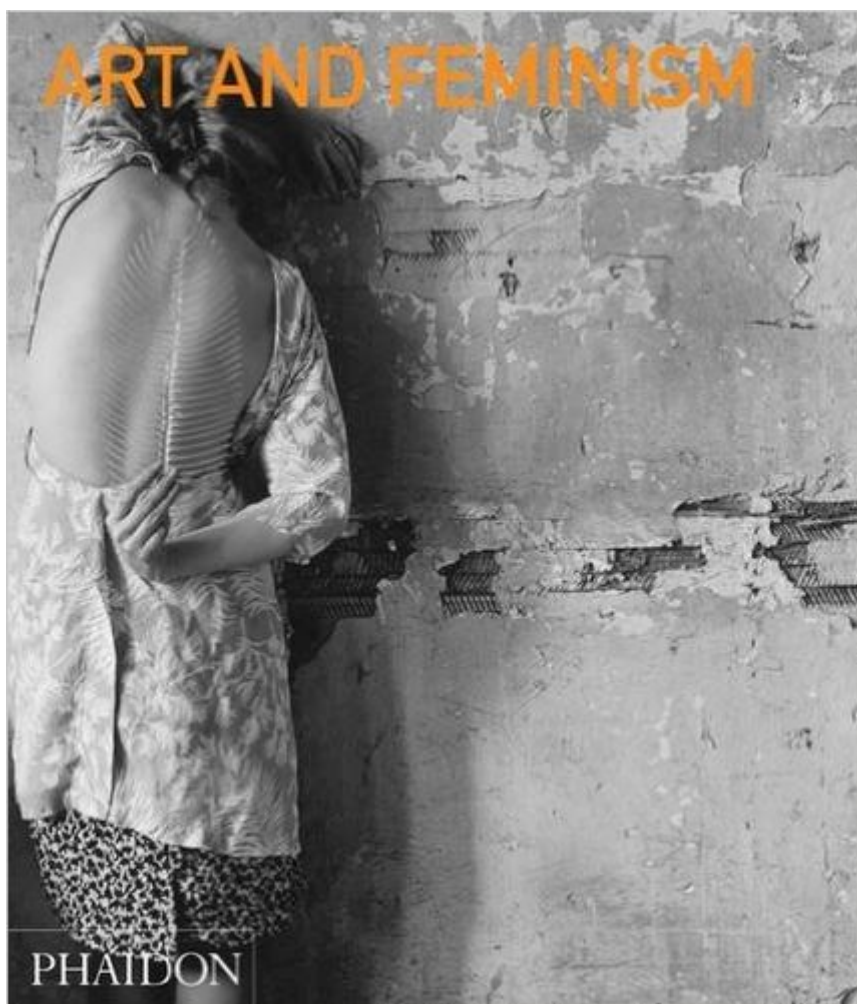


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Art And Feminism



Synopsis

This volume presents the rich diversity of art informed by feminism. It exposes assumptions about gender, politicising the link between private and public, and stressing the specificity of art marked by gender, race, age and class.

Book Information

Paperback: 204 pages

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Customer Reviews

I saw this book reviewed in Bust mag and am so glad I got a copy for myself. Peggy Phelan and Helena Reckitt have accomplished a "portable gallery" in this book--it is like seeing all of the works themselves, but with commentary that helps at every step of the way. Peggy Phelan's introduction is great because she draws everything together in a way that I couldn't do on my own, and actually, I am amazed ANYONE could do it. Wow. The book is expensive but worth it because otherwise you would have to buy about 100 books to try and do for yourself what they did here. Peggy and Helena, and all the artists, YOU ROCK!!!

The 2012/most current edition of this book is surreptitiously called "abridged." What has been removed is all the original critical texts present in earlier editions. The intro essay by Phelan still says "Art and Feminism present key works, both visual and written" (pp. 17-18), but the written ones are gone. I don't have the heart to give the entire book one star...the survey is phenomenal. But the publishers deserve less than one.

This book would be an excellent textbook for a Women In Art course. It doesn't have much information on centuries prior to the twentieth and largely focuses on art, artists, and issues from the 1960's on, so it wouldn't do as the only text for such a course. But this is all you need for late twentieth century concerns. The early essays are dripping with Freudian psychology and psychoanalytical social criticism. The issues surrounding why it took so long for there to be a sense of equality of greatness amongst artists of all genders is explored deeply. The issues of representation of all races and sexual orientations then follows. The book stops just short of discussing the newest research on intersex persons (persons born with an extra chromosome, among others). For a movement that was intending to create a sense of equality, feminist theory highlights both the vast differences as well as the profound similarities between the perception processes of men and women. This includes both the perceptions of and different approaches to art as well as life. Yet, when all is said and done, more recent artists are primarily interested not in these issues, but more a sense of having their work judged based on its quality, not their gender. The only disappointment I have in this book is one that no other book addresses either. So, I mean this only as a minor criticism. In short, the book does not answer the following: Is there an intersex mind state? Feminist theory either didn't reach the point of asking this in time for the extensive research put into this book or it has come to its conclusion and will transform gradually into a whole other movement. The art chosen to represent the above ideas and explorations is top quality. The reproductions are sharp and colorful. I would recommend this book to anyone with interests in women in art or in feminist theory.

This book is a great "picture book" for anyone interested in art and/or women artist. The descriptions of the work are concise, giving enough information to make you want to investigate further. A necessary addition to any art book collection.

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