Book Reviews

The Revolution Question: Feminisms in El Salvador, Chile, and Cuba. **By Julie D. Shayne. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. 2004. 210 pp. $23.95.**

Feminism and the Legacy of Revolution: Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chiapas. **By Karen Kampwirth. Athens: Ohio University Press. 2004. 279 pp.**

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Julie Shayne's book focuses on the complex relationship between revolution and feminism. It examines women's contributions to revolutions and how revolutions relate to the emergence and consolidation of a feminist agenda. The book constitutes an important contribution to our understanding of the role women play in revolutionary movements and how their experiences subsequently can transform society. Shayne presents an original, incisive analysis of three types of revolutionary experiences that she categorizes as negotiated (El Salvador), partial (Chile), and successful (Cuba).

Shayne divides *The Revolution Question* into six chapters that examine the revolutionary struggles of El Salvador and Cuba, as well as the transformation of Chilean society under Salvador Allende, an elected socialist president. As part of her postrevolutionary analysis, she examines feminism in postwar El Salvador, the role of the women's movement in postinsurrection Cuba, and the challenges Chilean women confronted under the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. She relies on in-depth interviews conducted in the 1990s during several extended field trips to El Salvador and Chile. In the case of Cuba, she faced the same difficulties other researchers have encountered. Because she was denied official support for her research, her time in Cuba was limited to one

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month. Nevertheless, she managed to conduct a series of impressive interviews.

An increasingly important body of thought examines women's participation in revolutionary movements. Shayne makes a significant contribution to this literature by providing evidence of how the emergence of feminism can have its roots in this revolutionary experience. This "revolutionary feminism" in turn seeks to transform the established political and socioeconomic structures that are the basis for injustice and inequality. She views revolutionary feminism as "a grassroots movement that is both pluralist and autonomous in structure" (p. 9).

The author argues convincingly that women can play the role of "gendered revolutionary bridges" (p. 17). For example, in the case of El Salvador, women who were part of the popular movement opposing the authoritarian regime were crucial in mobilizing support for the guerrilla forces and thus represented a bridge "between unincorporated civilians and the armed resistance" (p. 34). Further, the experience of women in these struggles, whether as armed combatants or in logistical support roles, led many women to organize as part of a women's movement in the wake of peace accords or the taking of power.

Shayne maintains that women's contributions tend to be undervalued and easily forgotten. Chile's recent past demonstrates that women can effectively rally behind both revolutionary and counterrevolutionary causes. Further, the policies instituted by revolutionary regimes do not necessarily benefit the emergence of an autonomous women's movement. Ironically, it was under the repressive dictatorship of Pinochet that the feminist movement flourished. On the other hand, Fidel Castro's Cuba provided benefits to women in the social and economic sphere that were unprecedented in Latin America. Simultaneously, however, the emergence of revolutionary feminism was preempted. The Cuban Women's Federation (FMC) enjoys a state-assigned monopoly in mobilizing and representing women. The organization's symbiotic relationship with the Communist Party makes autonomous development impossible and has reduced the FMC to mobilizing women in support of the revolutionary project. The subordination of women's strategic gender interests to the interests of the revolution as defined by a small, mostly male elite is the key factor explaining the absence of "a collective feminist consciousness" in Cuba (p. 156). Based on her research, Shayne reaches the conclusion that to the extent that a feminist consciousness does exist it "is an unconscious one, not sufficient for energizing a revolutionary feminist movement" (p. 156). This raises the provocative ques-

tion of whether Cuba will follow the path of Nicaragua where a hundred flowers of the feminist movement bloomed only after the Sandinista government had lost power.

Karen Kampwirth discusses this Nicaraguan experience in her book, *Feminism and the Legacy of Revolution*. Thus, a central theme in both books addresses the relationship between the women's movement and revolutionary governments. The authors find important parallels between Sandinista Nicaragua and Fidelista Cuba. Kampwirth argues that AMNLAE, the Nicaraguan women's movement, was characterized by the same lack of autonomy under the revolutionary government (1979–90) that Shayne emphasized in the case of Cuba's FMC. In an ominous sign for Cuba, Nicaragua's official women's organization became moribund once its sponsor, the Sandinista government, was defeated. At the same time, however, an autonomous women's movement started to flourish. Further, Kampwirth demonstrates that women's organizing in the postrevolutionary period was characterized by the "beginning of coalition building across partisan and class lines" (p. 66).

Kampwirth addresses some of the same questions raised by Shayne while examining the experience of two additional countries. Having discussed women's contributions to revolutionary movements in an earlier book—a companion volume to the present one—Kampwirth focuses her analysis on the legacy of the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran revolutionary movements. In the case of Chiapas, she describes events following the emergence of the Zapatista movement on the public scene in 1994.

Whereas both authors write about El Salvador, Kampwirth brings Nicaragua and Chiapas into the discussion. Her analysis draws on more than two years of field research and a wealth of personal interviews (more than 200) conducted over the last decade. She explores the central questions of "how and why many of the women that were mobilized within the guerrilla organizations were to break away from those organizations after the wars ended" (p. xii) and subsequently create autonomous feminist movements. The author starts out with an analysis of gender politics in revolutionary Nicaragua and then examines the dialectics of feminist and antifeminist politics in the wake of the 1990 Sandinista electoral defeat. The subsequent two chapters examine the rise of feminist politics following the 1992 Salvadoran peace accords and the relationship between feminist politics and the Zapatista rebellion in Mexico. A concluding chapter analyzes feminism and revolutionary movements from a comparative perspective.

Kampwirth posits that the feminist leaders that emerged in Nicaragua and El Salvador tended to come from the rank and file of the armed movements. In her terms, these "mid-prestige women" (p. 9) were compelled into action by their experience of gender discrimination while serving in the guerrilla armies and by the lack of opportunities encountered after the wars ended.

Kampwirth highlights the extent to which the Nicaraguan feminist movement influenced the development of an autonomous women's movement in El Salvador. In her view, "one can reasonably argue that the autonomous feminist movement would not have emerged when it did (or possibly not at all) if not for the catalytic influence of feminists from Nicaragua and elsewhere" (p. 100). In addition to the Nicaraguan influence, Salvadoran women benefited from a favorable international climate.

The author argues that in "Nicaragua and El Salvador, organized feminism can be seen as an unintended consequence of guerrilla struggle" (p. 7), whereas in the case of Chiapas, "the relationship between women's organizing and guerrilla politics is reciprocal" (p. 9). Women's organizing predated the emergence of the guerrilla movement and helped to shape it. On the other hand, the existence of the Zapatistas influenced women's organizing. From its very beginning, the Zapatista movement incorporated an extensive list of women's demands into its revolutionary program. What distinguishes the Zapatista from other liberation movements was its early insistence on the necessity to address gender relations within the movement itself, as opposed to simply issuing a list of demands directed toward the government. Further, in the Mexican case, Kampwirth highlights the complex interplay between the indigenous and the women's rights agendas.

In her concluding chapter, the author examines the case of the revolutions in Iran and Poland to illustrate her argument that "there is nothing natural or automatic about the relationship between revolution and feminism" (p. 165). In the end, "feminism, like any ideology, only takes root when the local conditions are favorable" (p. 196). She also speculates on the future of feminism in a post-Castro Cuba.

Both authors view feminism as revolutionary at its core, since in Kampwirth's words, "the world it seeks to turn upside down is that most intimate world, the world of daily life and the home" (p. 18). These books are of great interest to scholars and students working on gender politics, women and politics, revolution, regime transitions, social movements, and development theory.

Recognition Struggles and Social Movements: Contested Identities, Agency and Power. **Edited by Barbara Hobson. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. 2004. 352 pp. $75.00 cloth, $27.99 paper.**

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The well-known analytical distinction drawn by Nancy Fraser between social movement struggles for *recognition* and those for *redistribution* is put to the test in this collection of essays drawn from a wide array of historical and case studies. In one sense, these are empirical studies that set out to confirm or to refute the analytical utility of distinguishing between economic and cultural injustice. If that premise alone bound the collection, it would be of limited interest. In another more expansive sense, these essays treat social movements as struggles for power and voice in political contexts, struggles that take shape in an always changing political landscape. Their strategies are determined more within the exigencies of politics than by fixed identities or visions of justice. The essays take a kind of political turn away from analytical and normative concerns that drive a great deal of the literature on social movements. It is perhaps overstating it a bit, but only a bit, to say that these essays disclose the fact that both recognition and redistribution are consequences of successful social movements, rather than their starting points. To be successful, social movements must act like any other collectivity by gaining power before they can secure justice.

Even Fraser concedes that the distinction is purely analytic and does not correspond to different types of social movements or strictly different forms of injustice. *Recognition Struggles and Social Movements* opens with a new essay by Fraser, "Rethinking Recognition: Overcoming Displacement and Reification in Cultural Politics," where she reasserts her more general claim that recognition struggles are displacing struggles for redistribution; that is, cultural politics is displacing class politics. In addition to "the problem of displacement," Fraser is concerned that recognition movements devolve into identity-based movements, becoming separatist and asserting identity rather than struggling against injustice, a condition she calls "the problem of reification." At stake in Fraser's distinction between recognition and redistribution is the credibility of cultural politics and the visibility of economic injustice. Her general claim

does not fare well and her concerns are decisively supplanted in the essays that follow.

Yet it is by grappling with Fraser's analytical framework that these essays make their contribution to an understanding of the obstacles to what Fraser calls "parity of participation" (p. 30) and their possible remedy. It is impossible to improve upon the characterization of the essays given by Anne Phillips in her own review: "This is a profoundly democratic vision, and it is in my view democracy (rather than what Charles Taylor has theorized as the loss of more secure and unquestioned forms of identity) that fuels the struggles for recognition explored in this book. . . . Struggles for recognition are and have been very much struggles for political voice" (p. 265). Hence the landscape of struggle is not so much social as political. One question left unanswered in the volume is why we persist in referring to *social* movements and how they are distinct from political movements. How is social justice distinct from political justice? The priority evinced in these chapters is clearly political justice, or equal participation. These questions become acute after reading essays (Julia Szalai, Fiona Williams, Barbara Hobson) about the trials of multilevel political engagement on the international, national, and local levels made more complicated by the rapid growth of mediating organizations and nongovernment organizations.

The essays follow Fraser beyond identity politics and the incorrigible dichotomy between struggles for "equality versus difference," not by focusing on "women" or the differences between them but by situating social movements in the struggle for power. Recognition without power, in the example of the Roma in Hungary developed by Szalai, is not worth much and can make for even greater injustice. Redistribution, more obviously, will never be won without power, without having one's voice recognized as legitimate, as in the case study of mothers against drugs in Spain by Celia Valiente. The way political life confounds analytical distinctions is clearest in the essays by Marilyn Lake on Australian Aboriginal narratives and Diane Sainsbury on women's suffrage in Oklahoma, where competition and intersection between various groups struggling for recognition and redistribution are decisive factors in their success or failure. In their essay on abortion politics in Germany and the United States, Myra Marx Ferree and William A. Gamson compare different power struggles over abortion and the consequences for women's autonomy.

Fraser's concerns about displacement and reification are most directly challenged first by Sainsbury's demonstration that recognition struggles

are not new phenomena and that recognition is not a clear-cut remedy for the exclusion or misrecognition of groups. She suggests that recognition struggles have a long history, rather than characterize a distinctive feature of social movements in the present. Moreover, she demonstrates the impossibility of analytically accounting for various differences of race, class, and gender in one breath, and at the same time she demonstrates the perils of ignoring how the conflicts engendered by those differences confound or enable struggles for recognition. Don Kulick and Charles H. Klein suggest that for a genuinely transformative democratic politics, misrecognition can be a political tool for destabilizing group differences that do harm. (There are resonances here of Judith Butler's argument in *Excitable Speech* [1997].) In the micropolitics of the *travesti* in Brazil, they find a case for refusing to affirm group differences by demanding proper recognition so as to transform the markers of difference. Whereas Fraser treats misrecognition as social subordination, Kulick and Klein treat it in strictly political terms as an impediment to full citizenship.

Overall, individual essays (though not all) will be of interest to scholars and students of social movement politics. As a whole, the volume will be of interest to those grappling with the analytical conundrums that confound analysis of multicultural and feminist politics.

Governing NOW: Grassroots Activism in the National Organization for Women. By Maryann Barakso. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 2004. 192 pp. $49.95 cloth, $18.95 paper.

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The National Organization for Women (NOW) is in many ways the archetypal social movement organization (SMO), and it is unquestionably the premier SMO of the second wave of the women's movement. The story of NOW's founding has been told and retold many times, in part because it seems to embody many of the factors that scholars tell us are crucial for social movement (and thus, SMO) emergence: political opportunity (among other things, the creation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission), communication networks (such as the U.S. and state-level Commissions on the Status of Women), patrons (e.g.,

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organized labor), resources (via growing numbers of professional and working women), and so on.

But once that story is told, our knowledge and understanding of NOW—the largest feminist organization in the United States, the organizational "face" of feminism for many Americans—declines sharply. Many of us know the story of NOW's (infamous) involvement in Geraldine Ferraro's nomination for vice president in 1984 or recall the controversy over NOW's position on the allegations of sexual harassment against President Clinton in the 1990s. Yet we have lacked a systematic description and analysis of the history and politics of the National Organization for Women. Maryann Barakso's fine study, *Governing NOW*, fills that void, and in doing so, offers an important contribution to our understanding of gender politics in the United States. Equally important, the book represents a valuable case study of SMO and interest group governance that details the ways in which the original goals that motivate an organization's creation and the governance structures established at the onset continue to shape policies and actions for decades after the fact.

Barakso seeks to explain NOW's "strategic history" (its policy goals and political tactics) over the past 35 or so years. Why did NOW support the Equal Rights Amendment when (at least in the short run) that support cost the organization its United Auto Workers–supplied office space? Why was NOW's entrance into electoral politics so internally divisive? Why does NOW continue to employ mass demonstrations and protests as a central strategic tool? Why has NOW not made policies that address work–family balance a legislative priority? Barakso argues that NOW's choices can best be understood as a function of the enduring influence of both the group's founding principles and its formal decision-making processes. NOW's original statement of purpose and other founding documents demonstrate a commitment to acting as a feminist vanguard, to grassroots activism, and to political independence. Those values are reflected in its governance structures, which privilege participation over hierarchy and give substantial power to the membership. Members choose NOW leaders via elections and influence policy and tactics at annual membership conferences. Over time, these principles and structures were reinforced as NOW members pushed for, and won, structural changes that provided an even greater role for the grass roots, as truly contested elections offered members a choice between competing visions for the organization, and as activists used the organization's decentralized structure to demand that NOW maintain a radical and uncompromising vision of feminist equality.

One of the central strengths of this book is its detailed history of the internal and external politics of the National Organization for Women. Barakso examined NOW archives, content-coded various documents and records, interviewed NOW leaders and activists, and was a participant observer at a number of NOW annual membership conferences. The bulk of the book is a thorough and perceptive accounting of the controversies, issues, personalities, and finally choices and outcomes that characterized NOW from its founding in 1966 through to the present. This history, which has not, to my knowledge, been recounted elsewhere with such depth and detail, is a valuable addition to our understanding of these times and politics, and it offers rare insight into the internal workings of a large and influential interest organization. Barakso's rich study will be of great use not only to students of women and politics but also to scholars of interest groups and SMOs as well.

As is often the case, the strengths of the work (careful case study of one organization) also comprise some of its weaknesses. The analytic focus is sometimes lost among the many events and controversies that are recounted. Without comparative data, it is difficult to be fully confident that NOW's strategic choices are a function of its founding principles and governance structures or of some other factors. One wonders whether there are other similarly structured groups that are more or less radical, or differently structured organizations that come to similar decisions in terms of goals and tactics. Many organizations with similarly radical visions at their founding moderate their politics over time, and some organizations take radical stances precisely because members lack, rather than possess, the interest or opportunity to shape the group's direction. Barakso puts great emphasis on member participation in governance as an explanation for NOW's radical stances and grassroots tactics, but different activist members might have demanded different sorts of outcomes; it is not member participation per se but the kinds of members who choose to be active in NOW that influence its direction. There is likely a feedback loop of some sort at work here—NOW's reputation as a vanguard organization that does not compromise on women's rights likely attracts a certain sort of member and activist who then advocates for a continuation of the same. Future research that surveyed or interviewed NOW members as to their reasons for membership and activism would be a fascinating complement to Barakso's work.

Despite these quibbles, *Governing Now* is an important contribution to the literature on women and politics and on interest groups and SMOs. Barakso's analysis helps us to understand how and why, after all these

years, the National Organization for Women continues to serve as an unyielding advocate for women's rights from both inside and outside of the so-called political mainstream.

Gender and the Civil Rights Movement. Edited by Peter J. Ling and Sharon Montieth. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. 2004. 288 pp. $21.95.

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Much of the scholarship on the modern Civil Rights Movement has recaptured dramatic and poignant events through eyewitness accounts and oral narratives—from letters, speeches, newspaper editorials, press releases, and photographs that summon vivid images of fire hoses and police dogs, peaceful protestors and violent rioters. The conventional approach (or master narrative) of civil rights history has focused almost exclusively upon the individual personalities and grassroots organizations that led the fight for equal protection under the law, desegregated lunch counters, and the right to vote in local and national elections. Rather than broaden and deepen our understanding of individual and collective forms of resistance, however, such an approach often simplifies and distorts a much more complex history of black militancy and activism in the United States. Most people come to associate the modern Civil Rights Movement with the famous names, places, and events that made headlines during the turbulent 1950s and 1960s—the murder of Emmett Till in Money, Mississippi; Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott; Daisy Bates and the Little Rock Nine; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the March on Washington; Bob Moses and Freedom Summer; Gloria Richardson and the Cambridge Movement; and Fannie Lou Hamer at the 1964 National Democratic Convention—and *not* the ordinary men and women who risked their lives in the face of mob violence.

Only within the last decade have academics, particularly historians and sociologists, begun to examine different movement experiences determined by race, class, sexuality, and gender dynamics. Coeditors Peter J. Ling and Sharon Montieth have brought together a collection of scholarly essays that is radically different from most edited volumes on the modern Civil Rights Movement. Rather than sidestep or avoid some of

the most vexing and controversial issues inherent to the movement, this book takes an in-depth look at gender relations. Here, gender is defined in terms of how men and women ought to behave politically, with careful attention paid to cultural and societal expectations, widespread notions of masculinity and femininity, and the types of activities deemed most appropriate for black men and women as they engage in nonviolent, direct action during the 1950s and 1960s. In this sense, gender is a social construct that typically shapes the nature and longevity of interpersonal relationships between and among individual activists who are committed to social justice. Gender as defined here has the potential to influence hierarchical arrangements, crucial mobilization strategies, activist participation, and styles of decision making. It is in this regard that the male chauvinism exhibited by black male clergy toward Miss Ella Baker, which accounted for her departure from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and subsequent involvement with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), becomes illustrative.

Drawing upon new and recent scholarship, *Gender and the Civil Rights Movement* adds both breadth and depth to the conventional (or master) narrative of civil rights history. Contributors to this volume recognize that the written history of the movement remains incomplete so long as the masses of demonstrators remain undifferentiated and scholars continue to minimize the role and importance of bridge leadership on the local level. Each scholarly essay therefore speaks to the gender bias of civil rights history. With multifaceted and varied approaches that cross disciplines, the book includes an introduction followed by nine chapters (or independent essays) that cross-reference one another and improve the overall readability of related chapters—several of which are absolute page-turners, making them easily accessible to undergraduate and graduate students alike.

Two particularly sophisticated and well-reasoned essays compare the public personas of Daisy Bates and Gloria Richardson with their private lives as they contrast with journalistic accounts. Both women are unsung heroines who neither fit traditionally defined "feminine" roles nor lend themselves to conventional frameworks that seek to restore women activists to the historical record because they performed traditionally prescribed "masculine" roles that ensured their rightful place in civil rights history. In "Daisy Bates, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the 1957 Little Rock School Crisis: A Gendered Perspective," John A. Kirk asserts that Bates should not go down in his-

tory as an "honorary man" simply because she held a titled position with the NAACP, wielded power over its members, made decisions on behalf of the organization, and was perceived by the public as a legitimate leader with formal authority. Instead, Kirk suggests that scholars begin to determine how and why some women, like Bates, were the exception and not the rule during an era when gendered interactions created a particular context in which women participated—typically, behind the scenes. Moreover, he insists that scholars probe more deeply and look beyond spectacular events so as to uncover and explore unique aspects of individual personalities by carefully examining such primary resources as diaries, memoirs, letters, autobiographies, essays, interviews, and speeches.

Similarly, Jenny Walker emphasizes the primacy of rigorous analysis and intellectual inquiry so as not to misrepresent the lives and leadership capabilities of women activists and, at the same time, to avoid the pitfalls that come with designating one a "feminist icon" when issues of gender equity were rarely topics of discussion during the 1950s and 1960s. In "The 'Gun-Toting' Gloria Richardson: Black Violence in Cambridge, Maryland," Walker contends that Richardson should not go down in history as a "feminist icon" when her legacy of civil rights activism has been purposely distorted by some and altogether fabricated by others, as she is often perceived as a woman adverse to nonviolence and passive resistance. Walker pulls no punches in presenting her straightforward critique of Paula Giddings's (1985) work, *When and Where I Enter*, which wrongly suggests that Richardson came of age in the 1960s and took on the public persona of a "gun-toting" militant. In the end, Walker insists that scholars have relied far too heavily on the print media—both black and white—for civil rights history and readily accepted past historians' false characterizations without the corroboration of primary sources.

Yet another particularly insightful essay suggests that one of the most effective ways to impress upon both undergraduate and graduate students the significance of the modern Civil Rights Movement is to have them read such contemporary fiction novels as *And All Our Wounds Forgiven* (1994) and *Dreamer* (1998). In "Revisiting the 1960s in Contemporary Fiction: Where Do We Go From Here?" Montieth critically evaluates the network of images that created romantic heroes out of slain civil rights leaders in these novels. Her detailed and thorough analysis acquaints the reader with the kinds of observations one makes when assessing fictional work that highlights the tensions between different styles of male leadership and the exhibitionism of black masculinity today. In this instance, the fictional representation of such famous Civil Rights

leaders as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X provides a means of imagining certain events, interactions, and conflicts that one can use for the basis of class discussion and contextualizing known facts. Whether one is teaching a literature class and trying to incorporate history or teaching a history class using fiction, such an interdisciplinary approach has the potential to enhance the learning process enormously. Students might begin to question why, for example, contemporary novelists continue to codify black leadership as male and masculine—as either a nonviolent, charismatic minister or a black power revolutionary.

Contributors Marissa Chappell, Jenny Hutchinson, and Brian Ward work collaboratively to critically evaluate the network of images that represented middle-class respectability as both a tool of protest and an index of black progress in popular newsmagazines, citing the coverage of Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Montgomery Bus Boycott as a case in point. In respective essays, Ling and Belinda Robnett offer balanced assessments of different leadership styles and hierarchal arrangements that either aided and abetted or limited and prevented women from exerting more power and influence within two distinct Civil Rights organizations—most notably SNCC and SCLC. Ward and Eithne Quinn offer separate analyses of black popular music, from rhythm and blues to hip-hop and gangsta rap, which suggest that debilitating patterns of misogyny and machismo in black popular culture can be tied to the goals and objectives of the modern Civil Rights Movement. Both scholars concede that music was such an integral part of the movement that it can be merged with Civil Rights history to provide students with a broader understanding of the period and possibly show how black popular culture today can similarly be interpreted within the larger context of civil rights struggle. Such thoughtful and creative essays invite new and innovative approaches toward the teaching and study of this groundbreaking movement, particularly those that strike the balance between listening to music and discussing lyrics, reminding us that the quest for equality and justice persists today.

While there may be a growing body of literature on and about various facets of the modern Civil Rights Movement, I am not aware of any single book that offers such a variety of scholarly essays that all share something in common—the focus on gender and the movement—yet are able to stand on their own. This is indeed an important book for those instructors and curriculum specialists who wish to move away from conventional approaches (or master narratives) and adopt a kind of pedagogy that liberates students from a narrow, sanitized version of Civil Rights

history. A unique and contrasting feature of this collection of scholarly essays, as compared to other edited volumes on the modern Civil Rights Movement, is that it compels scholars who willfully ignore or deliberately obscure painful and embarrassing aspects of civil rights history to reconsider this fundamentally flawed approach. In view of this, I expect *Gender and the Civil Rights Movement* to stimulate additional research on the black freedom struggle. I therefore conclude that any scholar or student interested in the movement ought to read this book.

Women and Development in Africa: How Gender Works. By Michael Kevane. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. 2004. 244 pp. $55.00 cloth, $19.95 paper.

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This is perhaps the first comprehensive book on the subject of gender in Africa from a microeconomic perspective. Targeted toward upper-level undergraduates and graduate students, it provides an overview of many of the key debates among economists regarding gender and development. Although the book covers Africa as a whole, it also draws on insights based on extensive fieldwork Michael Kevane conducted in Burkina Faso and Sudan.

Kevane explores gender issues by using the economic method based on model building and verification. His approach, like that of most economists, is based on assumptions of methodological individualism, inference, and syllogistic reasoning that examines causes and effects. In short, he is interested in predicting and explaining the essence of behavior, of how and why people make choices. For scholars like Kehane who are trained in neoclassical microeconomic theory, people make choices to maximize their utility, that is, their satisfaction or happiness. He argues that they make these choices within structural constraints that place parameters on their budget, labor, time, and other such factors. Statistical applications of the data are employed to test the models.

The book draws on a mix of neoclassical and feminist economics as well as economic anthropology and cultural approaches to explain the gendered dimensions of land use, control of labor, marriage markets, household bargaining, treatment of boys and girls, investments in educa-

tion, and other such issues. The author addresses key debates regarding these topics in a readable and lively way, mixing descriptions of models with empirical evidence. For Kevane, most theories of female subordination do not stand up to the test of internal consistency, nor are they verifiable (p. 34). They are not based on specific assumptions, nor do they draw logical inferences. Discrimination is rejected as an explanation in favor of explanations that focus on the importance of gender at an individual level.

In one of the strongest chapters on bargaining within the household, Kevane embraces the feminist economics critique of Gary Becker's unitary household model (that assumes that household members act in concert out of love and altruism). He adopts a bargaining model in which women's bargaining power matters and in which their control of income, land, and other assets makes a difference. Thus, studies have shown that the more bargaining power women have within the household over land, labor, and income, the more their preferences will differ from those of men and the more divergent their responses to price incentives and policy interventions. When women earn higher incomes, the result is a large and significant reduction of child malnutrition.

While Kevane's microeconomic focus on individual choice provides many useful insights, it also leaves many important issues and angles untouched regarding women and development. The focus on parents' investments in the education of their children does not take into consideration the important role of Universal Primary Education in encouraging female enrollment in Africa. The discussion of causes of underdevelopment in Africa does not consider external factors that are commonly thought to have contributed to Africa's woes, including the role of debt servicing, trade barriers, and foreign donors, not to mention World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies, for example, structural adjustment programs. The discussion of microcredit lending to women leaves out questions of female agency and collective strategies of women themselves for improving their circumstances. Similarly, an historical perspective on the evolution of marriage, labor, and land markets is largely absent, which means that various beliefs and practices that have evolved over time remain depicted as frozen in time.

Although many key debates are effectively engaged, a surprising number of relevant topics are sidestepped. Although it is impossible to cover every topic and theory of development in such a book, one would have expected more discussion of the seminal work of economist Amartya Sen and philosopher Martha Nussbaum, who adopt a capabilities approach

that takes as its starting point not just questions of utility maximization but what physical and mental capabilities and social opportunities and influences people have available to them and how these rest on the efficiency and equity of social policies. Both Sen and Nussbaum have applied gender analysis to their capabilities approach.

While mention is made of women's care work in the home in the context of a discussion of the control of labor, this work tends to be underplayed in the book, especially when one considers how important it is to the daily lives of women and to the welfare of the household. Women care for the children, the sick, and the elderly; they cook, clean, and carry out voluntary community labor. Women engage in a wide variety of unpaid and unrecognized but crucial labor that occupies a large amount of their time and energy. Most studies of time allocation have shown that women work considerably more hours than men, a finding which Kevane dismisses. Studies in Kenya, for example, have shown that women work 56 hours a week compared with 42 hours for men, and they spend 10 times more hours than men in wood and water collection. Thus, the book discusses only GDP measures of national income, with no mention of the other ways in which women's work and welfare could be accounted for. These concerns have generated enormous debate in the field of gender and development, yet they are not addressed here.

In spite of these omissions, *Women and Development in Africa* is a unique and rare book. It is a welcome addition to the literature on women and development. The literature in this area abounds with popular but nevertheless untested assumptions about women in Africa. Kevane challenges economists and scholars of development to ask better questions, develop well-informed hypotheses, adopt more rigorous methods, and test their assumptions through solid empirical research.

Recovering Subversion: Feminist Politics Beyond the Law.

By Nivedita Menon. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press. 2004. 288 pp. $60.00 cloth, $25.00 paper.

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In this intriguing, multilayered, and eloquent work situated in the Indian landscape, Nivedita Menon argues that "rights," when bound up

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with law, are not in the service of emancipatory politics but rather of hegemonic projects, such as patriarchy and capitalist modernity, that legitimize only particular ways of being and doing. Rights are socially constructed and contextualized within particular moral universes, yet they lose their transformative potential when encapsulated in and institutionalized by the law, which is an exacting, universalizing discourse that fixes meanings and identities. Although feminists are increasingly invested in legal redress, any appeals to democracy, equality, and justice *through* the law, may have reached their discursive limits, requiring a renewed feminist emphasis on *political* struggle.

Menon's core argument is that feminism has not effectively confronted the politically dangerous dilemmas of using rights discourse and the law as tools of transformation, because feminism has not resolved its internal dilemma regarding the constitution of "Woman" as its subject. Menon accordingly interrogates women's identities, bodies, and experiences as context-specific representations and constructions, rather than prepolitical, static, already given starting points for feminist activism. She notes that the law stops the ambiguous "play of meanings" about gender, sexuality, and power, incapable of understanding the complexity of feminist issues, gender as performative, or the body's boundaries as fluid and irreducibly undecided. Yet, she asserts brilliantly: "Is it precisely the intractability of the oppression at the level of 'the body' which leads feminist practice to attempt to comprehend and contain it in the discourse of coherence and uniformity offered by the law?" (p. 13). In effect, the body is not ontologically prior to the law, but feminists have allowed law the power to collude with various discourses, such as technology, capitalism, and family, to decide what a body can/should be and do. Menon, then, forces scholars of gender and politics to ask: What are the unintended, contradictory consequences of feminist strategies? What if the way we approach gender and politics undermines our very focus on emancipation and transformation?

The author's struggle with these questions engages a wide variety of feminist theoretical viewpoints, imploring scholars and activists to remove concerns about violence, misogyny, and autonomy from the grasp of the law, as it contradicts feminist ethics. Yet she also acknowledges that "[t]he option of abdicating the law is not a viable one, for the law will not abdicate us—the only permissible identities in modern democracies are those put in place by the law" (p. 236). She proposes that the litigation strategies, rather than law reform strategies that simply reinscribe law's centrality, can be useful for temporarily protecting impor-

tant claims by the oppressed. She also uses the law as a lens for understanding postcolonial India's struggle with modernity, identity, governance, norms, and religion, particularly right-wing Hindu nationalism. Menon, then, galvanizes feminists to productively politicize and work through the paradoxes of the law, rather than abandon the law or harbor illusions about the law's potential.

Menon's empirical case studies astutely showcase the structure-agency dialectic at work in these paradoxes. She specifically looks at the structural oppression, violence, and injustice that make necessary "rights talk" and a focus on agency but also invoke a legal discourse that systematically dilutes and distorts feminist attempts to confront oppression or assert autonomy. For example, in Chapter 3, "Abortion: When Pro-Choice is Anti-Women," she explores how feminists are trying to promote choice yet must prevent selective abortions of female fetuses, with each attempt at agency cementing the systematic gendered repression. Specifically, the Indian state, communities, and families use the abortion right as a tool of population control and deflection of the issue of poverty, and to discipline women's sexuality and autonomy, thus eclipsing the liberal feminist focus on reproductive choice and access to safe and legal procedures.

Chapter 4, "Sexual Violence: Escaping the Body," interrogates the presumption that rape and sexual harassment laws can make experiences of sexual violence "matter" socially and politically. This chapter effectively shows that the law, courts, and legislation do not question the centrality of bodily violence to hierarchy and domination, cannot access the meanings of violence, and, in fact, reinscribe prevailing norms about gender, sexuality, consent, and women as always already rapable. This crucial chapter should be brought into conversation with scholars such as Veena Das, Elaine Scarry, and Renee Heberle, all of whom also challenge feminism to radically rethink how antiviolence responses often attach women's experiences and struggles with autonomous selfhood to systematically fixed and limited notions about the body.

Finally, Chapter 5, "Reservations for Women: 'Am I That Name'," explores how women and marginalized communities compete for political recognition and participation in political and legislative institutions yet question the implications of quotas on their visibility and voices. Unlike France's commitment to engender "real" universalism through quotas, in India the debates over quotas pivot on a postcolonial critique of abstract individualistic universalism. At the same time, legal and state efforts to "mainstream" gender and women's political participation actu-

ally deflect mass politics and the intersection of gender, religion, and caste in India. All three empirical chapters illustrate for gender and politics scholars the limited ability of law and legal actors to handle competing social values, particularly regarding the public, the private, sameness, and difference. Further, they show how the law highlights feminism's difficulty with Woman: How can feminists make legal claims when the bodies, identities, and experiences at stake are fragmented, complex, and constantly redefined?

In the concluding chapter, Menon argues that feminists must "recover subversion" since the law, by its very nature, subverts feminist ethics. The law may rectify how power restricts free will, but it also allows power to *produce* free will, a supposed autonomy and choice, that is actually anchored to patriarchal oppression. Thus, feminists, in their political challenge to destabilize power relationships, to assert counter-hegemonic values, and to imagine nonuniversalist, inclusive, radical democracy, must recognize that law makes possible hegemony.

Given these insights, it is striking that Menon misses the opportunity to theorize the state historically and politically. She explores the emergence of the law and the concept of rights as challenges to the absolutist state, but she refers vaguely to the modern state as an authoritative entity that legitimizes, endorses, and carries out the law. She would do well to incorporate the insights of critical and feminist international relations scholars on the production of state identity and the relationship between the state, nationalism, and gender. Overall, however, Menon successfully conveys the urgency with which feminists must actively question the law as feminist terrain if they are to participate in the "double, and *separate*, moves of invoking and deconstructing" Woman as its subject (p. 235, emphasis original).