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Review

Reviewed Work(s): Feminism under Fire by Ellen R. Klein

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Heidegger's thought, he quotes one of Heidegger's last philosophical utterances, a note to the participants at the 1976 American Heidegger Conference held at DePaul University in Chicago.

A number of the essays roam over ground that has often been trodden upon in the secondary literature on Heidegger without sounding its depth, although now with reference to his early papers and lecture courses. Other contributions are capable introductory reviews of the courses themselves which guide the prospective reader back to the original texts. The former follow in the wake of the French post-structuralists who have tended to obscure Heidegger, and make him mysterious and the inspiration of deconstruction. The mystery is that so much is still being written (and published) that imitates a "style" that Heidegger is supposed to have cultivated, in language that mistranslates Heidegger's basic words. But with only a few exceptions, the editors of the present collection have spared the reader further examples of the American cult of Heidegger. Thanks to these essays and the publication of his early lecture courses, an appreciation of Heidegger's thinking can only deepen.—Miles Groth, *Wagner College*.

KLEIN, Ellen R. *Feminism Under Fire*. Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1996. 258 pp. \$32.95—In this clearly written, highly readable book, Klein offers an extended critique of "feminist philosophy," or the position which holds that "*traditional science, philosophy of science, and epistemology ought to be abandoned and that feminist science, philosophy of science, and epistemology ought to be put in its place*" (p. 18).

In chapters 1 and 2, Klein critically examines the feminist claim that traditional science, philosophy of science, and epistemology are essentially male-biased. Applying the critical tools of analytic philosophy, Klein argues convincingly that this claim is inaccurate, and that (even if it were accurate) feminist thinkers have not justified the replacement of such science, philosophy of science, and epistemology by feminist versions of the same. Klein traces the roots of feminist epistemology back to remarks made by Carol Gilligan in her 1982 book, *In a Different Voice*, and rues the implicit separatism of feminist theories of knowledge: "feminist epistemologists from all areas of academe have flocked to Gilligan's island; and to this day, many remain there, marooned" (p. 53).

In chapter 3, Klein argues that feminist philosophy is ultimately unable to escape the grip of relativism. For Klein, the issue of relativism remains an ongoing problem for two reasons: first of all, relativism is philosophically untenable; secondly, the incipient relativism of feminist philosophy undermines the normative political agenda embraced by feminist thinkers themselves.

Chapters 4 through 6 constitute the book's center of gravity, an examination of various attempts by feminist philosophers to "naturalize epistemology" (following the work of W. V. O. Quine) and apply the results to the feminist cause. According to Klein, even if Quine's goal of naturalizing epistemology were viable (and she argues that it is not), feminist philosophers have not shown that a Quinean-feminist naturalized episte-

mology should be accepted as any more normative than traditional theories of knowledge.

The book's *coup de grâce* is found in chapter 7, where Klein "gets personal," offering evidence that academic feminists have harmed the interests of other women, both students and teachers, within academia. According to Klein, academic feminism has become dogmatic and oppressive in its own right, adversely affecting relations between teachers and students, and tainting peer reviews of scholarly works submitted for publication or for presentation at conferences. Some academic feminists may want to dismiss Klein's claims as an expression of "sour grapes" over her alleged inability to break into the "market" of feminist philosophy. Such a dismissal, however, would implicitly undermine the strategy of feminist philosophy itself; after all, Klein's explanation of why her thought has been inadequately recognized by feminist philosophers resembles the feminist explanation of why their own thought has been inadequately recognized by traditional philosophers. In the absence of further justification, feminist philosophers cannot dismiss Klein's argumentation as "sour grapes" without making themselves vulnerable to similar dismissal by traditional philosophers.

In general, Klein does not disagree with academic feminists regarding the factual existence of male-bias. She does, however, reject the philosophical claim that the traditional notions of "reason" or "objectivity" are irremediably male-biased. If academic feminists cannot justify this claim noncircularly and nontrivially, then their own agenda as feminist philosophers can only be asserted dogmatically over against those who disagree with them (male or female). Such dogmatism clearly contradicts the explicit ideals of the many feminist philosophers who valorize dialogue, difference, and intersubjectivity. If academic feminists want to remain true to their own critical project, then they would do well to take Klein's book seriously. Klein's criticisms and concerns amount to nothing short of a compelling invitation to feminist philosophers, challenging them to live up to their own critical and dialogical impulses more fully and more consistently.

In the final analysis, Klein may have demonstrated that the debate over feminist philosophy cannot be settled with the tools of analytic philosophy alone. As Klein has shown, the feminizing of epistemology according to the canons of analytic philosophy seems to lead inevitably to one form of relativism or another. With this demonstration, Klein has succeeded in two important ways: first of all, she has articulated serious criticisms of feminist epistemology from within the paradigm of analytic philosophy; secondly, she has raised fundamental questions that ultimately point us beyond the paradigm from which both analytic feminist philosophy, and her critique of it, emerge.—Michael Baur, *The Catholic University of America*.

KRAUSZ, Michael. *Rightness and Reasons: Interpretation in Cultural Practices*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993. xii + 175 p. \$29.95—In David Lodge's novel *Changing Places*, the protagonist Morris Zapp