

The Sexual Contract



By Carole Pateman

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Carole Pateman is one of the foremost political theorists writing in English today. In this outstanding new work, she presents a major reinterpretation of modern political theory. She shows how standard discussions of social contract theory tell only half the story. The sexual contract which establishes modern patriarchy and the political right of men over women is never mentioned. In a wide-ranging and scholarly discussion, Pateman examines the significance of the political fictions of the original contract and the slave contract. She also offers a sweeping challenge to conventional understandings - of both left and right - of actual contracts in everyday life: the marriage contract, the employment contract, the prostitution contract and the new surrogacy contract. By bringing a feminist perspective to bear on the contradictions and paradoxes surrounding women and contract and the relation between the sexes, she is able to shed new light on the fundamental problems of freedom and subordination. The Sexual Contract will become a classic text in the politics of gender and will be of major interest to students of social and political theory and philosophy, women's studies, sociology and jurisprudence.

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

In this remarkably original work of political philosophy, one of today's foremost feminist theorist challenges the way contemporary society functions by questioning the standard interpretation of an idea that is deeply embedded in American and British political thought: that our rights and freedoms derive from the social contract explicated by Locke, Hobbes, and Rousseau and interpreted in the United States by the Founding Fathers.

The author shows how we are told only half the story of the original contract that establishes modern patriarchy. The sexual contract is ignored and thus men's patriarchal right over women is also glossed over. No attention is paid to the problems that arise when women are excluded from the original contract but incorporated into the new contractual order.

One of the main targets of the book is those who try to turn contractarian theory to progressive use, and a major thesis of the book is that this is not possible. Thus those feminists who have looked to a more "proper" contract- one between genuinely equal partners, or one entered into without any coercion- are misleading themselves. In the author's words, "In contract theory universal freedom is always a hypothesis, a story, a political fiction. Contract always generates political right in the forms of domination and subordination." Thus the book is also aimed at mainstream political theorists, and socialist and other critics of contract theory.

The author offers a sweeping challenge to conventional understandings- of both left and right- of actual contracts in everyday life: the marriage contract, the employment contract, the prostitution contract, and the new surrogate mother contract. By bringing a feminist perspective to bear on the contradictions and paradoxes surrounding women and contract, and the relation between the sexes, she is able to shed new light on fundamental political problems of freedom and subordination.

About the Author

Carole Pateman is Reader in Government at the University of Sydney, Australia, and the author of many books, including *The Problems of Political Obligation*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Irma Kellner:

Information is provisions for those to get better life, information these days can get by anyone in everywhere. The information can be a understanding or any news even a problem. What people must be consider if those information which is from the former life are difficult to be find than now's taking seriously which one is appropriate to believe or which one the resource are convinced. If you obtain the unstable resource then you get it as your main information you will see huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen throughout you if you take The Sexual Contract as your daily resource information.

Marsha Young:

Often the book The Sexual Contract has a lot of knowledge on it. So when you make sure to read this book you can get a lot of gain. The book was compiled by the very famous author. The author makes some research ahead of write this book. This book very easy to read you can get the point easily after scanning this book.

Michael Short:

This The Sexual Contract is completely new way for you who has intense curiosity to look for some information mainly because it relief your hunger of information. Getting deeper you on it getting knowledge more you know or you who still having little digest in reading this The Sexual Contract can be the light food for yourself because the information inside this book is easy to get by anyone. These books create itself in the form which is reachable by anyone, yeah I mean in the e-book type. People who think that in publication form make them feel drowsy even dizzy this publication is the answer. So there isn't any in reading a e-book especially this one. You can find what you are looking for. It should be here for anyone. So , don't miss the idea! Just read this e-book variety for your better life along with knowledge.

Rachel Cady:

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