

Comparative Feminist Studies

Series Editor

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COMPARATIVE FEMINIST STUDIES foregrounds writing, organizing, and reflection on feminist trajectories across the historical and cultural borders of nation-states. It takes up fundamental analytic and political issues involved in the cross-cultural production of knowledge about women and feminism, examining in depth the politics of scholarship and knowledge in relation to feminist organizing and social movements. This series draws on feminist thinking in a number of fields, targeting innovative, comparative feminist scholarship; pedagogical and curricular strategies; community organizing, and political education. Volumes in this series will provide systematic and challenging interventions into the (still) largely Euro-Western feminist studies knowledge base, while simultaneously highlighting the work that can and needs to be done to envision and enact cross-cultural, multiracial feminist solidarity. CHANDRA TALPADE MOHANTY is Professor of Women's Studies and Dean's Professor of the Humanities at Syracuse University. Her work focuses on transnational feminist theory, cultural studies, and anti-racist education. She is the author of *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* and co-editor of *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, and *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*. Mohanty has worked with three grassroots community organizations, Grassroots Leadership of North Carolina, Center for Immigrant Families in New York City, and Awareness, Orissa, India, and has been a consultant/evaluator for AAC & U and the Ford Foundation.

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Gender Violence in Failed and Democratic States

Besieging Perverse Masculinities

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To Roberto Guibernau
Love is always stronger than death.

SERIES EDITOR'S PREFACE

For almost two decades, the Comparative Feminist Studies (CFS) series has addressed fundamental analytic and political questions involved in the cross-cultural production of knowledge about women and feminism. The series seeks to engage the politics of scholarship and knowledge in relation to feminist organizing and social justice movements and is designed to foreground writing, organizing, and reflection on feminist trajectories across the historical and cultural borders of cultures and nation-states. Drawing on feminist thinking in a number of fields, the CFS series targets innovative, comparative feminist scholarship, pedagogical and curricular strategies, and community organizing and political education. It explores a comparative feminist praxis that addresses some of the most urgent questions facing progressive critical thinkers and activists today.

Over the past many decades, feminists and social justice activists across the globe have been variously successful at addressing fundamental issues of domination, exploitation, and liberation. In our search for gender justice in the early twenty-first century, however, we inherit a number of challenges our mothers and grandmothers faced. But there are also new challenges to face as we attempt to make sense of a world indelibly marked by the failure of settler-colonial, postcolonial (and advanced) capitalist, and communist nation-states to provide for the social, economic, spiritual, and psychic needs of the majority of the world's population. Globalization has come to represent the interests of corporations

and the free market rather than self-determination and freedom from political, cultural, and economic domination for all the world's peoples. The project of USA empire building, the rise of Islamophobia in the USA and Europe, the global consolidation of "national security" regimes, alongside the dominance of corporate capitalism and neoliberalism, kill, disenfranchise, and impoverish women everywhere. Militarization, environmental degradation, heterosexist State practices, religious fundamentalisms, sustained migrations of peoples across the borders of nations and geo-political regions, environmental crises, criminalization and the rise of carceral regimes of rule, and the exploitation of gendered bodies and labor by governments and corporate capital all pose profound challenges for feminists at this time. Neoliberal economic policies and discourses of development and progress mark yet another form of colonial/imperial governance, masking the exercise of power over people's lives through claims of empowerment. Recovering and remembering insurgent histories and seeking new understandings of political subjectivities and citizenship have never been so important, at a time marked by social amnesia, global consumer culture, and the world-wide mobilization of fascist notions of "national security."

These are some of the challenges the CFS series is designed to address. The series takes as its fundamental premise the need for feminist engagement with global as well as local ideological, historical, economic, and political processes, and the urgency of transnational feminist dialogue in building an ethical culture capable of withstanding and transforming the commodified and exploitative practices of global governance structures, culture, and economics. Individual volumes in the CFS series develop and sustain gendered epistemologies anchored in the history and experiences of the Global South, providing systemic and challenging interventions into the (still) largely Euro-Western feminist studies knowledge base. The series highlights work that can and needs to be done to envision and enact cross-cultural, multiracial feminist solidarity.

Ithaca, NY

Chandra Talpade Mohanty

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The main idea for this book came from a conference organized by my colleague Laura Martins, who invited me to give a keynote address at the 26th Louisiana Conference on Hispanic Languages and Literatures in 2008. After I finished delivering my lecture, some of the people attending the event told me their personal stories about incest, pedophilia, and rape. I am grateful to them all for their trust, as I am to all of those who subsequently shared with me their family histories of gender abuse. I recognize in all of these people the source of my drive. In the body of this book, I acknowledge, in particular and more than once, the foundational fiction that was my inspiration to write on the subject.

Along the years, my colleagues Ana Forcinito and Héctor Domínguez, who are dedicated to the study of Human Rights and violence, organized several conferences on those subjects. At the University of Minnesota, Forcinito invited me to *Ongoing Dialogues on Memory and Human Rights* (2011), and *Erasures: Gender, Violence and Human Rights* (2013); At the University of Texas, Austin, and CIESAS, Mexico City, Domínguez invited me to *Republics of Fear: Understanding the Endemic Violence in Latin America* (March 2010), *Representations of Violence in Latin America* (March 2009), *Dialogues on The Mexico–US Border Violence UT Austin* (April 2005), and *Primera Reunión de Trabajo de Especialistas en la Dimensión Política, Jurídica y Cultural de la Violencia Sexual en la Frontera Ciudad Juárez, Chih./El Paso, Texas, CIESAS, Mexico City* (August 2009). After participating in all these state-of-the-art dialogues, I realized I had written another book. Thank you both for this unexpected gift. I am also much in debt to my then graduate students,

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