion of the self complies with the demand for active citizenship? This is the core question of Noëlle McAfee's comparison of the two leading theorists Julia Kristeva and Jürgen Habermas. While both can be, broadly speaking, subsumed under the tradition of continental philosophy, it is traditional to distinguish between German critical theory and recent French philosophy. McAfee's book goes against the grain of this accepted wisdom by combining these two in her quest for an adequate concept of citizenship. The objective of her book is to combine the respective strengths so as to avoid the respective shortcomings of the two thinkers' works. McAfee proposes a

synthesis of Kristeva's account of subjectivity with Habermas' account of citizenship. It is, as the author herself admits, an unusual choice but it promises, in her view, a notion of deliberative democracy which is inclusive, incorporating difference, and which allows for politics to take place.

What is to be gained from this combination? Does McAfee's proposal result in an 'unhappy marriage' between critical theory and post-structuralism? What are the implications of using Habermas' model of citizenship with Kristeva's notion of subjectivity? According to McAfee, this synthesis is a necessary step towards an adequate formulation of the concept of deliberation. Her emphasis lies with the notion of active citizenship, and the idea that any adequate concept of subjectivity must be compatible with the requirements for citizenship and for political agency.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I, 'Subjectivity in the Making', assesses Habermas and Kristeva and their respective accounts of subjectivity. McAfee emphasizes the initial similarities between the two thinkers which allow for such a comparison. These consist of an understanding of subjectivity which is shaped historically, contingently and linguistically, and which builds on Freud and the traditions of continental philosophy. In the chapter on Habermas and subjectivity, McAfee summarizes well-known criticisms raised against Habermas in a clear and succinct manner. Habermas' emphasis on universalism is, according to McAfee, riddled with metaphysical suppositions which any theory of subjectivity should overcome. It is in particular his account of the rational, self-transparent subject which remains unconvincing and which proves inadequate for an understanding of citizenship and politics. In McAfee's view, an account of subjectivity more appropriate to the latter is promised by Kristeva's notion of the subject-in-process, and the emphasis on the openness of the subject to which this notion leads. The open subject is capable of development and change, and can engage with other subjects, an essential element for deliberation.

In Part II, which inquires into the two theorists' respective discussions of politics and the public sphere, McAfee's sympathies are reversed. Habermas' 'striking unity of focus and concern' (82), his concern with democratic deliberation and for an adequate account of citizenship, and his work on the public sphere all weigh the balance in his favour. Continuing her discussion from the previous section, McAfee asks 'What kind of political agent can a subject-in-process be?' (108) Kristeva's useful notion of subjectivity is, according to McAfee, not reflected in her account of politics. Kristeva's suggestion of a model of cosmopolitan individualism, for example in *Strangers to Ourselves*, is incompatible with her own notion of subjectivity, and it fails to meet the requirements for deliberative democracy. More promising accounts of politics seem to arise out of the contributions of Nancy Fraser and Chantal Mouffe, on whose work McAfee focuses instead.

Part III, 'Subjectivity and Deliberative Democracy', integrates the two previous themes of subjectivity and politics. What would this synthesis look like? Subjectivity, according to McAfee, is constituted in relation to others. This relational dimension of subjectivity allows for complementary agency, since political agency arises out of public knowledge, public deliberation, and collective action. Politics, she argues, is only possible 'when subjects are relational, when agency is complementary, and when discourse is deliberative' (191).

I enjoyed reading this book. McAfee's analysis of deliberative politics and of the constitution of subjectivity offers an interesting account. She covers a wide range of sources and political-philosophical debates on selfhood and political agency. Her discussion displays a refreshing enthusiasm for politics, an enthusiasm which is reflected in the style of the writing. McAfee argues passionately, and in a manner easily accessible to anyone interested in political theory, while still remaining theoretically ambitious. Her attempts to bridge the gap between models of deliberative democracy and post-structuralism mean that the book can be recommended for offering an

interesting endeavour to overcome the deadlock of the 'critical theory versus post-structuralism' debate. I do, however, have some reservations.

Firstly, while the attempt to overcome the above-mentioned deadlock is commendable, the book does not discuss in sufficient detail what this synthesis of Habermas and Kristeva would look like. This is partly the result of McAfee's deflection away from her two main protagonists towards other theorists. McAfee draws on a wide range of sources and perspectives but she does so at the expense of an in-depth analysis of Habermas and Kristeva. Neither the potential nor the shortcomings of their work are sufficiently teased out. McAfee refers to well-known arguments and criticisms in relation to both authors but moves on too quickly to other thinkers. Habermas and Kristeva seem to serve as a mere pretext for a broader discussion of the project of deliberative democracy, and in this respect, the title of the book is misleading. This neglect is particularly important in Kristeva's case, as her work contains conceptual ambiguities which deserve closer attention. The book also lacks an account of the relationship between subjectivity, citizenship, agency and politics. Subjectivity and politics, for example, are posited as autonomous concepts without inquiring into the ways in which subjectivity is constituted politically.

Secondly, the book offers disappointingly little in terms of a feminist or gendered analysis. This is particularly surprising given the choice of authors and the wider theoretical debates in which they are embedded. Kristeva's psychoanalytic account of subjectivity, and her reception within feminism, would have lent themselves to a critical analysis of gendered accounts of subjectivity and their implications for political agency, as it is precisely the question of gender which determines the political efficacy of the Kristevan subject. This absence of a gendered perspective is also surprising in relation to Habermas who, in response to his feminist critics (for example, Seyla Benhabib, Nancy Fraser, and Iris Young), has addressed gender issues

in his more recent work, particularly in *Between Facts and Norms*. Furthermore, Habermas' influence on feminist social theorists is substantial. McAfee refers to these critics and their contributions to the notion of deliberative democracy, but offers no gender critique of the Habermasian notions of the public sphere and deliberation. Her discussion refers to abstract differences but seems to rely on disembodied political agents and communities.

In sum, this is a book by a normative theorist who incorporates insights from post-structuralist and psychoanalytic thinking into her discussion. It offers a useful and thought-provoking analysis of the conditions for politics in the contemporary world, but, in overlooking certain themes and perspectives, is still an unfinished project.

Birgit Schippers
Queen's University Belfast

Negativity and Politics: Dionysus and Dialectics from Kant to Poststructuralism

Diana Coole, Routledge, 2000

h/b £50.00 0 415 0317 6; p/b £16.99 0 415 03177-X

This book aims to interrogate and explore the political resources offered by the concept of negativity as it operates within the work of selected theorists from Kant to Kristeva in both Dionysian (following Nietzsche) and dialectical (following Hegel) forms. As Coole makes clear, however, presenting the project of the book in this way inevitably does a disservice to 'negativity' (and the different ways in which it can be named), because negativity is less a concept than a destabilizing moment which figures very differently in different thinkers' work. It appears as limit, dialectic, difference, *différance*, will-to-power, invisibility, negative dialectics and as sexual difference, to name but a few examples which figure in the text. The analysis of the book is therefore self-consciously informed by the explicit difficulty

either of making sense of negativity or of reducing it to the same in its manifold appearances.

Having said that, however, it is clear that Coole both wants to and does make some sense of negativity, and indeed that she is aiming to provide an argument for a return to political theorizing in a dialectical mode of negativity. The book is organized into six main chapters, each with a key protagonist: Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Merleau-Ponty, Adorno and Kristeva. Each of these chapters engages critically with the thought under consideration, sometimes introducing other thinkers as counterparts, critics and interrogators of the versions of thinking negativity in question. All of the chapters are insightful but, from my point of view, the most thought-provoking are those dealing with Hegel and his critics and Merleau-Ponty respectively.

The chapter on Hegel is crucial to certain distinctions in the meaning of negativity which Coole continues to trace in the later chapters. She provides a very strong analysis of the different ways in which Hegelian dialectic can be read and is, I think, right to argue for the undecidability of the status and role of negativity in Hegel's thought. It remains open whether Hegelian negativity operates as a movement towards the closure of the absolute—eventually to be recouped as pure positive stasis—or whether it is an aporetic dynamic inscribing a perpetual openness within spirit which has the capacity to destabilize apparent resolution or reconciliation.

Introducing a discussion of French critics of Hegelian dialectic, Coole points out how the negativity of deconstruction can be seen as a radicalization of Hegelian negativity. She also highlights the political implications of shifting the understanding of negativity from that of a moment in an immanent dynamic to that of radical alterity. This is one of the central themes of the book, since Coole argues that the 'radical alterity' option, which marks a great deal of postmodernist political thought, problematizes effective theoretical engagement with issues of critique and transformation in the political sphere.

However, this is not to say that Coole embraces Hegelian or Marxist dialectic as the 'right' mode of negativity or dismisses the significance of negativity in its radicalized form. Instead she finds in Merleau-Ponty a more promising pattern of engagement between the radical alterity and dialectical modes of negativity. In particular she emphasizes his simultaneous acknowledgment of both modes in his ontology of negativity and sees this as reflected in his account of politics: 'Merleau-Ponty acknowledges that political acts inevitably remain risky and violent. But unlike for example Derrida, he would not therefore defer action; he recognises that in politics decisions must be made and that acts are often definitive (to deny them would effectively replicate the quietism of neo-Kantian liberalism and ignore the fact that politics is violence)' (148-9).

In the exposition of complex theoretical positions, Coole does not always foreground the implications for politics of different formulations of negativity as strongly as one might wish. However, she makes it very clear that a notion of negativity thought as operating within an ontology of social relations has very different political implications to a notion of negativity thought as that which is always beyond, exceeding and transcending political and social materiality. This is also apparent in Coole's treatment of Kristeva and the significance in her work of the acknowledgement of dialectical mediation between identity and difference in the production of ethical subjects, and between 'the conceptual and the real, reason and its other' in theorizing (209).

One of the strengths of the book is that Coole points to the interconnections between the Dionysian and the dialectical in different manifestations of negativity, challenging the stereotypical ways in which representatives of each of these tendencies often characterize each other. However, one of the difficulties of the book is that this mapping, as Coole herself acknowledges, is too simple and rigid to catch the flexible phenomenon of the role of negativity in theory which she is trying to trace. As a result she shifts between

complex, nuanced accounts of different thinkers and rather bald statements of the implications of particular positions for politics. I felt in particular that the distinctions between a genealogical and a deconstructive mode of negativity became rather lost in a generalized set of claims about post-structuralism/postmodernism and the kinds of political theory it enables. The book provides the basis for a theoretical response to those versions of post-structuralist/postmodernist political theory which valorize negativity in and for itself and thereby provide poor resources for understanding or judging politics. But it is not entirely clear whether and to what degree all postmodernist/post-structuralist theory falls foul of this critique and, if it does not, whether this implies that in such cases there is always an unacknowledged dialectical element to the Dionysian.

This is a very ambitious book; a fascinating read which offers many insights into the thinkers under consideration. Coole's achievement is to revitalize the project of dialectical thought through her thoughtful and detailed tracing of the meaning of dialectic in Hegel, Merleau-Ponty and Adorno. Implicit in the book is a promise that Coole herself, having traced the different modes of thinking negativity, will go on to formulate in much more detail a political theory which incorporates her vision of the appropriate link between negativity and thinking politics. I hope she does.

Kimberly Hutchings
University of Edinburgh

Deleuze and Feminist Theory

Ian Buchanan and Claire Colebrook (eds), Edinburgh University Press, 2000

h/b £40.00 0 7486 1119 3; p/b £16.95 0 7486 1120 7

With new work by well-known Deleuze scholars Dorothea Olkowski, Rosi Braidotti and Elizabeth Grosz this volume cannot but be an important contribution to the contemporary, and sometimes troubled,

encounter between Deleuze and feminism. A common concern with what feminism will become as a result of that conjunction links the authors. It also marks the volume as an important investigation into the turn in feminist theory from emancipation to differentiation, from critique and the exposé of the prejudices within thought to the affirmative and creative task of thinking otherwise. The fact that established feminist writers like Claire Colebrook, Jerry Aline Flieger, and Camilla Benolirao Griggers, who have previously worked with theories of post-structuralism and psychoanalysis, are now using Deleuze to open up the ethics and politics of sexual difference bears witness to the vibrancy of feminist theory.

Despite the feminist call to think beyond the denigrating hierarchy of identity politics it is the Deleuzian commitment to a molecular becoming-woman over the establishment of a specifically female subjectivity or molar identity that has so worried feminists. The caution that runs through the volume—and which is returned to time and time again—is that the dissipation of a determinate feminist identity might mean the collapse of feminism as a political force and with it the recognition of the still urgent fight for women's rights. In her admirable introduction Colebrook confronts this tension by asking what would happen to the women's movement if feminist theory moved away from the concepts of identity, the subject and emancipation.

The problem of situating the turn to Deleuze within a history of feminism dominates the first half of the volume. Essays from Verena Andermatt Conley, Jerry Aline Flieger, Catherine Driscoll, and Dorothea Olkowski explore the resonance between Deleuze's work and that of Cixous, Freud, Kristeva, and Irigaray, respectively. Conley, Flieger and Driscoll all write fine, scholarly essays in which they strive to find affinities between Deleuze and post-structuralism, and therefore some continuity in feminist thinking. However, they fail to acknowledge that Deleuze is working within a very different tradition—Spinozist rather than Cartesian—and that this has radical

implications for the way that he thinks about the body. It is not until Olkowski's essay that this important point is made.

Noting that both Deleuze's and Cixous' writing emerge out of the context of the events of May 1968, Conley finds echoes between Cixous' 'Newly Born Woman' and Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the 'Body Without Organs'. What is striking however is that for each it is the act of writing that is productive, a process of invention that maps new territories, and effects new ways of being. Conley calls this a type of 'guerrilla warfare' that works against the molar power of law, government, science or religion (27).

Flieger reiterates the concern that the turn to the molecular and to becoming-woman is a movement that excludes real women, and in a re-evaluation of Schreber's trans-sexuality she questions whether the molar is as immutable as Deleuze seems to suggest. She thus seeks a productive disjunction between Deleuze and feminism in which Deleuze prompts us to mobilize identity politics and to confront the paradox of becoming equal while insisting on being different.

Driscoll finds a parallel between Deleuze and Kristeva in their consideration of the girl as an ambivalent figure that escapes the Oedipal frame. However, while for Kristeva that girl is the decentred subject, Deleuze proposes modes of subjectivity that were never centred, and with such different models of subjectivity in play the parallels that Driscoll draws seem to me to be of limited value. The strength of her essay is the later discussion of Kristeva, Woolf and Deleuze. Like Conley, she looks at poetic language and the process of writing as a practice that produces territories in which women continue to assemble, and which escape the normative identities essential to the symbolic order in language.

One of the main criticisms of Deleuze made by feminists—notably responses by Alice Jardine in *Gynesis* (1984) and by Judith Butler in *Subjects of Desire* (1987)—is that his work lacks a socio-historicized context. Olkowski identifies a similar criticism of Irigaray by political theorists, and goes on to stress that what both Deleuze

and Irigaray are doing is challenging the logical and philosophical framework that depends on binaries such as sex-gender, nature-culture. Using Irigaray's reflections on Plato, Olkowski folds Deleuze's theory of the simulacrum and becoming with Irigaray's theory of fluidity and of woman as without limit or measure. The problem that re-emerges here is whether 'becoming' disallows the assertion of sexual difference, or even whether becoming-woman is an appropriation of the female body by the male. However, as Olkowski points out, Irigaray's insistence on sexual difference does not depend on the solidity of the body but on the body conceived in terms of fluidity, mucosity and movement. Perhaps Irigaray and Deleuze are closer than they first appear.

To my mind, 'Is Sexual Difference a Problem?' is the pivotal essay in the volume because in it Colebrook shifts from Irigaray and a philosophy of the body to the Deleuzian notion of a 'bodily philosophy' (126). In so doing she challenges the traditional understanding of sexual difference and of the subject as questions for metaphysics. She argues that Deleuze's philosophy of immanence changes the focus of debate from the transcendental questions of origin and ground, and a concern with representation and the subject, to ontology and the radical empiricism that confronts sex as a specific relation to the world. The task of philosophy is then to respond to what is given by creating concepts that affirm contingent relations. Philosophy is *amor fati* (114).

The essays in the second half of the book attempt to explore what feminism becomes when it works as a 'bodily philosophy' and takes up Deleuze's challenge to work, create and effect rather than to critique or to interpret (126). Both Eleanor Kaufman and Nicole Shukin have reservations about Deleuze's project, and question the efficacy and desirability of breaking through long-held patterns of thought. Kaufman is astonished at the ease with which feminists like Braidotti and Grosz have embraced the idea of 'thinking through the body' (128). She wants to keep an oscillation or disjunction between

mind and body, arguing that it is precisely when that split is heightened—as in the mind-body split experienced in martial arts techniques or when suffering from migraines—that the 'humanist' boundaries of body and mind are confronted and surpassed. It is here that she finds the possibility of new states of health and exuberance.

Shukin returns the reader to the issue of feminism as a political force and finds that despite Deleuze and Guattari's apparent disregard of issues around sex and gender, gender remains latent in *A Thousand Plateaus*. She argues that in their enthusiasm for nomads, war machines, and becoming-woman, Deleuze and Guattari favour a 'feminine infinitely in *potentia*' and she warns against over-valuing the mutable woman (150).

In the following essay Braidotti is keen to develop a philosophy that can address the body image in our depersonalized 'techno-teratological' culture (157). In a conflation of body and subject that I found confusing, Braidotti argues that the 'Deleuzian subject' is attuned to the technological era because it is an enfolded but non-essentialist complexity where boundaries and limitations are confronted (161). However, despite finding resonance between feminist theory and Deleuze in thinking the post-human, Braidotti identifies a residual sexism in the feminization of the monster, which is still defined as abject, other and deviant.

The penultimate chapter is by Griggers who aims to think from Deleuze and to map what she calls a 'Filipina-becoming' (173). She sets out a series of plateaus that describe an unacknowledged US colonial history and the effect of globalization on traditional values and patterns of migration, in particular the phenomenon of the Filipina bride. The result is a stark and disturbing picture of women struggling against the weight of history. However, I am not sure that the mobilization of Deleuzian concepts adds anything to an already interesting commentary.

Finally, Grosz's essay looks at a politics of the future, a future thought in terms of becoming and as the generation of the new.

Grosz's discussion of futures makes this essay a fitting chapter with which to end the volume. Nonetheless it would have been useful to have her explanation of the way that Bergson-Deleuze break down the subject-object binary earlier in the book. This is because their concept of the body as a centre of action (and not as a locus of identity) has a significant bearing on the issue of politics that is the central concern of so many of the authors. Grosz herself uses Deleuze to think ways in which women might reclaim a positive concept of futurity, thereby aligning Deleuze with a feminist politics which aspires to a future that is not understood in terms of the status and forms of the past. The hope is that out of the confrontation with Deleuze feminist theory will emerge more confident, and women will not be so much concerned with who they are but with what they can do. This volume points the way.

Judy Purdom
University of Warwick

The Matter of Critique: Readings in Kant's Philosophy
Andrea Rehberg & Rachel Jones (eds), Clinamen Press,
Manchester, 2000
p/b £14.99 1 903083 11 7

For anyone interested in Kant's critical thought and, in particular, engagements with that thought from the perspective of continental philosophy, this book is like a box of chocolates—a real treat. It is a tribute to the editors that they have succeeded in producing an edited volume which is not simply a collection of loosely related articles, but one which works both in terms of the individual interest and lucidity of each particular essay *and* in terms of an interrelated whole.

The editors introduce the volume as the first example of a collection of original essays in English from authors working on Kant in the continental tradition. The purpose of the volume is to 'indicate some of the transformations of which Kant's texts are capable when

read in this way' and to inspire further work which treats Kant not just as a central figure in the history of philosophy, 'but as a thinker who is capable of becoming our contemporary' (xv). The essays engage with a range of Kantian texts and arguments, with readings inspired by Deleuze, Nietzsche, Derrida, Irigaray, Heidegger, Foucault and Lyotard. It is noticeable that the *Critique of Judgment* is particularly prominent as a point of reference and that, as the editors point out, little attention is paid to Kant's moral philosophy. Although the latter omission is unfortunate (something on Kant and Lyotard or Levinas might have been of interest here) it does, as the editors also note, reflect the pattern of engagement with Kant's work from a continental perspective, highlighting the importance of the *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* and, in particular, the notion and role of the sublime.

The book is divided into four thematic sections: 'The Emergence of Matter'; 'Genealogies'; 'Conjunctions' and 'Transcendental Empiricism'. The themes of the first section and of the fourth seemed to me to be particularly richly interconnected. The papers in both of these sections explore different ways of understanding Kant's account of encounters with matter in terms of experience, knowledge and artistic creativity.

Mick Bowles, using Deleuze, presents an elegant argument for using the notion of the sublime to understand the 'provocation of matter'. He points to a paradox at the heart of the Kantian synthesis of concept and intuition in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, arguing that it relies simultaneously on the power and the failure of categorical understanding. This argument connects with the role of the sublime in Iain Hamilton Grant's intriguing exploration of the physical location/condition of transcendental conditions of possibility within the human species.

Questions raised by both of these papers are revisited in the final section by Martin Bell and Alistair Welchman who both use Deleuze to read Kant in terms of transcendental empiricism. The

specific focus of Rachel Jones' contribution within the first section is on Kantian analogies between art and nature, the imagination of genius and the process of crystallization. In a thoughtful reading, she points to the ways in which Kantian attempts to grasp artistic and natural processes systematically are disrupted from within his own account. Two general themes are evident across these two sections. First, the importance of the arguments of the third *Critique* in relation to the first, particularly the notion of the sublime; and second, the importance of tension, paradox and disruption internal to Kant's arguments, which push the reader into both extending and challenging Kant's insights.

The middle two sections of the book are also rich. The 'Genealogies' section includes papers by Jim Urpeth and Andrea Rehberg which draw on Nietzsche and Heidegger respectively. The former follows Nietzsche's genealogy of morals in criticizing Kant for failing to break out of pre-critical 'theologico-humanist' values and remaining within the covert violence of an ascetic ideal in his analytic of the sublime. The latter is more generous to Kant in adopting a deconstructive technique which indicates how Kant's text may be pushed beyond its own limits, so that one can continue to think with Kant against Kant.

Following these two papers, Howard Caygill presents a highly scholarly account of how the concept of life operates differentially in different contexts in Kant's thought. In the 'Conjunctions' section Kant's work is brought explicitly into relation to other thinkers. Kath Jones offers an interesting set of reflections on different notions of community in Kant. Thinking against Hegel and with Foucault and Lyotard, she suggests that in Kant's notion of community as '*commercium*' it is possible to find grounds for a concept of 'being in common' which finds community (and politics) in plurality and difference rather than solidarity and identity. Simon Malpas, in a delightful paper, considers the relation between the Kantian sublime and the Hegelian absolute using Derrida on the logic of the frame.

Joanna Hodge presents a scholarly and careful argument for the strengths of Irigaray's 'disjunctive' mode of reading Kant in holding onto both Heideggerian and Lacanian insights.

It is a tribute to the strength of this volume that it provides the resources to call any of the arguments included in it into question. The editors point out that many of the essays in the volume fall into one of two distinct and opposing trajectories within the continental tradition's treatment of Kant. They either follow a path of reading in terms of libidinal economy or pursue a deconstructive approach. It is suggested that this is particularly evident in the contrast between the readings of the sublime offered by Urpeth, Bowles and Grant on the one hand and Kath Jones and Malpas on the other (xix). In the light of this, perhaps the most interesting paper in the volume is that of Paul Davies. Appearing, appropriately, in the middle of the volume, it teases the reader and the other contributions in a splendid engagement with Nietzsche's critique of Kant's treatment of the ontological proof as arguing for a difference which makes no difference.

I cannot resist ending with a quotation from Davies as he speaks eloquently to the philosophical depth and interest of what all of these papers enable readers to think, reminding us also of the lasting and seemingly inexhaustable philosophical provocation provided by Kant's work: 'it would be interesting to ask whether philosophy might not actually need this new and underdetermined difference, indeed whether it might only be able to proceed by way of a modest critical capitulation to the thought that it leaves everything as it is, and whether *contra* Nietzsche, a positive value might not have to be given to what will always be genealogically analysed as a difference that makes no difference, and so to something that by definition, genealogy always *misses*.' (124)

Kimberly Hutchings
University of Edinburgh

Relating Narratives: Storytelling and Selfhood

Adriana Cavarero, trans. Paul Kotman, Routledge, 2000

h/b £47.50 0 415 20057 1; p/b £13.99 0415 20058 X

In *Relating Narratives* Adriana Cavarero brings the art of narration and certain philosophical questions into creative conjunction. Her erudition, and her references to the Italian tradition in which she is an important presence, give the reader a sense of intellectual expansion. Her philosophical discussion is political and persuasive. Weaving stories from the ancient and the modern world, she suggests that the uniqueness of each of us comes in telling our life stories to a shaping listener. She provides an alternative to both the modern and post-modern subject in her stress on the unifying power of the desire to tell one's story. The English title is a straitening translation of the Italian: *Tu che mi guardi, tu che mi racconti*: 'You who look at me, you who tell my story.' The 'you', the reader soon discovers, is vital to Cavarero's thinking.

Under Cavarero's scrutiny the story of Oedipus introduces a definition of the universal 'man' inimical to her own vision. "Man", she writes, 'is a universal that applies to everyone precisely because it is no one' (9). By contrast, Cavarero endorses 'living singularity': a singularity that can only appear in storytelling. Both Oedipus and Ulysses, she argues, become themselves in hearing their stories narrated—'Between identity and narration ... there is a tenacious relation of desire' (32). When we hear our stories, Cavarero says, there is a 'familiar self-sensing recognition' (37). This phrase is better and clearer in the original Italian (*senza riconoscerne il sapore*), making me wish for more direct references back to Italian phrases to convey the sense of the original.

Cavarero draws throughout on the writing of Hannah Arendt, who also believed her ideas to be tied to her femininity. Thinking natality, the new beginning, as providing an opening for opposing disembodied male thought, Cavarero casts a new light on Oedipus'

birth (readers familiar with Cavarero's work will recognize her way of—charmingly—stealing from a patriarchal text). The secret of Oedipus' birth has denied him the originary story of his unique self which he desires, because the uniqueness of identity has its origin in the event of birth. This uniqueness, according to Cavarero, is seen by the other who relates the story, and is linked via Arendt to the uncanny figure of the *daimon* in Greek religion, 'which accompanies each man throughout his life, looking over his shoulder from behind and thus visible only to those he encounters' (Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Chicago U.P. 1958, 179–80; Cavarero 21).

For Cavarero, Muriel Rukeyser's poem 'Myth' starts a similar line of thought on how Oedipus erred in including 'woman', and indeed his mother, in the universal 'man', and in dealing in abstract categories. He, fatally, lost his sense of the particular and the accidental which, although suppressed in philosophy, are 'alive and well' in women's stories. One such story, partially recounted in this book, is that of Emilia and Amalia, two women who learnt to relate each other's lives at '*la scuola delle 150 ore*', one of the '150 hour schools'. (As the translator explains, these were 'schools founded by the Italian left in the 1970's, ... to provide supplementary education for ... workers or house-wives who lacked higher education—workers were allowed to take 150 hours, paid, out of their work year in order to attend these schools' (65 n2)). Cavarero writes movingly of the love between these women, and of the significance to Emilia of her friend's biography of her. Here, it would seem, the very obscurity of women's lives can be advantageous. Because they do find themselves represented as subjects in these stories, they do not consider themselves as falling under the universal 'subject'. The relationship between the women becomes more important.

Yet there are problems here. As Carolyn Steedman has already pointed out, Cavarero ignores the way that so many impoverished women who seek official assistance are forced to relate their stories ('I want to tell you a story', *Radical Philosophy*, 105 Jan. 2001, 45–8).

These are life stories too, but they are elicited by harsh necessity, and it is a privilege of the powerful to be able to put others to the question. The enthusiasm of philosophers such as MacIntyre for the story ignores the uses of silence for the oppressed. Briefly, Cavarero warns against the risk of 'cultural colonialization and of instrumental appropriation' (64). She alludes to Elsa Joubert's *The Long Journey of Poppie Nongena*, and deals rather cursorily with the power relation between the white literate story taker (Joubert) and the black illiterate story giver, who was given the fictitious name of Poppie Nongena. Cavarero is aware of the 'risk' that this story may appeal to those who speak the Afrikaans language but do not know how to read it (65). She suggests that Joubert tries to solve this problem by putting on a theatrical performance of the novel for the family and friends of Poppie Nongena. However, though well intentioned, it seems unlikely that such a performance could overcome the problem. A dramatic transformation would have been intelligible to non-readers of Afrikaans, but Poppie Nongena has still been transformed from being a worker, a daughter and a friend to being part of a white woman's literary oeuvre. These criticisms point to a lack of attention to practical concerns, as if the mundane is lost in the enchantment of Cavarero's world.

A further related question concerns how action is to be understood. Here there is an (unacknowledged) difference between Cavarero and Arendt. For Cavarero action, heroic or otherwise, allows the other to tell one's story and thus fulfils one's desire for one's story. For Arendt action has more direct political importance, as Cavarero shows when she quotes from *The Human Condition*: 'Since action is the political activity *par excellence*, natality and not mortality may be the central category of political as distinguished from metaphysical thought' (Arendt 1958, 9; Cavarero 28). But Arendt uses 'action' in the sense of both beginning and carrying through: action creates the space for freedom. The public discourse on the actions of heroes is a political good. For Arendt and for Cavarero (and Nancy) the

unexposable is the non-existent. In Arendt the exposing is ontological and political (unsurprisingly, she preferred biography to autobiography). Cavarero's self-exposure, however, differs from Arendt's in being closer to psychoanalysis than politics.

Perhaps it is my English reserve, but I am worried by Cavarero's insistence on the desire to tell one's story. Simone de Beauvoir, for example, maintained secrecy about her lesbian life throughout her many-volumed autobiography. I wonder, therefore, about Emilia. Did she carry her life story always with her in her purse because the story fulfilled her desire, or because she wanted to keep this very private document about her person? Was she alarmed at the self-exposure made permanent on this piece of paper? Given the complications of most women's lives, how many of us would entrust the vagaries of our fortunes to the discretion of another? Those in weaker positions have much to gain by having a hidden self. Perhaps we do not always or entirely recognize ourselves in the other's narration, however gifted or close to us the storyteller may be. And, besides, isn't there also a pleasure in keeping secret?

Cavarero differentiates her position from post-structuralist feminism. She laughs, indeed, at the American feminists who are frightened of the 'substantiality' of both biography and autobiography. Cavarero separates uniqueness from substantiality, and in a welcome move opposes the weakness of the fragmented postmodern subject: 'Our thesis, once more, is that the etymological root that the terms *uniqueness* (*unicità*) and *unity* (*unità*) share does not flatten them out into a homogeneous substance, but rather renders them signs of an existence whose life-story is different from all others precisely because it is constitutively interwoven with many others' (71). Cavarero is no essentialist; her interest lies in the 'who' someone is, not the 'what' that places her in a category, nor the disunited pieces that have superseded the categorization.

For Cavarero, it is often lovers who reaffirm the 'ontological status of the who—as exposed, relational, altruistic' (89). Gertrude

Stein and Alice Toklas, for example, are said to each provide the reality of the other. Cavarero also catches (brilliantly) the evanescence of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice as she moves between poet, personage, comment and critic, always asking for the 'you'. Scheherazade is, of course, a gift for Cavarero, as she resists the death of the author (as advertized by Roland Barthes) with her womanly art of narration. But Cavarero does not restrict story telling to exotic locations. The scenes of storytelling range 'from gossip to the family feast, from the meeting of friends to conversations with strangers, and, especially, in friendship and love' (126). For Cavarero the real is not swallowed in the text, the plot is a response to the real everyday context. Life stories never have an author: they are always in process and are completed only in the retrospective narration of the life.

The reader, however, is a missing figure in *Relating Narratives*. This contrasts with Cavarero's earlier book *In Spite of Plato* which comprised striking new readings of female figures marginalized or distorted in Platonic texts. We, as readers, may be imaginatively drawn into *Relating Narratives* but the stress throughout is on writing not reading. It will be interesting, therefore, to see the balance between the writer and the reader in Cavarero's forthcoming *Figures of the Body*.

Personally, Adriana Cavarero had an important influence on my philosophical life. I met her, and listened to a paper which became the first chapter of *Relating Narratives* at a time when I was discouraged by masculine philosophy. I find her an inspirational figure and I am sure that I will not be the only reader for whom this book has inspirational qualities. It is a riveting read, full of poetry and surprises, and provides us with a new direction in feminist philosophy of the self.

Liz Mitchell

Canterbury Christ Church University College

The Cambridge Companion to Feminism in Philosophy
Miranda Fricker and Jennifer Hornsby (eds.), Cambridge
University Press, 2000

h/b £37.50 0 521 62451 7; p/b £13.95 0 521 62469 X

Previous *Cambridge Companions to Philosophy* have been devoted to individual male thinkers from the established philosophical canon and, as the editors note, the *Companion to Feminism in Philosophy* breaks with this mould, exemplifying the anti-authoritarian impulses characteristic of feminist theorizing. The *Companion* is intended to provide an overview of the state of feminist reflection within most of the standard areas of the philosophy curriculum, and the quality of the contributions is excellent. The book will be a very valuable aid to teaching, since its articles explore the ways in which bodies of feminist work bear upon, elaborate, or criticize the mainstream philosophical views and concepts with which students will be familiar.

Each paper generally begins by summarizing previous feminist interventions within the relevant subject-area, before presenting new lines of argument in a rigorous and non-technical manner. The *Companion* can fruitfully be used not only on feminist philosophy courses, but also in courses on mainstream areas of philosophy, to stimulate students to reflect on the broader implications of attitudes and conceptions that predominate in these areas. The clarity of the contributions, and their openness onto mainstream philosophy, mean that the *Companion* is well suited for recommendation to colleagues who need persuading of the virtues of feminist approaches. Of course, it also makes interesting and enjoyable reading for those who already work in feminist philosophy.

Structurally the *Companion* concentrates on what many still regard as the 'core areas' of the philosophy curriculum: philosophy of mind, epistemology, philosophy of language, and metaphysics are all represented. This marks a welcome contrast to the rather frustratingly

predictable focus on moral and political philosophy sometimes found in anthologies on feminist philosophy.

If anything, the *Companion* swings too far away from that familiar focus, with only one article on political philosophy—Diemut Bubeck's 'Feminism in Political Philosophy: Women's Difference'—which actually deals with standpoint theory. Here Bubeck argues that standpoint theory is an inadequate basis for feminist political theory, and social theory generally, because it ties a materialist conception of knowledge to an antagonistic model of relations between knowers. It thereby falsely precludes the possibility of dialogue among feminists and between feminists and the broader socio-political community.

Since Bubeck's paper engages with political theory only indirectly, the *Companion* contains no dedicated treatment of feminist approaches to any of such familiar topics as political obligation, representation, contractarianism, or justice. Nonetheless, political themes are prominent in most of the contributions, which commonly emphasize the character of feminism as a politically motivated force within philosophy, resolutely tracing out the political contexts and implications of philosophical arguments and encouraging philosophers to cultivate sensitivity to their own social locatedness. Another recurrent emphasis is on feminists' attentiveness to lived experience—especially women's everyday experience of oppression and marginalization. Generally the *Companion* aims to show that feminists' appreciation for experiential diversity and political context enables them to further the development of a kind of philosophy much richer in intellectual scope than that which numbers of their non-feminist colleagues practise.

The *Companion* does not treat every sub-field within philosophy, two notable omissions being aesthetics and philosophy of religion. One area that is included, though, is the history of philosophy, represented by Genevieve Lloyd's 'Feminism in the History of Philosophy: Appropriating the Past'. This is especially welcome, because—as Lloyd remarks—the history of philosophy has been one

of the most productive areas of engagement for feminists, although contributions in this field have typically been much less methodologically reflexive than their counterparts in (say) epistemology.

Lloyd identifies several distinguishing features of feminist work on the history of philosophy. Feminists, she argues, engage with past texts to find ways of challenging present, socio-political as well as theoretical, conventions: for them this engagement is 'not so much a matter of taking back to the past the philosophical agenda of the present (as many non-feminist proponents of 'anachronistic reconstruction' maintain) as it is a way of opening up present philosophy to a wider agenda' (249). One common strategy for reading past texts is to 'collaborate' with the author, extending his or her train of thought to generate new arguments. Another, more critical, strategy is to explore the imaginary and affective resonances of texts within their cultures.

Lloyd hopes that the proliferation of feminist strategies for reading past philosophies can contribute to the methodological sophistication of historians of philosophy generally. Here her article joins with another recurring theme of the *Companion*: that feminist work in philosophy should not only provoke further feminist work, but also inform, and be informed by, mainstream work within the corresponding field of study. Hence the title of the collection: 'Feminism in Philosophy'.

In their introduction, Miranda Fricker and Jennifer Hornsby distinguish this conception of feminist philosophy as 'philosophy informed by feminism' from two competitors: the conception of feminist philosophy as radically discontinuous with an ineliminably masculinist tradition (a conception which, as stated, makes feminist philosophy not recognizably philosophical at all), and the conception of feminist philosophy as a philosophical sub-specialism with a distinctive subject matter.

I am unconvinced that this latter conception can be readily bypassed, since a constitutive element of feminist philosophical work

has been the rethinking of central practices and concepts of feminism—e.g. the concept of gender, the idea of a 'women's movement'. Thus, there does seem to be some distinctive subject matter of feminist philosophy. Setting this question aside, though, the editors' opening comments on the identity of feminist philosophy are regrettably brief, and—for students' benefit in particular—this is a theme that could profitably have been foregrounded more heavily throughout the *Companion*.

This brings me to what I found the most questionable, or at least question-provoking, aspect of the book: the editors' deliberate decision to exclude continental philosophy from its remit, partly to redress what they perceive as an imbalance within feminist literature towards the continental tradition. It is not that the editors should have included one or two articles on continental philosophy: in a work oriented as a whole towards analytic philosophy, this would probably just be offensive. But the framework of the *Companion* does tend to occlude the extent to which the philosophical practice of many feminists already blurs the boundary between analytic and continental traditions.

This blurring is evident within some of the articles in the *Companion* itself; for example, Susan James' contribution on 'Feminism in Philosophy of Mind: The Question of Personal Identity'. James criticizes the use of imaginary transplant cases—where one person's character is transplanted into someone else's body—to support arguments for psychological continuity as the criterion of survival. If these imaginary cases are to persuade, James argues, their authors must reduce character to obviously non-bodily traits and selectively interpret memory in non-bodily terms. They must also ignore the development and maintenance of psychological continuity through embodied social interactions. She notes, 'the kind of continuity that can be relied on (in the imaginary examples) is comparatively attenuated ... the attractions of psychological

continuity as a separable component of survival have been considerably reduced' (40).

James suggests that authors cling to this rather unattractive view out of fidelity to the culturally entrenched conviction that the 'symbolically feminine' body carries less value than the 'symbolically masculine' mind. James' article, like Lloyd's, displays patient sensitivity to textual ambiguities and attunement to thinkers' inescapable embeddedness in complicated histories of texts and their interpretations—attitudes that characterize much work within continental philosophy.

In fact, the *Companion* implicitly poses the familiar question of whether feminist sympathies inherently militate in favour of this kind of interpretive approach to philosophical writings, rather than a more orthodoxly analytic style. Several of the authors featured—Bubeck, for instance, and Alison Jaggar—stress the importance of dialogue for feminists, whether as bridging differences among women (Bubeck) or providing the basis of moral justification (Jaggar). The question is, to what extent must a non-interpretive analytic approach curtail such dialogue? Sally Haslanger's article on 'Feminism in Metaphysics: Negotiating the Natural' can serve here as something of a test case.

Haslanger examines Judith Butler's argument in *Bodies That Matter* that reference to a purportedly extra-discursive entity—such as a sexed body—requires 'the prior (intra-discursive) delimitation of the extra-discursive' so that this entity proves, after all, to be 'formed by the very discourse from which it seeks to free itself' (120). Haslanger objects that Butler's argument is fallacious, sliding from the claim that we discursively fix the boundaries of our referents to the claim that we discursively fix the boundaries of the objects referred to. Unlike Butler, Haslanger wants to recognize, and challenge, the political pre-suppositions of acts of reference without denying the existence of structured objects and natural kinds within the world.

The problem is that by rejecting Butler's (admittedly far from transparent) argument as fallacious, Haslanger overlooks the fact that

it embodies a particular understanding and reformulation of one of Hegel's criticisms of Kant, namely that in conceiving of 'things-in-themselves', Kant was already knowing them in the only available sense of knowledge. It seems, then, that without reconstructing Butler's arguments through their complex textual and interpretive background we cannot enter into meaningful dialogue with her. This does not imply that we should reject the analytic quest for clarity and precise distinctions, but may confirm that an analytic approach on its own is often insufficient for feminist purposes.

It is a great merit of this *Companion* that its careful and sober presentation leads the reader easily towards reflections such as these. Partly despite itself, the *Companion* highlights the diversity of traditions on which feminist authors draw, and it makes an unusually strong case for the importance and cogency of feminist contributions across the spectrum of areas of philosophy. I highly recommend the *Companion* as an essential addition for anyone working or teaching in feminist philosophy.

Alison Stone
Cambridge University

Line Drawings: Defining Women through Feminist Practice

Cressida J. Heyes, Cornell University Press, 2000

h/b £25.95 0 8014 3684 2, p/b £11.50 0 8014 8669 6

Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* include many dialogues between two voices, neither of which is a feminist voice. This book is an attempt to make that feminist voice speak. In this respect it is a missed opportunity, since Heyes does not make full use of Wittgenstein's ideas and, instead, covers only well-trodden territory both in feminist theory and in Wittgensteinian scholarship.

Heyes gives a good and clear summary of many of the issues that have generated debates about essentialism within feminism. She shows how many of the participants in those debates were prone to

forget the political issues affecting the lives of real people. However, although Heyes recognizes the tired and tiring nature of that debate, she attempts to provide yet another solution for it, which is bound to encounter some of the same problems faced by past solutions. This leaves the reader with the impression that no real advance out of the stalemate is offered in this book.

Heyes, as mentioned, encourages us to go back to the rough ground of feminist practice, away from the slippery ice of theory. For this purpose, she focuses her discussion on the methodological character of the debate about essentialism in feminism. This debate, she argues, has been mostly conducted on the frictionless plane of theory, away from the roughness of everyday political practice. In this way feminism has painted itself into a political corner. Theory-driven arguments against essentialism have led some feminists to embrace a form of gender scepticism which makes effective feminist politics impossible. Heyes attempts, with the help of some Wittgensteinian notions and methods, to 'negotiate a path between the Scylla of false generalization and the Charybdis of gender skepticism' (99).

In a nutshell, Heyes proposes that, instead of defining in abstract what 'woman' might mean, we should look and see the multiplicity of political uses to which the term 'woman' might be put. When we do so, she continues, we discover that the category 'woman' is to be understood as involving family-resemblances (77ff). There is nothing all women have in common, but this fact does not preclude the application of the concept 'woman', since there is an extensive overlap of similarities among many groups of women. 'Family resemblance' is a well-known Wittgensteinian term which he introduces in *Philosophical Investigations* §67 to explain why it is appropriate to say that chess, tennis, patience, and even bouncing a ball, are all games even though they have nothing in common.

Further, following Wittgenstein's remarks at §§68-9, Heyes suggests that the boundaries of application of our concepts are of our own making. Thus, she claims that 'feminists can aim for semantic

influence over the category "women" and redefine its boundaries with the explicit acknowledgement that this is a political activity (not an unproblematically "objective" scientific or medical one) within which power differentials affect the semantic authority of the participants including different women' (89).

There is much to be admired in this solution, which Heyes employs to argue in favour of the inclusion of male-to-female (MTF) transgendered people within the category 'woman'. Heyes also uses her account to good effect in order to demonstrate the politically stifling nature of the diatribe within feminism between essentialists and anti-essentialists. However, at the end of it, we are left inside the small suffocating circle of this sterile debate. Heyes, in other words, is trying to find an answer to the problem of essentialism. She is not, as one would expect from a Wittgensteinian, trying to dissolve the problem whilst also showing why it has such a grip on us.

The second half of the book is dedicated to a re-evaluation of the work of two feminist theorists who have often been accused of essentialism: Carol Gilligan and Catharine MacKinnon. This re-evaluation is, as I said above, prompted by Heyes' dissatisfaction with theory-driven anti-essentialist arguments. The Wittgensteinian account of the category 'woman' as a family-resemblance notion whose boundaries are drawn in political activity is presented as the framework within which such re-evaluations are conducted.

In fact, though, this framework is not really put to work by Heyes. Instead, she argues that it is never possible to understand properly the relevant similarities and differences between different situations unless one understands the power relations which structure those situations. This claim is quite clearly true, but it does not seem to require Heyes' Wittgensteinian framework in its support.

Heyes' assessments of MacKinnon's and Gilligan's work are quite insightful about the details of their more recent thought. She presents incisive criticisms, for instance, of their heterosexist assumptions. And, although Heyes highlights the presence of essentialism in

both Gilligan's and MacKinnon's theories, she also demonstrates the futility of name-calling as a mode of critique.

Instead, Heyes shows that there is much to be learnt from the work of these two feminists. Their essentialism does not exonerate us from thinking hard about the topics they raise. Further, Heyes' discussion of some of the political choices that she has had to make when working in a sexual assault centre is also used to demonstrate the usefulness of some of MacKinnon's views for practical political decision-making.

In conclusion, however, I found it odd that, despite her interest in Wittgenstein's way of doing philosophy, Heyes does not address many of the topics that the approach she adopts would illuminate. For instance, she never asks questions about the kind of voice adopted by the participants in the feminist debates about essentialism. Often, this was the authoritative voice of the solitary theorist rather than, for instance, the dialogical voices proposed by Maria Lugones and Elizabeth Spelman in 'Have we Got a Theory for You!'

Given the dialogical character of many of the remarks in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, and Heyes' explicit intention to read them in a feminist voice, this is one of the topics that this book could have usefully explored in order to develop feminist debates in new directions.

Alessandra Tanesini
University of Cardiff

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Call for papers: Special Issue on Feminist Epistemology

In the last two decades, the work of feminist epistemologists has been one of the major forces contributing to the development of more "social" epistemologies. What began as criticism of and reaction to more traditional forms of epistemology and their lack of attention to gender has now developed into a rich and vibrant field of positive inquiry. As feminist epistemologists continue to develop new ways of understanding the social in knowing, they also negotiate their way through the normative demands of a critical epistemology, remaining committed to the need to provide critical accounts of our current knowledge practices. For this issue, we invite paper submissions that explore the influences of feminist epistemology on issues of concern for social epistemologists broadly speaking, and/or further the development of feminist epistemology by considering the most pressing challenges it faces.

Submissions are due August 15th, 2001, and should be sent in duplicate to:
Mark Webb, Philosophy Department,
Texas Tech University, Box 43092,
Lubbock, TX 79409-3092.

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**HANNAH ARENDT PREVIEW
AVAILABLE ON AMERICAN
MEMORY WEB SITE**

The Library of Congress' Manuscript Division, in conjunction with the American Memory Historical Collections, presents an online preview of its manuscript collection relating to the life and activities of the author, educator, and political philosopher Hannah Arendt (1906-1975).

The preview includes selections from Arendt's writings, as well as an essay on her intellectual history, a chronology of her life, and an index of all folders in the Arendt Papers.

The entire collection has been digitized and will be available in its entirety to researchers in reading rooms at the Library of Congress, the New School University in New York City, and the Hannah Arendt Center at the University of Oldenburg, Germany, in the summer of 2001. Additional materials from the collection will be made available for public access on the Internet at that time.

Users can access this collection at the following url:
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/arendt.html/arendthome.html>

DAY SEMINAR

**PHILOSOPHY AND POLITICS:
ON AND AROUND HANNAH
ARENDT**

22nd November 2001

Seminar Day organised by the Finnish Institute in London and the LSE Gender Institute, with the support of UK SWIP.

Confirmed Speakers: Margaret Canovan (Keele), Jane Franklin (South Bank), Kimberly Hutchings (Edinburgh), Tuja Pulkkinen (Helsinki)

Venue: Finnish Institute in London, 35-6 Eagle Street, London, WC1R 4AJ

For further details contact:
Panu Minkkinen, at the Finnish Institute Tel. (020) 7404 3309

**SOCIETY FOR EUROPEAN
PHILOSOPHY UK
4TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
AND AGM**

SEPTEMBER 11-13 2001

Key-note Plenary Speakers:

Jean-Luc Nancy and Rudolf Bernet

Venue: Geoffrey Manton Building, Manchester Metropolitan University, Oxford Road, Manchester.

For further information contact:

SEP@mmu.ac.uk

or: Professor Joanna Hodge, Dept. of Politics and Philosophy, MMU, Manton Building, Manchester M15 6LL.

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Current UK membership rates for SWIP are: £20 waged, £10 p/t waged and unwaged. Cheques should be made payable to the 'Society for Women in Philosophy (UK)'. To apply please send details of yourself and any institutional affiliation to:

Meena Dhanda, SWIP Secretary & Treasurer, 18 Cavendish Drive, Old Marston, Oxford, OX3 0SB, UK (MDhanda@wlv.ac.uk)

Overseas applicants for SWIP membership should contact Meena Dhanda for the appropriate rate. Please note only those SWIP members paying UK full rate are entitled to the annual Special Issue free of charge, although we will include it for others as a bonus when funds allow. When this is not possible, part-time and overseas SWIP members will be offered the Special Issue at a discount rate.