

# Book review

## Feminisms in Leisure Studies. Advancing a Fourth Wave

*Edited by Diana C. Parry*  
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*Feminisms in Leisure Studies. Advancing a Fourth Wave* is the third issue printed as part of the Routledge Critical Leisure Studies, directed by Tony Blackshaw of Sheffield Hallam University. From philosophy to reflexivity, this series provides an interdisciplinary framework for leisure-focused research agenda setting, with the intent to challenge the status quo. True to such spirit, *Feminisms in Leisure Studies* is an anthology in eight chapters, with more than ten authors, edited by Diana C. Parry. Writers are from Canadian, British and Australian academic institutes, with majority from the University of Waterloo, Canada, *alma mater* of the editor. It was conceived with the ambition to stimulate and inspire the emergence of a new theoretical and methodological wave, between feminist thinking and leisure studies. As per concluding thoughts (pp. 161-162) by the editor, with Stephen M.A. Soucie and Luc S. Cousineau, the book was conceived with the intent to represent a beginning, not an end in itself.

It must be clarified right at the start and as the heart of this review that *Feminisms in Leisure Studies. Advancing a Fourth Wave* is not a publication focusing on tourism, neither in practice nor in theory. As a matter of a fact, references to tourism are limited to few one liner mentioning gay and lesbian tourism (p. 85). There is however more than one reason of

interest for readers who focus on tourism.

The most powerful aspect of this work is certainly the ambition to challenge positivist leisure studies “research agendas” by strongly advocating a contemporary feminist perspective. This is grounded in earlier Second Wave (1960s’ movements) and Third Wave (started by a groundbreaking 1992 article by Rebecca Walker) of feminism, being the First Wave related to the early 1900s suffragette campaigns. The Fourth Wave aims at holistically addressing racial, ethnic and national divides in a globalized world, with focus on four key constituencies:

1. blurred boundaries among “waves,” with the further introduction of the “ripples” analogy to stand for the complexity of feminist epistemologies and their mutual relationships;
2. technological mobilization, with the adoption of digital strategies and social media tactics;
3. interconnectedness in a globalized sociocultural context; and
4. rapid, multivocal, cutting edge tone of voice.

Based on these references, the book sophisticatedly develops a number of themes across feminist thinking, gender theory and references to not only classic thought leaders such as Judith Butler, Rosi Braidotti or Gayle Rubin but also to Marx, Gramsci and Nietzsche, including:

- the critical relevance of empirical research;
- the urgency of developing relational knowledge;

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- the necessity to focus on micropolitics as an arena of emancipatory leisure practices; and
- the opportunity to adopt performativity, intersectionality and constructivism to reframe and rewrite the leisure research agenda, from “categorizing and classifying” to “contextualizing and pursuing a transformational agenda.”

As an example, the proposal by Liesbeth A. Berbary of a turn to affect and emotions within emerging theories of affect (p. 39), in pursuit of ways of knowing beyond language (p. 40), switching from the textuality of emotions to the emotionality of text (p. 41).

The book is efficiently and effectively structured through a recurring editorial structure, whereby a repeated sequence introduces the reader to a fixed flow of themes within each chapter, namely:

- historical and disciplinary roots of the specific theme presented in the chapter;
- tensions/challenges at epistemological, theoretical or methodological levels;
- alternative viewpoints and insights triggered by the given content;
- fit with leisure studies and potential applications to research;
- advancing social justice, as this is the underlying political intent of the book;
- engaging with the Fourth Wave, to critically problematize the (potential) fit with feminist theories; and
- unfinished business, to present future developments, work in progress and hypotheses for next steps.

Of great value, at the end of each chapter the reader might find a rich

reference section and a concise but inspiring advice for further exploration are provided. This bibliography offers an excellent starting point toward next steps in this field.

For scholars in leisure studies or related interdisciplinary domains, this book is valuable, passionate and even enjoyable for its topic and its complexity. The inclusion of a masculinity perspective (pp. 126-148) is just an example of the intellectual stature of this project. Compared to the recent, almost coeval *Palgrave Handbook of Feminism and Sport, Leisure, and Physical Education*, this book takes the liberty to offer a less encyclopedic, yet more daring position in the attempt to trigger action and inspire reflection.

It might therefore sound as a paradox that, wearing the hat of a “pracademic,” this is not an easy or easily actionable title. The overall style of writing is dense, and the linguistic choices are sophisticated, while most chapters requiring specialized seniority in the topic matter. In this sense, an editorial opportunity exists for an applicative publication making these “critical, creative, hopeful” (p. 35) future-forming ideas actionable. Because as much as *Feminisms in Leisure Studies* might not be directly applicable to tourism itself, it might be a very important volume to explore uncharted palimpsests of potential development. Therefore, its relevance in terms of both theoretically reframing and reflexively rethinking preferable futures might prove to be paramount, making it a potential standard in social sciences and humanities.

#### **Marco Bevolo**

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