

WRC TODAY

{ Feminist Snack Break }

It is finally April! This month is the last big push before everyone either graduates, goes on summer break, or continue classes/work. As you all may already know, each month in the WRC Today we will be showcasing a staff recommended book that pertains to feminism, and women's and gender issues. In addition to having a monthly staff recommended book, we will also be showcasing a staff recommended book each week on the Women's Resource Center social media pages.

The book that was recommended for April was *The Red Tent* by Anita Diamant. This book embodies the feminine spirit and creates community and awareness in menstruating and gestating/life giving bodies while speaking to the ways in which the menstruating body is isolated, separated and deemed as incapable. It demonstrates the strength, boldness and beauty in the life giving blood that flows and the energy it releases.

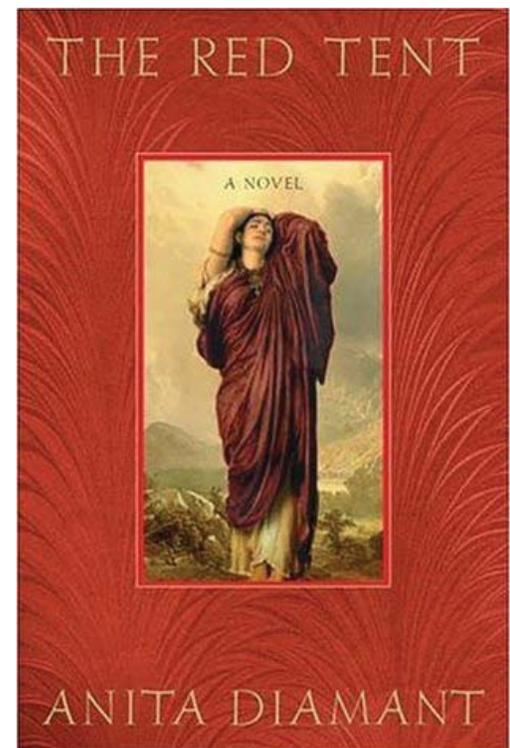
..about the book..

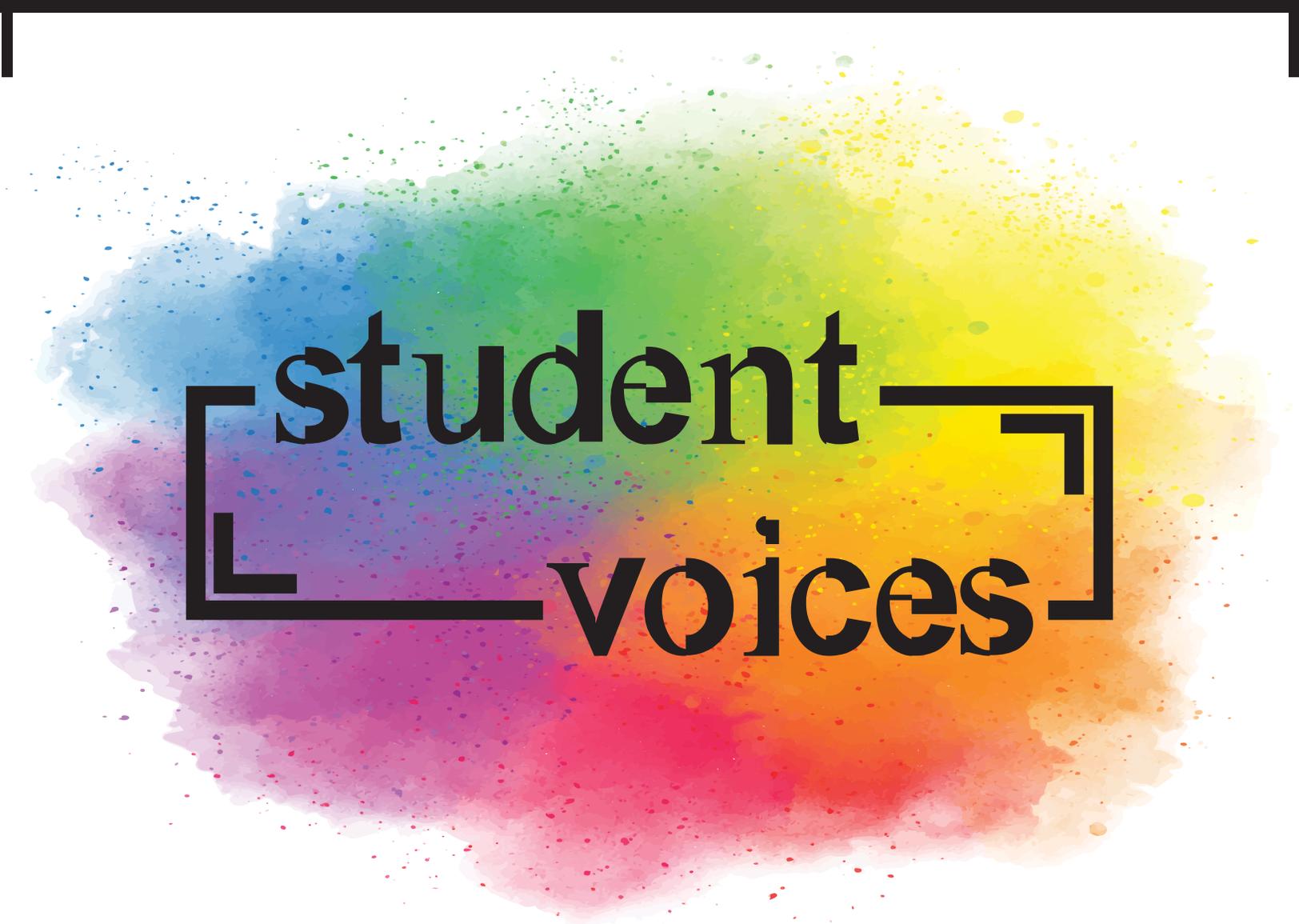
Her name is Dinah. In the Bible, her life is only hinted at in a brief and violent detour within the more familiar chapters of the Book of Genesis. In *The Red Tent*, Anita Diamant brings this fascinating biblical character to vivid life.

Told in Dinah's voice, the novel reveals the traditions and turmoils of ancient womanhood—the world of the red tent. It begins with the story of Dinah's mothers—Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, and Bilhah—the four wives of Jacob. They love Dinah and give her gifts that sustain her through a hard-working youth, a calling to midwifery, and a new home in a foreign land. Dinah's story reaches out from a remarkable period of early history and creates an intimate connection with the past.

Anita Diamant was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1951, grew up in Newark, New Jersey until she was twelve years old when her family moved to Denver, Colorado. She graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with a degree in comparative literature and earned a Master's in American literature from Binghamton University in upstate New York.

In 1975, she moved to Boston and began a career in journalism, writing for local magazines and newspapers, including the Boston Phoenix, the Boston Globe, and Boston Magazine. She branched out into regional and national media: New England Monthly, Yankee, Self, Parenting, Parents, McCall's, and Ms. Her feature stories and columns covered a wide variety of topics, from profiles of prominent people and stories about medical ethics, to first-person essays about everything from politics to popular culture to pet ownership to food. In 1997, Diamant published her first work of fiction.





student voices

Welcome to the Student Voices section of the WRC Today! This section may look a little different for some of you. If some of you remember, the Student Voices section of the WRC Today was actually launched in the Spring of 2016. We collaborated with Gender Studies to feature written pieces by students in the four newsletters we distributed last Spring semester. Student voices began as a space for students on campus to be able to discuss various topics relating to women's and gender issues, have their voices be heard and to get various perspectives on these topics. When initially launched, the Student Voices section was not open for all students on campus to submit pieces. However, that is changing this year!

While the purpose of Student Voices continues to be offering a space to heighten gender consciousness (being aware of what it means to have a gender identity and navigate from a gender place), we have decided to open up the section to allow all students on campus to submit not only written pieces, but also visual art, self-reflections, poetry and much more. If you want to join the Women's Resource Center in heightening gender awareness at the University of Northern Colorado, then submit your piece to us! Topics can vary anywhere from identity and intersectionality to injustice and gender.

If you are interested in submitting a reflection or piece (e.g. short story, poetry, visual art, etc.) to be featured in our monthly newsletter and online content, submit to, or for more information, contact Emily Hedstrom-Lieser at emily.hedstromlieser@unco.edu.

My emergence as a Feminist

by Jodeci Ybarra

Taking a gender studies class was not what I had in mind at all, but I did because I was always curious to understand feminism and what it means in our current times. Earlier I felt uneducated in some conversations around feminism but now many of my questions are answered and I can say that I consider myself to be a feminist. Now I did not just decide to be a feminist because it sounds cool or because I could call myself something new, but because of what feminism represents and has taught me about myself and my society. In my African Studies (AFS) class called Black Women in America I also got a brief history of feminism as well as an in-depth lesson on feminists that had a huge impact on the Civil Rights Movement and generations that came after.

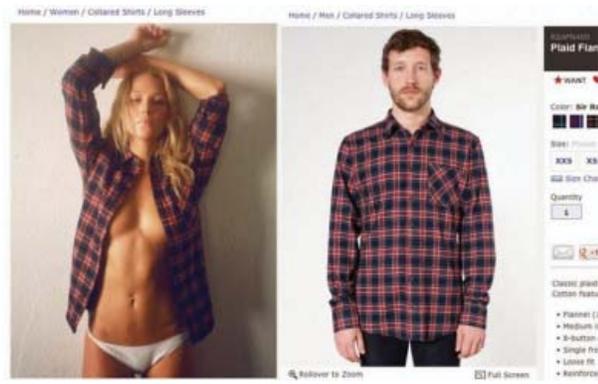
In my Gender Studies class we read "Feminism is for everybody" by bell Hook's where she defines feminism as a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression; and this definition encompasses all genders, and not just women. In my AFS class we read "Aint I a Woman" by the same author where she talks about how the black women had a harsh life of slavery. I am a person from a minority community and I felt myself echoed in both these books where I feel I still have to fight harder to succeed.

In the bell Hooks novel something that stood out to me when she says, "they has supported woman suffrage only to find their interests betrayed, only to find that "woman suffrage" would be used as a weapon to strengthen white oppression of black people" (page 172). I could not understand why white women were so against black women having the same rights as them. I got my answer finally in "Women Race & Class" which is written by the fierce feminist scholar and activist Angela Y. Davis. In this book Davis discusses that white women were not able to do so because the white men surrounding them told them that no matter what it took, black women should never be equal to white women. The main purpose for white women was to gain an equal position as white men. White women did not support the idea of social equality of African Americans and white people; instead they worked towards maintaining a racial hierarchy that would guarantee them a more superior position than African American women.

Even as this made me upset, I realized this had happened before my time. This was history, and today, we have realized that we all have to fight for equal rights for women whatever our skin colors might be. After sitting through ten weeks of class learning about gender, race, and sex, I have come to the conclusion that I am a feminist. Am I a feminist who blames men for the way women are treated: no, I do not think so. We need to band together as women, fight internalized sexism, and also teach men that feminism is not against them. I agree with bell Hooks when she says that feminism is not anti-male. Men are not the sole problem. There will always women who cannot let go of grudges and hate for men, but that is a different issue and one that media amplifies. But, in order for us women to achieve what we want to achieve as women, I think we need to start making changes within our own sex and support each other not worry so much about what the men are doing or have done to us in the past. The past is the past. We cannot change what has happened, we can only work on the present to make the future something better.



My name is Jodeci Ybarra. I am a second year here at UNC and I am studying Sports and Exercise Science.



Same shirt but different gender: Media Images, Sexism and Patriarchy

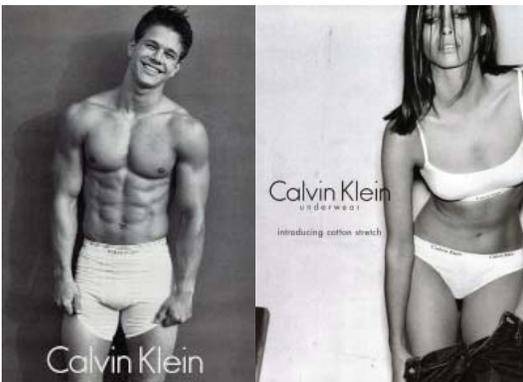
by Ben Schleiger

I am interested in doing a quick analysis of gender in media, specifically how different uses of clothing ads manifest patriarchy. Patriarchy is an oppressive system of society where male dominance controls what happens in society and what is valued. Allan Johnson in his famous essay says, "We are all involved, but we choose how we participate" These clothing ads participate by portraying cultural stereotypes. By encouraging these stereotypes, it further entraps females into submissive roles and males into dominant roles regardless if either gender intends to or not. Here is an example of men's clothing: starting with men's suits.

In most ads men have a dominant but casual stance with a mysterious gaze to add personality. No matter the lighting, all the men are portrayed with personality and value. The suit, already a sign of dominance, power, and wealth, is exclusive to men. Women attempt with "power" suits, but the whole point is that the person wearing the suit contains genuine and authentic power. Even in our progressive society women are still quite disadvantaged compared to men.



Let us also compare men's underwear ads versus women's underwear ads. With the men, they all look content and/or dominant in their presentations. Of course, they are extremely attractive, but they also still contain an aspect of personality. The problem is men can be stripped down and still looked upon as eye candy and a person. With females, they are not so lucky in the fact that they overwhelmingly become eye candy with only a sexual personality to follow.



In the above image shown the woman is seductively undressing for the viewers pleasure and allure of strip tease to sell the product. This paradox of advertising with less and less clothing to sell clothing may seem strange or unusual, but in marketing females are often portrayed as sexual vending machines and the payment is to be dominant and undress them. This unrighteous dominance and vast difference in presentation from the same brand is due to the influences and grasp of patriarchy. Until the comparison between the two genders is made the divide does not seem as big or drastic. But, when the gap is exploited we can see that advertisers use women as tools to sell a product and men as subjects to endorse a product.

My name is Ben Schleiger. I am currently a sophomore at UNC. I am majoring in psychology and minoring in political science. I am a part of the National Society for Collegiate Scholars honor society and I hope to either pursue becoming a drug and alcohol abuse counselor or continue my education to pursue a career as a mental health or career counselor. I am also became a published poet.

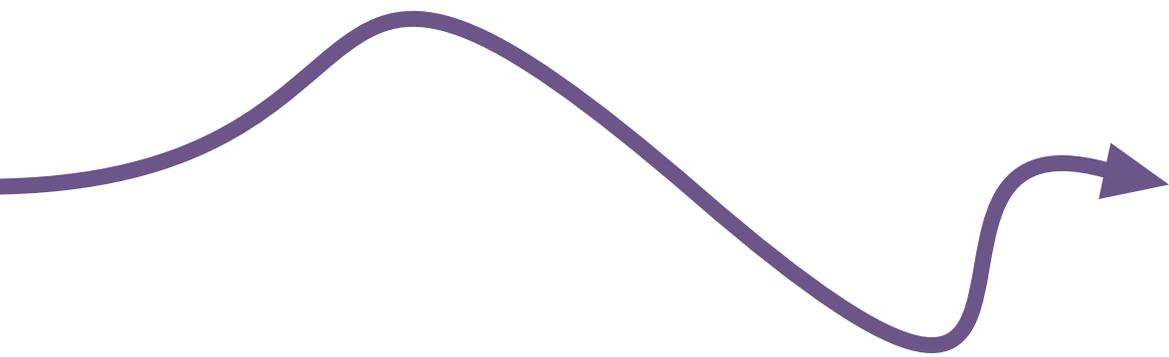


Consulting Editor to this Piece: Dr. Ather Zia, Assistant Professor, Gender Studies and Anthropology

Guess what?

The Women's Resource Center is now hiring!

Work study positions are available so stop by the center to grab an application or go to our website.



Also...

The Women's Resource Center is open & active over summer!

So stay connected with us over summer by following our social media pages!



Contact Us!

970.351.1492

www.unco.edu/womens-resource-center

