

Yoga Rising: 30 Empowering Stories from Yoga Renegades for Every Body

Melanie C. Klein

Llewellyn Publications (Jan 8, 2018)

Softcover \$17.99 (336pp)

978-0-7387-5082-8

Yoga Rising is an affirming and orienting anthology that addresses western yoga culture's issues with body image and more.

Yoga Rising is Melanie C. Klein's welcoming compilation in which thirty voices address issues of body image within western yoga culture.

Paired with strong philosophy and a willingness for serious self-inquiry, *Yoga Rising* is poised to be a valuable contribution to any yoga teacher training program. Its personal narratives have the potential to be eye-opening to a population that frequently benefits from thin privilege, informing their teaching in a significant way.

There are some real gems among these essays. Lakshmi Nair's no-holds-barred assessment of the yoga scene is gloriously challenging, gently laying out issues of commercialism, cultural appropriation, and spiritual bypassing. In the same section, which is devoted to intersectional yoga experiences and is by far the richest portion of the book, Channele John offers frameworks for dismantling oppression through much-needed alternatives to the yoga studio model.

Interestingly, the third section of the book includes the fewest questions for thought, though it offers much of the most challenging material. Magic strikes again in the book's fifth section, which opens with *Yoga Journal* founder Judith Lasater's intense self-reflection and astute insights on the evolving state of yoga in the West. The book awakens a hunger for more such richness.

The book sometimes falls short in connecting awareness to action. Especially in the first part of the book, it seems as though Suzannah Neufeld's cultural observation about how well acquainted we are with "the story of the young white woman using yoga as a path to healing" has not been heeded as cautionary.

Snippets of deep insight exist in every essay, though early on, the book seems to focus on more familiar narratives, missing the opportunity to challenge cultural issues such as under-trained teachers and a capitalism-driven studio system.

For those sensing that western yoga culture has work to do in the arena of body image, or those working through similar stories, *Yoga Rising* is an affirming and orienting anthology. Hopefully it reaches enough hands to springboard the community toward further inquiry and informed practice.

JESSIE HORNESS (January/February 2018)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.