Prejudicial Appearances: The Logic of American Antidiscrimination Law

Robert C. Post, K. Anthony Appiah, Judith Butler, Thomas C. Grey, Reva B. Siegel

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In *Prejudicial Appearances* noted legal scholar Robert C. Post argues modern American antidiscrimination law should not be conceived as protecting the transcendental dignity of individual persons but instead as transforming social practices that define and sustain potentially oppressive categories like race or gender. Arguing that the prevailing logic of American antidiscrimination law is misleading, Post lobbies for deploying sociological understandings to reevaluate the antidiscrimination project in ways that would render the law more effective and just.

Four distinguished commentators respond to Post's provocative essay. Each adopts a distinctive perspective. K. Anthony Appiah investigates the philosophical logic of stereotyping and of equality. Questioning whether the law ought to endorse any social practices that define persons, Judith Butler explores the tension between sociological and postmodern approaches to antidiscrimination law. Thomas C. Grey examines whether Post's proposal can be reconciled with the values of the rule of law. And Reva B. Siegel applies critical race theory to query whether antidiscrimination law's reshaping of race and gender should best be understood in terms of practices of subordination and stratification.

By illuminating the consequential rhetorical maneuvers at the heart of contemporary U.S. antidiscrimination law, *Prejudical Appearances* forces readers to reappraise the relationship between courts of law and social behavior. As such, it will enrich scholars interested in the relationships between law, rhetoric, postmodernism, race, and gender.

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