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***Revisioning Gender.* Myra Marx Ferree, Judith Lorber and Beth B. Hess (Eds.).**

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in a significant reversal in current thinking about economic development and equality. Nevertheless, Bowles and Gintis may have initiated a debate that could have far reaching repercussions. Their clear explication of how a grossly unequal society harms the well-being of ordinary people may be persuasive in fostering an egalitarian agenda that is electorally palatable.

Myra Marx Ferree, Judith Lorber and Beth B. Hess (Eds.), *Revisioning Gender*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999. \$72.00 hardcover, \$34.95 papercover.

Feminist scholarship in sociology has expanded rapidly over the last twenty or so years. This expansion has moved steadily along a trajectory of shifting gender analysis from the margins of sociological interest to its very center. Today feminist scholars insist that gender be viewed as a central element in all sociological research. Since gender is a central element of social life, the gender lens must be applied to all sociological questions.

As the editors of this book point out, sociology has not yet reached the stage where gender is central to its concerns. While gender inquiry is today given much more prominence than before, it is still viewed as a specialized field within the discipline. To attain centrality, they urge feminist scholars to continue to stress the importance of gender in all sociological and indeed, social science research. Irrespective of whether social science investigation is concerned with issues closely associated with gender, such as the family or employment, or with less obviously relevant issues such as economic development, social policy or law, gender must be fully integrated into the research agenda.

To promote this goal, this book offers a broad overview of the current state of feminist scholarship. Based on a summer conference funded by the American Sociological Association, it provides an commendably comprehensive account of the field. Its sixteen chapters cover a wide range of topics. These are grouped into five major categories dealing with the conceptualization of gender; gender and social policy; science and gender; gender and sexuality; bodies, gender and sport; gender and culture and so on. The list is impressive.

Equally impressive is the way most of the authors summarize their topics in a readable and engaging way, and successfully

avoid obfuscating the narrative with jargon. For this reason, the book should appeal not only to academics but to all those who are interested in contemporary social questions. For example, the chapters on gender and globalization, and gender and the welfare state do not focus exclusively on the gender dimension, but succeed in summarizing the field in its entirety, successfully demonstrating that gender issues cannot be relegated to the margins of social policy discourse. The authors also show that their subject is exceedingly complex and that it contains few simple and universally agreed upon generalizations. Their ability to combine sophistication of presentation with a readable and easily understood exposition of the field is impressive.

This book will be an essential resource for students, faculty and researchers in the social sciences. As suggested earlier, it should also appeal to those with a wider interest in contemporary social issues. It deserves to be the standard resource book on the subject.

Christine Cousins, *Society, Work and Welfare in Europe*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999. \$55.00 hardcover.

It is only in relatively recent times that social policy scholars have again focused on the role of employment in the promotion of social welfare. Although full employment was a fundamental component of both the New Deal and Beveridge proposals, mainstream social policy paid little attention to labor market issues and focused instead on the social services, and on issues of social service delivery. Today, employment is once again an important element in social policy. The requirement that needy people be required to work is central to so-called welfare reform in the United States and Britain. In Europe, where unemployment rates are comparatively high, labor market flexibility is a perennial theme in social policy discourse.

In this interesting and ambitious book, Christine Cousins examines diverse aspects of employment policy in Europe and its relationship with social policy. The book traces developments in four European nations—Britain, Germany, Spain and Sweden—and examines the way changing employment patterns over the last fifty years have affected social policy thinking. The four countries chosen offer examples of both policy divergence and