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## Feminist Thought as a Perspective for Discussing Social Pedagogy<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Feminism as a philosophical concept is a general reflection on gender issues and women's conditions. Since the 70s of the 20th century feminism has become an alternative way of creating knowledge from women's perspective. The author notices that in Poland, unlike the West, feminist thought has not been treated with respect. She explains what the feminist theory is and then analyses the connections between feminist thought and social pedagogy; for both of them the essential categories are: engagement and empowerment. Applying the feminist perspective allows to examine the earlier periods of development of social pedagogy, especially its beginnings, and to discover women's presence in the public sphere and their participating in developing socio-pedagogical thought.

**Key Words:** *feminism, feminist theory, social pedagogy, women's presence, empowerment, epistemology*

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<sup>1</sup> This text includes parts of a book by E. Górnikowska-Zwolak, titled as the article, edited by Wydawnictwo Górnośląskiej Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej im. kard. A. Hłonda, Mysłówice 2006. The paper was published (in Polish) as: *Feministyczne inspiracje dla rozwoju pedagogiki społecznej* [Feminist inspiration for the development of Social Pedagogy]. In: *Fenomen nierówności społecznych* [The Phenomenon of Social Inequalities]. Ed. by J. Klebaniuk. ENETEIA Wydawnictwo Psychologii i Kultury. Warszawa 2007. However, the English version enables the English speaking readers to learn about quite a new and important perspective for discussing social pedagogy.