


BOOK REVIEW/RECENSION

Feminism's Fight: Challenging Politics and Policies in Canada Since 1970

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Feminism's Fight: Challenging Politics and Policies in Canada Since 1970 is a comprehensive work on the relationship between feminism, politics, and policies in Canada over the past five decades. Editors Barbara Cameron and Meg Luxton have assembled a thorough collection that explores the challenges, accomplishments, and ongoing struggles encountered by feminists and asks how new ways of organizing and engaging with federal government policy can advance the feminist agenda of social and economic equality. The chapters tell the story of how feminism has transformed and evolved, and how Canada's feminist movement has interacted with governments from the 1970s to 2020. At its core, this collection grapples with the role feminism has played in shaping Canadian politics and policies since the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada (RCSW).

One of the key strengths of the book is its diverse range of perspectives and topics covered. Part one of the book, "Challenging Dominant Paradigms," serves as a foundational framework for the subsequent discussions. Cameron and Luxton in chapter 1, deftly navigate through the complexities of the RCSW, providing a balanced critique that acknowledges its contributions while also highlighting its limitations. Their analysis sets the stage for a comprehensive examination of various facets of Canadian feminism, ranging from Indigenous decolonization to LGBTQ+ rights, underscoring the interconnectedness of feminist activism with broader societal transformations. In chapter 2, Shelagh Day and Pamela Palmater provide a powerful narrative on the long history of discrimination against Indigenous women in Canada, laying bare the systemic failures of the Canadian government in addressing these injustices.

Part two, "Reclaiming the Economy," delves into the economic dimensions of feminism in Canada. Cameron's chapter on macroeconomic policy provides an accessible analysis of the interaction between the economy and feminism, offering balanced critiques of neoliberalism and highlighting the intersectional experiences of women across different social strata. Luxton's examination of socialist feminism further enriches the discourse, offering practical policy solutions for addressing entrenched gender inequalities in domestic labor, and Amber J. Fletcher discusses the history of Canadian farm women and presents actionable recommendations for equity. In part three, "Reimagining Policy," contributors analyze the ideas proposed by feminists and track the approaches adopted by governments in response. Lise Gotell scrutinizes the RCSW's gender-neutral liberal feminist approach while also recognizing its significant gains, and Christina Cabriel exposes the deficiencies of the RCSW in addressing immigration and citizenship issues. Alana Cattapan traces the evolution of reproductive freedom in Canada and how the concept of responsibility of governance over reproduction has evolved. Ann Porter discusses evolving obstacles to economic security for Canadian women since the RCSW.

Part four, "Reframing Representation," challenges conventional notions of political representation. Alexandra Dobrowolsky exposes a recurring pattern of "strategic, cynical, and

sinister representation” and advocates for a paradigm shift towards a bottom-up approach to representation that centers the voices of marginalized groups. Linda Briskin provides an insightful exploration of unions’ role in advancing women’s rights that underscores the importance of collective agency in effecting systemic change. Finally, in part five, “Reforming Institutions,” contributors analyze the potential of institutions to act as catalysts for equity mobilization and gender justice, such as human rights commissions, discussed by Nicole S. Bernhardt, and multilevel governance and federal coordination, discussed by Tammy Findlay.

Feminism’s Fight’s nuanced examination of key issues and discussions on gender equality and social change make it a valuable addition to the literature on feminism and politics in Canada. Although the focus on Canada is highly beneficial, incorporating a more comparative approach could have enhanced it. By juxtaposing the Canadian experience with that of other countries, the collection could have provided a deeper understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities faced by feminists in Canada, while also illuminating transnational connections and solidarities. Additionally, this approach may have enriched the analysis by highlighting alternative strategies and policy interventions employed by feminist movements in different contexts, offering valuable lessons for advancing gender equality and social justice worldwide.

This work will no doubt be an excellent resource for researchers, graduate students, and faculty across disciplines, and will also appeal to policymakers, activists, and readers interested in feminism, social justice, and politics. *Feminism’s Fight* is a timely collection that expertly documents and analyzes the ongoing struggle for feminist transformation in Canada. Its nuanced examination of key issues and its contribution to ongoing discussions on gender equality and social change make it a valuable addition to the literature on feminism and politics.

Competing interests. The author declares none.