

changes in our economic circumstances and perceive changes in our political structures, as corporations themselves change, and as new competing interests and values emerge. Future cases will provide multiple occasions for the reevaluation of currently prevailing rationales for granting or withdrawing corporate rights. Having a multidimensional understanding of corporate personhood, Ripken concludes, will help us make these important judgment calls. This is an appropriate and coherent conclusion to a fascinating intellectual journey.

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*The new sex wars: Sexual harm in the #MeToo era.* By Brenda Cossman. New York: New York University Press, 2021

Reviewed by Tugce Ellialti-Kose, Department of Sociology, Trent University, Peterborough, Canada

Feminists have long been concerned with the question of how sexual harm should be regulated. This question has been a topic of profound disagreement among feminists for decades with its beginnings in the late 1970s that witnessed a series of debates that took place within the feminist movement regarding issues of sexuality, agency, and law, and came to be known as the era of feminist sex wars. While virtually every book that has been written on feminism since the 1980s has at least briefly mentioned the history of these theoretical and political controversies, the primary emphasis has been on the deep antagonism that characterizes the two major positions within feminism, the one viewing sex as a site of victimization, danger, and harm for women and the other advocating it as a site of female agency, pleasure, and empowerment, respectively. Radical feminists, who endorse the use of the legal apparatus to sexual harm, and sex-radical feminists, who oppose the expansion of legal regulation, are often portrayed as members of two exclusive, and opposing, camps that approach the management of sex and sexuality in discordant ways. This seemingly expansive, yet inaccurate, portrayal presents the arguments developed by both parties as fundamentally irreconcilable steering away from questions about the points of contact and overlap between these two positions and the insights that a nuanced reading of each set of claims and arguments can bring to the table for feminist theory and practice, which has been traditionally characterized by feminism's "own discourse of divide, often articulated as waves" (p. 18). These are the major questions that motivate Brenda Cossman's *The New Sex Wars: Sexual Harm in the #MeToo Era*. In *The New Sex Wars*, Cossman calls existing reductive narratives of "feminist catfights" (p. 195) that have long dominated the ways popular culture and mainstream media depict these complex debates into question. She shows that a sincere attention to the complex claims regarding sexuality, agency, and law will not only correct the commonly held view that feminism is primarily a site of allegedly incompatible positions when it comes to the regulation of sex and sexuality but will also reveal better strategies that the commonalities may provide with respect to the role of law in addressing sexual harm (i.e., to use or not to use law, how to use it, and what modalities of regulation to rely on). This is particularly important in the face of the ever-increasing pervasiveness of sexual violence and recent contestations about how to respond to it.

In *The New Sex Wars*, Cossman engages in an in-depth historical analysis of the feminist debates on the regulation of sexual harm with a focus on the controversies that emerged within the #MeToo movement. In mapping high-profile events that are identified as critical moments of the movement such as the Weinstein, the Al Franken, and the Ansari cases, Cossman traces the development of political and regulatory disagreements between #MeToo feminists who point out law's failure in bringing justice for women who experienced sexual violence, and feminist detractors who react against the mobilization of the legal apparatus due to serious substantive and procedural concerns with an emphasis on the potential overreach for criminal and civil remedies. By teasing out the

commonalities between the sex wars of the 1970s and 1980s and disagreements that surfaced at the peak of the movement and its aftermath, Cossman unearths the intellectual roots of the conflicts about #MeToo that center around the potentials, limits, and discontents of the law in addressing sexual harm. The recognition of intellectual continuities manifests the long-lasting and unsettled nature of these debates within feminism while contextualizing the persistence on the use of generational divide as a convenient rhetorical device to categorize feminist arguments. More notably, the binary antagonisms of the sex wars (i.e., feminist disagreements about sexuality, agency, and consent) create a feminist impasse resulting from the alleged incompatibility between different feminist positions regarding the role of law in the regulation of sexual harm. Cossman convincingly challenges this reading by unfolding the parallels across #MeToo and its feminist critics. Building on feminist and sociolegal scholarship on sex, sexuality, and law, Cossman weaves a compelling argument that both #MeToo feminists and feminist detractors, who are intellectual inheritors of the sex radicals of the 1980s, defy the centrality of law as the arbiter of sexual violence. While #MeToo feminists underline the outright failure of the law to effectively address sexual harm, feminist detractors focus on the repressive role of law, its carceral modality, and its overwhelmingly negative view of sex. In doing so, and coming from different sensibilities, both sides raise the urgency to turn away from an exclusive reliance on the criminal law and its carceral logics extended to the realm of civil law (e.g., in the form of Title IX applied to cases of sexual violence on campus) in favor of alternative modalities of regulation such as restorative and transformative justice that center the victim, the harm they have suffered, and emphasize offender responsibility and reparation. This acutely observed commonality between seemingly contradictory positions on the question of the legal regulation of sexual harm, which Cossman exposes through what she calls “a reparative reading” (p. 5), which is “reading generously and keeping multiple perspectives in view” (ibid.), is a powerful manifestation of Cossman’s nuanced analysis on the sex wars of the last half century. More specifically, Cossman explores approaches to the regulation of sex and sexuality that do not build on worn-out dichotomies of danger/pleasure and victim/choice by moving beyond the irreconcilability argument offered for competing feminist claims about the legal regulation of sexual harm. She develops an insightful proposition that accommodates the many tensions that are caused by the centrality of criminal law, and its authoritative status as the metric of truth, which has been deeply criticized by scholars and activists from a range of ideological and political commitments (e.g., feminist, queer, and anti-abolitionist). This proposition gestures toward the possibility of envisioning the law in a comprehensive way that decenters the criminal justice system and its punitive logics and to use it as an instrument that holds a potential for alternative visions of justice that are more attuned to the needs of victims/survivors.

*The New Sex Wars*’ greatest contribution is in delving into a fundamental rethinking of the law to better address sexual harm while staying attentive to the risks inherent in legal regulation. Cossman’s incredibly nuanced, reparative approach to multiple perspectives provides a productive, and hopeful, roadmap to sociolegal and feminist scholars who have been facing a gridlock in addressing the question of legal regulation with adequate attention to discursive disagreements among feminists. While the text is dense due to the nature of the topic, Cossman does an excellent job in supporting the reader to stay engaged with rather highly complex theoretical arguments about sex, sexuality, and the law. She reminds the reader of major points so far discussed in the text before introducing new points, makes smooth transitions between different positions and well-contextualized arguments, and draws connections between them in a consistent, yet not monotonous, manner. Cossman’s gentle yet persuasive presentation of her account can be read as a stylistic reflection of her nuanced, empathic, and sensible approach to feminist contestations over sex and its uneasy relationship with the law.

To conclude, *The New Sex Wars* is an elegantly written and politically and theoretically inspiring contribution to gender studies, especially in law. It is also an excellent resource for scholars and students of law and society who want to broaden and deepen their perspectives to effectively, and timely, respond to emerging questions in the growing field of gender, law, and politics.