

So what makes this volume innovative in comparison to other studies on the Ethiopian Jews? The short answer is that it informs us more about the host society and the Israeli officials in charge of the Ethiopians than on the practices or culture of the newcomers. Other studies of the Ethiopian Jews in Israel have focused on the difficulties in their absorption but have rarely touched upon absorption policies and the attitudes of the bureaucrats. Thus, this book is a timely and significant contribution to migration studies in Israel from the perspective of “the absorbers”. If Hertzog’s study does not exploit enough from a theoretical stance the rich material she collected, the book does open new venues for further research in the field of bureaucracy and absorbing agencies. Furthermore, this study challenges some of the accepted policies on immigration and absorption and questions the very integration process of Ethiopian immigrants in Israel. Immigrants and Bureaucrats show accurately how de-socialization is still practiced and how Israeli-based religious and social models are being imposed on the newcomers, resulting in their vulnerability and helplessness as well as deep misunderstandings with the officials. This study is of great value in understanding some of the “mistakes” of the 80s and 90’s and the prejudices and stereotypes still prevalent among Israelis. Let us hope that such an analysis can be of help to the ongoing immigration and integration process of Ethiopian immigrants to Israel, and that today’s officials will benefit from her research.

Revisioning Gender

Edited by: Myra Marx Ferree, Judith Lorber and Beth B. Hess, Sage, 1999, pp. 471.

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In 1987, Beth Hess and Myra Marx Ferree published their comprehensive edited volume *Analyzing Gender*, with the aim of examining the state of the art of feminist research. Twelve years later, 1999, the same authors, now accompanied by Judith Lorber, again took upon themselves this challenging task and produced *Revisioning Gender*. In the introduction to both books, the authors singled out *Another Voice* by Marcia Millman and Rosabeth Kanter (1975) as the starting point of the feminist revolution in the social sciences. Taken together, these three books demonstrate the ways in which the field has evolved, and the

shape and form it has taken over the last three decades. But these kinds of books, by their nature, are not involved only in the naive task of taking stock of existing knowledge. They participate actively in shaping the field by drawing its boundaries -- selecting the topics to be included and the writers to be cited -- and by organizing it internally -- by creating chapters and classifying them into sections. Thus, more interesting than the task of reviewing just the latest volume, would be an examination of the image of feminist social scientific research that has been *produced* over time by the three books. Tempting as this may be, I will focus solely on *Revisioning Gender*, but the larger project remains to be done.

Five sections organize the sixteen chapters of the book. The first section *Reconceptualizing Gender* includes three chapters by Evelyn Nakano Glenn, Joan Acker and Joan W. Scott, that lay out the framework for the book: the conceptualization of gender, race and class as simultaneous social processes that organize and permeate all social institutions. Joan Scott goes farthest and presents a thought-provoking analysis by problematizing the very terms that are basic to the field -- women, sexual differences, sexuality, interests, and rights.

In the second section *The Macrosocial Organization of Gender*, the authors analyze the ways in which some macrostructures shape gender. Anette Borschorst focuses on the welfare state. Valentine Moghadam points to the contradictory effects that economic restructuring and globalization processes have on men and women both in developed and developing countries. And Lisa D. Brush disentangles deindustrialization and the crisis of Fordism into "his crisis" and "her crisis" to show how production crises are directly related to the reproduction crises.

Religion and popular culture are the focus of the third section *Gender, Discourse and Culture*. Susan Sered provides us with a useful distinction between women as agents and actual people and Woman as a symbolic construct. She claims that a strong tension exists between the two, especially in the symbolic realm of religion, and accounts for the intensification of gender conflicts and the emergence of patriarchal fundamentalist discourse within all world religions. Suzanna Danuta focuses on cultural images and examines the interplay between ways of producing gendered meanings and identities and consuming them. She warns against the recent trend in cultural studies that confuses pleasure involved in consuming popular culture with resistance to it, or even subversion.

The chapters grouped in the fourth section, *Gender in Social Institutions*, examine the production of scientific knowledge, work organizations, the family and sports as arenas that are shaped by gender and that, along with race, class and sexuality, produce gender. Patricia Hill Collins discusses the power politics that underly science and modernism. By focusing on gender and ignoring the simultaneous operation of multiple systems of oppression, white feminists erased black women and thus became an active part in the hierarchies of power. Patricia Y. Martin and David L. Collinson look at how organizational practices - such as job descriptions, pay scales and authority ladders - construct gender identities

and sexualize workers. Overt and covert harassment help in maintaining the appropriate behaviors of both men and women. Anne R. Roschelle contends that when considered independently, cultural perspective, structural macro-economic models and gender analysis cannot account for the economic problems of racial and ethnic families in the United States. She suggests instead an integrative model in order to account for the diverse situations of families of all social strata. Shari L. Dworkin and Michael A. Messner examine sports as a prime site for the social construction of gender within racial and ethnic and class based stratification systems. The fact that competitive sport is also a huge moneymaking enterprise problematizes the relations between corporate capitalism and liberal feminism that seeks integration within this enterprise.

In the chapters included in the last section, *Gendering the Person*, the authors examine the ways in which macro structures and processes operate on the micro level in the daily lives of people. Peter Glick and Susan T. Fiske propose a framework that places the psychology of gender relations into a structural perspective. Thus, stereotypes are not the cause but rather the result and reflection of inequalities that exist in various social settings. Yet, intimacy and love, men's domination of and dependence on women create ambivalence and inconsistencies in the gendered (heterosexual) systems of oppression. Barbara Katz Rothman talks about the changing politics of choice – the central tenets of second wave feminism – in the context of recent developments in reproductive technologies and the emerging biotech industries. Seeing gender as comprised of status, identity, and display, Judith Lorber analyzes the feminist debates regarding prostitution and pornography. Rejecting the notion of binary, essentialistic and stable categories of gender, she also explores the complexities involved in the boundaries of sexual identities and in the politics of transgression. In the last chapter of the book, R. W. Connell “brings the body in” and places it at the nexus of gender practices, identity and sexuality. Masculinity and femininity are, she tells us, gender projects, organized through historical time, and they operate on the personal as well as on the collective and structural, ultimately they connect intimate life and society on a global scale.

Though the sections are organized in the conventional way of moving from the macro-level of structure, culture and social institutions to the micro level of the person, within the sections and the chapters, the boundaries between the two are blurred. Or, to put it more accurately, instead of holding on to the old micro/macro debate that reifies the levels, the distinction itself is interrogated and relations between the levels are investigated.

Be this as it may, as one reads through the chapters, it becomes clear that the division of labor among the different fields of social science is being reproduced. Consequently, interrelations and mutual influences among different social dynamics are overlooked and many of the complexities and internal contradictions that result from these interactions are masked. For example, it is already clear that the forces of globalization shape gender relations in the economic, cultural and political arenas in diverse ways. But, instead of

investigating how the different areas covered in the various chapters (e.g., popular culture, work, identity politics) are being affected by it, the issue of globalization is confined to just one chapter (comprehensive as it is) and is hardly mentioned in any of the others. More troubling is the treatment of race, class and ethnicity. One of the main tenets of the book is intersectionality. The excellent chapters of Nakano Glenn, Acker and Hill-Collins proposed that the simultaneous operation of gender, race and ethnicity would be the shared conceptual framework of the book. Nonetheless, some of the chapters on organizations, the welfare state, and cultural studies, either privileged gender and paid lip service to the notion of intersectionality or ignored it altogether. And one could think of more threads that almost invisibly run through the chapters and could have been highlighted to create a more coherent book.

Though the chapters cover an exceptionally wide range of topics, the homogeneous background of the authors, mostly sociologists who work in the United States, created a book that is very American in orientation. This point is crucial for substantive reasons, and not only for the sake of politics of representation. Had gender in developing countries and East Europe been discussed, issues such as nationalism, socialism, immigration, emigration, and wars and their relations to gender would have been aired as well. Inclusion of such topics in this collection could have compensated somewhat for the fact that they are usually non-existent in North American feminist scholarship, and as an unfortunate result, perceived as outside the sphere of gender studies.

Having said all that, I do think that *Revisioning Gender* represents the state-of-the-art in many areas, and one can get a quick update on many topics just by reading the relevant chapters. I found many of the individual chapters to be exceptionally valuable in that they present a thorough analytical discussion, pinpoint complexities and ambivalences and provide theoretical formulations that could inspire research in a multiplicity of areas. Everyone who is interested in gender studies will find it beneficial to have this book on a nearby bookshelf.