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Reviewing “The Oxford Handbook on Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible” by Susanne Scholz

A Panel Discussion at the SBL 2023 Annual Meeting in San Antonio, TX (11th–18th Nov 2023)

Abstract: Der Artikel dokumentiert eine Panel Diskussion des Annual Meetings der SBL in San Antonio (TX) im November 2023. Gegenstand der Diskussion ist das von Susanne Scholz herausgegebene *The Oxford Handbook on Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* (Fortress Press, 2021). 4 Theologinnen sowie die Herausgeberin selbst diskutieren das ein breites Spektrum an Themen umfassende Werk, seine Geschichte, und seine Bedeutung für aktuelle Diskurse.

Introduction by Carol J. Dempsey, OP

Distinct in thought and content, *The Oxford Handbook on Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* (Fortress Press, 2021) is a shimmering diamond that expands the academic horizon. Divided into four parts (Part I: “The Impact of Globalization on Feminist Biblical Studies”; Part II: “The Impact of Neoliberalism on Feminist Biblical Interpretation”; Part III: The Impact of [Digital] Media Cultures on Feminist Biblical Exegesis”; Part IV: The Emergence of Intersectional Feminist Readings”), the volume’s 37 essays showcase the contributions of diverse scholars, female, male, trans, straight, or queer working and writing around the world. Exploring all kinds of exegetical, hermeneutical, and methodological venues and representing a broad spectrum of ideas, the *Handbook* focuses not only on biblical texts but also on cross-

cultural comparative works, media and novelistic appropriations, and cultural adaptations of the Hebrew Bible. The interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, interreligious, and artistic readings of biblical texts link feminist, womanist, queer, and gender-just biblical scholarship to geopolitics, classism, racism, heteronormativity, homophobia, phallogocentrism, sexual violence, and environmental degradation. The sheer breadth of the work has caught the attention of the scholarly community which prompted the SBL “Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible” and “Use, Influence, and Impact of the Bible” to sponsor a joint review panel with presentations offered by Carol J. Dempsey, OP, Rachel Adelman, Shelley Birdsong, and Holly Morse. Susanne Scholz delivered an insightful response. The following papers capture the lively conversation among scholars who celebrate new avenues in feminist biblical scholarship.

1. Carol J. Dempsey, OP

The number of edited Oxford Handbooks produced by scholars is expansive and varied, and Bible scholars are among the collection’s many editors and contributors. Most of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible volumes focus on either individual books of the Bible such as Jeremiah and Isaiah or a body of biblical literature in general such as the Prophets or the Writings. Typical to the field, essays explore social and cultic contexts, examine select biblical from a variety of historical, literary, and hermeneutical perspectives, comment on a book’s recurring theme such as violence, monotheism, exile, or trauma. Some volumes even trace a book’s reception history. As a biblical studies scholar, I contributed to several handbooks for which I owe a debt of gratitude to my colleagues for inviting me to participate in their work. Among the many Oxford Handbooks, however, no volume is as different, expansive, provocative, and visionary as

Susanne Scholz’s edited volume entitled *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*. This volume, considered unofficially as the fourth volume to Scholz’s earlier three anthologies titled collectively as *Feminist Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Retrospect*,¹ is a shimmering diamond among the many other gemstone handbooks. Scholz’s volume is a testament to the uncompromising lengthy career of a scholar of conscience. For this review, my comments focus on three points: the volume’s structure; the volume’s content with specific highlights; and the contributions the volume makes to the field and the classroom. Having read carefully every essay, I am filled with gratitude and appreciation for all the cutting-edge thought and efforts of the *Handbook’s* 37 contributors, and editorial work done by Dr. Scholz to bring this fascinating book into existence.

a) Creating Alternatives to Malestream Structures: A Conceptually Designed Handbook

Most of the Oxford biblical *Handbooks* are framed according to what Scholz calls “the conventional text-fetishized system, still dominating the academic field of the Bible, that categorizes the study of the Bible according to its books.”² A text-fetishized structure allows for traditional thought oftentimes focused mainly on historical, literary, and hermeneutical considerations that are text-centered and divorced from present day concerns, issues, and interests. As a feminist volume, Scholz’s book does not follow a text-fetishized, malestream structure. Instead, it utilizes a conceptual framework to organize the book’s content around the categories of globalization, neoliberalism, (digital) media studies, and intersectionality. Within this framework and these categories are interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, interreligious, and artistic readings of biblical texts that connect feminist, womanist, queer, and otherwise gender-

just biblical scholarship to racism, classism, homophobia, heteronormativity, phallogocentrism, geopolitics, sexual violence, and environmental degradation.

As the volume demonstrates, a conceptual framework moves away from what Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza classifies as the antiquarian-historical modernist epistemic paradigm.³ The conceptual framework allows for thinking strategies beyond a linear level, fosters meta-level content and analyses, and provides creative space for feminist biblical scholars to write on topics that can guide the field into a rich and exciting future where new possibilities evolve in the place of regurgitated, read with the grain, text analyses that contribute forcefully to the divorce of the Bible from the troubles of the world.⁴ In this *Handbook*, Dr. Scholz and contributors break through boundaries that have long colonized readers’ intellects, stifled their imaginations, and quelled their ability to see “the bigger picture.”

b) Come to the Feast Prepared for You: Dining on the Handbook’s Content

The contents of Scholz’s *Handbook* offers readers a savory intellectual feast, with choice thought from around the world. As an American Roman Catholic Bible scholar and member of a women’s religious congregation, who is daily shedding my own layers of colonization from graduate biblical studies at St. Louis University, Yale University, and especially the Catholic University of America, I would not have enjoyed this feast in 2016. This volume would have left me asking, “What have these essays to do with the Bible? How are they illuminating the *meaning* of the biblical text?” Then in 2017, I began traversing the land of biblical studies, journeying from the world behind the text and of the text to the world in front of the text. In my view, this is the journey that all biblical scholars need to make for the present and future life of

the field, the intellectual growth of students being taught Bible, and the development of a global biblical curriculum engaged in the twenty-first century. Like so many of my colleagues in biblical studies, I was enjoying the world of rhetorical and literary criticism, historical inquiry, and theological meanderings as they applied to the Bible, always reading with the grain, supporting hegemonic thinking, rarely doing metacommentating, and staying within the lines of malestream biblical criticism, but not always as evidenced from my one book on the *Prophets from a Liberation Perspective*. Sadly, I often contributed to the Bible being divorced from the concerns of the world as much as I contributed also to a personalized, privatized, and sentimentalized reading and interpretation of various biblical texts. I was a good Catholic biblical scholar doing my work in the context of the Catholic biblical tradition with an eye to “nourishing” the faith. Then I read Scholz’s three retrospective volumes in 2017 followed by *The Bible as Political Artifact* (that I now read and discuss with my undergraduate students every semester since 2018) These works turned my life, my scholarship, and my teaching upside down and inside out. Today I am able to critique the contents of this *Handbook* from a place of sheer delight, wide-eyed wonder, and deep appreciation for work that connects the Bible to the important conversations and thinking going on in our world today. Now more than ever Bible scholars, especially feminist Bible scholars, ought to be attuned to the pressing issues of our day and the rapidly occurring cultural shifts that are setting in motion a myriad of injustices choking the life out of all creation. Bible scholars and the work we do have a role to play in addressing today’s world situations. The contents of *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* provides a myriad of examples of how our work as twenty-first century Bible scholars is to proceed and lays a rich foundation for the development of new and exciting work

in the field. In this short review, I will comment on one of the book’s four topics, neoliberalism as it pertains to higher education, and then I will offer a comment on the book’s content as a whole.

One timely topic that the book’s essays engage critically is neoliberalism. Among the contributors writing on this topic are Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Hanna Stenström, and John W. Fadden. I highlight this topic and these contributors’ essays because in our post-pandemic era, seismic shifts continue to occur in higher education where many of us in biblical studies are employed. These seismic shifts are partly due to the pandemic but mostly due to market-drivenness, the related reduction of education to utilitarianism, and the corporatization of education, all of which are compounded by the move toward global authoritarianism. Education has become the means by which students can either become future oligarchs and bio-techno-pharma feudal lords or become compliant, economically disenfranchised serfs of oligarchs and bio-techno-pharma feudal lords. In the *Handbook’s* opening chapter, “Biblical Interpretation and Kyriarchal Globalization,”⁵ by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, she unpacks the thought of Henry Giroux and states:

...the hostile takeover of education by corporate market forces with its vicious and predatory excesses is in the process of undermining democratic processes and of radically reshaping the mission and practices of higher education. It reduces human values and experiences to data that can be measured and monetized in the capitalist marketplace. Neoliberalism’s multipronged assault produces cultural illiteracy, denies the resources for democratic collaboration, reduces human values and learning to that which can be measured, and undermines higher education’s ability to foster values like caring for each other. The values and mindsets of neoliberalism’s agenda are practiced every semester with a ‘shopping’ period during which professors have to advertise their wares to attract student consumers who at the end of the semester evaluate the products purchased.⁶

We who teach in higher education and especially in undergraduate teaching institutions, is not the thought of Schüssler Fiorenza our deepening reality? On this same topic, Hanna Stenström

makes the point that “the neoliberal university implements modes of governance and policy packages that create precarious working conditions for all scholars, except for those most assimilated to the demands of the neoliberal university.”⁷ She rightly states that feminist scholars live in this conflict and their research is underappreciated in neoliberal universities.

A common point within the thought of Schüssler Fiorenza and Stenström is the role that feminist biblical scholarship has in making a significant contribution to the burgeoning neoliberalism within higher education. For Schüssler Fiorenza “the task of feminist biblical interpretation is to recover the Bible as a political artifact not only for indicting neoliberal structures of dehumanization, but also for recovering a democratic-religious language of hope, dignity, and love.”⁸ For Stenström “feminist biblical scholarship plays an important role in resisting neoliberal claims that there is no alternative to neoliberal modes of seeing the world.”⁹ She asserts further that “alternative ways of thinking and living are possible through collective feminist work.”¹⁰ Thus, both Schüssler Fiorenza and Stenström issue a clarion call and challenge not only to feminist biblical scholars but to all scholars in this post-pandemic era where neoliberalism and its tentacles of corporatization, utilitarianism, compliance, and authoritarianism continue the radical reshaping of educational institutions to the detriment of human intelligence, imagination, and core ethical values.

Finally, John W. Fadden’s essay on “Justifying Feminist Biblical Studies in a Neoliberal Age”¹¹ expands Scholz’s views presented in *Artifact*.¹² Fadden is spot on when he advocates teaching students “to approach the Bible and its interpreters with multiple analytical lenses such as gender, race, class, sexuality, or disability”¹³ because it helps students “to better understand an important cultural and religious text. By learning the Bible’s reception history and its varied uses

and abuses in various reading communities, students will develop informed notions of the Bible as a cultural and religious text.”¹⁴ Since 2018, and as an educator for the past 43 years, 33 of which are in higher education, I approach the Bible in my classroom in all the different ways that Fadden suggests. I also include global contexts and metacommentating. Time and again, my students tell me how much they enjoy their Bible classes because the content is connected to the contemporary world, they are challenged to think broadly and deeply, they do not feel indoctrinated, and they are able to see how the study of the Bible intersects with many other topics and disciplines.

In sum, these essays on just one particular topic showcase the importance of this *Handbook* for feminist biblical scholarship and for the field as a whole. Scholars are writing about neoliberalism at the time they are being plunged ever more deeply into its continuous unfolding reality. Now, if Bible scholars insist on living in the nineteenth century world of only being interested in the *hiphil* participle, the search for authorial intention, and the quest for origins, then the field of biblical studies and the life of the mind will surely die, if that is not already happening in our midst. This Oxford *Handbook* is a wake-up call to the majority of the field’s scholars and teachers. The vision undergirding the volume can no longer go unnoticed nor the book’s contents go unread or unheeded. I now offer a comment on the book’s contents as a whole.

In his latest papal document titled *Ad Theologiam Promovendam*, or “To Promote Theology,” released November 1, 2023, Roman Catholic Church leader Pope Francis calls for a “‘paradigm shift’ in Catholic theology that takes widespread engagement with contemporary science, culture, and people’s lived experience as an essential starting point.”¹⁵ This new

paradigm will be “transdisciplinary,” will function as a “web of relationships, first of all with other disciplines and other knowledge,” with theologians making use of “new categories developed by other knowledge.”¹⁶ Remarkably, *Ad Theologiam Promovendam* has already resulted in new statutes being formulated for the Pontifical Academy of Theology. These statutes shift the institute’s two-hundred-year-old focus from “promoting the dialogue between reason and faith” to promoting “transdisciplinary dialogue with philosophies, sciences, arts, and all other knowledge.”¹⁷ What just happened in Roman Catholic Theology needs to happen throughout the field of biblical studies. Grounded in cultural studies and meta-level discussions on the cultural study of the Bible, and a feminist approach to interpretation, Scholz’s Oxford *Handbook*, especially Parts III and IV, is one of several efforts that pave the way for the needed paradigm shift in biblical studies. Part III of the *Handbook*, “The Impact of (Digital) Media Cultures on Feminist Biblical Exegesis,” engages feminist biblical exegesis and the arts: music, film, gaming, and works of literature. It explores the Bible’s impact on popular cultures. Part IV, “The Emergence of Intersectional Feminist Readings,” investigates the concept of intersectionality as it relates to various structures of domination related to gender and sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, geopolitics, nationality, age, religion, or ableness. This part of the *Handbook* represents intersectionality at its best, and in Scholz’s words, the essays in this section “illustrate the wide spectrum of feminist intersectional analysis of Hebrew Bible studies, ranging from historical to queer, transgender, egalitarian-evangelical, animal, ecological, interfaith, and cross-religious studies of biblical texts, characters, and topics.”¹⁸ To Pope Francis, and in light of his new document *Ad Theologiam Promovendam*, this Oxford *Handbook* would be a dream come true. Scholz’s vision realized through the volume’s contributed essays to this *Handbook*

paves the way for new and exciting work in biblical studies if the discipline is to have a transformative impact on readers and the world today. Reviewing the *Handbook* from my perspective as a Catholic biblical scholar, my hope is that the vision and contents of this volume will impact Catholic biblical studies and the work of its scholars and teachers. This Oxford *Handbook*, along with Scholz’s other works, have already helped to uproot and move this Catholic biblical scholar along new paths that surprisingly now seem to align with the vision of a pope! This point brings me to my final point: why is this *Handbook* so important to the field of biblical studies? The reasons are several.

c) Shifting Paradigms, Cutting New Pathways: The Contributions of the *Handbook*

The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible makes many important contributions to the field of biblical studies. In this section, I focus on five of them. First, the *Handbook* offers a model filled with vision that can move biblical studies and its scholars and teachers out of the antiquarian-historical, modernist epistemic paradigm to the emancipatory, democratizing paradigm which can set in motion the transformation of the field and hasten the transformation of world. Second, the discussion on globalization and its impact on feminist biblical studies opens the horizons of readers’ minds beyond seeing the Bible as a playbook on morality or a sacred text meant to nourish one’s faith. The book belongs to the people of the globe, and its stories and poems ought to be read and interpreted in global contexts. Third, the discussion on neoliberalism awakens readers to what is going on behind the scenes in educational systems and other structures that are becoming more and more oppressive, colonizing, and authoritarian instead of democratic and liberating. Clearly feminist biblical

scholars and feminist biblical interpretation can have an impact on neoliberalism. Feminist biblical scholars are faced with new challenges that invite decisive responses. Fourth, the volume represents the experiences and interests of students today who are media savvy and socially networked globally. Greater the interest is in exploring biblical texts from the perspectives of gaming or music or film than trying to figure out authorial intention, what a text means in its reconstructed historical setting, and how a text should be translated from its “original” language. Lastly, by focusing on cultural studies and feminist approaches to the Hebrew Bible, the *Handbook* brings the Bible into the contemporary world with a focus on contemporary issues and interests. The challenges that the essays pose to biblical scholars and to the field in general are many. Will this *Handbook* be lifted off the margins to become mainstream and normative or will it be a resource for “preaching to the choir” as biblical studies dies a slow death for lack of oxygen?

d) A Concluding Comment...

Despite my favorable review on a remarkable volume, there are two areas of omission. The first is the omission of material art in the digital media section. Perhaps Lot and his daughters would provide substance for a substantial essay. Second, masculinity studies is absent in the intersectionality section. Perhaps Scholz’s newly published edited volume, *Doing Biblical Masculinity Studies as Feminist Biblical Studies* (Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2024) will be the unofficial fifth volume in this collection of edited works. Finally, thank you, Susanne, for your scholarly perseverance, incomparable focus, and collegial hospitality. Your generous efforts have brought together, time and again, global scholars from all walks of life to produce volume

after volume of transformative work that captures a wondrous vision elusive to many in our field but which is shared by your many contributors to whom I owe a profound debt of gratitude as well. Together with them, you have made available to countless readers an anthology of essays that embody what the vision of what biblical studies can be, should be, and needs to be. And this reviewer has had a hard time offering a balanced, less than positive critique of this *Handbook* because I love its content, I see and understand its vision, and I am moved to silence, in awe of this shimmering diamond that would now probably receive even papal approval, letting me off the hook of being perceived at best, a lost soul and at worst, a heretic.

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working on an edited volume *Empathy and Hope: The New Diaspora Responds to Climate Crisis* (Lexington Books) and a volume entitled *Beyond Christian Anthropocentrism: What It Means to Be catholic in the New Diaspora* (Lexington Books). She can be contacted at:
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2. Rachel Adelman

The editor of this variegated collection of essays, Susanne Scholz, identifies this *Handbook* as the unofficial fourth volume to the three-volume collection, *Feminist Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Retrospect* (Sheffield 2017). Where the scope of that prior anthology spanned the past five decades of feminist criticism, this one ventures into new territory, applying innovative methods to new contexts in readings of the Hebrew Bible. It is free of what Scholz has called “textual fetishism,”¹⁹ which (like a sexual fetish) fixates on a part, displacing the whole embodied being. While the white male-dominated field has been characterized by a claim to provide a value-free, “objective” reading, oblivious to questions as to *why* and *how* they read, Scholz has invited authors to be explicit about their lens, to be self-conscious about the use of theory, and to engage in a geo-politically situated reading of the biblical text that challenges “structures of domination, such as colonialism, racism, ethnonationalism, ageism, anti-ecology, or able-bodied rhetoric” (p. xxxviii).

In this review, I focus on the ten essays in Part I: “The Impact of Globalization on Feminist Biblical Studies.” I analyze them in order of theme or shared content, rather than order of appearance. An intersectional hermeneutics undergirds all these readings. Intersectionality – a term first coined in 1989 by Crenshaw who was concerned with the unique values. Tracing the

origins of queer theory (from Foucault and Butler to Sedgwick), Punt surveys some of the queer readings in Ken Stone’s collection, “Queer Commentary and the Hebrew Bible”, such as Timothy Koch’s “cruising methodology” in reading the figures of Elijah, Elisha, Ehud, and Jehu. I am not sure why this essay was placed in the first section on “Globalization” rather than in section IV, “The Emergence of Intersectional Feminist Readings,” which includes three essays on queer readings of the Bible. Perhaps it sets the stage for chapter 6, “Queering Sacred Sexual Scripts for Transforming African Societies” by Sarojini Nadar. She argues that the combined heteronormative Christian readings and African myth that “homosexuality is un-African,” serve to reinforce homo/transphobic beliefs. Surveying the scholarship on Genesis 19 (where Lot offers his daughter to the men of Sodom) and Judges 19–20 (the story of the concubine of Gibeah, or “Bathshever” as Exum names her), the author shows not only how heteronormative readings encourage violence against queer bodies, but also how some queer affirmative readings support violence against women. In the end, she offers a “re-scripting” of the story with the remembered Bathshever in the form of an imaginary interview from a contemporary South African perspective. Full of innovative insights, this essay was both scholarly and transparent about its geo-political lens; it also offered a ‘redemptive’ sequel, giving voice to the voiceless Bathshever in a modern context.

The second chapter by Carole Fontaine, “The Bible and Human Rights from a Feminist Perspective,” reviews the origins and history of human rights as defined on a global scale in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). She argues that one of the reasons many countries of “Religions of the Book” have not adopted a human rights agenda is because the concept has not been grounded in Scripture. So she turns to Genesis 1:26–27 as a

new foundation for human rights language: every human (male and female) is created in the image of God (*imago Dei*). The next two essays cover biblical reception history through a critical look at biases in translation: “Catholic Androcentric Bible Translations as Global Missionary Tools?” (chapter 3) by Carol J. Dempsey, and “The Challenge of Feminist Bible Translations in African Contexts” (chapter 4) by Dora R. Mbuwayesango. Dempsey explores the androcentric biases in translations, such as *‘alma* as “virgin” instead of “young woman” (Isa. 7:14; cf. Matt. 1:23), and “Son of man” instead of “human being” (Dan. 7:13; cf. Matt. 20:18). These reinforce a Catholic agenda both of “supersessionism” (or “replacement theology” wherein Christianity comes to supplant Judaism, drawing upon a typological rather than contextual reading strategies) and of androcentric tropes in reading the Hebrew Bible. While chapter 3 focuses the translation of the “Old Testament” into English for the Catholic New American Bible, chapter 4 engages with the translation of Genesis 1–3 into Shona, the native language of the Zimbabwe people. This African translation replaces the name “Elohim,” which was associated with the colonialist missionary translations, by the name of the Shona god, Mwari. In so doing, the genderless spirit god, Mwari, was transformed into a divine being that reinforces heteronormative values. Mbuwayesango claims that it is not enough to adopt African indigenous names for the deity, but “the gods of Africa need to be decolonized through the same way they were colonized, in Bible translation, but this time on the basis of feminist postcolonial translation principles” (p. 64).

Chapters 7, 9, and 10 all engage with close readings of text from the author’s particular geo-political context. Yani Yoo’s essay, “The Demand to Listen to Korean ‘Comfort Women’ and Two Biblical Women,” recounts the story of 200,000 Korean girls who were forced into brutal sexual slavery to the Japanese during World War II. Only two hundred of these “comfort

women” survived, and their stories only began to emerge in 1991, and they have still not been properly heard. Yoo likens the suppression of their stories to the hearing in King Solomon’s court (1 Kgs. 3:16–28) – known as “Solomon’s Wisdom in Judgment” (NRSV). Through the lens of feminist hermeneutics and the stories of women subjugated in sex slavery, Yoo calls for us to listen to the story of these anonymous women differently. Solomon uses the threat of violence –invoking a sword that would cut the infant in half – in order to cast his judgment, just as modern dictators operate with threats of violence in war. He never asks the women any questions; they speak, rather, to one another, not to him. She surveys prior scholarship and decrees the scholars oblivious to women’s experience of living under an autocratic regime. Through the women’s anonymity, pronoun ambiguity, and reading irony into their speech acts, Yoo shows how the king failed to identify the biological mother of the living child and gave the infant to the wrong mother. She concludes: “Women and innocent victims in many corners of the world endure many forms of oppression and violence. Who will use a true ‘listening heart’ and give their ears to women and the oppressed? Who will lift the sword from them and pull them out of the fire?” (p. 111). Yoo’s essay is deeply moving, offering an innovative reading of the biblical text in the light of modern Korean women’s experience of sexual slavery and the silencing of their testimony.

Funlola Olojede, in “Toward and African Feminist Ethics and the Book of Proverbs,” similarly locates herself in a geopolitical context. She draws on feminist hermeneutics and traditional African communitarian notions of care and empathy in her reading of the female figures in Proverbs 1–9. “Woman Wisdom” (chapters 1, 8, and 9) is not a personification of *chokhmah* but, rather, a female preacher who upholds the virtues of moral integrity, honesty,

prudence, and uprightness, promoting responsible membership in the community. The Strange or Foreign Woman who, like “Woman Wisdom,” is upper class, speaks to naïve young men, and offers them hospitality, on the other hand, *is* personified as a representative of the seductions of Greek philosophy, foreign to the people of Yehud. Olojede maps these contrasting female figures onto the African post-colonial context and suggests that the basis for Western philosophy – Descartes’ *cogito* – is like the “Strange Woman,” at odds with African communitarian values. She concludes with a warning that “an African feminist ethics is a strange bedfellow with Western feminist ethics” (p. 138), and adjures African feminism concerned with ethics to embrace communitarian values that address the particularities of African women’s experience.

The final chapter in this section, Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan’s “Lament as Womanist Healing in Times of Global Violence,” explores the genre of lament as a response to patriarchal misogynist violence, and then applies her feminist lens to selections from Psalms and Lamentations, and the contemporary video production of “Hold Up” by Beyoncé. The author demonstrates how lament as a ritual can move us “toward a process of healing that shows our complex pain is also God’s pain, our sorrows, part of God’s sorrows” (p. 154).

All these essays drew me far out of my comfort zone (in a good way) and left me wanting more. They demonstrated what Schulz set out to do in the volume—to read the Hebrew biblical text through the lens of particular women within their own geopolitical context, challenging heteronormative, androcentric readings.

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3. Shelley Birdsong

The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible, edited by Susanne Scholz, offers a critical yet galvanizing glimpse into the future of feminist biblical scholarship.²⁰ The 643-page anthology, which features a diverse range of voices and stimulating topics, aims to inspire new “exegetical horizons” and relevant “hermeneutical ideas” in feminist biblical studies, particularly in response to globalization, neoliberalism, analog and digital media cultures, and intersectionality.²¹ Scholz and her peers deliver. The volume is a powerful exhortation to feminist biblical scholars to integrate intersectional paradigms into their work, engage one another in dialogic conversations, unite against the obstructions of the academy and the Christian Right, and continue the good trouble of timely liberative biblical analysis.

In this review, I respond to Part II: “The Impact of Neoliberalism on Feminist Biblical Interpretation, which addresses neoliberalism’s impact on feminist biblical interpretation.

Contributors include Esther Fuchs, John Fadden, Hanna Stenström, Teresa Hornsby, Judith McKinlay, and Susanne Scholz. Every essay is outstanding in its own right, and I lament my inability to give each individual thinker the time deserved. Nonetheless, I can reiterate their shared concerns regarding neoliberalism and their key proposals for how feminist biblical scholars can resist its influence.

a) Concerns Regarding Neoliberalism

Before addressing those concerns and proposals, it is important to briefly outline neoliberalism, which encompasses a school of thought, an economic ideology, a set of policies, and a mode of governmentality. Its primary motivation is profit. In order to ensure and maximize profit, neoliberals promote autonomy, consumerism, capitalism, competition, free global markets, deregulation, and privatization. Over the last forty years, proponents of neoliberalism have successfully imposed market rationality from the corporate world upon all other aspects of human society, including health care, education, incarceration, and so on. Consequently, what were once (mostly public) services meant to enhance the wellbeing of society have become businesses preoccupied with efficiency and the bottom line.²² Feminists have largely denounced neoliberalism as a plague on all our houses, widening the wealth gap and fostering inequity, commodification, and self-interest.

As John W. Fadden recognizes in his chapter, “Justifying (Feminist) Biblical Studies in a Neoliberal Age,” many humanities disciplines at liberal arts institutions have been forced to justify their own existence due to the neoliberalization of higher education.²³ While it is *possible* to use neoliberal principles to defend biblical studies courses, Fadden relays the implicit

absurdity of doing so. The values and aims of the humanities are not the values and aims of neoliberalism. Biblical studies is designed to cultivate empathetic and socially responsible critical thinkers not to increase a students’ marketability or starting salary in a capitalist economy.

Hanna Stenström, whose essay focuses on European feminist biblical scholarship, has similar qualms. She claims the Bologna Declaration, developed in the 1990s by a coalition of education ministers, as another neoliberal process of “quality assurance,” requiring conformity (for the sake of the customer), quantification of research, and ultimately competition.²⁴ For Stenström, the “neoliberal university” is one more system of oppression, which “challenges the very identity of feminist scholarship and the very existence of feminist scholars.”²⁵ It rejects solidarity, collegiality, and collective research and isolates individual scholars all the while pressuring them to assimilate into the neoliberal paradigm.²⁶

Esther Fuchs exposes how many biblical scholars have submitted to neoliberalism. In “Neoliberal Feminist Scholarship in Biblical Studies,” Fuchs exposes the theoretical flaws of well-known feminist biblical scholars and criticizes the neoliberal presentation of their work as “innovative” and “transformative” even though they “implicitly valorize” their own disciplinary methods and reinforce “traditional norms.”²⁷ Moreover, they have neglected one another’s work and rarely interrogate the conceptualization of gender or the assignment of different values to gender difference.

Along similar lines, in “Neoliberalism and Queer Theory in Biblical Readings,” Teresa J. Hornsby explicates how the Bible and its interpreters have prepared submissive human bodies for the demands of neoliberal capitalism with theologies of suffering and redemption.²⁸ The

theological cue that one must yield to the dominant force to be of value or to earn the reward accommodates neoliberal exploitation, which encourages individuals to make themselves small, even submit to dehumanization, to earn financial security. According to Hornsby, it is the illusion of security, not false binaries, that ultimately holds society captive today. To get that security, individuals eagerly submit their “queer bodies, which are in fact, all bodies,” to masculinized neoliberal capitalist oppressors.²⁹

Fadden, Stenström, Fuchs, and Hornsby all convincingly demonstrate how higher education in general and feminist biblical studies in particular have been challenged by or complicit with neoliberalism. Its ubiquity makes it difficult, if not impossible to escape. If a scholar is working in a university setting, then they are part of the academic industrial complex, bending to their customers’ demands,³⁰ competing for enrollment of bodies, and branding, marketing, and advertising themselves to increase consumption. So, what is a feminist biblical scholar to do in such an environment?

b) Proposals for Resistance

According to the writers under discussion, feminist biblical scholars can subvert neoliberalism by widening their scope to cultural and intersectional analyses, which engage contemporary issues and critique unjust systems. Stenström identifies critics who have already begun to blaze the trail of resistance and serve as models for other feminist biblical scholars. These including Esther Fuchs, Susanne Scholz, Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and Caroline Vander Stichele.³¹ Fuchs, herself, recommends that feminist biblical scholars follow the lead of the broader field of women’s studies and become an autonomous field rather than a sub-field

relegated to the margins of biblical studies. In order to do so, feminist biblical scholars must codify a common discourse, replace method with feminist theory, and unite around a shared agenda.³² Doing so would increase the likelihood of collectively exposing patriarchy, its intersections with other means of oppression, and generating “revolutionary social visions.”³³

Fadden like Judith E. McKinlay and Susanne Scholz propose increased commitment to intersectionality. The latter two advocate for specific types of intersectional lenses that should be employed to address wicked problems, like climate change, border conflict, and migration, all of which are precipitated by neoliberalism. McKinlay advocates for the use of postcolonial feminist criticism, since its practitioners are generally committed to “ethical relations, justice, and equity.”³⁴ Additionally, they treat the Bible as cultural artifact,³⁵ which creates a space where critics can not only name and deconstruct colonialist notions in the texts and their interpretations but also read against patriarchal ideologies, which often (if not always) overlap with colonial ones. The instructive posture of postcolonial feminists is one of resistance, exemplifying what it means to lift up the marginalized, pursue justice, problematize entrenched thinking, and decolonize the text and reader’s mind.

Scholz’s proposition resonates with McKinlay’s. She discusses the development of a feminist biblical hermeneutics of migration, arguing that feminist biblical scholars cannot ignore the “exegetical problem” of massive social dislocation.³⁶ In order to take a more comprehensive approach to reading the Bible as migration literature, Scholz proposes a sociological framework for feminist exegesis. She, like all the other contributors, believes it is necessary for feminist biblical scholars to recognize, analyze, and evaluate how biblical interpretations transmit ideological claims that affect “geopolitical, cultural, and religious discourses and practices,”

including migration. It is not enough to do textual analysis; one must engage in cultural analysis and expose how meaning-making – especially in relationship to the Bible – is contextual, socially located, and not value-neutral.³⁷ The feminist’s reason for being is to challenge the status quo, resist patriarchy, expose unjust systems, and refuse to be “silent about or complicit with the various expressions” of neoliberalism or authoritarianism, including the “pervasive acceptance of migratory injustice.”³⁸

Both McKinlay and Scholz remind feminist biblical scholars that the task at hand is personal and political. Though resisting neoliberalism can feel like an impossible task, every single feminist must persist³⁹ on the “stony but indispensable path” that is laid out in Part II of *The Handbook* and summarized here.⁴⁰ Feminist biblical scholars must:

- Collectively craft a focalizing political agenda and a codified common discourse
- Organize, and consult with feminist and gender critics in other disciplines, in order to create truly collective scholarship, researched and written together⁴¹
- Resist patriarchal, androcentric, colonial, and heteronormative structures of domination
- Counter binaries and read against naturalized or essentialized views of gender and sexuality
- Promote intersectional analysis
- Recover and implement alternative readings
- Bring minoritized and marginalized voices to the table (including the voices of Nature and our more-than-human siblings)
- Connect with various religious and intellectual traditions
- Nurture empathetic thought and practice

- Encourage justice, equity, and peace (in collaboration with other global powers)
- (Advocate for sustainable [e.g., circular, steady state] economies and sustainable practices)

I have added (in parentheses) my own additions to the path. They could arguably fall under other bulleted actions, particularly, “Resist patriarchal, androcentric, colonial, and heteronormative structures of domination.” Nonetheless, I want to draw special attention to ecological concerns. As we spin dreams of a better, queerer tomorrow, we need to heed the cries of the earth too.⁴² “Queer bodies” are not the only bodies that are feminized, colonized, oppressed, and exploited in the neoliberal context.⁴³ “Mother” Nature’s “body” is too. Similarly, *homo sapiens* are not the only migrants displaced by the negative impacts of neoliberalism. Millions of other animal species are too.⁴⁴ We, humans, must remember that we are not the only ones suffering in the *Anthropocene*.

So that we do not forget, I suggest that feminist biblical scholars expand their frame of reference even further to a sustainable, global framework. We ought not mistake anthropocentrism as the antidote for androcentrism. We cannot save the humanities, without saving the earth’s ecosystems. We cannot achieve justice for the marginalized communities without achieving justice for all biological communities. We cannot address migration without addressing the land and the human-made borders that hinder survival. If feminist biblical scholars genuinely want an alternative world, with more equitable social and economic structures, then we must situate our work within the bigger picture of planetary wellbeing, which requires balance within and between the social (people), economic (prosperity), and ecological (planet) spheres.

A sustainable framework also complements intersectional feminism since both recognize the complexities of identity and hope to intervene in the interlocking systems of oppression that exacerbate injustice. As sustainable development becomes a critical imperative internationally, feminist biblical scholars have an opportunity to collaborate with global powers, such as the United Nations, on these shared objectives. According to the United Nation’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, they are working to eradicate poverty, combat inequalities, build peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, protect human rights, promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and ensure the protection of the planet and its resources.⁴⁵ Feminist biblical scholars can and should participate in these larger global campaigns and offer our unique expertise to the collective effort.

c) Concluding Remarks

The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible will have a lengthy shelf life. The whole volume is impressive, and Part II skillfully balances critique and resistance with prophetic imagination and hope. *The Handbook* is a monumental and thought-provoking work that I will return to again and again.

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4. Holly Morse

For my contribution to this panel I had the pleasure of reviewing the third part of the ‘fourfold framework’ of Prof. Scholz’s edited volume, which explores the “The Impact of (Digital) Media Cultures on Feminist Biblical Exegesis.” Chapters in this part of the book provide a rich review of potential intersections between feminist biblical exegesis and a range of media (many of which have been typically underrepresented within the broader field of biblical reception), including video games, digital journalism, music, novels, and film. In an effort to try to draw together a range of reflections on these diverse chapters with varied purposes, positions, aims and achievements, I have restricted my comments to three themes: first, cultural studies and the feminist biblical scholar; second, Bible in culture and with culture, and third, some reflections for the future.

a) Cultural Studies and the Feminist Biblical Scholar

In the opening chapter to the volume “Reading the Hebrew Bible with Feminist Eyes,” Prof. Scholz outlines her thinking behind the inclusion of a section on “(digital) media cultures” in a collection dedicated to explorations of feminist approaches to the Hebrew Bible. This represents an important editorial move, I would say, given the still marginal place that reception studies hold within the field of biblical studies at large (though perhaps less so within feminist biblical studies...). By bringing writing on the Bible and culture into the book, Scholz follows through on the feminist decision to find ways “[to read] the Bible without merely rehashing text-fetishized ways of interpretation”⁴⁶ and to make space for interdisciplinary studies of the Bible

and culture that sit equally side by side a plethora of other significant feminist interpretative methods represented across the volume.

Interestingly, Scholz situates this inclusion of “media cultures” – both digital and analogue – at the intersection between feminist and cultural studies, arguing that feminist and non-feminist biblical studies that have begun to engage with media and culture have followed in the footsteps of the likes of Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall – key members of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham. This trajectory of the theoretical underpinning of biblical reception studies and its relationship to feminist biblical exegesis that Scholz outlines is not, I would say, representative of the dominant conceptual framing of reception criticism as a biblical studies enterprise. Much more popular, from my experience, are methodological justifications for the study of the Bible and its reception that take as their inspiration from the work of Hans Georg Gadamer, Robert Jauss, and Wolfgang Iser.

But in fact, Scholz’s argument here is an important reminder of the first steps taken by colleagues such as Cheryl Exum and Stephen D Moore in the 1990s to incorporate cultural studies into our field. Taking a particularly *feminist* approach to wanting to challenge the text-fetishization of our field by attending to issues of interpretation and impact has the potential to be a useful catalyst in reacquainting ourselves with cultural studies once more. After all, cultural studies’ aim of beginning to break down the barriers set up by classist notions of “high” and “low” cultures, barriers which have been important mechanisms for maintaining cultural control within patriarchal, heterosexist, racist, colonial systems, offers considerable potential for feminist approaches to biblical interpretation. Cultural studies opens the way for biblical scholarship to investigate the impact of the Bible outside of the academy, the gallery, the theatre, and the

concert hall. Instead, it pushes biblical scholars to take seriously the impact the Bible has had and continues to have in peoples’ daily lives – and to consider how this has shaped performances and perceptions of gender and sexuality as they intersect with race, ethnicity, religion, disability, class and myriad other aspects of experience. Although only covered in passing in the first chapter of the book, Scholz’s observations about the value cultural studies has for feminist reception criticism certainly opens up a range of interesting links to intersectional hermeneutics and praxis that can lead the feminist biblical exegete to be alert to both *interpretations* and *impacts* of the Bible.

All of this serves as a call for feminist scholars to take seriously and to seek out the biblical culture produced by those who have been historically excluded from the academy - women, queer folks, people of color, working class people and people living in poverty, disabled folk, and those living under colonial rule. It also challenges us to take seriously the impact of the Bible in the culture of *now*. In the words of Beatrice J. W. Lawrence, whose excellent essay concludes this section of the book:

Scholars must review digital media to become able of making knowledgeable connections to the Bible. Teachers must also become comfortable with the claim that the study of popular culture is valid research. Watching television shows and movies, and studying music, art, and advertisement are all necessary steps to become experts on teaching the Bible. The lacunae of this kind of research creates additional challenges for teachers of reading popular media by reading biblical stories. Students are fully immersed in the social and online media landscapes, and so contemporary researchers ought to explore the cultural assumptions embedded in today’s media.⁴⁷

Lawrence makes this point with urgency in the context of teaching on the Bible, rape, and rape culture.

In terms of how this approach is represented in the volume, the reader is treated to articles that cover a mix of “high” and “low” digital and analogue cultural artifacts that echo,

alter, and reimagine the biblical text. While readers of the volume are encouraged by, for example, Charles M. Rix, to consider how game theory might help us to encounter the complex gender dynamics in Joshua 2, they can also look to Helen Leneman’s survey of the power of (interestingly all male but one⁴⁸) librettists and composers, as well as the performers of opera, oratorio, and song, to retell the stories of biblical women in Western classical music, or to Sara M. Koenig’s exploration of Bathsheba’s starring role in twentieth and twenty-first century romance novels. Each chapter in this section of the volume encourages readers to consider the ubiquity of biblical stories in modern and contemporary cultures, particularly within the West, and to attend to the ways in which the Bible continues to be implicated in not only the perpetuation of patriarchy but also in movements to resist and dismantle it.

In future studies that build out from work like this collection, more attention must be paid to whose readings and retellings are being platformed. While this volume, as a whole, makes considerable space for engaging with both global and intersectional issues within feminist biblical criticism, and it rightly champions work on a wider range of *types* of reception à la cultural studies, including digital material, the media under consideration in this section of the book tended to be produced in the West by white, and often, though not exclusively, male producers. Notable and important exceptions include the analysis by Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch’s chapter on film receptions on Dinah, which included an analysis of the Malian film *Le Genèse*, while engagement with the work of women culture producers is found in chapters by Vanessa L. Lovelace and Arthur W. Walker-Jones, and alongside male authors in Koenig’s chapter.

b) Bible in Culture, Bible with Culture.

There seem to be two key dynamics of reading with media in this section of the volume – looking at the Bible *in* culture, and reading the Bible *with* culture. From my review I would say that the former was the most frequently represented method amongst the chapters, with a number of essays focused mainly on addressing what we might call cultural afterlives of primarily female biblical characters. Whether we encounter glimmers of biblical women and men in contemporary digital media, as we do in Linda S. Schearing’s chapter that examines the fleeting and slightly obscure appearances of Adam and Eve in the video game *Bioshock*, or are introduced to the catalogue of consistent erasures and displacements of Noah’s female family members in the wide range of twentieth and twenty-first century Noahic cinema surveyed by Anton Karl Kozlovic, many of the essays in this part of the anthology concern themselves primarily with analyzing and critiquing re-tellings of biblical characters and stories, considering what these re-tellings might tell us about the people and cultures responsible for producing them, and in some cases considering the impact this might have on the consumers of these cultural artefacts and their perceptions of the Bible.

I was particularly impacted by the powerful insights into specific examples of how biblical woman are weaponized by sexist, antisemitic and racist agendas – and here I would point especially to Adele Reinhartz’s compelling illumination of three troublingly supercessionist Hollywood reframings of Bathsheba, the Queen of Sheba, and Ruth, in which she sheds light on the way each Hebrew Bible woman’s story is cinematically molded into the Christian Pericope Adulterae (John 8:1–11) by various Hollywood directors. Reinhartz demonstrates how this interpretative move ensures that each biblical story is presented in such a way that promotes

supercessionist Christian patriarchal ideals “in an era when overt anti-Semitism was frowned upon”⁴⁹ by creating storylines that present women as weak and in need of saving by male heroes, David, Solomon and Boaz, all of whom exhibit “virtues... valued by Christianity whereas the traits of their enemies conform to long-standing anti-Jewish stereotypes.”⁵⁰

Equally powerful and nuanced were the observations provided by Vanessa L. Lovelace in her fascinating analysis of the dynamics of the racialization of Hagar in novels written by white women writers in antebellum American South. As Lovelace writes, while “for U.S.-American blacks, the recognition that the Egyptian Hagar is ‘black’ lifted their status as descendants of enslaved Africans. For nineteenth-century white feminist novelists living in the U.S.-American south, Hagar represents a different form of enslavement and freedom.”⁵¹ In each of the novels surveyed in this chapter, Lovelace demonstrates how the Hagar character is troublingly molded from racist stereotypes of Black women as “wild, dark, and rebellious,” and sent on a journey ultimately to find purpose and virtue in an idealized domestic life. While on the surface these texts aimed to elicit “sympathy for the rejected and rebellious young heroine...” whilst also imagining ultimately “her freedom from societal gender expectations,”⁵² in fact, as Lovelace so compellingly demonstrates, they perpetuate a message of idealized submission that fails both black and white women in the nineteenth-century United States by telling them both that “they need to aspire to being revered for their piety, submission, and resourcefulness.”⁵³

In fact, many of the essays that examine the bible *in* culture alert us to the potential dangers of imaginative re-readings of biblical texts, and the ways in which they can be used to perpetuate and even deepen oppressive and abusive readings of the Bible. Linda S. Schearing shows us how, within the gendered dynamics of the gaming world, Eve’s archetypal image as

essential partner, but also ultimate sex object is reiterated tacitly within the videogame, BioShock. A game whose narrative, while giving its players some semblance of free choices, leads them to be “unconsciously reinforcing ancient stereotypes over and over again.”⁵⁴ Looking at Genesis 34 and its representation on screen, Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch finds Dinah’s filmic experiences in *La Genèse*, which reframes the story in the context of postcolonial Mali, remain, as they are in the biblical account of Genesis 34, displaced by the wars of men in the film. Even the miniseries the *Red Tent*, which ostensibly aims to retell Genesis as “a liberating story by transforming the biblical rape into a tragic romance,”⁵⁵ actually entails the “the erasure of violence perpetrated against women (Dinah and the Hivite women),”⁵⁶ which is certainly not a “liberating hermeneutical choice in a society that all too often denies the reality of sexual assault and its consequences.”⁵⁷ Similarly troubling dynamics of power are evident in Koenig’s work too - her review of Bathsheba’s multiple appearances in romance novels, across the eleven books she reviews, leads her to end the chapter by stating that “despite the creative, diverse, and imaginative gap filling about Bathsheba, all of the novels depict her in gender stereotypical ways”⁵⁸ – a depressing conclusion indeed.

This excavation of the myriad ways in which the Bible sustains patriarchal cultures long after its inception, is, of course essential work. These approaches which read out from the Bible and into popular culture urgently alert us to the ways biblical literature can be and has been weaponized in the hands of heterosexist patriarchal racist colonialist cultures, and call on us to be “resistant readers” of such cultures.

BUT! The collection also gestures towards other potentially generative methods that might be explored by feminist biblical critics wanting to collaborate with cultural studies. In

particular, as well as looking out from the text into its subsequent interpretations, we can also look back from culture into biblical literature as a means of contributing to the growing number of future-oriented retellings of the Bible – the kind of interpretations that we have seen emerge and continue to emerge in the work of feminist, womanist, and *mujerista* theologians. Working with media and culture can bring new ways of seeing and new ways of reading biblical texts within a feminist framework – we can change the narrative!

While this kind of method appears in the work of Charles M. Rix, which encourages us to apply game theory to reading Rahab, and to Arthur W. Walker Jones’ cyborg reading of Jezebel, most interesting to me was Helen Leneman’s focus on the emotional and affective possibilities provided by reading the Bible *with* music – this desire to bring *feeling* to the text feels urgent and promising. In this chapter, Leneman observes that encountering biblical stories through music allows for stories “so often read but rarely *felt*” to be “*felt*,” highlighting the *affective* potential of reading with media and culture.⁵⁹ For me, this is a distinctly feminist move, because it challenges the dominance of historically male-coded values such as rationality, detachment, objectivity, and consistency within academia and makes space for historically female-coded qualities such as emotion, connection, subjectivity and messiness to be brought into the work of biblical interpretation in a way that is not dismissed or devalued. This feels like something that need not be left to artists, musicians, writers of fiction, and designers of video games, but is actually an approach that feminist biblical exegetes can take too. They can take this approach not only by looking at emotive representations of biblical characters in culture but also in staging their own encounters between the Hebrew Bible and a much broader array of media and culture that goes beyond biblical afterlives, with the aim of making space for an affective response in

their readers. This is something that I, amongst others, have interest to explore in a range of contexts including the Visual Commentary on Scripture.⁶⁰ Here artworks are used as reading partners for biblical texts, usually with the aim of generating new, fresh, and in my case, feminist readings of biblical texts. For example, in my entry on Eve’s punishment, I reflect on the way that reading Eve’s experience of maternal trauma in Genesis 3 and 4 alongside Damien Hirst’s image of female tragedy in his *Mother and Child Divided* – two vitrines at a distance from one another containing the bisected bodies of cow and calf – amplifies the visibility of the first woman’s maternal suffering in a way that has not been particularly prominent in the history of interpretation of her narrative.⁶¹ This is an approach that has also been modelled in Rhiannon Graybill’s latest work *Texts after Terror : Rape, Sexual Violence, and the Hebrew Bible*, when she argues for a feminist approach to reading texts concerning violence against women “through literature,” following Gayatri Spivak’s claim that “texts crack open when they are made to talk to other texts.”⁶² Likewise, such reading biblical texts alongside cultural artifacts can help us crack down on androcentric, misogynistic, racist and homophobic reading cultures, by creating our own cultural vocabulary within which to encounter the Bible.

c) Reflections for the Future

Much has been done in this volume to champion the potential for feminist cultural criticism within biblical studies, and it has paved the way for further studies that can also incorporate things like social media. As a handbook that might be encountered by someone just starting out their career in feminist biblical exegesis, it certainly provides a range of inspiration.

These scholars of the future may well want to attend to one issue that was not entirely resolved for me at the end of the review process. What does it mean to do *feminist* cultural criticism with the Bible? Not every essay in this part of the collection was entirely clear about its specific feminist stance. And not every essay fully articulated why a particular approach to reading the Bible, either in or with culture, ultimately served feminist goals. In the hope of not reverting back to a mode of feminist scholarship in which focusing on female characters in the Bible is sufficient to deem a study “feminist,” it seems to me that if we are to adopt the new, creative, critical methods we encounter in this volume, we must also be able, willing, and compelled to articulate why they particularly further the feminist cause. It also seems to me that the work that has been offered in this volume points towards the fruitful possibility more of collaboration and co-creation within feminist biblical research. How can we develop this agenda further by working *with* other scholars from elsewhere in the academy and beyond? What would it look like for academics and artists, musicians, writers, games creators, social media influencers to more frequently collaborate together? How can we incorporate the voices of the folk who are creating Bible culture today into our practice, beyond only observing and analyzing their work?

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5. Susanne Scholz: Responding to Reviewers: Let’s Keep Our “good trouble” going!

When a Dominican tells a Protestant that the Pope might agree with this Protestant, the Protestant knows she is in trouble. Could it be “good” trouble that John Lewis (1940–2020), the US Congress representative from Georgia, always urged us to be in?

Allow me to thank the chairs of the two sections cosponsoring this review panel for their willingness to organize this panel. I also thank my colleagues for their time, effort, and thoughtfulness in preparing their reviews and sending them to me. It is a gift and honor to receive your collegial assessment of this anthology that took me almost a decade to conceptualize, put together, edit, and send off to the publisher in August 2019 as a full-blown manuscript of 878 double-spaced pages. I also would like to thank my 36 contributors, a few of them here in the audience, for their collegiality in the editorial process that ensured a coherent and readable book. Foremost, I thank my Oxford editor, Steve Wiggins, who guided me in publishing this anthology. Early on, when he was still working for another publishing house, we had a very different project in mind. After he had moved over to Oxford University Press, he

encouraged me to think of the “handbook” format as an outlet for my ideas. When the book came out in 2021, I said at the time I would never edit another book. Of course, this promise was impossible to keep, and so just this month another anthology of mine came out focused on an exegetical area that my Oxford Handbook does not engage, namely biblical masculinity studies.⁶³

My respondents picked up on a key idea that inspired me to produce the Oxford Handbook. Yes, Carol, Shelley, Rachel, and Holly, you observe correctly that I do think of my Handbook as the “unofficial” fourth volume to my *Retrospective* trilogy. My three anthologies, entitled *Feminist Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Retrospective* (Sheffield Phoenix 2013, 2014, 2016), survey and evaluate the accomplishments of feminist Hebrew Bible scholarship since the 1970s, addressing the biblical canon (volume 1), social locations (volume 2), and methods (volume 3). When I was working on the three volumes, I always wondered why feminist biblical scholarship is so conventional although feminist thinkers have always aimed to break free from androcentric boundaries and some even tried to move into “outerspace” to leave phallogocentric conventions and hassles behind. This “unofficial” fourth volume, the “shimmering diamond” as Carol puts it so generously, aspires to offer encouragement, inspiration, and permission to move beyond text-fetishized, antiquarian, empiricist, and kyriarchal ways of doing feminist biblical research. But have we done it? Carol suggests, perhaps a little bit tongue in cheek, that “this shimmering diamond ... would probably receive papal approval” (p. XXX). Her comment scares me a little bit because it makes me wonder if my vision is too small and too limited. Or does her comment merely articulate a hopeful fantasy of a

Dominican sister who fears charges of heresy and accusations of having lost her faith, if the Pope were to read her essay that is part of this anthology?⁶⁴

Editing a volume over a ten-year period is a long time. Rest assured, I will not offer a source-critical report on the evolution of the manuscript that changed considerably from its conception in 2014 and long-lasting pregnancy to its eventual delivery to the publisher in August 2019, then a considerable waiting period for the baby (i.e. the proofs) and the final release from the hospital (i.e. the publication in print) in 2021.⁶⁵ Sadly, one dear colleague died toward the end of the editorial process. I dedicated the volume to her, our esteemed colleague, Judith McKinlay. She gave me her last written piece, telling me so on November 2, 2018. Three months later, on February 9, 2019, her friend, Sarah Mitchell, emailed that Judith had passed away the previous day, on February 8, 2019. Two years earlier, on March 6, 2017, Judith mentioned to me how delighted she was to be part of this volume because, as she put it, “[f]eminist engagement has been so significant for me, and not the easiest of roads to take.” One makes friends doing this kind of editorial work, although sometimes, alas, one makes non-friends for various reasons. As a sidenote, I advise newcomers to editing books: “Treasure your editorial integrity and do not lose it, no matter what.”

I wish to share with you how I arrived at the four main categories – globalization, neoliberalism, (digital) media, and intersectionality – that structure the 37 contributions of the volume. From the start I knew that I wanted to open up conceptually how feminist, womanist, queer, and gender-oriented Bible scholars might want to think about the possibilities of doing exegetical work in the field. By looking at the current publications, I understood that we are coming from around the world (“globalization”), have begun to interrogate critically the main

socio-political, economic, and cultural framework shaping our various societies (“neoliberalism”), invest our exegetical efforts in analyzing digital and analog media appropriation of biblical texts, characters, and issues (“[digital] media culture), and often connect our various gender related research to variously defined intersectional contexts (“intersectionality”). Although my volume does not maintain that these four areas are exclusive, the contributions illustrate the scholarly creativity, energy, and benefits these areas have inspired. Although much of our collective exegetical thought is still heavily invested in a text-fetishized focus, a broadening of the feminist, womanist, queer, and gender-oriented agendas has been achieved, and the anthology reflects this productive methodological way forward. In my view, such a broadening is highly beneficial and intellectually desirable because it offers fruitful horizons for a field that is still largely controlled by literalist-antiquarian and even religiously narrowing ambitions.

I also want to highlight two insights from contributors analyzing the neoliberal impact on (feminist) biblical studies. I agree wholeheartedly with Teresa Hornsby’s observation about the ongoing limiting, and perhaps even silencing, consequences that scholars, especially biblical scholars, face in societies shaped by neoliberal systems of power. She observes in her essay entitled “Neoliberalism and Queer Theory in Biblical Readings” (pp. 213–229) that “[b]iblical interpretation consistently takes a leading role in constructing subservient bodies, normative desires borne of submissive tendencies” (p. 220), by putting itself into the “passive and culturally defined ‘feminine’ role.” As Teresa puts it, many exegetes accept “whatever ‘our Father, who is in heaven,’ dishes out” (p. 220). With examples ranging from Isaiah 53, Judges 7, the book of Job, and the use and translation of the verb “to rape” (*innah*), Teresa shows that “biblical

interpretation ... produces theologies of subservience, submission, and security” (p. 227). This, then, is a current scholarly challenge feminist, womanist, queer, and gender-oriented Bible scholars face: how do we expose, deconstruct, and dismantle exegetical compliance and submission, and how do we resist the neoliberal logic when we analyze biblical texts and interpretations?

Interestingly, Teresa does not specifically examine feminist, womanist, queer, or gender biblical scholarship when she analyzes the neoliberal ideology assumed and advanced in texts and interpretations. I have quibbled with her about this issue, but another essay, entitled “Neoliberal Feminist Scholarship in Biblical Studies” (pp. 159–179) and written by Esther Fuchs, deals explicitly with the neoliberal assumptions embedded in feminist biblical scholarship. Esther focuses on the first generation of feminist biblical scholars who began writing during the heydays of the Second Women’s Movement. Esther asserts that they advanced neoliberalism by “legitimizing feminism as a viable and reliable scholarly project” (p. 159) and by ignoring “a more radical feminist interrogation” (p. 159). According to her, these early feminist works aimed to demonstrate “that women are just as important a topic of inquiry as men,” and they “highlight[ed] biblical women’s religious, historical, or literary significance” (p. 159), but they did not engage with feminist theory. Esther notes:

To the extent that the emerging field has followed the dictates of the liberal market economy according to which traditional academic benchmarks measure competition, productivity (relentless publishing), and success, and to the extent that the emerging field has sought inclusion, approbation, and accommodation within the confines of an already existing broader field, feminist biblical studies has followed a neoliberal rather than transformative trajectory” (p. 159–160).

In her essay, Esther examines the neoliberal tendencies of feminist biblical scholarship published during the 1970s and 1980s. She identifies five hermeneutical strategies in these

works: the *depatriarchalizing* strategy, the *historicizing* strategy, the *textualizing* strategy, the *mythologizing* strategy, and the *idealizing* strategy. Importantly, according to Esther, this body of feminist biblical research, lacks “clarity about the mission and purpose of feminist exegesis” (p. 177). This point resonates with Holly Morse’s remark toward the end of her review when she asks: “What does it mean to do feminist critical criticism with the Bible?” Like Esther, Holly encourages us to “be able, willing and compelled to articulate why they particularly further[s] the feminist agenda.” As a remedy to this confusing situation, Esther proposes a shift from “the ‘biblical’ to the ‘feminist’,” making women’s studies “the starting point” rather than biblical studies, with the goal of “transform[ing] feminist biblical studies into a radical and transformative interrogation of biblical studies in general” (p. 178). I suggest we ought to follow Esther’s advice. We also need more systematic engagement with the various feminist biblical scholarship and with each other. Esther’s essay serves as a model for how to go about such work.

I am highlighting these two essays of the Handbook not only because I consider them “essential” reading, but also because I do agree with Teresa and Esther that feminist, womanist, queer, and gender-oriented biblical scholars are facing extremely dire times in the field of biblical studies, in academia at large, and surely in the world. When I organized the Handbook into the four major areas (globalization, neoliberalism, [digital] media culture, intersectionality) in February 2014, my main concern was to move the field of (feminist) biblical studies *away* from the text-fetishized conventions so dominant in the field. When I first started thinking about my response for this panel, I checked my earliest files of this project to see how it all started. I found the guidelines for the Oxford Handbooks that Steve emailed me in January 2014. The

document explains how Oxford University Press defined this “exciting new initiative,” stating in the top paragraph:

Oxford Handbooks is an exciting new initiative from Oxford University Press. With contributions from leading scholars in a field, these high-profile and authoritative volumes are designed to fulfill a growing need across the humanities and the social sciences, with each handbook presenting the “state of the art” for scholars and graduate students in a key subject area.

How is that for an intimidating paragraph: “leading scholars,” “state of the art,” “key subject area[s]”? I thought long and hard how to fulfill this requirement, as I was not merely aiming to rehearse the field’s contributions but intended to include contributions that will move the scholarly discourse beyond the exegetical, hermeneutical, and methodological status quo of (feminist) biblical studies.

In other words, ten years after my initial conceptualization of the *Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, I again wonder how to expand further our feminist biblical interrogations even beyond the four areas of “globalization, neoliberalism, (digital) media cultures, and intersectionality.” The reason is that everything changed for me in March 2020, the year when my Handbook was patiently waiting for its publication release. Since then, I have come to understand that we are heading globally into the biotechnofeudal era, which includes the biopharmaceutical-corporatized-military-industrial assaults of the past four years. These developments have, of course, been going on for much longer, but I woke up to this global predicament only in 2020.⁶⁶ Today, in November 2023, I am convinced that feminist, womanist, queer, and gendered biblical scholarship, in its intersectional manifestations, must reorient itself to the vastly changed socio-cultural, political, economic, and religious dynamics in the world. We are not in 1971 anymore when mostly US-American white feminist religion and Bible

scholars came together at the Annual Meeting of the AAR and SBL, humbly asking for an additional section on “women and religion.”⁶⁷ In my view, back then our intellectual mothers, whom I love dearly and to whom I owe so much, were far too humble with their demands.

My major question in response to my reviewers is this: What do we as (feminist) biblical scholars have to say in these dire times of ours? Or asked differently: why are we doing what we are doing? I assert that this question ought to be our central question, and my Handbook aims to offer some answers, but we might already need to add further issues to our agenda due to the global crisis we all have experienced since 2020. I suppose we need to keep searching for more answers and still more ways of doing feminist biblical scholarship. I am wondering, as we are moving deeper and deeper into the biotechnofeudal era, what kinds of feminist biblical investigations need to be added to our scholarly to-do lists?

Still, my hope is that my Handbook encourages colleagues, friends, and even foes to keep working their exegetical “magic” in ways that engage with the world filled with wars, bombings, death, pain, and enormous injustice. The sun is still shining and plants are still growing, but panic and fear are pervasive today and weapons of mass destruction keep being produced and used. Perhaps this is also what the Pope had in mind in his newest “Apostolic Letter,” called “*Motu Proprio*,” in which he calls Catholic theologians – no Bible scholars yet, Carol – “to prophetically interpret the present and glimpse new itineraries for the future” (p. 1). In my view, my *Handbook* offers ideas, directions, and bridges to develop such itineraries for (feminist) biblical studies, as my reviewers outlined in great detail and with considerable enthusiasm. Thank you for your careful reading of this volume and for being on board in continuing to charter a path into our feminist biblical scholarly future. Let’s keep our “good trouble” going!

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¹ See Susanne Scholz, ed., *Feminist Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Retrospect*, Vol.1: Biblical Books; Vol. 2: Social Location; Vol. 3: Methods (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2013, 2014, 2017, respectively).

² See Scholz, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), xxv.

³ See Scholz, “Reading the Bible with Feminist Eyes: Introduction,” p. xxxviii in *Handbook*. Here Scholz references Schüssler Fiorenza thought and cites her work in note 55.

⁴ For further discussion on this point, see Scholz, *The Bible as Political Artifact: On the Feminist Study of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017), xv–xxii.

⁵ See Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, “Biblical Interpretation and Kyriarchal Globalization,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 3–20.

⁶ See Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, “Biblical Interpretation and Kyriarchal Globalization,” 17–18.

⁷ See Hanna Stenström, “European Feminist Biblical Scholarship in the Neoliberal Era,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 206–207.

⁸ See Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, “Biblical Interpretation and Kyriarchal Globalization,” 19.

⁹ See Hanna Stenström, “European Feminist Biblical Scholarship in the Neoliberal Era,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 212.

¹⁰ See Hanna Stenström, “European Feminist Biblical Scholarship in the Neoliberal Era,” 212.

¹¹ See John W. Fadden, “Justifying Feminist Biblical Studies in a Neoliberal Age” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 181–198.

¹² See Scholz, *Artifact*, 38–43.

¹³ See John W. Fadden, “Justifying Feminist Biblical Studies in a Neoliberal Age,” 198.

¹⁴ See John W. Fadden, “Justifying Feminist Biblical Studies in a Neoliberal Age,” 198.

¹⁵ See Jonathan Liedl, *Catholic News Agency* (Nov. 1, 2023)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/255887/pope-francis-calls-for-paradigm-shift-in-theology-for-world-of-today>

¹⁶ See Jonathan Liedl, *Catholic News Agency* (Nov. 1, 2023)

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¹⁸ See Scholz, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, xlix-l.

¹⁹ Or “text-fetishized system” of the male-dominated academic field (Scholz, 2023: xxv). See the definition that Scholz offers in her review of *Feminist Frameworks and the Bible: Power, Ambiguity, and Intersectionality* (eds. Julianna Claassens and Carolyn J. Sharp), *RBL* 03 (2019): “Meta-level conversations about the purpose, function, and role of feminist exegesis do not occur all that often, as textual fetishism permeates not only the white-male-dominated field of biblical studies in general but also feminist biblical studies.”

²⁰ Susanne Scholz, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).

²¹ Scholz suggests readers view the tome as a complement to and “unofficial fourth volume” of her *Feminist Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Retrospect*. 3 vols. (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2013–16), xxv.

²² To advance their own interests, neoliberalists has fostered distrust in, if not vilification of, government-run services and public institutions.

²³ In Susanne Scholz, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 181–98.

²⁴ Hanna Stenström, “European Feminist Biblical Scholarship in the Neoliberal Era,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 199–212; here 201.

²⁵ Stenström, “European Feminist,” 200.

²⁶ Stenström, “European Feminist,” 206.

²⁷ Fuchs, “Neoliberal Feminist Scholarship,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 159–79; here 168.

²⁸ For example, the suffering servant in Isaiah 53, who is like a lamb led to the slaughter, becomes an exemplar, or Gideon, who makes himself dangerously vulnerable to earn God’s protection in Judges 7 is celebrated (Hornsby, “Neoliberalism and Queer Theory,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 213–29; here 220–27.

²⁹ Hornsby, “Neoliberalism and Queer Theory,” in Susanne Scholz, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 228.

³⁰ These include job training and marketable workplace skills alongside a “vacation-like” experience (with state-of-the-art classrooms and dorms and an abundance of extra-curricular activities).

³¹ See, e.g., Esther Fuchs, “Reclaiming the Hebrew Bible for Women: The Neoliberal Turn in Contemporary Feminist Scholarship,” *JFSR* 24.2 (2008): 45–65; Susanne Scholz, ed., *Introducing the Women’s Hebrew Bible: Feminism, Gender Justice, and the Study of the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017); Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, ed., *Feminist Biblical Studies in the Twentieth Century: Scholarship and Movement*. The Bible and Women 9:1 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014); *ibid.*, “Feminist Remappings in Times of Neoliberalism,” in *The Bible and Feminism: Remapping the Field*, ed. Yvonne Sherwood with the assistance of Anna Fisk (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 170–85; Caroline Vander Stichele, “Is Don Quixote Fighting Windmills? Gendering New Testament Studies in the Netherlands,” *lectio difficilior: European Electronic Journal for Feminist Exegesis* (1/2013): http://www.lectio.unibe.ch/13_1/vander_stichele_caroline_is_don_quixote_fighting_windmills.html.

³² Fuchs, “Neoliberal Feminist Scholarship,” 162.

³³ Fuchs, “Neoliberal Feminist Scholarship,” 164. Stenström concurs.

³⁴ McKinlay, “Biblical Border Slippage and Feminist Postcolonial Criticism,” in *The Handbook*, 231–46; here 245.

³⁵ That is, as a text infused with the prejudices of its authors, who rarely gave authentic voice to women or the subaltern (McKinlay, “Biblical Border Slippage,” 233–35).

³⁶ Scholz, “On the Development of a Feminist Biblical Hermeneutics of Migration,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 247–62; here 247.

³⁷ Scholz, “Hermeneutics of Migration,” 256.

³⁸ Scholz, “Hermeneutics of Migration,” 258. Scholz also proposes a radicant methodological position for a feminist biblical hermeneutics of migration. She borrows the term radicant from Nicholas Bouriard, who claims that it is a characteristic feature of our post-postmodern era. Technically a radicant is a plant, like ivy, that takes root on or above ground, and grows new roots from the stem as it creeps outward. Bouriard likens humans and our current migratory tendencies to the radicant, wandering from place to place and rarely putting down sedentary roots. “Radicantity” can disrupt one’s sense of identity if unwillingly uprooted, but it also presents the opportunity to engage in multiplicity and embrace a fluid sense of culture and identity. For Scholz, the beauty of radicantity is its “dynamic sensibilities” that “unbind from essentialist notions of monolithic origins and pre-determined end points.” When applied to Bible reading, a radicant position affirms plurality and not essentialism, potentially nurturing an ethical opposition “to the globalizing forces” of neoliberalism that instigate mass migration (*The Handbook*, 260).

³⁹ As a great teacher once advised, “It is not [our] duty to finish the work, but neither are [we] free to neglect it” (Pirkei Avot 2:16).

⁴⁰ Susanne Scholz, “Reading the Hebrew Bible with Feminist Eyes: Introduction,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), xxiii–lii; here xlv; li–lii.

⁴¹ Both Fuchs and Stenström also emphasize that feminist biblical scholars ought to call upon their scholarly foremothers, which they have tended to ignore.

⁴² Ecofeminists and ecowomanists have already been doing this good work.

⁴³ See Hornsby, who claims that queer bodies are all bodies, and all bodies are “enveloped into and reiterated as submissive femininity serving masculinized power” (“Neoliberalism and Queer Theory,” 228).

⁴⁴ Animals have always migrated. What is distinctive at present is the increased quantity of migrants, their unusual patterns of movement, and the causes of such changes. Mass and itinerant migrations beyond typical patterns are primarily due to human-induced climate change and human-induced conflict over land and its plenty.

⁴⁵ “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” United Nations.

<https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>.

⁴⁶ Susanne Scholz, “Reading the Hebrew Bible with Feminist Eyes: Introduction,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), xxxvii–xxxviii.

⁴⁷ Beatrice J. W. Lawrence, “Teaching the Bible and Popular Media as Part of Contemporary Rape Culture,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 438–39.

⁴⁸ The one female composer who is included, Celanie Carissan, is described by Leneman as “a largely unknown woman composer.” See Helen Leneman, “Exploring Biblical Women in Music,” in Susanne Scholz ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 378.

⁴⁹ Adele Reinhartz, “Sexuality, Stoning, and Supersessionism in Biblical Epic Films of the Post–World War II Era,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 324.

⁵⁰ Reinhartz, “Sexuality, Stoning, and Supersessionism in Biblical Epic Films of the Post–World War II Era,” 324.

⁵¹ Vanessa L. Lovelace, “Hagar in Nineteenth Century Southern Women’s Novels,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), p. 390.

⁵² Lovelace, “Hagar in Nineteenth Century Southern Women’s Novels,” 403.

⁵³ Lovelace, “Hagar in Nineteenth Century Southern Women’s Novels,” 404.

⁵⁴ Linda S. Schearing, “The Bible, Women, and Video Games,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 278.

⁵⁵ Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch, “Mediating Dinah’s Story in Film,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 364.

⁵⁶ Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch, “Mediating Dinah’s Story in Film,” 364.

⁵⁷ Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch, “Mediating Dinah’s Story in Film,” 364.

⁵⁸ Sara M. Koenig, “Bathsheba in Contemporary Romance Novels,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 421.

⁵⁹ Helen Leneman, in “Exploring Biblical Women in Music,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021) 377.

⁶⁰ <https://thevcs.org/>

⁶¹ <https://thevcs.org/eves-punishment>

⁶² Gayatiri Spivak, cited in Rhiannon Graybill, *Texts after Terror : Rape, Sexual Violence, and the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021).

⁶³ Susanne Scholz, ed., *Doing Biblical Masculinity as Feminist Biblical Studies: An Exploration* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2023).

⁶⁴ Carol J. Dempsey, OP, “Catholic Androcentric Bible Translations Global Missionary Tools?,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Susanne Scholz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 37–52.

⁶⁵ The e-book was released on December 31, 2020 (see <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-oxford-handbook-of-feminist-approaches-to-the-hebrew-bible-9780190462673?cc=us&lang=en&>), but the copyright page of the hardcopy of the book gives 2021 as the publication date.

⁶⁶ For an expanded discussion of my position, see, e.g., my essay “Discursive Interventions toward Gender Justice in the Academic Study of the Bible: A Success Story of the Neoliberal Age?,” in *Religion, Women of Color, and the Suffrage Movement: The Journey to Holistic Freedom*, ed. SimonMary Asese A. Ahiokhai (Series Feminist Studies and Sacred Texts; Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2022), 279–301.

⁶⁷ For a description of this request, see Judith Plaskow, “Movement and Emerging Scholarship: Feminist Biblical Scholarship in the 1970s in the United States,” in *Feminist Bible Studies in the Twentieth Century: Scholarship and Movement* (Bible and Women 9.1), ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2014), 21–34.

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