

Issue
2007

19

GENDER FORUM

An Internet Journal for Gender Studies



Illuminating Gender II: Gender and Illness

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ISSN 1613-1878



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abstracts (October 1),

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abstracts (January 1),

completed papers (April 1)

Fall Issue:

abstracts (April 1),

completed papers (July 1)

Early Career Researchers Special Issue:

abstracts (May 1),

completed papers (August 1)

Winter Issue:

abstracts (July 1),

completed papers (October 1)

About

Gender forum is an online, peer reviewed academic journal dedicated to the discussion of gender issues. As an electronic journal, *gender forum* offers a free-of-charge platform for the discussion of gender-related topics in the fields of literary and cultural production, media and the arts as well as politics, the natural sciences, medicine, the law, religion and philosophy. Inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Beate Neumeier in 2002, the quarterly issues of the journal have focused on a multitude of questions from different theoretical perspectives of feminist criticism, queer theory, and masculinity studies. *gender forum* also includes reviews and occasionally interviews, fictional pieces and poetry with a gender studies angle.

Opinions expressed in articles published in *gender forum* are those of individual authors and not necessarily endorsed by the editors of *gender forum*.

Submissions

Target articles should conform to current MLA Style (8th edition) and should be between 5,000 and 8,000 words in length. Please make sure to number your paragraphs and include a bio-blurb and an abstract of roughly 300 words. Files should be sent as email attachments in Word format. Please send your manuscripts to gender-forum@uni-koeln.de.

We always welcome reviews on recent releases in Gender Studies! Submitted reviews should conform to current MLA Style (8th edition), have numbered paragraphs, and should be between 750 and 1,000 words in length. Please note that the reviewed releases ought to be no older than 24 months. In most cases, we are able to secure a review copy for contributors.

Article Publishing

The journal aims to provide rapid publication of research through a continuous publication model. All submissions are subject to peer review. Articles should not be under review by any other journal when submitted to *Gender forum*.

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There are no submission or page charges, and no colour charges.

Editorial

1 Resuming the discussion of gender, health, and illness begun in *Illuminating Gender I*, the contributions to our current issue continue to address discursive conceptualizations of illness. In their analyses of a wide array of women's narratives and poetry, dealing with illnesses so diverse as breast cancer, depression, and HIV/AIDS, the articles comprised in *Illuminating II* illustrate how women have contested normative notions of gender and illness. The discussion of these questions is completed by the outline of a newly founded health sciences master's program focusing on the nexus of gender and public health.

2 In "Policing, Politicizing, Poeticizing the Virgin/Whore Split: Contemporary American Women's Poetry About AIDS," J. Elizabeth Clark analyzes works by four American women poets — Lesléa Newman, Marie Howe, Tory Dent, and River Huston — writing in the emerging literary tradition of HIV/AIDS poetry. Conceiving of these women, caregivers and HIV-patients, as chroniclers and translators of the HIV/AIDS experience, Clark discusses the "poetic construction of HIV/AIDS" in their work and shows how they challenge the prevailing discourse on HIV/AIDS by subverting the culturally constructed virgin/whore dichotomy.

3 Discussing the respective limitations of strictly discursive or material explanations of depression, Amber Dean's "At the Limits of Materiality / At the Limits of Discourse: Feminist Struggles to Make Sense of Depression in Women" explores the possibility and the benefits of a theory of depression combining elements of both approaches. In her analysis of women's narratives on depression, Dean illustrates that neither discursive nor material explanations capture depression adequately and argues that undermining the materialist/discursive binary can enable a more comprehensive understanding of depression. In emphasizing how depression is the result of an interaction between material and discursive factors, a materialist-discursive theory allows us to take into account the lived experience of women's depression without having to disregard the ways in which (the experience of) depression, as well as the meanings that women assign to depression, are shaped by discourse.

4 Heike Hartung's "'Doleful Ditties' and Stories of Survival - Narrative Approaches to Breast Cancer in Frances Burney, Maria Edgeworth and Susan Sontag" presents a cross-reading of two nineteenth-century pathographies and Susan Sontag's 1978 essay *Illness as Metaphor*. Drawing on Mieke Bal's and Lorraine Code's concepts of second personhood and relational subjectivity, Hartung sheds light on the construction of narrative voice in Burney's and Edgeworth's texts and contrasts them with regard to the narrative strategies they employ.

While Burney's "Mastectomy Letter" is thus aimed at empowering the female patient by giving her a voice both physically (in the form of Burney's scream) and discursively, in Edgeworth's *Belinda* the representation of breast cancer primarily serves a moral and didactic purpose. By reading these narratives in transhistorical dialogue with Sontag's essay, Hartung illustrates how Burney and Edgeworth, although relying on personal narrative — the literary form dismissed by Sontag — appropriate and control illness metaphors and thus succeed in resisting their normative force.

5 Gabriele Kaczmarczyk's detailed description of the master's degree program "Health and Society: International Gender Studies Berlin" at the Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin is the first contribution in what is intended to become a series of articles focusing on approaches to the implementation of gender concerns and concepts in political, economic, or academic institutions. An innovative addition to both the fields of health science and gender studies, this master's course not only combines insights of the respective fields but also takes the intercultural dimension into consideration. If successful, this approach could contribute greatly to the trend of incorporating gender concepts in public institutions.

6 The issue is completed by reviews of recent publications by Kath Woodward, Frances Heidensohn (ed.), and Cara Carmichael Aitchison (ed.).