

**Ms.**  
digital reader

**A Ms. COMPANION TO**  
gendered voices | feminist visions

(SEVENTH EDITION)

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**SPECIAL SECTION:**  
BREAKING NEWS

# Ms. digital reader

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BY SUSAN M. SHAW

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**W**ELCOME TO THE *MS. COMPANION TO GENDERED Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (7th edition)!

Our textbook has been around a long time now, and we're so glad you're using our new edition in your women's, gender and sexuality studies class. My Oregon State colleague Dr. Janet Lee and I wrote the book with students in mind, and so we've tried to make it interesting, relevant, challenging and useful as a tool for learning about gender and developing skills for feminist activism.

Our new partnership with *Ms. Classroom* gives us the opportunity to provide you with up-to-the-moment readings that meld well with our textbook. The director of the *Ms. Classroom* program, Dr. Karon Jolna, and I have selected *Ms.* articles for you that we think address some of the important issues of the current moment. We've also included a number of classic *Ms.* pieces from the magazine's archives that grew directly out of the women's movement, as well as some groundbreaking *Ms.* covers and iconic "No Comment" pages.

My colleague Dr. Tracy Butts from California State University, Chico, and I have written brief introductions to each chapter highlighting some of the important issues related to the topics. We've followed the outline from *Gendered Lives, Feminist Visions* so you'll be able to move easily from the textbook to the reader, making connections among the themes, ideas and questions raised by all the readings. Another colleague, Dr. Margaret Lowry from Texas Christian University, has written teaching activities for each chapter to help you think more deeply about what you're reading.

You don't have to be on social media or watch the news much at all to find examples of current events that affect people differently based on gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, age, nationality and religion. Our entire 2019–2020 academic year was turned upside down by COVID-19, and then we saw a resurgence of Black Lives Matter with the police killing of George Floyd and the widespread protests against racism and police brutality. We've also seen a president who tweets insults and falsehoods to stoke divisions, and we're gearing up for a general election in the midst of all of these tensions and uncertainties.

At this moment, we clearly need feminist lenses to help us think about what's going on, how it's affecting people differently and how we might act to bring about a better world. Our textbook and this companion reader are here for you: to help you be better critical thinkers, to help you be informed and develop a critical feminist lens, and to help you go out and change the world!

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SUSAN M. SHAW, *Professor of Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Oregon State University*

1:

# Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies: Perspectives and Practice

IS THIS YOUR FIRST WOMEN'S, GENDER AND SEXUALITY STUDIES course? If so, you might notice a few things that are different from many of your other courses. First of all, women's, gender and sexuality studies courses center the lives, voices and perspectives of groups of people you might not normally learn about in traditional courses. Rather than assuming knowledge is something objective to be discovered, women's, gender and sexuality studies sees knowledge as something that is created by people who have their own biases and intentions that may be unrecognized. For example, many history books write history as a story of nations, wars and great men. What do you



Wonder Woman for President, First Issue, July 1972

Second, women's and gender studies courses use intersectionality as a key lens for analysis. Intersectionality looks at how various identities—gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, age, nationality and religion—shape one another within systems of power and across social institutions such as family, work, government and media. Rather than thinking of gender as something that exists apart from the other forms of difference, women's, gender and sexuality studies always keeps in mind the intersections of difference.

Third, women's, gender and sexuality studies is a transdisciplinary discipline. I know that may sound contradictory, but women's, gender and sexuality studies draws from other academic fields like sociology, political science, anthro-

pology, literature, biology and public health to examine how gender (and its intersections with other social identities) operates in the world.

Fourth, women's, gender and sexuality studies is activist and directed toward social justice. Women's, gender and sexuality studies grew out of the activist movements of the 1960s and '70s, and it continues to make connections between theory and practice, recognizing the ongoing need to make change toward justice in the world.

Fifth, the women's, gender and sexuality studies classroom uses feminist pedagogies. Feminist pedagogies are feminist theories of teaching and learning that focus on making the classroom a welcoming, inclusive and just place where students are empowered through co-creating knowledge together with their professor. Rather than seeing students as empty vessels to receive their knowledge, feminist professors see students as their co-teachers/learners in a shared enterprise. The feminist classroom values the experiences of students as part of the learning process. The feminist classroom is also anti-racist, anti-classist, anti-ableist and anti-heterosexist as well as anti-sexist.

You'll see these differences in the textbook *Gendered Lives, Feminist Visions* and this *Ms. Companion* to the textbook. Take note of these differences as you read, participate in your class and do your class assignments. As you do, you'll develop a new lens by which to see the world that has been and is and to imagine the world that can be!

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***“Stay Home, Stay Healthy” is Dangerous Language***

**Emily Yate-Doerr**

“Stay home, stay healthy” reinforces misconceptions about how many people live— with the risk of doing more harm than good.

[Msmedia.org, April 3, 2020](#)

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***Celebrating Feminism***

**Janell Hobson**

Feminism has grown more popular, more relevant and more vital than ever.

[Fall 2016](#)

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***This is What a Revolution Looks Like***

**Jeanne K.C. Clark**

In 50 years, the National Organization for Women (NOW) has changed the lives of women everywhere.

[Summer 2016](#)

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***Virtual U***

**Michelle Vlahoulis McGibbney**

Interacting with online women’s studies courses.

[Spring 2015](#)

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***So You Want to Change the World?***

**Michele Tracy Berger**

Women’s studies is alive and well, taught in every corner of the globe and spilling out of classrooms and into activism.

[Fall 2012](#)

## Learning Activities:

### **“Stay Home, Stay Healthy” is Dangerous Language**

Chapter 1 discusses the history and aims of the field of women's, gender, and sexuality studies and teaches that a key historical purpose of the field has been

“to integrate a perspective that would challenge previously unquestioned knowledge. This perspective questioned how such knowledge reflects women's lives and concerns, how it maintains patterns of male privilege and power, and how the consequences of such knowledge affect women and other marginalized people.” (3)

Emily Yates-Doerr's article “‘Stay Home, Stay Healthy’ Is Dangerous Language” provides an example of the ways that women's, gender, and sexuality studies “challenge[s] previously unquestioned knowledge.”

Before you read the article, take a few moments to write down the assumptions and values inherent in the phrase “Stay Home, Stay Healthy.” Who is telling people to stay home? What assumptions are made about what it means to be “home”? What assumptions are made about what it means to be “healthy”? Take a moment to compare your ideas with those of your peers. What ideas did you come up with? Before this exercise, had you previously considered the assumptions that are inherent in the phrase “Stay Home, Stay Healthy”?

Next, read Yates-Doerr's article. What concerns does Yates-Doerr raise about the phrase “Stay Home, Stay Healthy”? Why does the phrase “risk doing more harm than good” according to Yates-Doerr? How does the article provide an example of what it means to consider how previously unquestioned knowledge “affects women and other marginalized people”? Are there other recommendations regarding COVID-19 that you might want to reconsider now that you've analyzed “Stay home, stay healthy”? If so, what are they, and why do they deserve closer examination?

### **Celebrating Feminism**

Chapter 1 provides brief histories of the field of women's, gender, and sexuality studies and the U.S. feminist movement. Jeanne K.C. Clark's article “This Is What a Revolution Looks Like” discusses the foundation of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in June 1966 and traces NOW's involvement in the feminist movement from its founding to the present day. In doing so, Clark recounts stories of feminist advocacy on myriad issues and argues,

“NOW and its allies have altered the face of this country and the world. In law, politics, religion, marriage, family, employment, health, police, education, media, LGBTQA rights, government, economy, immigration, civil rights, sports, foreign relations and so much more, so much has changed” (35).

Working alone or with a partner, choose 3-5 of the topics listed above. Read through the article and timeline to find examples of changes that have occurred since 1966 with regard to your selected topics. What do you learn about how attitudes, norms, laws, and policies have changed? What strategies did activists use to help enact those changes? In what ways might you and your peers be the beneficiaries of the feminist activism that Clark describes? What changes have we seen since this article was published in 2016 that were catalyzed by feminist activism?



2:

## Systems of Privilege and Inequality

IN SPRING 2020, K-12 SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE U.S. transitioned to virtual modes of teaching and learning in an attempt to “flatten the curve” and slow COVID-19’s rate of transmission. The sudden transition to online instruction was intended to salvage the remainder of the term, preventing a disruption in students’ education and allowing continued progress toward a degree. However, this move also inadvertently highlighted systems of privilege and inequality by exposing the persistent challenges faced by students who are economically disadvantaged, first-generation and/or members of

minoritized, marginalized or certain gendered groups. The popularity of the joke “we all go to Zoom University now” attests to the widespread use of the videoconferencing platform as the go-to mode of virtual instruction. Yet the use of Zoom further exacerbated existing concerns about access and equity, the digital divide, privacy and safety for some of our most vulnerable students.

Even in the midst of a global epidemic, there is an expectation that students show up to class on time, having done the readings and assignments, and prepared to give their undivided attention to the work at hand. Those students who had access to a personal computer; fast, reliable internet; and living situations that afforded them private spaces in which to study and Zoom were able to complete the semester with mini-

the access and equity issues, Zoom-bombing—the act of internet trolls and hackers hijacking a session by shouting or sharing racist, misogynistic and offensive messages—became a phenomenon, leaving students feeling unsafe and alienated in their academic communities. Zoombombing became a reminder of the perils women face in online environments, where the cloak of anonymity serves as a breeding ground for racists, sexists, misogynists and homophobes.

Planning for the fall 2020 semester and the likelihood that many institutions will be teaching largely online, faculty are considering the implications of their pedagogical approaches. While asynchronous class meetings allow for greater flexibility, which benefits those students who work, commute and/or have family obligations, synchronous classes often provide structure and some form of accountability, which can prove useful to first-year and first-generation students who are making the transition from high school to college and learning to navigate their way through higher education. Ultimately, the move to virtual instruction has served as a much-needed reminder for us professors to consider our pedagogical practices, who gets included or excluded based upon our decision-making, and the professional obligation we have to make sure that we teach *all* of our students.

But what about students who did not have access to these material resources and comforts? How might their failure to attend Zoom sessions or even appear on camera be read as a lack of interest or ability? In what ways were systems of privilege and inequality created out of the differences between the haves and the have-nots?

At the same time that institutions were beginning to grasp the enormity of



Beginning Ms. Letter, Spring 2020



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***In Solidarity (Ms. Letter)***

**The Ms. Editors**

“This crisis has become a national teaching moment exposing some of the most glaring inequities in our society....”

[Spring 2020](#)

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***Five Lessons the AIDS Epidemic  
Can Teach Us About COVID-19***

**Brad Sears**

“We can do what we can today to mitigate this crisis— but unless we continue to address the deep inequalities in our country, the groundwork for the next epidemic, and the one after, has already been laid.

[Msmedia.org, March 17, 2020](#)

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***Black Girls Matter***

**Kimberle Crenshaw**

When national initiatives to help youth of color focus only on boys, the needs of our most vulnerable young women become invisible.

[Spring 2015](#)

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***Mericans (Ms. Fiction)***

**Sandra Cisneros**

A snapshot in the life of children at the intersection of religion, gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality.

[Summer 2002](#)

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***Welfare Is A Women’s Issue (Ms. Classic)***

**Johnnie Tillmon**

I’m a woman. I’m a black woman. I’m a poor woman. I’m a fat woman. And I’m on welfare. In this country, if you are any one of these things you count as less than a human being. If you are all of those things, you don’t count at all. Except as a statistic.


[Spring 2002](#)

## Learning Activities:

### *In Solidarity*

Chapter 2 focuses on gendered systems of privilege and inequality. These socially constructed systems are so ingrained that they can be difficult to see and recognize unless they are pointed out explicitly. In their letter “In Solidarity,” the *Ms.* editors point out the ways that COVID-19 reveals systems of privilege and oppression in the U.S. They argue, “This crisis has become a national teaching moment, exposing some of the most glaring inequities in our country.”

What “glaring inequities” do the *Ms.* editors point out? How are those inequities gendered? How do they relate to the systems of privilege and inequality discussed in Chapter 2? How do the *Ms.* editors argue for social justice in this text?



Dear *Ms.* Community Member,

While we were at work on this issue, our world changed suddenly, terribly. As we go to print, we’re still reeling from the tragedy—the increasing number of cases of COVID-19, the increasing number of deaths, the increasing anxiety and feelings of helplessness. By the time you read this, the numbers of sick and dying will only be greater and the losses more tragic.

These are difficult times for us all. And yet, we continue.

Here at *Ms.*, we’ll keep providing up-to-the-minute reporting—both in the magazine and online at [msmagazine.com](http://msmagazine.com). We’ll salute our heroes and mourn those who are lost. *Ms.* will remain focused on aspects of the crisis not often reported on by mainstream media: how this virus disproportionately impacts women, many of whom are on the front lines of this public health crisis. The vast majority of nurses, home health care workers and those who look after the elderly in nursing homes are women. So are the overwhelming majority of teachers, school counselors and school cafeteria workers, domestic workers and child care providers.

When we shelter in place, what happens to women experiencing domestic violence, homelessness or mental illness? For women who can’t afford not to work, what happens when family members become ill or children’s schools close?

This crisis has become a national teaching moment, exposing some of the most glaring inequities in our country. We’re outraged that 69 percent of low-income workers making \$10.80 or less per hour—who are mostly women and disproportionately women and men of color—do not have even

*Continued on Page 1*

### Black Girls Matter

As we learn in Ch. 2, systems of privilege and inequality are created out of the differences among women. In “Black Girls Matter,” legal scholar, activist, and public intellectual Kimberlé Crenshaw addresses the systemic ways that black girls are disenfranchised within the education system—and even within reform efforts to address systemic challenges facing black youth.

Take a look at the chart from “Black Girls Matter” p. 28 (below). What do you learn about the ways that Black girls are treated in schools compared to white girls? How does the disparate treatment of Black girls and white girls compare to the disparate treatment between Black boys and white boys? Are these statistics surprising to you? Why or why not? How do these statistics combat commonplace ideas about the educational opportunities afforded to Black girls in comparison to other students?

Crenshaw argues, “Feminists must speak out for a gender-inclusive racial justice agenda and must champion efforts to bring a race-sensitive analysis to bear in advocating for women and girls of color” (29). How does

“Black Girls Matter” model the type of “race-sensitive analysis” that Crenshaw calls for?

Dig deeper: Take a look at the “About” page on the website for the My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) Alliance (<https://www.obama.org/mbka/about-mbka/>). According to the website, what is the need for an organization such as MBK? What are MBK’s aims? Now apply Crenshaw’s gender-inclusive lens to what you learn about MBK. How does Crenshaw support her argument that organizations like MBK should provide explicit support for all Black children, rather than just supporting Black boys?

Next, take a look at pp. 9-12 of the white paper *Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Over-policed, and Under-protected*. According to the authors, Black girls face specific issues within the education system related to the intersections of gender and race. What are the specific issues facing Black girls? How do the concerns raised in “Black Girls Matter” differ from the ones addressed on the MBK website?



## 3:

## Learning Gender

IS IT A BOY OR A GIRL? THAT'S LIKELY THE FIRST QUESTION THAT WAS ever asked about you. When the person who delivers you answers that question, they set in motion a whole range of experiences that shape you from the moment you're identified as a girl or a boy based on your anatomy. That is the gender assigned to you at birth. (And now, there's a whole gender-reveal industry to answer that question even before a baby is born.)

Typically, based on that assigned gender, you may be given a gendered name, dressed in different clothes (pink or blue), given different toys and handled differently by people who pick you up and hold you. You'll get told how to act based on that gender: "Sit like a lady!" "Act like a man!" "Smile!" "Don't cry!" Even now, you know exactly who those messages are for—which are for girls and which are for boys. Gender is not something we're born with; it's something we learn.



Our dominant society only gives us two choices, and most people are comfortable enough with one of those. They learn to perform the gender that matches the one they were assigned at birth, and their internal sense of gender matches both the gender assigned at birth and the gender they perform (gender expression). These people are called cisgender, and the dominant culture supports their gender identity. They can walk through the world fairly easily without their gender being called into question or presenting obstacles for them.

Not everyone, however, fits so easily into the gender they were assigned at birth. Sometimes their gender identity does not match that gender. Some people may transition from the gender assigned at birth to their gender identity through their presentation (clothing, hairstyle, even the way they sit); some may take hormones and have gender affirmation surgeries so their bodies align with their gender identities. Transgender individuals often run into problems because of cisgender expectations. Recently, for example, we've seen

political efforts to force people to use bathrooms that match the gender assigned at birth rather than their gender identity.

Not everyone who identifies as a gender other than cisgender fits into the gender binary (the belief in only two separate genders). They may identify as gender nonbinary, gender nonconforming, genderqueer or a whole host of other identities, expressing themselves through a mix of characteristics we typically classify as male or female.

In some way or another, we all learn gender and express gender in the ways we walk and talk and dress and interact with the world. How about you? How are you expressing gender right now? Have you ever resisted the ways society has imposed gender on you? For example, I always hated wearing dresses. I wanted to play football. As I got older, I ran into gender expectations when people told me I wasn't supposed to do certain jobs because I was a woman (I did them anyway). How does gender shape your life? How do you think the gender binary keeps people from doing some things they want to do? How can all of us resist the limitations placed on us because of gender? What do the readings here and in the textbook suggest about how we learn and perform gender, how gender affects us all, and how we can challenge the constraints of gender?

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***Thinking Outside the Gender Box*****Kristi Eaton**

Somali refugees combat gender norms and intimate partner violence.

[Spring 2020](#)

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***Toxic Masculinity*****Stephanie Russell-Kraft**

In the minds of angry men's rights supporters, it's feminists who are always to blame.

[Spring 2019](#)

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***Three Chronicles (Ms. Fiction)*****Margaret Atwood**

Three short stories examining gender roles and how women and men fare in our fantastical and complex futures.

[Summer 2002 \(1990\)](#)

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***Baseball Diamond Are A Girl's Best Friend (Ms. Classic)*****Letty Cottin Pogrebin**

Boys have to worry about being good enough to play. But girls have to worry about being allowed to prove that they're good.

[Spring 2002 \(1974\)](#)

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***Guide To Consciousness-Raising (Ms. Classic)*****Letty Cottin Pogrebin**

Consciousness-raising groups bring women together to talk about their lives, creating connections between personal experience and broader systems of privilege and oppression.

[Spring 2002 \(1973\)](#)

## Learning Activities:

### Toxic Masculinity

Chapter 3 addresses cultural gender norms and expectations for masculinity and femininity and discusses the privileges afforded to cisgender men who perform masculinity according to socially acceptable “regimes of truth.”

Women’s, gender, and sexuality studies scholars argue, “regimes” of truth that dictate “masculine” and “feminine” behavior are not “natural,” and many feminist activists work to dismantle gender norms that can become “a prison for both women and men” (105).

As Stephanie Russell-Kraft discusses in her article “Toxic Masculinity,” some men’s rights groups appropriate and twist feminist gender analysis to argue, “male power and male oppression of women is a myth” (qtd in Russell-Kraft 33.)

Take a look at the images to the right. The top image is from the University of Wisconsin—Madison Police’s anti-sexual assault campaign.

Who is the audience for this ad? What is the message being communicated? What gender norms underlie the argument being made? Why might anti-rape activists consider this ad to be problematic? Why might men’s rights groups like the ones described in “Toxic Masculinity” be angered by this ad?

Next, take a look at the ad that a men’s rights group ran in response to the “Don’t Be That Guy” campaign (center).

Who is the audience for this ad? What is the message being communicated? What gender norms underlie the assumptions being made? Why is this ad problematic? What do you learn about men’s rights groups’ attitudes about feminism when you compare these ads side by side?

Finally, take a look at the bottom image, which is featured on the website for the National Organization of Men Against Sexism (NOMAS), an organization discussed on p. 104 of your textbook.



What is the effect of the update on the iconic image of Rosie the Riveter? What messages are being communicated? How does this image challenge “regimes of truth” associated with masculinity and femininity? How does it align with—rather than challenge and co-opt—feminist values?

### **Guide to Consciousness-Raising**

In Chapter 3, we learn, “gender is so central in shaping our lives, much of what is gendered we do not even recognize; it’s made normal and ordinary and occurs on a subconscious level” (98). Letty Cottin Pogrebin’s “Guide for Consciousness-Raising” describes one strategy for making the unconscious conscious—and creating a strong support community in the process.

Although Cottin Pogrebin’s “Guide” could be considered old-fashioned (this *Ms.* Classic article was originally published in 1972!), the act of gathering for consciousness-raising sessions is as radical today as it was then, particularly given our 21st-C impulse to focus more intently on our electronics than on each other. And Cottin Pogrebin’s framing questions provide an interesting starting point for discussions about gender norms that we often take for granted.

Working with a partner or in a small group, talk through these questions, which Cottin Pogrebin poses in her “Guide to Consciousness Raising”:

- Who do you live with, and how do you like it?
- Who do you usually confide in?
- Do you feel like a grown-up?

Next, reflect on your conversation. Are there things that become apparent about gender roles as you talk through these questions? How might participation in ongoing consciousness-raising groups benefit college students?

4:

## Inscribing Gender on the Body

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, MY MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER INSISTED THAT MY cousins and I had black dolls so that that we would grow up surrounded by positive, affirming images of blackness. As a black woman, I am unapologetically proud of my blackness. Yet as a black woman inhabiting a larger body, I am all too aware of the manner in which my body is measured, compared to others, held to a one-size-fits-all standard of beauty—and found to be lacking. When I was growing up in the '70s, there was a lack of representation of blackness in popular culture and media, but that lack paled in comparison to the dearth of examples of plus-sized women, who were often portrayed as the

funny, sassy best friend but never the leading lady nor the love interest. Even as a young person, it was clear to me that certain bodies, particularly certain female bodies, were preferable, desirable.

Discourses or regimes of truth about fat bodies insist that they be covered from head to toe and take up as little space as humanly possible. Fat women are expected to be embarrassed of their bodies and are often shamed for daring to embrace their curves. In December 2019, American-born singer Lizzo attended a Los Angeles Lakers basketball game. During the cheerleaders' halftime performance, they danced to her song "Juice," and Lizzo, clad in a booty-bearing dress that revealed her thong, gave an impromptu twerk performance from her courtside seat.

The backlash was immediate, with Lakers fans calling for the performer to be banned from future games. Although critics cited concerns about propriety and modesty, young children being exposed to a scantily clad woman and the singer's health due to her weight, it was evident that the real issue was Lizzo's unapologetic display of her body. She dared to act in the same manner as her "normal"-weight celebrity peers. In response to critics' attempts to fat-shame her, the singer posted a video to TikTok sharing her workout regimen. The video, which sought to debunk stereo-

typical notions that fat is synonymous with laziness and slovenliness, ends with Lizzo asserting, "I'm not working out to have your ideal body type. I'm working out to have my ideal body type"—underscoring the singer's desire to exercise autonomy over her own body.

In May 2020, British-born singer Adele made the news after unveiling her dramatic weight loss. Like Lizzo, Adele also sought to exercise bodily autonomy. Fans and tabloids took to social media to gleefully exclaim how beautiful the singer had become. Others shared that they felt betrayed by the formerly fat entertainer, whom they saw as a plus-sized role model.

As Lizzo's and Adele's experiences demonstrate, women's bodies are viewed as communal property, with everyone invited to have an opinion and weigh in on their suitability. When society obsesses about Lizzo's and Adele's weight, conversations about the singers' bodies overshadow talk of their performances and musical talents, the activities their bodies are actually responsible for. Our treatment of the singers brings to mind a passage in Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. After her husband publicly chastises her for cutting a plug of tobacco incorrectly, Jane Mae Crawford retorts, "Stop mixin' up mah doings wid mah looks, Jody." What are some other ways in which we inscribe gender onto bodies and conflate people's worth and abilities with their physical appearance?



Summer 2008: Body image



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***Addressing Racism's Toll: My Minneapolis Experience***

**Michele Goodwin**

“At a certain point it becomes hopeless and seemingly pointless for people of color to talk about the myriad ways in which racism affects their lives if white friends, coworkers and ‘allies’ are not listening.

[Msmedia.org, June 1, 2020](#)

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***Our Bodies, Our Hell: How Modern American Sexism Weaponizes Women's Bodies***

**Ashley Jordan**

It is no secret that American culture is misogynistic—but the central role women's bodies play in maintaining the sexist status quo is too often overlooked and understated.

[Msmedia.org, March 22, 2020](#)

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***Embracing Their Roundness***

**Clair MacDougall**

Ghana's new pageant aims to redefine African beauty.

[Spring 2011](#)

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***The Perfect Pantomime***

**Aimee Liu**

What is our body telling us when we have an eating disorder?

[Spring 2009](#)

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***the hole birth catalog (Ms. Classic)***

**Cynthia Ozick**

A meditation on anatomy and destiny: “It is, appropriately, logic with a hole in it.

[Spring 2002 \(1972\)](#)

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## Learning Activities:

### **Ms. Cover Summer 2008: Body Image**

In Ch. 4, the textbook authors write, “women are particularly vulnerable to the cultural preoccupation with, and the measuring of their worth against, the body” (162–63). This cover from the Spring 2008 issue of *Ms.* magazine makes a similar argument.

Spend some time looking at this cover image with a peer or in a small group. How is this body gendered? Racialized? Classed? What does this image communicate about the relationship between a woman’s body and her worth? What does this image communicate about the relationship between a woman’s physical body and personality traits?

### **Addressing Racism’s Toll: My Minneapolis Experience and Our Bodies, Our Hell: How Modern American Sexism Weaponizes Women’s Bodies**

When we consider how gender is inscribed on the body, it’s important to remember that race plays a key role in the ways that different people are subjected to particular types of bodily surveillance and control.

Carefully read through Michele Goodwin’s *Addressing Racism’s Toll: My Minneapolis Experience* and Ashley Jordan’s *Our Bodies, Our Hell: How Modern American Sexism Weaponizes Women’s Bodies*. According to Goodwin and Jordan, how are women’s bodies subjected to formal and informal surveillance and control by individuals and institutions (such as schools, laws, and social policies)? Working with a peer or in a small group, make a list of all the formal and informal examples you can find in the two articles.

Next, consider how the surveillance and control of women’s bodies differs depending on race. What do you learn about the different ways that racial markers determine the ways that women’s bodies are controlled? What are the consequences for individual women of these varying types of surveillance and control? What are the larger consequences for U.S. public health, law, policy, and politics?



5:

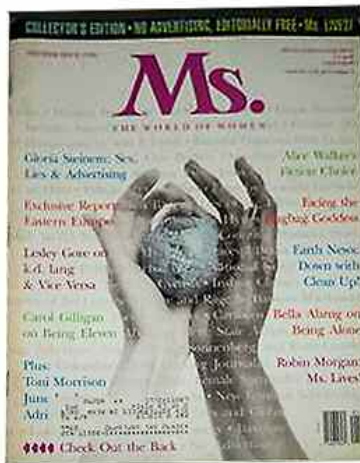
# Media and Culture

I LOVE POP CULTURE. IN FACT, I teach a couple of courses that use feminist lenses to examine things like British murder mysteries and crime dramas and sports. While we think of pop culture as entertainment, it also plays an important role in maintaining systems of oppression through the ways it reproduces gender, race, class, sexuality, ability and age. Pop culture both reflects and shapes our ideas about differences and social hierarchies.

Now with social media, 24-hour news and electronic tracking of our media consumption, we can find ourselves in smaller and smaller circles of media exposure, only seeing more and more of what we already think and want to hear. This echo chamber reinforces our existing biases and often causes us not to seek out differing opinions or research that contradicts what we believe. Particularly at this moment, political and religious conservatives have demonstrated a willingness to reject facts, science and history if they don't fit with their right-wing political agenda. President Donald Trump has been a primary purveyor of untruths, particularly through his Twitter account, and research shows that conservatives are much more likely than liberals to accept and amplify falsehoods and distortions on social media.

To work for social justice, we have to be educated and analytical consumers of media and pop culture. While we can enjoy watching *Law & Order: SVU*, we should also be critiquing the ways such shows reinforce

police culture and undermine efforts to transform the ways our society deals with the structural problems



Ms. cover from July/August 1990 and Gloria Steinem's *Sex, Lies, and Advertising*

that lead to crime. We have to ask how the constant display of mutilated women's bodies on crime dramas like

*Criminal Minds* contributes to our expectations of sexualized violence—and we have to consider why we like to watch this. We have to struggle with questions about what to do with the movies, TV shows, music and art produced by men like Alfred Hitchcock, Woody Allen and Harvey Weinstein. Do we toss these works in the trashcan? Do we watch them with a critical eye? Do we continue to listen to, for instance, R. Kelly? And how do we change the media culture so that powerful men no longer sexually abuse and assault women?

Importantly, media and pop culture can also be places for feminist resistance. *Ms.* magazine came into being in the 1970s as a way to support and amplify the women's movements' demands for justice. Activists around the world have used social media to organize protests, raise awareness and educate the public. #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo have revolutionized conversations about race and gender. Of course, we also have to be aware of the danger of assuming that simply tweeting about social problems is enough. Hashtag activism can only go so far. We have to vote and lobby our elected officials, go out and protest, and get involved in local change-making organizations.

Think about what the readings in the textbook and this reader have to say about how media and pop culture are gendered and radicalized productions, how they contribute to and resist systems of oppression, and what they suggest you can do to help make social change.

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***By and About Women*****Aviva Dove-Viebahn**

Nearly half of the directors up for awards at this year's Sundance Film Festival were women. The diverse stories they told touch on the many realities of women and girls.

[Spring 2020](#)

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***Logging On and Speaking Out*****Florence Njoki**

Increased internet access allows African women to join the #MeToo conversation.

[Summer 2019](#)

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***The Soundtrack of Lesbian Feminism*****Bonnie J. Morris**

"Women's music" turns 40.

[Spring 2015](#)

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***Sex, Lies, and Advertising (Ms. Classic)*****Gloria Steinem**

A discussion of advertising in *Ms.* magazine

[Spring 2002, \(1990\)](#)

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***"No Comment" (Ms. Classic)***

A *Ms.* institution, taking on offensive advertising and what readers can do about it.

[Summer 2016](#)

[Winter 2016](#)

[Winter 2010](#)

[Fall 2019](#)

## Learning Activities:

### “Sex, Lies, and Advertising” (*Ms. Classic*)

Ch. 5 reminds us, “women’s magazines are an especially fruitful subject of study for examining how gender works in U.S. society” (242). Magazines influence gender norms by shaping gendered and racialized beauty norms. But they also influence gender norms in less obvious ways—such as when advertisers dictate the content they deem acceptable for the magazines in which they advertise.

Gloria Steinem’s article “Sex, Lies, and Advertising,” which was originally published in the July/August 1990 issue of *Ms.*, describes the ways that advertisers tried to influence *Ms.* magazine’s content—and of the challenges Steinem faced in her efforts to solicit advertising revenue while also staying true to the magazine’s mission of “reporting, rebelling, and truth-telling.”

According to Steinem, how did advertisers attempt to influence the magazine’s content? Make a list of at least three examples from the article in which advertisers demanded changes to magazine content or pulled advertisements when *Ms.* editors refused. What did advertisers want changed and/or why did they refuse to run ads? If *Ms.* conceded to advertisers’ demands (or had chosen to concede), how did (or would have) those concessions changed the arguments being made by *Ms.* writers? How did (or would have) those changes compromised *Ms.*’s commitment to “reporting, rebelling, and truth-telling”? Did you know that advertisers had—and continue to have—such power over the kinds of stories that are told in television and print media?

Dig deeper: In Ch. 5 we learn that print magazines are an important “part of the multibillion-dollar industries that produce cosmetics and fashion and help shape the social construction of beauty” (242). Take a look at one or more women’s magazines, such as *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Glamour*, *Elle*, *Self*, *Ebony*, *Shape*, *O* magazine, etc. How many articles and/or advertisements can you find about beauty-related topics such as makeup, clothes, hair,

diets, or exercise? You can use the chart on p. 242 of your textbook to keep track of your tally.

What percentage of the magazines are made up of advertisements and articles related to these topics? What norms for beauty and consumerism do these advertisements and articles promote? What do you learn about the ways that fashion magazines influence women’s spending and the social construction of beauty from engaging in this analysis? How are the articles you’ve read in *Ms.* this semester similar to or different from the articles you find in the magazine(s) you reviewed?


**“No Comment” (Ms. Classic)**

*Ms.* magazine is well-known for its “No Comment” section, which features print ads that are problematic because of messaging that is sexist, racist, misogynistic, etc. “No Comment” includes the ad itself along with information about how to register complaints to the company running the ad, which encourages *Ms.* readers to engage in the activist work of lobbying companies to change their advertising practices.

Take a careful look at each of the three ads featured on the “No Comment” page from the Summer 2016 issue of *Ms.*

What implicit and explicit messages about gender norms do these advertisements communicate? Please list specific aspects of the ads’ photos, language, arrangement, etc. to support your assertions. Why are these ads problematic? Why do you think *Ms.* says only “No Comment” rather than analyzing these ads for readers?

Long Term  
*Wife Insurance!*



4.79 TOTAL CARAT WEIGHT  
HANDCRAFTED IN PLATINUM  
\$79,000

**BAILEY'S**  
FINE JEWELRY

*Every Woman Wants a Bailey Box*

Cameron Village & Crabtree Valley Mall  
Rocky Mount | Greenville  
[www.baileybox.com](http://www.baileybox.com)



YOU MAY NOT BE THE FIRST...  
BUT DO YOU REALLY CARE?

THE FINEST PRE-OWNED LUXURY AND EXOTIC AUTOS IN SOUTH FLORIDA  
WWW.EXCBLAUTO.COM  
1001 CLINT MOORE RD. STE 101 BOCA RATON, FL



STUART WEITZMAN

6:

# Sex, Power and Intimacy

I LOVE TEACHING SHERWOOD Anderson’s short story “Hands” (1919) in my survey of American literature course because the text is so ahead of its time in its treatment of sex, power and intimacy. “Hands” is the story of Adolph Myers, a teacher who is run out of town after a student falsely accuses Adolph of touching him inappropriately.

In his care of the boys in his charge, Adolph is likened to “the finer sort of women in their love of men.” Because the townspeople perceive Adolph to be effeminate, the student’s allegations corroborate their suspicions. The townspeople attack Adolph with the intention of killing him but relent because “something in his figure, so small, white and pitiful, touched their hearts and they let him escape.” Adolph is attacked because he does not perform gender in the way that the townspeople expect. Men are supposed to be masculine, hard. As demonstrated in the story, an acceptable way for men to use their hands is to hit and beat, to lord power over others. Yet Adolph’s life is spared because the men cannot bring themselves to enact violence against someone who presents in such a womanly manner.



From “What Do Women Want?” Summer 2019

Not only do the townspeople confuse sex and sexual identity, but they also erroneously conflate being gay with pedophilia. As a result of the attack, Adolph comes to live a very isolated life, one sorely lacking in intimacy, and he mistakenly associates his sexual identity with his expressive hands, such that he feels compelled to hide them in his pockets or still them when he talks.

In focusing on hands, Anderson calls our attention to double standards surrounding intimacy that exist for men and women. In our discussions of the story, my students, many of whom aspire to become teachers, talk about the double standards that persist in education, questioning why it is perfectly acceptable for women to use touch as a form of nurturing, yet society frowns upon men doing the same. This, of course, begs the questions: How are sexual scripts used to uphold power and how do they prevent intimacy?



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***Because of Sex: A Historic Win for LGBTQ and Transgender Americans During Pride Month (Ms. Breaking News)***

**Adam P. Romero**

On Monday, June 15, 2020, the Supreme Court ruled that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act protects LGBTQ and transgender employees from workplace discrimination.

[Msmedia.org, June 15, 2020](#)

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***Because of Sex***

**Adam P. Romero**

In three cases crucial to LGBTQ rights, the Supreme Court will decide whether employers can fire workers for their sexual orientation or gender identity.

[Spring 2020](#)

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***What Do Women Want?***

**Carmen Rios**

A radical women's health campaign ensures leaders worldwide will listen to the answer.

[Summer 2019](#)

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***A Question of Conscience***

**Melissa McGlensey**

What message do we send by tolerating Russian homophobia?

[Fall 2013](#)

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***Gay Gothic (Ms. Classic)***

**Lucy Van Gelder**

How four people met, had a baby, and became good friends.

[Spring 2002, \(1987\)](#)

## Learning Activities:

### ***Because of Sex: A Historic Win for Pride Month and Because of Sex***

In Ch. 6 we learn that sexuality is “highly regulated” in ways that are explicit and implicit, formal and informal. Laws and social policies are examples of ways that social institutions wield power and control by “condoning certain relationships and sexual expressions” while condemning others (280). Adam P. Romero’s article “Because of Sex: A Historic Win for Pride Month” celebrates the U.S. Supreme Court’s June 15, 2020 ruling in *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia*, which says that Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act protects LGBTQ employees from workplace discrimination.

At issue in this lawsuit (and in the other lawsuits mentioned in Romero’s article “Because of Sex”) is the way lawmakers understand and explain the relationship between sex, sexual orientation, and gender expression. Take a few minutes to review pp. 284-85 of your textbook. How do women’s, gender and sexuality studies scholars understand the relationship between sex, gender, and sexuality?

Next, read both of Romero’s articles, which focus specifically on lawmakers’ and Supreme Court Justices’ understanding of a person’s “sex.” Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits “discrimination motivated by a person’s sex” (34). What arguments does Romero make about whether or not legal protection based on “sex” relates to sexual orientation? What arguments does Romero make about whether or not legal protection based on “sex” relates to gender expression?

Take a look at the opening of the Supreme Court decision which was written by Justice Neil Gorsuch:

“Sometimes small gestures can have unexpected consequences. Major initiatives practically guarantee them. In our time, few pieces of federal legislation rank in significance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. There, in Title VII,

Congress outlawed discrimination in the workplace on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Today, we must decide whether an employer can fire someone simply for being homosexual or transgender. The answer is clear. An employer who fires an individual for being homosexual or transgender fires that person for traits or actions it would not have questioned in members of a different sex. Sex plays a necessary and undisguisable role in the decision, exactly what Title VII forbids. Those who adopted the Civil Rights Act might not have anticipated their work would lead to this particular result. Likely, they weren’t thinking about many of the Act’s consequences that have become apparent over the years, including its prohibition against discrimination on the basis of motherhood or its ban on the sexual harassment of male employees. But the limits of the drafters’ imagination supply no reason to ignore the law’s demands. When the express terms of a statute give us one answer and extra-textual considerations suggest another, it’s no contest. Only the written word is the law, and all persons are entitled to its benefit.”

What arguments does Justice Gorsuch, the author of this Supreme Court opinion, make about why Title VII of the Civil Rights act protects LGBTQ employees from workplace discrimination?

Finally, how does this legal debate relate to the ways that sex, sexual orientation, and gender expression are “highly regulated”? What do you learn about the relationship between sex and power from reading this article and thinking through these questions?

***A Question of Conscience***

Ch. 6 addresses the ways that laws, policies, and social norms attempt to regulate individuals' sexual expression, as well as the ways that individuals and groups accede to—or defy—those laws, policies, and norms. In “A Question of Conscience,” Melissa McGlensey examines the ways that debates about the regulation of sex, sexuality, and sexual expression played out on the world stage before the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi.

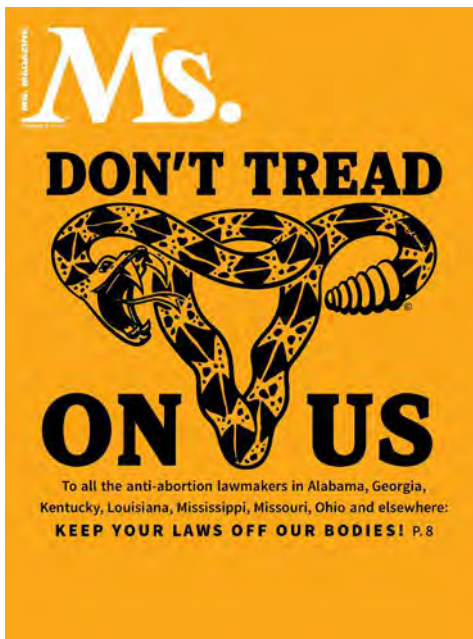
According to McGlensey, how did Vladimir Putin use Russian law to regulate and control Russians' sexual orientation and sexual expression? How did the International Olympic Committee (IOC) respond? How did then-President Barack Obama respond? Why are their responses “a question of conscience,” according to McGlensey?

7:

## Health and Reproductive Justice

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS MADE ONGOING INEQUALITY VISIBLE. In the U.S., we saw that those most affected by the virus and least able to access health care were largely poor people, older people and people of color. With the spread of the virus exacerbated by President Donald Trump, who

downplayed the coronavirus' risks and delayed action, the U.S. quickly became the world leader in COVID-19 infections and deaths. After the initial lockdown to "flatten the curve" so seriously ill people would not overwhelm the health care system, many privileged people, including Trump, began to demand that states reopen despite having no vaccine, no cure and no effective treatment. Many of us, it seems, are willing to sacrifice vulnerable people in order to shop, vacation and go to church services. At the same time that some conservatives were resisting shelter-in-place orders, right-wing politicians were using the pandemic as an excuse to tighten abortion restrictions by labeling abortion an elective procedure, thus banning abortions during the lockdown.



Ms. Cover (Don't Tread On Us, Summer 2019)

With COVID-19 as a case study, we can see the ways that gender, race, class, and health care, including reproductive rights, are intertwined. As the readings in this textbook and reader suggest, health is an especially important issue for feminists because it goes right to the heart of feminists' demands for bodily integrity and autonomy.

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***Abortion is Not Elective*****Abbey Hardy-Fairbanks and Christina Bourne**

Midwest reproductive healthcare during a pandemic.

[Msmedia.org, April 17, 2020](#)

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***The Crime Was Pregnancy*****Amber Khan**

Fetal rights law means U.S. women can be and are being prosecuted, not just for abortions, but for miscarriages and stillborn births -- for pregnancy itself.

[Summer 2019](#)

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***Black Mamas Matter*****Dr. Joia Crear-Perry**

Racism is the reason black mothers in the U.S. are far more likely to die of childbirth or pregnancy-related causes than white mothers.

[Winter 2019](#)

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***An Abortion in Chile*****Erica Hellerstein**

A network of underground abortion-rights advocates are providing a safe choice for Chilean women.

[Summer 2014](#)

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***Body Politic (Ms. Classic)*****Barbara Ehrenreich**

"When I think of the beginnings of the women's health movement, I think, above all, of the stories women told."

[Spring 2002, \(1984\)](#)

## Learning Activities:

*Ch. 7 pp. 361-72 recounts the history of U.S. abortion rights and summarizes arguments for and against abortion rights. The information provided on those pages provides a context for the Ch. 7 learning activities.*

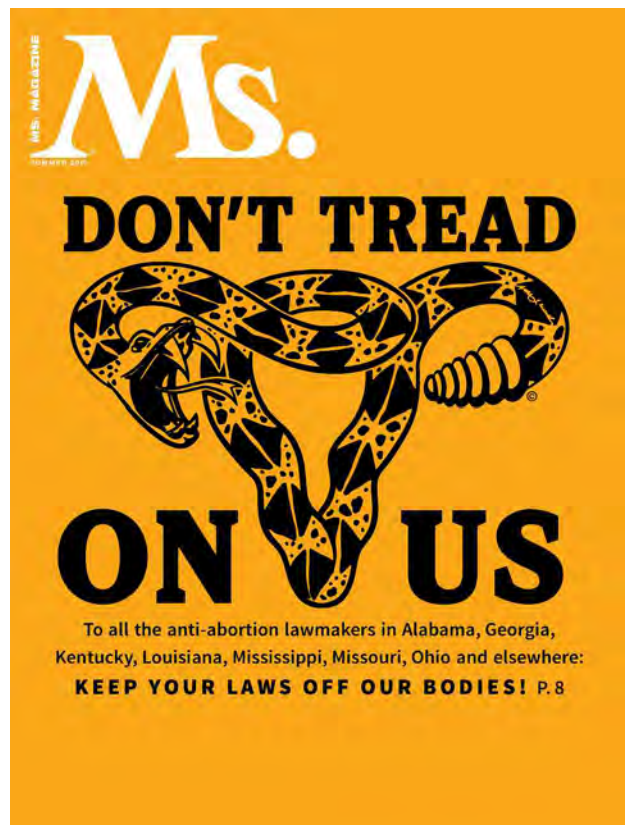
### **Don't Tread on Us (Ms. Cover Summer 2019)**

The focus of this activity is to consider the argument being made by *Ms.* in the Summer 2019 cover “Don’t Tread on Us.” In order to fully understand the argument being made, it’s important to understand the reference to the Gadsden flag, which was designed in 1775 during the American Revolution.

Take a few minutes to search online for information about the history, context, and symbolism of the Gadsden flag, which is pictured to the right.

What do you learn about the Gadsden flag from your research?

Next, study the *Ms.* cover. What arguments are being made? How does the cover draw on the Gadsden flag’s historical imagery and messaging? How does the cover revise that imagery and messaging to support a pro-choice stance?



***Abortion Is Not Elective***

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, many states limited restrictions on elective healthcare procedures in order to free up hospital beds and personal protective equipment (PPE) for hospitals and health care providers who were working to diagnose and treat patients infected with COVID-19. In the process, states such as Texas, Arkansas, Alaska, and Mississippi defined abortion as an “elective” procedure and banned abortions under the disingenuous premise that allowing abortion clinics to continue to operate would hamper statewide efforts to fight COVID-19.

First, review your textbook pp. 367-70 and make a list of the tactics used to support “a general chipping away of women’s rights to abortion” since the *Roe v. Wade* ruling in 1973. In what ways has there been a “chipping away of women’s rights to an abortion”?

Before you read Abbey Hardy-Fairbanks and Christina Bourne’s article “Abortion Is Not Elective,” look up a definition of the term “elective.” What is the definition of the term in relation to surgeries and medical procedures? According to Hardy-Fairbanks and Bourne, how have state abortion bans related to COVID-19 affected women’s abilities to obtain reproductive healthcare? How do the examples Hardy-Fairbanks and Bourne provide support their argument that abortion is not an “elective” procedure? How might you situate states’ attempts to restrict abortion during COVID-19 as part of larger attempts to “chip away” at women’s rights to an abortion?

8:

## Family Systems, Family Lives

PROBLEMATIC THOUGH IT MAY BE AT TIMES, SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS influencers have become critical agents in disrupting our notions of who or what constitutes a family and expanding our understanding of how families function—from the roles people assume to how power gets distributed. On social media, we are invited to join friends and strangers alike in the celebration of every phase of the family life cycle from pregnancy announcements, gender reveals and labor and delivery, to childhood and adult milestones, engagements, weddings and deaths. We witness the protest of unjust governmental policies, such as the imprisonment of children in cages at the U.S. border, separated from mothers who risked their lives to find new homes in this country. Celebrities like J. Lo, Gabrielle Union and Cierra share glimpses into the lives of their blended families, a move that reminds us that not all family units are nuclear. LGBTQ youth share their coming out stories and same sex couples introduce us to their children—both important acts in countering heteronormativity, pushing against homophobia and amplifying the lived experiences of members of the LGBTQ community.



Ms. Cover (She Persisted, Summer 2017)

choose whom we call family. While more than half of all black children and one-third of Latinx children live with an unmarried parent, posts of black and Latinx men caring for their children debunk the pervasive myth of absentee fathers. Videos of fathers doing their daughters' hair and posts celebrating #GirlDad dispel stereotypical notions of familial roles (i.e., women care for the home and children; men provide protection and financial support) and the importance of sons as heirs to the family name. Through its content, social media displays the diversity of family forms, highlighting the fact that there is no such thing as a "normal" family.

There is a meme making the rounds on social media that states, "If your parents aren't accepting of your [sexual] identity, I'm your mother now." As this meme demonstrates, your kinship circle is not solely biological; we all have the ability to

choose whom we call family. While more than half of all black children and one-third of Latinx children live with an unmarried parent, posts of black and Latinx men caring for their children debunk the pervasive myth of absentee fathers. Videos of fathers doing their daughters' hair and posts celebrating #GirlDad dispel stereotypical notions of familial roles (i.e., women care for the home and children; men provide protection and financial support) and the importance of sons as heirs to the family name. Through its content, social media displays the diversity of family forms, highlighting the fact that there is no such thing as a "normal" family.



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***Making a Killing*****Victoria Law**

By prioritizing profits over people the immigrant detention industry has ballooned under President Trump-- but so has the women-led resistance that's challenging it.

[Fall 2019](#)

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***Runaway Brides*****Kristi Eaton**

Indian girls and their supporters fight to end child marriages.

[Winter 2018](#)

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***Girls in White Dresses*****Gayle Tzemach Lemmon**

Thousands of U.S. girls are married off each year—often to men—in places like the South Bronx and Lincoln City and the Silicon Valley.

[Summer 2017](#)

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***Women on the Run*****Nina Rabin and Roxana Bacon**

Central American women fleeing domestic violence have born the brunt of some of the harshest border policies.

[Summer 2017](#)

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***In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*****Alice Walker**

The creativity of black women in the South.

[Spring 2002, \(1974\)](#)

## Learning Activities:

### ***Ms.* Cover *She Persisted* from Summer 2017**

Ch. 8 addresses ways in which “family forms are historically and culturally constructed in global contexts and... family is a place for the reproduction of power relationships both nationally and internationally” (398). The *Ms.* cover “She Persisted” asks readers to consider the ways that migrants’ and refugees’ family lives and structures are affected by national and international power relationships.

First, do some research on the feminist rallying cry, “Nevertheless, she persisted.” What are the origins of this statement? When and why did it become so popular and well-known? How might this U.S.-centered statement relate to the plight of immigrant and refugee families around the world?

Next, read Ashley McKinless’s “Beyond the Wall” on pp. 452-55 of your textbook and reconsider the previous question: How does this U.S.-centered rallying cry “Nevertheless, she persisted” relate to the plight of immigrant and refugee families around the world?

Finally, take a look at the Summer 2017 *Ms.* Cover (right).

How does the cover image and text change the context and meaning of the feminist rallying cry “Nevertheless, she persisted”? (You might begin by considering issues of race, ethnicity, and nationality.) How does the cover relate to discussions of power, family relationships, mothering, and the feminization of poverty in Ch. 8?



**Women on the Run**

Ch. 8 addresses the ways that families are sites of power and privilege (or lack thereof) for individuals, as well as the ways that family life and family systems are affected by global power relationships. Nina Rabin and Roxana Bacon's "Women on the Run" addresses the ways that Central American women experience "the disconnect between the circumstances that cause Central American women to flee their private hell and the harsh treatment they receive from the U.S. at our southern border when they come seeking refuge" (20).

First, read McKinless's "Beyond the Wall" on pp. 452-55 of your textbook. According to McKinless, what role does U.S. foreign policy have to play in the flood of immigrants coming to the U.S. from Central America?

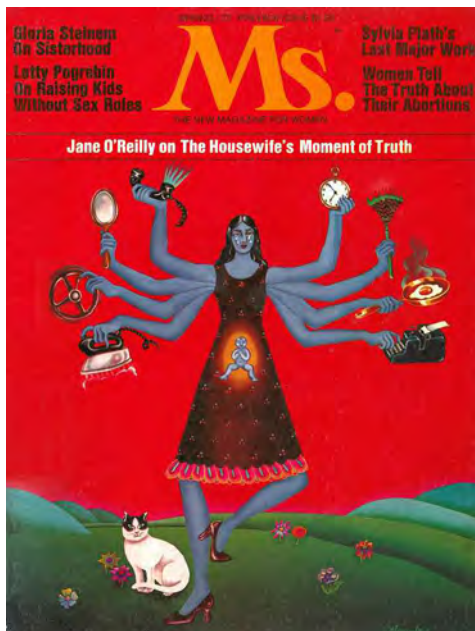
Rabin and Bacon begin by telling the story of Isabel, a Honduran woman who fled to the U.S. in an attempt to escape horrific violence. How does Isabel's story reflect what you learned about the discussion of power in family relationships on pp. 408-14 of your textbook?

Rabin and Bacon describe what happens to women like Isabel when they enter the U.S. What is the process for applying for asylum? How long does it take? How are asylum-seekers treated during the process? Why is it ironic that "U.S. law clearly recognizes asylum claims made by women escaping domestic violence" (22)? What recommendations do Rabin and Bacon make for how to treat asylum seekers entering the U.S.? How do Rabin and Bacon encourage concerned readers to advocate on behalf of asylum seekers like Isabel?

9:

## Work Inside and Outside the Home

IN A CAPITALIST SOCIETY, WE VALUE WORK AS LABOR THAT PRODUCES income. Despite decades of awareness and activism, women still persistently find themselves underpaid in the workforce in comparison with men. Not surprisingly, women of color fare even worse than their white counterparts.



Ms. Cover (The Housewife's Moment of Truth, Preview Issue, Spring 1972)

We also know that women still do more of the reproductive work of the family (cleaning, cooking, child care), even when women are primary breadwinners—although in queer households the distribution of reproductive labor is not so gender-based. Feminists have pointed out the value of the unpaid labor done in the home by women, and they have noted the unrecognized emotional labor women do in the workplace (organizing office celebrations, ordering flowers, sending sympathy cards). Even women who are highly successful face gendered barriers that are only exacerbated as we move down the socioeconomic scale.

Early on, feminists embarked on a “wages for housework” campaign, and they have lobbied for legislation such as the Lilly Ledbetter Act to ensure fair wages for

women employees. More than half of states in the U.S. do not have protections for LGBTQ employees; thankfully, however, the Supreme Court ruled in June 2020 that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes it illegal for employers to discriminate because of a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

We divide so much of our lives between our paid labor and our labor in the home—addressing inequities in work both inside and outside the home is key to creating a just society.

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***The “All-Consuming” Emotional Labor Caused by Coronavirus—and Shouldered by Women***

**Andrea Flynn**

The coronavirus has laid bare many divisions in society, impacting the gendered division of labor within the home and also shaping what is possible for women, and particularly mothers, in the public sphere.

[Msmedia.org, March 31, 2020](#)

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***“Equal Opportunity” Includes Equal Income***

**Carrie N. Baker**

The EEOC blocks collection of gender income data for being “burdensome” for businesses.

[Winter 2020](#)

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***A Voice for the Workers***

**Sebastian Castelner and Quentin Muller**

A reporter speaks for abused Filipina domestic laborers in Kuwait.

[Fall 2019](#)

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***Missing: Women Coaches***

**Martha Burk**

Title IX opened the door to women collegiate sports, but then male coaches strode in.

[Summer 2019](#)

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***The Gender Gap***

**Andrea Camp**

Unfair pay and unsafe workplaces

[Fall 2018](#)

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***Click! The Housewife’s Moment of Truth (Ms. Classic)***

**Jane O’Reilly**

“Those clicks are coming faster and faster. American women are angry because we have suddenly and shockingly perceived the basic disorder in what has been believed to be the natural order of things.”

[Spring 2002, \(1972\)](#)

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## Learning Activities:

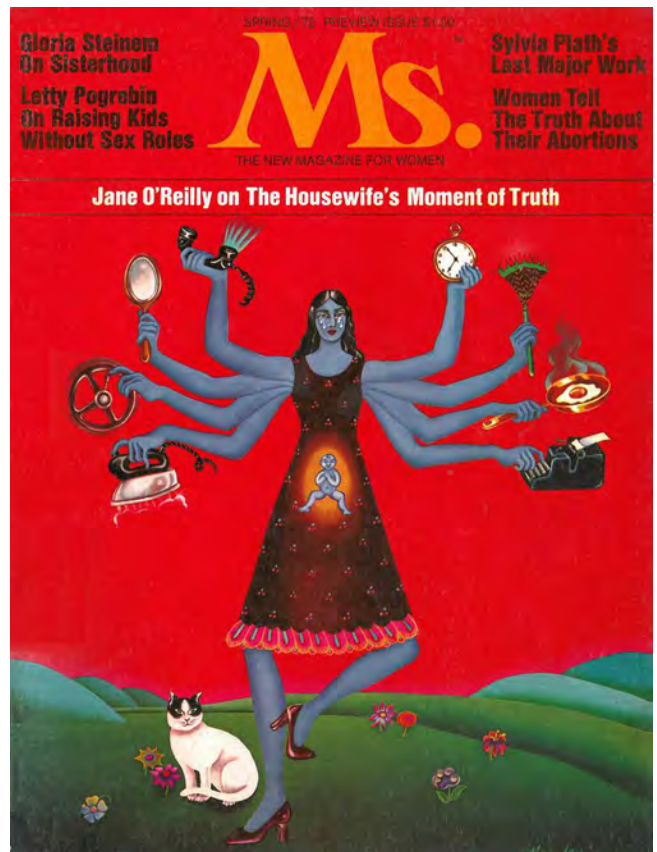
### **Ms. Cover *The Housewife's Moment of Truth* from Spring 1972**

Ch. 9 focuses on the gendered norms for unpaid and paid labor that people do inside and outside the home. This learning activity asks you to consider how the norms themselves, as well as our discussion of those norms, has changed since the *Ms.* Cover “The Housewife’s Moment of Truth” was created in 1972.

First, working with a peer or in a group, do some online research on the Hindu Goddess Durga and to look at representations of Durga. What does Durga look like? What does she symbolize?

Next, take a look at the *Ms.* Cover “The Housewife’s Moment of Truth.” How does *Ms.* adapt and revise the image of Durga? What arguments does this cover communicate? (Consider both the image itself and stories of Durga that you read.) What do you learn from this image about the issues facing “housewives” in 1972?

Finally, consider what you learned in Ch. 9 about the ways that paid and unpaid labor are gendered in the 21st century. How are those concerns similar to—and different from—the ones represented by the 1972 *Ms.* cover? Why might the 1972 revision of Durga’s image be considered problematic by 21st-century feminists? If you were charged with creating an image that represented 21st-century concerns about the gendered divisions of labor inside and outside the home, what would it look like and why?



***The “All-Consuming” Emotional Labor Caused by Coronavirus—and Shouldered by Women***

Ch. 9 discusses the practice of “kin keeping,” the practice of “taking care of the emotional needs of family members” (458). Kin keeping, which is invisible and unpaid, includes activities such as “remembering birthdays, sending cards, preparing for holidays, organizing vacations, keeping in touch with relatives, and providing ‘spousal career support’ by entertaining, volunteering, and networking” (462). In “The ‘All-Consuming’ Emotional Labor Caused by Coronavirus—and Shouldered by Women,” Andrea Flynn argues that the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare “the extent to which structural sexism permeates our lives: impacting the gendered division of labor within the home and also shaping what is possible for women, and particularly mothers, in the public sphere.”

First, take a few minutes to review pp. 458-64 in your textbook, which discuss the gendered division of labor in the home. What does research data show about the gendered division of labor in the home?

Next, read Flynn’s article, which recounts her experience as a mom of three children who is attempting to balance work and parenting while sheltering in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. What is Flynn’s experience? Does it confirm or conflict with the data in your textbook? Why or why not? What does Flynn mean when she explains that women do most of the emotional labor because of structural sexism? How does she support her argument? Why does she feel “a strong and steady current of rage”?

10:

## Resisting Gender Violence

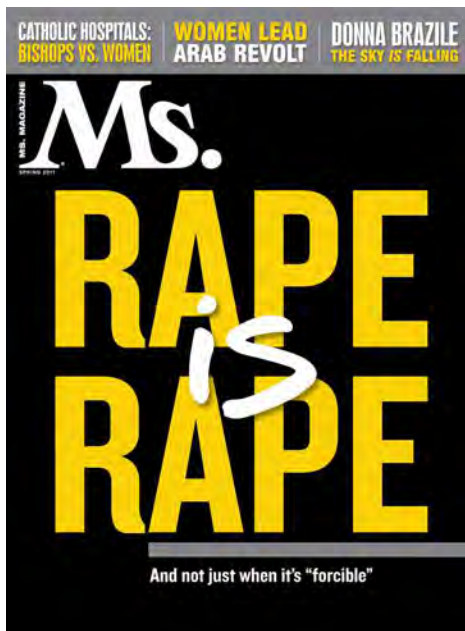
THE HIGH-PROFILE CASES INVOLVING BROCK TURNER AND CYNTOIA Brown highlight inequities in the criminal justice system and the extent to which race, class and gender afford some defendants protections while denying others the benefit of the doubt.

In 2015, 21-year-old Brock Turner, an affluent Stanford student-athlete and U.S. Olympic-hopeful swimmer, was caught sexually assaulting an unconscious young woman outside of a party. Turner was found guilty by a jury of three felony counts of sexual assault, but the judge who sentenced him worried that a prison sentence would have a “severe impact” on Turner. (During the sentencing hearing, Turner’s father bemoaned the fact that his son could suffer a lifetime of consequences for “20 minutes of action.”) Turner was sentenced to just six months’ incarceration, of which he served three months.

The trial and conviction of Cyntoia Brown, a biracial woman from a working-class background, stand in sharp contrast to Turner’s experience with the criminal justice system. Brown, a 16-year old runaway who was forced into sex work by her abusive partner, killed a 43-year-old man who picked her up for sex. According

to Brown, the killing was in self-defense. Despite the fact that Brown was a minor as well as a victim of sex trafficking, she was sentenced to life in prison. Thanks to the efforts of criminal justice reform advocates and celebrities like Kim Kardashian West and Rihanna, Brown was released from prison—but only after she had already served 15 years in prison.

Where was the concern about the loss of Brown’s promising future, the granting of grace and the benefit of the doubt? Brown’s conviction underscores the challenges women face in cases of sexual assault and trafficking, regardless of whether they are the perpetrators or the victims.



Ms. Cover, Spring 2011



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***Domestic Violence Rises Worldwide as the Coronavirus Rages***

**Barbara Crosette**

Reports of domestic violence are rising as COVID-19 rages across the planet and people are ordered to stay home.

[Msmedia.org, April 7, 2020](#)

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***No Such Thing as a Child Prostitute***

**Carrie N. Baker**

Revelations of Jeffrey Epstein's criminal enterprise bring new awareness to the plight of sexually exploited girls.

[Fall 2019](#)

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***The Weinstein Effect***

**Linda Burstyn**

How the downfall of one sexual predator can usher in an era of change for women everywhere.

[Winter 2018](#)

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***Won't Back Down***

**Gaylynn Burroughs and Debra S. Katz**

Student activists and survivors are using the legal system to fight sexual assault and harassment on college campuses.

[Summer, 2015](#)

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***The Nature of the Beast***

**Anita Hill (Ms. Classic)**

What I've learned about sexual harassment.

[Spring 2002, \(1992\)](#)

## Learning Activities:

### **Domestic Violence Rises Worldwide as the Coronavirus Rages**

In Ch. 10, we learn, “Gender violence in the United States and worldwide is an important public health and human rights issue” (525). The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the complicated relationship between gender violence and public health.

Gender violence is a public health issue even when we aren’t experiencing a global pandemic. According to the textbook, “it is estimated that the incidences of interpersonal gender violence (IPV) cost the state and insurance companies, as well as communities, families, and individuals, billions of dollars every year, including lost wages and decreased productivity as well as trauma and distress. Survivors of abuse are disproportionately represented among the homeless and suicide victims” (526).

In “Domestic Violence Rises Worldwide as the Coronavirus Rages,” Barbara Crosette explores the complicated relationship between COVID-19 and the resulting precipitous rise in gender violence across the world. According to Crosette, why has gender violence spiked since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic? What are the pandemic’s “direct, unique effects on women”?

### **The Weinstein Effect**

Ch. 10 discusses the pervasiveness of gender violence in the U.S. and around the world. The #MeToo movement has forced the public to reckon with the widespread existence of gender violence, the ways that responses to gender violence differ based on perpetrators’ and survivors’ race, ethnicity, class, and gender expression, and the lasting negative impact that gender violence has on survivors. This Learning Activity allows us to further explain and explore the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault in the workplace

First, we will consider explanations for pervasive workplace gender violence. Read Susan Shaw’s blog post “Harvey Weinstein’s Not the Problem” on pp. 552-53 of your textbook. According to Shaw, why *isn’t* Harvey Weinstein the problem? And if he’s not the problem, what is?

Next, we will explore the pervasiveness of workplace sexual assault. Read Linda Burstyn’s article “The Weinstein Effect.” What examples of systematic harassment and assault does Burstyn provide? How do employers work to ensure that survivors cannot share their stories of assault and harassment? How are feminists working to make systemic changes that provide legal support for survivors of sexual support? How do protections for female workers vary depending upon their race, ethnicity, social class, and additional identity markers?

Dig Deeper: The movie *Bombshell* (2019) tells the story of Fox News anchor Gretchen Carlson’s lawsuit against Fox News CEO Roger Ailes. Watch *Bombshell*, and consider the following questions: What laws, policies, and aspects of corporate culture supported Ailes’s predatory behavior? How do individuals working for Fox News negotiate those laws, policies, and corporate culture when they are directly or indirectly affected by sexual harassment or assault?



In her article Burstyn asks, “Will the shrugging culture of ‘boys will be boys’ give way to a new culture that allows women to be women—as equals—in the workplace?” (21). How does *Bombshell* answer Burstyn’s question?

11:

## State, Law and Social Policy

DID YOU KNOW THAT WOMEN ARE STILL NOT GUARANTEED EQUALITY under the U.S. Constitution? The Equal Rights Amendment was written by Alice Paul and Crystal Eastman and introduced to Congress in 1923, but it wasn't approved by Congress until 1972, when the women's movement began to make significant gains. Both the original 1979 timeline for ratification and

the 1982 extension passed without enough states signing on. However, in the 2010s, a movement to revive the amendment emerged. Though some legal hurdles remain, feminists are hopeful that the ERA will soon be recognized as part of the Constitution now that Virginia has become the 38th state—the final state needed—to ratify the amendment.

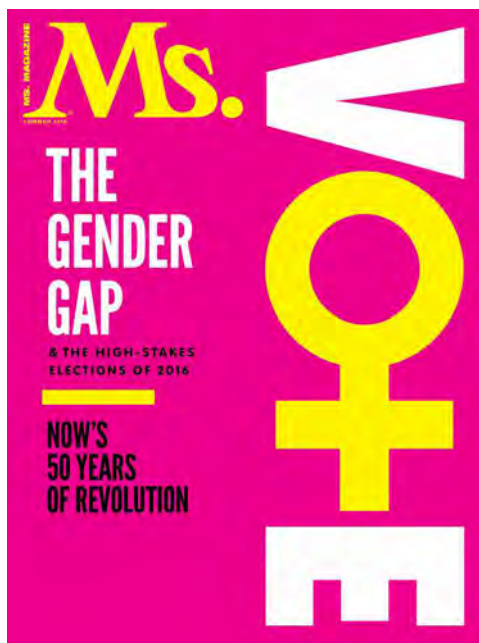
Until that happens, the protections that women do have are legislative—meaning they are ensured by laws passed by Congress and state governments. These laws are not always enforced as they should be. We also know that laws are applied differently across race and social class and rarely protect LGBTQ people.

At this moment, we also see the structural failings of our democracy as new voting restrictions attempt

to prevent voting access, especially for people of color, those who live in urban areas and college students—in other words, groups that have historically voted for Democrats. Furthermore, under the Trump administration we've seen the erosion of our system of checks and balances when Republican mem-

bers of Congress fail to exercise their oversight duties. We have witnessed a concerted attempt to appoint very conservative judges to the bench. Thanks to the Electoral College, gerrymandering and the overrepresentation of conservative states in the Senate, we have a government run by people who actually represent a minority of U.S. citizens. The U.S. has lost its standing as a world leader as Republicans have embraced Trump's America First rhetoric and allowed the president to pull out of the Paris Climate Agreement and withdraw support from the World Health Organization during a global pandemic.

Feminists, however, are working for change at local, state and federal levels—from encouraging people to get out and vote to protesting to defund the police to lobbying for laws that create greater equity. As you read, think about how you are affected by governmental laws, policies and institutions. Do you benefit more than others? Are you disadvantaged because of your gender or race or a disability? How might you act to help encourage governmental action on pressing issues?



Ms. Cover from Summer 2016

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***We Want In*****Carrie Baker**

The half-century fight to add women to the U.S. Constitution is finally nearing the finish line.

[Spring 2020](#)

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***Foreign Policy Goes Feminist*****Lyric Thompson**

As Mexico launches a feminist foreign policy, it's worth considering what such an approach would look like in the U.S.

[Spring 2020](#)

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***The #MeToo Legal Revolution*****Carrie Baker**

In two years, state legislators have proposed more than 200 sexual harassment laws.

[Winter 2020](#)

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***Stacking the Courts*****Michelle Goodwin**

Through the unprecedented confirmation of ultraconservative federal judges, the Trump era will directly affect women's rights for decades to come.

[Winter 2020](#)

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***The Growing Feminist Factor*****Ellie Smeal**

The heartbreaking presidential election of 2016 had a silver lining—the growing “gender gap” and “feminist factor.”

[Winter 2017](#)

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***Life on the Global Assembly Line (Ms. Classic)*****Barbara Ehrenreich and Annette Fuentes**

“Globalization has changed the rules of the game. The nation-state as we understand it is a state that is struggling, being swallowed up by corporate forces.”

[Spring 2002, \(1981\)](#)

## Learning Activities:

### “The Gender Gap” Ms. Cover and “The Gender Gap, Then and Now”

Ch. 11 addresses the prevalence of the *gender gap* in U.S. politics. The term gender gap refers to:

“differences between women and men in political attitudes and voting choices. Gender gaps are apparent in voting behavior, party identification, evaluations of presidential performances, and attitudes toward public policy issues. Polls find, for example, that compared with men, women are more likely to favor a more activist role for government; are more supportive of restrictions on firearms; more supportive of marriage equality; and more likely to favor legal abortion without restriction.” (593-94)

The *Ms.* Cover from Summer 2016 (right) highlights the important role the gender gap plays in the 21st century. Why might *Ms.* editors have considered the 2016 elections to have particularly high stakes? Take a few minutes to do an online search about the Venus symbol. What are its history and symbolic meaning? What are the implications of including the Venus symbol on this cover?

Next, read the interview with Eleanor Smeal, titled “The Gender Gap, Then and Now.” How has the gender gap changed since the publication of Smeal’s 1984 book *Why and How Women Will Elect the Next President?* What policy issues drive the gender gap, according to Smeal?



***We Want In***

Ch. 11 reminds us, “Women have had a complicated relationship to the [U.S.] Constitution” (587). The text-book summarizes that “complicated relationship” on pp. 587-97. Take a few minutes to review those pages. What do you learn about the ways that the Constitution has affected—and continues to effect—women’s involvement in the U.S. political process?

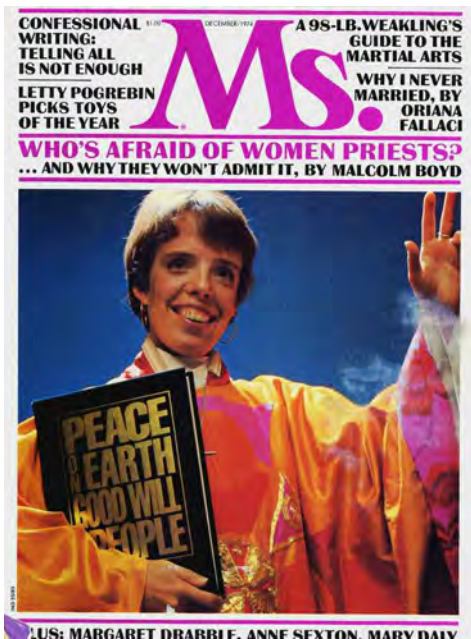
Take a careful look at the discussion of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) on pp. 588-90. What is the history and purpose of the ERA? Why did opponents of the ERA argue against it? Why do supporters think it is necessary, particularly given women’s “complicated relationship to the Constitution”? What is the three-state strategy?

Next, read Carrie Baker’s article “We Want In,” which discusses the ERA’s current status. What additional information do you learn about the fight for the ERA? What is the current status of the three-state strategy? According to Baker, why is the ERA more important now than ever before? How could the ratification of the ERA impact women in the U.S.?

12:

## Religion and Spirituality

FOR SOME PEOPLE, RELIGION IS A SOURCE OF COMFORT AND INSPIRATION. For others, it's a cause of suffering and oppression. For many of us, it's a mixed bag. More and more, people in the U.S. are rejecting religion. These religiously unaffiliated people are now referred to in research as the "Nones." This doesn't mean the Nones don't embrace spirituality; they just don't participate in organized religion.



Ms. cover, December 1974

Trump use federal forces to violently remove peaceful protesters in order to stage a photo op where he awkwardly lofted a Bible in front of a boarded-up Episcopalian church. The church's bishop immediately condemned the action, as did many people who noted the irony of a man holding up a book he does

not read in front of a church he does not attend. This overt and cynical use of religious props to appeal to his evangelical base underlines the extent to which evangelical faith has been co-opted to support a president who repays his base by appointing judges and issuing executive orders that limit reproductive choices, target transgender people, make immigration more difficult and advantage Christians over non-Christians. At the same time, we see people of faith engaging in opposition to these discriminatory policies, drawing from their religions' beliefs in divine love for all people and a call to justice for everyone.

What's your experience with religion? Have you found it to be liberating, oppressive or a mixed bag? Do you think of yourself as a religious or spiritual person? Does your faith or spirituality help you engage in activism and work toward a better world? Many feminists have left traditional, patriarchal religions. The readings in this chapter, however, note the many women who stay within their traditions and work for transformation. Do you think feminists should leave their religious traditions—or stay and work for change? Have you had to face such a decision yourself?



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***Muslim Men, Take This Opportunity to Learn from Muslim Women***

**Anniryn Armstrong**

“For the first time in many of their lives, Muslim men can’t go to the mosque. Now is an ideal time for Muslim men to build empathy toward the difficulties women face while trying to practice their faith.”

[Msmedia.org, April 27, 2020](#)

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***On Christianity and Donald Trump***

**Susan M. Shaw**

Christian fundamentalism in its current form among white evangelicals in the U.S. is the perfect recipe for support for Trump.

[Msmedia.org, January 14, 2020](#)

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***A 385-Mile Wall of Women***

**Sathya Saran**

Barred from entering a sacred temple, 5.5 million Indian women protest their exclusion.

[Spring 2019](#)

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***From Sexism to Sex Abuse in Southern Baptist Churches***

**Susan M. Shaw**

I left the Southern Baptist convention nearly 25 years ago because of their misogyny, anti-feminism and homophobia—but now, with headlines emerging about widespread abuse in the church, I feel compelled to offer an insider/outsider perspective.

[February 12](#)

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***Blind Eye***

**Michael D’Antonio**

Pope Francis has done little to combat priest sex abuse within the Catholic Church.

[Summer 2015](#)

## Learning Activities:

### ***Muslim Men, Take This Opportunity to Learn from Muslim Women***

Ch. 12 addresses the ways that religion can be empowering for women because “it offers them a place of belonging, comfort, acceptance, and encouragement” and oppressive for women because “it excludes and sometimes degrades women” (637). In her article “Muslim Men, Take This Opportunity to Learn from Muslim Women,” Anniryn Armstrong explores how the COVID-19 pandemic reveals the ways that women are marginalized within Islam.

Read “Muslim Men, Take This Opportunity to Learn from Muslim Women.” Working with a peer or in a group, list the concerns Armstrong expresses about women’s access to mosques. Why does the COVID-19 pandemic offer Muslim men a new perspective on women’s lack of full inclusion in Muslim worship? What does Armstrong want Muslim men to learn? Although this article discusses lack of women’s full inclusion in Islam, similar issues of inclusion can be explored with regards to other religions, such as Christianity or Judaism. How might the Armstrong’s argument about Islam have parallels with the treatment of Christian and Jewish women?

### ***On Christianity and Donald Trump***

In Ch. 12 we learn, “religions exercise power over women through church- and state-sanctioned control” (640). Christian evangelicals’ support for Donald Trump illustrates the relationship between church- and state-sanctioned control of women in the U.S. and around the world.

Read p. 642 of your textbook, which discusses white evangelicals’ strong support of Donald Trump. Why might white evangelicals’ support of Trump seem at odds with evangelical Christian values? For what reasons might white evangelicals be hesitant to support Trump? For what reasons might white evangelicals be eager to support him?

In “On Christianity and Donald Trump,” Susan Shaw provides a more thorough explanation for Christian evangelicals’ support of Donald Trump. Shaw begins by noting that there is a “fissure” among white evangelicals about whether or not to support Trump. What are the reasons for that “fissure”?

Shaw makes a distinction between “evangelicals” and “fundamentalists,” arguing, “While all fundamentalist Christians are evangelicals, not all evangelicals are fundamentalists, but most are.” Take a look at this article by Roger Olson, which Shaw cites: <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/rogereolson/2012/04/what-distinguishes-evangelical-from-fundamentalist/>. What are the differences between evangelicals and fundamentalists, according to Olson? Why is it important to understand that distinction in the current political moment?

Shaw says, “An examination of fundamentalism may help us understand one reason why white evangelicals overwhelmingly support Trump.” How does she support her argument? Why do fundamentalist Christians support Trump, according to Shaw?



13:

## Activism, Change and Feminist Futures

THREE OF THE MOST IMPACTFUL MOVEMENTS OF THE LAST DECADE WERE created by black women using feminist strategies and interventions: Black Lives Matter, #MeToo and #SayHerName. Black Lives Matter was founded by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Khan-Cullors and Opal Tometi in 2013 after the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the death of Trayvon Martin. #MeToo was first used by activist Tarana Burke in 2006 as a way of empathizing with survivors of sexual harassment and assault. The movement went viral in 2017 after actor Alyssa Milano began using the hashtag in solidarity with the sexual-assault victims of Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein. When informed of the phrase's originator, Milano used her platform as a

celebrity to amplify Burke's voice, ensuring that she would be recognized for her pioneering work. The #SayHerName campaign was founded by scholars Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw and Andrea J. Ritchie and the African American Policy Forum as a way of bringing attention to black female victims of racism and police brutality.

Using transgressive feminist leadership models, all three movements aim to center the voices of minoritized and marginalized groups—particularly black girls, women and transgender people—by interrogating and disrupting systems of power. One of the ways they do this is by decentralizing power within their movements. Unlike the civil rights movement of the 1960s, there is no one spokesperson or figurehead. These movements embrace the doctrine that every individual has the ability to lead. As such, decision-making is collaborative, democratic and transparent.



Ms. Cover (The Future is Feminist, Spring 2018)

These grassroots efforts have expanded into global movements. The death of George Floyd, an unarmed black man killed by Minneapolis police officers in May 2020, sparked Black Lives Matter protests across the United States and around the world. However, concurrent news of the police killings of Breonna Taylor, an unarmed black woman, and Tony McDade, a black transgender man, went largely unnoticed. Thanks to the joint efforts of the #SayHerName and Black Lives Matter movements, protesters have taken to the streets to demand justice for Taylor and McDade as well. What other contemporary social movements provide us with models of feminist leadership and feminist futures?

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***An Act of Radical Imagination***

**Treva B. Lindsey**

A black feminist describes her journey to prison and police abolitionist politics.

[Fall 2020](#)

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***What Black Women's Histories Can Teach***

***Us About Pandemics***

**Janell Hobson**

A history that centers the contributions of black women, who have modeled resistance and nurturing—especially during times of crisis—just might provide the blueprint for surviving and thriving.

[Msmedia.org, April 20, 2020](#)

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***Rematriate the Land***

**Claire Urbanski**

How indigenous women help solve climate change.

[Spring 2020](#)

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***Girl's v. U.S. Government***

**Sunaya Dasgupta Mueller and Taylor Fang**

Young women are taking the lead in a historic climate justice lawsuit.

[Summer 2018](#)

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***The Women of #Black Lives Matter***

**Brittney Cooper**

A new civil rights movement has emerged from the tragic killings of young African Americans -- and black women of color are at the activist forefront.

[Winter 2015](#)

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***We are the Ones We've Been Waiting For***

**Moya Baily and Alexis Pauline Gumbs**

Young Black feminists take their research and activism online.

[Winter 2010](#)

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***The Women Wore White (Ms. Last Word)***

**Ms. Editors**

The U.S. Capital: Feb. 5, 2019. Photo of Women in Congress.

[Spring 2019](#)

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## Learning Activities:

### **What Black Women’s Histories Can Teach Us About Pandemics**

Chapter 13 discusses the feminist work that still needs to be done and sums up our current political moment in this way:

“The picture is one of simultaneous optimism and despair. Perhaps we can address the rage, cynicism, and often mean-spiritedness of this historical moment and come up with a transformational politics that encourages a consciousness shift and extends generosity and compassion toward others. Any movement for justice-based equity must have a strong moral foundation based on love, human dignity, and community.” (710)

Although the textbook was published before the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent worldwide protests against police brutality, the call for a “transformational politics” that is “based on love, human dignity, and community” was prescient. In her article “What Black Women’s Histories Can Teach Us About Pandemics,” Janell Hobson reminds readers that our Black feminist foremothers modeled a “justice-based equity” with a “strong moral foundation,” and their stories provide models for addressing contemporary social problems.

Working with a peer or in a group, make a list of the pandemic-related concerns Hobson addresses. What are Hobson’s concerns? Why is COVID-19 a feminist issue? How are women at the forefront in terms of the U.S. response to the virus?

Next, make a list of all the historic Black women that Hobson lists in her article.

Who are they? Are you familiar with their stories? Choose one of the figures that Hobson discusses, and do an internet search about her. What do you learn?

How does Hobson connect the stories of historic Black women with their contemporary counterparts? According to Hobson, what can we learn from these stories? How do Hobson’s arguments relate to the passage from the textbook that is quoted above?

### **The Women Wore White (Ms. Last Word)**

As Ch. 13 reminds us, “the encouragement of marginalized people into leadership positions is a central aspect of feminist change” (708). The 116th U.S. Congress includes a record number of women since the election of the first woman to Congress in 1916. As *Ms.* editor Katherine Spillar notes in her article “The New Feminists in Office” (*Ms.* Winter 2019):

“Historic breakthroughs define the newest incoming class of women: The first Native American women to be sworn into Congress. The first black Congresswomen from New England states. The first Latinas to ever represent Texas in Congress. The first Muslim women” (20). (See Spillar’s article for more details about this historic group.)

The *Ms.* Winter 2019 cover provides a visual representation of the women of the 116th U.S. Congress.

As these statistics demonstrate, U.S. women have come a long way in the 100 years since the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

This photograph, taken on February 5, 2019, provides an example of the ways that “the encouragement of marginalized people into leadership positions is a central aspect of feminist change.” The photograph depicts the female members of the 116th Congress, who wore white for President Trump’s State of the Union Address.

Take a few minutes to do some research online so that you understand the context for this photograph. (This article from Vox is a great place to start: [www.vox.com/the-goods/2020/2/4/21120340/state-of-the-union-2020-outfits-political-statement](http://www.vox.com/the-goods/2020/2/4/21120340/state-of-the-union-2020-outfits-political-statement)). Why do female members of Congress wear white for the State of the Union Address? What are the origins of this tradition? What messages are members of Congress trying to communicate with their attire? Why do these members of Congress have “the last word,” according to *Ms.*?



14:

## Breaking News

WHETHER IT'S A PANDEMIC, THE #METOO MOVEMENT OR A NATIONAL election, current events call for feminist analysis that considers how gender, race and class are at work; who's disadvantaged; and how this contributes to or detracts from social justice. It's our responsibility to stay informed and be ready to address breaking news with feminist knowledge.



Black Lives Matter Plaza, Washington, DC

This chapter provides readings on some of the most important happenings in the headlines. In late spring, we saw protests and powerful coalitions in response to the police killing of George Floyd, close on the heels of the police killing of Breonna Taylor and the vigilante murder of Ahmaud Arbery. Black Lives Matter protests happened not only in major urban areas like Minneapolis, New York, L.A., Atlanta, Louisville and Chicago, but also in small towns in Oregon, Montana and Idaho. Movements to defund police and imagine other ways of addressing broader social issues began to have significant impact. These readings from *Ms.* can help us think about the wider context of the protests and provide an intersectional lens to view how race, gender and social class are inextricably intertwined in our current systems of policing.



## Historic Worldwide Protests Against Police Brutality and Racial Injustice

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### **#SayHerName: Happy 27th Birthday, Breonna Taylor**

Jenna Ashendouek

On this day, especially, activist and members of Taylor's community urge individuals to #SayHerName—a campaign created to raise awareness about the numbers of girls that are killed by law enforcement.

[Msmedia.org](https://msmedia.org), June 5, 2020

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### **The U.S. Needs Sweeping Police Reform: Let's Start with Women**

Carrie Shane

Multiple Studies spanning 50 years show that female police officers lead with de-escalation and communication, while male officers are more likely to lead with force and aggression.

[Msmedia.org](https://msmedia.org), June 8, 2020

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### **There Are Two U.S. Plagues— Coronavirus and Racism: Feminism is the Path Forward**

Corinne Ahrens

"It's not enough to be against something; you have to be for something"

[Msmedia.org](https://msmedia.org), June 4, 2020

## Election 2020

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### **"Madam Vice President": Kamala Harris Makes History**

Amish Wallia, Deborah D. Douglas and Aderonke Pederson

Harris's unprecedented rise as the first woman, who is also Black and South Asian, to serve as vice-president has been chosen to lead one of the greatest democracies in the world.

[Msmedia.org](https://msmedia.org), November 6, 2020

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### **What Can Women Expect From a Biden Presidency?**

Ms. series by Carrie N. Baker

[Women's Global Rights](#)

[Ending Violence Against Women](#)

[Work and Family](#)

[Economic Security](#)

[Health Care](#)

[LGBTQ+ Equality](#)





**SUSAN M. SHAW, PH.D.**

Susan M. Shaw is professor of Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies at Oregon State University. She is co-author of *Gendered Voices, Feminist Visions: Classic and Contemporary Readings* and a member of the Ms. Committee of Scholars. She is a regular contributor to Ms. Magazine online, and she's the author of *Reflective Faith: A Theological Toolbox for Women and God Speaks to Us, Too: Southern Baptist Women on Church, Home, and Society*. She is also co-author of *Intersectional Theology: An Introductory Guide and Girls Rock! Fifty Years of Women Making Music*. She's the general editor of the 4-volume *Women's Lives Around the World: A Global Encyclopedia and the forthcoming Women and Religion: Global Lives in Focus*. She's an avid Beavers women's basketball fan, and she loves British TV crime dramas, travel, gardening, and challenging the status quo.

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**TRACY BUTTS, PH.D.**

Upon the completion of her Ph.D. in English (University of Georgia, 2001), Tracy R. Butts joined the faculty at Chico State as a professor of American and African American literature. A native of Norfolk, Virginia, Butts earned her bachelor's and master's degrees at Virginia Tech. Prior to assuming the position of Interim Dean of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, she served as the director of Multicultural and Gender Studies, chief diversity officer, and chair of the Department of English. She is a firm believer that with privilege comes great responsibility, which is why service is a top professional priority for her. Butts is a recipient of the Lantis Endowed University Professorship, the A.S. Women's Center Carol Burr Lifetime Achievement Award, the Black Grad Celebration Outstanding Faculty Award, and the 2015/16 Outstanding Faculty Service Award.

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**MARGARET LOWRY, PH.D.**

Dr. Margaret Lowry currently holds the position of Lecturer in the Women & Gender Studies Department at TCU, where she teaches Introduction to WGST and Advanced Seminar in WGST. In 2018, WGST students selected Lowry to be the recipient of the department's "Wise Woman Award," which recognizes faculty members' outstanding teaching and mentorship. Lowry currently serves as the Chair of NWSA's Social Justice Education Task Force.

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**KARON JOLNA, PH.D.**

Dr. Karon Jolna is program director of Ms. Classroom, an innovative education program that brings cutting-edge feminist scholarship to Ms. magazine – and Ms. to the next generation of feminist students, teachers and activists. Dr. Jolna is series editor of the Ms. Digital Readers, including—*Introduction to Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies: So You Want to Change the World?*, *Gender, Race and Class*, and *Gender, Sexuality and Social Movements* (forthcoming 2021). She is co-author with Carrie N. Baker, Aviva Dove-Viebahn, Michele Tracy Berger and Carmen Rios of "Amplifying Our Voices: Feminist Scholars Writing for the Public" in *Feminist Formations* (forthcoming Summer 2020). Research interests include public scholarship, feminist leadership and organizing, as well as feminist pedagogy.

Dr. Jolna was among the first cohort of scholars to earn a Ph.D. in Women's Studies from Emory University.