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## Review of *Reflections on Violence*. John Keane. Reviewed by Henry D'Souza, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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involvement, and advocacy research that relies on data sets to help formulate policy. Another author argues that feminist coalition building is necessary and useful for feminist politics but requires recognizing differences and commonalities among those who favor social change.

Gottfried does a good job of presenting the core issues that not only represent feminist thought but also complicate its advancement. The critiques offered by various authors concerning the constraints imposed on feminist research, especially in the academic setting, are insightful and illustrate the current situation of feminist research. The title of the book appropriately reflects the fact that each of the pieces in the collection contribute in their own way to bridging feminist theory and social action. By having various authors contribute to the book, Gottfried is able to present a volume that addresses the multiple perspectives and approaches of feminist thought and practice. This endeavor effectively broadens the appeal of the book and is clearly a contribution to feminist scholarship. Gottfried's book allows the reader the opportunity to see the diversity in feminist thought and the offering of choice in applicable research methods.

Rebecca S. Carter

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John Keane, *Reflections on Violence*. New York: Routledge, 1996.  
\$17.95 papercover.

Much of the recent attention to violence has come from the feminist literature, with the main focus being the abuse experienced by women and children. The United Nations' conference on women in Nairobi and China helped bring this problem to the international forefront.

Keane disputes the claim that organizing societies into nation states was a civilizing process of establishing a "democratic zone of peace". It was believed that nation states would end the barbaric violence of primitive societies. Given the past century's quantity and brutality of violence, the author laments the paucity of reflection in political theory on its causes, effects, and implications.

Keane is critical of Adam Ferguson's and Ernest Gellner's optimistic attempts to resurrect the notion of civil society as a counter balance to the state. For Gellner, industrial nations are headed toward civil society (e.g., Europe's recent velvet revolutions). This is a victory of civil societies over despotic state regimes. For Keane, such theories distract from chronic violence within civil societies and ignore the "new politics of civility" that seek to end violence against women and children and attempt to expose the barbarism of capital punishment, genocide, and nuclear war. Indeed, modern nation states are dangerous instruments of pacification because this pacification does not extend to the relationship among states in spite of international negotiations and diplomacy.

Keane views the world of nations emerging along the Philadelphian model which makes the states more accountable for their use of violence. The principles of this model are equality of the member states of the union, citizens' rights such as free press and speech, and division of power among states on matters such as policing and war making .

World bodies such as the UN, war crimes tribunals, and human rights organizations are some of the elements of the Philadelphian model that have put some limits on the extent of violence such as denouncing rape as a weapon of war, and particularly direct action by civilians with regard to nuclear war.

The spread of nuclear weapons and their governmental justification that they are a "deterrence" has been resisted by these movements. Justification of an arms race and the ideology of state power was fed by fear and anxiety spread by civil defense drills and the mass media on how to survive a nuclear attack. However, it was the non-governmental groups that resisted and exposed the manipulation of the people and see themselves "as passive hostages in the wider struggle among nuclear states"; thus resisting state dominance.

Keane rejects Johan Galtung's definition of violence which includes "anything avoidable that impedes human self realization" and linking it to the "satisfaction of human needs." The original Latin term *violentia* means exercise of physical force against someone and Keane embraces that as more accurate and "better understood as . . . physical interference [which causes] a series of effects ranging from [injuries] . . . or even death."

Keane describes two microlevel explanations based on the conception of human nature; the first of which supposes that humans are essentially wicked. (This fails to explain why and how individuals and societies have remained pacifists, sometimes, for extended period.) The second, that human nature is perverted but can be changed.

One of the two institutional-level explanations is the macrolevel *geopolitical theories* that trace the violence to the permanently de-centered international system of states. Keane prefers mesolevel *regime theories*, that claim that violence results from historically specific political or socioeconomic systems. For example, violence stems from monarchy (Paine) or despotism (Montesquieu) or capitalism (Marx) or states structured by pre-capitalist values (Schumpeter) or totalitarian dictatorships (Arendt).

Although he attempts to make a distinction between the civil society-centered and capitalism-centered explanations, he integrates both. Civil societies develop measures such as welfare, sports and entertainment; all designed to counter social tensions. But these measures are inadequate because of the expansionary nature of capitalism and exporting of violence to all regions of the world. Stress, anxiety, chronic uncertainty, racism, unemployment, easy availability of cheap means of violence, violence as entertainment, thrill and pleasure are consequences of such expansion.

Contemporary nationalism in Eastern Europe in response to the reckless and creative destruction of the global capitalist economy has been another source of violence. The mindboggling ferocity and the extent of uncivil wars (inner city riots, skinheads, Gestapo, Klansmen, Rwanda, Serbia) makes simplistic explanations appealing. Pessimistic ontological explanations (believing that people are basically evil) serves as an apology for continued violence and the belief that people are basically good is a utopian pacifist fantasy. Private solutions (gated communities, employing security staff, burglar alarms, gun ownership) are also contradictory because they bring violence or threat of violence into the heart of social life.

Dealing with violence is such a complex issue that goal of reducing and eliminating violence effectively will require multiple approaches ranging from macrolevel strategies such as arms

reduction, banning the production and sale of landmines, war crimes tribunals, regional integration of states, to microlevel laws against bodily harassment against women, children, gays and lesbians and ethnic groups. Keane warns that these tactics are likely to drift into authoritarian law and order strategies "unless cultures of civility are cultivated at the level of civil society." One of the challenges of promoting civility is the characteristic of public life in capitalist economies. It is completely distorted and commodified. Keane puts it eloquently:

commodity-structured economies encourage moral selfishness and disregard of the public good; maximize the time citizens are compulsorily bound to paid labour, thereby making it difficult for them to be involved as citizens in public life; and promote ignorance and deception through profit-driven media manipulation. (p. 167)

Keane does not call for the end of capitalism. Yet under global capitalism, it is accumulation of wealth that is the driving force behind wars. Marx's remark, "socialism or barbarism" comes to mind. Both the urban poor of industrial nations and the third world poor live in barbarism caused by poverty and social injustice. They fear the slum lords or the landlords; live in streets; sell drugs; prostitute themselves; and respond to hunger and destitution by stealing and begging.

Keane also overlooks the insight provided by the feminist theory into the causes of violence at the microlevel but has macro implications, namely, the role of patriarchy and hierarchy. These suggest the need to not only curtail capitalism (one form of hierarchy based on class) but also to end patriarchy—hierarchy that predates capitalism and is much more firmly entrenched in society than capitalism. In these theories, personal is political and struggle against violence begins with personal transformation that leads to social and political transformation to a nonhierarchical society. Finally, Keane's preference for the older definition of violence is inconsistent with his endorsement of capitalism-centered regime theories. These theories imply oppression, exploitation and the anomic indifference and alienation experienced under expanding capitalism in modern times. This is where we can trace the root causes of most of the existing uncivil wars that he refers to. In spite of these oversights, Keane's reflections break the

long silence on violence in political theory and succeed in making us all ashamed of the long century of violence while working toward sensible ways to reduce it.

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Roger Waldinger, *Still the Promised City?: African-Americans and New Immigrants in Postindustrial New York*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996. \$35.00 hardcover.

Readers familiar with a similarly titled book by Moses Rischin (*The Promised City: New York's Jews 1870–1914*) might anticipate that this one offers a broad portrait of the cultures, social adaptations, political struggles, and economic experiences of New York's African-Americans and recent immigrants. If that's what you want, then this is not the book for you; instead it is devoted to one issue—the distribution of jobs among New York City's diverse workers. Waldinger carefully examines stability and change in the racial-ethnic division of labor, answering questions like “which racial-ethnic groups get the ‘good’ jobs and which get the ‘lousy’ jobs?”, “why does it work out that way despite official efforts to ‘open up’ the job market?”, and “why have immigrants entered certain industries in great numbers instead of (or as replacements for) African-American workers?”. Waldinger blitzes the reader with charts, graphs, and index numbers based on Census data from before WWII to 1990, showing the economic “ethnic niches” of New York City's native-born African-Americans, three large immigrant groups (the Chinese, Dominicans, and West Indians), and two older white ethnic groups (Jews and Italians). He also provides fascinating case studies, based on interviews with employers, union leaders, and labor department officials in industries that have served as economic niches for one or more NYC racial-ethnic groups: garment manufacturing, construction work, hotels and restaurants, working “for the City” (e.g., police, fire, welfare departments and other civil service jobs), and the world of small businesses run by ethnic entrepreneurs.

Waldinger finds that each racial-ethnic group's position in the job hierarchy is a complex function of demographics, political clout, industry structure, forms of racism, skill level (“what