mean to make law and policy in the light of her theoretical prescriptions. The book thus exemplifies what is best in contemporary Rawlsian political philosophy and applied ethics. It is both an excellent contribution to our understanding of what liberal egalitarianism requires of us and of how our embodied nature makes a difference to these requirements. Her title is of course rhetorical; it might as well have been, in response to Dworkin's 'prophylactic line', 'Why stop at the body?' Her own negative response to *that* question merits further discussion.

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Sex, violence and crime: Foucault and the 'man' question

Adrian Howe *Routledge-Cavendish, Milton Park, 2008, 238pp., ISBN 978-1904385103*

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Political theorists are certainly familiar with violence, an ever-present spectre of disorder in every major text. And while *The Republic* raised the sex issue more than two millennia ago, it has taken considerable feminist effort in recent years to get this re-centred again so that it is not just an issue about women, but an issue debated and expanded from women's perspectives on power relations in social relationships. Today this covers critical engagement with the ways that sex itself is constructed as knowledge about anyone's body, the gendered hierarchies of power through which women and men are perceived and

constrained, and the modes through which diverse sexualities are experienced within and projected upon the foregoing.

Crime is a somewhat different matter. Although political theory classically presumes that societies need rules, and that rules will have violators (else there will be no line between order and disorder at all), political theorists do not generally venture very far into law, where detailed rules are specified or into criminology, where violators are theorised and investigated as a category. There are, of course, some notable exceptions, such as Plato's and Rousseau's engagements with constitutions, laws and lawmaking and Kant's and Hegel's excurses on punishment and rehabilitation. Locke's obsession with extreme violations of natural law and hence with the death penalty counts here as a typical *reductio*.

However, Foucault (in this book's subtitle) and Gramsci (who figures importantly in the content) are certainly familiar in political theory these days, and I recommend Howe's book very highly for her nuanced and perceptive discussions of both. Gramsci is aligned with the question *why* power exists, and unequally so; Foucault with the question of *how* it works its way through all social relations. Power/knowledge and hegemony are carefully and critically explicated here, and any student in social theory would benefit from the very focused engagement that Howe offers throughout. Additionally Howe's work presents an important contribution to the 'man' question, though this particular focus, from the political theory point of view, is addressed more directly at present in International Relations theory, where war and warrior are dominant issues, than in 'non-IR' political theory, where to date the 'gender lens' has been focused on men and masculinities, in the first instance, in a relatively limited number of books and articles. Anyone interested in watching how this project works within a feminist frame would do well to read Howe's book, maybe even twice, as I did.

At its simplest Howe's project has considerable political and policy relevance, and goes with a swing. This is to show how the criminological literature, whether positivist or 'critical', labours mightily to de-gender men's violence against women and indeed to render it agentless altogether. It does this by failing to 'sex' the violence as male (for example. 'violence against women', but by whom or what?) and by reversionary contextualisation (for example. 'domestic violence', but by whom against whom?). Howe is in no doubt that interpersonal violence is skewed by sex, driven by gender and arises within the heteronormativity through which those very categories are understood, and that discussions to the contrary (for example, some women hit men, some same-sex partners are abusers) are strategic occlusions. However, she is not concerned with explaining men's violence in terms of masculinity (as if it were a property of men or maleness), but rather her project is a critique of how men's violence is *spoken about*, arguing persuasively that naming matters.

One of the most productive discussions in the book is the section on the interrelationship between heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity, using the work of Carole Smart and R.W. Connell and then showing exactly how and why in discursive terms men are regularly ‘disappeared’.

One of the book’s most careful discussions is the running distinction between her views and various radical feminisms, critiques of which, she argues, do not apply to her. Howe’s version of a post-structuralist feminism has plenty of scope for agency, transgression and subversion and its understanding of discourse goes all the way down. Things *are* what they mean. Given that her major focus is on men hitting women, which most people would interpret as quintessentially material and hardly a discursive phenomenon at all, this is quite a brave move. Although not detracting from the immediacies of this kind of experience, Howe offers a constructionism that goes all the way up. What things *mean* depends to a large degree on how (or indeed whether) we name them, and what things go on to mean in practice after that. Thus rather than focus on bodies, acts and minds as such, Howe enquires how social norms and legal systems then interpret these things as meaningful after the event. If a man hits a woman, is there even a problem here, much less an assault? (for example, looking back to codes and practices that naturalised and normalised such things to marriage and domesticity). The ways that violence is or is not ‘sexed’, and thus how sex, crime and sex-crime are defined, represent exceptionally interesting and subtle discussions in Howe’s text.

Howe is scathing (and scathingly funny) on the laborious ways that criminologists, policy-makers and the legal profession have struggled to evacuate agency and responsibility from men in situations of violence, indeed to struggle mightily to blame a woman – any woman, often the male perpetrator’s mother – for any suggestion that punishment must follow what is often a non-crime, a mere misdemeanor, or some perhaps regrettable action neutralised by extenuation. Foucault himself is not spared from this kind of critique, his methodological innovations notwithstanding. He thus emerges in a double hermeneutic: the analysis would not have been possible without his concepts of power/knowledge and regimes of truth; however, in relation to the ‘man’ question, some of his work (notably on the family murderer Marcel Rivière) is thoroughly questioned precisely in relation to his own authorial manhood. And in a notable move Howe does the same thing with feminist discourses, arguing that they (all) need scrutiny as material practices that can have exclusionary and violent effects.

Perhaps Howe’s very thoughtful treatment of the ‘rape script’ – taking in a wide variety of contexts in terms of race/ethnicity, class, culture and further intercut with various feminist views contrasting with each other – could have been generalised outwards a little more. I am thinking here of the IR literature on war as sexed violence, rape and sex-crime as weapons of war and indeed war

crimes and the laws of war as such. The book is written largely from an evolving – if highly contested – Anglophone consensus on what is or is not becoming *sayable* in academic and policy-making circles where the focus is on national politics in (supposedly) peacetime conditions. I miss the clash of real regimes here, not just regimes of truth, such as Howe very clearly and forcefully presents. True, the issues would be all that much more difficult at every level, but given the work that feminists have done on connecting the domestic and national with the international and the global, another chapter would not have gone amiss. However, it cannot be said that many political theorists have an excellent record in this regard, either and Howe's work is certainly admirable on its own terms of engagement.

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The ethos of a late-modern citizen

Stephen K. White

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In what spirit ought citizens of Western democracies to encounter the moral claims – and indeed the very presence – of others unlike ourselves? In his important new book, Stephen K. White suggests two possible dispositions in which such encounters might take place: those of generosity and hostility. His central aim is to promote an ethos of 'presumptive generosity' for citizens of privileged Western democracies who are faced with the particular challenges of late modernity. White's overall objective is not 'to reduce contemporary democratic politics to the practice of presumptive generosity and the dampening of hostility and resentment', but rather, 'to illuminate why it makes good sense to allow a certain spirit or ethos, to infuse our political stances' (p. x). He is concerned not only with how we should treat our fellow citizens (and other human beings), but with our stance toward being itself, as the ethos of presumptive generosity toward others draws from 'an affirmation of being as a generous presencing or becoming' (p. 107).