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Women's Studies & Gender Studies Program
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THEMED ISSUE
BIG MOMMA: family, kin, and reproduction

“Mothers” by J. Curtis Main

“Dear John” by Nlw

“Knocked Up: A Comedy From the Pro-life, Relationship-Hating Hellmouth.” by K. M. Zwick

“Foundations” by Bernadette Raspante

“Family Matters” by Mia Gutsell

“Fish and Visitors” by Amy David

“My [Fertility] Journey” by Crystal Battin

“[To Babies!]” by Shanny Jean Maney

“Natural Birth Control...” by Emily Johnson

[Untitled Photo Series] by Krysta Ann Williams

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Welcome to the continually revamped digital Digest magazine.

Utilize our interactive design by clicking on subjects to jump!

The WSGS Mission:

Founded in 1979, Loyola’s Women’s Studies Program is the first women’s studies program at a Jesuit institution and has served as a model for women’s studies programs at other Jesuit and Catholic universities. Our mission is to introduce students to feminist scholarship across the disciplines and the professional schools; to provide innovative, challenging, and thoughtful approaches to learning; and to promote social justice.

The DIGEST Mission:

Since 2007, the WSGS weekly digest has grown from a listing of upcoming events, grant opportunities, and other announcements to an interactive digital publication in the style of a feminist zine. The Digest’s mission is to connect the WSGS program with communities of students, faculty, and staff at Loyola and beyond, continuing and extending the program’s mission. We provide space and support for a variety of voices while bridging communities of scholars, artists, and activists. Our editorial mission is to provoke thought and debate in an open forum characterized by respect and civility.

Click HERE to Contribute! (guidelines)

We encourage Loyola students and staff, and ALL readers, to share with us, small or large, simple or complex.
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[“To Babies!”] by Shanny Jean Maney

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Dear readers,

This is a big week for The Digest! This is our biggest themed issue of the year so far, and one with a wonderfully diverse selection of contributions. This issue may take awhile longer to read than the previous ones so far this year, but it is worth it. Contained within these pages is art, poetry, anecdotes, opinions, and other heartfelt, inspiring contributions. I have enjoyed putting each work into this magazine, amazed by the depth of feeling, the passion, the thoughtfulness, the insights.

Please remember in reading and viewing these submissions that each person has their own view of family, kin, and reproduction. Each person’s experience allows us to better understand the world, with its many problems, solutions, pleasures, pains, miseries, and beauties. As is always the case, Loyola, WSGS, and The Weekly Digest do not necessarily endorse all of the views contained herein, but we promote this magazine as a space for anyone to share their views as relates to feminism and social justice. Although we reserve the right to edit or refuse any contributions that we feel are against an open discourse, it would be against our feminist ideals to marginalize people because they hold an unpopular view. (For more information on this, please refer to our Contributors’ Guidelines at the end of each Digest.) However, I want to personally state that I am impressed by every submission, and I feel that each is part of an incredibly honest discourse about family.

There has been a steady stream of positive feedback from those who receive the WSGS listserv and from other readers who access The Digest through the Loyola website. Please feel free to keep critiquing and sharing. Some of these contributions are from readers whom I have never met. Thank you for believing in this space and wanting to make it your own. And thank you to those people who I personally invited to be a part of this issue based on my knowledge of your work and lives. I appreciate all of you for sharing such personal stories and information. If any readers want to respond to what they read in this issue, please feel free to contact me.

For those of you who have access to the listserv, please consider sharing this resource with others. I know that many students and other community members do not even know that there is a space to get well-organized information about such things as WSGS events, internships, academic funding, calls for papers, etc. I am also interested in speaking to any WSGS classes to promote The Digest and the WSGS resources. Please let me know if you are aware of such an opportunity.

As always, I am excited to hear from you. Please read on...

Brandie Rae Madrid
bmadrid@luc.edu
Fall 2011 Event Calendar

September

9/14 Wednesday
3pm Klarchek Information Commons, 4th Floor
“A Question of Habit”
Directed by: Dr. Bren Ortega Murphy
LUC School of Communication
Film Screening, panel discussion, and reception

9/20 Tuesday
4pm Crown Center 530
“The Convert: A Tale of Exile and Extremism”
Written By: Deborah Baker
Discussion with author

October

10/13-10/15
Orrington Hotel, Evanston & Loyola Lakeshore Campus
Annual Conference
The Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender
Theme “Performing Gender”

10/17 Monday
Piper Hall 1st Floor
Discussion with: Bella DePaulo
Film Screening and Discussion

10/19 Wednesday
4pm Piper Hall 1st Floor
“From Murdered Women to Auspicious Goddesses: Dramatic Apotheoses in Rural Andhra Pradesh, India”
Discussion with Sree Padma

10/25 Tuesday
7-9pm Galvin Auditorium
“Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men”
Written By: Michael Kimmel
Discussion and BookSigning

www.luc.edu/womenstudies
PERFORMING GENDER
34TH Annual Meeting of the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language and Gender

Hosted by Loyola University Chicago
Chicago, IL

October 13-16, 2011

The Organization for the Study of Communication, Language and Gender [OSCLG] provides an interdisciplinary forum for discussion, presentation of research, and demonstration of creative projects in the areas of communication, language and gender. OSCLG promotes recognition of those doing work in this area and seeks to attract new scholars whose research may contribute to the development of language, communication and gender studies.

This conference explores all the dimensions of gender as performance, ranging from the obvious elements of stage and mass media to everyday life. As the home of some of the nation’s best regional theatre, the birthplace of improv, the site of passionate street action, a touchstone for performance studies and one of the most diverse metropolitan areas in the world, the Chicago area is a perfect place to discuss the central question: How is gender performed? Papers, panels, round table discussions and, of course, performances using theoretical, critical, cultural and performative perspectives are welcomed.

The conference will be held at The Orrington Hotel in Evanston, IL http://www.hotelorrington.com/ and Loyola University Chicago’s Lake Shore campus http://www.luc.edu/

For more information, contact Dr. Bren Ortega Murphy, Communication Studies/Women’s Studies & Gender Studies, bmurphy@luc.edu or see OSCLG website: http://www.osclg.org/conferences/index.php
Cover Artist: Teresa J. Parker

“Madonna Bust”

This week we are featuring the work of local artist Teresa J. Parker

In her piece “Madonna Bust,” she renders a bust of the Virgin with roses as her halo. This piece executed as part of a 2009-2011 series, all of which are 18 x 24”.

Artist background:

Teresa J. Parker has gained recognition as an artist, curator, and educator. She has exhibited her artwork throughout the United States, Asia, Latin America; and is the recipient of numerous awards, including grants from the National Endowment of Humanities, the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and the Illinois Art Council.

As a passionate advocate for the arts, Parker has earned acclaim through her curatorial experiences with Curtis Allen Turner Fine Arts (Chicago), Founding Director of Parker Press, Curator/Interim Director for Elmhurst Art Museum, Director/Curator of the Crown Center Gallery at Loyola University Chicago, and currently is Curator of Exhibitions and University Art Collections at Benedictine University. In addition to curating over one hundred fifty exhibitions of contemporary art for galleries, universities and museums, Parker has curated several international exchange exhibitions, and dealing with the Consulate Generals of India and Switzerland.

Parker’s continuing interest in the rights of women and children compelled her to work on their behalf as Art Consultant for AKTSinc., a not-for-profit organization concerned for the welfare of indigenous Micronesian women and children. From 2007-2009, she directed the Coral Rose Foundation, a not-for-profit organization devoted to the social and artistic preservation of indigenous cultures.

Parker also teaches studio art and art history at Benedictine University and College of DuPage, in Illinois.
Mothers

In the words of Margaret Cho:

Feminism is nonnegotiable.

If you are not a feminist, you do not deserve to live.

Do you think you grew out of the ground? That the stork dropped you off? You fell from a tree? NO. You came out of a woman. And even if your mother was awful, abandoned you, abused you, ignored you, made you hate yourself, put you on a diet at age six so that, to this day, you still have a complex about your weight, molested you, competed with you, made you join a cult, was jealous of you, was nicer to your brother than you, sewed you matching outfits, made you eat liver or any other kind of organ meat (or, like my mom, dried fish!), gave you a Toni home perm, made you as crazy as she, did not love you--you still owe her your life. You would not be here if it were not for her. I'm not telling you that you have to do anything for your mom. I'm just saying we need to respect women for the fact that they are where the world begins. They are the reason we are still here, and will continue to be here. Forever.

So if you are not a feminist, kill yourself.

Normally, I do not advocate suicide, but this time you do not have a choice. You do not have the right to live on this planet, and you need to kill yourself and go to your misogynist heaven, which is much like the Playboy Mansion, where you can read all sorts of men's magazines like Maxim, FHM, Stuff, Hustler, Gear and, of course, Playboy, except... there will be no women there. No real T & A, just paper cuts and those annoying subscription cards that fall out all over the place, because since you did not appreciate the wonder of what T & A really is, and because you did not understand the importance of us being here, your exploitation of them makes you eligible for a hell where we are not there at all.

Kind of like jail, but you do not get to make other inmates your bitch.

And then you have to read the articles. That is what I call Hades. Pussy, pussy, everywhere, but not a drop to...

What people need to understand is that the pussy is the Front Door of Life. Do you get that? Nobody really thinks about it like that up in the dusty cabinet of old white men that think they know everything. Women has the right to let someone in, or to tell them to come back another time, or even to have a sign that says NO SOLICITORS.

Woman has the right to be exalted, cherished and respected.

Woman has the right to choose, to choose for herself, for her own body, for her own life.

Feminism is nonnegotiable. Word to your mother.

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I could not have said this any better. Actually, there are so many things I could not express better than Margaret Cho. She does not bullshit nor waiver nor make pretty many truths, and in this instance she gets to one of the most basic tenets of my feminism: as much as my country and many of my peers want to ignore my origins, they are women and mothers in significant ways.

I say “origins” in the plural because it is not just from my birth that I ought to thank my own mother and be appreciative, even though that in itself is a hell of an accomplishment and gift. Beyond what Margaret Cho says here, I ought to give much appreciation to my mother, all mothers, and women in general for the amount of positive influence they have on the world that goes UNDERVALUED. This is not to say that my father, other fathers, and men in general have not made incredible sacrifices to others, including myself. And this is not to say that only women who are mothers are undervalued. Rather, what I want to focus on is women’s contributions to us all that we often take for granted.

When I was growing up, I used to often complain at the dinner table that the food was too hot. I have a very sensitive mouth and tongue, and I used to get upset that my mom would provide me food that was not available for immediate consumption (which I would still try and always burn myself). I used to also get frustrated that she would make lima beans, butter beans, brussel sprouts, and black-eye peas so often. I thought they tasted like paper and grass and fantasized about Little Debbie and Hardy’s.

Saturdays when my mother would get us out of bed early to do chores, or mornings when she would threaten our lives to empty the dishwasher, or Sundays when she would insist we learn how to cook, I wanted to be doing other things. At times I thought she was tough on us and expected too much. Little did I know, then, that not only was she always looking out for me, my father, my four siblings, and several other people, but she also took our crap, our bad attitudes, and most importantly, our indifference to her unrelentless hard work, and still loved us and supported us. Even more, she “broke us in” toward becoming mindful, capable adults.

“Anyone, female-bodied, male-bodied, whatever, who shows interest in developing other people rather than their own selves is not quite in line with American capitalism, with its growing emphasis on competition, individualism, and materialism/money.

Yet as I get older and better understand the culture we live in and push and pull among, the more I wonder where an appreciation for community, nurturing, connection, emotion, expression, intimacy, selflessness, and many other feminine “responsibilities” and characteristics, gets lost. I think back to my childhood, to work, to just last week, and I see and find dozens if not hundreds of women (and some men) holding us all together in so many ways. Anyone, female-bodied, male-bodied, whatever, who shows interests in developing other people rather than their own selves is not quite in line with American capitalism, with its growing emphasis on competition, individualism, and materialism/money. In college, I often provided food, coziness, a place to sleep over, beverages, and in general I just looked out for my friends and their friends. I was always inviting people into my home. Is it surprising I was given the nickname “Big Momma”? When we have concern for others, it is deemed “feminine.” Why is this not a universal trait we all seek?

Sure, it is not lost on me that people (often women and mothers) who put the most effort toward nurturing and caring for others gain positivity from this in various ways, such as the joy in helping others.
grow and survive. What I believe is lost, however, is a recognition and awareness of just how much impact women and mothers have on all of us. Like Cho says, in the least, they birthed us from their flesh. But in a society where (and this is getting better, due to activists, feminisms, etc.) women, girls, femininity, and mothering have often been taken for granted, forced, ignored, dismissed, and so on, the large gap between the positive influences of women and mothers and the negative treatment and reflection from much of our histories and current culture toward women and mothers simply needs to end.

When people are cast aside, mistreated, misunderstood, and in general deemed “undesirable,” women have often been those who look out for them, whether they like it, want it, or have other aspirations. I could spend hours discussing and analyzing what all this sex and gender means in the past and present. But I will not do that here. I could also exhaust myself pondering genetics, selfishness, family, and reproduction as they pertain to women and mothers--forced, socialized, and desired. Again, I will not do that here. What I will do and want to do, however, is ask that we be mindful of the women and mothers in our lives. Sure, this may sound like a Mother’s Day calling or holiday card. The difference, however, is that I am not saying do this for a day.

No, I am saying we should do this always. We should trash the notion that anyone exists as an “individual.” We should reconsider capitalism and competition. If most of our mothers strictly went by capitalism and competition, they would have left us in the dust and “bettered” themselves. We ought to take the negative bullshit we are fed daily about the flimsiness and fragility of women and focus instead on how we got here and who helped us along the way. Are we thankful? Do we recognize what was desired, socialized, and forced? So many women in the past and present have been forced into situations they did not choose. Were you a part of this, but still taken care of in ways? Think about it....
As a person who devours the news and current events with a voracious, almost compulsive hunger, it pains me deeply to type the following: I am going to have to forego my addiction to news media sources. Why, you might ask? Why would I choose to deprive myself of something that brings me so much joy? I can sum it up in two words: Mr. Obama.

Every single day, I witness the same, thinly veiled racist threats against our President—starting with the fact that most news sources refer to him as Mr. Obama, rather than President Obama or even Mr. President. Maybe I learned something different in school, but I was under the impression that the President of the United States of America was always to be addressed as such. You address your child’s teacher or an elder with “Mr.,” not the President. Regardless of his skin color.

Yep, I said it. It’s funny—America did such a great job of smugly patting herself on the back when he was elected, if only just to prove the point that Americans are not racist. How could we be? We have a black (we all know he’s biracial, but come on, he looks black and therefore is) man in the White House! The term “post-racial society” was thrown around like rice at a wedding. I honestly don’t even know what the term means, but for Americans, it’s supposed to signify that we are again better than everybody else because we put a person of color in a position of power. In my humble opinion, the election and his presidency only brought to the surface that America is incredibly racist and completely unable to own up to criticizing the President’s every move based on his race.

His administration saw to the execution of Osama bin Laden, repealed Don’t Ask Don’t Tell, and is trying to pass laws to assist the ever-shrinking middle class. But he’s always the big, bad black guy.

Let me be clear: I don’t have a problem with race being part of the conversation—on the contrary, I welcome it. The problem is that the President’s race is taken into every criticism, but when anyone tries to point that out, there is a huge wave of righteous indignation. It’s never race, it’s always his policies. For some reason, people are shushed and booed for having the audacity to bring race into the conversation. We are playing the race card when we point that no other President in the history of the US has been treated with such blatant disrespect and contempt.

For example, let’s focus on the “Take Our Country Back” mantra that the Right loves to repeat. Who, exactly, are we taking the country back from? Apparently, Mr. Obama has singlehandedly ruined our country by walking into the Oval Office saddled with 2 wars and an economy on the brink of recession.

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I’ve also heard that he hates this country and wants to tear America down piece by piece. Anytime he has black people to the White House, he’s hanging with his homies and drinking 40s (I’m so not making this up). This man can’t do anything right for anyone it seems. His administration saw to the execution of Osama bin Laden, repealed Don’t Ask Don’t Tell and is trying to pass laws to assist the ever-shrinking middle class. But he’s always the big, bad black guy.

I will say, however, that I do not worship at the shrine of Obama like everyone (liberals and conservatives alike) think that every black person does. One thing that I’ve found too personally frustrating is not being able to discuss the President in mixed company. If I happen to defend a policy of the man himself, I get rolled eyes and that look that says “You’re black—of course you’re going to stand up for him.” One of these days, people are going to flip out when they realize that not all of us know each other, are not related and (gasp!) don’t share the same beliefs. I just don’t have the same cobwebs of racism clouding my eyes like, say, the Tea Party. Remember those burning effigies of Obama at their rallies and people calling for his death? I’d say they’re a little biased.

I will say that this presidency has shown me a lot about America and how she views anyone that may be “different.” Different still means bad, untrustworthy, foreign, the enemy. I am sick and tired of the media propagating this idea in endless loops; therefore, this column serves as my Dear John letter to my old friends: CNN, MSNBC, Fox News (just kidding—you’ve always been my nemesis), Huffington Post, and any of the others that I would visit on a daily basis. I’m not saying I won’t be back—I’ll definitely still come around from time to time (especially you, MSNBC—nothing could keep me away from Locked Up), but I won’t be devoting any time to you in the foreseeable future. I’ll just cross my fingers and hope that we can have a civil conversation about President Obama.

“I am the son of a black man from Kenya and a white woman from Kansas. I’ve gone to some of the best schools in America and lived in one of the world’s poorest nations. I am married to a black American who carries within her the blood of slaves and slaveowners -- an inheritance we pass on to our two precious daughters. I have brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, uncles and cousins, of every race and hue, scattered across three continents, and for as long as I live, I will never forget that in no other country on Earth is my story even possible.

It’s a story that hasn’t made me the most conventional candidate. But it is a story that has seared into my genetic makeup the idea that this nation is more than the sum of its parts -- that out of many, we are truly one.”

-President Barack Obama, from his 2008 speech on race
From the PopUp Annals: Knocked Up: A Comedy From the Pro-life, Relationship-Hating Hellmouth.

(Note: Mature content and sarcasm warning)

Back in 2007, at the beginning of the aughts bromance comedy era, this was one of the most enjoyable mainstream comedies I’d seen in a long time. Having not been familiar with Apatow’s *Freaks and Geeks* ensemble yet, I was impressed with my introductions to Seth Rogen especially, and his motley crew of degenerate man-children roommates with their impeccable comedic timing and bizarre roundtable-flavored banter. Additionally, having had no exposure to Ms. Katherine Heigl via *Grey’s Anatomy*, I considered her adept in her role as the albeit one-dimensional and gorgeous shrew. I laughed big belly laughs the whole way through this film, knowing all the while I was going to wax finger-wagging as soon as I left the theatre. Hey, I’m multi-dimensional.

Until *Bridesmaids* this summer, *Knocked Up* was Apatow’s top-grossing film. This movie was successful enough to become a household name over the past few years, and with all its subtle and not-so-subtle messages about contraception, family planning, motherhood and heterosexual relationships, I am compelled to highlight what seems so problematic to me about it in hopes to remind viewers—and myself—to be ever-mindful of the harmful messages present in our most gut-busting and commercially successful entertainment.

*Knocked Up* grossed nearly a quarter of a billion dollars worldwide. We are the ones who pay Hollywood to keep certain messages going. After all, this film spawned many babies: *I Love You, Man; Superbad; Pineapple Express; Hot Tub Time Machine* and the like. For this Motherhood issue, editor Brandie Rae Madrid asked me to dust off my 2007 review and re-tool it for this issue. As I do so, I remind myself and readers what we’re not only consuming but also promoting with our entertainment dollars.

**Contraception: Woman’s Responsibility/Unsexy.**

During the one-night stand and film-premise-kick-off scene between black-out-drunk Ben (Rogen) and Alison (Heigl), Ben decides to discard his condom right when he’s putting it on in preparation to have

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sex with Alison because he interprets what Alison’s saying - “Just do it already”- as her meaning “Forget the condom, let’s go for it.”

Message: It’s the woman’s responsibility to bring contraception into sex, because a man will bone anything in sight and not consider the consequences. Not only is this insulting to women, it is also insulting to men and their ability to take care of themselves (STDs? STIs? Paternity suits?). Beyond that, the scene supports that old adage that condoms are annoying nuisances, difficult to manage, and potentially ruin the enjoyment of sex. In an ongoing era when health-promoting sex education and family planning is actually a plausible aspect of a child’s upbringing, do we really need a wildly popular film that promotes these stereotypical and ultimately damaging ideas about responsible engagement in sexual intercourse? Meh.

Rich People Can/Should Have Kids, Not Choices.

So, surely, the film would approach the options available to Alison when she discovers she is pregnant–due to this two-person sex gaff–maturely, if hilariously, right? But no. What we see of Alison’s decision-making is precisely a lack of her decision-making process.

We see a tearful cry from Alison to Ben letting him know she’s decided to keep the baby and she just wanted him to know; we do not see any of the thoughts or reasoning she had that led to that weighty decision. I suppose as we see her sitting in her plush guest-house bedroom at her sister’s enormous bungalow-cum-mansion, a white gal with great looks and uncomplicated blonde hair, with a fancy star-laden job at E!, we perhaps are to assume, “Well, her family is rich enough for her to have a kid, so, it’s probably a good idea.” With its lack of transparency about such a critical and life-altering decision, the film gives us no other option but to assume the reasons Alison decides to keep the baby, to suspend our disbelief, and just accept that that is what she wants to do for illusory and unstated good reasons.

Pro-Choicers Are Uptight/Eugenicists.

Right before we see this phone call from Alison to Ben, there’s the scene in which Harold Ramis’s character (Ben’s dad) gives a little speech to Ben amounting to this: “you never know where life will take you, you just have to go with it,” which, for all its hippy dippy feel-good vibes has the underlying tone of “She doesn’t need to get an abortion, man. She just needs to go with the flow, man. And so do you: have a kid.” Apparently Ben was a “mistake,” but mistakes are cool, man because Ben is the proclaimed best thing that ever happened to his dad. Hooray for mistakes!! Let’s all throw our condoms out our apartment windows and make lots of life-changing mistakes!!

The pro-kid voices in this film–Ben’s dad and Canadian patriot Jay Baruchel–are the cool and lovable ones.

Prior to The Phone Call, we also meet Alison’s mother (played by Joanna Kerns)–the Pro-Choice Hellbitch. The one potentially rational voice in the film supporting the mere option to have an abortion–besides morose and cynical Jonah (Hill), the most unlikeable character in the film–comes across as an evil heartless wealthy a-hole who believes in eugenics. She and Alison are having lunch, and Alison’s mother dictates that Alison has to “take care of it” (translation: get an abortion). Mom then gives an example of a friend/family member who had an abortion earlier in her life and now is married and “has a real baby” (translation: only married people have real babies). Way to fairly portray the mind of the pro-choicer: “Abort the fake babies that you don’t want and give birth to the real babies later!! Kill the fake babies!!! Hooray!!!”

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Men Only Have One Choice/No Choice.

This film seems to forget that men have choices, too. Ben is not given the option from anyone in his life giving him advice that he might want to consider getting a job and helping Alison solely (and importantly) financially while continuing to live his own life. Or, he might want to be an ongoing friend to Alison and a helpful, present male figure in the baby’s life. After all, during Alison’s tearful cry to Ben, she does not invite him to participate in the pregnancy and rearing of the child. We are to assume, though, that that is Ben’s only choice since she decided to keep the baby. The options available to Ben in the film are extreme, black and white, and frankly sort of terrifying psychologically: either Alison gets an abortion and Ben is absolved of involvement with her, she goes her way and he goes his (the film made it abundantly clear that Alison would not “lower herself” to date Ben if she were not keeping the baby), or she keeps the baby and Ben therefore must attempt to date her, be a romantic partner and full-fledged father to this child.

Don’t get me wrong: I’m all for men taking equal responsibility for their involvement in sex and its consequences; at the same time, there are a number of viable and healthy options for what that responsibility might look like. Knocked Up posits that the only option available to the man is to go along with whatever the woman is doing, like he is a hostage to the entire situation, not a fellow adult with choices of his own. While Alison’s options are somewhat fleshed-out in this film, we do not even get a taste of the idea that an adult man has choices of his own in this situation.

Men Are Distant Slackers And Need To Change. Women Are Bitches And Don’t.

The film attempts to highlight “real-life crap” that can occur in romantic relationships by giving us snippets of Debbie (Alison’s sister, played by Leslie Mann) and Pete’s (Paul Rudd) marriage, but instead it offers us an incredibly harsh view of partnerships that is, again, psychologically terrifying. It veers far afield of healthy dynamics with an albeit hilarious in-the-dog-housed Pete and Ben weekend trip to Vegas and a heartfelt male-bonding mushrooming experience that culminates in Pete realizing he doesn’t need alone time or his own activities, he just needs to accept the smothering love of Debbie and adhere to her whims. Simultaneously, Debbie and Alison engage in a girls’ weekend which leads to the realization that they, as women, are too old and/or pregnant to be single, so they might as well face facts and deal with their (in their minds) fuck-up male sig o’s.

Debbie and Pete’s relationship is a nightmare. He’s a charming but secretive, lyingavoider who honestly could probably use some time to himself, but he tells himself his wife is too controlling and reactive to be honest with her. She’s a cloying harpy who wants to affix herself to his flesh and make him into a female version of herself. Neither of them appear to know how to talk to each other honestly and kindly. My guess is they could both use time to themselves, nurturing their own interests and interdependence. But the film’s solution? Pete crawls back to his cloying harpy and surrenders his back-flesh to Debbie, and she’s happy. And as long as you can keep a woman happy, your relationship will work out fine. Thanks, Knocked Up, for priming us for Mad Men.

In the film, it’s the men who are positioned as fuck-ups, who are dishonest, who are difficult, who are immature, who have to change. A very tangible subplot in this film is the journey Ben has to go on to become ready to be a decent boyfriend and dad. And Pete has to be more willing to be fawned over and ordered around by Debbie in order for their marriage to work. The women need to do nothing but tolerate the men.

While Alison’s emotional outbursts and fear-filled rejections of Ben—as well as her unstated invitation to Ben to be involved in the baby’s life—encourage Ben to look deeply at his goals and decisions, there is no counterpart in the film that forces Alison to change from being a selfish, lying, underearning control
freak into an insightful, nurturing, honest, compassionate, more independent good listener. Did she read the baby books she nags Ben to read? Are we supposed to assume she did because she’s a woman? Or that she doesn’t need to read the baby books because she’s a woman? And are we supposed to assume that even though we do not see her mature emotionally even one iota in the film that as soon as her baby is born, she’ll suddenly become a more decent human being, capable of listening to her partner and nurturing her daughter without letting her arrogant narcissistic issues get in the way? Why are we to assume that?

Because women are biologically manufactured to be good mothers, and this makes them good people. They don’t need training. They just “know.”

Layered into the idea that only these men need to change in order to make their relationships work (while the women have to do nothing) is the duly offensive idea that women are childlike in their inability to alter their own behavior. They need to whine and throw fits and fly off the handle and smother their partners in affection all the time, and, boys, you better just tolerate it, because women have no capacity to grow up or receive feedback. This infantilization of the female characters in the film wouldn’t have been bothersome to me if the women underwent intense self-reflection and growth and made a commitment to understand the needs of their partners in order to maturely address the kinks in their relationships. But Debbie and Alison were relatively unlikeable, whiny, needy women from start to finish. Alison got a free pass for much of the film because she was pregnant. Maybe that’s fair? But, newsflash, women aren’t all hormones all the time during pregnancy. They are still thinking, feeling, working, productive beings in society who take responsibility for their behavior. Not Alison, though. She was just hormonal. The film wants us to cheer for Ben, whom we give big props to for taking all the heavy things weighing down that relationship (including Alison’s juvenile reactions to many things) onto his own back and being a remarkably stand-up dude, capable of learning selflessness, compassion, and all the way through offering an unbeatable wit.

Katherine Heigl was certainly right when she said the film is “a little sexist.” But it is not just anti-woman; it’s also anti-man. Ben and Pete may be fun-loving and sweet, with adorable smiles, but they’re also totally whipped. And the film posits that men being whipped is the only way for relationships to work, because women are incapable of changing.

Parenthood Is What You Need to Be A Real Adult.

Fast forward to the birth. We’re at the hospital. Ben and Alison have made up, after a 2-month long break-up, in 5 minutes, because Ben has proven that he “read the Baby Books!!!” (again, he changed, she did not) and because Alison has no one else to help her while she’s in labor. Fast forward through the birth (most of us know by now about the most sterile and unrealistic shorn prosthetic vagina-with-crowning-baby-head shot by this point, yes?) to Ben, holding his newborn baby girl. Ben is sweetly describing to the baby how she was conceived and says something like, “So Mommy said, ‘Just do it already,’ which was really confusing for Daddy... But I’m really glad I didn’t put that condom on.”

Don’t we all wish our infantile 20-somethings would get their shit together and grow up already? Well, this film has the answer: accidental pregnancy! Hooray! Boys will become men. Girls will become... if not women, then mothers, at the very least. Boys will get jobs and stop smoking pot. Girls will... become mommies. Boys will get their own apartments finally and stop hanging out with all their pink-eye-infested loser pot head friends. Girls will... become mamas. Boys will stop talking about blowjobs and big titties all the time and bond with upwardly mobile 30-something dudes who have real jobs and families. Girls will...only get knocked up.
Valuing All Families Under the Law
quotes from Nancy D. Polikoff’s book *Beyond (Straight and Gay) Marriage*

A consumer of current news might imagine that access to same-sex marriage is the most contested issue in contemporary family policy, and that marriage is the only cure for the disadvantages faced by gay and lesbian families. Both of these observations would be wrong. The most contested issue in contemporary family policy is whether married-couple families should have “special rights” not available to other family forms.

Couples should have the choice to marry based on the spiritual, cultural, or religious meaning of marriage in their lives; they should never have to marry to reap specific and unique legal benefits.

Extending legal rights to unmarried couples, as many Western countries do, is a start, but it is not enough. “Couples,” meaning two people with a commitment grounded on a sexual affiliation, should not be the only unit that counts as family.

With few exceptions, advocates for gay and lesbian access to marriage do not say that “special rights” should be reserved for those who marry. But the marriage-equality movement is a movement for gay civil rights, not for valuing all families.

Laws that distinguish between married couples and everyone else need to be reexamined. They stem from the days when a husband was the head of his household with a dependent wife at home, when a child born to an unmarried woman was a social outcast, and when virtually every marriage was for life regardless of the relationship’s quality. It was a very different time.

Successful reform that values all families may not come in the name of gay rights. It may come under the banner of, for example, parents’ autonomy, family pluralism, and the needs of children. Some lawmakers will support important reforms precisely because they help many people in many families and do not appear to be “gay rights” issues.

The contemporary movement for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people owes a great deal of debt to the feminist movement of the 1960s and early 1970s, including its critique of marriage and the family.
Foundations

by Bernadette Raspante
WSGS MA Student
Lover of coffee and trees

At age 14, as the oldest of three daughters, Marie made the journey from the shores of Sicily to America by herself to live with American family she had never met. By age 16 she was sewing for some of Chicago’s most prominent women and they loved her. She was offered great things, but took only what work she felt suited her and what payment she felt honorable.

Marie had another talent as well; cooking. No matter how many times she gave recipes to other women in the neighborhood, no one’s dish could come close to hers. Marie didn’t get the chance to pass on as many of her recipes or dress patterns to her granddaughters as she would have liked. But they remembered the ones that she did.

Nana, how do you make pizza? Was all she needed to hear and the kitchen turned into a classroom that scented of garlic and baking bread. Triple the size of your dough and you will always have something to eat is what she told the wide-eyed girls sneaking tomatoes and peppers from the counter when they thought she wasn’t looking. Then, you can make bread, pizza, and breakfast rolls all in the same day and eat all week.

What goes on a pizza? Anything you want, but a few special toppings mixed with simple ingredients always taste better. And the crust is the most important part; the pizza won’t taste right if you mess up the crust.

Her granddaughters were never able to ask Marie much about her life growing up, or her struggles as an immigrant working in America, or what it was like to be so far away from her sisters. They were never able to ask her about how she met their grandfather, or what her wedding was like, or if she would make the dresses for their school dances.

But she was able to tell them that the crust was the most important part. Everything else that went on top of it only complemented the taste and beauty of the pizza.
Family Matters

by Mia Gutsell

The theme of this issue is very important to me. My family is my life. I chose to apply to colleges only in the city of Chicago so I could be home anytime I needed to see my family, or they needed to see me.

My family is rather unusual. I grew up in a two flat with my mom, dad, and brother on the top floor; and my aunt, uncle, and three older cousins on the bottom floor. In essence, it was a house where I grew up with two moms, two dads, and five older siblings. To me, this concept of family was normal. There was always someone in the house to do the chores, or take care of the younger children.

Media, for a long time has presented the idea of the family being a mom, a dad, and two children, maybe with a pet. Shows such as “Modern Family,” show us though, that families do not come in any one shape or size. That is one of the most crucial aspects of our society. Families do not come in the two by two little arrangement, if they ever truly did so; it was only for a short span of time in the United States.

So, what does this have to do with feminism? What does my little diatribe about families have to do with anything?

Basically, the current government does not support families. (Yes, I am aware of the benefits of social security, medicare, and the new healthcare law. That’s not the Point.)

Uh oh. I just said something bad. And wrong.

Don’t politicians all over the country go on and on about family values? Well, yes. They do.

Do they have a lot to show for it? Not necessarily.

In other countries around the world, parental leave, child care, and various other resources are expected of the government. How much paternal leave does a parent have in the United States? Six weeks? Three months? Even then, it’s only given to the woman, not the man in the relationship.

In Sweden, parents of either gender have parental leave for up to 16 months. Let me emphasize that once more. 16 MONTHS. A year and a half.

Do you know what I would do if I could give that amount of time to my cousin, who currently has a baby only a few months old? She’d love to stay home with her child, while her husband worked, but the demands of her household and a lack of economic support from the government force her back into her job.

Now, I don’t want to start a pointless mommy wars discussion about whether or not women should be at home with their kids or working. All I’m trying to say is that women and men should have the choice to stay home to raise their children. It is an important family matter for any parent or guardian.

So, to all those politicians, I’d like to say, show me something. Show me something that proves that families really do matter in the United States.

At this point in time, I need some real proof.

Click here to CONTRIBUTE (guidelines)! We encourage ALL readers to share with us, small or large, simple or complex.
Fish and Visitors

by Amy David
Amy David studies Engineering at UIC and sometimes writes poems.

You have yet to remove the desk from the spare bedroom, or to stop calling it the spare bedroom, or to learn a lullaby or a breathing technique. This is what you wanted. A body that does not roll onto its stomach. A wardrobe of elastic and drawstrings. A guaranteed seat on the train. The woman who stands is no more a stranger than the one inside you. You think of ferns sending spores into the wind and no more, no passing up Saturday nights, no stretch marks, no urgent trips to the ladies’ room at four a.m. When your mother drops by to ask not about you, you do what you should to muster up a glow. You draw families of stick figures in purple crayon and clip plastic barrettes into your hair. You snack on formula heated on your wrist. You peer out from behind the bars of a crib. Your world is small.
My Journey

by Crystal Battin

My fertility journey began before I was born. You see, I was born into two large families; generations upon generations of large families. The only thing people in my family know how to do well is to have babies and raise families. My maternal grandmother often jokes that all she had to do was lie next to my grandfather and she was pregnant! She ended up having five children. My paternal grandmother did not have any difficulty, either, and had six children. It seems to me that their large families must have affected their children somehow because when it came time for my mom and dad’s generation to have families, the most anyone had was three children. None of them had any difficulties having children and none would suspect that any of their children would have issues, either.

My parents dated through high school and became pregnant with me, out of wedlock, at the age of 19. They married before my mother began to show and I arrived six months later. My brother was born two years later and shortly after, my mom had her tubes tied. Looking back on it, she did the right thing. Bringing another child into our family would not have been a wise decision. My father was an abusive alcoholic who taught my mother how to be abusive. We never had a stable home and money was tight.

We lived that way for twelve years of my life until my father had an affair and divorced my mother. That day was the happiest day of my life! It was that day that I made a few promises to myself: never allow a man to lay his hands on me, go to college, marry a man I was truly in love with, buy a house to provide stability for my family, and protect myself from having a child before accomplishing my goals. The last point is poignant. It was around the age of twelve that I realized that every woman on my mom’s side of the family was either pregnant on their wedding day or already had children prior to getting married. I had already seen what that had done to my family and there was no way I was going to contribute to that tradition!

“I realized at this time that I officially broke the cycle in my family. I was the first female in my entire family to be married without being pregnant or having children.”

I met the love of my life during my senior year of high school. To be sure I did not get pregnant, I went on birth control. I went to college and received a Bachelor of Arts at the age of twenty-two. My boyfriend and I bought a house shortly after I turned twenty-four, got engaged at twenty-six and married at twenty-seven. Shortly thereafter, I began experiencing problems. I was menstruating every two weeks and as an eleven year birth control user, I knew something was wrong. I went to my gynecologist and she began to run lengthy tests on me. After ruling out thyroid issues, hormonal issues, and everything else under the sun, she said to me, “Crystal, I think your body is telling you it’s time to get off birth control.” I was okay with that. After all, I had been married nine months, had received my Master’s degree, and owned my own home. I had also realized at this time that I officially broke the cycle in my family. I was the first female in my entire family to be married without being pregnant or having children. I kept my word to myself, so I was prepared to start my family.
Six months after going off of birth control, I began experiencing problems again. I had gained weight in my lower abdomen that would not come off and my periods had gotten further and further apart. I went into the gynecologist and after running some tests on me, she told me that I had polycystic ovaries. I was by myself and I began to sob in her arms. All I could think to myself was, “Oh my God! I am going to end up like Jon and Kate Plus 8! I DO NOT want eight kids!” My doctor comforted me by saying that even though I had polycystic ovaries, I did not have the full-blown syndrome. She assured me Kate was some freak of nature and it was highly unlikely that I could ever have six children at one time.

My gynecologist also told me that I had a rippled cervix and that I would need to get a biopsy to check and make sure I did not have cervical cancer. She ended our conversation by telling me that birth control may have caused this hormonal imbalance and it could have hid it all along. Either way, she said to monitor and track my cycles and let her know if anything changed.

At this point, I was scared. Thank goodness for my husband. I am sure without his support, I would have been a mess! My results came back from the biopsy and everything was fine. Then, two months later, my period completely stopped! I called my doctor and she had me take a hormone to trigger my cycle. She told me that I had PCOS and that it would be difficult for me to get pregnant without some help. She prescribed me Clomid, starting off with 50 mg. on days 3-7 and told me to have sex every day starting one week after my cycle ended.

Clomid made me gain weight and act crazy! My husband kept asking me where his wife was. I would snap at him out of nowhere and regret it after words. I had to keep reminding him that it was the Clomid talking. I also began taking Metformin, a suggestion from my general practitioner. Women with PCOS take Metformin to help them process glucose and it helps to control the symptoms of PCOS.

The first two months on the Clomid and Metformin, nothing happened. The third month, my dosage of Clomid was increased to 100 mg. My gynecologist had mentioned to me that if I did not get pregnant by the fifth month, I should see a fertility specialist. The fourth month, my dosage was increased to 150 mg. This time, though, we began having intercourse earlier than my doctor had suggested. I thought I might be ovulating earlier than the doctor thought I would and maybe that’s why I wasn’t getting pregnant.

Well, it worked! I had some spotting, thinking my cycle was about to begin, but then it went away. I took the test and it came back positive! It was a week before Christmas and it was the best gift ever! I was cautious not to tell my family, but I thought my mom should know. She was trying to buy me a lot of gifts for Christmas and I knew she would want to spend the money on the baby. She was so happy, she started crying. I told her not to speak a word until we were at least three months along. She promised she would.

“I kept thinking, ‘It’s my body. I went through this.’ I failed to see that he was hurting as much as I was.”

A few days later, I went to the doctor for my initial blood work and thought everything was great. The results came back and my HCG levels were low. Right away the nurse asked me if I was sure about the date of my last cycle and I told her I had been keeping track for years. I had to go back every two to three days to get more blood drawn. If the numbers did not double every seventy-two hours, a miscarriage was likely. The HCG levels continued to rise, but not what they should be. I went in for an ultrasound, but they couldn’t see anything.

On Christmas morning, I began spotting and knew I was miscarrying. The odd thing was, the doctor told me to go to the hospital if I bled through a pad in an hour or two. I never bled through a pad. I had terrible

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cramping without medication and spent the majority of my Christmas break on the couch, curled in a ball. I ended up miscarrying for four weeks before my doctor recommended a DNC. At that point, I just wanted the pain and bleeding to end. My husband remained by my side and his strength is what helped me get through. My mom decided to come to the hospital so that she could support both of us.

The doctor said there was very little tissue, so I must have passed the majority of tissue all by myself. My husband and I were emotionally drained from the whole ordeal. It put a huge strain on our relationship because I went into mourning. I kept thinking, “It’s my body. I went through this.” I failed to see that he was hurting as much as I was. He never really vocalized it, but I saw the hurt in his eyes. I decided to seek counseling to help me process the hurt. I felt like I was a failure. All of my friends had babies, all of my family members had babies, and I couldn’t even carry one. My doctor said that one miscarriage is normal and when we were ready, we should try again. I wasn’t sure when that would be. Fearing the side effects from Clomid, I decided to see if I could ovulate on Metformin alone and I did.

The months that followed were rough. I saw the birth of my niece, who was two months older than my baby would have been. I lost my job and my husband’s unemployment ran out. Under much stress and still grieving our loss, we decided to take a break until we knew we could support a family. I focused my energy on looking for a job, which worked. My husband had a year left of school and there was no way I would let him quit then. Looking back on it, things happen for a reason. Now, I just think to myself, “What if I didn’t miscarry and I had a baby without a job, without a home, without stability?” I would have been right where I didn’t want to be.

“Looking back on it, things happen for a reason. What if... I had a baby without a job, without a home, without stability? I would have been right where I didn’t want to be.”

I ended up getting a job in the city. The commute and workload was an adjustment for me and my husband. We began trying again, but nothing happened. I decided to contact my gynecologist who recommended we try Clomid again. The first two months, I was on 50 mg. and we followed the recommended intercourse schedule. On the third month, my dosage was increased to 100 mg., but we started having intercourse the day after my cycle ended. On Mother’s Day, I began feeling nauseated and extremely tired. After a week, it hadn’t gone away and I was pretty sure I was pregnant. Almost a week before my cycle was due, I had a positive pregnancy test! We were so excited, but cautious. After everything we went through the first time, we knew that something could go wrong. We decided not to say a word to anyone until we passed the first trimester, just in case.

We went in for a blood test at five weeks and my levels were perfect. We scheduled an ultrasound at eight weeks and tried to wait patiently for the next three weeks. When we went in for the ultrasound, the baby had a heartbeat and measured at 90 beats. Then the tech turned to us and said, “Are you sure you are eight and a half weeks along?” Right then, my stomach dropped and I knew. I told her yes and that I had been charting my cycle for years. She then said to us, “Well, your baby is measuring at six weeks. Maybe it’s just small or you conceived later than you thought. The doctor will probably have you get another ultrasound in a week and then you’ll know for sure.”

So I went in a week later, only to find out the baby hadn’t grown at all. My gynecologist was dumbfounded that I wasn’t spotting or cramping. She asked if I wanted to just wait for a natural miscarriage or have a DNC. I was teaching summer school and could not wait. Plus, there was no way that I wanted to endure the pain I had the first time. We scheduled the DNC for the next morning. The worst part was, my husband had to work and couldn’t drive me home from the hospital, so I had to tell my mom. She couldn’t wrap her mind

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around the fact that the baby had a heartbeat, but I had to have a DNC. Still, she came just as she had the first time.

This time around, I was much further along and there was much more tissue involved. I felt sick for two days after and ended up bleeding for two weeks. In the weeks that followed, I did not grieve as much as I had the first time. I think that’s because I made a new goal for myself: I was going to find out why my babies weren’t growing properly. My gynecologist said to me, “Crystal, I am so sorry. One miscarriage is bad. Two is horrible. I don’t want you to have to go through this again. I want you to be happy you’re pregnant, not scared. We can only do so much for you. I think it’s time you go to a fertility specialist. They will figure out what’s going on and you will come back to me once you’re past your first trimester.” I told her that I had already found one and looked forward to seeing her once I conceived.

My husband was not on board for going to the specialist at first. He told me he didn’t want our child being a test-tube baby and that he didn’t want some genetically morphed child. I asked him, “Don’t you think it’s weird we can’t be happy when we find out we’re pregnant? Don’t you think we should be able to focus on us and our own family for once? I don’t want to go through another miscarriage hoping that the third time will be the charm. Wonder if all we need is something small, like an aspirin a day to help our baby grow? I would rather find out before we get pregnant again so that we can put preventative measures into place and not lose our next one.” Noticing he was processing what I was saying, I followed up, “Maybe we had bad luck two times in a row as a fluke, but maybe not. Wouldn’t you want to make sure before we go through this again? Seeing a specialist will allow them to figure out what is going on. They can give us a plan. It is our decision if we want to follow that plan or not. But, if we don’t go, we will never know.” He agreed, somewhat reluctantly.

That was two months ago. We spent the remainder of our summer getting tested for everything under the sun. I have been poked, prodded, and gone through the worst pain ever for the HSG test. Our last blood test was two weeks ago and we are just waiting for my husband’s results to come back before we can schedule an appointment with the Reproductive Endocrinologist to set up our plan. We chose Dr. Jacobs with the Fertility Centers of Illinois as our RE. He is in the top 1% of REs and I have all the faith in the world that he can help us. I am also grateful that we have good insurance that is helping us through this process. Many couples can’t even get this far because they can’t afford the procedures necessary to become pregnant. I just hope that God blesses them and I continue to pray for them every day.

I am hopeful that our story will have a happy ending. I am kind of secretly hoping the doctor tells us we have to have IVF and he implants me with three embryos that all take. Then, I can have my three children at once and never have to worry about this stuff again. We just want to have our own children, like all of our friends and family members. The thought of not being able to has crossed my mind. I just want to prepare myself for the worst and hope for the best. I’m not really sure what we’ll do. We don’t have the money to adopt. Foster care was a thought, but it can get messy. Maybe we’ll just continue to spoil and love our nieces as our own. No matter the outcome, we will never forget those we lost and will always wonder how our lives would be different if we hadn’t. People always say what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger. I think strength is a shell. Hiding beneath it is pain that never goes away.

“No matter the outcome, we will never forget those we lost and will always wonder how our lives would be different if we hadn’t.”
by Krysta Ann Williams

This selection of images is a product of re(dis)covering my relationship with my mother as an adult. As her oldest child, from her first marriage, I grew up a witness to my mother’s abusive marriages, struggles with alcohol and autonomy. As an adult woman, I question myths and ideals surrounding femininity, motherhood, and gender relationships—all as a result of my relationship (and sometimes lack-there-of) with my mother.
TO BABIES!

Dear everyone!
Join me in a toast!
Raise your li'l glasses!
In a toast!

To Babies!
(Now You: To Babies!)
To Babies!
(Babies!)
To Babies!
(BABIES!)
Aren’t they fucking fantastic!

Once, I saw a baby wink at an old man!
It was on purpose and not because it was sunny!
Once, a baby bit my finger with its four teeth! It only had four and it bit me with them! Amazing!
Once, I met my nephew who was almost one, and even though he’d never seen me before, he smiled at me and acted like we were old pals. I loved him immediately! Unbelievable!

Did you know that babies can’t hold their own heads up!
Did you know that babies can’t hold jobs or buy their own groceries?
Did you know that the monthly cost of diapers for babies is more than I spend on my monthly property taxes?
I know that!

Did you ever notice that every baby looks like every other baby’s dopple ganger?
Fact! If babies could do their own grocery shopping, then you would always see someone who looks like someone you know in aisle six!
That’s a fact!

AND NOW!
Let’s raise our li’l cups to each of our Facebook friends who have recently changed their avatars
To sonogram pictures of the weird human baby seahorses
Squatting inside their uteri!
To Facebook avatars of mucusy nonhumans floating around your lady facebook friends reproductive cavity!
Baby fish mouth!

Once, I saw my goddaughter take her very first step ever!
It made me cry!
Once, my friend told me she was having a baby!
It made me cry!

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Once, a friend of mine in town, told me she was having her second baby!
It made me cry!

Once, my brother had a second baby! New baby’s name is Gavin! He’s almost one and I’ve only seen him in pictures! He lives in a house that is One thousand four hundred fifty nine miles away from my house! If I tried to walk to his house without sleeping, it would take about 23 days and 19 hours! That’s according to Google! I actually don’t know when I will ever see him in person, and I frequently worry that he won’t ever know my name!

Once, a few months ago when I was crying about babies, my husband said he was very sorry!
It made me cry! Again! Later!

Once, my grandmommy asked my mom when she could finally expect grandchildren!
My mom said if she had a baby at that particular point in time, she’d have to sell it!
My grandmommy never mentioned it again!
My mother-in-law calls us a lot to talk about babies! I am running out of things to say and I mostly don’t want to talk about it!

Three years ago, my sister-in-law told my husband and that we had to wait three years before having a baby so she could have one first!
Like it was her business! She still hasn’t had a baby! It turns out we haven’t either!
It’s a fact that I saw three pregnant women at the doctor’s office today and their brilliance shattered my entire soul!
It’s a fact that they should have different waiting rooms for people who are having babies and people whose lives feel empty!
It’s a fact that I can’t even look at baby shoes!
It’s a fact! I sometimes drink extra just because I’m not pregnant!
Did you know that one in four pregnancies results in miscarriage! It’s a fact!
If it happens to you, don’t worry about it! They say that to you! It’s a fact!
My friend brought me a casserole and now I don’t like casseroles anymore! Fact!

No one talks about it! It’s because it makes people uncomfortable! But someone should tell you that it is the saddest thing that ever happens! And that it feels like you’re being run over by a truck! And that the facts and statistics will never make you feel better! It’s a fact that they will tell you facts! It’s a fact that there are tons of facts!

It’s a fact, that I am ashamed at how sad I am about this and if you ask me about it, I will laugh and laugh like it’s a joke, though we’ll both know that it is not. Not at all. Not a little. I probably shouldn’t even read this poem because it probably isn’t healthy.

Raise your glasses!
To babies and what they smell like!
To babies and how they have nice skin!
To babies and how happy everyone is around them!

To Babies.
Natural Birth Control: It’s Not the Rhythm Method, for *#%k’s Sake

by Emily Johnson

Emily Johnson is a writer and pro bono philosopher living in Chicago. Some of her published work is available online at http://emjohnson.net.

[Editor’s Note: The practices described in this article are not endorsed by Loyola, WSGS, and The Digest.]

After years of people’s suspicions about my birth control method, I have only to point out exhibit A: my non-pregnancy over the past five years, using nothing but my knowledge of my body’s fertility for birth control.

Well, a tiny caveat: I use condoms when I’m ovulating.

We all know the pill can be a problem. It can dampen sex drive, change your mood, make you gain weight, and if you forget to take it you can whip yourself into a panic for the rest of the month. There are also more general concerns about taking hormones, and how they may affect the inner and outer environment, especially when many more women are delaying or avoiding having children. This means that many young women will be on birth control for a decade or more of their reproductive life.

About five years ago, in my mid-twenties, I realized that I didn’t like that prospect. I started looking around for other options. The diaphragm and the sponge seem archaic, somehow, and unreliable.

Then I learned about Fertility Awareness Method (FAM for short), a method of birth control in which you keep track of your fertility signals (basal body temperature, cervical position, and cervical wetness) to determine when you’re ovulating.

I was worried at first—could this really work? Was I going to wind up pregnant? In NYC at the time, I found a workshop led by Ilene Richman, who publicizes and teaches FAM, to learn how to do it.

I diligently kept track of my cycle for about eight months before I started to rely on the method. But looking back now, it didn’t take long for me to see the pattern. Every morning I took my temperature and checked the wetness and consistency of my discharge (Stay with me here!), and every month, around day eight I would start to see wetness in my underwear and my temperature would start to rise.

When you ovulate, or release an egg, your body has hormones that raise your temperature. This happens to accommodate a growing fetus, regardless of whether or not you’re pregnant. The temperature slowly rises about a degree over a period of six or so days. When your body sheds the egg (if unfertilized) at the end of your cycle, your temperature returns to normal and you get your period.

During the fertile period (the luteal phase) your cervix also opens and softens (a subtle but marked change), and releases mucus to provide a hospitable environment for sperm.

Between these three fertility signals, I grew confident about when I was fertile. During that time I either abstained from sex (which was difficult—more on that later!) or used condoms.

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Soon I was proselytizing to my friends. Some jumped on board without much thought for the consequences.

(continued on next page)
One friend started relying on it after a very short time using it—just a couple of months—and she got pregnant. I was convinced, though, that she and her husband just didn’t want NOT to get pregnant that badly.

One important piece of advice Ilene gave us was to talk with our partners about our feelings about getting pregnant. She said, “The less averse you are to the idea, the more likely it is that you’ll get pregnant.” Maybe there’s some unconscious bias towards procreation, so having this information about your body is a bit dangerous.

But it’s far more empowering. If you are serious about it, there’s very little chance you’ll get pregnant, because you won’t take chances on those “not sure” days. Mine are usually after my period is finished but before I start showing signs of ovulation. I err on the side of caution.

This best thing about this method is that it freed me (and my partner) from having to rely on birth control for a majority of the month, when we didn’t need it. But there are other wonderful, unexpected benefits of using the method. As I mentioned, I did find it hard to abstain. I found I wanted sex more when I was ovulating (and my boyfriend wanted me more). It makes perfect biological sense, but it is really cool to see how biological processes affect us emotionally. I even suspect that the body knows when you’re on the pill and decreases your arousal accordingly. But that’s just my hypothesis. I also had more of an understanding of my emotional moods throughout my cycle, and I was able to predict my periods better.

And for the one friend who got pregnant, another became a cheerleader for FAM. “Almost done with first month, I’m in my luteal phase!” she wrote me. She jested: “No babies so far, but people keep trying to freak me out about it. They’re all: YOU’RE GOING TO GET PREGNANT!”

Ultimately, the best unintended effect was that it empowered me to know my own body—both my anatomy and my biology—and to understand its rhythms. I thought more about pregnancy as a real possibility, and how I felt about it.

In fact, FAM is most often used by women trying to get pregnant.

So, if I ever decide that I do want a baby, I’ll know exactly when to try.

**

A few cautionary notes:
If you have a very irregular schedule—go to bed and wake up at different times, or drink or fly a lot (jetlag, sickness, drugs can throw off your cycle), this method may not work for you. One thing you have to do is to take your temperature, on waking, at the same time each day, with a digital thermometer that reads to the decimal. I no longer really need the temperature to tell where I am in my cycle, but you do need to always take at least two out of the three big symptoms to be able to rely on it. Believe me, you don’t want to be constantly worrying about getting yourself knocked up.

If you do want to learn the method, I would advise checking out these resources, or consider finding a workshop in your area. Educating yourself is essential to the process.

Resources:
Ilene Richman, based in NYC, hosts a great web page on Fertility Awareness: fertaware.com
Taking Charge of Your Fertility by Toni Weschler, MPH is a bible on the subject of fertility. It is more geared toward getting pregnant, but it outlines the method. There’s a great website here as well: http://www.tcoyf.com/
http://www.justissse.ca/ This is a Canadian organization that trains people to teach natural birth control method. Lots of great info here. I’ll put charts up at my website, too: http://emjohnson.net
“1968: Commencement - Mothers and daughters”

In this photograph:
Graduates with their mothers

• Family is still probably the most represented group who attend the commencements of graduates. What does a graduation mean to a family? Why do we share certain big moments with our families like weddings and graduations and not always others?

The above photo is part of WLA’s special digital collection from Mundelein College. In 1991, Loyola University Chicago incorporated the last remaining women’s college of Illinois, Mundelein. Join us in reanimating photos like this one from the past for glimpses into what made the present and what influences the future.

(Click the paragraph below to jump to the WLA website and the paragraph above to jump to the photo collection.)

The Women & Leadership Archives (WLA) collects, preserves, organizes, describes, and makes available materials of enduring value to researchers studying women’s leadership activities. The WLA strives to promote knowledge and understanding of women’s many diverse and important contributions to society through active collection development, research, and the facilitation of learning about women’s history. The Women & Leadership Archives functions as a public facility in addition to serving the Loyola University Chicago community.

Click here to CONTRIBUTE (guidelines)! We encourage ALL readers to share with us, small or large, simple or complex.
New 2-Week January Term begins in 2012
Loyola will offer a 2-week January term for the first time in 2012. The website for January term went live very recently at http://www.luc.edu/jterm. The site contains information regarding classes offered, financial aid, registration deadlines and policies. The J-term schedule has 6 on-campus (LSC), 6 online, and 1 each at the Beijing Center and LUREC for a total of 14 courses. Ten of the 14 courses are from CAS spanning all knowledge areas in the core. Registration begins November 1st.

Feminist Forum Meeting: Welcoming New and Returning Members
Monday, October 3, 8 p.m. | Rambler Room
Would you like to get involved in feminist organizing? Promote gender equality on Loyola’s campus this year? The Feminist Forum was founded in 1995 to provide a supportive, safe, and open environment to discuss women and women’s issues. A pro-active organization, the Feminist Forum seeks to bring speakers and hold events to raise awareness of the challenges in many women’s lives such as sexual violence, HIV and AIDS, discrimination, sexual harassment and awareness of systems of patriarchy. Contact Feminist.forum.luc@gmail.com

Herstory Series: Bridget Kelly, Ph.D.
Tuesday, October 4, 12:00-1:15 | Information Commons 4th Floor
This series highlights women in leadership positions at Loyola University during monthly lunches. Bridget Kelly is Associate Professor and Program Co-Director of Educational Leadership. Her research interests include “Preparing Multiculturally Competent Student Affairs Professionals” and “Campus Climate for Racial Diversity and Gender Equity.” Join us for a casual conversation and hear about significant moments in the lives of the remarkable women in our community. Lunch provided.

Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, & Gender Annual Conference
Thursday-Saturday, October 13-16
This conference explores all the dimensions of gender as performance, ranging from the obvious elements of staff and mass media to everyday life. As the home of some of the nation’s best regional theatre, the birthplace of improve, the site of passionate street action, a touchstone for performance studies and one of the most diverse metropolitan areas in the world, the Chicago area is a perfect place to discuss the central question: How is gender performed? For more information, contact Dr. Bren Ortega Murphy, Communication Studies/Women’s and Gender studies, at bmurphy@luc.edu or visit http://www.osclg.org/conference/index.php

Monday, October 17, 2 p.m., Reception with light refreshments at 3 p.m. | Regis Hall Multipurpose Room, LSC
Dr. Bella DePaulo’s research focuses on the lives of singles in our society. Specifically, she examines the myths associated with single men and women, single parents and their children, and how the rise of singles and adults with no children has challenged the definition of family. This lecture is the first in a series of three speakers about Gender, Work, & Family.

An Unconventional Documentary about Artemisia Gentileschi: “a woman like that”
Monday, October 17, 7 p.m. | Mundelein Center 204
The compelling new film about the provocative 17th Century Italian women artist Artemisia Gentileschi. In “a woman like that” filmmaker Ellen Weissbrod merges her own coming of middle-age story with her pursuit of the truths behind the legends of 17th century female painter Artemisia Gentileschi’s meaningful art and dramatic life. The event will include a question and answer session after the film with Ellen Weissbrod. The film is 93 minutes. Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1653) was one of the first female artists to achieve recognition in her own time.

Have an event or opportunity that the Loyola WSGS community would be interested in? Send it our way! E-mail the details to Kathryn Berg at kberg3@luc.edu
a woman like that

THE COMPELLING NEW FILM ABOUT
THE PROVOCATIVE 17TH CENTURY ITALIAN WOMAN ARTIST
ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI

The unconventional documentary “a woman like that” will be presented at

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
MUNDELEIN CENTER 204

On
Monday, October 17th at 7:00 PM
Free Admission

Co-Sponsored by Fine and Performing Arts, Modern Languages, International Film and Media Studies, and Women’s Studies and Gender Studies

For more information about the event please contact: mdunn@luc.edu

In “a woman like that” filmmaker Ellen Weissbrod merges her own coming of middle-age story with her pursuit of the truths behind the legends of 17th century female painter Artemisia Gentileschi’s meaningful art and dramatic life. The event will include a question and answer session after the film with Ellen Weissbrod. The film is 93 minutes.

Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1653) was one of the first female artists to achieve recognition in her own time.
“Dance of the Sacred,” Maggie Kast, M.T.S, M.F.A.  
Wednesday, October 5, 2011, 7:30 p.m. | Crown Center for the Humanities, Auditorium  
Maggie Kast has received acclaim for her book, “The Crack between the Worlds: A Dancer’s Memoir of Loss, Faith, and Family,” (2009) and fictional stories that she has written. She is a noted dancer and a teacher of both dance and writing. Free and open to the public – Reception following.

Women of Color Meeting  
Friday, October 7, 2 p.m | The Wellness Center  
For more information contact: Shenay Bridges at 773.508.8876 or sbridges@luc.edu

Empowering Sisterhood LUCES  
The Department of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs welcomes any self-identified woman to be a part of its Loyola University Chicago Empowering Sisterhood LUCES program. The LUCES Women of Color Program is a multi generational community of women that actively works towards solidarity, leadership, and community wellness at Loyola University Chicago. The LUCES Program encourages the success and growth of its participants and our community at large by focusing on the following elements of wellness: social/cultural, intellectual, spiritual/faith, vocational, physical health, environmental, and emotional. For more information on LUCES, please contact Nichole Smith at nsmith11@luc.edu or go to our page: http://luc.edu/diversity/LUCES.shtml.

Chameleon Magazine—Call for Writers  
Chameleon Magazine, a new student-run alternative themed magazine, is looking for passionate, dedicated and talented students to join our new team at the. Themes include: arts/entertainment/fashion; LGBTQQA and sexuality; religion; feminism and gender; the environment and activism; and politics and social justice issues. I am looking for students to fill our contributing volunteer (writer, photographer, artist, or blogger) positions. For more info, please feel free to contact Editor-in-Chief Kim De Guzman at kadeguzman.24@gmail.com or at (702).994.5923.

LOCAL EVENTS

Live Theatre: The Kid Thing  
Until Oct 16: Thur, Fri, Sat at 8:00 p.m., Sun at 3:00 p.m. | Chicago Dramatists, 1105 W. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, Illinois  
Sometimes good news isn’t all it’s cracked up to be. When two lesbian couples, who have been close friends for years, get together for a dinner party, the unexpected news of an impending pregnancy manages to rock both relationships. For individual students, we provide $15 tickets on Thursdays, and for groups of 7 or more we provide special student rates. For the teacher that organizes a group of 7 or more students we provide one complimentary ticket.

Women and Children First Bookstore presents Women’s Voices Weekend  
October 15-16, events all weekend long | 5233 N. Clark St in Andersonville  
Visit http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com for more information  
Women & Children First began in 1979. Staff include teachers, graduate students, professional writers and storytellers, political activists, board members, and poets. Each is a reader, a feminist, and a bookseller. Their purpose is to promote the work of women writers and to create a place in which all women would find books reflecting their lives and interests. They strive to do this in an atmosphere in which all are respected, valued, and well-served. They are one of the largest feminist bookstores in the country, stocking more than 30,000 books by and about women, children’s books for all ages, and the best of lesbian and gay fiction and non-fiction.
CALLING ALL WRITERS, BLOGGERS, PHOTOGRAPHERS, AND ARTISTS!

Do you want to showcase your “changing colors?” Or perhaps you have an alternative voice that you feel has been stifled on this campus? Are you interested in writing, photography, art, or blogging and would love to have your work published and seen by other students?

Then what are you waiting for?! Come and join the team at the LUChameleon, Loyola’s brand-new student-run alternative themed webzine! We are currently looking for passionate and dedicated students to fill our contributing volunteer positions as staff writers, photographers, artists, or bloggers.

Topics covered in the webzine include: arts/entertainment/fashion; LGBTQ and sexuality; feminism and gender; religion; the environment and activism; and politics and social justice issues.

For more information, please contact Editor-in-Chief Kim De Guzman at kadeguzman.24@gmail.com or at (702).994.5923.
Pilsen Plunge  
**Fall Break—October 7-9, 2011**  
This 48-hour local immersion in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago will introduce participants to immigrant justice concerns through service opportunities and hands-on experiences with urban ministries and grassroots organizations in the city. The cost for the weekend program is $75 per student. Financial assistance is available. Find out more and apply online at www.luc.edu/ABIapp

Jumpstart: Serve Children and families in Rogers Park  
Jumpstart recruits and trains college students to deliver supplemental preschool programs and provides LUC students an opportunity to serve children and families in the Rogers Park neighborhood while earning an AmeriCorps Education Award ($1,175) upon completion of the 300-hour service term. If you are passionate about working toward the day every child in America enters school prepared to succeed, we invite you to join us! To get involved, visit www.jstart.org. Additional information can be found at www.luc.edu/serve/jumpstart or contact Adam Serafin at 773.508.8597

Stay tuned for new Volunteer Opportunities in future Digests!*
* If you know of a volunteer opportunity for students, staff, and the community, contact kberg@luc.edu

Stay tuned for new Internship Opportunities in future Digests!*
* If you know of an Internship opportunity for students, staff, and the community, contact kberg@luc.edu
2011 EDWARD SURTZ LECTURE

“Dance of the Sacred”
Maggie Kast, M.T.S, M.F.A.

Maggie Kast has received acclaim for her book, “The Crack between the Worlds: A Dancer’s Memoir of Loss, Faith, and Family”, (2009) and fictional stories that she has written. She is a noted dancer and a teacher of both dance and writing.

Wednesday, October 5, 2011, 7:30

Crown Center for the Humanities, Auditorium
Loyola University Chicago
Lake Shore Campus
1032 W. Sheridan Road

Free and open to the public – Reception following

For further information please contact

Pauline A. Viviano, Ph.D.
Chair, Surtz Lecture Committee
at 773-508-2346 or
pvivian@luc.edu
Tenure-Track Position in Transnational Feminism
Review of Applications begins October 10
The Agnes Scott College Women’s Studies Program invites applications for a tenure-track position in transnational feminism to begin fall 2012. Ph.D. in Women’s Studies preferred, but candidates with a graduate certificate (or equivalent) in Women’s Studies and a Ph.D. in a related field also are invited to apply. The teaching load is 3/2, including courses in transnational feminism, feminist research methods, and, possibly, service-learning/internship. The successful candidate will possess the ability to teach a socially and economically diverse student population and a commitment to both scholarship and service. Please submit current CV, three recent letters of recommendation, and a cover letter incorporating brief statements of research agenda and teaching philosophy to: Prof. Elizabeth Hackett, Agnes Scott College, 141 E. College Ave., Decatur, GA 30030. Electronic submissions via wssearch@agnesscott.edu are encouraged. Review of applications will begin on Oct. 10, 2011 and the search committee will conduct interviews at the November 2011 NWSA Conference in Atlanta. Note that it is not necessary for applicants to attend this conference to be considered for the position. A writing sample and teaching evaluations will be solicited from selected applicants later in the hiring process. For more information about Agnes Scott College, please visit our Web site: www.agnesscott.edu.

Associate or Full Professor, Historian of Women
Screening of applications begins October 15
The Department of History at The University of Iowa invites applications for a historian of Women. The search is open at the rank of Associate Professor or full Professor. Teaching duties for this position will include graduate/undergraduate courses in the successful candidate’s area of expertise, as well as core courses in the department--such as U.S. history survey. Applications must be submitted online at http://jobs.uiowa.edu/(refer to requisition #59991). Candidates must have their PhD by August 2012 in History or related field. Electronic attachments to online applications should include a cover letter, curriculum vitae, and contact information for three letters of recommendation. We require a hard copy of the entire dissertation or book, if available, or completed book chapters (and other publications, if desired). Evaluation of written work plays a major role in hiring decisions. Send directly to the Women’s History Search Committee, Department of History, 280 Schaeffer Hall, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242-1409. Direct letters of reference to the same address.

Assistant Professor, Gender Studies
Deadline for Applications: October 31
The Department of Gender Studies at Indiana University Bloomington seeks to appoint an assistant professor in the area of gender and science beginning in the 2012-13 academic year. We invite applications from scholars whose work demonstrates a serious commitment to bridging intellectual and methodological divides between the natural, physical, behavioral, or social sciences and the humanities, from a feminist or queer perspective. Applications are encouraged from scholars whose work engages creatively with one or more of the following areas of expertise: sexuality, race and racialization, ethnicity, class and socio-economic inequality, or bodies and embodiment. For additional information go to http://www.iub.edu/~gender/. Salary, fringe benefits, research and teaching opportunities are consistent with peer Research One institutions. Completed applications received by October 31th will be assured full consideration.
Gender, Work, & Family Speaker Series

Regis Hall Multipurpose Room, LSC
Monday, October 17, 2011  2:00 PM
Reception with Light Refreshments at 3PM


Dr. Bella DePaulo’s research focuses on the lives of singles in our society. Specifically, she examines the myths associated with single men and women, single parents and their children, and how the rise of singles and adults with no children has challenged the definition of family. For more information, please review Dr. DePaulo’s latest book, “Singlism: What It Is, Why It Matters and How to Stop It,” which was recently featured in the New York Times.

Dr. Bella DePaulo, Ph.D.
www.belladepaulo.com

Sponsored by:
Department of Psychology Committee on Diversity Affairs (CODA), College of Arts and Science, Gannon Center for Women & Leadership, and Women Studies & Gender Studies
CALLS FOR PAPERS

Other Mothers/Other Mothering
Deadline for abstracts: October 12, 2011
Other mothers and other mothering roles may be found throughout history and across diverse cultures. Other mothers may be the paradigmatic first responders, the first-teachers of informal and formal learnings, or first care-givers for the formative triage years of children and youth. Other mothering denotes the continuity and contemporary practices of shared, communal, or assumed mothering responsibilities that are empowering and inclusive of social transformation. Despite the prevalence of this practice and increasing scholarship about other mothering, an edited collection on this important and central cultural paradigm does not yet exist. The aim of the present collection is to investigate the history, possibilities, differences, continuities, transformations, or advancements of other mothering, paying particular attention to liberating potentials of destabilizing patriarchal representations of motherhood and family structures.
Abstracts should be 250 words. Please also include a CV. Please send submissions by email directly to: Angelita Reyes, School of Social Transformation, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85284, Email: othermothers2013@gmail.com

Thinking Gender 2012, UCLA 22nd Annual Graduate Student Research Conference
Deadline for Submissions: Thursday, October 17 at 12 noon
Thinking Gender is a public conference highlighting graduate student research on women, gender and/or sexuality across all disciplines and historical periods. The UCLA Center for the Study of Women invites submissions for individual papers or pre-constituted panels on any topic pertaining to women, gender, and/or sexuality. This year, we especially welcome feminist research on: gender roles in relation to marriage, parenting, or being single; critiques of biosciences and biotechnology as they pertain to fertility, sanitation, and/or medical experimentation at a local, national or global level; mobility as duress or success—for example, in relation to migration, immigration, or upward or downward economic mobility; life stage issues, such as aging and girls’ studies; and feminist storytelling or research in modes such as oral histories, graphic novels, theater, comedy or other inventive expressions. For a detailed description of submission guidelines, please visit: http://www.csw.ucla.edu/conferences/thinking-gender/thinking-gender-2012

ACADEMIC FUNDING

Faculty Research Funding from Loyola’s Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage
Deadline for Applications: October 31
Two forms of funding are available:
(1) Research Funding: CCIH funds individual full-time faculty research projects on topics linked to Catholic intellectual concern. These research projects are expected to culminate in the publication of a journal article or book; however, alternative project results are welcomed. The maximum amount of funding for individual faculty research projects is $5,000 (pre-tax).
(2) Group Research Funding: CCIH also funds joint projects by two or more full-time faculty whose research intersects matters of Catholic intellectual concern. Group projects are expected to culminate in the publication of a journal article or book; however, alternative project results are welcomed. The maximum amount of funding for group research projects is $10,000 (pre-tax). For application and information visit www.luc.edu/ccih
GUYLAND
THE PERILOUS WORLD WHERE BOYS BECOME MEN
DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL

TUESDAY OCTOBER 25
Loyola University Chicago--Lake Shore Campus
GALVIN AUDITORIUM
7:00-8:30 PM
DISCUSSION AND BOOK SIGNING WITH AUTHOR MICHAEL KIMMEL

In mapping the troubling social world where men are now made, Kimmel offers a view into the minds and times of America's sons, brothers, and boyfriends, and he works toward redefining what it means to be a man today—and tomorrow.
--HarperCollins

Dr. Michael Kimmel is among the leading researchers and writers on men and masculinity in the world today. He is a Distinguished Professor of Sociology at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

CO-SPONSORED BY: INTERFRATERNITY COUNCIL, STUDENT ACTIVITY FUND, WOMEN’S STUDIES AND GENDER STUDIES PROGRAM
We want you to Submit!
Digest Contributor Guidelines

Principles

i) Feminist Consciousness:
(a) recognizes all voices and experiences as important, and not in a hierarchical form.
(b) takes responsibility for the self and does not assume false objectivity.
(c) is not absolutist or detached, but rather, is more inclusive and sensitive to others.

ii) Accessibility:
(a) means utilizing accessible language, theory, knowledge, and structure in your writing.
(b) maintains a connection with your diverse audience by not using unfamiliar/obscure words, overly long sentences, or abstraction.
(c) does not assume a specific audience, for example, white 20-year-old college students.

iii) Jesuit Social Justice Education & Effort:
(a) promotes justice in openhanded and generous ways to ensure freedom of inquiry, the pursuit of truth and care for others.
(b) is made possible through value-based leadership that ensures a consistent focus on personal integrity, ethical behavior, and the appropriate balance between justice and fairness.
(c) focuses on global awareness by demonstrating an understanding that the world’s people and societies are interrelated and interdependent.

Expectations and Specifics

• You may request to identify yourself by name, alias, or as “anonymous” for publication in the digest. For reasons of accountability, the staff must know who you are, first and last name plus email address.

• We promote accountability of our contributors, and prefer your real name and your preferred title (i.e., Maruka Hernandez, CTA Operations Director, 34 years old, mother of 4; or J. Curtis Main, Loyola graduate student in WSGS, white, 27 years old), but understand, in terms of safety, privacy, and controversy, if you desire limitations. We are happy to publish imagery of you along with your submission, at our discretion.

• We gladly accept submission of varying length- from a quick comment to several pages. Comments may be reserved for a special “feedback” section. In order to process and include a submission for a particular issue, please send your submission by the Friday before the publication comes out, which is every Monday.

• Please include a short statement of context when submitting imagery, audio, and video.

• We appreciate various styles of scholarship; the best work reveals thoughtfulness, insight, and fresh perspectives.

• Such submissions should be clear, concise, and impactful. We aim to be socially conscious and inclusive of various cultures, identities, opinions, and lifestyles.

• As a product of the support and resources of Loyola University and its Women Studies and Gender Studies department, all contributors must be respectful of the origin of the magazine; this can be accomplished in part by ensuring that each article is part of an open discourse rather than an exclusive manifesto.

• All articles must have some clear connection to the mission of the magazine. It may be helpful to provide a sentence or two describing how your article fits into the magazine as a whole.

• The writing must be the original work of the author and may be personal, theoretical, or a combination of the two. When quoting or using the ideas of others, it must be properly quoted and annotated. Please fact-check your work and double-check any quotes, allusions and references. When referencing members of Loyola and the surrounding community, an effort should be made to allow each person to review the section of the article that involves them to allow for fairness and accuracy.

• Gratuitous use of expletives and other inflammatory or degrading words and imagery may be censored if it does not fit with the overall message of the article or magazine. We do not wish to edit content, but if we feel we must insist on changes other than fixing typos and grammar, we will do so with the intent that it does not compromise the author’s original message. If no compromise can be made, the editor reserves the right not to publish an article.

• All articles are assumed to be the opinion of the contributor and not necessarily a reflection of the views of Loyola University and the WSGS program.

We very much look forward to your submissions and your contribution to our overall mission. Please send your submissions to: bmadrid@luc.edu