Tina Chanter’s recent book, Gender, is part of Continuum’s “Key Concepts in Philosophy” series, which has previously published volumes on Epistemology, Ethics, Language, Law, Logic, and Mind. The purpose of the series is to serve students as introductory volumes on “core ideas and subjects” in philosophy. Although not the most introductory of introductions, supplemented by primary sources and screenings of the films she discusses, Chanter’s book would serve as an excellent textbook for feminist philosophy courses, particularly for instructors with a continental slant: rather than dividing chapters into streams of feminist thought such as liberal and radical feminism, as is typical of most introductory books on feminist philosophy, Chanter provides chapters on Foucauldian, psychoanalytic, poststructuralist, and Deleuzian feminisms, and also includes extensive discussions of prominent continental feminists such as Julia Kristeva, Judith Butler, Gayatri Spivak, Moira Gatens, and Rosi Braidotti.

While Gender also includes chapters specifically devoted to Marxist and postcolonial feminisms, one of the merits of Chanter’s book is that issues of race, ethnicity, and class are discussed throughout the book and in every chapter, rather than remaining contained in these particular chapters. This is indicative of Chanter’s argument that considerations of race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class cannot simply be “added on” to questions of gender, as supplementary chapters for instance. Instead, Chanter advocates an intersectional approach which is also “resolutely historical,” or which “refuses to treat the ‘categories’ of race, class, gender, and sexuality as if they were transparent or self-evident” (154). Chanter’s book provides both strong arguments for and an example of such an approach to feminist theory. As an introduction to feminist theory, Chanter’s discussions of race and ethnicity as these intersect with gender and sexuality are also more inclusive of global feminist perspectives than many introductory texts in feminist philosophy, which tend to focus primarily or exclusively on the experience of black women in the United States when exploring race and ethnicity.

Chanter begins Gender by noting that, following declarations of the death of God and the end of metaphysics, “It was only a matter of time” before the end of gender would also be announced. As Chanter observes, “These are interesting and difficult times for gender theorists.” While in simpler times feminists made use of an apparently straight-
forward sex/gender distinction, today it has become clear that this is yet another binary opposition which calls for deconstruction. Exploring the challenges which intersexed and transgendered identities pose to the sex/gender dualism helps Chanter to complexify the discussion of sex and gender, and not only to show that there is no sex, but only gender, as some feminists have argued. The experiences of intersexed individuals who identify with the sex which they were prior to early surgical interventions, but which they have not been socialized to be, problematizes the strong social constructivist claim, while the case of transsexuality, in which individuals identify with a sex/gender which they neither possess "naturally" nor have been socialized to be, challenges both biological determinist and social constructivist arguments, suggesting to Chanter that, beyond the standard dualisms of sex/gender and nature/nurture, there may be a "third factor." This is a novel and exciting way of introducing feminist philosophy, one that begins with rather than marginalizes the transgendered and the intersexed and the problems which they pose to our deeply-entrenched notions of sex and gender, rather than beginning with the sex/gender distinction and with "woman" (as if this were another transparent and self-evident category).

In addition to the chapters that have already been mentioned, Chanter also has a chapter devoted to "Formative Moments and Concepts," and another to "Feminist Epistemology." It is in "Formative Moments and Concepts" that the reader will find discussions of classical feminist theorists such as Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, and Simone de Beauvoir, among others. It is also in this chapter that Chanter explores the implicitly white, heterosexual, and middle-class nature of traditional feminism, and the sexism of much traditional postcolonial theory. Chanter takes up the latter subject via a feminist response to the postcolonial philosophy of Frantz Fanon. Finally, in this chapter Chanter formulates her argument that analyses of gender, race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality should not only be synchronic but also diachronic, or should account for the "messiness of history."

Chanter's chapter on feminist epistemology takes up two kinds of examples of feminist arguments regarding the gendering of knowledge: feminist ethics of care and feminist philosophies of science. In this chapter we find stimulating discussions of authors such as Gilligan, Harding, and Haraway.

*Gender* is an eloquent, articulate, and sophisticated discussion of diverse aspects of the history of feminist theory and of current feminist theory. Chanter grounds her theoretical analyses in applied feminist concerns such as rape, anorexia, and sati, and also offers compelling interpretations of cultural works, and particularly of films, to illustrate her arguments. Although presented in the format of an introduction to
feminist philosophy, *Gender* is sufficiently complex and original to be stimulating reading not only to students new to the field, but also to scholars of continental and feminist philosophy.

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**The Impossible Mourning of Jacques Derrida**

SEAN GASTON

New York: Continuum, 2006; 152 pages.

Comprised of three chapters ("The Precedant," "Histories—Décalages," and "The Gap Moves"), each representing roughly a month of daily diary entries (October 12 through December 17), *The Impossible Mourning of Jacques Derrida* was chronicled during the first two months following Derrida's death in 2004. The book is a series of meditations that both directly and indirectly consider Derrida and his work, including personal stories of Gaston's life during this time of bereavement. The entries, which vary in length from five pages to a sentence or two, are at times intensely personal, autobiographical, and moving. At other times they are more formal and academic. Often they are a combination of both, where distinctions are not readily evident.

The character of this book is such that it probably will not be read by most at length but in small increments. Its fragmentary structure and short, often chaotic, bursts of thought make it a good daily devotional. Potential readers should not expect much in the way of a sustained interrogation of a given subject. More generally, *The Impossible Mourning of Jacques Derrida* is in style and content the kind of book readers will expect from an author who faithfully and fully embraces the gleeful play of deconstruction. Yet as much as this is a playful, even cavalier text, it is also somber and sorrowful.

In the end, this book stands out as an oddity among philosophical texts. Gaston offers little more than a snapshot of Derrida and his work, his relation to Hegel, Husserl, and others. While there are a number of important insights offered there is almost no critical dialogue. Moreover, readers should expect only a brief survey and introduction to deconstructive thought found between the lines. Even so, one need not be familiar with Derrida or deconstruction to appreciate this book. As a response to the loss of Derrida it is both a mourning and a realization that such is impossible. It is an attempt to fill the gap left by Derrida's passing and it is the realization that such a filling is impossible. Gaston returns again and again to the gap left by the passing of Derrida and the