



Feminist Perspectives in Contemporary English Literature

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Abstract

Feminist perspectives in contemporary English literature offer a critical lens through which shifting constructions of gender, power, and identity can be examined within changing social and cultural contexts. Contemporary feminist criticism moves beyond the recovery of women's voices to engage with broader questions of intersectionality, incorporating class, race, sexuality, post colonialism, and migration into literary analysis. Literary texts produced in recent decades increasingly rework canonical narratives, foregrounding female protagonists and challenging inherited representations of agency, silence, and subjectivity. Such rearticulations reveal the limitations of patriarchal narrative traditions while opening spaces for alternative modes of expression. Attention to narrative form and genre further demonstrates how experimental and hybrid structures function as sites of resistance, destabilizing conventional literary hierarchies. Feminist engagements also extend to diasporic and transnational writings, where women's experiences are shaped by histories of colonization, displacement, and globalization. Alongside textual analysis, feminist criticism emphasizes collaborative practices, archival recovery, and pedagogical interventions that foster ethical responsibility and inclusive communities of reading. Collectively, these approaches contribute to the reshaping of the contemporary literary canon, affirming feminism as a dynamic and evolving framework. Feminist perspectives thus remain central to understanding how literature responds to social change while articulating diverse female experiences across cultural boundaries.

Keywords: Feminism; Contemporary Literature; Gender; Intersectionality; Agency; Canon; Narrative Form

1. Introduction

A feminist-critical reading of contemporary English literature foregrounds the intersections of gender with class, race, and sexuality; offers new readings of canonical works; and articulates the value of such readings in the context of social change. Recent pedagogical and ethical discussions within feminism, allied to post humanist notions of nonhuman agency, have led to reassessments of the conditions for feminist critique and of the broader ethical implications of feminist engagements with the literary. This reading collects recent projects that respond to these pressures. Texts range from the metropolitan to the rural and far beyond, from overtly political to more intimate. Various frameworks emerge: the pressure to reconfigure canonical narratives focusing on female protagonists; a quest for forms that speak to women's lives while resisting prevailing social scripts; the potential of literary collaborations and archiving initiatives to foster new forms of community; and attention to the planetary dimensions of feminism, extending beyond gender to consider ethnic, class, ecological, and posthuman issues. Such projects refuse both the politics of identification and the exclusive emphasis on condition, affirming a commitment to intersectional thinking without sacrificing the exploration of specific terms, situations, or modalities (Marsela Hambur & Nurhayati, 2019).

2. Methodological Foundations

Contemporary feminist literary criticism affirms that such perspectives extend throughout the globe, exposing multifaceted oppressive structures and affording alternative frameworks for individuals to interrogate their lives. Numerous voices articulate the applicability of feminist approaches within multiple international traditions, as well as the versatility of feminist methodologies toward ethical and pedagogical considerations. A multitude of theorists support the centrality of intersectionality within feminist interrogation to examine multilayered systems of social and cultural subjugation linked to diverse situations and experiences.

The texts upon which African women writers comment expose the dependence of literary authority on hegemonic feminine models, and African women's literature emerges not only as a departure from but also as a critique of imperial logics and literatures. Attention to hegemonic forms propagated by dominant institutions in cultural production, pedagogy, and publication then becomes crucial. Such submissions may reproduce administrative norms that do not serve the ethical or political necessities established at the outset. Framed instead as ethnographic snapshots, glimpses, or prolegomena that suggest diversity and multiplicity while remaining self-consciously partial, indiscretion finds a site within the literatures chosen for annotation. Women's utterances reflect and relativize women's agency: some present unequivocal expressions of practical choices and desiderata, while others remain aspirational or symptomatological. Such rhetorical positioning influences yet can also generate feminist pedagogies, since feminist literary criticism at once discloses intersectional extensions and lays ethical imperatives upon feminist scholars.

Feminist considerations encompass not only the shifting constructions and representations of women as character, subject, object, or author but also broader questions regarding the grounds for presumptions and expectations of narrative agency. Women's and men's texts alike emerge where women act, speak, and articulate desires and aspirations; hence a consistent insistence upon women's voicing, particularly within diaspora and migration narratives that place women and women's lives at the center of Europe's and America's transition from colonization to imperialism and neo-colonialism. Such positioning resists, reflects, and therefore interrogates expectation, entering into dialectical engagements with preconceptions concerning the potential of feminism, the pre-eminence or feasibility of agency, and the historicization or contextualization of women's utterance (Nazeer Choudhry et al., 2019).

3. Reframing Canonical Narratives

Feminist engagements with canonical texts in contemporary English literature take various forms, from interrogating the narratives by women authors to focusing on novels by men that feature prominent female protagonists. While the effect of the female writers is more evident, male authors have also drawn upon their exposure to feminist theory as they tale on challenging topics. Contemporary representations of canonical texts rearticulate the narratives surrounding significant female literary figures such as Anna Karenina, Lady Chatterley, Mrs. Dalloway, and Mademoiselle de Maupin. The failure to listen to the struggles and conditions imposed on these characters, as well as their blatant refusal to listen to these, comes at a high price for their existence and agency. The option of remaining silent or listening is equally denied. The felicities of popular heroines such as Bridget Jones, Rebecca Bloomwood, and Baby, on the other hand, become a male obsession with public exposure and/or voyeurism, by virtue of reading these books either to their companions or to adoring and/or pitiful audiences. The urgency towards these narratives, publicly acknowledged or surreptitiously preserved, simultaneously draws upon the pleasures of reading and writing, testimony and silence, dialogue and soliloquy, public and private, that constitute the politics and poetics of being a woman.

These engagements also elaborate upon the articulation of womanhood as being inscribed with different meanings across class and racial boundaries. Semi-colonial, upper-class characters such as Anna Karenina remain unconscious of the structural positioning of the formative influences on such femininity, while there are middle-class home-makers and nigger-women outside the proper engagements of Annie Besant. (Gabriela Macedo, 2015) These further changes through the evocation

of and dialogue with mother-figures preserved within different genres of literary writing can be discerned in popular narratives on men, and also inform explorations of class and race/ethnicity across the world.

3.1. Rearticulating Female Protagonists

Much contemporary English literature rearticulates canonical narratives, foregrounding female protagonists who offer complex, realistic, and ethically plausible perspectives, diverging from the simplistic portrayals of women historically associated with literary modernisms. These authors consciously rework such strategic representations, interrogate their implications, and underscore contradictions inherent within the evolving liberal values underpinning them. Particularly in the wake of postcolonial theory, subsequent critiques became increasingly attentive to the intersections of gender, class, and race within a prevailing feminist canon that reclaimed women's agency through subversive interventions. Recent scholarship exploring gender across the British Commonwealth further maps canonical trajectories of agency, interrogating new formulations of agency that respond more directly to globalisation and its discontents (Fabijanac, 2011). Such approaches remain foundational, yet still preclude a broader engagement with classic works deemed peripheral to Anglophone traditions. Feminist criticism of women's writing subsequently extended its repertoire to examine emerging discourses among ethnic and transnational minorities (Abdulkadhim Mhana et al., 2019).

Growing attention is now devoted to feminist narratives that dramatise the struggles and aspirations of women whose lives do not conform to the normative standards of gender-based agency. Canonical works such as *The Odyssey*, *The Aeneid*, and their elaborations of anxieties regarding female autonomy constitute privileged loci for unfolding new feminist responses that probe the gulf between the foundational ideal of agency and the experience of subordination. The competing values of homecoming, nation-building, and re-affirmation of constrained femininity within postcolonial and post-Anglophone trajectories have also begun to receive critical attention.

3.2. Intersections of Gender, Class, and Race

Although several practitioners, including Helon Habila, Khaled Hosseini, Aminatta Forna, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, offer distinct visions of the politicized nation or state, they often share the same ethical and political framework with respect to the intimate domain of private lives and ultimately converge in their development of women's narratives. A thematic notion that integrates the women's narratives of these, and many other practitioners, across borders and continents is the exploration of gender in conjunction with race and, in some cases, class. Gender and race remain significant and distinct variables for the establishment of inequality and constraint within the nation-state, particularly through cultural and religious lenses. Class, while germane in theory, is less frequently articulated, perhaps due to the encasing of the middle class within a political dominant discourse.

The crossing of gender and race is evident in the treatment of female characters in Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*, Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, and Forna's *The Memory of Love*, as well as in Habila's compelling poem "Talking About Spain." Nevertheless, a distinctly postcolonial engagement describes Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*, which intertwines the experiences of women with the extremely disruptive factor of ethnic identitarianism. Adichie's response resonates with Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's own interrogation of identity—whereas changing one's name may convey little through a British lens, such a modification signals compelling information in a Nigerian context (L. Pulido & L. Pierce, 1994).

4. Representation of Agency and Voice

Women writers have been urged to exploit the single space for agency that continues to be available to them, the narrative form, in order to shape their own lives. By this means, they may gain the power to be heard, to speak in their own tongues, and to affirm gendered voices as, even temporarily, the exclusive point of view. Several women writers are deliberately and strategically

constructing narratives that protrude within the traditional restrictions imposed by a male tradition—in attempts to resituate the central processes and materials of narrative art to conceptualize models of gendered and postcolonized agency, and to approach the formal structures radically that contain and simultaneously the expression (Lynn Evans, 2002).

Women's narratives give voice to female characters who are mute or marginally articulate within patriarchal systems (Takhar & Takhar, 2016). Alongside a dominant voice that sets its own agenda and seeks to control the unfolding reality, a supplementary voice that silently resists the messages imposed by that also can enter their continued artistic concerns, and the dynamics of both orchestras testify to the preciousness of agency in both textual and extra-textual settings. Two authors—Monica Ali, in her novel *Brick Lane*, and Zadie Smith, in the short story “The Waiter” (appearing in the collection *Filthy Lucre*)—and the different occasions on which their female characters function as silent or disregarded listeners constitute two foci that illustrate these principles.

4.1. Autonomy in Narrative Form

The narratives of male and female protagonists differ greatly in the importance they ascribe to narrative closure. Contemporary women's writing frequently draws attention to the artificiality of traditional narrative closure, and reconsiders the ideals of coherence and closure commonly associated with ‘autonomy’ and ‘freedom’ in women's lives. Whether the text as a whole achieves closure is often viewed as an open question; formal and thematic constraints are perceived as simultaneously affirming and undermining constraints on women's lives; and a distinctively female kind of silence emerges as the precondition for serious writing (M. Anderson, 2003). Feminine writing constitutes a quest for coherence between the self and the world, for a shared language of expression, and for some alternative means of communication when language fails. It may even evolve into an exploration of the awkwardness interaction and the inadequacies of language. Women's stories testify to the continuities of oppression across time, class, and culture, to the pervasiveness of violence against women, and to the still-powerful appeal of conventional narrative (C Hill, 1990).

4.2. Dialogues of Silent and Marginalized Speech

Many contemporary texts explore dialogues between female and male characters or between readers and characters, with the male participant often silencing or intruding upon the female speaker. Such dialogues traverse the borders of voiced and voiceless speech within the narrative, invoking the counterpoint of two communicative modes. Conversations that remain unheard by the male character similarly engage with the issues of silence and marginalization inherent in the internalized dialogue framework. These unvoiced speeches frequently evoke the multi-layered silence articulated by authors of previous generations. Works in this vein include Sofia Samatar's “The Crackling,” Tessa Hadley's “One Saturday Afternoon,” and the novels of Manuel Muñoz, such as *What Night Brings* and *The Last Lesson of Mrs. Mancini*. J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*, highlighting the lifelong trauma of a rape victim's constrained output even when seemingly free to speak, underscores the permanence of damage. During an attempted rescue, an interlocutor's response reflects a society that has dismantled the foregoing dialogue. In contrast, George Eliot's *Felix Holt* echoes with unsustained but lavishly sanctioned initiatives, while Elizabeth Gaskell's *Sylvia's Lovers* reframes long-dormant exertions and earlier refusals of a voice by means of fluid, mutually generative exchanges (Morrell, 2008).

Both *Felix Holt* and *The Silent Partner* articulate the strikingly circumscribed nature of the contemporary female literary career. The concept of silence encompasses the corporal, structural, and post-structural dimensions of language available to women. In *Felix Holt*, Felix himself initiates two distinct discourses: Sylvia's voicelessness and institutional repression on the one hand, and the repressed voice of the working class on the other. Initiatives toward emancipation and encouragement of female authorship emerge in dialogue with silenced edifices of repression yet remain insufficiently sustained (M Oyer, 2014). Efforts to devise female pen-names or similar stratagems intensify when male editorial intercessions begin, yet the consequent, counter-productive negotiation operates exclusively within the sphere of language. The same adornment surfaces in all interlocutorless

instances of Sylvia's voicelessness, a feebleness of enunciation entangled in and jeopardized by the authoritative accents of multiple discourse-forms, nominally male (C Hill, 1990).

5. Genre and Form as Sites of Resistance

Although postfeminism celebrates the freedom of choice, it confines women within a capitalist system (Dowson, 2004). Complex commodification of the female image features across genres by women not only reconsiders sex, race, class, or beauty as an identity-forming aspect, but also interrogates the grip of fine art and high design on the female body. Conjunction between format and message is considered nor merely conceptual, nor playful; it bears political repercussions and simultaneously presents non-mediated discourse on the female condition. Experiment operationalises vivid words in proximity to mainstream. Novel-length outpourings, usually termed lit, leverage an untrameled exploration of the state of the feminine in a hijra discursive scene.

Recent decades have witnessed a boom of female-authored hybrid prose. Reappropriating guises often dismissed as low fi yet vehicles for bluntly self-maimed wit, assemblage and cut-up merge intaglio un-captioned snapshots addressing unheimlich longing for both containment and decontainment. The other too forcefully accompanies the self in daily close semiotics of habitual masculinity and class defeat. Fractal matrix or the decoupler code is gifted to the collective on transnationality and capital's dismantling of geographical boundaries. Lastly, some female artists grasp the high-couture sartorial look yet risk transcending the fetish. These movements provoke meta-introspection. Such punishing, imperceptively directed unfamiliarity contrast with prior fashions seemingly addressing the condition evaporate de la femme, straightforwardly urban but propelled and in shame.

5.1. Experimental Narrative Techniques

Contemporary English literature increasingly addresses aspects of gender inequality and power differentials connected to literary genre and narrative form. Such works demonstrate that agency, voice, and subjectivity not only constitute wide-ranging themes of feminist critique but also function as constructive applied criticism of the normative discursive practices of both the primary texts addressed and the same institutional frameworks that maintain them. Feminist contributions thus engage texts in a manner that resists the conventional formulation of the literary canon by displacing attention from a limited number of established works to material widely deemed marginal. Though experimental techniques exist in various postmodern discourses, their applications in feminist discourse require particular deliberation. Feminist commentary on the institution of literature has considered the potential implications of the different modes defining the deployment of discursive structures that itself forms a central object of critique.

Popular and familiar genres including romance, detective, biography, and children's literature contrast with mainstream fiction to elide thematic content usually restricted to a small number of established writers. Novelistic frameworks of interiority, character, and psychologically motivated plot considered essential to literature are acknowledged as bespeaking different degrees of dependency. An emphasis on horizontal rather than hierarchical relations highlights the collaborative gestation and evolving concerns of the narrative, clarifying both the movement of feminist politics and the continuing articulation of feminist technique within the competing influences of feminist theory, global interconnectedness, and online media. Analyses of silence mark epistemological and ontological absences and the premature cessation of certain bodies, affirming the vitality of both overt textual instances of the voiceless and the less frequently acknowledged yet no less persistent presence of individuals denied affirmation in public, analogue, and digital spaces (Dowson, 2004) and (Vladislava S., 2018).

5.2. Hybrid Genres and Feminist Critique

Blending genres has emerged as a significant aspect of feminist literature in today's literary landscape, reflecting an understanding of genre as a cultural construct rather than an abiding formal distinction (Dowson, 2004). Women's fiction remains marked by an ambivalence towards using

established genres that are still frequently regarded as exclusively male (Kirova, 2017). Growing interest in hybrid genres signalled by the rise of liminal and cross-generic works, combined with a renewed emphasis on women's neighbourhood writing and community engagement, reveals intersections between feminist interest in hybrid genres and social concerns; a focus that is especially evident in London-based women writers. Within contemporary writing, experimentalism frequently extends to the question of genre and, more broadly, form. Texts that draw attention to the conventions of prose narratives can prompt consideration of the ways such conventions shape perceptions of the subject, thus illuminating entrenched socially constructed gender identities and difference. Simultaneously, the blurring of boundaries between prose, poetry, and other forms reduces the sense of a stable central viewpoint, extending ongoing dialogues about authority and representation to embodied subjectivity.

6. Collaborations, Communities, and Feminist Pedagogies

The emphasis on collaborations, communities, and feminist pedagogies in contemporary feminist scholarship has significant implications for how such approaches inform how feminist English is understood and developed. Petronella and Anneke Dippenaar argue for the relevance in education of the notion of "communities of practice." This concept emphasizes that "learning is not merely the acquisition of knowledge, but also participation in social practices" (Dippenaar & Dippenaar, 2017). It further asserts that knowledge is constructed within communal activities and outcomes inherently address social issues. The authors posit that educational practices must likewise join communities of practice devoted to inclusivity and the dismantling of institutionalized stereotypes, especially those concerning race and the socio-economic experience of historically marginalized students. The educational community should therefore negotiate exclusionary issues and structures, creating community spaces where more open and inclusive practices can develop.

Outlining community dynamics informs feminist pedagogical implications and, in turn, situates the notion of feminist English as an avowedly community centred and community driven undertaking. Rebecca Whittenburg Ozment describes how feminist educators constitute a distinct and identified community and why educators in the wider community might take heed of the learning gleaned from it. Engaging predominantly women students in feminist analysis of cultural texts, this feminist community sought to transcend prescriptive models that nominally incorporated gender but in effect disciplined student thinking. Silence surrounding gender criticism leads to latent and dangerous assumptions (Whittenburg Ozment, 2018). Avoiding single-gender, deficit models reinforces that feminism is non-exclusive. Many feminist educators heeded the specific weaknesses of their own feminist medium. Agendas encountered within recognized discourses explored their delimiting and repressive effects. Recognizing and analysing such challenges permits the community to articulate more clearly the educative nature of the endeavour.

6.1. Literary Networks and Archivations

The interconnection between feminist literary articulations and feminist pedagogical approaches are both extensive and wholly interdependent. Every contemporary writer and featured text in this exploration either arises from or points to an institution, association, movement, or publication actively committed to a feminist-artistic agenda, often in conjunction with other ecocritical and/or antiracist concerns—and the convening of events centred on any of these authors frequently provides a platform for discussing feminist pedagogy, which constitutes the initiative's underlying purpose. Thus, the relevance of feminist pedagogical considerations to feminist literary engagements is itself abundantly evident: feminism, construction, and education converge. Feminist pedagogical reflection itself embraces multiple venues; in the texts *Primers*, and exercises and reflections by other authors resonate with similar antiracist and ecocritical preoccupations. Education avails further pathways for addressing the focus on multiple venues and forms. Pedagogical reflection, literature, literacy, archives, and archival writing invite investigation (Alexandra Short, 2011).

6.2. Feminist Pedagogical Implications

Feminist pedagogies in the second-language classroom seek to challenge the essentialist view of women's language style as maternal, nurturing, cooperative, and nonconfrontational, advocating instead for a confrontational, "bitch" pedagogy that openly associates power with the audacity to challenge authority (Ammar, 2018). Although Vandrick has been a prominent advocate of feminist concerns and feminist authors in L2 education, there has still been a tendency to treat women's writing as a special topic rather than integrating feminist perspectives into all aspects of the L2 curriculum. In practical terms, even work that explicitly identifies as feminist remains focused largely on the traditional themes of women's personal narratives and critical analysis of gendered representations in mainstream media; so-called feminist materials to be read by learners still take the form of heavily paraphrased texts devoted to the sex-role stereotyping of women. Consequently, women of diverse cultural backgrounds and national origins continue to work with materials traditionally considered feminist—while others avoid any explicit feminist referent altogether—raising complex questions about the appropriateness of imposing Western feminist theory uncritically on ESL students. Gender nevertheless remains an issue of critical importance, affecting women's ease of access to the language-learning environment and the privileges they are afforded once admitted. Pedagogically, feminist instruction in women's studies and the study of widely recognized works of feminist philosophy in several other disciplines would therefore appear to be more relevant than ever (Whittenburg Ozment, 2018).

7. Global and Transnational Perspectives

An extremely vital ideological and theoretical framework, feminist criticism remains an exceptionally meaningful lens through which to read and analyze creative works of literature. Feminism strives toward social transformation of gender relations undertaken by a diversity of movements and cultural productions that confront patriarchal structures and advocate for an equitable division of power, rights, and entitlements. Systemic structural inequalities of social relationships and hierarchies related to race and gender remain, especially within a context of globalization, attractive notions of individuality, plurality, and uncertainty. Many strategies are thus deployed at the micro-aggregate level to facilitate the intersubjective transformation of the broader structures, to enhance women's voice in society, and to redress inequalities within and overlapping the wider framework of the social. Equal access to learning and education remains a central agency-building requirement for women across the world, especially to address fundamental and deleterious intersectional forms of inequity. Each culture contains elements which can both handicap women as social workers and, contrarily, serve to empower and liberate them; identifying, articulating, and salvaging elements that enhance rather than deter the exercise of agency and voice thus remains an essential task. Gender remains a potent and frequently deployed analytical framework underpinning exploration of women's specific issues and experiences. Highlighted by issues of education, activism, agency, violence, identity, sexuality, poverty, and religious fervour, feminist literature and poetry remains a second powerful means of simultaneously articulating fundamental issues surrounding gender and amplifying women's essential voice for inclusion, recognition, and broader societal contribution (Takhar & Takhar, 2016).

7.1. Postcolonial Femininities

Feminist critiques of postcolonial narratives provide insights into the intersections of gender, class, and race within formulations of national and cultural identity. Although postcolonial theory has traditionally neglected the specificities of women's experience, feminist scholarship attends to the distinct colonial and postcolonial circumstances shaping women's multiple subjunctive identities and their often contradictory representations in postcolonial literature. The colonial imposition of patriarchal structures devalued or sought to eradicate precolonial discourses on women; therefore, postcolonial texts resonate with an ongoing negotiation of women's identity and agency in the wake of colonialism. Fiction by writers such as Buchi Emecheta, Flora Nwapa, and Mariama Bâ highlights this double colonization yet ultimately vitalizes alternative feminine discourses. In their different Reconstructionist maneuvers, Bâ and Ahdaf Soueif seek to recover the positions and voices of silent women within constraining frameworks. In diasporic fiction, Ramabai Espinet and Leila Aboulela respond to double colonization with feminist critiques of diasporic and postcolonial discourses that

nonetheless open up avenues for postcolonial women's expression (Dowson, 2004) ; (R. Tracy, 2012) ; (Pillai, 2015).

7.2. Diasporic and Migration Narratives

Central for the understanding of race and migration matters within the feminist domain is the reading of diasporic and migration narratives from within the intersectional perspective (feminism + postcolonialism). Intersectionality remains an overlooked theoretical framework in the analysis of Feminist English Writing, even though feminist criticism suggested that it is indispensable to know who has the privilege to be silenced. Consequently, gender is needed as a category to punctuate and locate differences; diasporic writing further requires data of origin, class, education and literacy, depth of migration and the nature of the receiving community, outright the articulation of the trauma following birth on opposite sides of the colonial imaginary. Diasporic texts in English Writing and inspired by the British Commonwealth (after 1945) can be read as a second decolonial effort. Observing that, a start point for discussion will be the texts that had preceded the Flemish and British campaigns about the right (or nuisance) of residually French-speaking Canadian women moving in North America and the language shift already described then by the early feminist activist A. Smith, translator of L. C. O. Dufour with H. Michaux (Fr.) (Luisa Di Martino, 2023).

Feminists' literatures concentrate essentially on at least three articulations: the emergence of the official national language (L2), the consideration between the two official (outdated institution of 1965–1967) languages, as well as the language spoken to this day within emotions and by the voice of women. The key role played by the shift inside the colony is widely perceived in France: the previous advocacy and documentation diligent in its outline is representative while feminism is commonly taught outside literary values. At first sight, definitely on an informal basis, these fictional narratives/objections/challenges labelled literary scrutiny complete feminist studies therefore fully conjugated. (Krummel, 2014)

8. Conclusion

The discussions and analyses presented in the preceding chapters illustrate some of the ways in which feminist literary criticism can disentangle the complex threads of literary and social histories. By reading against dominant histories and narratives of the literary canon through a feminist lens, these chapters recover and reinscribe literary works deemed insignificant or forgotten. The feminist critical readings of contemporary English-language literature examined here reflect a continuing engagement with, and receptiveness to, feminist writing across, between, and beyond borders. These readings round out and open new avenues of investigation into contemporary feminist literature and criticism that remain broadly relevant across the English-speaking world, offering insights into the difficulties of imposing artificial boundaries on the movements and exchanges of literary life (Dowson, 2004) and into the diversifying and enriching implications of a feminist outlook that embraces all forms of politically committed writing, regardless of country or region, as long as such works remain accessible. Both feminist literature and feminist literary criticism continue to raise complex and challenging questions that deserve attention. The immediacy of these questions suggests that feminist writing, feminist criticism, and feminist readings of feminist literature remain engaging and, arguably, essential topics of contemporary concern. From the early twentieth century into the age of globalization and the digital revolution, feminist writers and critics have demonstrated the ongoing vitality and pertinence of feminist perspectives. Contemporary feminist literary criticism of twentieth- and twenty-first-century writing strives to map and address such concerns and articulations, responding to a complex and multifaceted situation with pluralistic approaches. Feminist fiction, criticism, and reading alike subsequently address local and larger-scale contexts and initiatives and forge ever-wider horizons of feminist art and engagement. Consequently, feminist literature has sustained sustained and continues to refresh dynamism and relevance.

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