



Women of the Revolution: Forty Years of Feminism

Kira Cochrane

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When hundreds gathered in 1970 for the UK's first women's liberation conference, a movement that had been gathering strength for years burst into a frenzy of radical action that was to transform the way we think, act and live. In the 40 years since then, the feminist movement has won triumphs and endured trials, but it has never weakened its resolve, nor for a moment been dull. The *Guardian* has followed its progress throughout, carrying interviews with and articles by the major figures, chronicling with verve, wit and often passionate anger the arguments surrounding pornography, prostitution, political representation, power, pay, parental rights, abortion rights, domestic chores and domestic violence. These are articles that, in essence, ask two fundamental questions: Who are we? Who should we be?

This collection brings together - for the first time - the very best of the *Guardian*'s feminist writing. It includes the newspaper's pioneering women's editor, Mary Stott, writing about Margaret Thatcher, Beatrix Campbell on Princess Diana, Suzanne Moore interviewing Camille Paglia, and Maya Jaggi interviewing Oprah Winfrey; there's Jill Tweedie on why feminists need to be vocal and angry, Polly Toynbee on violence against women, Hannah Pool on black women and political power, and Andrea Dworkin writing with incendiary energy about the Bill Clinton sex scandal.

Lively, provocative, thoughtful and funny, this is the essential guide to the feminist thinking and writing of the past 40 years - the ultimate portrait of an ongoing revolution.

Women of the Revolution: Forty Years of Feminism Details

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Charlotte says

I've been reading this for over a month now, just dipping in and out of the articles. It was an interesting read, not particularly in-depth, but it gave good insights into various feminist issues and a chance for me to broaden the scope of my own knowledge, giving me names and ideas to look up at another time.

Interesting but not essential.

Kathryn says

Really enjoyed this from start to finish - really great writing as expected, some episodes from the last 40 years which I had forgotten and some I had never heard about.

Mary says

A necessary collection of articles recording the various elements that have formed and continue to inform the movement.

Monika says

This book offered an interesting and a varied range of articles (varied in topic, most of them are about feminism in the UK). One article was homophobic, one made me mad but at the end of the day this collection of articles offered me a window to the state of feminism in the past without historical perspective. I recommend this book to anybody who is interested in feminism and anyone who understands that feminists disagree with each other sometimes.

Cat Tobin says

Great overview of some of the key feminist discussions - predominantly in the UK, but also abroad - over the last forty years. A lot of food for thought; interesting to see how far we've come in some instances, and how unchanged some of the core issues are.

Hanna says

What I liked about this book was how it provided a historical journey of feminism. You see how much the

collective has grown; in size and complexity. In addition, you see what women have fought for, then and now; the triumphs and setbacks, and the differing perspectives provided. You get to see how far we've come, and the enduring themes that never seems to change.

Nicola says

such an informative book on a wide range of topics. Almost every article taught me something, even if it wasn't on a subject I would usually read about. Highly recommended!

Oraynab Jwayyed says

Read the book for a portrayal of inequality and discrimination against women. It's a compilation of essays from women who were front and center in the fight for gender equality. Some of the stories will anger you, but others will inspire. It's a definitely important read.

Sho says

This is a collection of columns from The Guardian newspaper from the beginning of the 1970s to 2011. It's really interesting to re-read some of the later ones (because I remember reading them at the time of publication) and a brilliant education reading early articles by the likes of Jill Tweedie, Linda Grant and bel hooks. it's also fairly depressing to read early articles by people like Suzanne Moore and Polly Toynbee, who are still writing in the Guardian today, because they are writing the same stuff today as they were writing in the 70s, 80s, 90s...

It is especially depressing reading the early ones, particularly those written after the introduction of the Equal Opportunities act and the Equal Pay act (early 70s) because they were so hopeful, so sure that within 20 years they wouldn't need to be writing about that kind of topic in the 21st century. And yet here we are, writing about systematic disadvantage towards women simply for being women.

But it is also uplifting to see just how many women of colour are represented within the pages of the book. How I came to realise that Intersectional Feminism (which is my kind of feminism) isn't a new thing and that feminists recognised the different kinds of disadvantage faced by women of colour or women with disabilities, for example. I'm also a tad relieved to see that the idea of self-identity and the uselessness of trying to push people into binary definitions of identity were being acknowledged in the 70s (and before).

All in all it was a fascinating read although it was encouraging and depressing in equal measure. It made me think of the third Harry Potter film where Ron and Harry are reading each other's tea leaves: you'll suffer but you'll be happy about it.

Jess McCabe says

I'm saving my thoughts for a proper review on TFW...

Brooklyn Tayla says

Hurray! I read this in less than a day! Everyone must read this; I felt all these emotions whilst reading these snapshots: horror, fascination, admiration and empowerment. These women and more make me all the more proud to call myself a feminist; I feel we could all learn a thing or two from their stories.
