Includes 150+ classic and current Ms. articles and blogs by:

bell hooks  
Gloria Steinem  
Angela Davis  
Barbara Smith  
Barbara Ehrenreich  
Toni Morrison  
Alice Walker  
Kimberlé Crenshaw  
Dolores Huerta  
Eleanor Smeal  
Katherine Spillar  
Gaylynn Burroughs  
Bonnie Thornton Dill  
Beverly Guy-Sheftall  
Anita Hill  
Jean Kilbourne  
Michele Tracy Berger  
Barbara Ransby  
Premilla Nadasen  
Irma McClaurin  
Michelle Chen  
Carrie Baker  
Audrey Bilger  
L.S. Kim  
Caroline Heldman  
Gina Athena Ulysse  
Patricia Trujillo  
Nicole Guidotti-Hernandez  
Rita Dove  
Aviva Dove-Viebahn  
Jennifer Williams  
Michelle McGibbney  
Vlahoulis  
Janell Hobson  
R. Dianne Bartlow  
Brittney Cooper  
Margaret Rhee  
Ileana Jimenez  
Sandra Cisneros

PLUS:

New Documentary Films from Women Make Movies  
Radio recordings courtesy of Pacifica Radio Archives  
Short Documentary Films from the Feminist Majority Foundation  
Produced and Directed by Lorraine Sheinberg  
Written and Narrated by Susan Rubin
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ONE OF THE MOST PRESSING CHALLENGES IN WOMEN’S and gender studies today is taking the conceptual building blocks of feminist scholarship and making them accessible and useful in practice as well as theory on a complicated and ever-shifting world stage. A crucial aspect of facilitating this curriculum transformation is the realization that teaching universalized concepts—concerns that ostensibly affect “all women” equally—is no longer sustainable or desirable pedagogy. In our global age of new and instantaneous media, students are more exposed to the diversity of lived experience and are, hence, better equipped to understand an intersectional and transnational approach from the start. Affirmed by a 2014 National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) Curriculum Institute, in which distinguished feminist scholars championed an approach to the field that embraces the complexities of human identity over and above the “universal” experiences of white, Western women, this reader is one of the first introductory women’s studies textbooks to implement this methodology.

Women of color, LGBTQ individuals, women and girls abroad, poor women, and many others who do not fit the impossibly narrow confines of the white, Western, cis notion of “woman” have all been and continue to be essential to the fight for equality. This reader aims to tell their stories, not just as examples of other ways to enact a pre-established idea of feminism, but as quintessential to the formation of modern feminism itself, in its many iterations. The pages of Ms. magazine, articles from which comprise almost the entirety of this reader, articulate this more complete and multifaceted history of diverse women’s lives, making visible the significance of women’s and men’s experience to the feminist movement across a vast spectrum of different and intersecting identities.

By mobilizing over forty years of dynamic content published in the pages of Ms. magazine, one of the most well-known and respected feminist publications in the U.S. and globally, this reader seeks to inspire a new generation of innovative, powerful, engaged and feminist-minded women and men. A popular publication with rigorous journalistic integrity and scholarly underpinnings, Ms. represents the best of both worlds, with articles that run the gamut from personal narratives and poetry to hard-hitting exposés and theoretically rich analyses of cultural trends. Articles included in this reader illustrate the diversity of both the magazine and feminism itself, representing the importance of identity markers such as gender, race, and class to issues in social justice, the media, work and labor, and reproductive rights, to name a few.

Each chapter in this reader highlights one of the many overlapping branches of the feminist critique of identity politics, paying special attention to the intersection of identities and the complex, and sometimes contradictory, nature of power, oppression, and prejudice. As such, it lends itself well to an academic approach to teaching feminism, gender studies, and intersec-
When I began to write the introduction for this extraordinary *Ms.* digital reader, I was astonished by the enormity of what it chronicles in terms of the evolution of a relatively new field in the academy.

In 1969 while I was pursuing a Master’s degree in English at the historically Black Atlanta University, I began research for a thesis on “Faulkner’s Treatment of Women in His Major Novels,” as the new interdisciplinary field of Women’s Studies was beginning to emerge in the academy. Ironically and not on my radar, this was the first year that a formal women’s studies program was about to emerge in another part of the country—San Diego State University. What motivated me to embark upon what would turn out to be my life’s work is a narrative that is probably unique in the stories that get told about the evolution of one of the most significant developments in higher education, the establishment of Women’s Studies.

When I began to write the introduction for this extraordinary *Ms.* digital reader, I was astonished by the enormity of what it chronicles in terms of the evolution of a relatively new field in the academy. I also wanted to consider how this Reader’s focus on gender, race and class from the pages of *Ms.* magazine had always preoccupied academic women of color, long before the term “intersectionality” had made its way into feminist discourse. In 1969, for example, I used the slowly evolving tools of feminist literary criticism to analyze a giant in American letters, William Faulkner, not because I was compelled by the work of “dead white males”, but because I was interested in the ways in which race, gender, and class intersected in the lives of women in the U.S., especially the Deep South; maybe even more importantly, I was haunted by the complexities, contradictions, and pathologies of the region that had shaped my own family history and who I had become as a young African American scholar/activist deeply committed to anti-racist, feminist struggles, initially within the context of the academy. As women’s studies was beginning to develop, I returned to my alma mater, Spelman College, to teach in the Department of English in 1971. Not surprisingly, I encountered what was the norm in American higher education—Eurocentric, masculinist, curricula in which women were invisible or marginalized. This was the context in which I designed the Department’s first women’s studies courses—Images of Women in Literature, Images of Women in the Media, and two mini-courses focused on Black women writers that students could opt to take in the place of World Literature, though this was short-lived. I am certain that had I not been impacted by my immersion in feminist literary studies as a result of writing a master’s thesis, it would not have occurred to me to design several “women’s studies” courses.

It is certainly the case that when professors began to teach women’s studies courses in the sixties and the first program was established in 1970, no one could have predicted its future or the profound impact such curriculum transformations would have on higher education. The National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA), the professional association for our field, identifies more than 900 women’s and gender studies programs in the U.S., and they enroll the largest number of students in any interdisciplinary field. The phenomenal growth of women’s studies over 45 years is apparent in its global reach as well; programs now exist in Canada, Mexico, parts of Africa, Argentina, Costa Rica, the Caribbean, Europe, India, Indonesia, China, Japan and Korea. Ph.D. programs have been established in nearly twenty U.S. universities, as well as in Canada, Australia, England, New Zealand, Korea and Hungary. With the expansion of women’s studies into graduate education, including master’s programs and graduate concentrations/certificates, it is clear that women’s studies is now a respected “field” with all the accouterments of other scholarly disciplines—a national association, diverse disciplinary associations, numerous refereed journals (over 30 in the U.S. alone), and a steady outpouring of monographs, anthologies, readers and textbooks by university presses and trade publications. Colleges and universities across the nation advertise for junior and senior faculty trained in the interdisciplinary field of women’s studies, as well as award prestigious endowed professorships in women’s studies. Beyond the academy, there is a growing domestic and international market for women’s studies scholars in government and non-governmental organizations, policy and research institutes, foundations, women’s magazines and non-profit organizations.
As a way of illustrating the long, amazing history of the development of women’s studies in the academy, which the Ms. reader captures, I want to suggest a different genealogy in this magnificent narrative. In the 1920s, a group of Black clubwomen in the South formed a little known, under researched and still largely invisible organization in the annals of U.S. women’s history called the International Council of Women of the Darker Races. Had I not written a women’s studies dissertation a decade after leaving Atlanta University, it is likely that I would not have encountered these women—foremothers of us all who claim women’s studies as our academic home or neighbor. The Council had as its objective “the dissemination of knowledge of peoples of color the world over.” The constitution stated that the membership would include 150 American women of color and 50 international women of color. The leadership of the Council was in the hands of Margaret Murray Washington, its first president, former president of the National Association of Colored Women (1914-1918), and the third wife of Booker T. Washington, President of Tuskegee Institute. At Tuskegee, she was also Director of Girls’ Industries and later Dean of Women. In addition to organizing the Council, she was responsible for the development of a course at Tuskegee on the conditions of women around the globe. The formation of study groups, which were called Committees of Seven, became the organizational strategy for curriculum integration projects in what we would now call women’s studies. Teachers were organized; recommended reading lists were distributed; discussions were held; and school boards were lobbied. Understanding the lived experiences and status of women and children in West Africa, Haiti, Cuba, and India was an important component of the Council’s work and in this regard the study groups arranged field trips to selected countries and fund-raising campaigns for international educational projects. One such project involved building a school for girls in Sierra Leone, West Africa, in partnership with Adelaide Casely-Hayford. What is significant about this short-lived organization with respect to a new genealogy of the evolution of women’s studies is that Council women had a profound understanding of the importance of analyzing the intersection of race and gender in the lives of women globally or transnationally. This pioneering, forward looking organization is certainly reminiscent of recent attempts by contemporary women of color to establish linkages with other women of color throughout the world and to struggle for the elimination of racism and sexism on a global level. Their desire to understand and bond with other women of color across geographical boundaries is yet another manifestation of both feminist and Pan-African impulses on the part of earlier Black women scholar activists, both inside and outside the academy. Had early women’s studies professors in the 60s and 70s been aware of our important herstory, they would have understood the importance of intersectional, border-crossing analytic frameworks in their theory building and knowledge construction with respect to the lives of women locally, nationally, and transnationally.

Women’s studies classrooms and movements for advocacy and social change on behalf of women and girls in America and around the globe continue to provide sites for the kind of transgressive teaching, research and activism in which many of us would like to remain engaged and about which much has been written in Ms. since 1971. Though secure at many colleges, it is also the case that women’s and gender studies is barely in the front door on hundreds of campuses, most notably community colleges, historically black colleges, tribal colleges, and many majority institutions, especially small, under resourced ones. One of the most urgent challenges still for higher education in the U.S. is how to effectively respond to issues of difference, especially around race, gender and class. … and the Ms. digital reader is an important intervention.
SO MANY QUESTIONS REVERBERATE IN THE MULTIFACETED AND VIBRANT space of a women's studies curriculum: What is feminism? Are feminists only women? What about Beyoncé—is she a feminist? How do we dismantle systems of oppression including sexism, racism and classism? Why are women often paid less than men? How do we end gendered violence? What is the relationship between women's working conditions in the U.S. and globally? 

For the last forty years the academic field of women's studies has asked the provocative questions about how both power and privilege operate in women's lives. The theories animating these questions make feminist activism possible and have contributed to historic economic, social and political changes globally. That living theory embodies the core concepts of women's studies.

This section introduces these, often overlapping, core concepts: feminism, intersectionality, knowledge production, transnational analysis and social justice. They are the result of two centuries of feminist theorizing, community organizing and healthy debates among scholars and activists. The feminist fight for equality, both at the individual level and collectively, defines a social justice approach. Intersectionality is an analytical way of taking into account the systems of inequality that make a difference in a woman's life, based in ideas about sexuality, race, ethnicity, class and/or language status. Who creates knowledge and from what perspective? How do men and women experience the world? And, what difference does that make in how society values some stories over others? These questions define the core concept of knowledge production. Finally, thinking through a transnational lens enables us to discover how patterns of globalization, histories of colonialism and labor practices shape women's access to food, security, and power.

By exploring these core concepts, you are building a powerful theoretical toolkit, the same toolkit that has enabled leaders, activists and scholars to tackle some of the most pressing issues of the 21st century including reproductive rights, immigration, police brutality, racism, sexual violence, women's health, and many others.

Reading the selections herein will help you develop a critical analysis of power, offering answers to the question of who tends to have it and why. This section also addresses other questions central to women's studies: What else does feminism offer besides insights into women's oppression? Why is thinking about intersections important? How did consciousness-raising groups support women's ability to name oppression? How do we break down the tendency to think of 'the West' and 'everyone else'?

There are multiple paths to feminist action and engagement. These readings offer a roadmap of those paths, providing some definitions and historical context about feminism. In "Feminism Today: 'what would bell hooks say?"" (Spring 2011) scholar and cultural critic bell hooks defines feminism as a practice that is accessible to all. She notes that people now encounter feminist ideas in diverse spheres of life from popular culture to online classes.

Bonnie Thornton Dill's "Intersections" (Spring 2009) invites us to see that each person has privileges and vulnerabilities within larger systems of oppression, highlighting a core concept of intersectionality. Dill's essay can be put into conversation with the early black feminist theorizing of "The Combahee River Collective Statement" (July/August 1991), which helped to generate an intersectional analysis and merge it with practice. As knowers, women's experience is often invisible and devalued, and so Kimberle Crenshaw's "Black Girls Matter" (Spring 2015) provides another way to think about knowledge production through the impact of media representations and the effect of male-centered national policies on black girls. Understanding how systems of oppression interact and shape personal and group experience can be difficult work, so you are encouraged to reflect on your own experience. Do these conversations about race, sex and power seem different today? If so, in what ways?

After reading how high school students taught by Ileana Jimenez in "Feminist High" (Winter 2013) and college students in Michele Tracy
Berger’s “So You Want to Change the World?” (Fall 2012) apply their women’s studies training in their communities, you’ll be able to answer the question “What can you do with women’s studies?” Several other articles highlight the transformative force that the field of women’s studies has become in shaping educational communities. Carrie Baker and Bonnie Thornton Dill’s “Taking Women’s Studies into the Streets” (Fall 2012) and Michele Rowley’s “Women’s Studies Brings Global Change” (Fall 2012) highlight women’s studies as a successful, and growing, global phenomenon.

Much of this section demonstrates the different ways feminists have advocated for social justice and the issues they’ve tackled. Britney Cooper’s “The Women of #BlackLives Matter” (Winter 2015), Beverly Guy-Sheftall’s “Coretta Scott King: A Revolutionary Woman” (Spring 2006), Nawal El Saadawi’s “An Enemy of the State” (January/February 1995) and Jennifer Williams’ “Feminism is Not Just About Women’s Oppression” (August 15, 2014) offer rich examples of social justice approaches to police violence, sexist media representation and the politics of reproductive rights.

Analyzing power includes exploring the ways that women around the world face unique challenges in their many roles as workers, mothers, caregivers and leaders. As such, transnational analysis looks at the relationship between gender, nation and economics on the global stage. Along these lines, Maria Melendez’s “Mujeres de Maiz” (Spring 2011) and Mridu Khullar Relph’s “The Planet Savers” (Winter/Spring 2014) reflect on the lives and labor of women in Mexico and India, respectively, and how those women’s lives are affected by global trade and the environment.

These core concepts reflect theory in action or ‘praxis’: the integration of learning with social justice. Theory in action is one of the core principles of Ms. magazine and of a women’s studies approach to the world. Engaging with these robust concepts will provide you with a solid foundation to build on as you learn about specific topics later in the reader (e.g. media and technology, health and reproductive rights). Most importantly, this section should help you consider how applying your knowledge can make a real difference in the issues that matter most to you.

Discussion:

1. Feminism is a complex and often contested concept. While simple to define, many artists, entertainers, scholars, and activists interpret its tenets differently. Using any of the videos and articles in this chapter that foreground feminists and their ideas (Adichi, Beyoncé, hooks, or King), examine the differences in the approach of at least two of these women. In what areas do their ideas overlap? In what ways are race, class, and/or sexuality additional factors in each woman’s perspective on feminism?

2. Read Berger’s “So You Want to Change the World?” and consider what women’s studies means to you? Whether you plan to major, minor, or just take one class, how do you see women’s studies making a difference in your life personally and/or professionally?

3. The last section of this chapter includes articles that discuss how ideas presented in the women’s studies classroom can be translated into action for social justice. Using one of these articles as support, discuss a recent event that has affected you, your family, your community, your school, or your city/state and consider how what you’ve learned so far about feminism or the intersections of race, class, and gender could be translated into activism in relation to this event.
The unimaginable has happened. Donald Trump—after a blatantly misogynist, racist, anti-LGBT, anti-disability, xenophobic campaign—has won the electoral vote and is the president-elect of the USA. This is not the time for feminists to sit on the sidelines. We must fight on. We have come too far and worked too hard to go back now. We must organize, organize, organize.

**Feminism**

Ms. *Post-Election Call To Action*

Ms. Editors

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

**The Growing Feminist Factor: We Are the Majority**

Eleanor Smeal

The heartbreakin presidential election of 2016 had a silver lining – the growing gender gap and feminist factor.

**Beyoncé’s Fierce Feminism**

Janell Hobson

Popular and talented, Beyoncé’s a controversial figure for feminists, who sometimes don’t know what to make of the provocative messages put forth by the “girl power” diva.

**Lemonade: Beyoncé’s Redemption Song**

Janell Hobson

An exploration of the cultural and historical themes of Beyoncé’s second visual album, a fiercely feminist reinvention of the medium.

**Moving Beyond Pain**

bell hooks

bell hooks’ response to Beyoncé’s *Lemonade*.

**Intersectionality**

**Joan Little: The Dialectics of Rape**

Angela Davis

The intersections of sex, race and class in the case of an African American woman charged with murdering a white prison guard who sexually assaulted her.

**The Combahee River Collective Statement**

Actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual and class oppression, this collective develops an integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking.
Intersections
Bonnie Thornton Dill
Women’s studies needs to incorporate a more complex approach to understanding women’s lives, beginning with race, ethnicity, class and culture.
Spring 2009

Indiana Injustice
Deeper Iyer and Gaylynn Burroughs
Immigrant women, women of color and low-income women are at the greatest risk of becoming the subject of policing, prosecution and severe sentences in an age of mass incarceration.
Spring 2015

Knowledge Production

A Guide to Consciousness-Raising
Letty Cottin Progrebin
Consciousness-raising groups bring women together to talk about their lives, creating connections between personal experience and broader systems of privilege and oppression.
March 1973

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. Nine feminist scholars reflect on the state of the field and report back.
Fall 2012

Feminist High
Illeana Jimenez
How to teach intersectionality and transnationalism in high school and why women’s studies shouldn’t be limited to the college classroom.
Winter 2013

Black Girls Matter
Kimberlé 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

Transnational Analysis

War Through a Transnational Feminist Lens
Patricia McFadden
An African scholar reflects on a U.S. gathering to confront feminism and war with a race-, class-, and age-diverse group of more than 400 anti-war activists and academics from around the world.
Winter 2007

Mujeres de Maiz
Maria Melendez
Want to know how the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) affects women in Mexico? Follow the corn.
Spring 2011

Women’s Studies Brings Global Change
Michelle V. Rowley
The growth of women’s studies and the women’s movement internationally has been critical in reminding state leaders that half of their countries’ citizens are women.
Fall 2012

The Planet Savers
Mridu Khullar Relph
India’s waste-picking women, who search for recyclables amidst trash shipped from the U.S., U.K, and other countries for disposal, are invisible heroes.
Winter/Spring 2014

A Woman for Woman
Linda Kramer Jenning
The U.N.’s Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka has the “women portfolio” as the advocate for the world’s 3.5 billion women and girls.
Summer 2016

Social Justice

An Enemy of the State
Nawal El Saadawi
An excerpt from the prison memoir of Nawal El Saadawi, a physician and feminist author jailed by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981 for her social justice advocacy.
January/February 1995
Coretta Scott King: A Revolutionary Woman
Beverly Guy-Sheftall
While Coretta Scott King has been celebrated as a civil rights icon, she was as outspoken about women’s rights, gay and lesbian rights, trade unions, peace and a broad range of other social issues.  
Spring 2006

Taking Women’s Studies into the Streets
Carrie Baker and Bonnie Thornton Dill
Women’s studies, with its activist roots and central focus on social justice is at the forefront of campus activism and civic engagement.  
Fall 2012

Feminism Is Not Just About Women’s Oppression
Jennifer Williams
A report on the police killing of unarmed black teenager Michael Brown, the events in Ferguson, MO, and why police brutality is a feminist issue.  
Ms. blog, August 15, 2014

The Women of #BlackLivesMatter
Brittney Cooper
A new civil rights movement has emerged from the tragic killings of young African Americans – and women are at the activist forefront.  
Winter 2015

FILM

I Am A Girl
A film by Rebecca Barry
Distributed by Women Make Movies
I AM A GIRL follows six different girls – who differ by origin, economics, ethnicity and access to education – as they inch closer to adolescence, defining what it means to be a girl in the 21st century.  
Australia, 2013, 88 min
Health and Reproductive Justice

INTRODUCTION BY NATALIE WILSON,
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN MARCOS

Working towards reproductive justice continues to be a defining component of the feminist movement. While the goals related to attaining reproductive justice pre-date the existence of Ms. magazine, it has been integral to advancing awareness, activism, analysis, and legislation that promotes health and reproductive rights for all people.

Health and reproductive rights encompass a huge swath of issues, including access to legal, safe, and affordable healthcare, contraception and abortion; implementing and fighting for comprehensive sex education; working to bring an end to oppressive practices and legislation locally and globally; and exposing the violence, extremism, and misinformation perpetuated by those who intend to curtail reproductive rights. An essential component of the reproductive rights movement is health, particularly the health and healthcare of women and girls and how these have been affected and impeded by the historical construction of females as “reproducing bodies.” Which women should become mothers and why has been a key area of oppressive policing, one that has historically privileged white, western women and disenfranchised those people who are not white, economically privileged, heterosexual, cisgender, and/or able-bodied.

As reproductive justice activists and scholars have made clear, reproductive rights and health-related issues must be addressed through an intersectional lens, with attention to how race, class, gender, sexuality, geographical location, religion and so on shape both the experience of individuals and the broader systems of our world, such as patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism, hetero-monogamy, militarism, and fundamentalism.

Forced sterilization, child marriage, clinic violence, maternal mortality, and legislation that aims to elevate the rights of the fetus above those of the mother are all part of these systems that keep global patriarchy securely in place, negatively impacting the health of women, girls, and other marginalized groups. At the heart of these intersecting limitations and practices lies the true aim of controlling reproductive capacity: in short, maintaining the patriarchal status quo.

Articles included in this section offer timely, succinct, accessible information that documents the continuing battles for reproductive rights around the world and attest to Ms. magazine’s extensive publications on the topic. Some of the articles focus on global issues such as rape as a weapon of war (“The Cruelest Weapon,” Akila Radhakrishnan and Kristina Kallas, Fall 2014), how to make childbirth safer in Tanzania (“Special Delivery,” Bell Taylor-McGee, Fall 2010), the important work of women in countries without enough doctors (“Heart and Soul,” Linda Villarosa, Winter 2011), and how the lack of access to basic healthcare impedes the education of girls in some African countries (“For the Price of a Pad,” Linda Villarosa, Winter 2012). Other articles address recent anti-choice legislation and practices in the U.S. (“A Frightening Prosecution,” Gaylynn Burroughs, Winter 2012; “Voting for Sanity,” Holly Derr, Winter 2012; “The 88 Percent,” Sarah Boonin, Fall 2014) and document other pressing issues for women’s health such as teen pregnancy (“Mixed-up Mississippi,” Andy Kopsa, Winter 2013) and the troubling intersection of race and breast cancer treatment (“The Breast Cancer Divide,” Michelle L. Smith, Fall 2004; “Why Is There a Black-White Gap in Breast Cancer Mortality?” Anita Little, November 19, 2012).

The publication and activism evidenced in the articles herein attest to the importance of not only an intersectional lens, but a “glocal” one, in which relationships between the local, national, and global are seen as mutually informing one another in a system of global patriarchy. Furthermore, the selections attest to the importance of feminist organizing and activism, paving the way towards true reproductive justice, a key component of the feminist world we are in the process of mapping.

The need to bridge reproductive justice and health awareness and activism via the implementation of an intersectional, global focus is a vital part of the reproductive rights movement. Articles published by Ms. magazine over its 40-plus year history reflect this primary import, covering local issues such as clinic access, personhood laws, and sex education; na-
tional issues related to legislation, funding, and healthcare; and global issues such as child marriage, female genital mutilation, the “unholy alliance” between religious and state systems of power.” Crucially, this work has consistently been attuned to how race, class, gender, sexuality, and geopolitical location intersect in ways that privilege some and impede others.

Discussion:

1. What is “reproductive justice?” Why does it continue to be a central component of feminist activism in the U.S. and globally? Discuss with reference to one of the many important current issues covered in this chapter.

2. Several articles in this section focus on the growing slate of state level abortion restrictions, such as “personhood amendments” that declare fertilized eggs to be people (Derr) and “fetal homicide laws” that grant fetal rights separate from pregnant women (Burroughs). Discuss the stated intentions versus real life consequences of these laws. Why are immigrant women, women of color and poor women disproportionately affected by these abortion restrictions?

3. Read Villarosa’s “For the Price of a Pad” and view “Girls’ Education – Period.” What is the connection between access to sanitary products and girls’ education in developing nations? Discuss several innovative ways that activists and entrepreneurs are making pads accessible and affordable to millions of girls worldwide who need them.
Never Again – Death, Politics, and Abortion
Roberta Brandes Bratz
Ms. publishes shocking photo of a woman, dead from an unsafe back-alley abortion, as a way to remember thousands who died or were injured by laws outlawing abortion.
April 1973

The Breast Cancer Divide
Michelle L. Smith
Since the early 1980s, increased mammography screening had led to earlier breast cancer detection and lower mortality rates. Yet black women have benefited far less from these advances than have white women.
Fall 2004

Special Delivery
Bell Taylor-McGhee
How can childbirth be made safer in a poor country like Tanzania? Raising community awareness about and providing reproductive health and family-planning services is a start.
Fall 2010

Heart and Soul
Linda Villarosa
In their poor country with too few doctors, thousands of Ethiopian women act as counselors, midwives, health teachers and sources of inspiration.
Winter 2011

Treatment Denied
Molly Ginty
The opinions that count most at Catholic hospitals are those of bishops, not doctors, preventing medical staff from performing even life-saving procedures if they go against the doctrine of the church.
Spring 2011

For the Price of a Pad
Linda Villarosa
In the U.S., women take menstrual protection for granted, but millions of girls worldwide miss school or drop out because they can’t afford sanitary napkins.
Spring/Summer 2012

A Frightening Prosecution
Gaylynn Burroughs
Fetal homicide laws in many U.S. states diminish the rights of the pregnant woman, potentially making her criminally liable for any act that could harm the fetus.
Spring/Summer 2012

Voting for Sanity
Holly Derr
A report on the defeat of Amendment 26 in Mississippi, which would have bestowed “personhood” on every fertilized egg, endangering women’s access to birth control and safe, legal abortion.
Winter 2012

Why Is There a Black-White Gap in Breast Cancer Mortality?
Anita Little
Race, class and gender snake their way into practically everything, and all of these identities come to a critical head with black women and breast cancer.
Ms. blog, November 19, 2012

Mixed-Up Mississippi
Andy Kopsa
Public schools in Mississippi are required to teach abstinence-based sex education. With the highest teen pregnancy rate in the country, are these programs helping?
Winter 2013

We’ve Got You Covered
Cindy Pearson
Ten things women need to know about the Affordable Care Act, including who gets insurance, what’s covered, and who’s left out.
Spring 2013
The 88 Percent
Sarah Boonin
The Supreme Court's Hobby Lobby decision—to allow a corporation to refuse certain reproductive health coverage to its employees based on religious objections—threatens all contraception.
Fall 2014

The Cruelest Weapon
Akila Radhakrishnan and Dristina Kallas
With rape so prevalent in conflict zones, the U.S. must lift the unwarranted ban on funding war-related abortions.
Fall 2014

When Anti-Choicers Co-Opt #BlackLivesMatter
Anita Little
Black women are already culturally cast as irresponsible, and anti-choicers rely on these stereotypes to shame black women who get abortions.
Ms. blog, April 4, 2015

New Study Shows Black Communities Want Clinic Access
Anita Little
Disproportionately affected by the growing slate of state-level abortion restrictions, women of color and low-income women want better access to reproductive health services.
Ms. blog, July 9, 2015

Justices Side With Women
Sarah R. Boonin
Whole Women’s Health is a major – though tenuous – victory for abortion rights.
Summer 2016

VIDEO

Educate Girls – Period!
Written and Narrated by Susan Rubin
Produced and Directed by Lorraine Sheinberg for the Feminist Majority Foundation
A short video about the importance of sanitary pads to girls in developing nations where lack of feminine care products sometimes means they have to skip school.
http://youtu.be/bQOjP4Yq8BY
INTRODUCTION BY CAROLINE HELDMAN, OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE

THIS CHAPTER ADDRESSES VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, A GLOBAL EPIDEMIC and public health crisis affecting women’s physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health. Violence against women has been linked to physical injuries, unwanted and early pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and diseases, mental health disorders, suicides, and homicides.

On a national level, gendered violence increases health care costs and reduces employment productivity. According to the World Health Organization (2013), one in three women experience sexual/intimate partner violence worldwide. Violence against women is also a political crisis where half of the population is not afforded the same rights and protections as the other half. The articles in this chapter present a complex picture of who experiences violence, its origins, rape myths, institutional betrayal, the best ways to address this violence, recent reinvigoration of the anti-violence struggle, and powerful new tools for activists.

Researchers have identified patriarchy as the origin of gendered/sexualized violence. In short, women face violence at the hands of men because societies across the globe do not consider girls and women to be full human beings. From a gang rape in India (India’s Daughter, Leslee Udwin, 2015) to gendered violence in Juarez, Mexico (“Getting Away with Murder,” Martha Burk, Spring 2006), the pervasive sexual assault of women farm workers (“The Green Motel,” Rebecca Clarren, Summer 2005), the disenfranchisement and struggle of women in post-earthquake Haiti (“Rising From the Dust of Goudougoudou,” Gina Athena Ulysse, Winter 2011), the prosecution of women and girls who have been trafficked for sex (“Jailing Girls For Men’s Crimes,” Carrie Baker, Summer 2010), and the debate over allowing domestic abusers to own guns (“Rearming Domestic Abusers,” Gaylynn Burroughs, Winter/Spring 2014), women are not afforded the same rights and protections as men.

The patriarchal origins of violence against women are best seen in overtly patriarchal institutions, like the military and college campuses. Women are twice as likely to experience rape in the military than in a civilian setting, and the threat is even higher in war zones (“Culture of Rape,” Natalie Wilson, Spring 2010). Rape culture also thrives on college campuses, where one-in-five female students face sexual assault and rapists are rarely held accountable (“Date Rape,” Ellen Sweet, October 1985; “Blowing the Whistle on Campus Rape,” Caroline Heldman and Danielle Dirks, Winter/Spring 2014).

A significant aspect of the struggle to combat violence against women is debunking myths perpetuated by the media and culture at large, such as the idea that intimate partner violence is a private family matter; that being a rape survivor is a coveted or privileged status; that only “forcible” rape is “real” rape; that rape is mostly committed by strangers; that women are likely to make false reports of rape, and that only weak women stay in abusive relationships. In reality, violence against women is a public crisis that demands government intervention; rape survivors do not hold a privileged status but are instead often persecuted for speaking up about their experience; “rape” includes non-consensual penetration of any orifice by any item through force, incapacitation, or inability to consent (e.g., a mental disability); most rapes are perpetrated by a friend or acquaintance; false rape reports are rare; and the cycle of abuse makes it difficult for women of all backgrounds to leave abusive relationships.

The Internet works as a powerful tool for consciousness raising and action around these issues. Survivors in most countries now use social media to share their experiences, and many people are hearing firsthand accounts of sexual/partner violence for the first time. Survivor voices have brought media attention and raised public awareness (“Double Jeopardy,” Chalaine Chang, Fall 2013). Social media also played a key role in the FBI’s decision to expand its definition of rape through a Feminist Majority Foundation/Change.org petition that gained over 150,000 signatures (“Victory Over Violence,” Stephanie Hallett, Winter 2012). Through social media, activists across the globe are networking and raising awareness in new ways that have changed the face of anti-violence work.

There is hope. Recognizing the
roots of violence against women in patriarchy and patriarchal institutions is one of the first steps in addressing it. Other remedies include holding perpetrators more accountable on campus (Heldman and Dirks, Winter/Spring 2014) and in our justice system, challenging and speaking out against street harassment and other verbal and physical attacks on women (“Pockets of Resistance,” Aviva Dove-Viebahn, Fall 2014; “If These Walls Could Talk: Fighting Street Harassment with Street Art,” Anita Little, Fall 2013), getting men and other bystanders involved in intervention, developing more inclusive legal definitions of “rape” (Hallett, Winter 2012), and taking action at the local level to prevent violence against women. This chapter describes the global nature of this epidemic, the societal beliefs that contribute to it, and what anti-violence activists are doing to reduce gendered violence. New social media tools have made anti-violence efforts more effective than ever, but efforts have a long way to go because of entrenched societal beliefs.

Discussion:

1. Read the series of articles on the epidemic of campus rape in this chapter, starting with Sweet’s “Date Rape” published in Ms. magazine in 1985, the first far-reaching study on date rape at U.S. colleges, and continuing to the current coverage by Heldman and Dicks in “Blowing the Whistle on Campus Rape” and Burroughs and Katz in “Won’t Back Down.” Are you surprised to learn that the statistic of 1 in 5 women who experience sexual assault during college has not changed since 1985? Discuss the many daunting challenges activists face in taking on the epidemic of campus rape. How are new legal strategies and social media making a difference in recent campus activism?

2. The epidemic of rape and violence against women and girls crosses every sector and place in U.S. society: colleges (Sweet, Heldman and Dicks, Burroughs and Katz), the military (Wilson), prisons (Meiner), work (Clarren), public, private and domestic spaces (Bartlow, Burroughs, Hobson), and most recently, online (see Chapter 7). It also crosses national borders around the globe (Udwin, Chang, Ulysse, Burk, Pascus). Is there a root cause of gendered/sexualized violence? How can intersectional and transnational analyses be used to better understand violence against women and girls, and create effective strategies for local and transnational activism?

3. Make a list of the many myths that support cultures of rape and violence against women in the U.S. and globally. How does the media play a central role in reinforcing these myths? Discuss with reference to one of the articles in this chapter that focus on the connection between violence against women and the media (Hobson, Dove-Viebahn, Heldman and Dicks).
Date Rape
Ellen Sweet
The first far-reaching study on date rape at U.S. colleges, the Ms. Campus Project on Sexual Assault reveals startling statistics: one quarter of college women have been the victims of rape or attempted rape.
October 1985

The Green Motel
Rebecca Clarren
That's what some women farmworkers call the fields and orchards in which they face the persistent threat of sexual assaults.
Summer 2005

Getting Away With Murder
Martha Burk
Hundreds of women have been murdered and sexually assaulted in Juárez, Mexico since the 1990s. What's the connection between these horrors and U.S. corporations?
Spring 2006

There's Nothing Friendly About Abuse
R. Dianne Bartlow
Children are at risk when custody cases rely on a theory of parental "alienation," a meritless assertion that most accusations of child abuse during custody battles are false.
Summer 2010

Culture of Rape
Natalie Wilson
Given its reputation for covering up abuses and silencing victims, will an upcoming class-action lawsuit force the military to face its sexual assault problem once and for all?
Spring 2010

Jailing Girls For Men's Crimes
Carrie Baker
Is an underage girl arrested for selling sex a criminal – or a victim of trafficking? Outraged activists want to send such girls to safe harbors, not jail.
Summer 2010

Rising From the Dust of Goudougoudou
Gina Athena Ulysse
The world has watched Haiti's most vulnerable women survive quake, flood, cholera, and homelessness – yet those women still feel invisible.
Winter 2011

The Forgotten Women of West Mesa
Laura Pascus
Eleven women were murdered and dumped on an Albuquerque, N.M. borderland. The intersections of race, class, and gender not only make these women more vulnerable, but also their case less likely to be solved.
Spring 2011

What's the Connection Between Violence Against Women and Our Prison Nation?
Erica Meiners
How is it that the overlapping forms of violence impacting many marginalized women – particularly transwomen and/or black, Latino, First Nations, queer and disabled women – do not count as violence or harm?
Ms. blog, September 5, 2012

Victory Over Violence
Stephanie Hallett
After a yearlong campaign, the FBI finally recognizes "rape is rape" by changing its definition, thereby making sexual assault less ambiguous and easier to prosecute.
Winter 2012

Double Jeopardy
Chalaine Chang
With sexual violence a daily menace, particularly during recent protests and conflict, Egyptian women suffer as both citizens and women.
Fall 2013

If These Walls Could Talk: Fighting Street Harassment with Street Art
Anita Little
The bodies of women of color are already hypersexualized which is reflected in how men approach them. Rather than glaze over race, this essay explores its connection to street harassment.
Fall 2013
**The Rape of Harriet Tubman**  
Janell Hobson  
A discussion of the Harriet Tubman Sex Tape and how her heroic narrative has turned into a demeaning joke by a racist and sexist culture.  
Ms. blog, August 17, 2013

**Blowing the Whistle on Campus Rape**  
Caroline Heldman and Danielle Dirks  
Student activists, alumni and supportive faculty have taken on the epidemic of sexual assault with renewed vigor and added legal tools.  
Winter/Spring 2014

**Rearming Domestic Abusers**  
Gaylynn Burroughs  
Whether the Supreme Court lets violent offenders own guns could mean the difference between life and death for thousands of survivors of domestic violence.  
Winter/Spring 2014

**Pockets of Resistance**  
Aviva Dove-Viebahn  
The intersection of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation plays a big role in this documentary about the New Jersey 4, mishandled by the justice system and crucified by the media.  
Fall 2014

**A Girl Child Ain’t Safe**  
Janell Hobson  
A discussion of the cultural expectations and vulnerability of young women and girls of color after the incident in McKinney, TX where a teenaged black girl in a bikini was manhandled by police.  
Ms. blog, June 22, 2015

**A Black Mother Weeps for America**  
Irma McClain  
This appeal to America to “stop killing our black sons” challenges the escalation of incidents of police brutality and considers its racial motivations.  
Ms. blog, July 7, 2015

**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 campus.  
Summer 2015

**VIDEOS**

**No More Excuses: TEST All Rape Kits**  
Written and Narrated by Susan Rubin  
Produced and Directed by Lorraine Sheinberg for the Feminist Majority Foundation  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DRybsweu0
Work and Labor

INTRODUCTION BY PREMILLA NADASEN, BARNARD COLLEGE

FEW ISSUES HAVE OFFERED MORE PROMISE FOR WOMEN’S LIBERATION or created more divisions among women than work and labor. Women’s relationship to work has been both a site of oppression and a source of liberation. The range of articles in this chapter illustrates how women of different race, class, ethnic, and citizenship backgrounds relate to and understand paid employment.

Despite differences among them, nearly all women have experienced devaluation of their labor. Women’s work is devalued, in part, because workplace and government policies assume that full-time, long-term employed men are the primary breadwinners and women are secondary earners. This assumption leads to lower earnings, higher tax rates, and fewer government benefits for women (“Paycheck Feminism,” Karen Kornbluh and Rachel Horner, Fall 2009).

Women have struggled to break the glass ceiling, achieve equal representation with men in previously closed occupations, and push for equal pay for equal work. They have challenged unequal pay through individual advocacy, sex discrimination suits, class action suits, and legislation such as the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which extends the statute of limitations and better enables workers to seek redress for pay disparities.

The question of sexual assault and sexual harassment in the workplace has exacerbated inequality in the workplace. Anita Hill’s accusations of sexual harassment by Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas in 1992 highlighted the ways in which women are subject to ongoing harassment in the workplace with often little recourse. Hill’s case drew national attention and galvanized women across the country (“The Nature Of The Beast,” Anita Hill, Jan/Feb 1992).

Women are now nearly half the paid workforce but they tend to be concentrated in low-wage jobs, such as fast food, home health care, private household labor, farm work and guest or subcontracted labor. Low-wage women workers are fighting to improve status and pay within their occupations. Campaigns for a living wage and an increase in the minimum wage have been closely associated with women’s economic independence.

Low-wage women workers have also mobilized and organized into unions and similar formations. Domestic workers—considered some of the most difficult workers to organize—have come together both locally and nationally and have developed alliances with other “excluded workers” who are also denied federal labor protections (“Domestic Workers Take It To The Streets,” Premilla Nadasen, Fall 2009; “Not Just Scraping By,” Michelle Chen, Spring/Summer 2012). Similarly, fast food workers held a nationwide strike for better working conditions and higher wages (“Fed Up,” Michelle Chen, Fall 2013).

Low-wage women’s work is a global problem and has been made worse by free trade and neoliberal economic policies. Free trade policies have enabled corporations to trade without tariffs and dodge environmental and labor standards. U.S. companies’ ability to produce goods abroad cheaply weakens national regulations since companies can easily relocate. For example, the building collapse of a garment factory in Bangladesh employing mostly young women illustrates how international economic ties implicate both U.S. corporations and American consumers in deadly working conditions and labor exploitation of women abroad (“From the Ashes of Rana Plaza,” Jason Motlagh and Susie Taylor, Summer 2013). But even the “Made in the USA” label is no assurance that labor rights are protected. Both workers in U.S. territories and trafficked and exploited workers in the U.S. labor under coercive conditions (“Paradise Lost,” Rebecca Claren, Spring 2006).

Inequality in the workplace also stems from women’s status as mothers and caretakers and their responsibility for the unpaid work of social reproduction. So, even women not in the paid labor force are workers, but their work is both devalued and unrecognized. Unpaid household labor and caretaking creates greater pressures for women who also work outside the home. While working women of all classes juggle the competing demands of work and family, there is a class divide in how compa-
nies are willing to accommodate family needs. Family friendly policies—child care, family leave, job-sharing, and flex time—are much less readily available to low-wage women workers. In addition, economically well-off women can purchase services to ease the work-family balance—services very often performed by less well-off women. Poor women—disproportionately women of color—employed in both the corporate sector as well as for individual families struggle with unpredictable work schedules, inflexible hours, low wages, the high cost of child care and limited benefits, not to mention food insecurity. Cuts in social programs such as food stamps affect women workers who disproportionately rely on such assistance to make ends meet (“Playing Games With Hunger,” Monica Potts, Winter/Spring 2014).

Public assistance is directly related to women’s position in the paid labor force and their status as mothers. In the classic 1972 essay, “Welfare is a woman’s issue,” Johnnie Tillmon addresses the work of mothering and how the stigma of the welfare system, which controls women’s lives, deters women from leaving low-wage jobs or going it alone, without a man. She suggests that an expanded welfare state and support for women’s work as mothers could ameliorate women’s poverty and give them a real alternative to undervalued and low paid work.

Together these articles illustrate that truly achieving equity in the workplace requires a multifaceted approach—addressing pay disparities, instituting family friendly and flexible policies for all workers, raising wages, reforming and expanding the safety net, putting an end to sexual harassment, and eliminating coercive labor practices.

Discussion:

1. Using one of the articles in this chapter that addresses how labor abroad benefits consumers in the United States, consider the factors at play—race, nationality, class, gender, etc.—that contribute to the exploitation of these workers. If you were in charge, how would you address the labor issues at stake while both respecting the workers and maintaining the industry in question?

2. Kornbluh and Homer’s “Paycheck Feminism” considers how gender and race differences lead to pay disparity. Pair this article with another of your choice from this chapter and discuss the factors at play for women in the paid labor force. Do you see the same or similar concerns in both articles?

3. Choose at least two of the articles in this chapter that address low-income workers in order to interrogate how work is valued and what factors contribute to the devaluation of certain people’s labor. Why do you think some types of labor are valued more highly over others? What might be one way to address this wage gap?
Welfare Is A Women’s Issue
Johnnie Tillmon
Welfare can happen to anyone, but it especially happens to women. For a lot of middle-class women in this country, Women’s Liberation is a concern. For women on welfare, it’s a matter of survival.
Spring 1972

Life on the Global Assembly Line
Barbara Ehrenreich & Annette Fuentes
The exploitation of women in U.S. sweatshops, South Korean textile factories, and Ciudad Juarez maquiladoras.
January 1981

The Nature Of The Beast
Anita Hill
A first-person account of sexual harassment—a pervasive problem for working women, who are often disbelieved, dismissed, discounted, or worse.
Jan/Feb 1992

Stop Sexual Harassment Now!
Gwendolyn Mink
A look back at the legal struggle to protect women at work—and forward to the first film bringing some of that history to the big screen.
Fall 2005

Paradise Lost
Rebecca Clarren
Greed, sex slavery, forced abortions and right-wing moralists: the global exploitations of garment manufacturing and the precarious definition of “Made in the USA.”
Spring 2006

The Invisible Ones
Rebecca Clarren
An investigation into the shadow world of sex and labor trafficking in the United States, exposing not just the dimensions of the problem but the startling inadequacy of the federal response.
Summer 2007

Paycheck Feminism
Karen Kornbluh and Rachel Homr
With women making up almost half of the U.S. paid workforce, it’s time to rethink government policies that were designed for a different time. Here are five ways to better value women’s work.
Fall 2009

Domestic Workers Take It To The Streets
Premilla Nadasen
In cities around the U.S., women who work in other’s homes are emerging from their isolation to fight for decent wages and humane conditions.
Fall 2009

Detroit: The Road to Bankruptcy Hits Women Hard
Carol King
The attacks on unions are attacks on women, and Detroit is only one front in the War on Women, the middle class and poor Americans.
Ms. blog, October 25, 2013

Not Just Scraping By
Michelle Chen
Gender and racial discrimination on top of low wages and unsafe working conditions mean that women and racial minorities are often exploited by the restaurant industry.
Spring/Summer 2012

From the Ashes of Rana Plaza
Jason Motlagh and Susie Taylor
It took a huge tragedy for the garment factories of Bangladesh, filled with exploited young women workers, to finally draw international attention and action.
Summer 2013

Fed Up
Michelle Chen
Often further disadvantaged by their class and/or race, the fast-food industry’s women workers join walkouts for better wages.
Fall 2013
**Playing Games With Hunger**  
**Monica Potts**  
The story of Gail Todd, who struggles to put food on the table for her family of five despite the fact that she and her husband both work, illustrates how cuts to food stamps causes the working poor to suffer.  
*Winter/Spring 2014*

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**Behind the Labels**  
**Kristi Eaton**  
Cambodia's garment workers pay for what we save. While there was a recent wage increase for workers making clothes for apparel giants like the Gap, Nike, H&M, and Walmart, is it enough?  
*Spring 2015*

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**The Fearless Fight for $15**  
**Jenevieve Ting**  
A report on the continued campaign for a $15 minimum wage, which would critically enhance the quality of life for low-income workers, most of whom are women, people of color, and/or single mothers.  
*Ms. blog, May 5, 2015*
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, GLORIA STEINEM’S “SEX, LIES, AND ADVERTISING” (July/August 1990) exposed the controlling effect of advertising dollars on women’s media. And there have always been enough sexist ads to fill Ms. magazine’s “No Comment” section, appearing on the last page of each issue. Unfortunately, not much has changed in the world of advertising, as Jean Kilbourne notes in “Sexist Advertising: Then and Now” (Summer 2010): “Increasingly, people understand that, far from being trivial, advertising is actually a public-health issue that affects us all.”

Despite the limitations of sexist advertising, there is no denying the growth and progress of women’s roles, representations, and storytelling in other forms of media. From the Oprah’s influence on public perceptions of women’s empowerment via television talk shows (“The Winfrey Effect,” Janell Hobson, Summer 2011) to progressive TV shows like The Good Wife and Mad Men (“Stand By Your Man?” Aviva Dove-Viebahn, Spring 2010; “Feminism In A Mad World,” Aviva Dove-Viebahn, Summer 2010), television has become a key medium in the transformation of images of women. As for women’s creative talents, pop stars like Beyoncé have embraced the feminist label (Chapter 1, “Beyoncé’s Fierce Feminism,” Janell Hobson, Spring 2013) and powerful women showrunners like Shonda Rhimes, Jenji Kohan, and Jill Soloway have changed the content of television (“The Women Who Steal the Show,” Dani Klein Modisett, Spring 2015; “Portraying Women as They Actually Are,” Janell Hobson, Spring 2015; “What Does the Female Gaze Look Like?” Aviva Dove-Viebahn, Spring 2015). Signs like these point to mainstream media coming around to championing feminist principles and a more gender-inclusive and racially diverse world.

Of course, we still have challenges ahead. While feminists have made a tremendous impact on the mainstream media, the road ahead isn’t entirely smooth, from the sexism and racism faced by television journalists like Belva Davis (“Conventional Ignorance,” Belva Davis, Winter 2011) to the media misrepresentation of African Americans (“Singed Out,” Tamara Winfrey Harris, Winter 2012; “Angry or Complicated: Misrecognizing Black Women,” Janell Hobson, September 9, 2014). And while “Bollywood Goes Feminist” (Dinsa Sachan, Fall 2014) notes the progress of the largest movie industry in the world, Eliza Barclay reports in “Branded Women” (Summer 2009) how other countries like Mexico recruit women from around the world to model products, perpetuating both sexual objectification and racial hierarchies that value fair skin and blonde hair over other “types.”

The limited, and sometimes limiting, representation of women in media is both a local and global problem. Nonetheless, the existence of Ms. magazine’s forty-plus years since its inception provides hope for alternative media and storytelling. All over the world, progressive and radical media makers are pushing back against the mainstream and insisting on different means and ways of creating media.

There is also the rise of blogs and other social media in amplifying feminist narratives and catching the attention of mainstream media. Within news coverage, the increasing effect of women reporters and other media producers working behind-the-scenes has changed the gendered content on screen (“Air Time,” L.S. Kim, Fall 2007). Even mainstream sitcoms like Ugly Betty and Fresh Off the Boat challenge stereotypes of gender, ethnicity, and body image and immigrant families, respectively (“Beautiful Betty,” Yeidy M. Rivero, Winter 2007; “Seeing Myself in Fresh Off the Boat,” Jenevieve Ting, February, 12, 2015). As L.S. Kim argues (Fall 2007), “Yes, mass media can bring about progress and social change— but not without feminist and other alternative media pushing and guiding.” Feminist media continues to steer us in the right direction.
Discussion:

1. Steinem’s “Sex, Lies, and Advertising” gives readers an insider’s perspective on what happens when a magazine’s readership isn’t considered a desirable commercial demographic. What do you think the advertising in your favorite magazine or during your favorite television show says about its presumed audience in terms of race, class, gender, and age?

2. Many of the articles in this chapter reference television shows with women show runners (Winfrey, Rhimes, Kohan and Soloway) or with major female characters who are diverse and multilayered. According to at least two of these articles, why does having a woman play a central role in a show—as director, creator, producer, or character—matter?

3. In her Ms. blog post on the television show *Fresh Off the Boat*, Ting argues that, when it comes seeing Asian Americans on TV, “at the end of the day something is better than nothing.” Do you agree with this claim about the media representation of minorities, even if the representation isn’t ideal or completely fleshed-out?
**Sex, Lies, and Advertising**
*Gloria Steinem*
A discussion of advertising in *Ms.*, the exploitation of women in ads, and why the magazine reconsidered its policy on commercial advertisements.
*July/August 1990*

**Beautiful Betty**
*Yeidy M. Rivero*
An analysis of the television show *Ugly Betty*, which brings gender, class, ethnic and body issues to the screen.
*Winter 2007*

**Air Time**
*L.S. Kim*
A media scholar examines how feminists have impacted mainstream media from without and within—but reminds us we still have a long way to go.
*Fall 2007*

**Branded Women**
*Eliza Barkely*
Using models from around the world to sell products is a Mexican growth industry, one that manipulates consumers and demeans women.
*Summer 2009*

**Stand By Your Man?**
*Aviva Dove-Viebahn*
*The Good Wife*, a law procedural and a political and domestic drama combined one television show, defies gender – and genre – norms.
*Spring 2010*

**Sext Advertis ing: Then & Now**
*Jean Kilbourne*
A discussion and historical comparison of advertising’s exploitation of women from the 1960s to the present.
*Summer 2010*

**Feminism In A Mad World**
*Aviva Dove-Viebahn*
Despite its setting in the sexist and racist heyday of a 1960s advertising firm, *Mad Men*’s women remind us how far we’ve come, and how far we have to go.
*Summer 2010*

**Excerpt: Conventional Ignorance:**
*Belva Davis*
An excerpt from the memoir of Belva Davis, who, at the outset of her TV journalism career, confronted violent racism at the 1964 Republican convention.
*Winter 2011*

**The Winfrey Effect**
*Janell Hobson*
Oprah’s talk show is history, but it’s not too late to take a walk in the media icon’s shoes and consider her (feminist?) legacy.
*Summer 2011*

**Singed Out**
*Tamara Winfrey Harris*
Recent films, news stories, and special reports suggest that the media obsessed with the marriage rate of black women. But why?
*Winter 2012*

**Angry or Complicated: Misrecognizing Black Women**
*Janell Hobson*
How the white gaze, cultural assumptions, and racism fuel misunderstandings and manipulations of black women.
*Ms. blog, September 9, 2014*

**Bollywood Goes Feminist**
*Dinsa Sachan*
While a few recent Bollywood films reveal a newfound interest in women-driven narratives, the question remains whether India’s film industry is really serious about women?
*Fall 2014*

**Seeing Myself in Fresh Off the Boat**
*Jenevieve Ting*
Although *Fresh Off the Boat*, a television show about an immigrant family, is a far cry from perfect, it’s still a seat at the table.
*Ms. blog, February 12, 2015*
The Women Who Steal the Show
Dani Klein Modisett
Women showrunners like Shonda Rhimes, Jenji Kohan, Jill Soloway – and more! – are changing the face of television for the better by embracing racial, sexual, and gendered diversity in their storytelling.
Spring 2015

Portraying Women as They Actually Are
Janell Hobson
An interview with Shonda Rhimes (creator of Grey’s Anatomy, Scandal, and How to Get Away with Murder) the most powerful person in television right now.
Spring 2015

What Does the Female Gaze Look Like?
Aviva Dove-Viebahn
An interview with Jill Soloway, creator of Transparent, which explores the meaning of family and the late-in-life transition of a transgender patriarch-turned-matriarch.
Spring 2015

Amy Schumer: Born Feminist
Audrey Bilger
Amy Schumer has earned mainstream success not in spite of her “unflinching feminism” – but because of it.
Summer 2015

Lupita Nyong’o: Harnessing Her Star
Janell Hobson
Academy Award winner Lupita Nyong’o is working to see that African women’s stories are eclipsed no longer.
Spring 2016

Survivor Stories
Lisa Barca
Shamed and bullied on social media, two high school sexual assault survivors reclaim their narrative in the now-streaming documentary Audrey & Daisy
Winter 2017
IN FALL 2014, THE #GAMERGATE MOVEMENT—WHICH BEGAN AS AN attack on Zoe Quinn, a female videogame developer, but quickly escalated to an all-out attack on women in technology—helped to re-focus attention on issues related to gender and technology. Describing those who criticized the misogyny of the videogame industry and the sexism of videogame representations of gender as “social justice warriors,”#gamergate provided a vivid illustration of the continued barriers to women’s full participation in shaping the technologies that increasingly govern people’s lives. It also demonstrated the extremes to which male-dominated technology industries are being protected by those opposing the inclusion of women and people of color (“Confronting Toxic Gamer Culture,” Mia Consalvo, Ada, November 2012).

Women’s labor in digital environments -- either indirectly through play (as in “digital labor” or “free” labor that serves as free research and development for corporations) or more directly through paid labor in service sectors is vital to high tech industries.

Women’s vulnerability to harassment and other forms of gender-based violence when they assert their rights as workers in technology industries, as bloggers and participants in online environments, as students in computer science programs, as gamers and fans, as consumers of images that often degrade and demean them remain central issues for feminist theory and activism. This section of the Ms. Reader provides insight into the complexities of these issues, focusing on production, consumption, and distribution and providing ways of thinking about how issues of access are shaped by very different geographical, political, racial, and economic circumstances. In the mainstream media, the #gamergate controversy suffered from a focus on more privileged women’s control over, and access to, one technology and its representations. The Ms. Reader affords us a global perspective on gender and technology, one that is capable of grappling with how gender oppression is structured through its relationship with other social inequalities.

For example, throughout the world, women and girls are currently understood to be the key to promoting economic and technological growth, recruited to labor forces, addressed as consumers, and in some cases enlisted as scientists or engineers. But the categories of “women” and “girls” are unstable and contingent, particularly in relationship to technologies. As producers in modern factory and information technology sectors in China, India, Mexico and Africa, they appear as familiar stereotypes of a gendered, racialized labor force that produces technologies widely used throughout Europe and North America. As European and North American consumers, women and girls’ presumed facility with social media makes them ever more sought after audiences for new media and technologies. As call center workers, sweatshop laborers and affective/immaterial laborers of various types, they are barely acknowledged as productive contributors to the global economy (“Korea’s Electronics Scandal,” Lily Bixler, Fall 2010).

To grapple with the complexities of gender and technology in the contemporary moment means holding these and other geographies and temporalities in mind -- understanding poor and working-class women’s role in the manufacturing of technologies in global factories, making consumer items and munitions; women’s continued absence and lack of agenda-setting power in the production of scientific and technological knowledges; the often negative experiences of women in digital spaces of leisure and interaction; the gendering of particular technologies understood to be masculine or feminine; the gendered symbolism of social media (“Facebook’s New Feminist Icons,” Julia Robins, July 10, 2015), and so on.

In the context of the technoscientific centers of the North, renewed attention to the absence of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics has been accompanied by calls for increased participation in these “STEM” disciplines (“A Few Good Women,” Aviva Dove-Viebahn, Winter 2012). As important as these calls for women’s participation are, the additive approach to the problem of hostile climates in higher
education and industry alike demands that women and/or people of color bear the burden of institutional change and, as Laura Sydell points out in “Women of the Valley,” (Winter 2012) conform to a system invested in the maintenance of social inequalities. Rather than demanding that men in computer science, to take one example, or in Wikipedia, to take another, grapple with histories of bias and discrimination and the resultant climate issues these approaches assume that responsibility for those changes rests with the minority of women and people of color who manage to make their way into these male-dominated spaces.

Indeed, approaches to changing STEM disciplines highlight one of the central contradictions concerning gender and technology. On one hand, women are excluded from input into global agendas concerning technology development. On the other hand, women are increasingly burdened with the responsibility for managing local problems related to food security, climate change, economic injustice, and battles over water brought about in large part by the rapacious nature of capitalism. Perhaps the key to balancing these issues, and one that is reflected in the selections in this section, is to understand that “access” merely to digital information and to the internet without access to technologies in a broader sense is an impoverished concept, one that mystifies the very problems feminists need to be addressing.

The readings in this chapter encourage us to be mindful of these critiques while at the same time acknowledging all the ways in which women are using technologies for purposes that often defy their intentions. From the global Hollaback campaign (“Hollaback Goes Global,” Anita Little, Summer 2010) to the online activism of black feminists (“We are the Ones We’ve Been Waiting For,” Moya Baily and Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Winter 2010) and the use of tech terms like “hacking” to understand racial difference (“Hacking the Black/White Binary,” Britney Cooper and Margaret Rhee, Ada Issue 6, January 2015), diverse groups of women are using technologies and social media to organize, to theorize, and to fight back.

Discussion:

1. In which ways are feminists harnessing technology and social media as critical tools for understanding and protesting contemporary racism, sexism, heterosexism and economic injustice? Discuss with reference to the current issues and activism covered in this and other chapters in the reader, such as police brutality and #BlackLivesMatter (Cooper and Rhee), online and offline sexual harassment (Consalvo, Little) and the epidemic of campus rape (Chapter 3, Heldman and Dicks, Burroughs and Katz).

2. In “Hacking the Black/White Binary,” Cooper and Rhee introduce a new critical concept for the study of gender, race and class: “Hacking.” How is “hacking the black/white binary” underlying contemporary narratives of racial suppression useful in making black women – and other social identities at the intersection or gender and race – visible? Discuss in relation to national controversies around police brutality and Black lives.

   Organize a Hack-a-thon or Wikipedia-a-thon on your campus. For an example, see Rhee’s “Gender Balancing Wikipedia, Once Article at a Time.”

3. How does the #gamergate movement provide a vivid illustration of the tremendous progress and remaining obstacles for women and technology today?
More Than a Game
Jessica Stites
A report on the “Girls ‘N’ Games” conference, during which academics, game designers and “grrl gamers” discussed how feminists can reclaim video games, as well as their cultural significance.
Summer 2006

We are the Ones We’ve Been Waiting For
Moya Baily and Alexis Pauline Gumbs
How the blogosphere helps young black feminists take their research and activism online, giving them a voice and an audience.
Winter 2010

Hollaback Goes Global
Anita Little
Hollaback started as an online movement to record incidents of street harassment and challenge perpetrators in New York; now it’s an empowering tool used by women across the globe.
Summer 2010

Korea’s Electronics Scandal
Lily Bixler
Many electronics companies prefer women workers for their ability to handle delicate machinery in their factories, but why are Samsung’s women workers getting cancer in record numbers?
Fall 2010

Women of the Valley
Laura Sydell
Despite stereotypes and media representation, the male geek is not the only image of success in the tech world. In fact, women are making huge strides across Silicon Valley and beyond.
Winter 2012

A Few Good Women
Aviva Dove-Viebahn
The Anita Borg Institute supports young women in STEM fields and encourages tech companies to embrace diversity.
Winter 2012

The Women and People of Color Who Invented the Internet
Tara L. Conley
A response to the fallacy that “men invented the internet” and a challenge to the myopic history of tech that often puts white men at the forefront.
Ms. blog, June 6, 2012

Getting in Line with Online Ed
Michelle McGibney Vlahoulis
Women’s studies can be found in classrooms all over the world these days, but also in a worldwide virtual classroom: the internet.
Fall 2012

Mapping a Feminist World
Soraya Chemaly
How feminism is leveraging the transformative powers of the Internet by broadcasting the conversation about sexualized violence around the world.
Fall 2013

Uber’s Deep-Seated Denial of Sexual Violence
Zosia Sztykowski and Britni de la Cretaz
What’s most baffling about Uber’s reluctance to institute preventive safety measures is that it should be obvious that keeping people safe and comfortable is good for business.
Ms. blog, November 11, 2014

Gender Balancing Wikipedia, One Article at a Time
Margaret Rhee
Wikipedia is dominated by male editors, which can lead to a distorted account of the world. The Ms. Fembot Edit-a-Thon writes important women back into our history.
Ms. blog, March 13, 2015

Oppression vs. Discrimination: How the Law Failed Ellen Pao
Sean M. Scott
According to social norms, Ellen Pao should have been passive, willing to serve, humble and grateful for being allowed to join the firm at all. Instead, she filed a law suit alleging gender discrimination and retaliation.
Ms. blog, June 12, 2015
Confronting Toxic Gamer Culture
Mia Consalvo
An analysis of the sexism of videogame culture, how it's recently turned to harassment and threats of violence, and what feminist gamers can do about it.
Ms. blog, July 10, 2015

Hacking the Black/White Binary
Brittney Cooper and Margaret Rhee
In light of the surge in white-on-black murder and police brutality, a feminist analysis of racial difference and violence.
Ms. blog, July 10, 2015

Facebook’s New Feminist Icons
Julia Robins
Even in our everyday encounters on social media, symbols and icons speak to cultural constructions of gender. Until now.
Ms. blog, July 10, 2015
how women have emerged as leaders in rising against global warming (Spring 2007), and Catherine A. Traywick’s “Preserving the Future” highlights how indigenous women in the US and Canada are successfully taking on big oil (Spring 2011).

Carol Moseley Braun, the first African American women Senator in the United States, now turned environmental activist, serves as an inspiring example of someone making great strides in the agricultural sector by promoting sustainability, social justice, and corporate accountability (“Back to the Land,” Delthia Ricks, Fall 2007). Eilis O’Neill’s “Sophia vs. Goliath” also demonstrates how even a single woman in Argentina fighting agrochemicals can make a significant difference (Winter/Spring 2014).

As Laura Orlando illustrates in “The Melting Point,” small efforts yield substantial results, such as using compact fluorescent light bulbs, which can lead to fewer CO2 emissions, thereby helping to stop global warming. Citing the work of Laurie David, Orlando emphasizes this crucial point: “If everyone does one thing, they are likely to do two things, then three things. Then they are likely to influence friends and family, and that’s how you build a movement. That’s how change happens. Change the light bulb.”

In this set of articles, we see the role of women in fighting polluters, holding all levels of government accountable, and making great inroads in highlighting how women carry a heavy burden as the climate changes due to flooding, rising sea levels, and warmer temperatures. When it comes to the environment, women are leading domestically and internationally; they are out there and have been for some time.
Discussion:

1. Compare Van Gelder’s “It’s Not Nice to Mess with Mother Nature: Ecofeminism 101” and Alcid’s “Ecofeminism Today.” What are the main concerns of ecofeminism? Have they shifted significantly—or not—in the last 25 years?

2. Discuss the intersection of race, class, gender, health, and environmental pollution in Carty’s “The Dirty Saga of Onondaga County” and Lyman’s “The Geography of Breast Cancer.” What do you see as some of the major contributing factors to a person or community’s environmental risk? Did anything about either article surprise you?

3. Using either Ricks’ “Back to the Land” or O’Neill’s “Sophia vs. Goliath” consider the widespread impact of women activists on environmental movements. What concerns you most about the environment in your community—be it your school, town, city, state, or region? What small step could you take to address this concern? How could you get others involved in your cause?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>Publication Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It's Not Nice to Mess With Mother Nature: Ecofeminism 101</td>
<td>Lindsay Van Gelder</td>
<td>One of the most interesting (and least reported on) developments in environmental studies has been the integration of feminist and ecological concerns.</td>
<td>Jan/Feb 1989</td>
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<td>The Geography of Breast Cancer</td>
<td>Francesca Lyman</td>
<td>Why are there “hot spots” of the disease in the United States? Survivors, scientists and mapmakers look to pollution and the environment to try to understand.</td>
<td>Fall 2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Dirty Saga of Onondaga County</td>
<td>Linda Carty</td>
<td>In Syracuse, N.Y., activists for environmental justice prove how racism leaves toxins at the doorsteps of the poor and people of color.</td>
<td>Spring 2007</td>
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<td>The Melting Point</td>
<td>Laura Orlando</td>
<td>As the Earth heads toward catastrophe, women leaders rise up to stop global warming.</td>
<td>Spring 2007</td>
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<td>Back to the Land</td>
<td>Delthia Ricks</td>
<td>Carol Moseley Braun is now a recovering politician and an organic-biodynamic food seller with a triple bottom line: environmental sustainability, social justice, and corporate accountability.</td>
<td>Fall 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>An Acequia Runs Through It</td>
<td>Patricia Marina Trujillo</td>
<td>The water-sharing traditions of New Mexico’s women should be a model—or at least a metaphor—for how the world could treat water as a community resource.</td>
<td>Winter 2010</td>
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<td>Man-Made, Woman-Saved</td>
<td>Antonia Juhasz</td>
<td>Guess who’s helping clean up BP’s Gulf Coast oil disaster – and working to prevent another from occurring?</td>
<td>Summer 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserving the Future</td>
<td>Catherine A. Traywick</td>
<td>Indigenous women in the U.S. and Canada are taking on Big Oil – and winning.</td>
<td>Spring 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Billion Reasons</td>
<td>Suzanne Petroni</td>
<td>As the global population hits a historic high, the best strategy for saving the planet is to invest in women.</td>
<td>Summer 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Fight to Save Appalachia’s Last Mountain</td>
<td>Clara Bingham</td>
<td>These are mothers, homemakers, and local workers who came to activism because of what happened to their own backyards, their children, and their neighbors.</td>
<td>Ms. blog, June 8, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fracking Is a Feminist Issue</td>
<td>Rebecca Clarren</td>
<td>Natural-gas drilling may disrupt not just the environment, but your health. With scientists unable to conduct the necessary research, affected civilians and civilians are asking the difficult questions about fracking.</td>
<td>Spring 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia vs. Goliath</td>
<td>Elis O’Neill</td>
<td>One Argentine woman’s fight against agrochemicals illustrates what an individual can do to help better the environment and the lives in her community.</td>
<td>Winter/Spring 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dolores Huerta: Still Fighting for Farmworkers’ Rights
Gaylynn Burroughs
Legendary feminist and workers’ rights activist, Dolores Huerta, recently sounded the alarm on a common herbicide that could be endangering the lives of farmworkers and their families.
Ms. blog, May 4, 2014

The Weight of a Falling Sky
Barbara Kingsolver
Photographs by Ripple Images
From the Andes to the South Asian tropics to the African Plains, women carry a heavy burden as the climate.
For more information and images, see www.rippleeffectimages.org
Winter 2015

Ecofeminism Today
Sara Alcid
A discussion of the various ways feminism and environmentalism intersect, including how women address global climate change, social injustice, and toxic injustice.
Ms. blog, April 22, 2015
WHERE CAN WOMEN IMAGINE THEIR OWN POWER? WHERE CAN WOMEN speak truth about their lives? Where can women curse their sons? Kill powerful lawyers? Imagine a world “somewhere / where nobody is sold”? Laugh at male competitiveness? Mourn the loss of a lover? Celebrate friendships between women? Whisper, sigh, rage, cry, and triumph?

Women can do all of this—and more—in feminist fiction and poetry. Short fiction and poetry are important sites of imaginative work by feminists. In fiction, writers create memorable characters who embody the challenges that women face in patriarchal societies. In a few short pages—or in some cases even a single page—writers condense action and emotion into an imaginative story, transporting readers to another time and space. Short stories often linger with readers, inviting them to return again and again to a situation, story, character, or feeling. Poetry, similarly, compresses experiences, people, even fields of power into hyper-charged images, lilting language, and visual codices for readers to read, decode, and savor. In short, poetry and fiction are sources of pleasure for understanding human experiences and sites of revolutionary transformation for feminists.

The poetry and short fiction in this chapter engages readers in various imaginative worlds, inviting us to make connections between the creative worlds of writers and the material worlds of women and feminist activists. In particular, these works encourage us to think about and discuss race, class, and gender and how they are encoded in creative work.

Poetry and short fiction are not separate from the material lives of women, rather they are deeply entwined with the lived experiences of gender, race, and class in the world. Many of these poems and short stories are in conversation with the journalism elsewhere in the reader. Creating dialogues between poets, fiction writers, and journalists is an exciting way to encounter these materials. For example, Alice Walker’s short story, “How Did I Get Away with Killing One of the Biggest Lawyers in the State? It was Easy,” pairs well with pieces on domestic work and legislation around gendered forms of labor (Chapter 4, “Domestic Workers Take It To the Streets,” Premilla Nadasen, Fall 2009; “The Invisible Ones,” Rebecca Clarren, Summer 2007). Patricia Grace’s short story, “Butterflies,” demonstrates different ways of seeing across class and provokes interesting conversations with reports about food stamps and the working poor (Chapter 4, “Playing Games with Hunger,” Monica Potts, Winter/Spring 2014). And Sandra Cisneros’s “Mericans” speaks to journalism on the relationship between the US and Mexico and its effect on free trade, women’s livelihood, and their sexual objectification (Chapter 1, “Mujeres de Maíz” Maria Melendez, Spring 2011; Chapter 5, “Branded Women,” Eliza Barclay, Summer 2009). These are just a few of the dialogues that these poems and short stories invite.

Entering the diverse worlds of fiction writers and poets invites readers to dream and imagine different experiences in the world; fiction writers and poets often disrupt entrenched systems of power through direct confrontations or through imagined alternatives. These writers invite readers to construct a new understanding of how people live and to develop new capacities for empathy. For decades, feminist writers have been using short fiction and poetry as a social, political, and aesthetic tool to create positive change for women, people of color, and poor and working class people. This chapter invites you into this conversation.
Discussion:

1. Many of the short stories in this chapter rely on assumptions people make regarding gender, race and/or class in order to ultimately defy or upset our expectations. Choose one of these stories and discuss how the author sets up and dismantles certain expectations about the setting, characters, or circumstances of the narrative. What did you learn or otherwise gain from this unconventional storytelling?

2. In her introduction, Enszer suggests how a few of the short stories in this chapter might be paired up with other articles in the reader at large. Using either your favorite story from this chapter or one of Enszer’s suggestions, find an article in one of the other chapters of this reader that speaks to some of the same or similar issues as those explored in the story. What similarities and differences do you see between the fictional and nonfictional discussions of this subject? Which do you find more compelling and why?

3. Using at least two of the poems included in this chapter, discuss how the poets address complex, controversial, or even upsetting subject matter through the use of metaphor, symbolism, irony, and/or mythology. Why might this approach—as opposed to or in addition to a more “objective” academic approach—be useful or appealing and under what circumstances?
Fiction

Three Chronicles
Margaret Atwood
Three short stories examining gender roles and how women and men fare in our fantastical and complex futures. 
September/October 1990

How Did I Get Away with Killing One of the Biggest Lawyers in the State? It was Easy
Alice Walker
The tale of a teenage girl caught up in a prejudicial and exploitative system—until one day she wakes up.
November 1980

Mericans
Sandra Cisneros
A snapshot in the life of children at the intersection of religion, race, ethnicity, and nationality.
July/August 1991

Butterflies
Patricia Grace
A student and teacher’s diverse backgrounds means the difference between whether butterflies should live or die.
November/December 1990

Standing Ground
Ursula K. Le Guin
Three unique perspectives on a mother and teenage daughter’s visit to an abortion clinic.
July/August 1992

Snakes
Danielle Evans
A young mixed-race girl learns painfully that we are safe with our families, until we are no.
Summer 2010

Four (Same-sex) Weddings & a Funeral
Susan Goldberg
In this excerpt from a new anthology on lesbian marriage, the author recounts how, in sickness and health, through love and tears, marriage equality brought a family together.
Winter 2012

Saving Mother from Herself
Marge Piercy
Poignancy and empowerment mix as a woman resists her family’s efforts to clean up what they consider her messy life.
Winter 2013

The Port-au-Prince Marriage Special
Edwidge Danticat
A Haitian woman and her ailing young nanny face the consequences of their misguided trust.
Fall 2013

A Better Place
Elizabeth Nunez
In this excerpt from her latest book and first memoir, Trinidad-born novelist Nunez recalls her mother’s dutiful Catholic opposition to birth control, which led to 14 pregnancies.
Summer 2014

To Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, After Reading Her Poems
Julia Alvarez
In this excerpt from her introduction to a newly translated collection of selected work by de la Cruz—17th-century Mexican scholar, poet, and nun—novelist and poet Alvarez speaks directly to her “personal saint.”
Fall 2014

Poetry

The Muse
Eleanor Wilner
“A pox on the great Lacan / who writes with his eraser; on all poetic / Graces, mute and pensive, concave exactly / where he is most extensive…”
March/April 1991
She
Adrienne Rich
“Lifts her brush once like a thrown thing / lays it down at her side like a stockpiled weapon, / crushes out the light.”
July/August 1990

The Real Indian Leans Against
Chrystos
“There are certainly more fake Indians / than real ones but this is the usa / What else can you expect from the land of sell / your grandma sell our land sell your ass”
September/October 1992

Dinner with an Eligible Bachelor
Juliette Chen
“The selfsame women / and their masticating husbands / offer toasts to a future / they have no part in”
November/December 1991

Persephone Abducted
Rita Dove
“No one can tell a mother how to act: / there are no laws when laws are broken, no names / to call upon. Some say there’s nourishment for pain, / and call it Philosophy.”
July/August 1992

The Way Down
Toni Morrison
“Black Crazies / Lying the day long on stone. / Your teeth scare me more than / Ice on walks I can not / Walk / Lest I fall.”
July/August 1990

RADIO

A Black Woman Reflects: Ntozake Shange
Pacifica Radio Archives
Poet and playwright Ntozake Shange, winner of the Obie for her play, For colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf, discusses her work and reads selections.
1982

From the Cancer Journals: Audre Lorde
Pacifica Radio Archives
Live readings by Audre Lorde from her first-person account of her breast cancer diagnosis and treatment.
1978
9: Politics, Law and Social Policy

INTRODUCTION BY CARRIE N. BAKER, SMITH COLLEGE

Among the many tools that feminists have used to improve the condition of women, fighting for better laws and social policies has been a particularly important and effective strategy for social change. Women’s advancement into political and judicial office has been key to women’s legal and policy successes over the last decade. This chapter introduces some central struggles in politics, law and social policy over the last decade in the United States and globally, demonstrating how the intersection of gender, race and class have fundamentally shaped these struggles.

The articles in this chapter cover some of the legislative successes, defeats, and ongoing struggles waged by feminists. For example, a major success was the Supreme Court’s ruling in favor of marriage equality when it struck down a federal law banning recognition of same-sex marriage in 2013 (“Feminism Helped Pave the Way for Marriage Equality,” Audrey Bilger, Summer 2015, “Marriage is Marriage,” Sarah R. Boonin, Summer 2013), but restrictive and regressive immigration laws are a huge setback (“Where Are You Going Arizona?” Nicole Guidotti-Hernandez, Summer 2010). The chapter documents ongoing battles in issues of poverty and child welfare (“Too Poor to Parent?” Gaylynn Burroughs, Spring 2008; “Mother and Child Reunion,” Seth Freed and Kat Aaron, Summer 2014) as well as affirmative action (“A Preference for Deception,” Kimberly Crenshaw, Winter 2008). The juxtaposition of these articles raises many interesting questions: Why has the Supreme Court advanced the rights of same-sex couples, while retreating on affirmative action? How do state-legislated policies on issues from immigration to child welfare affect individuals and families? And how do gender, race and class factor into these decisions?

This chapter demonstrates the impact of these laws and policies on women, including the effects of repressive immigration laws on women in the U.S. and globally (“One More Child Left Behind,” Dolores Huerta, Spring 2007; “Ana’s Choice,” Patricia Zavella, Winter 2009; “Anything But “Secure,” Premilla Nadasen, Winter 2012). Stories of individual women illustrate this impact. Delamy Palencia, for example, is an undocumented immigrant who was separated for months from her still-nursing infant due to what began as a domestic dispute with her partner and a misunderstanding with the police (Nadasen, Winter 2012). Ana Garcia (a pseudonym) recounts her decision to make a life-threatening border crossing to escape the crushing poverty of rural Mexico, only to face the hardships of living undocumented in the United States (Zavella, Winter 2009). These stories bring to life the impact of laws and policies on women’s lives. They illuminate how women and girls are influenced by laws and policies in different ways, even when these laws appear to be neutral with regard to race and class.

Legislative and judicial representation is key to good laws and policies. Articles in this chapter document women’s battles for political and judicial office around the world over the last decade. Several of the articles follow women’s campaigns for expanded legislative representation in India (“From Slum to Statehouse,” Brittany Shoot, Fall 2012), Afghanistan (Shroud of Silence: Women in Afghanistan, Lorraine Sheinberg), and Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Cameroon and Ghana (“No Turning Back,” Drew Hinshaw, Summer 2010). In these articles, there are stories of women braving dangers and fighting deep biases to run for public office.

In addition to political representation, feminist organizing is critical to the enactment of laws and policies that benefit and empower women and girls. Throughout the chapter, stories of feminist activism show how women have attempted to influence law and public policy, like the activism of young women of color against anti-immigration laws (“Old Tactics, New South,” Nicole M. Guidotti-Hernandez, Fall 2011) and the importance of gender and ethnicity in the nomination of judge Elena Kagan to the U.S. Supreme Court (“What a Difference a Latina Makes,” Carolina Gonzalez, Summer 2009).

This chapter shows how women, across class and race, and around the world, are using law, social policy and politics to create a better world for women, their children, and their communities.
Discussion:

1. Using at least two of the articles in this chapter, discuss how immigration law(s) and/or race and class issues can affect the relationship between parents and their children. How does policy disproportionately disadvantage certain families and what factors put families at risk?

2. Hinshaw’s “No Turning Back” and Shoot’s “From Slum to Statehouse” report on the inroads women have made as political leaders in certain African countries and India, respectively. What contributes to these women taking office and how do race, class, and/or gender affect their success in these positions?

3. Boonin and Bilger both address the importance of the Supreme Court’s decisions regarding marriage equality. How did feminism impact these decisions according to the authors?
POLITICS, LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY

One More Child Left Behind
Dolores Huerta
How U.S. policies harm immigrant women and their children – let alone the nations they come from.
Spring 2007

A Preference for Deception
Kimberlé Crenshaw
In Michigan, Ward Connerly and his supporters steal the language of civil rights, committing voter fraud in the process, to halt affirmative action.
Winter 2008

Too Poor to Parent?
Gaylynn Burroughs
Black children are twice as likely as white children to enter U.S. foster care. The culprit: Our inattention to poverty.
Spring 2008

Ana’s Choice
Patricia Zavella
Immigrant women face life-and-death decisions. Now Congress faces a life-and-death decision: can it reform immigration law to make it more humane?
Winter 2009

What a Difference a Latina Makes
Carolina Gonzalez
A discussion about the nomination of Supreme Court justice Sonia Sotomayor and how gender and ethnicity can’t help but inform a judge’s sensibilities.
Summer 2009

Where Are You Going Arizona?
Nicole Guidotti-Hernandez
Regressive new laws targeting immigrants and ethnic minorities spark nationwide protests.
Summer 2010

No Turning Back
Drew Hinshaw
When not ignored, quotas have helped women in southern and eastern African countries succeed in politics, with legislatures that are up to 50% women.
Summer 2010

Old Tactics, New South
Nicole M. Guidotti-Hernandez
Georgia’s young women of color lead the fight against anti-immigration laws that make it difficult for undocumented students to get an education.
Fall 2011

Anything But “Secure”
Premilla Nadasen
Federal program designed to nab criminals is devastating immigrant families, including separating mothers from their children.
Winter 2012

From Slum to Statehouse
Brittany Shoot
Women candidates from poor areas may alter India’s political landscape with the help of community organizing and legislative representation.
Fall 2012

Marriage is Marriage
Sarah R. Boonin
How the Supreme Court’s repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which defined marriage as between a man and a woman, changed lives.
Summer 2013

Mother and Child Reunion
Seth Freed and Kat Aaron
A story about a mentally disabled boy who ended up in foster care and his mother’s fight to be reunited with him begs the question: should child welfare laws be so rigid about ending parental rights?
Summer 2014
**The Ms. Voting Guide for College Students**
A how-to guide for first-time voters, including how to register, a state-by-state voting guide, and where you have the right to vote.
*Ms. blog, October, 13, 2014*

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**Feminism Helped Pave the Way for Marriage Equality**
Audrey Bilger
A discussion of the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling to legalize same-sex marriage nationwide and the role feminism played in helping the justices define marriage.
*Ms. blog, June 29, 2015*

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**I do! Now What?**
Sarah R. Boonin and Janson Wu
The marriage-equality victory is just the first step toward full legal equality for LGBT Americans.
*Summer 2015*

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**Betting on the Gender Gap**
Katherine Spillar
An in-depth analysis of what’s behind the gender gap in voting and what’s driving voters’ choice of candidates in the 2016 election.
*Summer 2016*

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**New Feminists in Office**
Donna Decker, Dianne Bartlow, Julie Enszer, and Cheryl L. Radeloff
Introducing the talented new leaders who will hold the line for women in Washington.
*Fall 2016*

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**VIDEOS**

**Revelations: Exposing the Radical Right**
Narrated by Alfre Woodard
Produced and directed by Lorraine Sheinberg
An eye-opening documentary exposing the convergence of right-wing political, religious and economic forces in the U.S.
[Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLHWmKAaXbc&feature=channel_page)

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**Shroud of Silence: Women in Afghanistan**
Narrated by Marlo Thomas
Produced and directed by Lorraine Sheinberg for the Feminist Majority Foundation
The everyday struggle that was life for Afghan women and girls under the Taliban regime’s brutal system of gender apartheid from 1994 to 2002.
[Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5G-h1m1lRkg&feature=channel_page)
Roadmap for Equality

Introduction by C. Nicole Mason, Spelman College

One of the most important observations from the more than 40 years of documenting activism, advocacy, and organizing for social and political change on behalf of women and girls in the pages of Ms. magazine is the reality that quests for justice and equality are often sparked by everyday women and citizens whose very lives, dignity, and well-being are on the line. They are the women fighting for clean water and living wages; calling for the right to quality education and the full range of reproductive health care options; demanding racial and gender justice; and advocating for an end to sexual and domestic violence, among many other issues.

Most of the women organizers and activists featured in this reader see no alternative but to stand up and fight for justice, combating global abuses and violence committed against families, communities and, in some instances, entire nations. And with few resources, the success of their efforts depends almost exclusively on their ability to mobilize diverse constituencies across race, gender, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, and other markers of difference.

The articles in this chapter raise critical questions about the role of lived experience and social location in crafting advocacy agendas and the kinds of issues that are prioritized in movements for social change; the significance of identity and the intersections of race, class, ethnicity, and sexuality to building community and sustainable coalitions; and how to address the historic tensions and the invisibility of women of color, low-income women, and LGBTQ individuals in both the women’s and civil rights movements.

In the cinematic and oral reflections on the lives and vast works of Angela Davis and Alice Walker, we are asked to consider the value and commitment of a life spent in pursuit of justice, equality, and the recognition of the humanity of women, particularly Black women and girls (“Living History,” Aviva Dove-Viebahn, Summer 2013; Angela Davis: Black Women in America, Brian DeShazer, April 12, 1974; Alice Walker: Beauty in Truth, Pratibha Parmar, 2013). Along similar lines, Donna Brazile speaks to the responsibility we all have to ensure the work of previous generations is not undone by a failure to support the next cadre of feminist leaders (“Bella, Coretta, Shirley…” Fall 2011). From the feminist impact on the most recent US presidential election (“The Feminist Factor,” Eleanor Smeal, Winter 2013) to the crucial and life-saving work of India’s LGBTQ activists (“Where Lesbians Don’t Exist,” Mridu Khullar, Spring 2010) and feminist punk rock in Russia (“The Birth of Pussy Riot,” Masha Green, Winter/Spring 2014), the articles in this chapter fill a crucial gap in both the national and global discourse, articulating whose voices should be included and the types of policies and remedies that should be sought. Similarly, “Young Feminists Have Their Day” (Anna Bahr, Fall 2012) and “Girls Take the Lead” (Kathryn Joyce, Spring 2013) illustrate the power and value of the voices of women and young girls at meetings of the United Nations.

Articles such as Tzemach Lemmon’s “Afghan Women Rising” (Fall 2010), which takes on the violence, turmoil, and ultimately hope of women in Afghanistan; “Taking Slut for a Walk” (Christine Thompson, Summer 2011), which challenges rape culture in society; and “The Gold Cleaners” (Pierrick Blin and Valerian Mazataud, Fall 2014), an account of how Peruvian women miners organized for better housing, pay and safety equipment, emphasize the diversity of this chapter and the issues it encompasses.

Overall, this chapter represents a collection of articles and insights that show us how to think critically about the tables where we currently sit and how they might be expanded to include the voices and perspectives of the most vulnerable and marginalized in our society.
Discussion:

1. Many of the articles in this chapter emphasize the importance of girls and young women to the feminist movement. Choose three of these articles and create a list of what you see as the five most important reasons why we should support and listen to girls’ needs and ideas. Since girls are not all the same, keep in mind the differences in region, race, and class and how those differences shape girls’ voices.

2. Compare two or more of the articles in this chapter that address the relationship between feminism’s past and its future (see Brazile, Dove-Viebahn, Steinem, Burroughs, etc.). What are some of the major factors contributing to feminism’s successes and its continued necessity?

3. Watch Malala Yousafzai’s speech to the U.N. and then compare it with an article of your choice from this chapter; it does not need to be directly related to Yousafzai’s speech, but should also address the need for activism in order to help women and/or girls. How can the theoretical concerns of feminism and intersectionality be channeled into active social justice?
A ROADMAP FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens: The Creativity of Black Women in the South
Alice Walker
Guided by my heritage of a love of beauty and a respect for strength – in search of my mother’s garden, I found my own.
May 1974

A Brave Sisterhood
Bay Fang
Women overcame years of gender apartheid—and even bullets—to run for office and vote in Afghanistan’s recent elections.
Winter 2006

Black Girls’ Dreams
Nikki Ayanna Stewart
At the intersection of misleading media representation and black women’s studies, this scholar asks what can young women show and tell us about their world?
Summer 2007

Baker’s Pride
Barbara Ransby
Ella’s Daughters, a network of activists, artists, and scholars, follow the tradition of a radical human rights organizer.
Summer 2009

Where Lesbians Don’t Exist
Mridu Khullar
Lesbians and gay men in India are not supported culturally or legally, but a revolution seems on its way. The country’s LGBT activists hope soon pride marches will replace suicide pacts.
Spring 2010

Honoring Wilma and Each Other
Gloria Steinem
Wilma Mankiller made history when she was elected the first woman principal chief of the Cherokee Nation. She led her people and became a symbol of hope, especially within original cultures and women’s movements around the world.
Spring 2010

Afghan Women Rising
Tzemach Lemmon
Amidst the violence and turmoil, signs of hope from women entrepreneurs, midwives, civic leaders and military officers in Afghanistan.
Fall 2010

Bella, Coretta, Shirley...
Donna Brazile
Women need to become mentors – and mentees as well. We need to offer one hand below us up to help someone up, and then stretch the other above us for someone to lift up.
Fall 2011

Taking Slut for a Walk
Christine Thompson
SlutWalk, a series of marches promoting women’s sexual agency, allows young feminists to give an old slur new meaning.
Summer 2011

Young Feminists Have Their Day
Anna Bahr
Issues like forced marriage, lack of education, and genital mutilation disproportionately affect young women globally. So, the U.N. has formally adopted the International Day of the Girl Child to recognize “girl power.”
Fall 2012

Girls Take the Lead
Kathryn Joyce
As part of the U.N.’s annual meeting devoted to advancing women’s status, girls from around the world spoke their truths and demanded answers.
Spring 2013

The Birth of Pussy Riot
Masha Green
The Russian feminist punk band arose in a country where feminism has been stifled.
Winter/Spring 2014
The Feminist Factor
Eleanor Smeal
It wasn’t just women who made a critical difference in reelecting President Barack Obama, but feminists.
Winter 2013

Living History
Aviva Dove-Viebahn
Two recent documentaries by women filmmakers illuminate icons Angela Davis and Alice Walker.
Summer 2013

Our Revolution Has Just Begun
Gloria Steinem
The esteemed writer, strategist and cofounder of Ms. looks ahead at some of the critical unfinished goals of the feminist movement.
Winter/Spring 2014

The Gold Cleaners
Pierrick Blin and Valerian Mazataud
By organizing, Peruvian women miners create better lives for themselves and their families, implementing safety regulations, labor policies, and adequate living conditions.
Fall 2014

Too Young to Marry
Gayle Tzemach Lemmon
Saving girls from forced marriage gives them a better chance to stay healthy, fulfill their dreams and make their communities proud.
Winter 2015

How To Defuse Police Violence
Katherine Spillar
The gender gap in policing is deadly: Hire more women who also mirror the racial makeup of the communities they serve.
Winter 2015

ERA YES
Gaylynn Burroughs
Thirty-three years after the Equal Rights Amendment fell just short of ratification, it’s time to once again push for inscribing women’s equality in the U.S. Constitution.
Winter 2015

Excerpt: The Nearly Impossible Dream
C. Nicole Mason
Hard work and ambition are supposed to be the keys to escaping poverty, yet few poor black girls will ever achieve middle-class success. In her new memoir, Born Bright, public policy expert Mason illustrates why.
Winter 2017

Not Going Back
Gaylynn Burroughs
Here’s where we’re drawing the line in the sand to defend our rights.
Winter 2017

Malala Yousafzai UN General Assembly Speech
July, 2013
Teenage Pakistani activist Yousafzai—shot by the Taliban in retaliation for her advocacy work—speaks to the U.N. about the importance of girls’ education. In 2014, she became the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rNhZu3ttfU

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Winter 2015
Angela Davis: Black Women in America
Pacifica Radio Archives
Angela Davis speech at the UCLA Campus as part of the University’s Black Women’s Spring Forum. Davis talked about the struggles and accomplishment of Black and other minority women in the U.S. and around the world.
April 12, 1974

F I L M

Alice Walker: Beauty in Truth
A film by Pratibha Parmar
Distributed by Women Make Movies
A penetrating look at the life and art of an artist, intellectual, self-confessed renegade and human rights activist.
US, 2013, 84 min
Contributors

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