

Maps, figures, tables, and excerpts from original source material contribute to a better presentation and portrayal of the discussed content. Each chapter concludes with a list of further readings. Foreign and technical terms are defined in a glossary. Individuals and subject matters are easily located in the person and subject indices.

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Kristof, Nicholas D., and Sheryl WuDunn. *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*. New York: Vintage Books, 2009. xxii + 296 pp. Hardcover, \$15.95.

*Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* was published in 2009 in book form and in late 2012 was made into a PBS two-part documentary series. As a result, the book is experiencing a resurgence of interest. The book is filled with poignant, expertly, yet sensitively written stories that are both heart wrenching and horrific. The authors, Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, recount the individual stories of women from across the globe who have suffered unimaginable abuse and provide intermittent journalistic commentary on various aspects of gender inequality in the regions where these women live. It would be difficult for any reader not to have a strong emotional response to these stories and sensitive readers are advised that these stories are an account of some truly deplorable acts against women.

The coauthors are Pulitzer Prize winning journalists, so a high standard of prose is to be expected and is certainly delivered. Together, they won a Pulitzer in the *International Reporting* category in 1990 “for knowledgeable reporting from China on the mass movement for democracy and its subsequent suppression” (see [www.pulitzer.org/awards/1990](http://www.pulitzer.org/awards/1990)). In 2006, Kristof won a second Pulitzer in the *Commentary* category for “his graphic, deeply reported columns that, at personal risk, focused attention on genocide in Darfur and that gave voice to the voiceless in other parts of the world” (see [www.pulitzer.org/citation/2006-commentary](http://www.pulitzer.org/citation/2006-commentary)). Kristof has also been a Pulitzer finalist an additional four times. This husband and wife team has coauthored three books together: *China Wakes: The Struggle for the Soul of a Rising Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995); *Thunder from the East: Portrait of a Rising Asia* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001); and the topic of this book review, *Half the Sky*. Their books focus on sociocultural and political issues in predominantly Eastern Asia through the use of interviews and personal experiences.

*Half the Sky* is an investigation of the breaches of basic human rights inflicted upon women in primarily the developing and politically unstable sectors of the world. It seems to concentrate on giving the survivor a voice

and providing commentary from those who work first-hand with these women.

The book profiles issues such as sex trafficking, slavery of women and girls (some as young as three years old), and rape as a means of control or as an act of war to show the brute strength of the conqueror while humiliating the conquered. The different ramifications of rape, particularly among strongly patriarchal and religious communities are profiled and include commentary on honor killings, social ostracism, inflicted physical deformity such as acid burning or removal of the nose, all of which insinuate that the causation of the rape was the victim's responsibility and not that of an opportunistic, abusive, or sociopathic perpetrator. There is significant emphasis placed on the sense of powerlessness experienced by the women featured in this book, where they are victims of crimes but often receive no support from law enforcement or even their own families, who believe these crimes have now brought shame to the family.

The book also discusses maternal mortality, female circumcision, injuries occurring as a result of childbirth, and the physical harm of childbirth by girls 13 years old and younger. There is also a discussion on the role of religious organizations in the instigation and perpetuation of discrimination, hostility and violent behavior toward women. It is suggested that these behaviors and general attitudes toward women within religious organizations are not necessarily misogynistic in origin, but are rather theological. The writers suggest that the Koran and the Bible are, in recent times, being read differently with regard to slavery and ask why the same could not be done to emancipate women.

In addition to sharing the stories of women and the individuals who work with them, the writers also suggest solutions they believe could make a difference. The solution of most prominence is education for girls, which can result in delayed marriage and pregnancy, and in some of the individual cases cited, change family and community perceptions about the academic and economic potential of girls. It is also suggested that increased maternal health options, particularly for women in rural areas, access to microcredit, and empowering women to become entrepreneurs could also be life-transforming for women in politically volatile and developing countries where human-rights abuse toward women is most prevalent. The book concludes by encouraging readers to contribute funds to organizations that address these human-rights violations toward women at a grassroots level, rather than waiting for governments to make a change.

This book is inspirational, poignant, and timely. The accompanying PBS television series gives a human face to some of the women profiled in the book and features human service and political advocates of women's rights. Together, this book and television series become a powerful and influential vehicle for change.

Despite the inspirational dynamic and eloquence of the narration, it must be emphasized that this book is more appropriately classified as a work of journalistic commentary rather than a scholarly publication. While some reference to empirical studies to support the authors' claims are given, often the only support provided is anecdotal and based on the observations of one or a small number of people. Also, references to "studies" are made throughout the book without naming their researchers, what they were researching, or providing a reference within the bibliography. If promoted as a scholarly publication, its lack of consistently referenced empirical evidence gives critics of this book far too much opportunity to accuse the writers of seeking out the troubled strata of politically volatile countries and reporting on exceptional circumstances that are not representative of communities as a whole. As a work of journalistic commentary, however, the singling out of individuals from different regions around the world makes readers aware of the atrocities these women are experiencing—experiences not even one woman should have to endure. As a journalistic commentary, it would also be at liberty to encourage readers to become financially and politically proactive in bringing these issues to an end. Given the final section of the book encourages readers to do just that, it would seem that motivation for collaborative change and fundraising, not scholarship, is the primary purpose of this book. All things considered, the expectation that there exists extensive, reliable, peer-reviewed research on women's issues in developing and politically volatile countries is decidedly unreasonable. This book, despite its journalistic focus, certainly warrants notice by scholars as it provides an overview of the global discussion regarding these issues, and provides an excellent opportunity for relevant disciplines to source a whole range of topics for empirical study. This is something invaluable to graduate students seeking a dissertation or thesis topic that could make a significant and consequential contribution in creating or enhancing solutions for these issues in these regions.

The solution of increased education suggested by the authors may provide short-term benefits; however, in the long term they may not necessarily produce the results expected. Education as a means of addressing hostile attitudes toward women may have some efficacy as a study by Glick, Lameiras, and Castro provides evidence that the level of educational attainment is negatively correlated with attitudes of hostile and benevolent sexism in both sexes ("Education and Catholic Religiosity as Predictors of Hostile and Benevolent Sexism Toward Women and Men," *Sex Roles* 47 [2002]: 433-442). Given this, education as a solution to sexism needs to be offered not only to all girls, but also to all boys, otherwise attitudes of hostile and benevolent sexism, both of which are also positively correlated with one another (P. Glick, P. and S. T. Fiske, "The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory: Differentiating Hostile and Benevolent Sexism," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 70/3 [March

1996]: 22-48) will continue within an uneducated male population. Additionally, while education may provide a short-term solution by allowing women to be upwardly mobile, financially independent, and contribute to the economy of their region, what will happen when universal primary, secondary, or tertiary education become the norm? One issue facing Western countries is that a baccalaureate degree does not provide the employment or salary opportunities it once did. Western countries, too, despite opportunity and access to education, are not exempt from rape, sexual abuse, violence, and discrimination toward women. Even the authors acknowledge that “education isn’t always a panacea” (170) and cite two instances in Saudi Arabia and India where education among women has not had the desired effect. Once again, mainly anecdotal evidence and commentary is cited to explain these anomalies, not empirical evidence. While women the writers know personally may have been able to change their lives through education, it may not be education that is the sole reason for this shift. Other factors such as personality, self-efficacy, association with influential Westerners like the writers, political stability returning to their country, and/or any combination of these or a host of other factors may have contributed to these outcomes and may warrant further investigation before millions of donated dollars are spent on such an ambitious endeavor. Consideration to other contributing factors also needs to be made such as the influence of the hierarchical structure of the larger society (e.g., a caste or one-party system); neurological functioning that is the result of genetics, epigenetics, and early childhood; theological patriarchy or a dominant religion; and/or environmental effeminizing that may permanently alter the temperament and perception women have of themselves thereby challenging attempts to rehabilitate them, despite education. Education itself can be problematic if its curriculum is only teaching the societal views that are a part of the problem. Be that as it may, education seems to be the proverbial “best boat afloat” at this point, so even though it may not provide all the answers, it is a good place to start.

*Half the Sky*, while not a scholarly publication, provides a comprehensive overview of the global discussion regarding the oppression of women in developing and politically volatile countries. As such, this book serves as a good introduction and will help the reader to become more aware, and hopefully, more involved in addressing these important social issues both proactively and academically.

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Logos Bible Software. *Logos Bible Software Version 5: Platinum Collection*. Bellingham, WA. [www.logos.com](http://www.logos.com). \$2,149.95.

In the Fall of 2012, Logos Bible Software issued version 5 of their popular Bible software program. The previous version had been designed and programmed