



The Question of Gender: Joan W. Scott's Critical Feminism (21st Century Studies)

From Indiana University Press

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A generation after the publication of Joan W. Scott's influential essay, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," this volume explores the current uses of the term and the ongoing influence of Scott's agenda-setting work in history and other disciplines. How has the study of gender, independently or in conjunction with other axes of difference such as race, class, and sexuality, inflected existing fields of study and created new ones? To what extent has this concept modified or been modified by related paradigms such as women's and queer studies? With what discursive politics does the term engage, and with what effects? In what settings, and through what kinds of operations and transformations, can gender remain a useful category in the 21st century? Leading scholars from history, philosophy, literature, art history, and other fields examine how gender has translated into their own disciplinary perspectives.

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The Question of Gender: Joan W. Scott's Critical Feminism (21st Century Studies) From Indiana University Press Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1637540 in Books
- Published on: 2011-07-20
- Released on: 2011-07-20
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .80" w x 6.00" l, 1.05 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 336 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"[The editors] provide fresh analyses of the state of gender studies and the dynamic theories of 'sexual difference' as proposed, tested, and critiqued by Joan Wallach Scott." ?American Historical Review

"This richly stimulating book will be widely welcomed. It demonstrates in kaleidoscopic detail how feminist thought has come of age. Joan W. Scott's questioning stance over the last quarter of a century provides the thread running through the varied essays that engage with political and ethical as well as more traditionally scholarly issues. For anyone grappling with the concepts of gender and sexual difference this volume gives convincing evidence that they are formed in relation to other modes of social organisation and therefore can only be posed as historical questions." ?Lenore Davidoff, University of Essex

"The scholarship and the writing here is engaging and imaginative (see in particular Gayle Salamon's paper on transgenderism and Merleau-Ponty), and there is a keen sense of what's at stake in a field that seems to have, in Joan W. Scott's words, only paradoxes to offer." ?COMPARATIVE LITERATURE STUDIES

"A remarkable collection engaging with the work of one of the most remarkable thinkers of our time. Although Joan Scott is best known for her introduction of gender as a tool for historical analysis, the wide-ranging scope of these essays shows just how central she has been to the cause of critical thinking more generally." ?Bonnie Smith, Rutgers University

"The Question of Gender collects cutting-edge research by some of the most prominent contemporary feminist scholars." ?Women's Studies Quarterly

"[T]he book sheds light on the continued power of feminist scholarship following poststructuralism. It provides many models of engaged, provocative, critical, and careful writing that constitute feminist scholarship at its best." ?

About the Author

Judith Butler is Maxine Elliot Professor in the Departments of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature and Co-director of the Program of Critical Theory at the University of California, Berkeley. Her books include *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*; *Undoing Gender*; and *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?*

Elizabeth Weed is Professor of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University and Director of the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women. She is editor of *Coming to Terms: Feminism/Theory/Politics* and editor (with Naomi Schor) of *Feminism Meets Queer Theory* (IUP, 1997) and *The Essential Difference* (IUP, 1994).

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