

BOOK REVIEW

Women's Studies on the Edge. Joan Wallach Scott, editor. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008; 210 pages+Contributors+Index; ISBN 978-0-8223-4274-8; \$22.95US (paper).

The edited collection in *Women's Studies on the Edge* illustrates and brings attention to some difficult conversations taking place in the corridors of academia. They are conversations I overhear at universities in which I work. As a new academic in Women's Studies, I have known no reality other than this particular subject of discussion: "how do we increase the enrolment of students who major in Women's Studies?" This edited book contributes to the historical perspective of such debates, which is necessary for new academics who work in Women's Studies or other social justice programs; it echoes the frustration and anxiety experienced by many experienced scholars who fear the dismantling or institutionalized disciplinarity of Women's Studies.

The sites of analysis presented in this collection are not a cohesive whole in the sense that the authors do not agree on the current state of the field of Women's Studies. In fact, many of the authors critique each others' perspectives and the debates which are put forward are contentious: Has Women's Studies become too conventional, too theoretical, too practical, or too integrated into the dominant structure of the academy? Has it lost its critical edge and political grounding? Different arguments are put forth which at times support and at other times challenge these positions. However, a common thread which runs through these chapters points to the corporatization of academia as a major influence on how the field of Women's Studies is experienced today by both academics and students. The development of Women's Studies as an interdisciplinary program challenged the status quo of traditional knowledge production, methodology, and pedagogy in the university and the community. The contributors to this collection outline their struggle to preserve the foundation of this scholarship while responding to a changing political climate and the need to integrate new social justice initiatives and identities into the Women's Studies landscape. Some of the riveting themes explored in these chapters include the intersectionality of Gender Studies with Cultural Studies, studies of Imperialism and Globalization, Post-Colonial and Anti-Racist studies, and Transgender Studies. This book is appropriate for graduate courses and upper level undergraduate courses.

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