

The last two chapters deal with special groups: Liat Kulik examines strategies for dealing with the conflict between home and work from a multi-cultural perspective and compares the situation of Jewish and Moslem Arab women. Ayala Malach-Pines, Yafit Hasan, Lesley Hammer and Margaret Neal deal with the group of workers in the hi-tech industry from the “sandwich generation,” whose work – home conflict combine the issues of caring both for children and for ageing parents.

The book is interesting, compelling and relevant for wide areas of interest. It offers a complex, thought provoking view on a subject central to our lives, whose complex aspects are hidden from view and not part of the public discourse. It is impossible to ignore the gloomy message openly apparent in some of the articles and subtly camouflaged in others. The reality is complicated, the forces preserving traditional attitudes are dominant and the road to real change in family life in general and in women’s lives in particular is still very long.

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Sylvie Fogiel-Bijaoui, *Democracy and Feminism: Gender, Citizenship and Human Rights*. (The Open University in Israel, Ra’anana, 2011) ,267 pp.(Hebrew)

An excellent tool for teaching feminism and gender within the framework of citizenship and human rights, this book is a timely contribution to the scholarship and publications accompanying the growing interest in gender studies. The Open University is well known for publications enabling students to obtain general knowledge on subjects not necessarily taught in high school or even BA degree courses. The connection between feminism, citizenship and human rights within western democracy seems to be obvious. Could feminism ever flourish, or even survive without a democratic framework? The answer is complex and not at all obvious. Thus, a book that connects feminism and democracy has the potential to be an eye opener for anyone not yet initiated into gender and feminist studies. Indeed, the book *Democracy and Feminism: Gender, Citizenship and Human Rights*, outlines the basic ideas of feminism within the framework of democratic thinking. Therefore, the discourse remains strictly within the parameters of western democratic thinking. As such, it is a successful attempt to summarise more than 200 years of struggles for women’s equality and freedom. The struggle of women and women’s movements to gain equality and freedom in western

democracies has been a long and tumultuous one. The hopes for equality, even today, are not yet fully realised. Women everywhere are far from being able to participate in society as equals on every level, and violence against women is still prevalent in every democracy.

This book makes a significant contribution to the cause of introducing feminist history and theory to the average student and to the wider public. It is written in informative language, and easy to understand and follow. Women's rights and the struggle for women's rights are not always synonymous with feminist ideals and struggles within Western culture. But as most women's lives everywhere are multifaceted, it is impossible that one book can do justice to feminism as an ideology and as a movement. The book provides some background to this complexity, but mostly side-steps it in order to establish the connections between women's struggles citizenship and human rights.

Women and men have been at the forefront of the long road to gain freedom and equality everywhere, inside and outside the democratic framework. The right to vote symbolised the great feminist struggles of the "first wave" i.e. at the end of the 19th century and up until the First World War. Obtaining the vote proved to be only a basic necessary step in the continuous struggle for equality. Women had a long way to go beyond their political participation and had to continue to struggle for every step of the journey toward equality. These struggles are narrated in the book in an organised manner, and allow the reader to consider liberal feminism as the major and perhaps only possibility for achieving women's rights. The historical narrative of women's achievements since the French revolution is told in a clear and explanatory manner. The sequence of events follows each other and allow a panoramic view of the last two centuries of struggles to unfold. The book offers a narrative as much as an explanation of the complexity of feminist struggles within the concepts of human rights and citizenship. It describes the slow but steady success of women, as they enter parliaments and become a part of the ruling elite. It follows the ideals of equality as liberal ideals have lined them up. It is a history of the success of liberal feminism, and it includes references to women's achievements globally, and to major changes that made gender mainstreaming a common phenomenon.

A full chapter of the book is dedicated to the history of women in Israel and their struggle for equality. The history of Jewish women is narrated together with the struggle for women's right to vote and the participation of Jewish women in the national-Zionist endeavour. However, the problem of telling a history of Jewish women only is a worthwhile theme for consideration with regards to the challenge of writing the history of women in Israel. The attempt to shift our perspectives eastwards and tell an inclusive history of women's struggle has already begun. The attempt of feminist activists in Israel to create a platform for partnership within our

multiple identities could transform Israeli society. But these struggles are often less documented and less integrated into books such as this, whose principal aim is to provide a general survey of history. With major changes taking place globally, women are taking active part in social revolutions and in cultural changes. Women had always taken part in struggles for national and human rights, but their (our) history was not always told. It is not merely the numbers of Prime Ministers or members of Parliaments that this book documents so well that really counts. It is often the bloggers and protesters in the streets, the organisers, the shapers of the ordinary lives that are making changes, and their history has to be told too. After 20 years of publishing feminist and gender history and theory in Hebrew mainly based on American and western influences and translations, the time has come to look for different sources and learn about Palestinian women, about women in India, Iran and other cultures that might help us construct a different path to feminist struggles. When will the history of feminism be told from a non-western point of view? Can such a history be written at all? During the first half of the 20th century the majority of women in Palestine/Israel were Arab women. Their history had received much attention and research particularly in the last decade through the research work of Manar Hasan, Sarab Abu-Rabia-Queder, Fatemh Kasem and others. This research has the potential of creating a joint narrative, one that will include both Jewish and Palestinian women's history. One hopes that this new book by the Open University on Feminism and Democracy might announce the beginning of a "new history" in women's studies.

Two final compliments for this publication are the wealth of photographs included in the book and its clear language. The book is written in a language that is accessible to everyone, and whilst intended for Master's degree students can be easily read and understood by high school students too. The time has perhaps come to make such book available and directed to first degree student, thus enabling Master's student to delve into much more complicated texts in feminist theory. The choice of having photographs in a teaching book is interesting and informative. However, I wish other photographs might have been chosen, rather than those of the five Israeli governments with their scanty female representation. All in all, we should all be grateful for the publication of this book, and hope for more and varied publications about gender and feminist studies.

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