

English Abstracts

The Economic and Feminist Approaches to Law: An Eternal Feud, or a Misunderstanding Among Friends?

Adi Eyal

The feminist and economic approaches to law are often portrayed as opposed in their character, aims, and methodology. This article aims to prove the opposite — that while the differences between the schools of thought are indeed stark, research that draws on the strengths each possesses will enrich both legal scholarship, and the schools themselves. The article begins with an outline of the similarities and differences between the two, together with the interaction between scholars associated with each school. While some of the earlier writings tended toward criticism (indeed, antipathy), closer study shows that these were mostly products of the more extreme views within each school. In order to allow a fuller analysis of the debate, the article focuses on two central values: rationality and objectivity.

Economics has long been characterized as a striving toward a methodology of rational and objective analysis, allowing universal application regardless of the subjects of analysis or the views of any particular judge. Feminists criticized this aim as masking an ideology inherent to the economic method itself, such that these values could never be attained. The article examines these critiques, and the alternatives offered by feminist scholarship, not in order to decide “who is right,” but aimed at mutual learning by both sides. After summarizing some of the main feminist writings on the subject, we turn to the other side — developments in behavioral economics that answer these criticisms while employing a totally distinct methodology. An interesting point is that parallel developments occurred within each field, economics and feminism, but mostly without scholars of one

field being aware of those of the other. I take this to strengthen my premise that the distinct methodologies still allow constructive interaction between them.

Implementation of the theoretical debate is achieved by focusing on the problem of contractual choice, a long-standing issue of dispute among scholars from the different schools.

Going Downhill in the Labor Market: The Commodification of the Female Work Force In Israel

Orly Benjamin

Twenty-four directors of human resources in the public sector were interviewed in 2000–01 for the purpose of a study on non-standard employment. Dehumanization emerged as a common form of speech when interviewees discussed those employed in non-standard arrangements. In this article, I present my analysis of an ongoing process of commodification which, in my opinion, rationalizes dehumanization as a form of speech. Following Ben-Israel, I argue that the outsourcing employed by the state in female areas of the labor market blurs the differences between the purchase of labor and the purchase of commodities.

Two aspects of the human dignity of female employees are ignored in this process of commodification: firstly, women's commitment to care for those dependent on them; and, secondly, social security in old age. These two issues, and their decline in the female sector of the Israeli labor market, are discussed in this article.

The Mute Feminist Psychological Template of Girl Graduates of Religious-Zionist High Schools in Israel

Zehavit Gross

The intention of this article is to investigate how, in retrospect, Religious-Zionist young women who are serving in the army and national service perceive and

analyze the feminist socialization they underwent while studying in the State Religious schools in Israel (*ulpana* and high school). What are the components of these processes, and to what extent have they affected the formation of their female identity?

The understanding of these issues will be analyzed while describing and delineating cycles of discourse in which the socialization processes occur, defining the semantic and epistemological space and analyzing its sociophilosophical Religious-Zionist context.

The research findings are analyzed according to Berelson (1952), Eisner (1990), and Gross (1999), and show that the molding of female identity is not part of the school curriculum or of the students' own repertoire. Three types of reaction to their feminine identity were found in the subjects: denial, moratorium, and dissociation. Their female identity and school socialization were described in an essentialist and patriarchic manner. The main conclusion of this research is that the State Religious educational policy regarding female socialization requires radical change in order to be adequate and relevant to the requirements of women who live and function in a post-modernist world.

Mizrahi Feminism, Post-Colonialism and Globalization

Henriette Dahan Kalev

Mizrahi feminism is a concept increasingly used to describe literature and practices aimed at extending Israeli liberal feminism and bringing it to circles of discourse of feminist critique, multiculturalism and post-colonialism. Mizrahi feminism perceives Israeli feminism as a movement that, while striving to promote gender equality and women's rights as human rights on a universalistic abstract basis, loses sensitivity and contact with women who have special needs. These needs may derive from a specific way of life — the vicious circle of poverty or neocapitalist processes — or the women may belong to gender-oppressive communities and are therefore "living at the bottom of the heap." Grounded in this perception, Mizrahi feminism is aimed at propagating the feminist struggle

seeking to achieve the self-empowerment of these women who are at the “bottom of the heap.”

Theoretically, Mizrahi feminism is not an activist feminist movement’s political manifesto; it is, rather, a broad perspective on diverse women’s lives, described along multicultural post-colonial and globalized lines. In this respect, Mizrahi feminism is aimed at supporting women who are empowering themselves by struggling for their own emancipation. It supports women who either have chosen to stay put and to generate changes in their own communities, who are actively trying to bring their own oppression to an end, or who want to abandon their traditional communities and find new directions.

Mizrahi feminism is significantly important now, when globalization has created forces that atomize and isolate individuals, “blasting” all attempts to gather in solidarity. Mizrahi feminism’s input to the prevailing social activism in Israel is particularly in evidence in its support of small groups within communities, sometimes traditional, without condemning these women for choosing to stay put. Mizrahi-feminism does not strive for the rigid allocation of resources and equal human rights embedded in neoliberal ideology. It extends, rather, those areas where the Mizrahi (and the Palestinian) narratives will be heard alongside the Holocaust and Zionism, and will grant Mizrahi men and women a dignity like that of their fellow citizens of Ashkenazic origin.

**“Complete Equality...Irrespective of...Sex...”
Women, Law and Social Change in Israel**

Ruth Halperin-Kaddari

In this article I trace the position of women in Israel from a socio-legal perspective, using Israel’s Reports to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as a basis for discussion, and analyze it as a test case for law and social change. The picture that unfolds is not an encouraging one, pointing to a large gap between the legal and social spheres, thus highlighting the question of the power of law to bring about social change.

The incorporation of feminist theories of law into the examination of this question

leads to a somewhat multifaceted conclusion, placing the current situation of women in Israel at a crossroads. This crossroads, in a sense, reflects the anticipated move from liberal-legal-feminism into more complex feminist perceptions that may parallel, among other things, cultural and/or radical feminism.

Between the Lawn and the Gravel Path: Women, Politics, and Civil Society

Hanna Herzog

The paper's central argument is that a *slow* but *profound* process of change is occurring in Israeli society as the result of feminist endeavors. In the course of this process, diverse publics of women have begun to flourish. All of them are women with a strong political awareness, who work in various arenas to redefine gender, gender inequality, and intergender relationships. Additionally, those publics are challenging dominant political perceptions and proposing alternative ways of observing the social order; women are now involved in the broader social process within which a civil society in Israel is taking shape. Women's efforts are dispersed among different arenas in civil society, in organizations composed of women and men, but also in numerous organizations created by women for women.

Women now constitute one of the pivotal forces in the burgeoning civil society. They play their part in extending the borders of politics, both in the way that the political world and its contents are defined, and in the alternative modes of organization suggested for achieving political change.

Gender Politics in Israel: The Case of Affirmative Action in the Appointment of Women to Directorships

Dafna Izraeli

This study describes how Israeli women succeeded in obtaining affirmative action to give them access to state-owned company boards. The apparent paradox

of the inclusion of affirmative action in a law intended to eliminate “irrelevant” considerations in the appointment of directors, and the irony that affirmative action was legislated for the most privileged minority — professional women — are explained in relation to the specificities of Israel’s “incorporation regime”: its republican-to-citizenship discourse that legitimated a hierarchy of entitlements among women on the basis of nationality and ethnicity, and the transition to a liberal citizenship discourse with its emphasis on individual merit and equal opportunity.

The study traces the political and historic context within which the struggle for affirmative action took place, focusing on the orchestration and strategy supplied by the emergent professional class of women, particularly feminist lawyers and members of women’s organizations. Ultimately, the way in which the policy was framed and construed — as a recognition of women’s potential contributions to company boards — has kept women locked in a gendered social order.

Jewish Women’s Leadership: Israeli Modern Orthodoxy as a Test Case

Tova Cohen

In contrast to the situation prevailing hitherto, it is today possible to identify Israeli women who fit the definition of “religious leaders” in various Jewish religious communities. This characteristic is especially marked in Modern Orthodox circles.

This article describes the phenomenon of Jewish women’s leadership in Israel from several perspectives and in several spheres. It begins by outlining the historical and societal processes that facilitated its recent emergence. Within that context, particular emphasis is placed both on the development of “voluntary communities” and on the growth in the numbers of women studying Torah. Thereafter, attention is focused on the attitude to female religious leaders at the two ends of the Jewish religious spectrum: the Reform and Conservative communities (who officially oppose gender discrimination where religious leadership is concerned), on the one hand, and the *haredi* communities

(who explicitly rule out the possibility that a woman might occupy a position of religious leadership) on the other. Modern Orthodoxy is situated somewhere between these two extremities, and it is there that a unique type of female religious leader has begun to emerge.

Although undoubtedly growing, this phenomenon does not affect all Modern Orthodox circles to the same extent. Rather, at this time it is still especially pronounced in elitist groups, one of whose characteristics is the particularly complex nature of their approach to religious and social affairs. Typically, these groups are ideologically committed — simultaneously — both to gender equality and to the traditional Halakhah.

The body of the article analyzes such groups, and provides several examples of women who constitute their religious leaders. In conclusion, the article also discusses the possible future development of the phenomenon in these and other circles.

Men are the Discourse and Women Only Add Color

Aliza Lavie

Only ten percent of all interviewees in radio news and current events programs in Israel are women. The exclusion of women interviewees, the absence of their voices, and the compartmentalization of the few female interviewees into pre-defined categories, highlight radio discourse as a social boundary keeper in which sex determines modes of behavior. As such, news discourse is a gendered “social tool” that perpetuates women’s inferior status, perhaps reflecting their status as perceived by society as a whole.

In the case of Israeli public radio, the under-representation of women interviewees is even more disturbing in light of significant social processes, including the accelerated process of feminization among journalist roles, a reflection of which is expected in the media. No less than nine mediating factors, which suppress the radiating effect of these social processes, are perceived as holding potential for modifying news discourse, among them: Unawareness of the

Under-Representation of Women; Irrelevance of Gender in the Selection Process; Intentional Preference of Male Interviewees: The Ex-Culture. The study of these factors may be relevant to the under-representation of women on the air, not only in Israel, but in other countries as well.

An examination of the division of interviewee roles and status in radio discourse as reflections of a social reality allows us to identify ways in which discourse is utilized to structure men and women through social practices. A critical analysis of radio discourse and news production practices, as reflected in the selection of interviewees, highlights the role of this discourse as one of the fundamental social tools that structure and fixate the pre-existing social order.

Gender Politics and the Diaspora Museum

Pnina Lahav

In 1989 Dafna Izraeli z"l published an article entitled "Gender Politics in the Diaspora Museum." She focused on the exhibit of Mauricy Gottlieb's painting, *Jews Praying in the Synagogue on Yom Kippur*. While the original painting included women praying in the women's section, the Museum's version erased the women and presented an empty women's section. With Dafna, I conducted a campaign have this version removed and replaced with a reproduction of the original.

This article reviews four arguments presented by the Museum in its defense: the argument that the curators were not aware of feminist theories; and historical, structural-sociological and pragmatic arguments. The article then attempts to refute each argument.

It is suggested that in order to understand why the Museum altered the painting one must focus on Abba Kovner, the leader of the team that put together the exhibit. His ambivalence concerning the dramatic changes in the lifestyle of the Jewish communities in Eastern Europe since the nineteenth century led to a somewhat sentimental memory of that lifestyle. Since Jewish women were agents of change in these communities, we contend that Kovner's ambivalence to these changes led him to remove the women from the painting.

The Museum eventually agreed to take the painting down, but Dafna was skeptical about the meaning of this victory. She thought that the discrimination against women remained, but that a striking proof of this discrimination had now been removed from the public discourse.

The article concludes with a short discussion of the “Women of the Wall” (agents of change), which supports Dafna’s insight that, in their struggle to achieve equality, women are far from achieving their goals.

Between the Workers’ Kitchen and the Hungarian Café: An Autobiography of an Urban Woman

Orly Lubin

Women have long used the autobiographic genre to formulate their participation in the public arena. Being a “peripheral” genre, and very similar to a diary — considered a “feminine” genre — autobiographies lend themselves to women’s writing. Nevertheless, “women’s autobiographies” usually have some defining characteristics that separate them from “men’s autobiographies”: they generally portray a community within which the author survives rather than against which she fights; they do not necessarily focus on the writer and her singularity, but on the family, the surrounding community, and the larger frame of reference; and they justify themselves by relating to issues bigger than the self, as if the autobiography is more of a testimony than a personal record of events.

In the Hebrew culture, there are quite a few women’s autobiographies of this kind; but, adhering to the dictate encouraging them to write about nationality, the importance of the Zionist project, and its success or problems, most of these are “testimonial autobiographies” dealing with those issues that the modern national Zionist movement considered most important — the story of the agricultural community, of the communal structure — the kibbutz, and of the changes taking place in the profile and life of the “new Jew.” The uniqueness of Ziona Rabau’s autobiography is that it is a memoir written in retrospect, by a woman who grew up in an urban environment — the newly established town of Tel Aviv.

This article looks at the special characteristics of “an urban autobiography,” written about a time (and to an extent at a time) when living in an urban settlement was deemed inferior to living in an agricultural settlement. This inferiority is very visible in Rabau’s memoir, and the paper exposes the ways in which Rabau acknowledges her “inferiority” but also tries to “upgrade” urban life to the higher level of agricultural commitments. She portrays bourgeois life through its commitment to commerce: its private houses and its public sphere — the boundaries of the urban space and the details of the inside of the urban home; its interaction with the *halutzim*, the pioneers, committed to the “superior” way of life — communal and agricultural; its creation of an urban tradition, based on Jewish tradition, pioneering tradition, and the new Hebrew tradition. Thus, she creates an alternative story of national constitution, which, in fact, represents the majority of Jewish settlers in Palestine, rather than the small but paradigmatic group of the *halutzim*. She can do so, as is claimed and shown in this article, because, as a woman writer, she is “permitted” to deal with less important issues; she can disregard generic dictates, repeat herself, tell a fragmented historical story, describe major national events from a child’s perspective — in short, she can be “the other” of the pioneering era, represent the urban “other,” and use the female perspective to focus on that which is important to women: the home, nurturing, surviving, and creating a daily life for a new community.

The Broken Dream, or the Legend of Equal Opportunity: Immigrant Women and the Myth of Equality in Israel

Hannah Safran

The article focuses on the activities of women in their struggle for equal rights and suffrage in the Jewish community in Eretz Israel in the early twentieth century, and in the feminist activities that began in Israel in the 1970s. The dream of creating a new society, which was an integral part of the Zionist ideal and its application in Eretz Israel, accompanied the immigrant women on their journey to Eretz Israel. The new society, they hoped, would be based on ideals of justice and equality

between women and men. In Eretz Israel they discovered a different reality, however, that had very little to do with women's equality. Facing this reality, they had to fight for their rights — thus beginning their feminist activity. Over the years, the Zionist dream of a new society created a myth, which maintained that equality for women had indeed been achieved. The discovery that the reality on the ground was not one of equality generated feelings of anger and disappointment, and motivated many women to become activists on their own behalf.

The article focuses on the personalities of two women, Sarah Azaryahu and Marilyn Safir, who, on their arrival in the country, each in a different period, were deeply disappointed that their Zionist dream differed so starkly from the reality of women's "equality." Facing the reality they found in Eretz Israel, they became activists and, together with other friends, created women's organizations to campaign publicly for women's rights. Other women, who were born and brought up in the country, went through a similar process of realization — that equality for women in Israel was not a reality but a myth. Feminist activism was a joint effort of local women together with immigrant women, who became disillusioned with the reality of discrimination and the existence of violence against women in Israel. In this way, the women's organizations were established in the 1920s, and a whole gamut of feminist organizations were created in the 1970s in a similar way in order to bring about social change, and also to help women in need.

Typology and Analysis of Israeli Feminism

Orit Kamir

Israeli feminism, as well as its analysts, often borrows Anglo-American feminist terms and categories to define and evaluate the status of women in Israeli society and their struggle for equality. Israeli feminist activists and academics, therefore, think of Israeli feminism and refer to it in terms of the familiar distinctions between "liberal," "cultural," and "radical" feminisms. This article suggests that, although such terms and categories can and do yield significant insights, the unique reality of Israeli society requires its own set of feminist terms that will be more suitable

and applicable to local history and culture. Such a specific perspective may be more sensitive to unique social, cultural, and historical features of Israeli women's circumstances, as well as to their feminist endeavors. The article offers the first steps in this direction.

The argument developed in this article relies on the theoretical perspective developed in an earlier article, "At a Crossroads: Israel between Honor, Dignity, Glory and Respect," published in *Democratic Culture* 9. Analyzing Israel's commitment to *kvod ha'adam*, that article distinguishes between the term's four distinct aspects, associating them with the English terms of honor (as it is perceived in honor cultures), glory (in its biblical sense, which associates man's essence with God's), dignity (in its contemporary, liberal, global sense) and respect (as an expansion of dignity). "Israeli Honor and Dignity" shows political Zionism's special affinity to Jewish honor, and its contemporary consequences in Israeli life.

The current article argues that, throughout the Zionist era, the mainstream discussion on women's status and rights took place within the Zionist rhetoric of Jewish honor.

Up until the 1970s, women's groups and feminist activists were similarly committed to this discourse. Women's movements in Israel thus featured *Jewish Honor Feminisms*. More specifically, Israel's most significant feminist movement, aiming to establish Israeli Jewish women's position as the nation's mothers and workers, can be entitled *Working Mothers' Feminism*. The other, secondary feminist movement, began with some pioneer women's pre-State struggle to establish Jewish women's rights to participate in the Zionist workforce on an equal footing with Jewish men. It grew into a movement advocating women's equal rights in Israel's workforce and citizenry, reaching its peak in the 1980s, and can be entitled *Equal Opportunity Feminism*.

In the 1990s, a new type of feminism, previously limited to small, hard-core feminist groups in the country's big cities, began to spread and gain popularity. This feminism does not restrict itself to the domain of political Zionism, does not buy into the Zionist gender equality myth, and does not adhere to the Zionist perception of Jewish honor. In this sense, it is an a-Zionist type of feminism. It focuses on women's dignity (i.e. on violence against women, their right to liberty, and their social status), and on the respect shown by society and state

to women's identity politics (i.e. to self-determined needs of groups of lesbian women, religious women, Jewish women of Eastern descent, and Palestinian women). These types of feminism can be called *Dignity and Respect Feminisms*, respectively.

The article presents these Israeli feminisms, analyzes them, compares them to Anglo-American feminisms, and assesses their modes of operation and their chances of success.