

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

Review Essay

ECOFEMINISM IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Erika Cudworth. *Developing Ecofeminist Theory: The Complexity of Difference*. London: Palgrave, 2005. ISBN 1842777777.

Carine Pionetti. *Sowing Autonomy: Gender and Seed Politics in Semi Arid India*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development, 2005. ISBN 1843695626.

Vandana Shiva. *Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability and Peace*. London: Zed Books, 2006. ISBN 1403941157.

These three books are linked by a concern with women and environmental issues but in very different ways. Vandana Shiva and Carine Pionetti share a common concern with the politics of women's relationship to the environment in a very direct way, while Erika Cudworth's book, as its title suggests, incorporates ecofeminist thinking into recent developments in social theory.

Vandana Shiva is well known as a writer who can sweep the reader along with acerbic criticism of her target – corporate capitalism – and optimism and enthusiasm for possible alternatives, in this case *Earth Democracy*. Shiva sees *Earth Democracy* as a new paradigm that governments and corporations can adopt, but particularly as a paradigm for global governance. *Earth Democracy* for Shiva is based on the intrinsic worth of all species, peoples and cultures and the common rights that this entails. All are part of what she calls the 'earth family' or 'earth community'. As in her other writings Shiva sees the natural diversity of both nature and culture as being destroyed by the destructive monocultures of corporate capitalism. *Earth Democracy*, she claims, is already present at the grass roots where:

through everyday actions on everyday issues, we are creating living economies, living democracies, and living cultures. Diversity, alliances, co-operation and persistence are our strengths. Service, support, and solidarity are our means. Justice, human freedom, dignity and ecological survival are our ends.

(p. 145)

Shiva sees the fight for, or defence of, *Earth Democracy* as represented in the campaigns and struggles of local people for their livelihood against enclosure and corporate power, particularly in control of seeds, food and water. A major concern is the World Trade Organization's Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). Shiva and other international campaigners have fought long and hard to defend traditional species and knowledge from commercial patenting.

For Shiva, what she calls biopiracy undermines the ability of farmers to retain and exchange seeds as they have done for centuries. This destroys the autonomy of the small farmer in a corporate process she describes as food fascism. Small farmers and peasants she argues are becoming an endangered species, burdened by debt with high rates of suicide, particularly in India. Global capitalism, driven by the profit motive is plundering and polluting, destroying social and environmental support systems. Public goods and services are being privatized, the poor are being dispossessed. Girls are being denied life through infanticide and women are being trafficked as the patriarchy of traditional cultures links up with the patriarchy of globalism. Dominant economic and cultural forms are inherently gendered and women are faced by two patriarchies, market fundamentalism and religious fundamentalism. Shiva

is particularly concerned about the loss of women's role in primary production, food, water and health and the knowledge this generates. A key analysis of ecofeminism is that women and other subordinate groups are seen as dependent on dominant men and economic groups, but in reality the seemingly independent individuals of modernity are dependent on women, subordinate groups and the planet for their material survival. Women-centred world views are important: 'Because the division of labour has left the sustenance economy primarily in women's hands, women generate, sustain and regenerate life' (p. 133).

For Shiva all beings (human and non-human) have a right to livelihood. Earth Democracy

takes into account whose concerns we must have in mind when shaping our economies and deciding what we do with our food, our water, our biodiversity, our land. The democracy of all life is a living democracy; it recognizes the intrinsic worth of all species and all people . . . all life [has] a natural right to share in nature's wealth, to ensure sustenance-food, water, ecological space, and evolutionary freedom.

(p. 62)

Following Gandhi, she argues that resource sufficiency will be achieved if the necessities of sustenance are in popular control where the 'Commons are the highest expression of economic democracy' (p. 3). Commons are the resources of the natural world before humans artificially carve them up into property regimes. Shiva sees the natural world as a natural Commons, claiming, for example, that nature distributes water equitably. If there is water all species in the region can share it. Similarly she sees humanity as potentially existing in common and speaks of common humanity, one-ness and interconnectedness (p. 110). The basis of this commonality is not similarity, the Earth community's task is to preserve cultural diversity. For Shiva there is care and compassion in cultural diversity and common humanity. It is hard to identify the interaction of diversity and commonality here. For example, I do not know what to make of the statement that 'common humanity makes a peasant the equal of a prince' (p. 160). Presumably if humanity is in common there would be no princes – although Shiva praises the ecological approach of Britain's Prince Charles. Are difference and diversity good in themselves? As Shiva acknowledges traditional societies can be patriarchal. Traditional society is also hierarchical. For example, in Britain there are strong links between the Green movement and the aristocracy. They share a common interest to protect the integrity of the rural environment, but the difference for the aristocracy is that they own it. If they are green and farm organically as does Prince Charles, does this mean that their ownership of the land need not be challenged? Does Earth Democracy mean ecologically sustainable and secure livelihoods or does it mean shared ownership and control on an equal basis? Equally, if traditional farming systems are secured in all their

diversity what about women's share in ownership and control of land? Shiva praises the Brazilian landless movement MST and the settlement of the landless on unused land, but the ownership and control of used land still remains to be tackled.

Shiva's optimism for a future Earth Democracy is based on examples of successful activism. She describes how in India a bottom-up democracy is being created through 'freedom farms, freedom villages and freedom zones' (p. 164). Evidence is presented of activism by women in local communities such as a women-led campaign against CocaCola's use of groundwater in Kerala. Other examples show the importance of leadership and consciousness raising in activism, particularly that of Vandana Shiva herself. She describes her leadership role in the campaign against the patenting of the neem tree following the disaster at Bhopal in 1984. Under the slogan 'no more Bhopals, plant a neem' there was a successful struggle against the patenting of the tree. This was by no means a spontaneous local struggle: 'we combined research with action, and we mobilized and built movements at the local level' (p. 146). Another campaign was organized against water privatization in Delhi. There is no doubt that local communities, and women in particular, have responded to these campaigns but the political philosophy that underpins them is unclear. For example, is Earth Democracy a politics or a state of being? The notion of common humanity seems to imply the latter:

We, especially indigenous peoples, have a deep identity of place. We have bonds of family, community and country. We have an identity as members of the Earth family. We have a common human identity that is universal, even when embedded in a local culture. We are both local and universal beings. Living cultures are vibrant, evolving, self-generative, and peaceful. Living cultures are rooted in life – the life of the earth, the life of the community.

(pp. 114 – 15)

Shiva can be criticized for holding an overly romanticized view of rural communities. It is hard to see what is specifically feminist about a commitment to place, family and community. Indigenous communities may be self-generative and peaceful or they may be patriarchal and violent. Is solidarity and co-operation the product of a natural 'living economy' or something people need to achieve through conscious association? While it is true that solidarity, altruism and co-operation are aspects of human lives, so is greed, power and domination. Politics is about which of these will prevail. It appears that Earth Democracy is more than the sum of the parts of these various local struggles. What Shiva describes as the spontaneous evanescence of local people is created as much by her analysis and perception of it, and even by her active involvement in it. This is not to deny that those struggles exist, but building them into something that can be called Earth Democracy is an active conceptual and political process. Just naming Earth Democracy cannot create a movement if there is no material base, no real people engaging

in real lives and struggles, but bringing those people together in a movement is a conscious political act. The problem is that naming and celebrating a movement is only the start, structures of solidarity need to emerge that can outlast the inspirational leaders. Only time will tell if this is the case. Shiva certainly sees herself in this way. At the start of her concluding chapter she declares:

over the past three decades, in the defence of my extended earth family, I have worked as an earth citizen to shape an Earth Democracy. I have tried to combine knowledge with action; I have strived to connect the local to the global. By transcending divisions, we are collectively creating new possibilities and engendering a post globalization world.

(p. 145)

Shiva can certainly be described as an 'earth citizen'. Rather like Saskia Sassen's notion of some cities being global cities there appear to be some people who are global people with a worldwide reach and recognition. In her speeches and books, Shiva seems to be able to touch people in their innermost concerns and can talk to governments, activists and local communities with equal ease. I was at a conference in 2006 where we held a day-long ecofeminist panel. The morning's session was full, chaired by Shiva, the afternoon session was much more lightly attended, but I am sure some people stayed on to hear more about ecofeminism having originally been attracted by Shiva's presence rather than ecofeminism as a topic. Her speeches and books can arguably bring a wider audience to the concerns about women, the environment and poor communities, than more carefully argued and theorized positions. Shiva's political strength is her ability to link people's concerns, dreams and daily lives with her wider critique of capitalism and aspects of modernity. The other two books reviewed here provide more detailed data and theoretical analysis.

Carine Pionetti covers ground that is very dear to Vandana Shiva's heart, women as subsistence farmers and their role in the conservation of seed. However, her study reveals the political reality of women's lives in rural communities where the women she studied do not own land, or even have usufruct (use by custom) unless it is common land. Women live and work on their husband's farms and have no legal rights to the land or decision-making power over land use changes and there are gender conflicts over crops, for example, the production of cotton versus subsistence crops. This is why Pionetti, like Shiva, stresses the role of common land as important to women and the landless. She argues that women have a vested interest in diversity and subsistence knowledge because they are marginalized and excluded from male dominated circles of knowledge and power (pp. 117–18). She points out that promoting cultural diversity and the preservation of rural ways of life is closely tied with preserving traditional divisions and hierarchies. There is, however, room for autonomy in women's farming: 'even though low caste women face various forms of discrimination, they are involved in

productive activities and they enjoy a much higher degree of mobility than high caste women' (p. 47).

Pionetti's research project, on which the book is based, focuses on women in their multiple roles as farmers, livestock herders, cooks, gardeners, keepers of culinary traditions and healers, but primarily as seed custodians. The research was undertaken in the semi-arid drylands of the Deccan Plateau of South India. The study used a wide range of research techniques based in participatory appraisal including resource mapping, social mapping, matrix ranking and data on field use and seed holding and exchange. The result is detailed farmers' accounts of why seed-saving is central to crop diversity and nutrition. Pionetti's concern, like Shiva's is that industrialization of agriculture is undermining crop diversity as agro-industrial control of the food producing sector concentrates knowledge and productive power. Horizontal integration spreads control of monopolistic industries across the globe dominating each stage of production and sales. Vertical integration takes control from the earliest stages of food production in crop-growing to the final stages of packaging and sale. Farmers lose autonomy, growing to contract often using seed provided by the commissioning company.

For the semi-arid regions irrigation is undermining the special knowledge of those experienced in dryland crop cultivation. Women's knowledge in this area is vital, as 'rural women are experts in biodiversity management' (p. 214). Women are central because they are responsible for ensuring household food security. In areas where many men have migrated to seek work, the ratio of female-headed houses has also risen to around 20–30 per cent. To lose their seed is to lose a precious resource. Pionetti's plea is for an end to 'bottom line' thinking where only the price on the market counts. She makes the case for slow local farming. Over a quarter of the world's population are still reliant on family farming. In economic terms these are not competitive or efficient. Family farms may not be efficient but they bring other benefits that the market system cannot measure. She points out that in the European Union more than 500,000 agricultural jobs are lost every year. This rural exodus is destroying patterns of rural life.

However Pionetti does not set the traditional methods of the drylands with its pattern of lending and saving of seed within an informal non-market network, against the work of agricultural technologists. She instead calls for a partnership as 'it would be illusory to think that the seed industry can be done away with' (p. 215). She sees local farmers as a source of expertise and calls for farmer-led participatory breeding programmes in public research institutes. Women, including landless women, could provide expertise particularly for tree crops and medicinal plants. Sustainability would mean the need to move away from a preoccupation with productivity and pest resistance and look instead at low input, yield stability and fodder quality. Local seed systems could be strengthened by having communal gene banks, which could encourage the circulation of seed and certification of its quality. This would also provide insurance if there is catastrophic crop loss. Pionetti wants to retain

family farming and make the whole agri-food system more democratic and sustainable. For this to happen the price of agricultural produce would need to rise as driving down costs is not sustainable in human or environmental terms. This would mean keeping production and exchange of agricultural goods primarily local, or at most regional, where producers share common conditions. Less favourable growing areas would need to be supported and specialist knowledge such as dry farming retained. Re-localizing could link rural producing communities with local urban areas, revive local exchange networks and promote non-monetary values.

Both Pionetti's and Shiva's books describe the potential energy of the local and want to retain broadly local rural communities as they are. This raises questions for urban based feminist politics. Much feminist politics has been about a move from traditional family structures that rural communities often represent, to the broader opportunities of urban industrial life (although it is not generally expressed in those terms). If it is true that in the interests of the planet rural women remain in their 'place', quite literally, to retain and share their knowledge, this holds great implications for feminism. The centrality of the ecofeminist argument is that people living in the more privileged economies and urban centres depend on the viability of planetary environmental systems and sustainable food resources. What books like Pionetti's show is that maintaining food security through crop diversity and the retention of agriculture in more hostile environments may mean supporting subsistence production and all the cultural forms that entails. It is important that feminist politics embraces the implications of this wider picture, otherwise its analysis and campaigning may be akin to creating equality in access (for some) to the deckchairs on the Titanic.

While Shiva and Pionetti's books are based in empirical research and examples of local activism, Erika Cudworth's book, as its title suggests, is a text in social theory. It is a work of scholarly devotion with a breathtaking breadth and depth of reading. Her overall perspective is critical realism with strong influence from postmodernism and complexity theory. Her aim is to thread together ecologism, feminism and ecofeminism. Cudworth sees the growing interest in complexity theory as important for ecofeminist analysis as it aims to express the intertwined dynamics of multiple power systems while also capturing difference. One of the criticisms of postmodernism is that it mutes the material dynamics of power by emphasizing language and culture, and I was interested to see how Cudworth sought to maintain the groundedness of ecofeminism as expressed in a concept central to the book, embodiment. Cudworth defines ecofeminism as being concerned with the links between the social organization of gender and the ways that human societies are organized with respect to nature. Ecofeminist theory, she argues, can handle multiple forms of social domination. By understanding the way in which dominations intersect and interlock it may be possible to 'unravel the tapestry' of domination. Within the framework of this book this is presented as a theoretical exercise, while the other books presented here provide the complementary analysis of how dominations can be unravelled in practice.

One intersection of dominations that Cudworth identifies is that patriarchy is threaded through with anthroparchy. 'Anthroparchy is a complex system of relationships in which the "environment" is dominated by human beings as a species' (p. 166). Anthroparchy has five basic interacting structures: the use of natural resources in production, domestication and other technological interventions in nature, violence to habitats and to non-human beings, cultural assumptions of the superiority of humanity over non-human nature and the political role of the State. Cudworth also explores how dominations intersect at the different levels of system, structure and discourse. In her review of ecofeminism Cudworth acknowledges Shiva's linking of the dominations of patriarchy, capitalism and scientific knowledge although she argues that they are not sufficiently separated analytically. Cudworth's concern is that different dominations should not be conflated or homogenized, that is all put down to patriarchy or capitalism. Each system has to be explained in its own right and then the intersections of the dominations identified.

On the core concept of embodiment, Cudworth rejects the postmodern conception of the body as symbolic. Instead she sees the body through complexity theory as 'a network of complex interrelated social/bio systems of emergence and becoming, [that] can overcome the culture-nature divide' (p. 130). Overcoming the divide between humans and non-humans is also important as this othering of non-human nature is a mechanism of domination. The relationship between dominations is central to Cudworth's analysis but I was not always sure how she sees the relationship of the different dominations; she sometimes speaks of hierarchies and at other times of nesting. As a book that sets out to embrace complexity, this book is a complex read. It does not pretend to present a politics. The implication is that conceptual analysis of the sort undertaken in this book is a ground-clearing exercise before a politics can be developed. On reflection that should read a ground-covering exercise. This book covers an immense amount of ground and will reward careful reading. It is good to see a theoretical text that takes feminism and ecology seriously. However I did feel that the exercise in theory building somewhat overwhelmed the ecofeminism. Although Cudworth does stress the links between human embodiment and the gendered divisions of labour and the independent agency of non-human nature these are rather lost in the closing theoretical discussion of the matrix of dominations the book elaborates. Oddly while the theorizing is at a highly abstract level what political conclusions there are in the book stress the more local embedded political contexts identified by Pionetti and Shiva:

Those of us who adhere to any kind of radical contestatory politics and oppose the dominations of race, of class, of gender or of nature or other exclusions, exploitations and oppressions, need to look hard for political links, although our own life-worlds and localities will often specify those choices for us. Much as change may be a struggle, it is also so often embedded.

(p. 178)

What insights on politics, then, do these books provide for feminists? Shiva is certain that the main enemies are patriarchy and capitalism, her answer is the preservation and development of local livelihoods and the democratic control of resources. Shiva's book aims to link embedded local struggles for livelihood in communities, particularly by women, with a notion of a common humanity and holistic notions such as the Earth family. At the same time her examples of activism show the importance of consciousness raising and political organizing. Pionetti's carefully assembled evidence is used to make a reasoned appeal to dominant public and private agencies to recognize the beneficial role of women's work and knowledge. She sees the main enemy as top-down commercial and technological developments that are not open to the democratic participation of knowledges from below. Her answer is political inclusion to reform global decision making. Cudworth's adoption of complexity theory makes the direction of political action more opaque. She argues that 'to list the challenges of feminism and ecologism, to indicate the links in political praxis which both have made, with actions which contest gendered, natured, capitalist and postcolonial relations of power would take at least another book' (p. 177). Cudworth's concentration on theory building leaves feminists with the task of interrogating the margins of 'the very detail of the matrix of domination' (p. 178). It is the detail of domination in practice that Shiva and Pionetti's books address.

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Barbara Einhorn. *Citizenship in an Enlarging Europe: From Dream to Awakening*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006. ISBN 1-4039-9840-X.

Jasmina Lukić, Joanna Regulska and Darja Zaviršek (eds). *Women and Citizenship in Central and Eastern Europe*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006. ISBN 0-7546-4662-9.

Over the last twenty years, states in Central and Eastern Europe have been affected by the fall of communism, marketization, democratization, war, nationalism and, recently, the process of European Union (EU) enlargement. Women may have hoped to achieve greater gender equity as a result of these changes, but instead, have faced new challenges. A gendered consideration of citizenship is taken as the central analytical axis in Barbara Einhorn's monograph and the edited collection by Lukić, Regulska and Zaviršek. Both books describe and analyse issues surrounding post-communist transitions and EU enlargement, explored in relation to a wide range of contemporary concerns affecting women in Central and Eastern Europe.

The edited volume, *Women and Citizenship in Central and Eastern Europe*, integrates several themes around citizenship, focusing on female agency in

the post-communist world. Chapters are written by activist and academic contributors from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds. The range of contributions is admirable – the volume includes discussion of the gendered impacts of disability policies in Slovenia, gendered effects of adopting EU policies in Latvia, the experiences of exiled female Croatian novel writers and analysis of the differences between Eastern and Western European feminism. The mix of generalized and localized contributions successfully conveys a diverse geographical area, drawing together generalizations and yet still portraying nuances between countries.

Taken together, these case studies broadly define the relationship between women and citizenship. Daša Duhaček's chapter employs a feminist analysis of Hanna Arendt's work to demonstrate how citizenship is an element of political responsibility. By drawing upon the experiences of activists within *Women in Black*, a feminist peace organization, Duhaček highlights the ways that members crafted their own citizenship through assuming political responsibility by speaking against state actions. This sort of analysis is typical of the innovative theorizing about citizenship seen in this volume.

The editors have arranged the book thematically. Part one mostly addresses mainstream political institutions and the legal status of women's citizenship within the context of inclusion into the EU. The underlying argument suggests that legal changes are not enough and social transformation is required. Contributors to part two examine women as activists, particularly the role of NGOs in mapping out notions of women's citizenship. The final group of articles places female citizenship in Eastern and Central Europe within an international context. These final articles were among the most fascinating in the collection, and so it was a pity that they were somewhat detached from the overall thrust of the rest of the book. Concluding a volume with a range of articles so broadly themed is an unenviable task. The epilogue drawing together the book would have benefited from discussion about the differences between the countries and why they existed, alongside regional similarities. As it is, the epilogue has a sense of incompleteness, reminding the reader of the complexities of transition periods.

Contributors to *Women and Citizenship* successfully analyse the historical context of communism and post-communist transitions in order to highlight the contemporary circumstances of women. Perhaps unwittingly, the concept of post-communist transition is portrayed as a transformation, and something that had already occurred. In contrast, Barbara Einhorn in *Citizenship in an Enlarging Europe* problematizes 'transitions', emphasizing how the concept ought to recognize the fluidity of the journey towards a market economy, where membership of the EU is part of this wider change. The variation in the treatment and discourses about the social and political changes in Central and Eastern Europe over the past twenty years is the most striking difference between these books.

Citizenship in an Enlarging Europe builds on themes explored in Einhorn's 1993 work *Cinderella Goes to Market*. In Einhorn's latest offering, she looks at

how the lives of women have been affected by post-communist transitions and contemporary circumstances, including the intertwined processes of nationalism, marketization and democratization. Beginning from the assumption that state socialism did not provide gender emancipation, Einhorn asks if democracy and market changes have. This question is tackled through a wide range of topics, with chapters focusing on problems for women in terms of institutional representation in mainstream politics, civil society activism, media representations and the labour market.

Einhorn asks us to redefine citizenship – a problematic construct of liberal democracy in many feminist eyes. She effectively demonstrates the possibilities of citizenship as a framework for thinking about and achieving social justice. The importance of institutional citizenship within mainstream politics is emphasized alongside the citizenship agency of women's civil society organizations. Einhorn rightly argues for a holistic approach to citizenship – one that includes both mainstream politics and civil society organizations.

Throughout, Einhorn takes care to define her use of particular concepts, including gender equity, citizenship and transition. Despite this, areas remain where conceptual clarity would be helpful for non-feminists; for example, in her discussion of EU gender mainstreaming policies. Gender mainstreaming is a term that feminists are well acquainted with, but some non-feminists might have found dealing with this concept problematic. The breadth of this book would make it ideal for an introduction to a feminist perspective on citizenship issues in Central and Eastern Europe, so it is a pity that terms not widespread within non-feminist research are not more deeply explored.

Apart from this minor weakness, the book is extremely well written, well informed and cogently argued. Einhorn incisively reviews and analyses an extraordinary range of literature, supporting arguments with a remarkable breadth of empirical and statistical analysis. Her impressive comparative ability ensures that she 'hops' around Central and Eastern Europe without sacrificing important empirical detail.

Both books make a significant contribution to emerging debates about the gendered impact of EU enlargement on women's agency and citizenship. Upon finishing them, a nagging question remained: just what are the consequences of exclusion from the 2004 EU enlargement for women? Throughout both books inclusion/exclusion effects were indicated, but specific analysis of impacts remain inadequate, beyond noting the existence of a hierarchy. In either book, little is mentioned of emerging impacts of the EU for the 2007 entrants of Romania and Bulgaria, candidate countries like Croatia, or currently 'excluded' states like Serbia. Consideration about potential impacts of different relationships to EU membership for women's citizenship would push the books further analytically.

All the writers should be congratulated for making a remarkable attempt to pull together several strands of interdisciplinary research. It is a difficult task to highlight and link together several areas of debate. Both books not only achieve this, but also present the material in an admirably readable fashion.

Consequently, the authors have opened up dialogues at interdisciplinary intersections, creating avenues for future research.

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Einhorn, B. 1993. *Cinderella Goes to Market: Citizenship, Gender and Women's Movements in East Central Europe*. London & New York: Verso.

Daniel R. Pinello. *America's Struggle for Same-Sex Marriage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006. ISBN 0-5216-1303-5.

Compared with other western democratic regimes the USA has indeed struggled to settle the dispute regarding the legal recognition of same-sex couples. Whereas the UK, for example, compromised on the issue by establishing civil partnerships, the USA has a contradictory policy agenda. In Vermont couples can form civil unions, in Massachusetts couples can marry like their heterosexual counterparts, but elsewhere non-recognition policies generally take hold. Yet in the bid not to be 'equal but separate', the American gay and lesbian rights movement demands marriage. For more than a decade opponents and supporters of the right to marry have presented same-sex marriage as a key political and moral concern. This book documents the politics of same-sex marriage in the USA during 2003 and 2004. Pinello's central aim is to explore the role and impact of the actors and institutions involved in this domestic policy furore with a view to address some traditional concerns of political science.

Pinello shows that the same-sex marriage struggle gives us great insight into the American policy process. Three interrelated sites are the subject of analysis: the judiciary and its role in democratic society; interest groups, their strategies and the 'policy warfare' they invoke; and the 'sources of, and responsiveness to, policy initiative in American government' (p. 32). An accessible and refreshing approach is taken to conduct the analysis. The book is dominated by excerpts from interviews with key political and interest group figures as well as gay and lesbian couples from Massachusetts, California, Oregon and New York. The views of some opponents of same-sex marriage and homosexuality are depressingly mythical and prejudiced but in spite of this, most experiences and emotions expressed by those on both sides of the struggle work to humanize the policy-making process. By making people's lives – their loves, hopes and fears – not just relevant but integral to political struggle, Pinello provides an invigorating account of policy making and institutional politics at county and state levels.

The core argument of the book is that the American judiciary plays an invaluable role in ensuring minority groups are given due rights and responsibilities that they would otherwise be denied, and as such, the courts ignite

'enormous social change' (p. 192). The case of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling in favour of same-sex marriage is used to justify this argument. It is argued that the now famous *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* case that subsequently established political progressiveness in the Massachusetts legislature and beyond, spurred on public officials in other states to issue marriage licences without hesitation, bolstered expectations, political awareness and activism within the gay community, and of course ensured marriage rights to around 6,000 couples in Massachusetts.

These changes are important and I do not wish to drain the optimism with which Pinello concludes. However, liberalizing marriage laws to include same-sex couples only goes so far in affecting social change regarding sexuality, and homosexuality in particular. Marriage may erase myths about the inability of gays and lesbians to sustain loving relationships, as Pinello notes, but couples will still be queer when they step out of the local town wedding hall. In this respect, Pinello emphasizes political progression at the expense of social and cultural stalemate in arguing the courts bring about enormous change. Moreover, same-sex marriage is integrationist in nature; it does not challenge the underlying construction of fixed sexual and gender identities, nor does it challenge the heteronormative order.

In the end, neither does Pinello. Throughout the book we are introduced to couples like 'Peg and Spence', 'Gordon and Jeff', and 'Jim and Simon' resulting in a 'normative emphasis on the loving lesbian/gay couple living together in marital-style relationship, rather than the rights of the individual sexual actor [amounting to a] decoupling of homosexuality and sex' (Richardson, 2004: 397). In an attempt to normalize homosexuality, some will view Pinello as unwittingly conforming to some degree of heterosexism which downplays the unaccepted realities of other sexualities.

Mirrored in the book and its main argument is the dilemma inherent in the politics of sexuality. The liberal language and politics adopted by groups to demand invaluable improvements in everyday life for same-sex couples tends not to address the broader turf of sexual politics which deals with attempts to undermine essentialism and sexual hierarchies and to accept diversity in love and sex. Pinello excellently documents the trials and tribulations of integrationist politics regarding same-sex marriage but for more radical advocates of sexual change the book will serve to confirm the argument that to be accepted in politics one has to heterosexualize.

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- Richardson, D. 2004. 'Locating Sexualities: From Here to Normality', *Sexualities* 7 (4): 391–411.

Laura Sjoberg. *Gender, Justice, and the Wars in Iraq: A Feminist Reformulation of Just War Theory*. Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006. ISBN 978-0-7391-1610-4.

Laura Sjoberg's book is a feminist scrutiny and reconstruction of just war theory. The premise is that rather than advocating a politics of pacifism, feminists should engage constructively in just war debates. To this end, Sjoberg outlines a feminist ethics of war, which she argues '*re-presents* just war theory with the aim of changing the injustices of just war politics' (p. 236, emphasis in original). She applies her critique of just war theory and subsequent reformulation of a feminist war ethic to the case of the Iraq Wars, showing how just war discourses surrounding these wars were gendered and how they could have been imagined differently.

The book is divided into four parts. Part one presents an account of the historical emergence and diversity of just war theories and articulates the problematically gendered nature of this tradition. Part two explores what a feminist rewriting of just war theory might look like, specifying feminist ethical foundations based on 'relational autonomy in politics and ... empathetic cooperation as a feminist security ethic' (p. 14). Building on these foundations, Sjoberg suggests alternative conceptions of the standards of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. *Jus ad bellum* is transformed from 'an indeterminate laundry list' to 'a group of dialogical and participatory guidelines that focus on human security and encourage restraint in war-making' (p. 14). The 'immunity principle' in *jus in bello* is said to have harmful (gendered) effects and is jettisoned in favour of a model of 'empathetic war-fighting' (p. 14). Part three relates these issues to an empirical case through a feminist just war theory-inspired reading of the wars in Iraq. The wars are analysed through gendered lenses and it is argued that 'the stories of the Gulf Wars are stories of "just warrior" states protecting "beautiful soul" states through sexualised warfare' (p. 14). Finally, Part four argues for a feminist weak ontology for just war theory. A 'dialogical reformulation' of a policy conversation about the First Gulf War including the voice of feminist just war theory in the discussion is constructed, along with 'a feminist metaphorical reinterpretation of the sanctions regime on Iraq as sexual violence' (p. 15). Sjoberg proposes 'performative non-violence' as a policy alternative to the Second Gulf War and suggestions are made for moving towards a 'positive peace' in Iraq (p. 15). The book concludes with an examination of the potential contributions of feminist just war theory to international policy making.

Sjoberg demonstrates the importance of deconstructing and engaging with just war theory as a result of its 'problematic preeminence' (p. 17) in the academic disciplines of IR and political theory and its frequent deployment by political actors in international politics. She gives an impressively detailed and nuanced analysis of just war theories, avoiding the temptation to oversimplify and caricature the tradition. The depth of this exploration of just war was not always matched with an equally comprehensive discussion of the

reconstructive elements of the project. Perhaps necessarily given the ambitious extent of the ground covered in the book, key concepts such as 'relational autonomy', 'empathetic co-operation' and 'care' are not developed as fully as they might be, given the already extensive feminist literature on such issues. Having said this, Sjöberg acknowledges that 'a comprehensive feminist statement on how to make and fight wars requires further research, further tailoring, and further thought' and presents her work as 'laying the groundwork' for such a feminist statement (p. 236).

A significant strength of the text lies in its method of articulating potential counter-discourses to those actually employed in the case of the Iraq Wars, which draw imaginatively on a feminist war ethic. This technique allows Sjöberg to illustrate some of the implications of her perspective in an effective and creative manner. The contextualizing approach of using the Iraq Wars to explore and illuminate just war theory is a fruitful strategy, moving the debate beyond the sterile abstract engagement with political concepts that often characterizes political theory. Further, the story that is told about constructions of gender in the Iraq Wars is in itself a valuable and insightful empirical contribution.

Gender, Justice, and the Wars in Iraq provides thought-provoking reading for students and academics alike interested in just war theory, feminist ethics and gender in the Iraq Wars.

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Irena Cristalis and Catherine Scott with contributions from Ximena Andrade, Isabel Casimiro, Ruth Jacobson, Caroline Roseveare and Brigitte Sonnois. *Independent Women: The Story of Women's Activism in East Timor*. London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 2005. ISBN 1-85287-317-5.

Timor-Leste, often referred to as East Timor, achieved national independence in 2002 following nearly 500 years of Portuguese colonization and 24 years of Indonesian occupation. Since the independence vote in 1999 the United Nations, international agencies and non-government organizations (NGOs) have established a massive and very influential in-country presence. Over this period, terms such as 'women's empowerment' and 'gender equality' have ascended to prominence in national public discourse. Frequently these two phenomena – a significant international presence and a high-profile discourse on gender – are treated as directly related to one another. Localized attempts at challenging patriarchy are often left largely unrecognized.

In the context of Timor-Leste, *Independent Women* is a monograph of great importance. Irena Cristalis and Catherine Scott explore the plentiful history of East Timorese women mobilizing for change. In their account women's

activism in Timor-Leste has two faces: contribution to the struggle for national independence, and the development of an autonomous social movement concerned with improving women's lives. The authors acknowledge that this activism has been influenced by international and global developments. However they seek to re-position East Timorese women as the central drivers in processes of change to gender relations in Timor-Leste. The reader's attention is consistently drawn to the extraordinary persistence and achievements of female activists in the face of monumental challenges, both extending from oppressive conditions of colonialism and war and arising since independence.

Independent Women consolidates and extends smaller publications such as *Buibere: Voice of East Timorese Women* (Winters 1999) and *Written with Blood* (Fernandes *et al.* 2003) about women's contribution to the independence struggle. With the exception of an initial chapter, *Independent Women* concentrates upon the period from the early 1970s up until the present phase of nation building. Authored by other contributors, three comparative chapters explore the evolution of women's movements from conflict to post-conflict periods in Mozambique, Namibia and Cambodia.

The book reads as an accessible history designed to engage a general readership. While it is disappointing that the book does not have an index, the appendices, including a glossary of conceptual terms, a brief history of the formalization of women's rights internationally, key East Timorese documents and a list of selected women's organizations, are all useful additions. This is particularly so in the context of a society where dissemination of information remains limited. Commendably there are plans to publish the book in Indonesian, allowing distribution within Timor-Leste itself.

In their first aim of paying homage to the East Timorese women's movement, Cristalis and Scott are largely successful. The book gives crucial attention to a subject matter usually overlooked in writings about Timor-Leste, clearly lays out the movement's major developments and effectively draws upon the stories of individual activists. Some small criticisms of the authors' treatment of the women's movement may be noted. At points *Independent Women's* reflection upon pertinent themes and questions feels overly succinct. While the inclusion of case studies from other countries provides interesting comparisons, it would have been valuable to give extended consideration to the book's main subject area. Additionally, the choice of individual stories mostly favours high-profile female leaders typically based in the urban capital, Dili. A balance with stories of rurally based and younger activists may have given a fuller picture of the movement.

The authors' avoidance of any extended conceptual deliberation means that interesting questions about the nature of the women's movement are left unanswered or unconsidered. For example they do not provide sufficient reasons for why feminism is considered a taboo idea by many activists in Timor-Leste. The term 'East Timorese women's movement' should also be open to query. Not only is there considerable involvement of men in gender

matters, there are enormous divisions between female activists and their organizations.

A second major aim of *Independent Women* is to explore if and how, after national independence is secured, women can build upon gains to their social positioning established during conflict. *Independent Women* is situated as an addition to a growing body of literature about women's relationships to nation building and post-conflict processes (p. 2). The innovation of the book's analysis is limited by its tightly restricted theoretical reflection. *Independent Women* does not offer many new ways in understanding the theme of women in post-conflict settings more generally. It largely affirms, albeit in a new national context, what other texts have already argued: that women are not emancipated from patriarchal structures as a result of national independence or the end of conflict. It is able to make some positive suggestions for women's movements but these are fairly straightforward and are limited to ideas such as transparent governance of women's organizations (p. 169). Taking the lead of key thinkers such as McClintock (1995), the authors may have been able to extend the innovation of their analysis by considering, for example, whether in fact women are able actually to pursue an emancipatory politics within the national form.

The value of *Independent Women* lies far more at the level of the empirical, drawing out the achievements and challenges faced by East Timorese female activists as their political community has undergone substantial change. As such it is a welcome and relevant publication, and the authors' careful work provides a strong basis for future research into gender relations in Timor-Leste.

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The complexities associated with transnational ruptures brought about by forced migration and the resulting transnational lives lived by Guatemalans

in Canada and their families left behind in Guatemala are the subject of this study. The book seeks to establish the significance of transnationalism for Guatemalans forced into exile as a result of political violence and the resulting impact on their identity construction and negotiation of their new transnational social space. These processes are summarized as follows: '[t]he spatializing of refugee transnationalism is influenced by the ruptures and sutures of identity, the Guatemalan and Canadian national contexts of displacements and refuge, and the power of internal differentiation among Guatemalans' (p. 148).

This study of transnationalism and forced migration focuses on refugee movement from Guatemala to Canada from the 1970s through to the early years of this century. Nolin has chosen to focus her study on a group of Guatemalan refugees living in the Ontario region. Her research looks not only at these 'refugee (im)migrants' (p. 3) in their new social space in Canada but also at the impact and implications of their forced migration on the families that stayed behind. The refugee (im)migrant voices and their narratives are powerful contributors to a complex story of the struggle for survival. The dimension of gender in refugee research is an area where there is scope for significantly more work. Nolin's contribution to this is through the incorporation of a gender dimension in transnational research based on community study, through the specific lens of feminist geography. Thus she presents an analysis of the different experiences of men and women and how these are reconfigured in a new exile context.

The book is structured into four parts. The first part provides a broad introduction not only to the research but also to the concepts being analysed in the study. The introduction outlines the realities of forced migration from Guatemala to Canada. 'Reconfigured communities, renegotiated places, and newly imagined identities continue to emerge from the political violence in Guatemala and subsequent refugee flight and (im)migration' (p. 30). This section also includes a detailed narrative explaining the research process and Nolin's personal journey as her relationship with her research subjects unfolds and develops. This personal element to the study brings some detailed insights into the lives and psychological perspectives of the Guatemalan refugees. This first part also presents an analysis of the central concepts namely gender and forced migration, community and transnationalism. Nolin continues to develop and intertwine these concepts in her subsequent analysis of the Guatemalan refugee narratives.

Parts two and three of the study incorporate the data from her in-depth interviews with Guatemalan refugees in the Ontario region and their families spread throughout Guatemala. In these sections numerous elements of the transnational experience are examined. It is here that Nolin further develops her argument regarding the 'spatialization' of the refugee movement and highlights complexities involved in understanding the concept of transnationalism from an exile perspective. 'Guatemalan refugees and (im)migrants forge primary social relations within and across multiple scales' (p. 178). Starting

with an historical overview of the forced movement from Guatemala to Canada from the 1970s, this is linked to the notions of political violence, internal conflict and the role of the State in these contexts in Guatemala. This detailed overview is followed by a chapter devoted to Canadian policy on arrival in which the argument is made that these policies are also responsible for transnational ruptures rather than facilitating transnational flow. Part three further develops the experience of Guatemalans living a transnational life in Canada, interspersing the conceptual analysis with the complex stories of departure, arrival and the uncertain in between – all of which make up the challenges of exile. These chapters include the individual perspectives of those interviewed and develop an understanding of how social spaces of belonging are constructed in the Canadian context. This part of the book forms an interesting ethnographical study with the interwoven narratives of those forced into exile providing a unique insight into the challenges of exile.

The concluding part of the book is somewhat short and simply a repetition of the key elements of the study. There could perhaps have been some scope to develop some further thoughts on comparable communities from the region in exile, although this would probably be a separate study in itself. In summary the study argues consistently for the need to examine forced migration through a gender lens, moving beyond the common concerns articulated in the transnational refugee literature. The two way research experience of locations both in exile in Canada and of those left behind in Guatemala presents a unique insight into the transnational challenges of people in exile.

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