

# Beyond Patriarchal Biases in Economics

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Title	: Beyond Economic Man: Feminist Theory and Economics
Editor	: Julie A. Nelson & Marianne A. Ferber
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## **The Trinity: Capitalism, Feminism, Environmentalism**

This book is written by contributors from different scientific backgrounds; nine economists, a sociologist, and a philosopher. They are Rebecca M. Blank, Paula England, Marianne A. Ferber, Nancy Folbre, Ann L. Jennings, Helen E. Longino, Donald N. McCloskey, Julie A. Nelson, Robert M. Solow, Diana Strassmann, and Rhonda M. Williams. This book is edited by Julie A. Nelson & Marianne A. Ferber. Julie A. Nelson, an alumni of University of Wisconsin-Madison, known as a feminist who has special concerns in feminism, economy, and climate changing. Julie is one of the economists who is known for her

consistency in applying feminist theory in the discipline of economics, both as model and methodology. Being one of the first economics books which uses feminist framework, this book is a significant manifesto in the history of contemporary feminism.

This book includes the development of economics for the last ten years before 1993. The narrative of “market” and “house” is explained as a machine that has missed its initial mission as a justice and wealth provider. Masculinity biases is still powerful in market behavior which is deplored in this book. Market has becoming “a machine” that is masculine inherently – separating figure arguments from ethics. Patriarchal biases are still dominating in economics (p. 7). This book is not meant to restrict economics in feminist trap, but rather expand it – widen the exploration range and the power of economics analysis considered to be rigid, arid, and divorced from the values of justice, especially the questions of ethics on climate changing and social justice that needs to be refreshed most of the time. Julie A. Nelson is a feminist who also departs from environmentalist ideology. As a professor and an activist, she also established International Association for Feminist Economics and is also an Editor for journal of *Feminist Economics*.

Not only editing this book, Julie also writes a lot of books and other journals about economics and feminism, they are: *Economics for Humans*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006; *Can We Talk? Feminist Economists in Dialogue with Social Theorists*, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 31 (4), Summer 2006, 1051-1074; *Feminist Economics Today: Beyond Economic Man*, co-edited with Marianne A. Ferber, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003; *Feminism, Objectivity, and Economics*, London: Routledge, 1996; *Feminism and Economics*, *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9(2), Spring 1995, pp. 131-148; *Beyond Economic Man: Feminist Theory and Economics*, edited with Marianne A. Ferber Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993; and *Household Economics of Scale in*

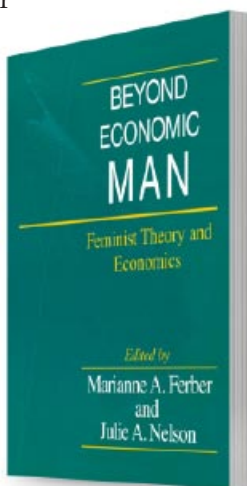
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This book suggested that at present the practices of economy has been constructed socially and culturally to act unfairly to certain gender, women and sexual minority. Not to mention to ecological problem.

*Consumption: Theory and Evidence*, *Econometrica* 56(6), November 1988, pp. 1301–1314.

Julie is a feminist who initiated the attention of feminism and environmentalism on economic problems. She argues that all this time economics “has not been objective” – it still lives in the shadow of masculinity which has huge desire in conquering the nature and making it as capital an sich. Capitalism forgets that the Earth and the nature are the capitals that need to be taken care of, not only as exploitation objects. She introduces the diction of “kitchen argumentation” to fight the stigma and stereotype that see home economy as a mere inferior to market economy. She argues that economics should remove the patriarchal biases that are still strongly coating in itself.

### Sustainable Economy

This book is the first book to evaluate the discipline of economy from the feminist perspective. The discipline of economy needs to liberate itself from masculine biases which is greedy about profit and figures. *Beyond Economic Man* asks a question about the discipline in economy which are not objective enough in appreciating “home” economy (pp. 40-51). The contributors of this book try to find out how masculine attentions undermine the capital and market operation and exclude the communal tasks which have been carried by home all the time. The bitter



thing is that the orientations on capital and figure are called as objective ideas! This statement is completely rejected by Julie as “less objective” because it lacks of the values of social-fairness and ecological-fairness. The practices of economy which are concerned in the values of communal, nature, and home should receive more attention in economy epistemology to broaden its objectivity range (pp. 97-101). This book suggested that at present the practices of economy has been constructed

socially and culturally to act unfairly to certain gender, women and sexual minority. Not to mention to ecological problem.

Theoretical interventions need to be done to ensure that the vulnerable and the minority groups receive their rights fairly from the economy cake. Social and economy classes need to get epistemological guarantee from economics with its solidarity sectors which supports only to the elite all the time. Besides the solidarity of economics for the poor, economics should set the foundation of environmental conservation and give more attention to climate change in constructing its expansion, instead of being the main trigger that tends to be greedy and impairing the ecology (pp. 125-127). According to Julie, women have a dependent position in economy market, depends on men, the holder of capital control. This is due to many domestic jobs cannot be remunerated and the reproductive functions are neglected, if not being marginalized.

Economy beyond masculine biases is “the solidarity economy” which is cooperative and has solidarity in slavery liberation (*slave-free product and sweat-free goods*), protects the environment (*green product and recycling goods*), not violating the rights of certain ethnic groups and the vulnerable (*fair-trade*), not causing environmental damage and has to be fair to women and the sexual minority (p. 170). Therefore economics has to be free from unfair values that has created more poverty, warfare, and ecological damages from which sustainable economy will emerge.