

Summary of “Women as a Hegemonic Class”

by moses moon, aka “thotscholar”

Woman as a Hegemonic Class explores the connection between Catharine MacKinnon’s rendition of “dominance feminism” and its connection to Kimberlé Crenshaw’s juridical intersectional theory, the most popular and widely cited version of *intersectionality* in today’s popular feminism, suggesting an alternative theorization of *entanglement*. I attempt to provide a capacious definition of (popular) feminism, relating it to “women’s culture” and hetero/gendered “spheres,” probing how the various expressions of it, from “sex positivity” to “queer” feminisms, have failed to address:

- 1) the myriad effects of negative racialization,
- 2) theories of property and labor,
- 3) the connection between human trafficking vulnerability, race, class, and citizenship status
- 4) the entanglements between homophobia/transantagonism and negative racialization
- 5) differences in levels and genres of personhood where “deviant” and nonnormative demographics are concerned

I believe that sex positive, queer, and sex radical feminism are, like popular feminism, are plagued with an over-reliance on subversive/transgressive aesthetics and practices that emphasize individual freedom and that this, along with a resistance to deeply engaging issues related to race and class, has functioned as an impediment to forward movement. I also believe that the separation of the LGBTQ and prostitute’s rights movements, along with the reluctance to re-engage the issues of the prostitute as a racialized, classed, and queer figure has to do with the rise of the empowered/exploited “sex worker,” the co-optation of black, brown, and poor trans struggle, and the desire to (re)produce a white, homonormative culture/aesthetic that necessarily excludes those demographics targeted as sexual and racial deviants: black people of all genders, prostitutes, and nonwhite transgender people who do not fit into white/queer spaces.

My piece is not meant to declare a post-intersectional movement but is meant to highlight the racism I feel informs the relentless focus on decriminalization, marriage equality, and the binaries of multiple movements and parties which have declared themselves “intersectional.” The use and commodification of the concept of intersectionality in today’s popular feminism leaves a lot to be desired and is decidedly heterogendered in expression. My goal is to provide a much-needed intervention from my point of view, having created space for myself in the margins of this movement in the face of racist and socioeconomically biased anthropologists and sex workers, and anti-porn/anti-prostitution advocates. It is my hope to unsettle the idea that “woman” as a class functions independently or analogically to race, to point out the discrepancies in this western, humanistic logic, and to make people see that “woman” is, in and of itself, a hegemonic class. This is the exact opposite assertion currently made in popular/modern feminism—which is deeply influenced by dominance feminism and critical legal theory, and is beset with antiblackness, sexualized racism, and homophobia. Dominance feminism and mass criminalization are affiliated. So long as we ignore these influences and issues within these movements, we will forever be hustling backwards.



About the Author

moses moon, also known as “thotscholar,” is a writer and self-made scholar whose work focuses on race and racialization, sexuality, gender, and genre. She is a former member of SWOP-USA’s Board of Directors and has made a name for herself through questioning stale conventions and highlighting racial, sexual, and socioeconomic entanglements. Her work has been published in the Yale LPE blog, Columbia Human Rights Law Review, VICE, Afropunk, and Duke University’s SAQ. Her book *low end theory* is forthcoming. Sign up for her substack: thotscholar.substack.com or follow her on Twitter [@thotscholar](https://twitter.com/thotscholar).