Sixth Canadian Edition

Feminist Issues: Race, Class, and Sexuality

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Nancy Mandell is a Professor in the Department of Sociology, York University. She is a faculty associate at the Centre for Feminist Research (CFR) and the Centre for Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS). Her research and teaching interests include gender, aging, qualitative methods, schooling, and family. Recently she has published on life course analysis of midlife Canadian women, senior immigrants, and transnational family patterns, gendered and racialized forms of carework, and academic-community research partnerships. She is completing a SSHRC grant entitled “Worked to Death,” which examines patterns of economic security among aging immigrant families.

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**Carmela Murdocca** is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at York University, where she is also appointed to the graduate programs in Sociology, Socio-Legal Studies, and Social and Political Thought. Her work has appeared in *Law and Social Inquiry, Social and Legal Studies, the Australian Feminist Law Journal,* and the *Canadian Journal of Law and Society.* She is the author of *To Right Historical Wrongs: Race, Gender and Sentencing in Canada* (2013) and co-editor (with D. Brock and A. Glasbeek) of *Criminalization, Representation, Regulation* (2014).

**Barbara A. Pollard** is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor, Canada. Her research interests focus on critical literacy and critical pedagogy as it is practised across educational contexts. Pollard draws on feminist and other critical theoretical frameworks in order to explore how culture, ideology, knowledge, and identity are linked to social justice. Her research examines factors such as gender and social class under circumstances of oppression and resistance in the lives of students and teachers. Pollard has presented her research at numerous peer-reviewed conferences and was recently published in *Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices.*


**Carla Rice** is a Canada Research Chair at University of Guelph. A leader in the field of embodiment studies, Dr. Rice is founder and former director of the Body Image Project at Women's College Hospital in Toronto and the National Eating Disorder Information Centre. Her research explores representations and narratives of body and identity. Rice has published in widely in international journals including *Feminism & Psychology, Women's Studies International Forum,* and *Cultural Studies => Critical Methodologies* among others. Books include *Gender and Women's Studies in Canada: Critical Terrain* (2013), and *Becoming Women: The Embodied Self in Image Culture* (2014).

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She teaches classes in communication theory, popular culture, media and diversity, and social media; and is interested in phenomenology, new materialism, gender theory, and digital humanities. She has worked in the realms of media, cultural policy, and fashion design.

Michelle Webber is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Brock University and is affiliated with the Centre for Labour Studies, also at Brock University. Her research interests lie in the sociology of labour, education, and gender. Her current research is an investigation of faculty associations and the politics of accountability governance in Ontario universities (with Larry Savage and Jonah Butovsky—both at Brock University).

Fiona Whittington-Walsh is Chair of the department of Sociology at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in British Columbia. She teaches in the area of media, disability, and gender. Her research examines beauty, the body, disability and difference, media, and popular culture. Her current research is exploring the history of disability representation in film using participant action research methodology. She is a member of the Board of Directors for Inclusion BC, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the full inclusion of people with disabilities in every facet of society. She resides in British Columbia with her partner, daughters, and grandchildren.
Preface

We are very pleased and proud to bring forward the 6th edition of Feminist Issues. Significantly revised, the new edition provides an in-depth analysis of key issues facing women in Canada. Politics, sexuality, social media, intimate relationships, life course challenges, and institutional barriers are some of the issues the authors address. While the text is aimed at the new undergraduate reader, seasoned students and practitioners of feminism(s), anti-oppression, and related areas of study will also find rich and engaging discussions of current feminist topics. No matter who you are, where you are or what your life circumstances, young girls and women experience oppression and omission. Sensitive to differences in age, gender, sexuality, language, region, and ethnicity, in this book our authors examine both continuing and new challenges facing women.

Since the 5th edition, there has been a veritable groundswell of media interest in feminist issues in Canada and transnationally. The continued widespread existence of sexual assault on university and college campus campuses, ongoing sexual harassment in workplaces, unyielding calls by Indigenous people and allies that challenge Canadian society to account for literally hundreds of missing and murdered Indigenous women, ongoing violence against women transnationally, and genuine engagement from feminist men’s groups in shifting dominant ideas about masculinity have all come to the forefront of popular discussions about feminism. In order to ensure that media interest is more than fleeting, students of feminist ideas need to continue to build capacity for action. Whether your feminist action happens in your teaching, on social media, at your child’s daycare, in the streets, at the kitchen table, or on the floor of the House of Commons, we think it is important that readers continue to have access to in-depth feminist discussion of the topics addressed in this book as a part of their/our reason to act.

The 6th edition includes nine new authors from across Canada who have singly or collaboratively authored new material for this introductory text. These wonderful new contributors broach the topics of critical race and Indigenous feminisms, transnational feminist theory, critical masculinity studies, sexuality and gender identity, violence against women, and health. Returning contributors have substantially revised and updated five chapters within the thematic areas of education, aging, beauty culture, mothering and work, education, and historical trajectories of select types of feminism. Every chapter is theoretically grounded and contains contemporary examples.

With the writing of this preface, we have also to mark the passing of our colleague, friend, and previous contributor, Dr. Sharon Rosenberg (July 31st, 2010). We remember Sharon as an internationally recognized, controversial, challenging, and well-loved theorist of cultural and feminist studies. We also remember her as a mentor of new feminist thinkers.
As always, we have sought contributors who are both seasoned academics as well as new-entry scholars in an effort to further collaborative research and teaching about feminism. We have done this by reaching out to scholars in universities of all sizes across Canada, who have deep commitments to the intellectual communities they work within.

The production of knowledge about feminism can be a minefield of politics, social tensions, and debate, both within communities that already consider themselves “feminist” (and there are many) and those who baldly oppose gender, racial, class, and sexual equality (and sadly, there still exist some of those as well). In other words, the production of knowledge about feminism is messy and often partial and incomplete. One of the most important features of this book is that authors write the material for this collection, drawing upon their own original research and assessment of their fields as they stand today. They have sifted through mountains of literature, firsthand interviews, popular media, policy and legal documents, and records of individual/collective experiences to distill for the reader some key ideas about their topic. Authors have been asked to present answers to the following questions: Why is the topic an issue for feminism? Why discuss it now? How have some of the core issues for feminists been taken up within this topic? How would/how do feminists working on this topic define problems that exist for women?, and: What solutions does are posed for these problems? In their answers, authors challenge our ideas about what topics feminism can be applied to and where feminist understandings of these issues still need to grow.

Putting together this collection of ideas, arguments, and research has been a privilege and a pleasure. The contributors and peer reviewers of this text have been generous with their time, constructive criticism, and written work. We thank each one of them for their work. For one of us—Jen Johnson—work on this collection represents a full circle return to a text that was first introduced to her as a student in 1995. Working with Nancy Mandell, the originator and editor of this text, has been a privilege and a tremendous learning experience. For Nancy, bringing Jen on board was an inspired choice as she has completely revitalized the discussion and moved it in new and fascinating directions. We each do our part in the ongoing struggles for women’s equality in Canada. We the editors and the contributors are very proud to offer this edition as our small contribution to these movements.
Acknowledgements

Numerous people have read versions of these chapters and generously offered rigorous and thoughtful critiques. Given their attention to peer review, we are confident that these chapters represent the best possible versions of the contributors’ work and for this we are extremely grateful. We thank also the seven anonymous reviewers of the previous edition, feminist scholars from all over Canada who teach about feminism to ‘new’ audiences and to those students who have given invaluable feedback over the years—we are listening. At Pearson we would like to thank Madhu Ranadive, Matthew Christian, and Keriann McGoogan for their guidance and timely suggestions on the composition and framing of the collection. To Pearson’s staff and copy editors Ruth Chernia, __________, __________, we are grateful for your attention to detail and for bringing this collection to fruition.

Nancy would like to welcome Jennifer Johnson on board and thank her for agreeing to co-edit Feminist Issues. Jen’s lively sense of humour and her considerable energy and enthusiasm for the project have made her an ideal collaborator. The sixth edition is markedly stronger because Jen has joined the team. Nancy also thanks the people from whom she gains strength and affection: her long time partner Lionel; her ‘boys’—Jeremy, Ben, and Adam—and their partners—Marissa, Caroline, and Jamie—and now their children—Micah, Eli, Charlotte, Brooke, and Emily. As Feminist Issues has grown, so too has Nancy’s family!

Jen is very thankful to Nancy for the opportunity to join you in co-editing this text—thank you for taking a chance on me! Working with you afforded me the opportunity to learn far more than I ever could have on my own. I am extremely thankful also to my research assistant, Taynia Rainville: thank you for your exceptional work ethic and ability to ask good questions fearlessly. To my partner Shana, thank you for your patience into the many months of drafts and editing. My hope is that this book is one small part of shifting our culture to allow our trio of proto-feminists: Leandré, Rhys, and Maël, a chance at living in a more just society.

Dedication

Micah, Eli, Charlotte, Brooke, and Emily

and

Leandré, Rhys, and Maël