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978-0-521-87651-3 - The Feminist Avant-Garde: Transatlantic Encounters of the Early Twentieth Century

Lucy Delap

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THE FEMINIST AVANT-GARDE

In the early twentieth century the term ‘feminist’ was used by self-consciously ‘modern’ men and women, to distinguish their ideas from those of ‘the women’s movement’, and even to adopt anti-suffrage positions. In the first major study of twentieth-century feminism as an Anglo-American phenomenon, Lucy Delap offers a new perspective on the politics of gender during this period, exploring the intellectual history and cultural politics of Anglo-American feminism in a way that challenges the reader to rethink the nature of both the ‘avant-garde’ and ‘feminism’. Focusing on the development of transnational feminisms within Edwardian and inter-war print culture, feminist political argument is placed at the centre of an account of modernism, highlighting some unexpected and often uncomfortable components, including the feminist fascination with individualism and egoism; ambivalence over World War One; utopian thinking and captivation by the idea of ‘the simple life’, anti-Semitism; sexual radicalism; and ideas about ‘the superwoman’.

LUCY DELAP is a Fellow of St Catharine’s College, Cambridge, and a member of the History Faculty in the University of Cambridge. She is co-editor of *Anti-Feminism in Edwardian Literature* (with Ann Heilmann, Thoemmes-Continuum, 2005), *Anti-Feminism in the Victorian and Edwardian Debate* (with Valerie Sanders, Thoemmes-Continuum, 2008), and *Feminism and the Periodical Press 1900–1918* (with Leila Ryan and Maria DiCenzo, Routledge, 2006).

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St Catharine's College, Cambridge



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*Dedicated to my parents, Liz and Tim Delap,
for all their love and support*

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Abbreviations

COS	Charity Organisation Society
<i>FW</i>	<i>The Freewoman</i>
<i>IJE</i>	<i>The International Journal of Ethics</i>
ILP	Independent Labour Party
IWSA	International Woman Suffrage Alliance
NAWSA	National American Woman Suffrage Association
<i>NFW</i>	<i>The New Freewoman</i>
NUWSS	National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies
NWP	National Woman's Party
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
WLF	Women's Freedom League
WPP	Women's Peace Party
WSPU	Women's Social and Political Union