

Reading Women's Lives: New Selections for 2008!*

Tzvi Howard Adelman, *Self, Other, and Community: Jewish Women's Autobiography* (2004)

In her article, Adelman examines four contemporary autobiographies written by Jewish women in order to explore the authors' construction of self. Adelman also discusses the conversion narrative, the presence of both fact and fiction in autobiography, and the gendered autobiography. WS0600

Karrin Vasby Anderson & Jessie Stewart, *Politics and the Single Woman: The 'Sex and the City Voter' in Campaign 2004* (2005)

Anderson and Stewart discuss the phenomenon of the "Sex and the City Voter" label in the United States 2004 presidential election. The authors analyze media representations of female voters and third-wave feminism and argue that the construction of the "Sex and the City Voter" undermined women's political agency. WS0601

Kristin J. Anderson & Christina Accomando, *Madcap Misogyny and Romanticized Victim-Blaming: Discourses in There's Something About Mary* (1999)

Anderson and Accomando analyze the film *There's Something About Mary* (1998) and subsequent media reviews in order to examine the film's discourse about the practice of stalking. The authors argue that the film downplays stalking as normalized heterosexual relational practice and encourages victim-blaming. WS0602

Wendy Atkins-Sayre, *Naming Women: The Emergence of 'Ms.' as a Liberatory Title* (2005)

In this essay, Atkins-Sayre documents the history of the emergence of "Ms." as a new label to signify women's social identity in the context of the second-wave feminist movement. Feminists proposed this term to replace the traditional categories Mrs./Miss, which defined women primarily by their marital status and connections to men. They advocated the adoption of "Ms." as a means to endorse women's struggles for equality and independence. The title was also intended to empower women with a sense of confidence and dignity as individuals. However, powerful language gatekeepers, such as the *New York Times*, resisted against this language for the ambiguity of identity it allowed women. The author outlines the key arguments for and against adopting the term Ms. into mainstream language use. It shows how language is an important arena of political struggles. WS0603

Neela Banerjee, *Clergywomen Find Hard Path to Bigger Pulpit* (2006)

In this *New York Times* article, Banerjee discusses the phenomenon of the stained glass ceiling for clergywomen. Although women make up over half of divinity school students, they are not hired to lead larger churches because of their gender. WS0604

Penny Barham, Black Madonnas (2003)

Barham posits that Black Madonnas may have deeper meanings than as representations of the Virgin Mary and that these meanings move beyond Christianity. She explains the ways in which Black Madonnas are political, active, and act as deities in certain cultures and belief systems. WS0605

Fred A. Bernstein, On Campus, Rethinking Biology 101 (2006)

This New York Times article discusses the changes college campuses are making to accommodate transgender students including non-gendered bathrooms and sports teams. Transgender students are profiled and talk about their college experiences. WS0606

Susan Bordo, Adoption (2005)

The author tells of her experiences as an adoptive mother. Specifically, Bordo discusses her first abortion and issues of reproductive control, what it means to be a "real" or "other" mother, and familial differences and interracial adoption. WS0607

Rachel Burgess, Feminine Stubble (2005)

Burgess writes of her experience as a black, lesbian, hirsute woman. Because of her facial hair, Burgess is often identified as different, without gender, or as a female transitioning to a male and is alienated from the lesbian community. Framing her narrative with an experience in which her gender identity is called into question, Burgess examines the ways in which gender is constructed and policed through "normative" gazes within both heterosexual and lesbian/gay communities. WS0608

Susan K. Cahn, From the 'Muscle Moll' to the 'Butch' Ballplayer: Mannishness, Lesbianism, and Homophobia in U.S. Women's Sports (2003)

In her article, Cahn chronicles the cultural representations of and attitudes toward women athletes from the early 1900s to the 1950s. Cahn also discusses the different receptions of white versus black female athletes as she describes how the initial description of female athletes as mannish eventually developed into a homophobic fear of athletes' possible lesbianism. WS0609

Joan C. Chrisler & Ingrid Johnston-Robledo, Raging Hormones? Feminist Perspectives on Premenstrual Syndrome and Postpartum Depression (2002)

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) and postpartum depression (PPD) are generally perceived and treated as two unique "illnesses" associated with womanhood. This article questions the medicalization of PMS and PPD as disease and highlights the importance of understanding women's experience of these syndromes in a larger psychosocial context. It explores how PMS and PPD are explained from biomedical, psychological and sociocultural theoretical models. As a feminist analysis, it critiques how the medical discourse on PMS and PPD are not only constructed out of but also perpetuate harmful stereotypes against women. WS0612

Patricia Hill Collins, It's All In the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation (1998)

In her article, Collins explores the concept of family as a site to examine the intersectionality of race, gender and nation. Offering several examples, Collins discusses the ways in which this intersectionality effects and influences racial segregation, immigration, the eugenics movement, public policy, and the U.S. political and cultural rhetoric of "family values." WS0613

Kimberlé Crenshaw, Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color (1995)

In this short excerpt from Crenshaw's seminal analysis of the impact of intersecting subordinations on identity, the author discusses the limitations of conventional identity politics by example of the troubling disempowerment faced by women of color in comparison to both men of color and white women. To illuminate women of color's specific experience of oppression, Crenshaw proposes that identity be viewed from an intersectional lens that pays attention to the interlocking nature of multiple subordinations and their simultaneous impact on identity. WS0615

Krista Donaldson, Is it Time for G.I. Jane? (2005)

Donaldson asks if women's equality in the military (i.e. women as soldiers) is the kind of equality that feminists should be fighting for. She also discusses the draft, the formation of female Muslim military recruits, and female amputees and war veterans. WS0616

Mary Lowenthal Felstiner, Casing My Joints: A Private and Public Story of Arthritis (2003)

Felstiner describes the degeneration of her body due to rheumatoid arthritis. Throughout her narrative, she discusses the impact of her hair loss, her inability to work, and her loss of voice and capacity to communicate. She also explores rheumatoid arthritis as a gendered illness and examines her own identity as a disabled woman. WS0618

Thomas J. Gerschick, Toward a Theory of Disability and Gender (2000)

In this article, Gerschick attempts to develop an intersectional theory of gender and disability. He discusses material and non-material effects of disability on gender identities and experiences. He argues that this new theory would allow for expanded understanding of and resistance against complex forms of oppression against people with disabilities. WS0619

Heather Hendershot, The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: From Buffy the Vampire Slayer to Dr. 90210 (2006)

Hendershot critiques reality television and discusses the importance of feminist analysis for television viewers. WS0621

Alison M. Heru, Pink-Collar Medicine: Women and the Future of Medicine (2005)

In her article, Heru offers a comprehensive literature review of the status of women in the medical profession. She specifically looks at gendered differences in pay, practice, professional support, sexual harassment, familial role, and job satisfaction. Heru also gives suggestions to improve gender equity in the medical field. WS0622

bell hooks, Feminist Politicization: A Comment (1989)

hooks discusses the feminist phrase "the personal is political" and explores the problematic and helpful aspects of identity politics and personal experience for feminist movement. WS0623

bell hooks, Rethinking the Nature of Work (2000)

hooks questions the liberatory aspects of women in the work place and specifically notes the contrast between the work histories of white women and women of color. hooks also discusses affirmative action, the feminization of poverty and capitalism as an oppressive system. WS0624

Stanlie M. James & Claire C. Robertson, Introduction: Reimagining Transnational Sisterhood (2002)

In this article, James and Robertson propose the term “female genital cutting” (FGC) to discuss the various practices reshaping women’s genitalia in Africa. Their discussion situates the variations of FGC in their complex historical, cultural, economic and geographical contexts. They criticize uninformed condemnations of FGC in the West as rooted in Western colonialist perspectives that often reduce Africa to the notion of “backward” traditions and African women to hapless victims of the traditions. They suggest that transnational feminist efforts to eradicate FGC need to engage the Western “demonization” of the practice critically and provide careful examination of the issue. WS0625

Jyl Josephson, Citizenship, Same-Sex Marriage, and Feminist Critiques of Marriage (2005)

This article examines and analyzes the debate over same-sex marriage in the United States. It looks into the arguments both for and against the issue from religious conservatives, gay marriage rights advocates, skeptics of the marriage rights agenda and feminists, whose competing views reveal a complex web of often conflicting understandings of marriage in the U.S. The author points out that the same-sex marriage debate is fundamentally a debate about democratic citizenship, as the institution of marriage is perceived and therefore fought over as a hallmark of citizen rights. Drawing on feminist critique of marriage, the author suggests that in their struggles to achieve full citizenship through marriages rights, lesbian communities have to be aware of both the enabling possibilities and limits of the reliance of their approach on legal regulation of families. WS0626

Pagan Kennedy, So Are You Two Together? (2006)

Kennedy discusses her “Boston marriage,” or her platonic, committed relationship to another woman, and asks why this kind of relationship is not more common among women. WS0627

Ruth Lister, Being Feminist (2005)

Lister explores and explains several pertinent issues of the feminist movement including the plurality of feminist identities, global feminism, and the concept of the third wave. Situating her own feminist identity as a British woman influenced by second wave feminism, Lister also discusses feminist identity politics and argues that ultimately they have negative consequences for the feminist movement. WS0629

Kathryn Lofton, Practicing Oprah; or, the Prescriptive Compulsion of a Spiritual Capitalism (2006)

In this article, Lofton examines Oprah Winfrey’s use of spiritual commodity and practice of spiritual capitalism. Specifically, Lofton discusses the increase in spiritual programming and advice on The Oprah Winfrey Show, Winfrey’s “Change Your Life Television” and “Revolution” rhetoric, and the general public’s reaction to a commodified “Church of O.” WS0630

Mandy R. Manning, *The Rhetoric of Equality: Hillary Rodham Clinton's Redefinition of the Female Politician* (2006)

Manning offers a rhetoric analysis of two public speeches made by Hillary Rodham Clinton. She analyzes how Clinton's passionate but unemotional speaking style emphasizing her role as an advocate and policymaker challenges gendered linguistic styles and renegotiates the role of the woman politician. Manning asserts that Clinton's non-traditional rhetorical style enhances her speeches and her self-representation as a political figure and women's rights advocate. Her analysis highlights the role of gender stereotypes in the construction of masculine vs. feminine communication styles. It also suggests that through use of language, female politicians can effectively transform societal views about women in power. WS0632

Daphne Merkin, *Keeping the Forces of Decrepitude at Bay* (2004)

In this *New York Times* article, Merkin discusses her anxiety surrounding her fiftieth birthday and her subsequent visits to plastic surgeons and dermatologists. Drawing on her own experience of aging and cosmetic surgery, she reflects on the contradictions between the anti-aging mania permeating the present culture and the natural, inevitable biological process of aging that used to be revered more than feared. Her essay delivers a humorous but incisive critique of the mounting pressure for people, especially women, to struggle against the onset of aging process. She suggests that the youth-oriented beauty norms engineer women's particular fear of growing old and produces enormous pressure on them to stay young in the looks. WS0634

Monica K. Miller, *Refusal to Undergo a Cesarean Section: A Woman's Right or a Criminal Act?* (2005)

The author analyzes the legal concerns of forced cesarean sections for pregnant women who refuse to comply with doctor's recommendations to have surgery for the health of the fetus. Specifically, Miller explores a 2004 case in which a woman was held legally responsible when one of her twins was stillborn after she refused the cesarean section recommended by her doctor. Ultimately, Miller examines how the state views the rights of a woman versus the rights of her unborn fetus and argues that the state should not prosecute women who refuse cesarean sections. WS0635

Uma Narayan, *Undoing the 'Package Picture' of Cultures* (2000)

Narayan challenges the images of different cultures as having clear boundaries and asserts that these boundaries are human constructions. Because cultures are not packaged neatly and are often muddled, Narayan argues that recognition of the variations and diversities of cultures will help feminist understand how cultural practices should be valued. WS0636

Linda H. Peterson, *Institutionalizing Women's Autobiography: Nineteenth-Century Editors and the Shaping of an Autobiographical Tradition* (1993)

Peterson explores the relevance and significance of gender within autobiographical writing. Specifically, Peterson discusses spiritual autobiographies, domestic memoirs, and various other women's autobiographical texts in order to examine the ways in which editors have historically influenced gendered autobiographical forms. WS0637

Jennifer L. Pozner & Jessica Seigel, Desperately Debating Housewives (2005)

Pozner and Seigel debate whether the television show *Desperate Housewives* is feminist or sexist in a discussion that draws on media hype, dialogue from the show, and feminist concepts of the personal as political, the second shift, and *The Feminine Mystique*. Is the show subversive, dangerous, confronting stereotypes? And to whose benefit? WS0638

Loretta J. Ross, A Feminist Perspective on Hurricane Katrina (2005)

The author discusses the gendered, racial, and class-based structural inequalities that were revealed in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. WS0641

Phyllis Rosser, Too Many Women in College? (2005)

Rosser discusses the gender gap in undergraduate and graduate education and explores the significance of affirmative action for male students. She also examines racial and economic differences among college students and questions of the use of gender-biased SAT test scores as admission criteria. WS0642

Marsha Saxton, Caring for Aunt Alice (2002)

Saxton narrates the end of her aunt's life and tells of her own experiences as her aunt's primary caregiver. She also discusses euthanasia, age-related disability, and disability rights for the elderly. WS0644

Alix Shulman, A Marriage Agreement (2005)

The author describes how she and her husband negotiated gender equality in their household after the birth of their children. She includes a list of jobs and the schedule that her and her spouse chose to follow. WS0645

Dorothy E. Smith, Schooling for Inequality (2000)

In her article, Smith argues that schooling and education are not prioritized enough within feminist theorizing and practice. Using studies and statistics that show gender inequality in the classroom, Smith calls for more attention to be paid to current educational practices that inhibit the agency of young women, thus negatively affecting their adult lives and disrupting democratic society through constructions of inequality. WS0646

Kimberly Springer, Third Wave Black Feminism? (2002)

Through an analysis of three books written by young black women, the author explores the relationship between black women and the third wave of feminism. Ultimately, Springer argues that Black women do not fit within the wave paradigm and are instead building on a history of black female activism of their foremothers. WS0647

Nan Stein, Still No Laughing Matter: Sexual Harassment in K-12 Schools (2005)

In this article, the author points out that though sexual harassment is a rampant issue in K-12 schools, public authorities are slow in action to protect students, especially teenage girls and sexual minority students, from its harms. To reveal the prevalence of sexual harassment in public schools, she brings in survey results and perspectives from harassed students themselves. She also discusses the legal framework for prohibiting sexual harassment in school, examines relevant policies, and suggests a multi-pronged approach to the elimination of the issue. WS0648

Joan C. Tronto, The 'Nanny' Question in Feminism (2002)

In her article, Tronto argues that hiring lower-class women, immigrant women, and women of color as domestic servants or nannies in upper-class and upper middle-class homes is an unjust practice and should be considered in opposition to feminist principles. Foregrounding her argument, Tronto discusses the differences between the household and the consumer market, examines the moral perspectives of employers versus employees versus the children that are cared for, and offers alternative solutions for women who need childcare. WS0649

Ross Wantland, Feminist Frat Boys?: Fraternity Men in the (Women's Studies) House (2005)

The author describes the implementation of the Fraternity Peer Rape Education Program at his university. Wantland helped develop and teach an all-male class that educated fraternity members about rape culture with the goal of bringing about change within fraternity chapters. Wantland asks feminists to consider the ways in which all-male spaces can also be women's studies teaching spaces. WS0650

Linda Wayne, Neutral Pronouns: A Modest Proposal whose Time has Come (2005)

In this essay, the author advocates a turn to sex-neutral pronouns, which will allow for the expression of a variety of gender and sexual identities. Feminists have always criticized the gendered language system for the unequal power relations between the sexes it both reflects and perpetuates in linguistic signification. Experiences of ambiguously gendered and sexed people further expose the restrictions and violence of the sexed language, especially the two-sex pronoun system. It not only renders nontraditional sex identities invisible, it also constructs people identifying with these expressions as abnormal and deviant subjects who need to be regulated. The author suggests that a movement for gender-neutral pronouns should be the next step in social struggles to eliminate sexism, which not only manifests as discrimination of one gender against another, but also as prejudicial practices against all non-conformative gender identities. WS0651

Brenda R. Weber. Beauty, Desire and Anxiety: The Economy of Sameness in ABC's Extreme Makeover (2005)

In this article, the author focuses on the reality show "Extreme Makeover" and examines the body politics of makeover shows in general which equates personal transformation with acquiring a physically attractive and fashionable body. She criticizes these shows for their obsession with appearance, narrowly defined norms of beauty and perpetuation, exploitation of people's desire for beauty, and perpetuation of cycles of cultural anxiety about the body. WS0652

Justus Reid Weiner, Lillian Hellman: The Fiction of Autobiography (2003)

Weiner recounts the ways in which Lillian Hellman's much praised accounts of major historical events in her autobiographical novels *An Unfinished Woman* (1969), *Pentimento* (1973), and *Scoundrel Time* (1976) were proven false and inaccurate and ultimately damaged Hellman's credibility. WS0653

Holly Cohen Cooper & Joan C. Williams, *The Public Policy of Motherhood* (2004)

The authors outline public policies relevant to motherhood and parenting and compare policies in the United States and Europe. Specifically, they discuss work hours, part-time work, health insurance, and child care concerns for women and offer a list of proposed policy changes. Cooper and Williams also discuss the importance of anti-discrimination policies for people with familial commitments. WS0614

Lynda Zielinski, *Jane Doe's Choice* (2006)

Zielinski, a licensed social worker, discusses her experience working with underage girls who attempt to get abortions through the court without parental consent. She describes the procedures a pregnant teenager has to go through and a web of professionals and judges they have to interact with in order to obtain the "judicial bypass," which will grant them the right to abortion without parental permission. She suggests that while young girls decide for abortion for "mature" pragmatic reasons, whether or not they will be granted abortion without parental intervention is largely determined by the social beliefs of the judges. Her essay is a critique of the increasingly restrictive laws on teenager's reproductive rights. WS0655