

Feminist Interpretations of Richard Rorty (Re-Reading the Canon)



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When Richard Rorty died on June 8, 2007, obituaries lionized him as one of the "world's most influential cultural philosophers" and as a thinker whose work covered a wide and varied terrain of literature, philosophy, politics, aesthetics, and cultural critique. Most famous for his rejection of the analytic tradition, Rorty had a relationship to the philosophical canon, and the discipline of philosophy, that was as fraught and full of tensions as it is for most feminist philosophers. Rorty chose to use his 1990 Tanner Lecture on Human Values (the text of which is the first chapter in this volume) to side with feminists Marilyn Frye, Catherine MacKinnon, and Adrienne Rich, who tried to show the importance of opening up new logical space within which women's voices could be heard.

Feminist Interpretations of Richard Rorty presents classic and new essays on Rorty's engagement with feminist philosophy, including essays about the relevance for feminism of pragmatism, philosophy, rhetoric, realism, and liberalism. The chapters in this volume not only take up Rorty's conversation with feminism but also distill the debates that were the central concern of feminist theory in the late twentieth century and that continue to demand our responses, perhaps in slightly different forms, in the beginning of the twenty-first.

In addition to the editor, the contributors are John C. Adams, Linda Martín Alcoff, Sharyn Clough, Nancy Fraser, Sabina Lovibond, Alessandra Tanesini, Georgia Warnke, and Stephen R. Yarbrough.

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Colleen Nguyen:

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