

OXFORD READINGS



IN FEMINISM

# **FEMINISM** & **PORNOGRAPHY**

**Drucilla Cornell**

OXFORD READINGS IN FEMINISM

# Feminism and Pornography

Edited by  
**Drucilla Cornell**

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OXFORD READINGS IN FEMINISM

**FEMINISM AND PORNOGRAPHY**

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## Preface

Given how divisive the issue of pornography in the second wave of feminism has been, it is not surprising that it took the committed effort of a great number of people to bring this book to fruition. I want to thank all of them. Judith Butler's wisdom was crucial to me in thinking through how to be fair to the different points of view on pornography. Wendy Brown's generosity and intellectual integrity was essential in helping me see through what compromises could be made to make this volume as inclusive as it is. Ann Scales gave of her time to do research on the aftermath of the *Butler* decision in Canada, thus making sure that I accurately represented current Canadian Obscenity Law. Norma Ramos was helpful in explaining why a Latina could embrace anti-pornography legislation. Catharine MacKinnon threw herself into the project and taught me a lot about what anti-pornography feminism stands for. Donna Hughes played an important role through her effort in collecting international materials. Andrea Dworkin's cooperation from the beginning of the project was unyielding. It is this kind of sisterly cooperation that makes a project like this possible. I would like to thank my editor, Tim Barton, for his patience and understanding of the importance of putting together the collection which we ultimately achieved.

Teresa Brennan was ~~by my side through~~ all of the twists and turns that this book took. Her devoted support and belief that a feminist volume containing diverse views on pornography was possible, helped me see the light of day. ~~One went way beyond~~ her responsibilities as a series editor. From the ~~beginning of its~~ conception, she embraced the spirit of the collection, ~~which would include~~ not only diverse perspectives on pornography, but also voices which are not usually heard on the topic, particularly perspectives from former colonial nations. Teresa also graciously provided the translation for pieces which were written in Spanish and had to be translated into English. Throughout this process, she represented the best kind of support and sustenance.

Isabelle Barker, my assistant, in a very real sense took the journey with me as we struggled together, not only to figure out what should be included in the book, but also to discuss the differences between her generation and mine about pornography. Isabelle spent months on the

internet so we could reach organizations, such as the El Salvador Sex Workers Union. Isabelle also helped me conceive of the overarching structure of the collection and poured over book after book on pornography to help me select the materials. It is no exaggeration to say that without her assistance, this book could not have gone forward. Her own response to 'Editing Pornography' is included as an essay in this volume because of the lessons she brought to this project and taught me.

Evelyn Alsultany took over from Isabelle and saw the book through its completion. Her dedication to the project was shown in her diligence in taking care of all the nitty gritty details that a manuscript like this demands. Our discussions about the complex relationship between ethnic and national identity to questions of sexuality were indispensable.

Dorchen Leidholdt was extraordinarily helpful in my search for international materials. More importantly, she embraced the spirit I was trying to achieve in the book which was that of respect for the different views of the feminists on pornography in all their complexity. Dorchen Leidholdt and my long-time friend, Mary Elizabeth Bartholomew, are both anti-pornography feminists. Dorchen was one of the founders of anti-pornography feminism and helped to conceptualize it as a movement. Although we have often disagreed about what role law should play in feminist struggles, including over exploitation of women in the sex industry, we have been able to strengthen a bond of alliance and cooperation that is so necessary if feminism is able to embrace disagreement amongst women without taking such a disagreement as a sign that the other side is no longer part of the feminist community. It is the spirit of solidarity in the discussions between Dorchen, Mary Elizabeth, and myself that sustains feminism. Mary Elizabeth and Dorchen also represent the unflagging commitment to the liberation of women without which a feminist movement could not get off the ground. They are untiring fighters for the rights of battered women. It is this day to day work in the trenches which often goes unsung which I would like to recognize here by dedicating this book to them.

D.C.

*New York City*  
*November 1999*

## Notes on Contributors

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MALEK ALLOULA was born in Oran, Algeria, in 1937. He received a Master of Arts degree in Letters after having studies in Algeria and at the Sorbonne. He has been living in Paris since 1967 and works in publishing. He has published articles of literary criticism in numerous publications and journals, both in France and Algeria. He has published three collections of poems (*Villes et Autres lieux*; *Rêveurs Sépultures*; *mesures du vent*) and the essay (*Le harem colonial. Images d'un sous-esotisme*).

ISABELLE V. BARKER is a doctoral candidate in political science at Rutgers University, where she studies women and politics, political theory, and comparative politics. She is also a freelance writer and activist involved in feminist and anti-racist violence prevention and education work in New York City.

WENDY BROWN is Professor of Political Science and Women's Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Her most recent books include *States of Injury: Power and freedom in Late Modernity* (Princeton, 1995) and *Liberalism Out of History: Political Possibilities After Progress* (Princeton, forthcoming).

JUDITH BUTLER is Maxine Elliot Professor in the Departments of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the author of *Subjects of Desire* (Columbia University Press, 1987), *Gender Trouble* (Routledge, 1990), *Bodies That Matter* (Routledge, 1993), *The Psychic Lift of Power* (Stanford University Press, 1997), *Excitable Speech* (Routledge, 1997), as well as numerous articles and contributions on philosophy, feminist and queer theory. She is currently finishing a manuscript on Antigone and the politics of kinship.

DEBORAH CAMERON has taught linguistics and women's studies in England, Scotland, Sweden, and the US and is now professor of languages at the Institute of Education, London University. Her publications include *Feminism and Linguistic Theory* (Macmillan 1985), *Verbal Hygiene* (Routledge 1995), and,



with Elizabeth Frazer, *The Lust To Kill: A Feminist Investigation of Sexual Murder* (Polity 1987).

REY CHOW is Andrew W. Mellon Professor of the Humanities at Brown University. She is the author of many essays and several books, the most recent of which is *Ethics after Idealism: Theory, Culture, Ethnicity, Reading* (1998). In 2000 the journal *Differences* will publish a special issue guest-edited by her entitled 'Writing in the Realm of the Senses'.

DRUCILLA CORNELL is a professor of law, women's studies, and political science at Rutgers University. Prior to beginning her academic life, Professor Cornell was a union organizer for a number of years, working for the UAW, the UE, and the IUE in California, New Jersey, and New York. She played a key role in organizing the conferences on Deconstruction and Justice with Jacques Derrida, held at Cardozo in 1989, 1990, and 1993. In addition, she has worked to coordinate the Law and Humanism Speakers Series with the Jacob Burns Institute for Advanced Legal Studies and the Committee on Liberal Studies at the New School for Social Research. Professor Cornell was professor at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law from 1989 to 1994 and spent the 1991–2 academic year at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. She has authored numerous articles on critical theory, feminism and 'Postmodern' theories of ethics. She is the co-editor, with Seyla Benhabib, of *Feminism as Critique: On the Politics of Gender*; with Michel Rosenfeld and David Gray Carlson, of *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*; and has published five books: *At the Heart of Freedom: Feminism, Sex, and Equality*; *The Imaginary Domain: Abortion, Pornography and Sexual Harassment*; *Beyond Accommodation: Ethical Feminism, Deconstruction and the Law*; *The Philosophy of the Limit*; and *Transformations: Recollective Imagination and Sexual Difference*. She is part of a published philosophical exchange with Seyla Benhabib, Judith Butler, and Nancy Fraser entitled *Feminist Contentions*. She is also a produced playwright—productions of her plays *The Dream Cure* and *Background Interference* have been performed in New York and Los Angeles.

KIMBERLE CRENSHAW has lectured and written extensively on civil rights, Black feminist legal theory, and race and the law. A founding member of the Critical Race Theory workshop; co-editor of *Critical Race Theory: A Reader*. Her work has appeared in *Harvard Law Review*, *National Black Law Journal*, *Stanford Law Review*, and *Southern California Law Review*. She serves on the governing board of the Law and Society Association and the Society of American Law Teachers, is a specialist on legal issues confronting Black women (assisting the legal team that represented Anita Hill). A frequent commentator on political and cultural issues and an international lecturer, Ms. Crenshaw is twice honored as Professor of the Year at UCLA Law School and has lectured throughout the national and international community with recent visits to South Africa, Brazil, Spain, France, Germany, and Holland.

ANDREA DWORKIN has spoken at colleges, universities, and rallies around the world. With Catharine A. McKinnon, she authored civil rights legislation recognizing pornography as legally actionable sex discrimination. She has written ten books, including such seminal works as *Intercourse* and *Pornography*. Her next book, *Scapegoat*, will be published by the Free Press in Spring 2000. She lives in New York City.

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AMBER HOLLIBAUGH has 30 years's experience as a national organizer, educator, filmmaker, and writer. She has worked as a theoretician and activist on issues such as prisoners' rights, homophobia, women's rights, incest, domestic violence, rape, race and class oppression, and sexuality. For the last ten years she has worked as a health educator: as a pre- and post-test supervisor of New York City's AIDS hotline, in the New York City Commission on Human Rights AIDS Discrimination Unit, and finally, as Director of the lesbian AIDS project at Gay men's Health Crisis in New York. Her documentary, *The Heart of the Matter*, focuses attention on Women's sexuality through the prism of premiered nationwide on PBS's POV series in 1994.

BELL HOOKS, cultural critic, feminist theorist and poet, has written widely on feminism and popular culture, the civil rights movement, and capitalism. Her more recent texts, *Remembered Rapture: The Writer at Work* (1999), and *Wounds of Passion: A Writing Life* (1997) embody both memoir and social critique: they examine not only the field of publishing, but also the creative

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AUDRE LORDE 1934–1992. A self-described 'Black lesbian, mother, warrior, poet,' Lorde's celebrated works continue to inspire. Her works include books, essays, and poetry volumes such as *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* (1982), *The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic As Power* (1978), and *Our Dead Behind Us* (1986). Lorde was a co-founder of 'Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press'.

CATHARINE A. MAC KINNON, J.D., Ph.D., is a lawyer, teacher, writer, activist, and expert on sex equality. She and Andrea Dworkin conceived and wrote civil rights ordinances making the harms of pornography civilly actionable as sex discrimination. She is Elizabeth A. Long Professor of Law at the University of Michigan and long-term Visiting Professor of Law at the University of Chicago.

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DIANA H. RUSSELL, Ph.D., is an Emerita Professor of Sociology at Mills College, Oakland, California, where she taught for 22 years. She is the author/co-author/editor/so-editor of fifteen books, most of them on sexual violence. Her book, *The Secret Trauma: Incest in the Lives of Girls and Women* (1986), was winner of the 1986 C. Wright Mills Award for outstanding social science research. Russell has also written/edited three books on pornography: *Making*

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

*Violence Sexy: Feminist Views on Pornography* (1993), *Against Pornography: The Evidence of Harm* (1994), and *Dangerous Relationships: Pornography, Misogyny, and Rape* (1998).

ANN SCALES is an activist and lawyer. For twenty years, she taught law on various faculties, including the University of New Mexico, the University of British Columbia, Boston College, and the University of Iowa. She testified as an expert witness on pornography in the landmark Canadian case, *Little Sisters Book and Art Emporium v. Canada*.

ALICE WALKER is a Pulitzer Prize winning novelist, essayist, and poet. Her 1997 collection, *Anything We Love Can be Saved: A Writer's Activism* includes pieces on religion and the spirit, writing and language, families and identity, politics and social change.

# Contents

<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	xi
------------------------------	----

Introduction	1
DRUCILLA CORNELL	

## Part I. Anti-Pornography Feminism

1. Against the Male Flood: Censorship, Pornography, and Equality	19
ANDREA DWORKIN	
2. Pornography and Grief	39
ANDREA DWORKIN	
3. Pornography is a Social Justice Issue	45
NORMA RAMOS	
4. Pornography and Rape: A Causal Model	48
DIANA E. H. RUSSELL	
5. Only Words	94
CATHARINE A. MACKINNON	
6. Pornography: An Exchange	121
CATHARINE A. MACKINNON/RONALD DWORKIN	
7. The Roar on the Other Side of Silence	130
CATHARINE A. MACKINNON	
8. Suffering and Speech	154
ANDREA DWORKIN	

## Part II. Questioning Moralism

9. Not a Moral Issue	169
CATHARINE A. MACKINNON	
10. The Mirror of Pornography	198
WENDY BROWN	
11. The 2 Live Crew Controversy	218
KIMBERLE CRENSHAW	

## CONTENTS

12. On the Question of Pornography and Sexual Violence:  
Moving Beyond Cause and Effect 240  
DEBORAH CAMERON AND ELIZABETH FRAZER
13. The Politics of Postmodern Feminism: Lessons from the  
Anti-Pornography Campaign 254  
MARY JOE FRUG
14. 'It's Merely Designed for Sexual Arousal': Interrogating the  
Indefensibility of Lesbian Smut 264  
BECKI L. ROSS
15. Avoiding Constitutional Depression: Bad Attitudes and  
the Fate of *Butler* 318  
ANN SCALES
16. On Prostitution: Two Broadsheets and a Statement 345  
MOVIMENTO FEMMINISTA ROMANO

### **Part III. An Historical and Cultural Analysis of Sexuality, Imperialism, and Modernity**

17. Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity, 1500–1800 355  
LYNN HUNT
18. The Colonial Harem: Images of a Suberoticism 381  
MALEK ALLOULA
19. Erotic Autonomy as a Politics of Decolonization: An  
Anatomy of Feminist and State Practice in the Bahamas  
Tourist Economy 404  
M. JACQUI ALEXANDER
20. The Sexual Exploitation of Women and Girls: A Violation  
of Human Rights 418  
DORCHEN A. LEIDHOLDT, ESQ.
21. Looking for Women's Rights in the Rainbow:  
Pornography, Censorship, and the 'New' South Africa 423  
LLIANE LOOTS
22. También Somos Mujeres: We Are Women, Too—Cuban  
Prostitutes after the Revolution 438  
VICTORIA ORTIZ

## Part IV. Breaking Open the Ground of Sex and Gender

23. Seducing Women into 'A Lifestyle of Vaginal Fisting':  
Lesbian Sex Gets *Virtually* Dangerous 445  
AMBER HOLLIBAUGH
24. Just Looking for Trouble: Robert Mapplethorpe and  
Fantasies of Race 460  
KOBENA MERCER
25. Good Girls Look the Other Way 477  
BELL HOOKS
26. The Force of Fantasy: Feminism, Mapplethorpe, and  
Discursive Excess 487  
JUDITH BUTLER
27. 'Love Me, Master, Love Me, Son': A Cultural Other  
Pornographically Constructed in Time 509  
REY CHOW

## Part V. Erotic Hope, Feminine Sexuality, and the Beginnings of Sexual Freedom

28. Polemical Preface: Pornography in the Service of Women 527  
ANGELA CARTER
29. Porn in the USA 540  
CANDIDA ROYALLE
30. Pornography's Temptation 551  
DRUCILLA CORNELL
31. Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power 569  
AUDRE LORDE
32. Lovers and Workers: Screening the Body in Post-  
Communist Hungarian Cinema 575  
CATHERINE PORTUGES
33. What We're Rollin Around in Bed With: Sexual Silences in  
Feminism 587  
AMBER HOLLIBAUGH AND CHERRIE MORAGA
34. Porn 600  
ALICE WALKER
35. A Little Hungarian Pornography 606  
PÉTER ESTERHÁZY



## CONTENTS

36. Newsletter: Sexual Workers from AMSS Introduce a Demand Platform ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN 'FLOWERS OF STONE'	617
37. Prostitution in Latin America and the Caribbean ZORAIDA RAMIREZ RODRIGUEZ	619
38. From Research to Action FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN IN THAILAND	624
39. Editing Pornography ISABELLE V. BARKER	643
<i>Further Reading (1988–1998)</i>	653
<i>COYOTE Bibliography and Sex Worker Resource Listing</i>	657
<i>Index</i>	665