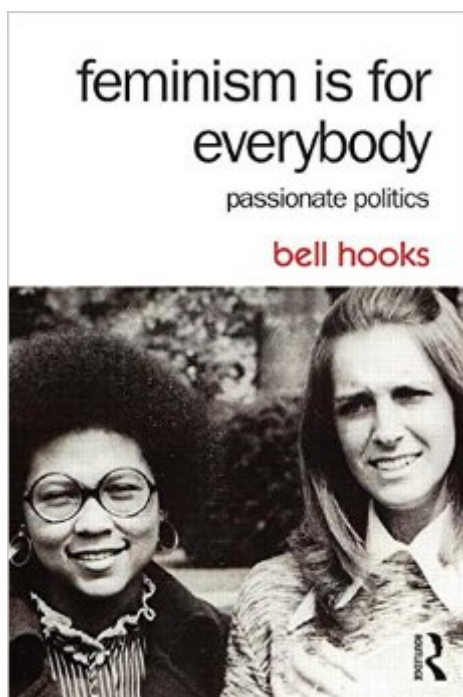


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# Feminism Is For Everybody: Passionate Politics



## Synopsis

What is feminism? In this short, accessible primer, bell hooks explores the nature of feminism and its positive promise to eliminate sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. With her characteristic clarity and directness, hooks encourages readers to see how feminism can touch and change their lives •to see that feminism is for everybody.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is the best "primer" to feminism that I've ever read. It's a great read for people who know nothing about feminism or who are only familiar with mainstream society's myths about feminism, because it offers a concise and easy to understand history of the movement. hooks also clears up misunderstanding on the definitions of the terms feminist and feminism. She touches on problems within the movement and where we're at now. I also think this is an excellent book for seasoned feminists to have on hand. For one thing, you can find the quotes and passages you're looking for with ease...and it also helps to have read a book that you should be suggesting to those new to feminism. Finally, I disagree with the reviewer who said this book is only for the "fringe" because hooks points out "our feminist pioneers [were] privileged, educated white women." Um...THEY WERE for the most part. If you're looking for a whitewashed version of the history of feminism then this book isn't for you. Like the feminist movement itself, this book cannot address sex and gender without also addressing race and class. Also, nowhere in the book does hooks imply that housewives are excluded from feminism. The book actually touches on the fact that most of the

work done by women (including especially unpaid domestic labor) is still unpaid and undervalued in this society. The amazing thing about this book is that hooks is able to compress so much information into such an easy and interesting read. You won't put it down except maybe to get your hi-liter.

Bell hooks's book is an excellent introduction to the study of feminist politics. With clear and concise language, she revisits the beginnings of the movement, and tells us where it is now. She also succinctly explains why feminism is not anti-male, anti-sex, or anti-family, but rather feminism is the struggle against rigid sexism in patriarchal cultures. Despite its plague of editorial errors, the book is highly recommended for the non-academic language and for the encouraging message hooks offers us.

I have always admired and respected the formidable intelligence of bell hooks. I have read her books since *Ain't I A Woman* when I was still a sophomore in college. While I don't agree with everything she says I feel her vision is quite insightful, but *Feminism for Everybody* is just recycled rhetoric, which has been a pattern of her books as of late. I feel this book is like every other book she has done, saying the same old things without any new insight or enlightenment. The one thing I notice is that for all her suggestions she never has a concise game plan on how to solve things based on her theory, although when she does criticism she is the first to write of other authors who don't share any type of solutions based on their rhetoric. This book is good for people who are ignorant and have a fear about feminism. It is a good introductory book, but if you're a seasoned reader, or activist I suggest you move on to something more substantial.

*Feminism is for Everybody* is a great book for third wave generation feminists. Most young feminists of today don't know the history of feminism that bell hooks recounts in this book. bell hooks explains how the current feminist movement lacks a strong sense of sisterhood, and one reason for that is our lack of participation in consciousness raising groups. We need safe, sacred space in which to work out our internalized sexism. We need to learn about feminism outside of the classroom as well as inside it. We need to come together across the lines of race, class, and education, and demand a revolution. hooks also discusses some of the differences between "reform" feminism and "revolutionary" feminism, and why knowing about the distinction is so important. That helped me to understand one reason why today's feminism seems to exclude women of color and poor women so much. I highly recommend hooks' book for women (and men) who are new to feminism and to those

who've been involved in the movement for a while. I think she has some excellent and important things to teach us about our movement and where it needs to go.

Ms. hooks stated goal of writing an accessible feminist primer for those outside the movement has partially been achieved. The book covers a great deal of territory for such a small volume; and it does so with (largely) accessible language (although I am not sure that continued use of such words as "dialectic" or phrases like "white capitalist male patriarchal heterosexist hegemony" are really all that accessible to outsiders to the movement). Many chapters are quite excellent and contain a thoughtful and succinct analysis of where feminism has been, is now, and needs to go. There are some flaws within the work, however: 1. The focus on radical feminism as the "true feminism" and the "one path to salvation" may be tiresome for those feminists who are not in agreement with those beliefs or goals. 2. The continual dismissal of "reformist feminists" as "allies of patriarchy" could be considered insulting. 3. As a Canadian, the American paternalism wore a little thin, especially since, 4. She makes the common mistake of saying that feminism must end in creating an absolutely egalitarian society along sex, gender, class and race lines--and that anything that aims only to repair inequities between men and women is not "real" feminism (and then falls into the trap of American paternalism, which could be considered rather hypocritical). For instance, in the chapter on "global feminism," feminism all around the world is reduced to two forms: American and Third-World. I can only suppose that she believes that other Western countries can't really be distinguished from America.

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