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Two Hands Clapping: Reconciling Materialist and Poststructural Feminisms Against Neoliberal Authoritarianism

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Abstract:

This paper argues that contemporary feminism must reconcile materialist and poststructural approaches to resist the dual authoritarianisms of our time: the moral authoritarianism of the right and the managerial authoritarianism of the neoliberal left. It contends that sex remains a stable material structure of power—organizing vulnerability, embodiment, and social life—while its meanings are mediated through discourse and law. Using Canadian and U.S. data, the paper demonstrates how transmen's and transwomen's experiences reveal the persistence of sex-based inequality despite gender fluidity. Reuniting feminism's divided frameworks restores a coherent politics of embodiment and justice capable of confronting neoliberal authoritarianism in all its forms.

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