

THE MORAL PARAMETERS *of*
GOOD TALK
a feminist analysis

MARYANN NEELY AYIM

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Should we not apply the same moral standards to language as we do to behaviour? Should we not demand fair treatment in how others speak to us or include us in conversations?

In *The Moral Parameters of Good Talk*, Ayim contends it is ludicrous to exempt language from the moral standards we apply to other behaviours. Language, like any other behaviour, is capable of creating harm or good – we should strive to talk in morally appropriate ways. While freedom of expression is a right we strive for in a democratic society, it is acceptable only when it is conducive to freedom of expression for all. Racist and sexist speech fails the moral test.

Ayim discusses her proposed moral criteria for language on two levels: on a theoretical level, where she applies her moral analysis to the major competing theories on the relation of gender and language, and on a practical level, where she examines circumstances in which such moral criteria have been applied.

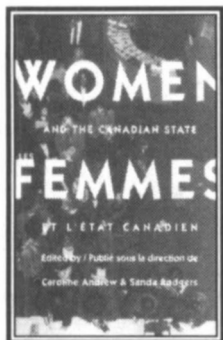
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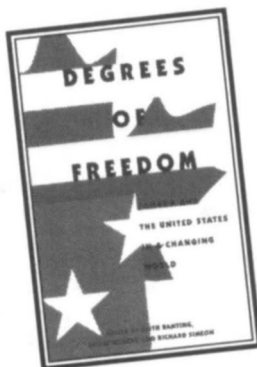
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