

Postmodernism, Feminism, and Their Debate**

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There are two primary goals in this paper. First, I will discuss the development of both postmodernism and feminism from the 1960s to the present. By doing this, I would like use the past (history) to understand the present. Without a (historical) context, postmodernism, as well as feminism, will become a fixed and monotonous discourse. The development of both postmodernism and feminism are deeply rooted in the social environment of the West (mainly Europe and North America). Not only was this true in as early as the 1960s, it also is in the present. If we expect any alternatives from today's postmodernism and feminism, an answer perhaps can be found in their history.

The second goal of this paper is to learn from the debate between postmodernism and feminism. In this part, I will examine the main controversial issues between them, such as modernity, subjectivity, deconstruction, and metanarratives. Through investigating the debate, we can understand how these two postmodern discourses are related to each other. If a common contradiction during their development is their against modernism, a special contradiction exists between them. Solving these contradictions is beyond the scope of this paper. What I wish to do in this paper is to offer some insights for the readers. In order to examine the development of postmodernism and feminism and their relationships, I will first discuss the concept of modernism.

Modernism: a Common Target

[Postmodern] mean[s] the shift in material conditions of the late 20th century monopoly capitalism brought on by the micro-electronic revolution in information technology, the fissures of a global, multinational hyper-capitalism, and the global

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uprising of the marginalized. This conjunction includes movements in art, architecture, and the practice of everyday life (e.g. MTV). The code name for the crisis of confidence in Western conceptual systems, postmodernism is borne out of our sense of the limits of Enlightenment rationality (Lather 1992:4).

Patti Lather's notion of postmodernism suggests an important fact that postmodernism is rooted in its postmodern conditions, which also represent a crisis of modernist notions: "autonomy, transcendence, certainty, authority, unity, totalization, system, universalization, center, continuity, teleology, closure, hierarchy, homogeneity, uniqueness, origin" (Hutcheon 1988: 57). These modernist concepts are challenged by both postmodernism and feminism. That is, the common target shared by postmodernism and feminism is modernism.

The concept of modernism is associated with three levels: social, aesthetic, and political. Social modernity, according to Calinescu (1987:41), is characterized by:

the doctrine of progress, the confidence in the beneficial possibilities of science and technology, the concern with time, the cult of reason, and the ideal of freedom defined within the framework of an abstract humanism, but also the orientation toward pragmatism and the cult of action and success.

Within Calinescu's notion of social modernism, the central elements are progress, rationality, truth, and subjectivity. On the one hand, social modernity refers to "the progressive differentiation and rationalization of the social world through the process of economic growth and administrative rationalization" (Giroux 1991: 8). On the other hand, the social modernist project is also an "epistemological project of elevating reason to an ontological status" (Giroux 1991:8).

The second category of modernity is its aesthetic tradition. Art is defined in this category as a representation of criticism, rebellion, and resistance. Furthermore, there is an underlying commonality and attempt to erase the difference between art and politics and the boundaries between life and aesthetics (Giroux 1991:8). It should be noted that this aesthetic avant-garde movement is never abandoned by the later postmodernism. That is, postmodernism in fact transcends the aesthetic tradition of modernity.

The social modernity is associated with the aesthetic modernity in that both claim the superiority of high culture over and against popular culture, the affirmation of a center, the faith in the power of the highly rational, conscious mind, and the belief in the unequivocal ability of human beings to shape the future (Giroux 1991:9). Besides social and aesthetic modernism, Giroux also argues that there is a third tradition - the political modernism, in

which projects include removing the causes of human suffering, signifying the principles of liberty, equality, and justice, and developing human beings' capacities in order to "overcome ideologies and material forms that legitimate and are embedded in relations of domination" (Giroux 1991: 11).

Giroux's analysis of the social, aesthetic, and political modernism shows the theoretical, ideological and political complexity of modernism, but more importantly, it reveals the origin of postmodernism and feminism. In the following sections, I will discuss how postmodernism and feminism develop from modernism.

Postmodernism in a Historical Context

It is necessary to briefly describe how the term "postmodernism" is used from the 1960s to the present. In the 1960s, postmodernism was first used emphatically by literary critics such as Leslie Fiedler and Ihab Hassan. During the early and mid-1970s, the term was widely used in arts and entertainment, such as architecture, dance, theater, painting, film, and music in the United States. Postmodernism migrated to Europe via Paris and Frankfurt in the late 1970s. Kristeva and Lyotard took up this term in France, as did Habermas in Germany. It was only in the early 1980s that the modernism/postmodernism constellation in the arts and the modernity/postmodernity constellation in social theory had become very influential in the intellectual life of Western societies (Huyssen 1990:237). During the late 1980s to the present, while the term is widely used almost everywhere, postmodernism (with a hyphen) (e.g. Rosenau 1992) is distinguished from postmodernism (without a hyphen). Conservative opponents of postmodernism employ the hyphen while radical supporters omit it (Hassan 1985: 125). Postmodern(ism) without a hyphen indicates a new age out of modern times while post-modern(ism) with a hyphen shows a continuous age of modern times. After reviewing the usage of the term "postmodernism," I will discuss how postmodernism has developed through three historical periods: the 1960s, the 1970s and the early 1980s, and the late 1980s to the present.

Postmodernism in the 1960s, to some extent, should be called "the prehistory of the postmodern" (Huyssen 1990: 247) because the term "postmodernism" did not gain wide currency then. Postmodernism of the 1960s was rooted in the modernist social and political movements, such as student movements, anti-racism, women's liberation, etc. in the 1960s, the era which may be described as a revolutionary, ideal, enthusiastic, and revolt period. Huyssen (1990) sketches four major characteristics of this early postmodernism.

First, it was characterized by "a temporal imagination," which exhibited "a powerful sense of the future and of new frontiers, of rupture and discontinuity, of crisis and generational conflict, an imagination reminiscent of earlier continental avant-garde movements such as Dada and Surrealism rather than of high modernism" (244). Second, this early phase of postmodernism included as iconoclastic attack "on cultural institutions and on traditional modes of representation (which) presupposed a society in which high art played as essential role in legitimizing hegemony" (245). Then, many of the early advocates of postmodernism optimized about the new techniques and their products, such as television, video, and computer (246). Finally, this early postmodernism also tended to "validate popular culture as a challenge to the canon of high art, modernist or traditional" (246).

In general, the early postmodernism in the 1960s in fact continued modernist avant-garde movement but became more radical, and was closely associated with the spirit of active revolt. It is this avant-garde movement that becomes the foundation of postmodernism after the 1960s on the one hand, and constrains the relations of postmodernism to modernism on the other hand.

Postmodernism in the 1970s and the early 1980s not only carried on the "tradition" of early postmodernism but also broke new ground. In this period, postmodernism offered a challenge to the cultural politics of modernism by focusing on a number of issues. First, postmodernism continued the distinction between high or elite and low or popular culture, and made the everyday or the popular an object of serious study. Second, the earlier optimism about technology, media and popular culture had given way to more sober and critical assessments: television, for example, as pollution rather than panacea. This shows that postmodernism not only rejected modernism, but began to challenge its own criticism of modernism. Then, there was an increasing skepticism toward grand narratives or metanarratives, such as "philosophies of history like the Enlightenment story of the gradual but steady progress of reason and freedom, Hegel's dialectic of Spirit coming to know itself, and, more important, Marx's drama of the forward march of human productive capacities via class conflict culminating in proletarian revolution" (Fraser and Nicholson 1988: 86). Finally, postmodernism began to pay attention to feminism and other social discourses and movements, which "foregrounded difference and exposed the patriarchal, heterosexist, and ethnocentric nature of dominant Western ideals" (Felski 1989:36). That is, different ideological and structural forces, such as race, gender, and class, became visible in postmodernism.

It is during the 1970s and early 1980s that postmodernism became "mature." A positive influence of postmodernism was and is "its concern for difference, for the difficulties of

communication, for the complexity and nuances of interests, cultures, places, and the like" (Harvey 1989:113). To this extent, postmodernism indeed shook traditional modernist thinking. Postmodernism itself, however, became pastiche - a free-floating, crazy-quilt, collage-montage, hodgepodge patchwork of ideas or views. Its theory (if there is any) includes French structuralism, romanticism, phenomenology, nihilism, populism, existentialism, hermeneutics, Western Marxism, Critical Theory, and anarchism. Postmodernism shares elements with each, but more importantly, it has had quarrels with every approach (Rosenau 1992: 13). Its enormous system of knowledge has been challenged by its critics, not only from the inside, but also from the outside. Postmodernism in this sense has not been successful enough in solving the problems of modernism, but rather it has reinforced the crisis of the modernity. Thus, postmodernism should not be considered a new paradigm replacing liberal humanism (Hutcheon 1988:4). The new postmodernism from the late 1980s to the present, based on the ruins of the battle between the previous postmodernism and modernism, tends to critically interrogate the earlier postmodernism.

From the late 1980s to the present, postmodernism is clearly divided into two discourses: the affirmative and skeptical¹ (e.g. Best and Kellner 1991:14-5; Rosenau 1992). The skeptical postmodernism, according to Rosenau (1992), offers a "pessimistic, negative, gloomy assessment," and argues that "the postmodern age is one of fragmentation, disintegration, malaise, meaninglessness, a vagueness or even absence of moral parameters and societal chaos" (15), while the affirmative postmodernism has "a more hopeful, optimistic view of the postmodern age" (15), and encourages re-definition and innovation (4). The skeptical postmodernism becomes a crisis of postmodernism itself, and is criticized and rejected by many affirmative postmodernists. In contrast to skeptical postmodernism, affirmative postmodernism focuses on its application. That is, a new postmodernist condition, recognized by postmodernism, is seriously considered in many fields, such as architecture, art, literature, psychology, political science, anthropology, philosophy, women's studies, etc. (Rosenau 1992:7), and social movements, such as feminism, the politics of identity, multiculturalism, and so forth.

In sum, from the 1960s to the present, postmodernism first developed as a social movement characterized by its resistance to the domination of traditional modern social forms (in the West). Then, postmodernism, along with poststructuralism, is a discourse of

1. The similar classification of postmodernism in fact can go back to the 1980s. Foster (1983), for example, argues that there are two opposite forms of postmodernism: a postmodernism of resistance and a postmodernism of reaction (xii). The former "seeks to deconstruct modernism and resist the status quo" while the latter "repudiates" modernism "to celebrate" "the status quo" (1983:xii).

and about modernism (Huysen 1990:259). Finally, postmodernism is cultural politics, and operates "in a field of tension between tradition and innovation, conservation and renewal, mass culture and high art" (Huysen 1990:267).

Feminism since the 1960s

Feminism provides a grounded politics that employs the most progressive aspects of modernism and postmodernism. In the most general sense, it reaffirms the importance of difference as part of a broader political struggle for the reconstruction of public life. It rejects all forms of essentialism but recognizes the importance of certain formative narratives. Similarly, it provides a language of power that engages the issue of inequality and struggle...promotes social criticism that acknowledges the interrelationship between human agents and social structures...(and) provides a radical social theory imbued with a language of critique and possibility. (Giroux 1991:44)

Giroux's comments summarize the current condition of feminism. The most important work done by feminists is their challenge of the invisibility and distortion of women's experiences, and their retrieval of women's voices. Under the general label of feminism, however, there are various orientations, such as images of woman criticism, separatist or women-centered gynecriticism, feminist critique of patriarchal ideology in male texts, psychoanalytic studies of female subjectivity, Marxist-socialist contextualizing, deconstructive interrogations of cultural constructs, women's perspectives on Afro-American, post-colonial, etc. (Cf. Hutcheon 1988:67-8).

In the 1960s, along with "women's rights" movements, feminism was characterized by its focusing on invoking biological differences between women and men in order to explain sexism (e.g. Firestone 1970). In the early 1970s, this approach was criticized because it did not allow us to "understand the enormous diversity of forms that both gender and sexism assume in different cultures" (Fraser and Nicholson 1988:93). At the same time, a new approach appeared to focus on cross-cultural domestic and public separation (e.g. Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974). Since the late 1970s, both biological determinants and a culture-oriented domestic/public separation in feminism were largely abandoned. Since around 1980, feminist scholarship has attained maturity. Many feminist scholars have stopped looking for the causes of sexism and have turned to more concrete inquiry with more limited aims (Fraser and Nicholson 1988:98). From the 1980s, feminism, like postmodernism, becomes plural and diverse. It is no longer a grand system of knowledge, but varies within different classes, races, and ethnic groups.

In sum, feminism, by introducing sex and gender into analytic probes, disrupts the modernist discourse by implication of division in general, the postmodernist discourse by reminding us of the reality of the female gender, and the discourse of feminism itself by exposing "the instability, indefinability, yet indissolubility of the category of woman" (Keller 1989:18-9). As one of the most important and influential discourses in the late 20th century, feminism has relations to many other discourses, particularly to postmodernism. In the following section of this paper, I would like to discuss relationships between feminism and postmodernism².

The Relationships between Postmodernism and Feminism

While it opens up a radical project by acknowledging the authenticity of other voices, postmodernist thinking immediately shuts off other voices from access to more universal sources of power by ghettoizing them within an opaque otherness, the specificity of this or that language game. It thereby disempowers those voices (of women, ethnic and racial minorities, colonized peoples, the unemployed, youth, etc.) in a world of lop-sided power relations. (Harvey 1989:117)

Harvey's criticism of (skeptical) postmodernism is widely shared by many critics. Owens (1983), for example, argues that postmodernism appears as a crisis in Western representation - its male authority and universalism, and criticizes that postmodernism has tended either to neglect or to repress feminist voices (57-63). Owens also argues that the feminist position of "no single theoretical discourse" should also be a postmodern condition (64). This argument implies that postmodernism should take feminist position in this sense. That is, we should bring female's voices back to our representations.

The relationship between postmodernism and feminism may be seen as a power relationship. When discussing how power is exercised, Foucault (1982) argues that we should look at its relations, communication, and application (216-8). In fact, since the mid-1980s, more and more feminists have turned to criticize postmodernism. I would argue that this phenomenon results from the repression by postmodernism of other theoretical voices including feminism. That is, the feminist critique of postmodernism may be seen as a reaction to postmodernism. Feminist critique of postmodernism, according to Di Stefano (1990), consists of four related claims:

2. Many scholars have discussed this issue (mainly see Owens 1983; Jardine 1985; Creed 1987; Flax 1987; Hutcheon 1988; Kipnis 1988; Moi 1988; Alcoff 1988; Fraser and Nicholson 1988; Keller 1989; Felski 1989; Nicholson 1990; Di Stefano 1990; Bordo 1990, 1992; Giroux 1991).

First, that postmodernism expresses the claims and needs of a constituency (white, privileged man of the industrialized West) that has already had an Enlightenment for itself and that is now ready and willing to subject that legacy to critical scrutiny. Secondly, that the objects of postmodernism's various critical and deconstructive efforts have been the creations of a similarly specific and partial constituency (beginning with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle). Third, that mainstream postmodernist theory (Derrida, Lyotard, Rorty, Foucault) has been remarkably blind and insensible to questions of gender in its own purportedly politicized rereading of history, politics, and culture. Finally, that the postmodernist project, if seriously adopted by feminists, would make any semblance of a feminist politics impossible. To the extent that feminist politics is bound up with a specific constituency or subject, namely, women, the postmodernist prohibition against subject-centered inquiry and theory undermines the legitimacy of broad-based organized movement dedicated to articulating and implementing the goals of such a constituency. (75-6)

Di Stefano's arguments touch controversies between postmodernism and feminism in spite of their vagueness. In order to understand the relationships between postmodernism and feminism, I would like to examine the main controversial issues between them: modernism, subjectivity, deconstruction, metanarratives, and identity politics.

Feminism responds to modernism in terms of reaction while postmodernism does to modernism by means of resistance. Feminism has affirmed the modernist concerns with equality, social justice, and freedom, and has stressed putting these modernist concerns into a gender context. According to this affirmation, women and men are equal under contract law and under genetic law (Keller 1989:21). This can be seen as a modernist project. In contrast to feminism, postmodernism generally resists modernist concerns with equality, social justice, and freedom. That is, the postmodernist attitude to these modernist concerns is skeptical. Even if some postmodernists affirmed these modernist concerns, they denied or were not aware of gender context.

Although feminism affirms modernist concerns with equality, social justice, and freedom, this can only be seen as an early phenomenon. In fact, postmodern feminism has revised a feminist early attitude to modernism, and has rejected those aspects of modernism in which universal laws are exalted at the expense of specificity and contingency (Giroux 1991:31). This attitude is more relative, and overlaps with postmodernist critique of universalism.

When evaluating both feminist and postmodernist relations to modernism in the early phase (particularly in the 1960s and the early 1970s), feminism, mainly as a social movement, renders the development of postmodernism as a discourse. The feminist movement itself to some extent was a resource for postmodernism, but women's interests were never considered seriously by early postmodernism. Until the late 1970s and the early 1980s, feminism, not only as a social movement but also as a discourse, began to develop as an independent theory out of postmodernism through carrying its attention to poststructuralist theories. This postmodern feminism has critically interrogated postmodernist discourses, particularly subjectivity, deconstruction, and metanarratives.

With regard to the idea of subjectivity, feminism affirms it while postmodernism rejects it. These two discourses about the idea of subjectivity have debated each other. For postmodernism, subjectivity means "individuality and self-awareness - the condition of being a subject" (Hohendahl 1986:59). Postmodernists do not employ this word in its modern sense of philosophical relativism or tentativeness or the opposite of objectivity. Postmodernism offers a generally negative assessment of the modern subject. Thus, it questions the value of a unified, coherent subject (a human being, a person) as a coherent reference point or equivalent character (e.g. Baudrillard 1983:67; Derrida 1978; Foucault 1970:261-2). Postmodernism opposes the modern subject for at least three reasons. First the subject is a symbol of modernity. Second, the subject is humanist. Third, the subject implies an object (Rosenau 1992:46-50).

For feminists, the modernist notion of subjectivity is incomplete because women (and other marginal groups) were never treated as empowered subjects before. At the very moment that women for the first time in history are constituting themselves as empowered subjects, postmodernism abolishes the subject (Hartsock 1987). Some feminists thus conclude that anti-subject stand of postmodernism is "gender bound and biased" (Flax 1990: 225), criticize postmodern deconstruction of subjectivity, and urge that feminists continue to seek "location and participation" in the retelling and reconstruction of women's "differentiated yet collective experience" (Flax 1990: 221). At the same time, some feminists take seriously what poststructuralist writers have called the "decentering" of the subject, but they revise the notion - the decentering of the subject is not regarded as "a methodological or theoretical dogma," but as "part of the lived experience of acting, thinking, writing in fragmenting times" (Bordo 1992:163). Hooks argues that feminists should decenter the self in order to offer opportunities for new and various forms of voices among people (cf. Hooks 1990). Hooks' argument means that woman cannot be seen as a unified and indifferent subject, but as different in terms of class, race, and ethnicity group.

The notion of subjectivity is related to another idea - deconstruction. The goal of deconstruction is "to keep things in process, to disrupt, to keep the system in play, to set up procedures to continuously demystify the realities... to fight the tendency for our categories to congeal" (Lather 1992: 10). By means of identifying "the binaries, the oppositions that structure an argument," reversing/displaying "the dependent term from its negative position to a place that locates it as the very condition of the positive term," and creating "a more fluid and less coercive conceptual organization of terms that transcends a binary logic by simultaneously being both and neither of the binary terms" (Lather 1992:11, Grosz 1989:xv), deconstruction tries to make the complexity of the contradictions within conventions apparent (Hassan 1986).

The application of this poststructuralist notion of deconstruction has been both positive and negative. On the one hand, the marginal, the local, and the peripheral including women, the minority, the native, the colonized, etc., have opportunities of speaking and expressing. It is in this sense that the world becomes plural. It is also the notion of decentering that lets feminists engage in their evoking women's voices. Another good example is Said's criticism of Orientalism (Said 1978), which definitely is influenced by the notion of deconstruction.

Although deconstruction originally have nothing to do with a shift from an old center to a new center, its radical application, by extending the notion of deconstruction, tends to establish new center(s). That is, when rejecting conventional centers, such as the White, the male, the West, etc, the extreme not only deconstruct them, but more importantly, tend to set up new "centers" in order to against the old. Some radical feminists, for example, argue that if women's values were to replace traditional male values, the world would know peace (Keller 1989:21-2). This extreme argument is criticized not only in terms of its tendency to establish a new female "center," but also in terms of its unitary and fixed category - women. To some extent, that deconstruction empowers the repressed, the colonized, the local, the peripheral, etc, suggests the destruction of the old structure. A problem of deconstruction, however, is that it only tells us what to do but not how. This ambiguity of the notion of deconstruction naturally results in its problematic application.

With regard to master narratives, although both feminism and postmodernism criticize them, they have different attitudes. For postmodernism, an important characteristic is its critique of totality, reason, and universality. Lyotard (1984), a key figure among postmodern critics, criticizes metanarratives which "totalize historical experience by reducing its diversity to one-dimensional, all-encompassing logic," and urges "a discourse of multiple horizons, the

play of language games, and terrain of micropolitics" (Giroux 1991:19). While accepting the postmodern critique of master narratives that employ a single standard and make a claim to embody a universal experience, feminism does not define all large narrative as oppressive. Fraser and Nicholson (1988) criticize Lyotard's version of postmodernism as theoretically and politically disabling for (radical or socialist) feminism, and argue that Lyotard's rejection of all master narratives like male domination, racism, or class exploitation undermine the struggles of women and opposed groups (85-91). Thus, postmodernism is generally skeptical to metanarratives while feminism is affirmative to them. Feminism cannot reject all notions of totality because this will run "the risk of being trapped in particularistic theories that cannot explain how the various diverse relations that constitute larger social, political, and global systems interrelate or mutually determine and constrain one another" (Giroux 1991:40).

As the analysis above shows, the debate between feminism and postmodernism over the issues of modernism, subjectivity, deconstruction, and metanarratives can refer to a politics of difference which "has emerged as a project of building new political groupings with categories neglected in previous modern politics such as race, gender, sexual preference, and ethnicity" (Best and Kellner 1991:205). The politics of difference operates within a network, in which those categories, such as race, gender, class, etc., coexist and intertwine. A positive contribution of this politics of difference is to help generate a new perspective for social theory and radical politics today, which is a "multi-perspectival cultural analysis" which attends to the dimensions of class, race, gender, and specific social group in textual analysis and critique (Best and Kellner 1991: 213).

In addition to the politics of difference, another characteristic of postmodern politics is the politics of identity. "Identity politics," developed from the Combahee River Collective's "A Black Feminist Statement" (Alcoff 1988:431, note 65), and means that "one's identity is taken (and defined) as a political point of departure, as a motivation for action, and as a delineation of one's politics" (Alcoff 1988:431-2). Identity politics offers a basis for building communities in a chaotic environment (Epstein 1991:28). Identity involves a forging of political identity from one's historical and cultural background, and one's gender, class, and ethnic status. Many postmodernists are not as active as feminists in the politics of identity. This, to some extent, is because postmodernism rejects subjectivity while feminism affirms it. Although a politics of identity may help the repressed, the underclass, and the marginal to foster the development of political and cultural identity and solidarity, it also can foster nationalism, chauvinism, and the like, through naming, defining boundaries, and constructing a usable language and tradition (Epstein 1991:28; Best and Kellner 1991:213-4).

From the development of postmodernism and feminism since the 1960s, we can clearly see two tendencies. First, within each discourse, postmodernism, as well as feminism, continues to react to modernism. Many central notions of modernism, such as certainty, totalization, system, continuity, center, authority, etc., are challenged by both postmodernism and feminism. Despite being challenged, these modernist notions are not collapsed fundamentally. This is not because these notions should not be replaced but because both postmodernism and feminism make people confused, and more importantly, do not offer any solutions to the modernist problems. To this extent, the deeper the crisis of modernity is, the more problematic both postmodernism and feminism are. However, an important role played by both postmodernism and feminism is to make the crisis of modernism visible.

Moreover, there is a tendency of integration between postmodernism and feminism. Not only does the debate between them result in division, it also results in integration. The fact that more and more scholars have been interested in discussing the relationships between postmodernism and feminism since the mid-1980s indicates a practice of integration. Dialogue is a way of solving conflict. By means of communications on the basis of common goal(s), different classes, races, groups, sexes, and so forth, will offer opportunities for understanding each other.

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後現代主義，女性主義及其爭論

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(中文摘要)

本文將探討六十年代以來後現代主義和女性主義的發展，以及他們之間關於現代性，主題，解構和宏觀論述等問題的爭論。本文的目的一是把後現代主義和女性主義放在一個歷史脈絡中進行考察，並試圖理解他們怎樣相互批評；二是對後現代主義和女性主義之間爭論的角色進行一番思考。

關鍵詞：後現代主義、女性主義、爭論、批評

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Postmodernism, Feminism, and Their Debate

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(Abstract)

This paper will discuss the development of postmodernism and feminism from the 1960s to the present, and the debate between postmodernism and feminism over issues such as modernity, subjectivity, deconstruction, and metanarratives. The goals of this paper are to understand both postmodernism and feminism in a historical context and how they criticize each other, and to think of the role of the debate between postmodernism and feminism.

Key Words: postmodernism 、 feminism 、 debate 、 criticism.

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