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# Enlightened Sexism The Seductive Message That Feminisms Work Is Done

## Susan J Douglas

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*The Gender Knot* Simon and Schuster More than three decades after its first publication, Edward Said's groundbreaking critique of the West's historical, cultural, and political perceptions of the East has become a modern classic. In this wide-ranging, intellectually vigorous study, Said traces the origins of "orientalism" to the centuries-long period during which Europe dominated the Middle and Near East and, from its position of power, defined "the orient" simply as "other than" the occident. This entrenched view continues to

dominate western ideas and, because it does not allow the East to represent itself, prevents true understanding. Essential, and still eye-opening, *Orientalism* remains one of the most important books written about our divided world.

[The Routledge Companion to Media & Gender](#) Routledge

Do you see women your age portrayed as puttering gardeners and docile grannies? Do you feel bombarded by anti-aging products that insist you must "defy" getting older? Do you feel invisible in professional and social situations? And have you had enough and are you ready to challenge the intertwining of sexism and ageism in our culture? Susan Douglas knows that you are not alone. She declares it is time now for the

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largest female generation over fifty to reinvent what it means to be an older woman and to challenge the outdated stereotypes—think doddering or shrewish—that Hollywood and TV have assigned them. She zones in on how the anti-aging cosmetics industry targets older and younger women alike with their products, and how Big Pharma ads equate getting older with disease and decline.

Douglas exposes the ageism that mature women face at work and why conservatives' decades-long attacks on Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare disproportionately affect women. With a sharp sense of justice and fresh wit, *In Our Prime* sees a social movement emerging that may help to create a different view of and life for older women. It celebrates Gray Panther Maggie Kuhn, who broke down legal barriers in the past, as well as today's activists, career women, actors, and others who defy stereotypical

images by embracing their age and remaining strong and socially involved. Ultimately, Douglas calls on women of all ages to join together now to fight against gendered ageism, to secure our country's financial safety net, and to make a brighter, more welcome future for older women.

The Psychosocial Implications of Disney Movies BRILL

From the author of *Where the Girls Are*, a sharp and irreverent critique of how women are portrayed in today's popular culture. Women today are inundated with conflicting messages from the mass media: they must either be strong leaders in complete command or sex kittens obsessed with finding and pleasing a man. In *Enlightened Sexism*, Susan J. Douglas, one of America's most entertaining and insightful cultural critics, takes readers on a spirited journey through the television programs, popular songs, movies, and news coverage of recent years, telling a story that is nothing less than the

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cultural biography of a new generation of American women. Revisiting cultural touchstones from Buffy the Vampire Slayer to Survivor to Desperate Housewives, Douglas uses wit and wisdom to expose these images of women as mere fantasies of female power, assuring women and girls that the battle for equality has been won, so there's nothing wrong with resurrecting sexist stereotypes—all in good fun, of course. She shows that these portrayals not only distract us from the real-world challenges facing women today but also drive a wedge between baby-boom women and their "millennial" daughters. In seeking to bridge this generation gap, Douglas makes the case for casting aside these retrograde messages, showing us how to decode the mixed messages that restrict the ambitions of women of all ages. And what makes *Enlightened Sexism* such a pleasure to read is Douglas's unique voice, as she blends humor with insight and offers an empathetic and sisterly guide to the images so many women love

and hate with equal measure. Univ of California Press "This timely, accessible reference and text addresses some of the most fundamental questions about human behavior, such as what causes racism and prejudice and why good people do bad things. Leading authorities present state-of-the-science theoretical and empirical work. Essential themes include the complex interaction of individual, societal, and situational factors underpinning good or evil behavior; the role of moral emotions, unconscious bias, and the self-concept; issues of responsibility and motivation; and how technology and globalization have enabled newer forms of threat and harm. Key

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Words/Subject Areas:  
aggression, altruism,  
antisocial, evil, free will,  
good, guilt, heroism,  
human behavior,  
morality, prejudice,  
prosocial, racism, shame,  
social psychology,  
stereotyping, terrorism,  
values, violence

Audience: Students and  
researchers in social  
psychology; also of  
interest to sociologists.

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### **The Little Lady Agency** Springer

What is feminism? In this  
short, accessible primer,  
bell hooks explores the  
nature of feminism and its  
positive promise to  
eliminate sexism, sexist  
exploitation, and  
oppression. With her  
characteristic clarity and  
directness, hooks  
encourages readers to  
see how feminism can

touch and change their  
lives—to see that feminism  
is for everybody.

### **Popular Culture, Political Economy and the Death of Feminism** Springer Science & Business Media

Women today are inundated  
with conflicting messages  
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Feminist Theory and Pop

Culture John Wiley & Sons

From the start of Barack Obama's presidency in 2009, conservative populist groups began fomenting political fractiousness, dissent, and surprising electoral success. The Tea Party was one of the major characters driving this story. But, as Khadijah Costley White argues in this book, the Tea Party's ascent to major political phenomenon can be attributed to the way in which partisan and non-partisan news outlets "branded" the Party as a pot-stirrer in political conflicts over race, class, and gender. In other words, the news media played a major role in developing, cultivating, and promoting populism's brand, particularly within the news spaces of commentary and opinion. Through the language of political

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marketing, branding, and promotion, the news media not only reported on the Tea Party, but also acted as its political strategist and brand consultant. Moreover, the conservative press acted more as a political party than a news medium, deliberately promoting the Tea Party, and aiding in organizing, headlining, and galvanizing a conservative political base around specific Tea Party candidates, values, and events. In a media environment in which everyone has the opportunity to tune out, tune in, and speak back, *The Branding of Right-Wing Activism* ultimately shows that distinctions between citizens, journalists, activists, politicians, celebrities, and consumers are more symbolic than concrete.

### **In Our Prime: How Older**

### **Women Are Reinventing the Road Ahead Seal Press**

The *Routledge Companion to Media and Gender* offers a comprehensive examination of media and gender studies, charting its histories, investigating ongoing controversies, and assessing future trends. The 59 chapters in this volume, written by leading researchers from around the world, provide scholars and students with an engaging and authoritative survey of current thinking in media and gender research. The *Companion* includes the following features: With each chapter addressing a distinct, concrete set of issues, the volume includes research from around the world to engage readers in a broad array of global and transnational issues and intersectional perspectives.

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Authors address a series of important questions that have consequences for current and future thinking in the field, including postfeminism, sexual violence, masculinity, media industries, queer identities, video games, digital policy, media activism, sexualization, docusoaps, teen drama, cosmetic surgery, media Islamophobia, sport, telenovelas, news audiences, pornography, and social and mobile media. A range of academic disciplines inform exploration of key issues around production and policymaking, representation, audience engagement, and the place of gender in media studies. The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender is an essential guide to the central ideas, concepts and debates currently shaping

media and gender research.

### **Where the Girls Are**

Lexington Books

How has popular film, television and fiction responded to the realities of an ageing Western population? This volume analyses this field of representation to argue that, while celebrations of ageing as an inspirational journey are increasing, most depictions still focus on decline and deterioration.

The Social Psychology of Good and Evil, Second Edition MDPI

Enlightened Sexism Times Books

*The Concise Encyclopedia of Communication*

Routledge

The book argues that the category of mother is distinct from the category of woman, and that many



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of the problems mothers face—social, economic, political, cultural, psychological, and so forth—are specific to women’s role and identity as mothers. Indeed, mothers are oppressed under patriarchy as women and as mothers. Consequently, mothers need a feminism of their own, one that positions mothers’ concerns as the starting point for a theory and politic of empowerment. O’Reilly terms this new mode of feminism matricentric feminism and the book explores how it is represented and experienced in theory, activism, and practice. The chapter on maternal theory examines the central theoretical concepts of maternal

scholarship while the chapter on activism considers the twenty-first century motherhood movement. Feminist mothering is likewise examined as the specific practice of matricentric feminism and this chapter discusses various theories and strategies on and for maternal empowerment. Matricentric feminism is also examined in relation to the larger field of academic feminism; here O’Reilly persuasively shows how matricentric feminism has been marginalized in academic feminism and considers the reasons for such exclusion and how such may be challenged and changed.

**How Pop Culture Shapes the Stages of a Woman's Life**  
Crown

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Challenges idealized concepts about motherhood that the author believes compromise women's rights and empowerment without benefiting children, citing such factors as unrealistic parenting standards, media scare tactics, Reprint. 500,000 first printing.

*Enlightened Sexism*

Springer Nature

Nearly every night on every major network, “unscripted” (but carefully crafted) “reality” TV shows routinely glorify retrograde stereotypes that most people would assume got left behind 35 years ago. In *Reality Bites Back*, media critic Jennifer L. Pozner aims a critical, analytical lens at a trend most people dismiss as harmless fluff. She deconstructs reality TV’s twisted fairytales to demonstrate that far from being simple “guilty pleasures,” these programs are actually guilty of

fomenting gender-war ideology and significantly affecting the intellectual and political development of this generation’s young viewers. She lays out the cultural biases promoted by reality TV about gender, race, class, sexuality, and consumerism, and explores how those biases shape and reflect our cultural perceptions of who we are, what we’re valued for, and what we should view as “our place” in society. Smart and informative, *Reality Bites Back* arms readers with the tools they need to understand and challenge the stereotypes reality TV reinforces and, ultimately, to demand accountability from the corporations responsible for this contemporary cultural attack on three decades of feminist progress.

**The Dinner Party** University of Georgia Press

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In MTV and Teen Pregnancy: Critical Essays on 16 and Pregnant and Teen Mom, contributors from a variety of backgrounds and expertise offer potent essays about the MTV programs 16 and Pregnant, Teen Mom, and Teen Mom 2. Divided into four parts, each section tackles the controversial representation of teen pregnancy from a different discipline. Part One explores gendered social norms and the shows' representations of teenage motherhood. Part Two prompts readers to consider the intersections of race, class, gender, and the social and cultural power structures often glossed over in these programs. Part Three turns its attention to teenage fathers, and Part Four draws from TV's representations of reality to discuss the impact these shows may have on the viewing audience. As the debates about these shows continue, this collection provides a valuable critical discourse to be used both

inside and outside the classroom.

*Matricentric Feminism*

Scarecrow Press

In almost all critical writings on the horror film, woman is conceptualised only as victim. In *The Monstrous-Feminine* Barbara Creed challenges this patriarchal view by arguing that the prototype of all definitions of the monstrous is the female reproductive body. With close reference to a number of classic horror films including the *Alien* trilogy, T

Celebrity Springer

Unique empirically grounded analysis of how audiences negotiate sexism and feminism across media, from popular television shows to dating apps. Feminism can reflect the cultural moment,

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especially as media appropriate and use feminist messaging and agenda to various ends. Yet media can also push boundaries, exposing audiences to ideas they may not be familiar with and advancing public acceptance of concepts once considered taboo. Moreover, audiences are far from passive recipients, especially in the digital age. In *Media-Ready Feminism and Everyday Sexism*, Andrea L. Press and Francesca Tripodi focus on how audiences across platforms not only consume but also create meanings—sometimes quite transgressive meanings—in engaging with media content. If television shows such as *Game of Thrones* and *Jersey Shore* and dating apps such as *Tinder* are sites of persistent everyday sexism, then so, too, are they sites of what

Press and Tripodi call "media-ready feminism." In developing a sociologically based conception of reception that encompasses media's progressive potential, as well as the processes of domestication through which audiences and users revert to more limited cultural schemas, Press and Tripodi make a vital contribution to gender and media studies, and help to illuminate the complexity of our current moment. Andrea L. Press is William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Media Studies and Sociology at the University of Virginia. Her books include *The Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Feminism* (coedited with Tasha Oren). Francesca Tripodi is Assistant Professor of Information and Library Science and Senior Researcher at the Center for Information Technology

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and Public Life at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The Branding of Right-Wing Activism Vintage

Pundits and politicians often opine on the irrelevance of feminism and the women's movement today. Some commentators describe the state of feminism as "post-feminist," alongside equally questionable claims of Barack Obama's election as signaling a "post-racial" America. Modern Misogyny examines contemporary anti-feminism in a "post-feminist" era. It considers the widespread notion that the feminist movement has ended, in large part because the work of feminism has been completed. In fact,

the argument goes, women have been so successful in achieving equality, it is now men who currently are at risk of becoming irrelevant and unnecessary. These sentiments make up modern anti-feminism. Modern Misogyny argues that equality has not been fully achieved and that anti-feminism is now packaged in a more palatable, but stealthy form. This book addresses the nature, function, and implications of modern anti-feminism in the United States. Modern Misogyny explores the landscape of popular culture and politics, emphasizing relatively recent moves away from feminist activism to individualism and consumerism where

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"self-empowerment" represents women's progress. It also explores the retreat to traditional gender roles after September 11, 2001. It interrogates the assumption that feminism is unnecessary, that women have achieved equality, and therefore those women who do insist on being feminists want to get ahead of men. Finally, it takes a fresh look at the positive role that feminism plays in today's "post-feminist" era, and how feminism does and might function in women's lives. Post-feminist discourse encourages young women to believe that they were born into a free society, so if they experience discrimination, it is an individual, isolated

problem that may even be their own fault. Modern Misogyny examines that rendering of feminism as irrelevant and as the silencing and marginalizing of feminists. Anderson calls for a revived feminism that is vigilant in combatting modern forms of sexism. *The Rise of Enlightened Sexism* NYU Press Contemporary popular culture has created a slew of stereotypical roles for girls and women to (willingly or not) play throughout their lives: The Princess, the Nymphette, the Diva, the Single Girl, the Bridezilla, the Tiger Mother, the M.I.L.F, the Cougar, and more. In this book Ames and Burcon investigate the role of cultural texts in gender socialization at specific pre-scripted stages of a

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woman's life (from girls to the "golden girls") and how that instruction compounds over time. By studying various texts (toys, magazines, blogs, tweets, television shows, Hollywood films, novels, and self-help books) they argue that popular culture exists as a type of funhouse mirror constantly distorting the real world conditions that exist for women, magnifying the gendered expectations they face. Despite the many problematic, conflicting messages women receive throughout their lives, this book also showcases the ways such messages are resisted, allowing women to move past the blurry reality they broadcast and toward, hopefully, gender equality.

### **The Monstrous-Feminine** OUP Us

Rita M. Gross has long been acknowledged as a founder in the field of

feminist theology. One of the earliest scholars in religious studies to discover how feminism affects that discipline, she is recognized as preeminent in Buddhist feminist theology. The essays in *A Garland of Feminist Reflections* represent the major aspects of her work and provide an overview of her methodology in women's studies in religion and feminism. The introductory article, written specifically for this volume, summarizes the conclusions Gross has reached about gender and feminism after forty years of searching and exploring, and the autobiography, also written for this volume, narrates how those conclusions were

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reached. These articles reveal the range of scholarship and reflection found in Rita M. Gross's work and demonstrate how feminist scholars in the 1970s shifted the paradigm away from an androcentric model of humanity and forever changed the way we study religion.

*(Re-)Claiming Bodies Through Fashion and Style*

Simon and Schuster

While some have argued that we live in a 'postfeminist' era that renders feminism irrelevant to people's contemporary lives this book takes 'feminism', the source of eternal debate, contestation and ambivalence, and situates the term within the popular, cultural practices of everyday life. It explores the intimate connections between the politics of

feminism and the representational practices of contemporary popular culture, examining how feminism is 'made sensible' through visual imagery and popular culture representations. It investigates how popular culture is produced, represented and consumed to reproduce the conditions in which feminism is valued or dismissed, and asks whether antifeminism exists in commodity form and is commercially viable. Written in an accessible style and analysing a broad range of popular culture artefacts (including commercial advertising, printed and digital news-related journalism and commentary, music, film, television programming, websites and social media), this book will be of use to students, researchers and practitioners of International



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Relations, International  
Political Economy and  
gender, cultural and media  
studies.