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Introduction

In 1972 the United Nations declared 1975 to be the . . . International Year of the Woman. Among the world's women . . . reaction was not all good. Was this . . . an admission that everything else was the Year of the Man?¹

Through the centuries, women have endured the Year of the Man. Ever, some have rebelled. If feminism is a protest against women's oppression, there is no confining its story, by country, culture, or time. We know of the suffragists who campaigned for the franchise. Do we remember Emily Davison, who died in its cause? Do we recall those arrested time after time, brutally force-fed, that we might vote?²

It may be, we do. Do we know of the Indian women who have for decades fled patriarchal laws and led gangs of bandits; famous among them, released in 1993, Phoolan Devi, the 'Bandit Queen'?³ Or the Chinese women who fought in rebel armies; and to the end of the nineteenth century, fleeing foot-binding and other cruelties, formed roving bandit gangs? Though few could escape, so strongly were they held in submission, except by death at their own hand.⁴ The women of Muslim Central Asia, forced to give birth in squalor, subjected to innumerable other cruelties, spied for the Bolshevik invaders of the 1920s, to gain a better world. And their reward? The defeated men joined the Bolsheviks: women were subjugated once more.⁵

This book is born of a different and mainly later history, much of which is nonetheless unknown, or partly hidden, now. It is not only the story of the unhappy housewives of the best-known early books, like *The Feminine Mystique* and *The Captive Wife*.⁶ It also tells of those who fought for socialism in the 1960s Left in the US, Germany, and the UK; women who denounced their male comrades for preaching liberation for all the peoples of the world: all except women. This is a story far milder than those above. But there are analogies, for, as Robin Morgan said, a woman of the New Left 'could be declared uptight or a poor sport if she didn't want to be raped', while a leading black militant announced that 'the only position for women in [the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee] is prone'.⁷ And the story, once more, tells of promises broken, a contract unfulfilled.

My book is not a biography of these women, or a political or social history of feminism's Second Wave, which they began. Rather I address Second-Wave theory, which is not, early writings apart, necessarily the 'movement' voice. For feminist theory has become an enterprise all of its

own. There is a gulf between activism and the academic writing that emerged; a gulf that has widened with time.⁸ The reasons for and consequences of this are not my topic here.

The writing I address ranges from 1963 to 1994; beginning with the publication of *The Feminine Mystique*, and covering Second-Wave feminism's first thirty or so years. I do not attempt to discuss it all; that is impossible, given the amount and range of feminist thinking now. Nor is there a generally accepted – and certainly no ideal – way of deciding what authors and texts to include, and how they should be grouped. So I have had to make difficult choices.

I chose writings in two ways. First, I decided to study 'schools' like liberal feminism and within them, to focus on significant texts. This raises the question, which ones? I do not want to suggest I tried to include all the major works, or even the most important writers. I do not even want to say I chose the writings most representative of a given school, though of course I would have liked to do that. Formidable problems of definition and classification ruled it out. Second, I chose, when reading these texts, to concentrate on two concepts which have been central to feminism more or less throughout: the concepts of equality and difference. These have of course normally been taken to mean sex equality and difference. But they are more widely employed than that, and will be used more broadly here.

I suggest that there is a tension between these concepts that runs through the schools, and exists within individual thinkers, too. Though I do not expect to show this in every case. It may not be the same tension, given that the concepts are used in various ways, and have given rise to more than one dispute.

In the remainder of this chapter I introduce the meanings of difference encompassed here: between the sexes; between groups of women; between individuals and 'within woman'. I then explain in more detail how and why I have structured the book by 'schools' of feminist thought, and the problems that can result. I note that various of the writings are neither conventionally 'theoretical' nor specifically concerned with the debates, so I have had to tease their views of equality and difference out. Finally I address the problem of language within feminist writing, of for example the over-inclusive 'we' that overrides the differences feminist writing seeks to grasp; and how I have tried to cope with that.

I begin by outlining aspects of feminism's 'equality–difference' debate, which concerns equality of, and differences between, women and men.

The equality and difference debate

feminism means that we seek for women the same opportunities and privileges the society gives to men, or . . . that we assert the distinctive value of womanhood against patriarchal denigration. While these positions need not be mutually exclusive, there is a strong tendency . . . to make them so. *Either we want to be like men or we don't.*⁹ [italics mine]

The sex equality–difference controversy is key to my book. It is what these concepts tend to evoke, that is, when feminist thinkers hear the terms together, they normally think of that debate. I outline it briefly here.

In its most basic form, the argument concerns women's similarity to or dissimilarity from men. That, though, is not its starting point; that is, it is not its primary motivation to find out what sex differences, beyond the most basically biological, there are, and how they are caused. Rather, in its origins at least, it concerns the quest for equality of the sexes – equality of rights and of opportunities, and more radically, of condition.

Equality and difference are counterposed here because of the view that women can only be equal if they are the same as men, though clearly, 'same' is not 'identical' and means, say, alike. Hence the stress on, for example, IQ test and examination results, and on finding non-biological reasons for any differences that emerge. Though as time has gone by, as the debate has become formalized and cast as a dispute among feminists, as well as between them and their opponents, matters have become more complex.

Feminists are so used to the debate that, disagree violently over the issues though they do, they may not see the immediate problem it poses for newcomers to the field. That is the problem of its name. Those new to feminist thought might well think that 'equality–inequality' would be the more appropriate opposing terms. However these would be misleading, initially at least, as they could be taken to imply first that we know what equality means, and second that there are 'inequality feminists' who favour a situation in which women are regarded as men's inferiors, or held subordinate to them.

'Sameness–difference', which some feminists employ, might be a better axis, even though there is no doubt that equality is in some way involved in the debate. For 'sameness' feminists undoubtedly seek equality with men:¹⁰ they ask to be treated as men are, and justify this on the grounds of sameness, though 'likeness' might be a better term. So they ask, for example, for equal entitlement to consideration for jobs. To a suggestion of sex differences which ruled that out, they would reply that there are none, or rather that they are small in number and size, trivial in type, and irrelevant to the equality of women and men.

I continue the 'sameness–difference' discussion as if the two formed an axis, and equality was placed with sameness as though they were automatically linked. However, before moving to difference, I note that we might want to ask whether equality *does* necessitate sameness. For there are some who would say not. We might then want to see 'equality', 'sameness', and 'difference' as forming not a continuum, but, three corners of a triangle. Then the notion of 'equality in difference' enters in. (This is the idea that we merit equal though not identical treatment; equal in the sense of 'equally good, and more appropriate to us'.) Though so does 'equality through difference', as opposed to 'equality through sameness'.¹¹ my 'sameness' category above.

These ideas have implications for what we think equality is. One is this: to treat people equally, it is not necessary to treat them in exactly the same way. To treat people as equals may *require* that they not be treated the same way. This is a difficult point, and I delay discussion of it until later in the book. I shall first deal with what might be called more basic views of equality, beginning, in detail, in Chapter 2.

The equality–difference debate generally implicates ‘sameness’ feminists in a male world. A strict equality feminist would not wish to change that world; and for her, ‘as good as men’ means ‘the same’. Her harsher detractors – ‘strong difference’ feminists – would tend to regard this as bad in itself, believing men’s qualities whether innate or not to be a force for ill, and a ‘man-made world’ to be inimical to more than female advance. (Of course, there are various positions between these extremes.) I want to consider a point made by such detractors here, though it is mainly relevant to Chapter 10.

‘Sameness’ is shorthand for women’s sameness, for purposes relevant to women’s advance, with men; as opposed to men’s sameness to women. This point may sound odd. Are not these identical? Certainly ‘sameness’ feminists would think so. But their view is thought by others to leave them open to attack.

What have ‘sameness equality’ feminists failed to see? Why is asking whether men are the same as women different from asking whether women are the same as men? Difference feminists would say this: to compare women with men, to be concerned with the way *women* differ from *men*, is to write not only difference, but inferiority, or at best, deviation from a social standard, into the question itself. So whatever the answer, its implications – that women are the ones who are different, deviant, even abnormal – are decided in advance. And the notion, if not indeed the fact, that men are the standard, that ‘man’ indicates and defines ‘human’, is entrenched.

Such feminists would add that society is ordered according to what men need, or are thought to need, and that this is seen as the normal and rational state of affairs. To order society so as to cater for women’s needs, too, requires ‘special arrangements’. This is because those who see the current position as natural think providing for men is catering for people; providing for women is adding something else. To exaggerate their view somewhat: men simply ask for their rights, women for affirmative or compensatory action. Women are given to ‘special pleading’. That is how feminist demands for fair and indeed equal treatment are seen. Or so one type of ‘difference feminist’ indictment runs.

I am not going to take a stand here on these ideas. I shall however quote a feminist lawyer who rejects equality *and* difference, as the terms are used now; Catharine Mackinnon:

Men’s . . . needs define auto and health insurance coverage . . . their perspectives and concerns define quality in scholarship, their experience and obsessions define merit . . . their image defines god, and their genitals define sex. For each of their

differences from women, what amounts to an affirmative action plan is in effect, otherwise known as the structure and values of American society.¹²

The ‘values of . . . society’, she and others say, are geared to men. To grasp this view is to see how great the stakes in the argument are. Even within the ‘equality–difference’ or ‘sameness–difference’ debate – as opposed to the broader question of how these concepts are employed by feminists, and their general consequences for feminist thought – massive implications lie. Here is a discussion that latently, anyway, goes far further than the extraordinarily difficult task of achieving parity of the sexes in society now; or even gaining it by revolutionary means by which the general oppressions perpetrated by our system are overthrown.

For here we move towards a declaration that our entire value system is male. And we will see in Chapter 10 an argument – whose premises are not the same – that the very terms of the debate are, too. Clearly at some stage along the way to the wholesale rejection of culture as man made, the question arises whether women and men can communicate adequately, let alone ‘equally’, at all. Here, conventional means of analysis are of little use. I give this section’s end to a poet.

some men would rather see us dead than imagine
what we think of them/
if we measure our silence by our pain
how could all the words
any word
ever catch us up
what is it
we cd call equal?¹³

Beyond sisterhood? Other women, other groups

The oppression of women knows no ethnic nor racial boundaries . . . but that does not mean it is identical within those differences To deal with one without even alluding to the other is to distort our commonality as well as our difference.

For then beyond sisterhood is still racism.¹⁴

Above, I pointed out that there is a problem of terminology in the equality–difference debate: the dichotomy seems incorrect. Only if we link sameness to equality does it begin to make sense. Many feminists seem not to understand this point. I do not mean that theoretical naïvety is involved, undertheorized, within feminist thought, though ‘equality’ is. We have become used to the name of the debate, and some part of us simply ‘knows’ what it means, at least, to us. Also, I believe that ‘equal’ has come to appear to mean only one thing. At times I am inclined to add, ‘and not very much’. But when people of my ethnic background, ‘race’, and occupational grouping make comments like that, it is time for difference, in the sense of difference between women of various groups, to enter in.

One oddity of 'difference', both within the debate and elsewhere in feminist thought, is that it would appear to be endlessly invoked, but again, often is not defined. Writers silent on equality are voluble on difference. But what do they mean? Even that within the debate 'different' means 'from men', is not that simple a point. I move to other meanings, now.

There is a lesson feminists have been slow to learn: that there are variations between groups and categories of women¹⁵ and that at the very minimum, one group does not speak for all. Middle-class white heterosexual women do not a movement make. Or rather, we might. But it would not be *the* feminist movement. Some indeed would doubt whether it can be *a* feminist movement at all.

'Difference' in this sense has been seen, perhaps because of its supposed association with black and lesbian feminists, as equivalent to identity politics, that is, a politics anchored securely in an identification with, for example, one of these two categories or groups.¹⁶ I discuss identity politics in Chapters 8 and 9. Here I note that I reject the proposed equation in part because it assumes, say, that a feminist who is a lesbian is also a 'lesbian feminist', and that she identifies with lesbianism as a group.

There is another reason for my rejection, related – how closely, I am not sure – to the first. I feel that such equating over-homogenizes the 'groups': it can exacerbate stereotypes, too. Though viewed another way, identity politics can be seen as crucially necessary for those we have the gall to name the 'different'; and solidarity via that politics, regarded as conferring strength. I raise points like this in Chapter 9, via the writings of lesbians and black women.

My rejection of this particular proposed equivalence is also linked to a view that it is always the member of an underprivileged group who is taken to need an 'identity' and thought to belong to a school of feminism based on that, and even on that alone. We blithely speak of 'black feminism' and 'lesbian feminism'. Is there a book whose index lists 'white feminism'? Is a feminism unqualified, reserved for us?

I do not find it easy to hear, let alone to forward, these points; I have seen this form of difference as sundering the movement. I have been forced to see that sisterhood has to be earned, and that it may not be for me to decide when. Nor do I suggest that I have yet learned enough.

Feminism is divided by the sex equality–sex difference debate. It is riven by this second difference too. I want equality, and justice. I do not believe these to be 'Western', or 'white' or 'male'; certainly not inherently or irremediably so. I want unity within the movement. However, I think I have come to accept that feminists will have to live with a sundering for a long while yet, and that we may have to live with the knowledge that the sundering was done by 'us'. And I have also come, belatedly, to see that to live with this is to live by the founding tenets of the movement, the beliefs of the radicals among the early Second Wave, which I address in Chapters 2 and 5. More, it is little to ask that we see that 'though all women are

women, no woman is only a woman'.¹⁷ Indeed, that is especially incumbent on those of us who have sometimes, anyway, insisted that we were, and were 'worth', more, while ignoring the very existence of women from less advantaged groups.

I move briefly to the 'third difference', postmodernism's in part, most fully addressed in Chapter 9.

The last difference? Can woman there be?

This approach, whose more technical aspects I address later on, has been variously construed. I aim to capture its original meaning, insofar as that is reflected in British and American thought. I see the term as employed in two major ways. The first, which is not postmodernist, but which I will for the moment treat as such, emphasizes the differences between women within and across groups. Its import is less that it views women as entirely different one from another, than that it reminds us forcefully that we are not reducible to the groups to which we belong. Thus it has implications for identity politics, at least if they propose that one 'identity' or affiliation is paramount, it may be, regardless of a woman's views or choice.

A variant of this first idea emphasizes differences between women to the point, it is said, where we cannot use the notions of women or gender in our thought. I assume the belief is that the differences outweigh what we might have in common, but that they are individual and not group differences (though obviously groups will enter into the account).

The second notion, which is highly complex, I would call 'full' postmodernism. It threatens to explode the category of 'woman'; I do not mean to suggest that it says women literally do not exist, though there are readings on which it might. Its views are difficult to convey, though perhaps I think that because I do not find them easy to grasp. I am here merely going to suggest one way of looking at the questions raised, paralleling the discussions above: via the notion of the fragmented self.

We all understand that there are various facets to our 'selves', that most of us have a nationality (or more than one), a family of some kind, friends made at stages of our lives, some gone. We may be in waged employment. If not, that may not be by choice. We probably have what are called 'outside interests' or 'leisure pursuits', and there can be a very wide range of these. We all have one or more ethnic origins, though people often speak as if 'ethnic' means 'not-white'. We have sexual preferences. And so on. Some of these are more important to us than others; or perhaps we think they are. Their importance may change over time, or we may choose to focus on one at a given moment, or drift into doing that.

As I wrote this, my mind moved to my Dutch ancestry, though I am only in small part Dutch. Day to day, this rarely comes to mind. If I could go to Holland often, I might think about it more. Currently, I think mainly about my job. And while I have been working on this book, I have

left most other interests – other parts of myself? – aside. My feminism has been with me throughout, though in different ways. My writing brought the early days of the movement back. For a while, that was hard to bear.

All this really says is that I am like most people and different from them at the same time. I am like other people, in part, because I am different from them: we all have our interests, and they will not be the same.¹⁸ But that supposes there is an 'I', a self. I change, but there is a self to change.

'Full postmodernists' argue, or try to, that there is more to it than that – though I shall give in to temptation, and say, also, 'less'. For them, at the extreme, there is no 'self'.¹⁹ The individuality and the changes I have discussed, are for some people evidence of this. It follows that there could be nothing called a 'woman'. I shall explain the argument, and offer a critique, in Chapter 9.

Feminism's 'schools'

I have divided this book into the following 'schools' of feminist thought: liberal, 'early radical',²⁰ 'strong cultural' (or 'cultural radical'), 'weak cultural', socialist, and postmodernist. A mixture of tradition and practical concerns has dictated my choice. Insofar as it is tradition, however, I have broken with it, in part via my simultaneous analysis of equality and difference, in part by emphasizing the heterogeneity within these schools.

Some will think my classifications wrong; others, a division into schools not only narrow and old-fashioned, but totally inappropriate now. Marianne Hirsch and Evelyn Fox Keller,²¹ for example, think it best to speak in terms of issues and debates. And it is true that if we do that, we see the schools 'split'. If for example we looked at pornography, we would see no united front within my 'ideological' groups. However, that is part of the point I want to make. I do not believe, because that is so, that feminists have transcended the (always somewhat faulty) standard classifications of political groupings and views. But further, the fact that the groups remain will have an influence on our thought, too important to deny by employing new categorizations when we write.

That is: 'liberalism' and 'liberal feminism', say, are inadequate constructs in various ways; in particular, for me, because they may do violence to the nuances of a writer's thought. But many people think of themselves as, for example, liberals, and socialists; and the fact that they do may interact with the beliefs or other factors that led them to choose that affiliation at the start. There is a relationship between affiliation, attitudes, and behaviour, and it includes, for example, 'I am a socialist, and so I should not do this'. So these labels, problematic as they are, 'represent' overlapping views as they may do, nonetheless constitute part of our social reality; and of identity, some would say. It may be too soon to give them up.

A standard way of presenting liberal feminism, for example, is to produce a definition of liberalism and examine liberal feminist thinkers in relation to that. This is problematic in various ways.

Liberalism is normally defined via the work of men.²² A framework of ideas is produced, and is called liberalism. It is then customary to say that liberal feminists will hold certain views – those already articulated – and their work will be read with that in mind. If they do not hold them, it will be said that liberal feminism differs from liberalism.²³ We have become so accustomed to this way of proceeding that perhaps we have not seen its flaws. I point to them first via an eloquent protest by Joanna Hodge.

Hodge attacks the way postmodernism is conventionally understood and defined: like the other schools, via the work of men. Women postmodernists such as Julia Kristeva and Hélène Cixous are, she points out, 'feminist postmodernists' (if not, indeed, non-existent) according to this way of thought.²⁴ 'The (real) postmodernists' are the male writers in the field, and – I would add to Hodge's complaint – entire books on 'postmodernism' can be written without mentioning a woman's name.

My method here springs from agreement with Hodge.²⁵ I have not, however, taken the step of defining, for example, liberalism by the writing of women, or, to go further on the attack, via the feminist texts,²⁶ tempting as these ideas are: they are every bit as illogical as defining liberalism by the works of men – though, no more.²⁷ Rather I have singled out ways of looking at equality that seem to me to be liberal, and tried to locate them within feminist work.

I do not pretend to have solved the problem of categorization by doing this. For how did I gain an idea of 'liberal equality'? But it seems to me preferable to the alternative of, in effect, first ignoring a writer and then classifying her against the background of men's ideas: an alternative that helps perpetuate the odious distinction between 'real' and feminist theory. That can have various bad results. It can stifle innovation as prudent feminists produce Theory. Or, ironically, it can move feminists away from the mainstream, strengthening the kind of view which calls that 'malestream' and wants feminist theory to be different from non-feminist or 'male' thought.

Some feminists would disagree less with what I have just said than with the idea that 'postmodernism' (for example) necessarily incorporates its allied feminist writings. For 'feminist postmodernism' differs from (most) 'postmodernism', they say,²⁸ and an assimilation of the two would be wrong.

While the former point may well be true – though I suspect that both in its postulation of a gulf and in its suggestion that there is 'a' feminist postmodernism, or a 'feminist' postmodernism, it assumes too much – I do not see that it can answer the basic challenge to, and charge of, the 'writing out' of women's work.

Given its importance and its applicability to other schools, I shall take the point further now. First, to say that 'feminist postmodernism' is

different from postmodernism is I believe to cede the terrain without a fight. Is postmodernism, 'real' postmodernism, which men write about without mentioning even *one* woman author, then the standard from which feminist or women's postmodernism diverges? Or should postmodernism comprise both sets of works? If not, is one to be called men's, or even 'masculinist', postmodernism? Why is men's writing the measure? Are writers within a school to be classified by gender? or by mode of analysis, topic, and style?

This kind of question affects more than one of the feminist 'schools' I discuss. And it parallels a major issue of the book, discussed mainly in Chapters 8 and 10. For questions about addressing a 'school' of thought, and classifying an individual author, are questions about how we think of groups and individuals, too. That is: who comprises a school, or a group? Is it heterogeneous or monolithic? To what school, or group, does a writer, an individual, belong? How do we know that? Are we diminishing the writer, the individual, if we say they belong to a school or a group? Are we ignoring aspects of their texts, of their 'self'? Are we forcing them into a straitjacket, adversely affecting their personality and their thought? Do we misrepresent their characteristics and their views? These comments are about theory. They are about political, cultural, and social differences between people(s), too.

Theory inferred

The writers I have chosen to discuss are, of course, not necessarily consciously engaged in the 'equality-difference debate'. And even though there is in almost all, I believe, an important element of the usages of equality and difference commented on here and in Chapter 2, they may offer no definition of the terms. Further, the early writers will not address 'difference' as it is known, and discussed, now, so I shall infer their views on certain points from their texts. I shall attempt to locate their concepts of equality and inequality, and their views on sameness and difference. And I shall try to say how they think equality is to be gained; and what the future will bring.

I am discussing major writers within the 'schools', via their most important works, or, ones that seem most relevant to me. Most authors would employ, many readers prefer, a more synthetic approach. However, as Patricia Collins says, that might well over-homogenize the schools.²⁹ This is an important consideration, but there are others that affect my choice.

Feminist theory has reached the stage where more or less any analysis, though especially a textbook like this, could become a summary of commentaries on commentaries on major articles and books. While there is a place for that kind of writing, it distances a reader from, and affects their reading of, the original work. Of course, any reading, any interpretation,

does that. I am not claiming any particular insight, nor do I say an especial ability to avoid imposing a framework on the literature inheres in my approach. But I focus on, if possible adhere to, the first text. In choosing this path, I shall omit some outstandingly good writers who have offered critiques of various kinds. I regret that.

There is another reason besides the problem of piling interpretation on interpretation why I chose the approach. It applies in particular to the earlier works I discuss. It is common now, though possibly more so in the US, to discuss feminist theory either in a 'historical' manner that ranges back to the nineteenth century at least, or by employing mainly contemporary work. I do not want to adjudicate either between these, or between them and an issue-based approach. However my reading has convinced me that there is a particular history we have to recover, whose theories and values we do well to recall. It is the history of feminism's second wave. And so I have framed my book.

'What Language is it?': conventions used here

There is forever in feminist thought a problem of what terms to employ when speaking of, say, women. I have chosen to say 'they' except when referring to white middle-class (and sometimes heterosexual) women; then I shall say 'we' or 'us'. When I talk about an author's discussion of this group of women, I shall say 'they'. But I have found it almost impossible not to say 'we' meaning 'you who read this, and I'.

The use of 'women' (or 'men') is problematic. That will emerge at various stages below. I know that there will be times when I say 'women' without meaning 'all women'. It is impossible to qualify, adequately, each time the word is used.

Speaking of feminists poses a similar problem, which I have not been able to resolve with ease. I use 'we' more or less as I do in the case of women; 'I' in giving my views; 'they' where I obviously cannot speak for the feminists concerned. But I know inconsistencies will appear.

These are, ensuing chapters will, as 'difference' follows 'difference', show, not the only problems of wording I encountered as I wrote this book.

Notes

- 1 Gloria Steinem, 'Houston and history', in *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions*, 1985, p. 279.
- 2 Rebecca West, 'The life of Emily Davison', 1913, in Maggie Humm (ed.), *Feminisms: A Reader*, 1992, pp. 30-1.
- 3 Mala Sen, *India's Bandit Queen: The True Story of Phoolan Devi*, 1993.
- 4 Elisabeth Croll, *Feminism and Socialism in China*, 1978, pp. 36-7.
- 5 Gregory Massell, *The Surrogate Proletariat: Moslem Women and Revolutionary Strategies in Soviet Central Asia*, 1974, *passim*.

6 Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 1982 (first published 1963); Hannah Gavron, *The Captive Wife*, 1966.

7 Robin Morgan, 'Goodbye to all that', in Leslie B. Tanner (ed.), *Voices from Women's Liberation*, 1971, p. 273; Stokely Carmichael quoted by Jo Freeman, *The Politics of Women's Liberation*, 1975, p. 57.

8 bell hooks, *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist – Thinking Black*, 1989, pp. 35–41.

9 Iris Young, 'Humanism, gynocentrism and feminist politics', in *Throwing Like a Girl: And Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory*, 1990, p. 85.

10 I am here using 'equality' in a fairly undifferentiated way, and as if its meaning were clear.

11 See Sibyl Lipschultz, 'Social feminism and legal discourse, 1908–1923', in Martha Fineman and Nancy Thomadsen (eds), *At the Boundaries of Law*, 1991.

12 Catharine Mackinnon, *Feminism Unmodified: Discourses on Life and Law*, 1987, p. 36.

13 Ntózake Shange, 'Some men', in *A Daughter's Geography*, 1985, p. 44.

14 Audre Lorde, 'An open letter to Mary Daly', in Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (eds), *This Bridge Called My Back: Radical Writings by Women of Color*, 1983, p. 97.

15 My rough distinction is that a group is something one joins, a category something to which one is deemed to belong.

16 They are of course not mutually exclusive. It is for clarity that I hold them apart.

17 Elisabeth Spelman, *Inessential Woman*, 1990, p. 187.

18 I am not talking here about anything remotely like the idea that politics, or 'life', is about the pursuit of our own interests at others' expense.

19 As we will see, they find it difficult to be consistent on this point.

20 I do not mean that radical feminism has gone, nor that 'cultural radical' feminism is its current dominant form.

My understanding that this is not so has been greatly aided by the views of Pauline Bart.

21 'Introduction' to Marianne Hirsch and Evelyn Fox Keller (eds), *Conflicts in Feminism*, 1990, pp. 1–5.

22 It is not my point that it is wrong to assess women by 'male standards'.

23 See for example Alison Jaggar, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature*, 1983; Rosemarie Tong, *Feminist Thought*, 1989.

24 Joanna Hodge, 'Feminism and postmodernism', in Andrew Benjamin (ed.), *The Problems of Modernity*, 1991, pp. 86–7, 101ff.

25 Patricia Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 1990, takes an analogous but more radical view: pp. xii–xiii.

26 Here I distinguish between liberal women and feminist liberals.

27 There are of course historical reasons why the latter has been done.

28 Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism*, 1986, p. 194.

29 Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, pp. xiv–xv. Collins though rejects a 'major writers' approach; hers is issue orientated: p. xiii and *passim*.