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978-0-521-65984-0 - Political Theory and Feminist Social Criticism

Brooke A. Ackerly

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## Political Theory and Feminist Social Criticism

In *Political Theory and Feminist Social Criticism*, Brooke Ackerly demonstrates the shortcomings of contemporary deliberative democratic theory, relativism, and essentialism for guiding the practice of social criticism in the real, imperfect world. Drawing theoretical implications from the activism of Third World feminists who help bring to public audiences the voices of women silenced by coercion, she provides a practicable model of social criticism. She argues that feminist critics have managed to achieve in practice what other theorists do only incompletely in theory. Complemented by Third World feminist social criticism, deliberative democratic theory becomes critical theory – actionable, coherent, and self-reflective. While a complement to democratic theory, Third World feminist social criticism also addresses the problem in feminist theory associated with attempts to deal with identity politics. Third World feminist social criticism thus takes feminist theory beyond the critical impasse of the tension between anti-relativist and anti-essentialist feminist theory.

BROOKE ACKERLY is Visiting Assistant Professor in the Political Science Department at University of California, Los Angeles.

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larger contexts of political theory, development practice, and Third World women's activism.

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