

CHAPTER 6

Feminist History of Philosophy

Susanne Sreedhar

*Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy
Boston University, MA*

Until lions tell their own stories, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter.
—African proverb

In providing an overview of feminist history of philosophy, this chapter aims, in particular, to highlight the interpretive, methodological, and philosophical questions involved in approaching the history of philosophy with a concern for the lives and ideas of women. A glance at most philosophy syllabi reveals the overwhelming maleness and Whiteness of the discipline. According to the National Center for Education, in 2004 women made up only 14 percent of full-time philosophy faculty in four-year colleges in the United States, although the profession has begun to take more public and deliberate steps toward gender equality (Schwitzgebel 2016). Charles Mills (1951–), one of the most influential African American philosophers working today, often jokes that he has to wear sunglasses at philosophy conferences in order to avoid snow blindness, and that, if more than a couple of Black philosophers took the same airplane to a philosophy conference and the plane crashed, the majority of Black philosophers would be wiped out. Comparable jokes could be made, without much exaggeration, about women in the profession.

When we look for women philosophers in the history of philosophy, the numbers are much smaller. The historical canon of Western philosophy runs roughly from Plato (427–347 BCE) to the beginning of the twentieth century. Let's say something about both time and place. First, philosophy didn't only happen in ancient Greece and Western Europe, though this chapter might give that impression. Philosophy existed all over the world—wherever human beings have lived in societies, there's probably been philosophy. But the feminist history of philosophy we are addressing here arises from and responds to the canon of Western thinkers, and so that is our focus. Second, we can't say exactly when the history of philosophy ends and contemporary philosophy begins, but we can safely say that, for philosophers to be counted as figures in the history of philosophy, they must not be among the living. Of course, being a philosopher and being dead don't in themselves qualify someone to be included in the so-called canon; questions of what is called canonicity are notoriously difficult. However, we can fairly easily come up with some uncontroversial examples: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Mill, Nietzsche, Hegel, Marx, and Heidegger comprise a rough and ready list. Most people can recognize these names as the famous figures in the history of philosophy—and, of course, all of them were men. You can probably think of a few more, but most likely they

would also be mostly male. Some might name women whom they would consider philosophers in the historical canon: Mary Wollstonecraft and Simone de Beauvoir are likely the most famous, but we might also add Hannah Arendt.

Given the relative absence of women from the Western philosophical canon, there are at least three questions to consider: first, what did these famous male philosophers have to say about women; second, what should we make of what they said; and third, what about the women who were also philosophers?

Correspondingly, this chapter has three sections. This tripartite structure is inspired by Charlotte Witt (1951–), who has done much of the best theorizing about feminist history of philosophy (see, for example, Alanen and Witt 2004; Witt 2006). In the first section, I outline the state of the Western philosophical canon. Some canonical philosophers said some pretty horrid things about women; some said ludicrous things; some said nice things; some said both horrid and nice things; and others said nothing (or almost nothing) at all about women. The purpose in this first section is to give a general lay of the land, important in its own right and necessary to set up the next two parts. In the second section, I explore the interpretive, methodological, and philosophical questions that arise when we consider these historical utterances about women from a feminist perspective. Contemporary feminist philosophers have very different ways of approaching these canonical works. Some are understandably very critical, eager to highlight the misogyny and sexism of the texts, sometimes as an attempt to discard the entire canon; others seek to defend certain parts of or figures in the canon; and yet others want to appropriate questions or ideas from these canonical figures in order to do feminist work today. In the third section, I explore the voices that have been left out of the philosophical canon. My focus here is on women, but people of color have been even more excluded from this canon. This part aims to find and explicate the philosophy of women in the history of philosophy; this is also being done by other scholars, though so far with less success, with non-White philosophers. I conclude by summarizing the themes of the chapter.

THE CANON: A QUICK AND DIRTY OVERVIEW

Let's begin with a few caveats. As discussed above, there is no universally accepted Western philosophical canon. The following overview of the kinds of comments made by figures generally regarded as important within this canon pays special attention to those whose views have been of interest to feminists working in the history of philosophy. (I leave out Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz [1646–1716], for example, because feminists have not yet taken much interest in his work.) There is of course much more to be said about all of these philosophers, and there are also many more philosophers who could have been included. As will become clear, however, there are patterns in the ways women have been described in the history of philosophy. Although this categorization, too, could be contested, in this discussion I divide philosophers roughly by time period—ancient, medieval, modern, and nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Most discussions about women within the Western philosophical canon have focused on what eventually, in the nineteenth century, came to be called the *querelle des femmes*, or the “woman question.” This was actually a set of questions about the nature of the sexes, their proper relation to each other, and their proper places in society and social and political institutions. What are men and women naturally like? Are they different but equal? Or

different and therefore unequal? Is one sex naturally superior to the other, and, if so, what follows from this natural superiority? What should the roles of men and women be in the family, religion, society, and state? What sort of education should they have? These questions were asked long before they got codified into one overarching woman question.

THE ANCIENTS

In the *Republic*, Plato sets out a vision of the ideal society, in which three classes of people carry out three separate functions. Two are guardian classes, one ruling and the other defending, while the third class of people produces the goods society needs. For Plato, gender is irrelevant to the functions people perform in society; he explicitly states that women can be guardians and philosopher kings.

Speaking through Socrates (470–399 BCE), Plato says a number of things about gender, family, and the organization of society. In Book Five of the *Republic*, Socrates offers a striking pronouncement of sexual equality. Although he insists that there are natural differences between human beings in terms of skills, talents, and potential, Socrates denies that these differences align with sex differences:

There is no pursuit relevant to the management of the city that belongs to a woman because she is a woman, or to a man because he is a man; but the various natural capacities are distributed in a similar way between both creatures, and women can share by nature in every pursuit, and men in every one, though for the purposes of all of them women are weaker than men. (Plato 2004, 144)

Although he remarks on the general physical weakness of women relative to men, Socrates does not think women are naturally or inevitably inferior. Understanding Socrates's views on women is further complicated by his idea that for the guardian classes, women and children should be shared. He describes methods for mating the best males with the best females, treating humans like any other animals that are bred for quality. This would require sophisticated social machinations to ensure that the best males impregnated the highest number of women possible. There is no allowance made for individual affection, attraction, or choice. Although he talks only in terms of the sharing of wives, husbands are subject to the same kind of restraints. Socrates then argues that children of the guardian class should be raised all together, without knowledge of who their biological relations are, so that the guardians will protect everyone equally instead of caring disproportionately for those that are taken to be biological family. His assumption seems to be that if the goal is the best possible protection of and rule over the city as a whole, individualistic ties and special relationships can only get in the way. Shouldn't we care for everyone as we care for the members of our own family? There is debate among scholars about how seriously to take Socrates's recommendations on these issues. Even if he is not offering an actual blueprint for how to organize an ideal human society, his lengthy philosophical arguments in favor of various ways of arranging the family are worth taking seriously.

Aristotle (384–322 BCE) spends considerable time rejecting Plato's views on the family, arguing that such conditions would result not in more protection but less. To Plato's notion that not knowing to whom one is biologically related would result in treating everyone as a biological relation, and thus very well, Aristotle counters that not knowing to whom one is biologically related would result in treating no one as a biological relation, and thus very poorly. However, it is Aristotle's remarks on sex difference and the proper relationship between men and women that has earned him notoriety among feminist

readers. In contrast to Plato, Aristotle explicitly claims that women are naturally inferior to men in skills, abilities, and roles. In *The Politics*, he flatly states, “as between male and female the former is by nature superior and ruler, the latter inferior and subject” (Aristotle 1992, 68). Hierarchy is natural for Aristotle, who also argues that there are natural slaves, though for him this isn’t a racialized category: natural slaves are defined as those with lesser rational capacities. Men are superior to women; masters are superior to slaves; and Greeks are superior to non-Greeks.

Aristotle goes into detail on the nature of women’s inferiority. In his *Generation of Animals*, he states, “the female is as it were a deformed male” (Aristotle 1942, 175). The female, on Aristotle’s account, is associated with passivity and imperfection, whereas the male is associated with activity and perfection. His theory of reproduction postulates an active sperm acting on the passive raw material supplied by the mother. In this theory, the sperm, if operating correctly, produces male offspring; if the child is female, something has gone wrong. On his view, the purpose of human life—its only route to fulfillment—is full personhood and participation in the political community. This fulfillment, however, is available only to some: women and slaves are excluded.

ST. PAUL, THE MEDIEVALS, AND NATURAL LAW

In the first century CE, Paul the Apostle was the first to offer specifically gendered ecclesiastical orders. In First Letter to the Corinthians, he advises, “Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says.” In First Letter to Timothy, he notes, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.” There is dispute among biblical scholars as to how to interpret these passages: some defend his views, others argue that these passages should not be attributed to Paul himself, while still others point out that Paul founded churches in which women held leadership positions. Because Paul was writing for different audiences in his time, it is impossible to know what he truly thought. Some interpret these passages as Paul giving practical and context-specific advice to new churches that was intended to help them fit into their larger society—a society that would’ve agreed with these prescribed social roles for women and in which Christians were still a marginalized minority. Paul is now studied mostly as a theologian, but Pauline doctrine was treated as philosophy for centuries, and by some still is. Indeed, there was really no line between philosophy and theology for at least another thousand years.

Misogyny was reflected and reproduced in the writings of medieval philosophers and the early natural law theorists. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) maintained that women are inferior to men in both mind and body. St. Paul is one of his sources for this claim; Thomas Aquinas quotes what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:10, that “man was not created for the sake of woman, but woman was created for the sake of man.” For Thomas Aquinas, if one thing is made for the purposes of another, then the former is inferior to the latter. He was also influenced by Aristotle’s biology, in which women were seen as defective men. Thomas Aquinas cites Aristotle when he makes statements such as, “As regards the individual nature, woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active force in the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex; while the production of woman comes from a defect in the active force or from some material indisposition, or even from some external influence” (*Summa theologica* p. 1a, q. 92, a. 1). Thomas Aquinas continues by acknowledging that women are not misbegotten from the point of view of God, who created both male and female.

Thomas Aquinas also made claims about sexual morality. He thought that procreative sex must only take place within marriage and that all nonprocreative sex was immoral. The natural law tradition, of which Thomas Aquinas is regarded as the founding father, also prohibited sexual practices such as homosexuality and masturbation. The reasoning for this was as follows: Thomas Aquinas claimed that our sex organs should be used only for the natural purpose of procreation. Any other use is not in line with those organs' purposes by nature and thus forbidden. One might counter that claim by arguing that, though the natural purpose of ears is hearing, it's not immoral to also use them for decoration by, for example, wearing earrings. However, the view that women's lives—and not just their bodies or sexual organs—are properly restricted to reproductive functions in the context of marriage and home has been extremely influential throughout history.

THE MODERNS

When philosophers talk about “modern philosophy” they don't mean contemporary or present-day philosophy. Rather, they mean philosophy of the so-called modern period, namely the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. (Note that this is also sometimes called early modern philosophy.) This period was important for philosophy in part because it was at this time that concepts of individual rights and secular, limited government began to be articulated in a way that is recognizable and familiar today. A series of thinkers began to develop the idea, which came to be known as contract theory, that legitimate governmental authority requires the consent of the governed.

Hobbes and Locke. The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) is often thought of as the founder of this social contract tradition. Rejecting Aristotle, Hobbes asserts that all people are equal and explicitly includes women in this claim. However, his argument for this claim yields an idea of equality that we would now consider thin or minimal. According to Hobbes, all people (whether men or women) are equal because on our own, in the state of nature, we cannot subdue each other without a fight. A human being is naturally dominant over an ant, for example, because a human can dominate an ant without much struggle or effort. But no human being is naturally dominant in this sense over any other human being. Even the strongest person has to sleep and so can be overpowered by the weak. Even if men are, on average, slightly physically stronger than women, Hobbes points out that a battle would still be necessary between men and women and so denies that men are naturally superior. For Hobbes, then, human equality is understood as the absence of natural dominance among humans.

The English philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) also maintains the natural equality of the sexes, but he has a more substantial notion of what this means. For Locke, men and women have equal natural capacities for rationality, which for him entails understanding and following natural law. Despite their claims about natural equality of the sexes, though, both Hobbes and Locke endorse a patriarchal social structure. They accept the traditional idea that there is an analogy between the family and the state: the sovereign rules the state by consent of the governed, and the head of household rules the family by consent of its other members. For both Hobbes and Locke, there can be only one head of household (because no one can serve two masters), and men will naturally assume this place. On the other hand, both think that sovereigns can be queens, and Locke argues that unhappy wives should be able to divorce their husbands. The Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677) says little about women other than to claim that they are most decidedly not equal to men. He

explicitly denies women political rights, asserts their mental inferiority, and worries about their ability to seduce men into making irrational decisions. The French thinker René Descartes (1596–1650), the most famous and arguably the most important philosopher of the seventeenth century, avoids the question of sex difference and the various social and political roles attached to each gender.

At least part of the explanation for why some philosophers say so much about women and others so little has to do with the kinds of philosophical issues with which they engage. The topic of sex difference comes up in the political philosophy of Hobbes and Locke because they are speaking directly to questions of human nature, equality, and authority. Questions about women and their relationship to men and place in society arise naturally in that context, particularly given the traditional analogy between the state and the family. Descartes, on the other hand, is primarily interested in metaphysics (concerned with questions of reality and being) and epistemology (the study of knowledge), and questions of sex do not necessarily arise in those discussions. (Descartes does not have much to say about social or political philosophy in general.) Likewise, in Spinoza's metaphysical and epistemological work there is no discussion of sex. Only when he turns to the social and political does he address the subject of women. There is, of course, more to be said about how and why these philosophers engage the subjects of sex and gender, but for now it is worth noting that, even though Descartes says almost nothing about women, he is one of the main subjects of criticism by feminist historians of philosophy. (More on this in the next section.)

Kant. In the eighteenth century, Immanuel Kant and Jean-Jacques Rousseau loom large, and both had much to say about women. The German philosopher Kant (1724–1804) claims that women are mentally and morally inferior, incapable of participating in political institutions, and that their primary purpose is to civilize men and society. Consider some representative quotations: He dismisses scholarly women by saying that they “use their books somewhat like a watch, that is, they wear the watch so it can be noticed that they have one, although it is usually broken or does not show the correct time” (Kant [1798] 2006, 221). Women are incapable of understanding moral principles, he says, and they act instead on the basis of sensations and pleasures. Because “women will avoid the wicked, not because it is unright, but because it is ugly; and virtuous actions mean to them such as are morally beautiful,” women's education should therefore focus on “making only that please them which is good” (Kant [1764] 2011, 77). In his view, “laborious learning or painful pondering, even if a woman could get very far with them, destroy the merits that are proper to her sex” (Kant [1764] 2011, 36). Attempting to teach women abstract principles or difficult subjects would be not only ineffective but also deleterious to their womanhood.

On the question of women's “nature,” Kant says,

One can only come to the characterization of this sex if one uses as one's principle not what we *make* our own end, but what *nature's end* was in establishing womankind... These conjectural ends can also serve to indicate the principle for characterizing women—a principle which does not depend on our choice but on a higher purpose for the human race. These ends are: 1) the preservation of the species, 2) the cultivation of society and its refinement by womankind. (Kant [1798] 2006, 207)

Because the end (or purpose) of women is to have babies and serve as a civilizing and refining force for society, and because these ends are set by nature, it follows that individual women cannot and should not set their own goals. Men, on the other hand, should be free

to pursue self-chosen ends, including political ones. Given that he held these views, it is unsurprising that Kant declares women incapable of participating in public life or the political sphere: “*Woman* regardless of age is declared to be immature in civil matters; her husband is her natural curator.... Women cannot personally defend their rights and pursue civil affairs for themselves, but only by means of a representative” (Kant [1798] 2006, 103; italics in original). He also excludes women from citizenship on the grounds that they are not economically self-sufficient. For Kant, women and children cannot take part in political decision making but have some rights as passive members of the state. He claims that this exclusion is natural and inevitable. Of course, history has proven this empirical claim wrong. While young children are naturally economically and otherwise dependent on others, women clearly are not.

Kant’s writings also express views that denigrate certain groups because of their race. He claims that “the Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the ridiculous” (Kant [1764] 2011, 58); and that, “because [the Black man] is so amply supplied by his motherland, he is also lazy, indolent, dawdling” (Kant [1777] 2000, 17). Moreover, Kant invokes his views about racial hierarchy in justifications for and elaborations on the institution of human slavery. He says that Native Americans are completely inert, impassive, and incapable of being educated at all, and are therefore at the bottom of the racial order. He says that Blacks are a rung above Native Americans because of their usefulness for slavery: “red slaves (native-Americans) are used only for domestic work in Surinam, because they are too weak to work in the fields. Negroes are thus needed for fieldwork” (Kant [1777] 2000, 17).

Kant’s sexist and racist remarks are inconsistent with the basic tenets of his moral theory, which emphasizes the fundamental equality of all people on the basis of their rational capacity to set and pursue their own ends. The logic of Kantian moral principles forbids slavery. Note that the central texts of Kant’s moral or political philosophy do not make reference to race or gender (again, more on this in the next section). Rather, these subjects are relegated to what some scholars think of as his peripheral writings on anthropology and aesthetics.

Rousseau. In his principal work of moral and political theory, *The Social Contract*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) likewise makes no reference to gender or race. However, in the French philosopher’s famous treatise on education, *Émile: or, On Education* ([1762] 1911), he sets out his arguments for different education for boys and girls. Boys were to be raised to be independent and autonomous, girls to be submissive and pleasing. Rousseau devotes Book V of *Émile* to detailing the nature of women and the education that he sees as suited to that nature. He states: “If woman is made to please and to be in subjection to man, she ought to make herself pleasing in his eyes and not provoke him to anger; her strength is in her charms, by their means she should compel him to discover and use his own strength”; he calls this a “law of nature” (Rousseau [1762] 1911, 322). Rousseau delineates the implications for education:

A woman’s education must therefore be planned in relation to man. To be pleasing in his sight, to win his respect and love, to train him in childhood, to tend him in manhood, to counsel and console, to make his life pleasant and happy, these are the duties of woman for all time, and this is what she should be taught while she is young. (Rousseau [1762] 1911, 328)

It should be clear why many feminist historians of philosophy hold sharply critical views of Kant and Rousseau.

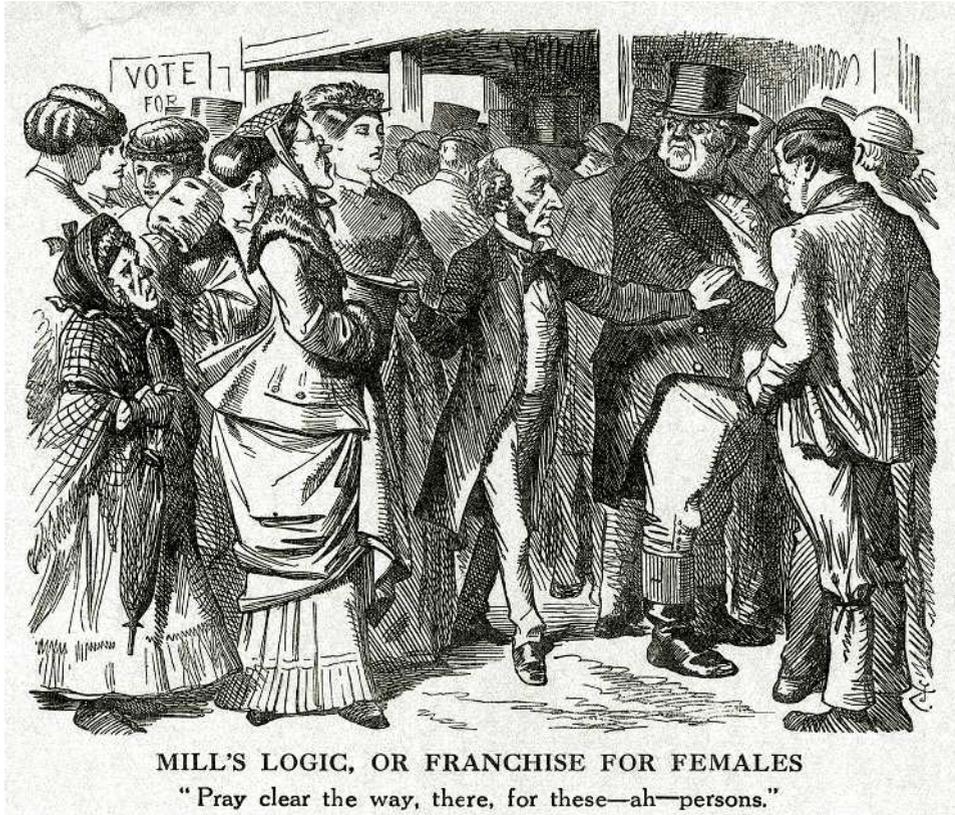
The difference between the views on women held by Kant and Rousseau, in the eighteenth century, and Hobbes and Locke, in the previous century, is striking. The earlier philosophers look positively innocent in comparison to the later ones. Why, one might ask, is this the case? First, it's worth noting that only in the eighteenth century did the beginnings of a women's movement emerge. For the seventeenth-century thinkers, women's social and political equality was purely hypothetical. It was not a real possibility that women would demand, let alone be granted, equal rights to men. Hobbes and Locke could speculate about women's equality without any expectation that it would lead to political action. By contrast, in the eighteenth century women were involved in such political events as the French Revolution of 1789, insisting that they be included with men in the general claims about the equality of all people. It's unsurprising, then, that Rousseau admonishes women who agitate for legal equality: "Women do wrong to complain of the inequality of man-made laws; this inequality is not of man's making, or at any rate it is not the result of mere prejudice, but of reason" ([1762] 1911, 324). Rousseau saw the unequal treatment of women as grounded in reason and his arguments for women's natural inferiority to men as entirely rational.

It's also relevant that both Hobbes and Locke were explicitly rejecting the prevailing doctrine of the seventeenth century, divine-right patriarchalism, which grounds political authority in God's grant of power to Adam and posits a parallel God-given right of men to rule women. Hobbes and Locke were forceful in their renunciation of patriarchalism not because of its claims about men and women but because of its claims about kings and subjects. For the patriarchalists, kings' rule over their subjects, like husbands' rule over their wives, was natural and divinely inspired. Disobeying a command from one's king was tantamount to disobeying God; advocates of various rebellions and revolutions in the seventeenth century denied this view of the divine right of kings and thereby justified their own disobedience of the king. Hobbes and Locke, in rejecting patriarchal divine command theory, for which the inequality of the sexes was a given, posited the natural equality of the sexes. By Kant's and Rousseau's time, the landscape of political theory had changed and divine-right patriarchalism was well on its way to losing credibility.

NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

There are too many canonical philosophers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to canvass, so what follows will focus on some of the highlights, beginning with the English philosopher John Stuart Mill (1806–1873). Mill would later come to be known as the first male feminist.

Mill. With his coauthor and future wife, Harriet Taylor, Mill wrote treatises arguing for the political and social equality of women. Although the authors viewed their proposal as ripe for enactment, their ideas were met with mockery and scorn. Other figures in the utilitarian movement—Marquis de Condorcet (1743–1794) of France and the Britons Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) and William Godwin (1756–1836)—also held fairly progressive views toward women in keeping with utilitarianism's reform-minded politics, which drew on Enlightenment thinking. Utilitarianism, very generally, is the view that morally right action maximizes utility, the technical term by which the utilitarians meant happiness. Utilitarians don't prioritize the well-being of some human beings over others; everyone's utility counts equally in the utilitarian calculus. This tendency toward equality is evident in the writings of Condorcet, who argues in his famous 1790 essay, "On Giving Women the Right of Citizenship":



John Stuart Mill and suffragettes. This satirical cartoon from 1860 mocks Mill's support for women's rights. The caption reads "Pray clear the way, there, for these—ah—persons." HULTON DEUTSCH/GETTY IMAGES.

The rights of men stem exclusively from the fact that they are sentient beings, capable of acquiring moral ideas and of reasoning upon them. Since women have the same qualities, they necessarily also have the same rights. Either no member of the human race has any true rights, or else they all have the same ones; and anyone who votes against the rights of another, whatever his religion, colour or sex, automatically forfeits his own. (Condorcet [1790] 1994, 335)

Hegel, Marx, and Engels. Echoing the thoughts of Aristotle and Kant that we've seen so far, the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) takes a position on the woman question in his *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* ([1821] 1998). He describes men as active and women as passive, and a woman's place as in the family. "The difference between men and women," Hegel says,

is the difference between animals and plant; the animal is closer in character to man, the plant to woman, for the latter is more a peaceful [process of] unfolding whose principle is the more indeterminate unity of feeling. When women are in charge of government, the state is in danger, for their actions are based not on the demands of universality but on contingent inclination and opinion. (Hegel [1821] 1998, 207)

We have seen this kind of sentiment as recently as the 2016 US presidential election, where rhetoric about the dangers of women being in charge was used against Hillary Clinton.

Although Marxist feminism is one of the most popular strains of feminist thought, the writings of Karl Marx (1818–1883) himself lack both a coherent, sustained, and plausible account of the nature and origins of women’s oppression and a precise articulation of an alternative to patriarchal gender roles. However, Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), Marx’s fellow German philosopher and the coauthor of his 1848 pamphlet *The Communist Manifesto*, in 1884 wrote an essay on the family that contains some surprising insights into the nature of gender oppression. For example, under capitalism, he says, the modern family is “based on the open or disguised enslavement of the woman” ([1884] 1978, 744). Engels spells out the connections between the nature, creation, and development of family structures on one hand and property relations on the other. If history had progressed as Engels thought it would, we would have seen the elimination of both socioeconomic class differences and the subordination of women.

Nietzsche. Among other nineteenth-century philosophers, the German thinker Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) is perhaps most notorious for misogynist remarks. For example, in his famous aphorism 232, from the 1886 work *Beyond Good and Evil*, he declares that, “from the beginning, nothing has been more alien, repugnant, and hostile to woman than truth—her great art is the lie, her highest concern is mere appearance and beauty” (1968, 353). One of Nietzsche’s main influences was Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), whose 1851 essay “On Women” avers: “One need only look at a woman’s shape to discover that she is not intended for either too much mental or too much physical work” ([1851] 1897, 64). He continues, “Women are directly adapted to act as the nurses and educators of our early childhood, for the simple reason that they themselves are childish, foolish, and short-sighted” ([1851] 1897, 65). He gives evidence for this characterization: “Nothing different can be expected of women if it is borne in mind that the most eminent of the whole sex have never accomplished anything in the fine arts that is really great, genuine, and original, or given to the world any kind of work of permanent value” ([1851] 1897, 72). Schopenhauer declares that it is women’s nature to obey and denies that they have a sense of justice. He concludes the essay with this declaration:

That woman is by nature intended to obey is shown by the fact that every woman who is placed in the unnatural position of absolute independence at once attaches herself to some kind of man, by whom she is controlled and governed; this is because she requires a master. If she is young, the man is a lover; if she is old, a priest. (Schopenhauer [1851] 1897, 79).

We hardly need to point out that, among the countless counterexamples of women achieving and maintaining independence, just a single one of those examples would suffice to falsify Schopenhauer’s claim as a matter of empirical fact.

Freud. In the work of Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), the Austrian neurologist who founded psychoanalysis, the most consistent aspect of his views on gender is his associating activity with masculinity and passivity with femininity. However, although he harks back to Aristotle on sex difference, he separates masculinity and femininity from anatomical sex. In Freud’s view, every biological male has passive impulses and every biological female has active impulses, and the distribution of these impulses depends on life events and cultural context. This relatively enlightened position runs against Freud’s

theory of castration anxiety, which, in terms of the psychic trajectories of both men and women, ascribes tremendous value to the possession of a penis. Freud has been both critiqued and celebrated by feminists. Influential contemporary feminist philosophers who celebrate Freud include Luce Irigaray (1930–) and Hélène Cixous (1937–). They overcome the problem of castration anxiety by drawing on Jacques Lacan's (1901–1981) ways of interpreting Freud. In his celebrated essay "The Signification of the Phallus" ([1958] 2004), Lacan takes what Freud calls "castration" as an unavoidable condition for entering into culture (what Lacan calls "the symbolic"). The phallus, for Lacan, is not the penis but rather the sign for that nonexistent thing that would overcome the alienation that accompanies submission to various cultural constraints. So, for Lacan, every functioning social subject is castrated.

Wittgenstein. Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951), the Austrian-British thinker who was one of the giants of early-twentieth-century philosophy, said little about women in his published philosophical writings. His biographer reports that Wittgenstein did make a number of derogatory comments about women in personal conversations, expressing opposition to women's suffrage on the grounds that women are stupid, and exclaiming, after all but one of the women in a class he was teaching at Cambridge had left the lecture hall, "Thank God we've got rid of the women!" (Monk 1990, 498).

Analytic Philosophy. Philosophers in the analytic tradition, which developed and became professionalized in the United Kingdom and the United States, also narrowed their vision. Overwhelmingly men, such philosophers stopped mentioning women and gender almost altogether as their attention turned to questions of metaphysics, epistemology, and language.

Certain trends emerged in this period. On one hand, some held views of women's nature as fundamentally embodied and, in particular, tied to their reproductive function; proponents of these views held women to be governed by their emotions, and considered it appropriate for them to be active only in the private sphere (as opposed to men as spiritual and intellectual, men as governed by reason, and men as properly active in the public sphere). Often but not always, such conceptions of women entailed a view of emotions, bodies, reproduction, and private life as inferior to reason, intellect, and public life; women were thus considered to be inferior to men and properly subordinated to them both in society at large and within the family.

One other point worth mentioning is that, even when canonical philosophers do address the woman question, their views on the subject are largely ignored. That is to say, answers to this question are ignored *by us*, by those people who study history of philosophy and teach and present it to others. Returning for a moment to Kant in the eighteenth century, it is noteworthy that, though his work is one of the major subjects of study in the history of philosophy, his views about gender and race are rarely mentioned, let alone discussed in detail. It is true, as has been noted, that these views are located in texts that are usually regarded as peripheral to his main corpus. But this raises the question of whether those texts are considered peripheral precisely because philosophers tend to dismiss issues related to women as unimportant.

Since the late twentieth century, there have been many feminist attempts to engage critically with the canon. The next two sections describe some of the work done by feminists.

FEMINIST RESPONSES

Having read the preceding section, you likely are not shocked to hear that contemporary feminists have had a field day with the history of philosophy. Given that feminist scholars disagree about a lot of things, you are also probably not surprised to learn that they disagree as to what to say and do about philosophy's rampant historical sexism.

We can separate the various feminist responses to the history of philosophy into three major camps: the critics, the defenders, and the appropriators. Although members of all three groups start with a critique of the canon, the defenders and appropriators attempt to go beyond criticism by picking up philosophical ideas and reinterpreting or developing them. Critics, on the other hand, aim primarily to show just how serious the flaws are.

THE CRITICS

The strongest criticism of the canon of Western philosophy charges that it is sexist through and through and should therefore be rejected. This charge is supported in various, subtly different ways.

Some feminist critics simply point to all of the material mentioned above (and more—much more). Virtually all philosophers in history made sexist remarks, they say, and we can take these remarks as evidence of their views of women as subordinate by nature, or by marriage, or both.

Other feminist critics focus not so much on particular philosophers' sexist remarks but on the intrinsically gendered nature of their thinking. The charge is that the canon, or major figures in the canon, are sexist not only because of what was explicitly said about women but because the concepts that are used are themselves gendered. We can see this when we consider Descartes. As mentioned above, Descartes didn't say much of anything about women, yet he is one of the main targets of feminist critique. Why is this? The answer is that Descartes makes a radical distinction between the mind and the body, elevating the former over the latter: the mind and its use of reason give us truths, while our bodies deceive us and make us fallible. (As an example, he discusses optical illusions, where our senses tell us something that our minds know can't be right.) This idea in itself seems gender neutral, but feminists point out that the body has historically been identified with women and the mind with men. So, the elevation of the mind and the denigration of the body is, in effect, an elevation of men and a denigration of women. Arguably the whole rationalist tradition, of which Descartes is the founding father, is equally guilty here. Genevieve Lloyd (1941–) famously made this critique in her 1984 book *The Man of Reason* (see also Susan Bordo's 1987 book, *The Flight to Objectivity*). Lloyd admits that Descartes didn't have the explicit intention to denigrate women; in fact, Descartes himself thought that his theory of the mind made knowledge accessible to everyone, women included (Lloyd 1984, 45). However, the received stereotypes about the masculinity of the mind and reason and the femininity of the body meant that Descartes's philosophy (and specifically his mind-body dualism) reinforced and perhaps exacerbated cultural ideas about the inferiority of women.

The roots of this kind of gendered dimension to what is supposed to be merely a metaphysical division go back to Aristotle. As we've seen, Aristotle said some pretty sexist things. Some feminists point out that, even if we ignore those remarks, his metaphysics can be seen as having a problematic gendered component. Aristotle draws a strict distinction

between form and matter; masculinity/activity is associated with form, femininity/passivity with matter. And form is elevated above matter in Aristotle's metaphysics. This means that Aristotle's presupposition that men are better than women underpins his discussion of the building blocks of all reality. Critics insist that Aristotle's sexism is necessarily intertwined with every aspect of his philosophy. For example, in "Woman Is Not a Rational Animal," Lynda Lange argues that "it is not at all clear that it [Aristotle's theory of sex difference] can simply be cut away without any reflection on the status of the rest of the philosophy" (1983, 2).

Hobbes, another canonical figure, has been explicitly indicted along with other contract theorists such as Locke and Rousseau for upholding fundamentally patriarchal commitments. Carole Pateman (1940–) was one of the foremothers of this critical movement. In her 1988 book, *The Sexual Contract*, she argues that the history of political philosophy has been predicated on a contract among men to secure the subordination of women. When she turns to Hobbes, she argues that the Hobbesian social contract is enacted for no other reason than to secure patriarchal political right in the commonwealth, and that Hobbesian women are necessarily excluded from becoming civil individuals. Similarly, Susan Moller Okin (1946–2004) charges that Hobbes's "political structure is based on the patriarchal family [as an] institution [that] depends on the assumption of the radical inequality of women" (1979, 199). According to Christine Di Stefano, Hobbes's philosophy "embodies a gender-based logic, epistemology, ontology and intellectual style" (1983, 634). Tommy Lott argues that Hobbes provides a "rationale for racialized patriarchy" (2002, 64). Charles Mills makes the criticism most generally—and most eloquently—when he claims that "Hobbes ... [is] a *male* theorist in a sense deeper than [his] mere possession of one kind of genitalia" (1999, 15).

The critics of Hobbes in this context are fully aware that Hobbes said positive things about women, that he insisted on the natural equality of the sexes, that he denied the inevitability of male domination and female subordination, that he radically broke with tradition by locating the first rights over children in mothers not fathers, and that he emphasized the possibility of female sovereigns and praised various queens. In fact, as these critics see it, this makes Hobbes's patriarchalism even more pernicious. He doesn't wear his sexism on his sleeve; rather, he smuggles it in under a banner of false equality and consent. The critics charge that Hobbes is not simply inconsistent or hypocritical but that his theory represents the worst kind of misogynist, sexist patriarchalism, one made so bad by its duplicity.

Consider the implications of this criticism. Social contract theory goes hand in hand with the birth of liberalism. Liberalism, with its emphasis on equality, liberty, and the consent of the governed, turns out to be a by-product of patriarchal thinking. Worse, according to some of these theorists, liberalism turns out to be inextricably based on and linked with views about the inferiority of women and their proper place as the servants of men. One could make the argument that even though (for instance) Rousseau and Kant didn't speak explicitly of gender in their moral and political theories, those theories are "fruit of the poisoned tree." The idea here is that the various racist and sexist comments cannot be cordoned off or set aside in order to accept the more central moral and political views of the philosophers who espouse them.

As we can see, then, there are many different ways of being critical of the canon. Feminist critics such as these have been among the loudest voices calling for diversification of the sources we engage with and teach to our students.

THE DEFENDERS

Some interpreters push back against these critical charges. Often the instinct of these feminist defenders of the canon is to point out the not-terrible or sometimes even positive things said about women or about gender equality (as, for example, by Hobbes). Some scholars (e.g., Kleingeld 2007; Storey 2015) argue that Kant changed his mind about the inferiority of the non-White races. Others, such as Helga Varden (2015), offer readings of Kant that try to mitigate the overt sexism of his various statements.

Another kind of feminist defense challenges the feminist critical charges on interpretive grounds. Witt (1998), for example, defends Aristotle's philosophy against the charge that his form/matter distinction smuggles in sexist ideas, insisting that this is simply a misreading of Aristotle. We can remove the gendered dimensions of Aristotle's concepts, she argues, without changing them in any important way.

Feminist defenses of the canon such as these involve a kind of separability thesis: the idea that we can separate out various sexist claims from the rest of the theory. These philosophers were products of their times, the defenders argue, and so can be forgiven for reflecting the commonly held beliefs, biases, and prejudices of their society; there is no need to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

The Separability Thesis. There is a real dispute about the legitimacy of this separability thesis: What does it mean to say that sexist claims are separate from the other claims, that one part of a philosopher's body of work is separable from the rest? Is it that they are *logically* distinct? If we carefully cut out all of the explicitly sexist remarks, does the theory remain intact? Can we just carve up theories any way we like? These are difficult questions, but at least part of how we answer them will make reference to the purpose of our inquiry. If the goal is to render the most faithful textual account of a particular philosopher, then we probably can't separate out their sexist remarks, at least without doing something like showing that the remarks in question were, say, added in by someone else after the philosopher's death (as some have tried to do with Nietzsche's anti-Semitism, claiming that his sister inserted these remarks). On the other hand, if the goal of the inquiry is to reconstruct the most consistent, coherent, and charitable interpretation of a philosopher's view, then we might be able to separate out the sexist parts.

Other feminist defenders go further than advancing separability theses and instead try to offer fully feminist readings of historical philosophers. These readings are usually called reconstructionist projects. One example of a reconstructionist project is S. A. Lloyd's feminist reading of Hobbes. She points out that, though Hobbes ultimately endorses patriarchy, he also says a number of things that can be read with a feminist gloss. According to Lloyd, "Hobbes, properly understood, has a sturdy and sound philosophical basis to establish the political equality of women. It's time that Hobbes received the credit for the important feminist work he did" (2012, 60). Lloyd adduces a number of pieces of evidence for this claim, pointing out the egalitarian impulses in Hobbes: he insists on the natural equality of the sexes and rejects Salic law (which prohibited women from inheriting the throne); he argues for what is called "natural maternal right," which means that children naturally belong to the mother, not the father, as many patriarchalist theories claimed. For all of these reasons, Lloyd and others think that Hobbes is a kind of unclaimed feminist hero.

You can see how the boundaries between the kinds of defenses might start to get fuzzy. It can be difficult to draw the line between attempting to salvage the "good" parts of a

philosopher's work and simply putting forward a different theory. And, of course, some attempts to reframe—some might say “sanitize”—the work of a canonical philosopher are less compelling than others.

THE APPROPRIATORS

The feminist appropriationist approach involves taking concepts initially developed by philosophers for other purposes and using them for feminist purposes. Appropriators use these philosophical concepts to explain what is wrong with certain kinds of treatment of women and to show how various everyday practices and institutions rely on that kind of treatment. Recall that the reconstructionist approach emphasizes the positive things said about women and argues for the separability of the negative claims; in contrast, the appropriationist approach draws on concepts that might not be about gender at all and uses them to address contemporary problems of gender. The difference between the two approaches should become clearer with some examples. One of the prime subjects of this approach is Kant, the author of numerous egregious remarks on women and non-White races. Some philosophers, as was just discussed, have tried to contextualize these remarks to take away at least some of their sting. However, even the defenders of Kant can only do so much, and they know it: they can only say that Kant wasn't that bad, not that he wasn't bad at all.

Kantian Ideas. On the face of things, then, it's intriguing that so much recent feminist thinking has drawn ideas from Kant. One such strain of thought developed since the late 1990s focuses on Kant's concept of objectification. Many feminists point out that women are objectified in numerous ways in contemporary society. A lot of popular culture involves representations of women as simply there for the sexual use, amusement, and service of men—women as object-like and even, in the most egregious cases, actually represented as inanimate objects. Mainstream pornography provides an obvious example, but women are also sexualized in this way in everything from advertising to blockbuster movies to music videos to the jokes of (male) standup comedians. Kelly Sue DeConnick, one of the top writers at Marvel comics, articulates her frustration with this phenomenon in what she calls the sexy lamp test: “If you can remove a female character from your plot and replace her with a



Sexy lamp test. Kelly Sue DeConnick articulates her frustration with female objectification in what she calls the sexy lamp test: “If you can remove a female character from your plot and replace her with a sexy lamp and your story still works, you're a hack” (Yebl 2013). © WISCONSINART / DREAMSTIME.COM.

sexy lamp and your story still works, you're a hack" (Yehl 2013). It's easy to point to cases in which women are objectified, and perhaps many people would agree that the worst examples make them feel uncomfortable; but it's not so easy to explain what is problematic or even wrong with such representations. Kant allows us to do exactly this.

At the center of Kant's moral theory is what he calls the categorical imperative, which is supposed to be the fundamental principle of morality. He formulates it in a number of ways, but the second formulation is perhaps easiest to grasp. The categorical imperative, he says, requires that we treat rational nature in others and ourselves as an end in itself and "never merely as a means" ([1786] 2012, 49). What Kant means by this is that we have to respect persons as persons and not treat them as if they were things. We can use things—objects—for our own purposes: they don't need to be respected; their own goals don't need to be considered when we ask ourselves whether it's okay to use or interact with them. So, if I sit on a chair, I don't need to ask the chair's permission first. I don't need to ask myself whether the chair wants to be sat on. I can use the chair as a mere means to my own comfort. I can sit on the chair, sell the chair, chop up the chair for firewood, and even chop up the chair for fun. I can do all of these things without doing anything that is morally problematic or even relevant from a moral perspective (unless, of course, the chair belongs to someone else). Kant's point is that the chair is a *thing*. *Persons*, on the other hand, are not things; they have ends, or goals, of their own and those ends need to be respected. When I ask myself whether it's okay to interact with a person in a particular way, I have to take into account that person's own needs, goals, and values. From Kant's point of view, what makes persons different from things, and what makes persons valuable from a moral perspective, is their autonomy—their ability to set and pursue ends, and their ability to reflect on whether the ends they've set are the right ones, that is, their ability to be moral. Kant would put this in terms of persons' ability to understand and follow the categorical imperative.

What does that have to do with objectification? This formulation of the categorical imperative tells us what we can and cannot do to persons. We aren't allowed to treat them as mere means, that is to say, as objects. For Kant, when we lie to people or steal from them, we use them as mere means—we treat them as objects for our own purposes; we fail to respect their autonomy and ability to set their own ends.

Kant himself didn't apply this moral standard to the treatment and representation of women, but it can be applied on his behalf. And this, of course, is precisely what feminist appropriators do. Kant did worry about the connection between sexuality and treating people as objects or mere means, and he used this to argue against prostitution, masturbation, and sex outside of monogamous (opposite-sex) marriage. Feminists such as Andrea Dworkin (1946–2005), Catharine MacKinnon (1946–), and Rae Langton (1961–) use the Kantian worry about objectification to criticize pornography, the sexualization of women in popular culture, sexual harassment and sexual violence against women, and a number of similar phenomena.

Of course, there are debates about the moral status of sexual objectification, with some scholars arguing that objectification isn't always bad. Martha Nussbaum (1947–), for example, has a feminist theory of objectification according to which it can be neutral or even good. To illustrate a case of unproblematic objectification, she writes:

If I am lying around with my lover on the bed, and use his stomach as a pillow ... there seems to be nothing at all baneful about this, provided that I do so with his consent (or, if he is asleep, with a reasonable belief that he would not mind), and

without causing him pain, provided as well, that I do so in the context of a relationship in which he is generally treated as more than a pillow. (Nussbaum 1995, 265)

But leaving that aside, what's important for our purposes here is to see how Kant's concepts are appropriated as means for feminist ends. Kant's idea of treating a person as a mere means has been put to use to give a more precise or philosophically substantive grounding for the feminist claim that the sexual objectification of women is wrong. The feminist position on objectification is generally a critical one. While noting the exceptions (such as the one quoted above), Nussbaum agrees that objectification is generally a bad thing. Indeed, Nussbaum gives an analysis of what objectification is that involves explicitly Kantian elements (like the denial of autonomy), showing how influential the Kantian vocabulary has become even for a thinker who ultimately rejects elements of the Kantian picture.

Another feminist appropriation of Kant is found in the work of Carol Hay (the editor of this volume), who argues that Kant can be appropriated for feminist ends in a very different way. According to Hay (2013), members of oppressed groups have a duty to resist their own oppression. This is an important and interesting view in part because it turns attention to the agency of the people who are oppressed, and others have also argued for this view on various grounds. But it is also a controversial claim, not least because a failure to resist one's own oppression might then look perilously close to being to blame for one's own oppression. Part of what is so distinctive about Hay's approach is that she draws on Kant's idea of a duty of self-respect. Hay's account is controversial as an appropriation of Kant, and it's also controversial whether oppressed people have a duty to resist their own oppression. This makes her appropriation somewhat different from the objectification case, where feminists largely agree that objectification is wrong and no one really doubts that the critique of objectification is an appropriate extension of Kant's ideas.

Hay's account, on the other hand, is not a clear extension of familiar Kantian principles to explain a claim we already know to be true. She has to do a lot of work to argue for both parts of the account—she has to demonstrate that the duty to resist one's own oppression can be derived from what Kant says about duties to oneself, and she has to defend that duty against those who doubt it exists. She makes a strong case on both parts of the account, but the point here is that Hay illustrates a different way in which a philosopher's ideas can be appropriated and used to explore an important contemporary issue. Note in both cases, though, that feminist appropriators are not interested in defending what Kant said about women or what he said about sexual objectification.

Ideas from Mill. John Stuart Mill is another interesting case in this regard. Mill himself argued extensively for gender equality in his 1869 book, *The Subjection of Women*. But what contemporary feminists most frequently take from Mill is his analysis of harm. For example, feminists such as MacKinnon and Dworkin object to pornography on the grounds that it harms women, arguing that normalizing and sexualizing the objectification, degradation, and humiliation of women contributes to rape culture and the maintenance of the patriarchal order. Mill's famous harm principle says that the law can interfere with liberty only in order to prevent harm to others. The law cannot interfere with liberty in order to prevent harm to oneself or to serve moralistic goals, goals that cannot be reduced to harm. Some criticisms of pornography make reference to precisely these kinds of moralistic considerations—claiming, for example, that pornography is immoral because sex outside of heterosexual, monogamous marriage is immoral, or because masturbation is immoral and

pornography is often used for masturbatory purposes. Feminists, unsurprisingly, tend to be suspicious of these kinds of moralistic claims, and thus many feminist critics of pornography ground their critique in claims about the harms that result from the production and widespread use of mainstream pornography. In doing so they at least implicitly invoke Mill.

Whether or not attempts at appropriation are successful, we need to be careful. As Richard Rorty (1931–2007) puts it, appropriationist approaches risk “anachronistically imposing enough of our problems and vocabulary on the dead to make them conversation partners” (1984, 49). He urges that, at the very least, such interpretations must be “conducted in full knowledge of their anachronism” (1984, 54). Something is anachronistic if it involves attributing a claim, concept, or position to a historical event to which it does not belong. To call Plato a feminist is to be anachronistic because the concept of feminism did not exist in ancient Greece. We can take Rorty’s point to heart and, when we proceed anachronistically, do so in full knowledge and disclosure. After all, the history of philosophy should still be useful. Without assuming that objectification and pornography existed in Kant’s or Mill’s time as they exist in ours, we can use their philosophical resources to talk about pornography as long as we are honest about the anachronism inherent in this approach. In other words, being anachronistic isn’t a bad thing if one is forthright about it.

WOMEN PHILOSOPHERS: RECOVERING LOST VOICES

As long as there has been philosophy, women have been doing philosophy. But many of these voices have, for the most part, been lost to history. This section gives an overview and a sampling of some of the voices that remain.

History is a notoriously tricky enterprise. We can separate out which voices were heard, which voices had their words recorded in writing, which writings were deemed important both at the time and for future generations, and which records and writings ultimately survived. For instance, we don’t actually have Aristotle’s writings; the scholarly consensus is that what we have are copies of lecture notes written by students in his classes.

When we think about the ancient world, for example, we note that women as a group were subordinated to men in most societies that we know about (though there are a few notable exceptions—the Spartans had a striking amount of gender equality, and women fought alongside men in battle). Women couldn’t be citizens in ancient Greece or Rome, and Greek and Roman laws reflected and reinforced women’s inferior status. There are very few known women philosophers from the ancient world, for a number of likely reasons. Given that women were excluded in large part from public discourse, they were less likely to participate in philosophical discussions; and even when they did participate, their contributions were less likely to be taken seriously and less likely to be recorded for posterity. Only women in the most exceptional circumstances—such as those who were royalty—were taught to read.

Of course, most men couldn’t read or participate in esoteric philosophical exchanges either—both were elite practices available only to a very few. The vast majority of the populace was thus excluded from doing philosophy. Even among those who were permitted to join and further philosophical conversations, however, women were rare. Hypatia of Alexandria (370–415 CE) is pretty much the only woman philosopher from the ancient world whose writing has survived. Even now, few contemporary philosophers are working on Hypatia, who is rarely included on syllabi for ancient

philosophy classes. (She has, however, been given the honor of having the first feminist philosophy journal named after her.)

If I had written this chapter in, say, 1995 or 2000, the only women I would have mentioned in this section are Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797), Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986), and perhaps Hannah Arendt (1906–1975). At that time, those would have been the familiar names to people in philosophy departments, even if few of them knew much about what any of these women said. In fact, it's likely their fame came as much or more from the fact that all three were romantically connected with famous male philosophers. The English Wollstonecraft was married to William Godwin (one of the utilitarians mentioned earlier), who was famous during his lifetime. (Their daughter was Mary Shelley, the author of the novel *Frankenstein*, who bore the name of her own famous husband, the Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley.) The German-born Arendt had a long and controversial romantic relationship with Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), who was her professor. Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980), one of the most famous French existentialist philosophers, were what we might today call life partners, remaining unmarried because neither believed in the institution of marriage. The association of women philosophers with male philosophers will become a theme in what follows.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT AND PRINCESS ELIZABETH: THE FAMILIAR FIGURES

The way in which I've carved things up puts Beauvoir and Arendt beyond the limits of what counts as history of philosophy, as they both died in the last quarter of the twentieth century. (Another aside: Arendt herself rejected the label of philosopher, instead describing herself as a political theorist.) Wollstonecraft, however, as an eighteenth-century figure, uncontroversially belongs to the history of philosophy.

Wollstonecraft. For many years Wollstonecraft's name was a familiar one because she was one of the founding mothers of feminism, arguing for the reform of marriage and improvement in the treatment and condition of women, especially with regard to education. Her arguments respond directly to Rousseau's. Wollstonecraft rails against the institution of marriage and the gender roles of her day, which taught women that their only role was to be attractive and charming to men and dutiful as a wife and mother. In her view, this system is bad for both men and women. Such subservience, she argues, encourages women to be petty, superficial, and incurious and deprives them of achieving many of the intellectual and moral virtues.

Wollstonecraft insists (much to the chagrin of some later feminists) that the existing system of gender roles also makes women into *worse* wives and mothers. She argues that if women were educated well, then they could be genuine partners with and companions to their husbands, instead of aiming to be pretty servants. Wollstonecraft's arguments for women's education, then, were based largely on the good consequences that education would have for men. Now, it's not clear whether Wollstonecraft actually attached such importance to the consequences for men or whether it was a rhetorical or strategic move on her part to frame her arguments in this way. After all, the people with the power to make decisions about whether or not to allow women to be educated were men, and so in practical and political terms it was sensible for her to appeal to their self-interest. Wollstonecraft gets credit for being the first of what are now called liberal feminists (other chapters in this volume discuss the distinctions between kinds of feminists and feminist political philosophy). She was widely read in her day and has been since, but not particularly

frequently in philosophy departments; rather, the attention she garnered has been in departments such as history, English, and women's studies. Part of the reason for this may be that she didn't engage the nongendered topics that have typically attracted analytic philosophers (e.g., abstract questions about the nature of reality, knowledge, or value); instead, she mainly wrote about subjects that have been seen as "women's issues" (a phenomenon discussed further below).

In the present century there has been a surge of interest in recovering the lost voices of women philosophers, and much of that attention has focused on the early modern period. This recovery effort involves both finding women who have gotten no attention and giving more attention to the few names that might be familiar.

Elizabeth of Bohemia. The one woman who would've been found on an early modern syllabus even before the awakened scholarly interest in women philosophers, and the pressure to diversify syllabi in philosophy classes, is Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia (1618–1680). Princess Elizabeth was Descartes's most well-known correspondent, raising what is arguably the best objection to Descartes's mind-body dualism.

In his most famous work, the *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641), Descartes argues that the body and the mind are two totally separate things, indeed, two separate kinds of things (he calls them "substances"). For Descartes, the essence of "body" (also called "matter") is what he calls "extension"—matter/body is extended: it takes up space. Matter can have other properties (for example, motion), but a material object can change its rate or direction of motion and still be the same object. The one property that is fundamental and essential to material things as such is extension. "Mind," on the other hand, is not extended. The essence of mind is "thought," which is not the kind of thing that takes up physical space. Consider your idea of a car or of your best friend: that idea is an instance of thought that does not exist anywhere in space. It might be produced by or in your brain, but it's not the case that we can cut open your brain and carve out the little bit that is your idea of a car or of your best friend. And matter, considered on its own, doesn't think. Thought is fundamentally different from matter. This, in a nutshell, is Descartes's mind-body dualism, and it is the goal of the *Meditations* to defend it.

Upon reading the *Meditations*, Princess Elizabeth put a simple question to Descartes, and that simple question revealed itself to be one of the most important objections to his philosophy. If the mind and the body are so different, she asked, then how do they affect each other? We know that they do, in fact, affect each other: you have the thought "I'm going to go to class now," and the different parts of your body start moving. When something happens to your body, such as stubbing your toe, you have a corresponding idea of pain. But if the mind is not extended, then how can it cause extended things to do anything at all, let alone to move? And if the body does not possess any property of thought, then how can things that happen to the body manifest themselves in thought? We already know that there is a connection between the mind and the body, and it looks like Descartes's theory makes that connection more mysterious, not less.

Letters go back and forth between the two, and Descartes tries various ways to respond to Princess Elizabeth's objection, all of which fail. In a later work, he posits that the mind and body interact in the pineal gland, at the base of the skull. But that move doesn't solve the problem, because the pineal gland is still matter. Descartes's pineal gland argument is now seen as one of the best illustrations in the history of philosophy of a failed rejoinder.

In addition to the force of Elizabeth's objections, there are several revealing things about the correspondence between the two friends. First, she is strikingly self-deprecating, constantly apologizing for and lamenting her ignorance and lack of understanding. At one point, she chalks this up to the weakness of her sex (Shapiro 1999). But Descartes never says anything of the kind about her. In fact, he dedicates one of his later books to her, taking her to be one of his best and most challenging interlocutors. Second, it is only because Descartes and his mind-body dualism are so famous and influential that Princess Elizabeth's correspondence with him has gotten the attention it has. Third, her status as royalty afforded certain privileges that made this correspondence possible. Princess Elizabeth was not only literate but highly educated; she knew French and Latin, as well as Greek, English, and German. She also had the free time necessary to study and reflect on philosophical questions and writings, and she wouldn't have been sanctioned much for doing so. This combination of factors made Princess Elizabeth one of a very small number of women in Europe to be in a position to read and correspond with Descartes.

OTHER LOST VOICES

Other women from the early modern period to have received increasing attention include Margaret Cavendish (1623–1673), whose husband was William Cavendish, one of Thomas Hobbes's benefactors. Hobbes lived with the Cavendish family for years and served as a tutor to their sons. Cavendish wrote in direct response to Hobbes's theories, denying his metaphysical views and positing her own. Even though they were in the same household and dined at the same table, and even though she read and responded to his work, not once did they directly engage intellectually (Cunning 2016). This is a revealing fact about the position of women vis-à-vis men and vis-à-vis philosophy at the time.

The English feminist writer Mary Astell (1666–1731) has a famous exchange of letters with John Norris (1657–1711), a Cartesian philosopher, in which they debate some of the most common topics of the time—love of God and the nature of causality. Lady Damaris Masham (1658–1708) was a longtime friend and interlocutor of John Locke, and she had an extended correspondence with Leibniz. Locke lived with the Mashams for some time, and he died in Lady Masham's presence. Locke, who never married, is suspected of having been in love with Masham, but there is no evidence that he ever acted on his affections (though there are some early letters between them that include pastoral love poems).

Emilie du Châtelet (1706–1749) is another figure who has achieved some popularity. Famous for her translations into French of works by the English scientist Isaac Newton and the Dutch-English philosopher Bernard Mandeville (and, to return to a familiar theme, for her love affair with the writer-philosopher Voltaire), she also wrote philosophical essays and letters that were recognized in her own time. Some of her ideas appeared in Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond D'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*, arguably the most important representation of Enlightenment thought. She criticizes Locke and was influenced by Leibniz. Other figures we could point to include the English aristocrat Anne Conway (1631–1679), who was associated with the philosopher Henry More and argued against the views of Descartes, Hobbes, and Spinoza, and the French writer Marie de Gournay (1565–1645), who was a student of Michel de Montaigne and made a name for herself commenting on his work while also arguing forcefully for the equality of men and women. As Joan Gibson and Mary Ellen Waithe put it, in their introduction to a history of women philosophers from the sixth through sixteenth centuries, "These women are not women on the fringes of philosophy, but philosophers on the fringes of history" (1989, xxxviii).

“What is philosophy?” is itself a philosophical question, and philosophers have argued about this for as long as they have been arguing about anything. However, it must also be said that what topics and questions are considered philosophical is determined by a historical context that is both gendered and racialized. As a result, determining who can produce philosophy or be recognized as producing philosophy has also been gendered and racialized.

OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

By now you should have noticed a trend. Each of these recovered voices of women is paired with the voice of an already known man. That this is so has been criticized as giving women what Charlotte Witt (2006) has called a “best supporting actress” role. If these women are discussed in the scholarly literature and included on philosophy syllabi only in conjunction with one or more of the canonical men, this relegates the work of women to a secondary status. Women are not studied in their own right, and the narrative of the history of philosophy is left intact. This trend, incidentally, is not confined to women’s voices in the history of philosophy. It also is evident in the attention paid to recovering lost voices of philosophers of color. For instance, Anthony William Amo (c. 1703–c. 1759), born in what is present-day Ghana, as a child was given as a gift to a German duke. Treated as a member of the duke’s family, who provided for his education, he is the first African we know of who attended and graduated from a European university. He became a professor of philosophy and wrote against Descartes, advancing a position more in common with Locke and the Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711–1776).

To be sure, the women discussed above did in fact comment extensively on the men whose works they read; so did other men. If you were writing philosophy in seventeenth-century Europe, it was expected that you would locate your views in relation to influential figures such as Descartes, Hobbes, and Locke. Yet it is cause for concern that women are included *only* as commentators on, interlocutors with, or objectors to the canonical figures. This idea receives some support from looking at popular sources of information. At one point, on Châtelet’s Wikipedia page, for instance, there was lots of information about her translation of Newton’s *Principia* and her tumultuous affair with Voltaire, but you had to scroll down a bit before you learned that she had any philosophical views of her own. In contrast, when one looks up Newton, his biographical details might make little mention of the fact that he was translated by Châtelet. Similarly, discussions of Masham often begin by talking about her relationship with Locke, whereas discussions of Locke rarely mention Masham, and if they do it is usually in a biographical context, not a philosophical one.

Thus these men loom conspicuously larger in the representations of these women than the women do in the representations of these men. Although it is true that these women often were commenting on, objecting to, or translating the work of men, so too were men responding to each other—as Locke to Hobbes and Descartes—yet that is not the first thing we learn about them. Philosophers often proceed by responding to the major theories of their time, and women were no exception. But in the reception of women now, they are introduced and defined by their association with men, even and especially when these lost voices composed work that was not simply a commentary on others. And this happens in a way that is not true for the men of the canon.

These women did have philosophical theories of their own. Cavendish, for example, advanced a theory of causation called occasionalism, which posits that all events are caused by God. This is almost certainly not a true theory of causation, though some think that one virtue of occasionalism is that it might provide a way around the problem of interaction

(discussed above). However, occasionalism is no more implausible than George Berkeley's (1685–1753) idealism (which holds that reality is composed of minds and ideas and nothing else), yet no one questions the legitimacy of this idea as a philosophical position or an object of inquiry.

One could respond that these women were merely responding to better-known men and thus it's legitimate to treat them as such. The best evidence for that view is the example of Princess Elizabeth, where the only writings we have of hers are her letters to Descartes. However, Lisa Shapiro (2007) argues that Princess Elizabeth has her own metaphysics that can't be understood simply as a response to Descartes or derivative of Cartesian philosophy. It's also worth noting the political and social power dynamics that characterized the conditions in which these works were produced. Women, more than men, would have had to couch their philosophical thoughts in relation to the views of men. Because the credibility of women as philosophers in their own right was suspect at best, it would have served to legitimate and validate their work to present it in the context of the already legitimated male figures. And, of course, it's also possible that they produced other writings, and that the only ones that survived were those that were legitimated by their references to men.

Explaining the Absence of Women from the Canon. There are many other figures I have omitted, and more are being identified and studied every year. One reason (aside from sexism and the circumstances of women's lives) why the writings of women have been absent from the canon of Western philosophy is that they often wrote in genres not explicitly philosophical. Women wrote letters, stories, and poems as well as philosophical treatises. For example, Cavendish wrote a book of utopian fiction called *The Blazing World* (1666) in addition to her more traditional *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* (1668), which sets out the occasionalist position described above. Because women tended to write in genres other than the recognizable philosophical treatise, those works weren't considered to be philosophy. That men also wrote letters, stories, and poems hasn't diminished their credibility as philosophers. We can't know for certain whether women were more likely than men to write in these other formats, but we do know that the writings of women, in whatever format, were largely ignored in the philosophical, intellectual, and political discourse of their times.

A second reason that the philosophical writings of women have been ignored has to do with the subject matters on which they wrote. It's not a coincidence that the women who have received the most attention are those writing on "traditional" philosophical topics, especially metaphysics and epistemology (nicknamed M&E). There is a bias in philosophy, and in studying early modern philosophy in particular, to focus on M&E and not on what we would now call social, moral, or political philosophy. The vast majority of the canonical early modern figures had something to say about social, moral, or political philosophy. Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, Leibniz, Hume, and Kant all had social, moral, and political views along with their metaphysical and epistemological positions (though, as I've mentioned, Descartes was an exception).

When we consider women philosophers in this context, something interesting emerges. The women who have received attention so far—the ones named above—all wrote on topics in M&E. Sometimes they wrote on other topics as well, but their writings that gained attention are the M&E ones. As well as reflecting a general bias in current views about philosophy, this also serves to further marginalize the writings of women. Mary Astell, as I've said, engaged in the popular philosophical debates of the time in her correspondence with John Norris, and that is what is getting attention. But most of her work is on questions related to gender. She argues against marriage and for women's education, and writes about

many other subjects that are recognizably feminist by today's standards. Cavendish has her bizarre theory of causation (again, a topic in M&E), but she also wrote on politics, including a story about a feminist utopia. A good deal of scholarship in philosophy is being produced about Cavendish's occasionalism but very little about her utopian fiction. Wollstonecraft has received scant attention from historians of philosophy because her main subjects were issues concerning women; she did not defend views in metaphysics or epistemology.

There is a cluster of issues that have tended to interest women philosophers, chiefly the argument for the equality of the sexes (natural, theological, even political), the institution of marriage, and women's education, whose practices they criticized and about which they presented and defended reforms. As noted, in the nineteenth century this cluster of issues became known as the woman question. Mainstream contemporary philosophers have not taken these questions seriously. As a result, the women in history who address these questions haven't been taken seriously either.

As a side note, this bias about what counts as a properly philosophical question still exists. Only since the 1990s has feminist philosophy been recognized by many philosophers as a legitimate area of study. Here is a telling example: Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), one of the giants of twentieth-century philosophy, wrote a book called *Marriage and Morals*, in which he argues for what he called “free-love.” Russell is responsible for founding analytic philosophy (the kind of philosophy dominant in North America and Britain today); his work on topics from mathematics, to language, to the nature of value are revered. He covered all of the M&E topics as well as moral and political theory. But he did not consider his book on marriage to be philosophy. As Carrie Jenkins observes, “He just didn't call *Marriage and Morals* philosophy, and I think that it's partly fed into the conception of analytic philosophy as a very gendered thing: The mind, the logic, the mathematics is very specifically men's business, and his work on love, sex, relationships, society—all the ‘women's business’—he cordoned out” (Weigel 2017).

THE FUTURE OF THE RECOVERY PROJECT

Women's voices are being recovered, slowly but surely. There are societies for the study of women philosophers and conferences on their work. Journal articles, books, and edited volumes are being published. A number of specific initiatives are worth mentioning. In the United States, Project Vox is a website that houses much of the original work of Cavendish, Conway, Châtelet, and Masham, and aims to facilitate scholarly and pedagogical inquiry into these four figures and others. In Canada, the website *New Narratives in the History of Philosophy* also provides primary sources and curricular resources to study and teach neglected figures. In Europe, the website *History of Women Philosophers* has similar goals. Perhaps, then, it is fair to say that the Western world is taking small steps toward diversifying the philosophical canon.

Summary

This chapter has given an overview of the main projects, issues, and questions in feminist history of philosophy, as it is practiced by contemporary academic scholars in colleges and universities in the West. There are three main approaches.

The first approach aims to excavate, display, and take seriously the various pieces of text in the existing philosophical canon that take up what is called the woman question. What

kinds of things have famous philosophers said about the nature and role of women? Some of them sound almost silly to our present-day ears (think of Aristotle's view on human reproduction). Some of them strike us as offensive in ways that are recognizable as continuing to exist today (as when women are seen as silly, petty creatures who exist to serve men). Some of them seem prescient to feminist concerns and arguments (think of Plato's insistence that all social roles should be open to men and women and Engels's criticism of the position of the wife in the modern nuclear family). This first project can tell us what famous or canonical male philosophers did or did not say, but it cannot tell us what to do with that information.

The second type of project is an attempt to do just that. What should we make of these various kinds of remarks? A few, such as Aristotle's claim that the female is completely passive in reproduction, can be easily dismissed as demonstrably false. But the pressing question as readers of these texts concerns how and to what extent the sexist remarks count against the philosophical views of the figures that hold them. Should the whole canon of Western philosophical thought be rejected as irremediably sexist? Are some of the feminist criticisms unfair? Are there countervailing pieces of textual evidence or are different interpretations possible? As we've seen, some feminist scholars want to dismiss the canon outright, while others think that at least some of the views of major figures can be defended or recuperated.

Finally, the third project, feminist history of philosophy, is a project of either recovery or discovery. The goal is to find and discuss women who were doing recognizable philosophy but who never became widely known and so aren't properly appreciated now. This project is in its infancy, and I am hopeful that a second or third edition of this book will have much more to say about them.

Bibliography

- Alanen, Lilli, and Charlotte Witt, eds. *Feminist Reflections on the History of Philosophy*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic, 2004.
- Aristotle. *Generation of Animals*. Translated by A. L. Peck. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1943.
- Aristotle. *The Politics*. Translated by T. A. Sinclair. London: Penguin, 1992.
- Bordo, Susan. *The Flight to Objectivity: Essays on Cartesianism and Culture*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987.
- Condorcet, Marquis de. "On the Admission of Women to the Rights of Citizenship" [1790]. In *Condorcet: Foundations of Social Choice and Political Theory*, edited and translated by Iain McLean and Fiona Hewitt. Aldershot, UK, and Brookfield, VT: Edward Elgar, 1994.
- Cunning, David. "Margaret Lucas Cavendish." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. Winter 2016. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/margaret-cavendish>.
- Di Stefano, Christine. "Masculinity as Ideology in Political Theory: Hobbesian Man Considered." *Women's Studies International Forum* 6, no. 6 (1983): 633–644.
- Engels, Friedrich. "The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State" [1884]. In *The Marx-Engels Reader*, edited by Robert C. Tucker, 2nd ed., 734–759. New York: Norton, 1978.
- Gibson, Joan, and Mary Ellen Waithe. "Introduction to Volume II." In *A History of Women Philosophers, Vol. 2: Medieval, Renaissance and Enlightenment Women Philosophers, A.D. 500–1600*, edited by Mary Ellen Waithe. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic, 1989.
- Hay, Carol. *Kantianism, Feminism, and Liberalism: Resisting Oppression*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Hegel, Georg Friedrich Wilhelm. *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* [1821]. Edited by Allen Wood. Translated by H. B. Nisbet. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- History of Women Philosophers. <https://kw.uni-paderborn.de/fach-philosophie/forschung/history-of-women-philosophers/>.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*. Edited and translated by Robert B. Louden. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. First published 1798.

Chapter 6: Feminist History of Philosophy

- Kant, Immanuel. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Edited and translated by Mary Gregor and Jens Timmermann. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. First published 1786.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime and Other Writings*. Edited and translated by Patrick Frierson and Paul Guyer. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. First published 1764.
- Kant, Immanuel. "Of the Different Human Races" [1777]. Translated by Jon Mark Mikkelsen. In *The Idea of Race*, edited by Robert Bernasconi and Tommy L. Lott, 8–22. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2000.
- Kleingeld, Pauline. "Kant's Second Thoughts on Race." *Philosophical Quarterly* 57, no. 229 (2007): 573–592.
- Lacan, Jacques. "The Signification of the Phallus" [1958]. In *Écrits: A Selection*, translated by Bruce Fink, 271–280. New York: Norton, 2004.
- Lange, Lynda. "Woman Is Not a Rational Animal." In *Discovering Reality: Feminist Perspectives on Epistemology, Metaphysics, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science*, edited by Sandra Harding and Merrill B. Hintikka, 1–16. Dordrecht, Netherlands: 1983.
- Lloyd, Genevieve. *The Man of Reason: "Male" and "Female" in Western Philosophy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.
- Lloyd, S. A. "Power and Sexual Subordination in Hobbes's Political Theory." In *Feminist Interpretations of Thomas Hobbes*, edited by Nancy J. Hirschmann and Joanne H. Wright, 47–62. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012.
- Lott, Tommy L. "Patriarchy and Slavery in Hobbes's Political Philosophy." In *Philosophers on Race: Critical Essays*, edited by Julie K. Ward and Tommy L. Lott, 63–80. Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002.
- Mills, Charles. "The Racial Polity." In *Racism and Philosophy*, edited by Susan E. Babbitt and Sue Campbell, 13–31. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999.
- Monk, Ray. *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*. New York: Free Press, 1990.
- New Narratives in the History of Philosophy. <http://www.newnarrativesinphilosophy.net>.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*. Edited and translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Modern Library, 1968.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. "Objectification." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 24, no. 4 (1995): 249–291.
- Okin, Susan Moller. *Women in Western Political Thought*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979.
- Pateman, Carole. *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988.
- Plato. *Republic*. Translated by C. D. C. Reeve. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2004.
- Project Vox. <http://projectvox.library.duke.edu>.
- Rorty, Richard. "Historiography of History: Four Genres." In *Philosophy in History: Essays on the Historiography of Philosophy*, edited by Richard Rorty, J. B. Schneewind, and Quentin Skinner, 49–76. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Émile: or, On Education* [1762]. Translated by Barbara Foxley. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1911. HathiTrust Digital Library. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo.31924024242434;view=1up;seq=8>.
- Schopenhauer, Arthur. "On Women" [1851]. In *Essays of Schopenhauer*, translated by Mrs. Rudolf Dircks, 64–79. London: W. Scott, 1897. HathiTrust Digital Library. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=njp.32101075718542;view=1up;seq=11>.
- Schwitzgebel, Eric. "Changes in the Race and Gender of U.S. Philosophy Faculty, 1988–2004." *The Splintered Mind* (blog). March 14, 2016. <http://schwitzsplinters.blogspot.co.uk/2016/03/changes-in-race-and-gender-of-us.html>.
- Shapiro, Lisa. "Introduction." In *The Correspondence between Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia and René Descartes*. Edited and translated by Lisa Shapiro. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Shapiro, Lisa. "Princess Elizabeth and Descartes: The Union of Mind and Body and the Practice of Philosophy." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 7, no. 3 (1999): 503–520.
- Storey, Ian. "Empire and Natural Order in Kant's 'Second Thoughts' on Race." *History of Political Thought* 36, no. 4 (2015): 670–699.
- Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica from the Complete American Edition* [1273]. Project Gutenberg, 2006.
- Varden, Helga. "Kant and Women." *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* (October 2015). [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN.\)1468-0114](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN.)1468-0114).
- Weigel, Moira. "'I Have Multiple Loves': Carrie Jenkins Makes the Philosophical Case for Polyamory." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 3, 2017. <http://www.chronicle.com/article/I-Have-Multiple-Loves-/239077>.
- Witt, Charlotte. "Feminist Interpretations of the Philosophical Canon." *Signs* 31, no. 2 (2006): 537–552.
- Witt, Charlotte. "Form, Normativity and Gender in Aristotle: A Feminist Perspective." In *Feminist Interpretations of Aristotle*, edited by Cynthia A. Freeland, 118–137. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998.
- Yehl, Joshua. "Kelly Sue DeConnick Talks Captain Marvel, Pretty Deadly, and the Sexy Lamp Test." *IGN*, June 20, 2013. <http://www.ign.com/articles/2013/06/20/kelly-sue-deconnick-talks-captain-marvel-pretty-deadly-and-the-sexy-lamp-test>.