tiently for conservative women to experience the “click” of feminist consciousness on their own only does the same.

This book should be read not only by scholars of religion but by any woman who is stumped by the resistance of other women to feminism. The culture wars of the last decade have contributed to the widening gap between feminists and nonfeminists. Amid those wars, many who see culture breaking down find that the assuredness and order of evangelical religion offers security, even safety. Others, including those from more liberal religious traditions, disagree, and so religion itself remains contested territory. One woman’s oppression, it seems, is another’s liberation. Beyond that, Griffith argues that a class-based bias contributes to feminist hostility toward conservative women. She would have us instead see what we have in common: recognition and celebration of, and a desire to enhance, women’s value and status.

Every book that helps explain the great divide between women challenges the contention that women are their own worst enemies. God’s Daughters is one of those books that might serve as required reading before sitting down to share perspectives about what it means to be a woman in the world today.

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Marysia Zalewski is concerned to examine the present position of feminism: whether the influence of postmodern and post-structural ideas has meant that it no longer has any use as a “practice for women.” She questions whether there is a gulf between the 1970s and 1990s feminists. To do so, she employs an intriguing metaphor: that of an imaginary dialogue between two well-known feminists—Andrea Dworkin, “the quintessential 1970s radical feminist” and Judith Butler “the paradigm of a contemporary postmodern feminist” (1) and wonders whether they would agree on anything.

There is excellent discussion of the three main feminisms classed as “modern”—liberal, radical, socialist—noting first their differences and then demonstrating how they can be classed together, as well as a sound examination of patriarchy. Postmodern feminisms “are defined by their opposition to both ‘malestream’ socio-political theories, at least those that are essentialist and totalising, and also feminist theories which share these characteristics” (27). This leads neatly to consideration of whether there is a gulf between modernism and postmodernism. Centring on three key issues, the sub-
ject, epistemology and the nature of politics and political action, Zalewski takes a position and then interrogates it from other perspectives. This enables her to draw out real differences which are seen as accounting for political strife and similarities which might signal useful coalitions. In answer to the question of whether there is a gulf between modernist and postmodernist feminisms, Zalewski concludes that on the basis of evidence so far (73), there is.

As the subtitle of the book (“Theorising through practice”) demonstrates however, Zalewski is concerned with practice, “In the face of what is, what should we do?” (74). To do so, she chooses the practices of reproduction technologies. Again she creates dialogues using reports and eye-witness statements. Liberal, social and radical feminists differ in their attitudes to reproductive technologies. Liberal feminists welcome these advances. For liberal feminists they involve choice while for social and radical feminists even prenatal screening is felt to encourage women to carry out the eugenic designs of the state. Radical and socialist feminists consider that “the politics of rights” will not necessarily improve women’s lives because it leads to the question of whose rights are paramount—the mother’s, the foetus’s or the father’s. Some telling examples are quoted such as that of Angela Carter in the USA who, diagnosed with terminal cancer, was forced to undergo a Caesarean section when the doctors refused to give her chemotherapy because of its potential effects on the foetus. Both Carter and the baby died (94–95).

Zalewski quotes Corea, “Reproductive technologies do more than give males a sense of continuity over time. They are transforming the experience of motherhood and placing it under the control of men” (96). To add to this, Zalewski discusses “the literal erasure of females by the practice of female feticide” (96) and points out how this is having a profound effect on sex ratios in China and India.

Liberal, radical and socialist feminists all share the belief that women have been unfairly treated or oppressed because they are women, and to improve this situation women should received more importance and value. For modernist feminists, woman is the subject that really matters. By contrast, postmodern feminists are interested in how subjects become constructed or positioned and how to destabilise these constructions. Thus the harrowing tale of the forty year old who had spent ten years having unsuccessful infertility treatment and now felt “I don’t know what to do next. I always thought that I would be a mother … In the past 10 years I have sat on a dead-end job waiting to become pregnant. Now I feel I have nothing—not even a career to throw myself into. I don’t know how to go forward” (107) would be read as “being in a moment of resistance and deconstruction” (109). Zalewski provides an excellent deconstruction of the impact of reproductive technologies. This works very well even if it is not clear where she herself stands in this regard. Her writing is sympathetic and she very skillfully evaluates all the points of view leaving the reader to make up her/his own mind.
This is a well-written, easily accessible work. A greater discussion of the situation in the Third World would have been welcome since the book is overwhelmingly Western and white. It will be of great use to all interested not merely in Women’s Studies or Gender Studies but also to those concerned with philosophy and reproduction technology. Even those who follow masculinist theories will find it absorbing reading. A good bibliography and a glossary of relevant medical terms complement the text. Zalewski’s conclusion is, “there clearly are some significant differences between the 1970s and 1990s feminisms, most obviously in the realm of theory, but … the differences do not have to imply dismissals of either group of feminisms by the other” (142). And for the twenty-first century the warning is that we need to recover feminisms “from the intolerance of other feminism” (142).

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Starting out with an anecdote about women and domestic violence in Bangladesh from the author’s fieldwork in 1993, this book delves straight into the precarious intersection between politics as theory and politics as activism. Ackery, a North American political scientist who has researched Third World feminism, maps a tightly argued answer to a pressing question: how can social theory forged in the bourgeois democratic revolutions of Western modernity enable political practice for women in a post-modern and distinctly chaotic globalising present? As Arjun Appadurai has observed, economic globalisation has been a source of anxiety in the West, yet it has produced new social forms in non-Western contexts, including an international civil society in which non-Western activists can claim new kinds of social and political rights in parallel with new economic ones. Appadurai (2000) advocates new and innovative relationships between pedagogy, activism and research in the era of globalisation in order to rework the heady momentum of globalisation away from exclusion and marginalisation and towards democracy. Appadurai terms this new social form “globalisation from below.” Although Ackery does not discuss Appadurai’s work, nor does she name her project in these terms, her book is a timely example of how feminist critiques of political theory can energise this process.

Are human rights inherently Western? What would a women’s human rights look like? How adequate is our current international human rights framework for activism in struggles far from its origins? Is Western theory at