



Identities and Freedom: Feminist Theory Between Power and Connection (Studies in Feminist Philosophy)

By Allison Weir

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How can we think about identities in the wake of feminist critiques of identity and identity politics? In *Identities and Freedom*, Allison Weir rethinks conceptions of individual and collective identities in relation to freedom. Drawing on Taylor and Foucault, Butler, Zerilli, Mahmood, Mohanty, Young, and others, Weir develops a complex and nuanced account of identities that takes seriously the ways in which identity categories are bound up with power relations, with processes of subjection and exclusion, yet argues that identities are also sources of important values, and of freedom, for they are shaped and sustained by relations of interdependence and solidarity. Moving out of the paradox of identity and freedom requires understanding identities as effects of multiple contesting relations of power and relations of interdependence.

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Identities and Freedom: Feminist Theory Between Power and Connection (Studies in Feminist Philosophy) By Allison Weir Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #2352370 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Oxford University Press, USA
- Published on: 2013-03-01
- Released on: 2013-01-03
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 6.10" h x .70" w x 9.20" l, .60 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 192 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"Weir breaks new ground, arguing for freedom as belonging: a form of freedom that acknowledges the discipline and category ascription that shape our identities as well as our elective and transformative practices, even those of subordination."

--*Hypatia*

"Allison Weir's *Identities and Freedom* is an important book. It introduces a new direction in contemporary discussions around identity, a direction that is crucially necessary.... Weir has taken the very important discussion about identities and freedom into new territory. Because this is so, this book is a must-read for anyone who wishes to participate in the ongoing conversation about what we mean when we identify ourselves and others through socially shared labels."--Linda Nicholson, *Social Theory and Practice*

"[This book] is ambitious in scope and its insights are manifold.... [I]t is profoundly engaging and provocative -- it is a book that all feminist philosophers, and many others concerned with questions concerning identity, freedom, power, and connection should read."--Sonia Kruks, *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*

"This is a terrific book, one that stakes out an original and distinctive position in some well-worn debates, and that brings together diverse bodies of theory in an insightful and productive way. It is a real gem. It offers substantial new insights into how feminist theorists can go on in the wake of the relentless critique of the notion of identity. The book will make a significant contribution to ongoing debates in feminist theory over the vexed question of identity -- a question that is absolutely central to feminist theory, and has been so for at least the last twenty years."--Amy Allen, Department of Philosophy, Dartmouth College

"This book makes great contributions to the feminist literature by reconceptualizing IDENTITY in terms of connectedness and FREEDOM in terms of practices of belonging. Through a fascinating and innovative synthesis of Michel Foucault and Charles Taylor, Weir's communitarian approach develops new arguments for the need to cultivate resistant identities and resistant communities. This impressive book is full of original ideas masterfully articulated in critical engagements with leading feminist scholars such as Saba Mahmood, Cynthia Willett, Iris Young, and Linda Zerilli. This provocative book is a must read for anyone interested in contemporary discussions of freedom, resistance, identity, and community."--José Medina, Department of Philosophy, Vanderbilt University

About the Author

Allison Weir is a Professor in the Institute for Social Justice at the Australian Catholic University in Sydney, Australia. She is the author of *Sacrificial Logics: Feminist Theory and the Critique of Identity*.

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