

THE RELEVANCE OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS FOR CONTEMPORARY FEMINISM(S)

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Abstract

This article explores the importance of women's rights in the fight for women's empowerment. It contributes to the theoretical debate on whether women's rights are compatible and complementary with the general concept of human rights, or rather irreconcilable. The use of the human rights framework for upholding women's rights has been criticized for: its male norm hidden behind a false universalism obscuring or even excluding women; its disregard for the limited choice of many women, its comprisal of a hierarchy of rights in which those most relevant to women's equality often do not rank the highest, its limited vocation in positively enforcing women's equality, its tension with multiculturalism and the problems related to the enforcement of such rights. The paper will discuss these claims and will provide counterarguments to them, and subsequently conclude that the liberal concept of human rights is the best vehicle for promoting women's rights.

Keywords: women's rights, feminism, human rights