Chapter 2: The Postfeminist Context: Popular Redefinitions of Feminism, 1980–Present

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The Postfeminist Context

Popular Redefinitions of Feminism, 1980–Present

Most simply, given a dictionary definition of "post" as "after," popular texts that use the term "postfeminism" imply that the contemporary moment is "past" feminism. These texts promise that postfeminism has moved us beyond feminism; yet, in the process they also produce the particular versions of feminism that are supposedly defunct. Thus the concept of postfeminism *perpetuates* feminism in the very process of insisting that it is now *over*. But what kind of feminism is perpetuated? As Judith Stacey (1987) puts it, postfeminism is "the simultaneous incorporation, revision, and depoliticalization of many of the central goals of second-wave feminism" (quoted in Dow 1996b, 87). According to Stacey, postfeminism absorbs and transforms aspects of feminism in ways that, at minimum, dissociate feminist concepts from political and social activism. Suzanna Danuta Walters (1991) argues that this "revision . . . of second-wave feminism" not only depoliticizes feminism but can go so far as to kill it off. She writes, "[Postfeminist] discourse . . . has declared the [feminist] movement (predictably if illogically) dead, victorious, and ultimately failed" (106). In Walters's discussion, postfeminism defines feminism as dead and gone either because it has been successful and is therefore no longer necessary ("victorious") or because it was unsuccessful and therefore proves itself to be unnecessary ("failed"). According to postfeminist discourses, what specific victories has feminism won? And what aspects of it have failed?

In this chapter I focus on the emergence of the concept of postfeminism in popular culture since the early 1980s. I have two goals here: first, to identify and analyze the definitions of postfeminism circulating in popular culture for the last twenty years or so; and second, to detail and critically examine the particular versions of feminism those postfeminist

discourses offer. Thus, I ask both "What are the themes and concerns of postfeminism?" and "What kind of feminisms do those postfeminist themes and concerns discursively produce?" While I do not address depictions of rape directly in this chapter, the answers to these questions are particularly important to understanding the rape narratives I discuss in the remainder of the book, all of which are influenced by and contribute to postfeminist discourses in some way.

In what follows, I discuss five interrelated categories of postfeminist discourses that emerge in the popular press. I focus first on what I call *linear postfeminism*: the representation of a historical trajectory from prefeminism through to feminism and then on to the end point of postfeminism. The construction of linear historical relations between feminism and postfeminism ensures the impossibility of feminism and postfeminism coexisting. Since postfeminism always supplants feminism, feminism logically no longer exists. The second category of postfeminist discourses I discuss is *backlash postfeminism*. Rather than simply declaring feminism over, these discourses aggressively lash back at feminism. For example, what might be called "antifeminist feminist postfeminism" introduces a "new" type of feminism as a corrective for a previous problematic "victim" feminism. Alternatively, "new traditionalist postfeminism" appeals to a nostalgia for a prefeminist past as an ideal that feminism has supposedly destroyed. Overall, both linear and backlash postfeminism represent feminism in a particularly negative light.

In contrast, *equality and choice postfeminism,* the third category of postfeminist discourse I identify, consists of narratives about feminism's "success" in achieving gender "equity" and having given women "choice," particularly with regard to labor and family. While this type of postfeminist discourse represents feminism in a relatively positive light, it nonetheless suggests that women now have greater access to choice and hence can avoid having to fight further for equality; therefore, women presumably no longer need feminism. The fourth category of postfeminist discourse I discuss is a more recent development, emerging first in the 1990s rather than the 1980s. This version of postfeminism defines feminism as antisex and then offers itself as a current, more positive, alternative *(hetero)sex-positive postfeminism*; this version nevertheless also incorporates aspects of feminism that promise women's independence. Thus, it both rejects an antisex feminism and embraces a feminism focused on individuality and independence. In most postfeminist discourse, men are in the background as objects of desire, role models, or villains. A fifth category

of postfeminist discourse, however, focuses directly on men. Here, since feminism has been successful and women are now equal, *men can be feminists too*. Again, while these postfeminist discourses offer a relatively positive version of feminism by embracing it for both women *and* men, not surprisingly men turn out to be *better* feminists than are women.

These five categories offer some structure for understanding the complexity of postfeminist discourses in the popular media. They illustrate the adaptability and pervasiveness of the assumption in popular culture that feminism existed, was wholeheartedly absorbed by the mainstream, and therefore is no longer needed. Because postfeminism is and can be so many different things, it is a powerful, pervasive, and versatile cultural concept. However, as I will argue, postfeminism is also limited by its overwhelming focus on white, heterosexual, middle-class women (and sometimes men). Its complexity and adaptability, as well as its essentialist and universalizing logic about "women" and "gender equality," tend to cover over postfeminism's race, sexuality, and class specificity. Thus postfeminist discourses not only shape what feminism is and how women are positioned in relation to work, family, and sexuality, but they do so in ways that deny the relevance of race, sexuality, and class to considerations of gender—and therefore to feminism.

A Linear History for Feminism, Ending in Death

Time magazine's June 29, 1998, cover nicely illustrates the kind of linear history much postfeminist discourse assumes.[1] The cover features the disembodied heads of four women, three actual women and one fictional woman: Susan B. Anthony, Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and Ally McBeal. The name of each woman appears above her head, in case, perhaps, the reader does not recognize these famous feminists or "misinterprets" the head of television character Ally McBeal as the head of Calista Flockhart, the actor who portrays Ally. Ally's is the only picture in color; the other women are in black and white. This opposition between color (for the fictional present) and noncolor (for the actual past) suggests that Ally's feminism has supplanted the three earlier "out-of-date" versions. But her feminism is tenuous. Below Ally's chin, *Time* poses the question "Is Feminism Dead?" The question, printed in red, is particularly authoritative since the color matches the magazine cover's title and border.

This cover depicts a linear history of feminism that is white, middle-class, and heterosexual, ending in "death" with the figure of Ally McBeal. In terms of race, by beginning the history of feminism with Susan B. Anthony, who is probably best known as a suffragist, *Time* disconnects "first-wave" feminism from its earlier roots in the mid-1800s abolition movement and thus elides analysis of race and gender as co-constitutive aspects of feminist activism historically.[2] Anthony herself was involved with the abolition movement (Ryan 1992, 14), although by the 1870s she was using racist rhetoric to argue for women's suffrage.[3] Furthermore, *Time*'s depiction of Anthony, who worked most extensively for suffrage, neglects many other aspects of feminist thought that coincided with the push for suffrage, including, among other issues, working women's rights, birth control, and sexual freedom.[4] Whether or not a *Time* reader is aware of these details in Anthony's history or the history of feminist thought and activism, generally, is beside the point; by depicting Anthony rather than, say, Angelina Grimké, Sojourner Truth, or Frederick Douglass as the "first" feminist, the magazine cover ensures an explicitly white-focused and implicitly racist depiction of the "beginning" of U.S. feminism.[5]

Jumping ahead nearly a hundred years, *Time* represents Betty Friedan as the next stage of feminism. While the cover thus connects disparate historical moments in feminism, these moments nonetheless share a focus on whiteness and middle-class life. Friedan's (1963) best-selling book, *The Feminine Mystique,* focuses primarily on white middle-class women (a default, given the absence of a discussion of racial and class specificity in her book) and thus conceptualizes a version of feminism that neglects women of color and working-class white women. Friedan is followed by Gloria Steinem, known for her active, independent, heterosexual feminism. As a young, traditionally attractive, openly heterosexual white woman in the 1970s, Steinem became (and continues to be) an acceptable feminist figure in the popular press (Dow 1996b, 29–30).[6] Again, *Time* might have pictured Angela Davis, Ti-Grace Atkinson, or Rita Mae Brown to symbolize late 1960s and early 1970s feminism but chose instead the middle-class, white, and heterosexual Friedan and Steinem. Perhaps most troubling, though, is *Time*'s choice of Ally McBeal to represent contemporary feminism. Rather than depicting one of many feminists who are currently active and visible in the popular press, such as bell hooks, Alice Walker, or even Ellen DeGeneres (as herself, rather than a fictional television character), *Time* ensures at least the potential for an affirmative answer to its question—"Is Feminism Dead?"—by depicting an imaginary (i.e., *nonliving*) television character

who represents heterosexuality, obsession with body image, and aggressive get-ahead professionalism.

My point is not that picturing these other feminists (or any other feminists) would somehow be more accurate, or that *Time*'s version of feminism does not actually qualify as feminism. Rather, my point is that this depiction, in fact, *is* (at least one representative example of) what feminism *is* in the popular press; it is an example of how the media play a powerful role in defining feminism. This is the version of feminism—which *Time* and many other popular media sources repeatedly discuss in stories about feminism, the death of feminism, and postfeminism—that has emerged since the early 1980s. This version of postfeminism defines feminism as having followed along a linear historical trajectory focused, as I discuss in more detail below, almost exclusively on "equality" for white, heterosexual, middle-class women. It suggests that feminism has now ended (died) because, as the existence of Ally McBeal illustrates, women have achieved full access to independence and high-paying jobs and now have the right to choose whether or not to engage in heterosexualized bodily display in those contexts.

Antifeminism, New Traditionalism, and the Assaultive Backlash

This *Time* magazine cover also includes an implicitly aggressive assault on the feminism about which it simultaneously purports to be concerned. The question "Is Feminism Dead?" is not new; the popular press has asked this question repeatedly since the early 1980s, thus ensuring both "yes" and "no" answers to the question.[7] On the one hand, if the question has to be asked repeatedly every few years (if not every year), often on the cover of a widely distributed national magazine such as *Time*, feminism is clearly not dead. It lives on, if only to instigate this question. On the other hand, however, the repetition of the question, especially when paired with layouts like the *Time* cover I describe here, also leaves open the potential for a "yes, it's dead" answer. From this perspective, the question itself is a backlash against feminism. As Amelia Jones (1992) puts it, while a text that includes this question "appears to 'ask' innocently if there is 'a future for feminism,' it effectively precludes any consideration of this future by using the term 'postfeminism,' inexorably linking feminism to the highly charged image of 'being strident and lesbian,' a state of 'being' that is implicitly undesirable" (11).[8] While the

Time cover defines feminism through Anthony/Friedan/Steinem rather than "'being strident and lesbian,'" as in the example Jones analyzes, *Time* nevertheless implies that feminism has no future, in this case because it has already passed into the "historical" black and white imagery of Anthony/Friedan/Steinem.

Another assault on feminism within postfeminist discourses comes from antifeminist (self-defined) feminists, such as Shahrazad Ali (*The Blackman's Guide to Understanding the Blackwoman* 1989),[9] Sylvia Ann Hewlett (*A Lesser Life* 1986, 1987), Wendy Kaminer (*A Fearful Freedom* 1990), Daphne Patai and Noretta Koertge (*Professing Feminism* 1994), Katie Roiphe (*The Morning After* 1993, 1994), Christina Hoff Sommers (*Who Stole Feminism?* 1994),[10] and Naomi Wolf (*Fire with Fire* 1993, 1994), many of whom receive substantial press coverage.[11] While these authors often define themselves as feminist, their perspectives are simultaneously antifeminist because they call for the "death" of (another version of) feminism in the process of articulating their own feminism. Specifically, while claiming to stand for women's "equity" with men, antifeminist feminist postfeminists reject a "victim" feminism that they assert has great cultural ethos, particularly on college and university campuses. As Patrice McDermott (1995) points out, these books and the popular press's celebration of them focus on, attack, and, in fact, *define* one version of feminism (victim feminism); in the process, they neglect and thus negate many other versions of feminism. As a result, they are able to hold "exaggerated feminist propaganda . . . responsible for the oppression of women in contemporary society" (671). Bell hooks (1994) points to the "frightening dismissal and belittling of feminist politics that is at the core of" Naomi Wolf's *Fire with Fire,* in particular (97). In other words, these antifeminist postfeminist feminists blame the oppression of women on a version of feminism that they imagine to exist. As a result, it must be eliminated and replaced with "better" feminism.

These two assaults on feminism—asking whether feminism is dead and blaming an imaginary feminism for women's oppression—are part of a larger postfeminist cultural backlash against women and feminism. Susan Faludi (1991) details this assault in her best-selling book *Backlash*, which focuses on demeaning depictions of feminism and women. In part, Faludi examines explicitly antifeminist and antiwoman rhetoric in the media, politics, and popular press that virulently opposes feminism and sometimes women as a whole. Collectively, these discourses do not even bother to "ask" whether feminism is dead (which might at least imply a

concern about its future) or to replace a problematic feminism with a more useful one. Instead, they explicitly attack feminism.

One example of this backlash is the idea of "new traditionalism." Jones (1992, 1994) illustrates the emergence of new traditionalism in the popular press's use of rhetorical appeals to nostalgia and the pastoral. These discourses construct a postfeminist woman as someone who rejects feminist ideology altogether and hearkens back to a time when traditional values were (supposedly) popular. Jones (1992) uses the example of a series of early 1990s ads that appeared in a variety of magazines, including *Woman's Day* and *Good Housekeeping*. These ads feature "new traditionalist" women, such as Barbara Bush, as the postfeminist replacement for the "professionally powerful . . . feminist subject," such as Murphy Brown. The depiction of feminism (which Jones argues is already a "limited" version of feminism) as threatening to the family in these particular new traditionalist postfeminist representations "legitimates and in fact necessitates its obliteration" (11).

Jones (1991) argues that feminism is under fire not only in new traditionalist discourse but also in what she calls neo-noir films. In these films, "bad news" women—of *Fatal Attraction* (1987) and *Presumed Innocent* (1990), for example—receive "punishment and/or annihilation by the patriarchal system [they] so overtly [transgress]" (297). Both new traditionalism and the neo-noirs see feminism as victimizing women and threatening the family. Having defined feminism as all-powerful, these backlash postfeminist discourses then set out to "promote" its "death" (Jones 1992, 10).

Equality and the Choice between Work and Family

While Faludi and Jones discuss postfeminist texts that set out to destroy the sexually and professionally independent feminist New Woman, not all postfeminist discourses reject this New Woman. Some texts declare feminism to be a positive success within the postfeminist moment, representing today's women as "equal" to men. These examples still suggest that feminism is no longer necessary, but, unlike the backlash depictions, they celebrate what they define as feminism's historical usefulness for women. For example, a 1985 *TV Guide* "Cheers 'n' Jeers" column claims that in 1985 female characters approached "numerical parity with males." Of the 143 new characters that season, 46.85 percent were women. Fur-

thermore, the article claims that 76 percent of adult women on mid-1980s television shows had jobs outside the home.

While similar in certain respects, Nancy Gibbs's 1992 review of Faludi's *Backlash* in *Time* is somewhat more complex than this *TV Guide* example in its representation of "equality." Gibbs acknowledges that a backlash against feminism exists, but then opposes Faludi's critique of Hope Steadman ("the submissive wife" on *thirtysomething*) and Glenn Close as Alex Forrest ("the crazed career woman" in *Fatal Attraction* [51]), which she considers justified, with "feminist" images of the television characters Roseanne and Murphy Brown. While the first two pages of the article label several pictures "backlash stereotypes" in large, bold type (50–51), the second two pages label several pictures "feminist images" in large, bold type (52–53). The two layouts are identical, as are the number of "backlash" and "feminist" images. By representing Murphy Brown and Hope Steadman as opposites, the positions of the photographs and their captions suggest a stalemate between Faludi's critique and Gibbs's "interesting parlor game" (53) of thinking up counter-images. Because the "feminist images" *follow* the "backlash stereotypes," however, the "feminist images" indirectly counter Faludi's critique of the backlash against feminism. While Gibbs does not consider the contemporary moment unambiguously ideal for women, the reduction of the debate about feminism to a dichotomy between positive and negative "images" does use the mere existence of Roseanne and Murphy Brown to highlight a positive, utopian "feminist" interpretation of the "postfeminist age" (50).

These two examples of equality postfeminism, like almost all postfeminist discourse, make no distinctions among the various social and cultural positions and experiences of women; instead, they celebrate depictions of white, middle-class, heterosexual women's success as markers of all women's supposed success. Even when articles about postfeminism do occasionally discuss or include photos of women of color or white working-class women, the articles do not address how these women might have specific racialized or classed experiences that could impact their place in postfeminism. Herman Gray (1995) calls similar representations of African Americans "assimilationist." Focusing on television, he writes, "I consider shows assimilationist to the extent that the worlds they construct are distinguished by the complete elimination or, at best, marginalization of social and cultural difference in the interest of shared universal similarity" (85). When postfeminist discourses simply include African

Americans and/or other people of color, they depend on an assimilationist mode of representation so that "the privileged subject position is necessarily that of the white middle-class. That is to say, whiteness is the privileged yet unnamed place from which to see and make sense of the world" (Gray, 86). For example, in *USA Weekend* Patricia Edmonds (1998) both quotes from and pictures an African American woman (all other women pictured are not only white, but blonde; and two of them appear with their two blonde children), but makes no mention of how African American women and white women might experience discrimination differently in the workplace.[12] As a result, her article implies that all women are the same.

Of course, it would be equally problematic if these texts addressed race in stereotypical ways, such as defining all African American mothers as inadequate single mothers, for example.[13] My point here is that, in general, postfeminist representations depend on an assimilationist mode of representation to erase race as a legitimate social category for analysis. As a result, "woman" is meant to stand for all women but does so through the lens of whiteness. Relatedly, in terms of class, while Gibbs draws on an image of Roseanne, "the working-class hero" of *Roseanne* (52), she uses it as just another example of a generic woman who appears as a "feminist image" equivalent to Murphy Brown, "the savvy professional" (53). Thus the class differences between the two fictional television characters disappear. Similarly, the new traditionalist and neo–femme fatales of backlash postfeminism *depend on* their stable middle-class status for their identities as nonprofessional homemakers and vicious career women, respectively.

Given this implicit middle-class focus of postfeminist discourses, it is no surprise that many articles define women's success in politics in particular as evidence of an equality feminism's success. For example, Ellen Hume (1986) argues that when women enter politics as a matter of course and do so without referring to gender as a campaign issue, then postfeminism has arrived. In a *Wall Street Journal* article she demonstrates this by discussing two women from the two major parties who are running against each other for the Nebraska governorship, hence assuring Nebraska a female governor. She claims that neither woman is involved in feminist networks and each avoids women's rights issues in her campaign platform (although they both believe that feminism made their campaigns possible), but she also claims that "feminists are clearly delighted" that a woman will be governor. This version of postfeminism de-

pends on essentialist definitions of women and of feminism, suggesting that as long as women are succeeding in typically male arenas, regardless of their political affiliations, feminism has worked, feminists are happy, and thus there is no longer a need for feminist activism. Deirdre English (1992) makes a similar move in her *Mother Jones* article "Through the Glass Ceiling." English, in fact, suggests that the successful campaigns of women politicians, such as Barbara Boxer, Carol Moseley Braun, Diane Feinstein, and Ann Richards, signal the advent of a post-postfeminist moment. Of the "culture war" between the Democrats' "Year of the Woman" and the Republicans' "Family Values," she writes, "At least the smug postfeminist mood of the last decade is over" (49). While English does not define what she means by postfeminism, she paints an optimistic picture of today's women, who are "on the verge of finally breaking through" the "glass ceiling" (49). That women (whether in the 1986 or the 1992 version of postfeminism) are perpetually "on the verge" but never quite "there" inadvertently reveals the underside of this optimism.

Bonnie J. Dow's (1996b) analysis of Murphy Brown as the postfeminist who "has made it" in the 1980s as opposed to Mary Richards of *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, who was "emerging" (136) as a feminist in the 1970s, illustrates that there are representations that manage to escape this "almost equal" and "on the verge" version of postfeminism in the above examples. As Dow shows in her analysis of *Murphy Brown,* however, to achieve full equality the postfeminist woman must give up all connections to feminism, other than the "right" to function in the professional world—the right to be like a man. As Dow sees it, Murphy Brown is a "male persona in a female body" (140).[14] Despite the fact that the show was often heralded as "feminist" (e.g., Gibbs), Dow's close analysis of several episodes illustrates how the narrative often displaces potentially feminist ideas and issues. For example, in an episode based on the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas hearings, "the issues of gender, race, and sexual harassment . . . are completely ignored" (157). Instead, the episode focuses on what Murphy calls the senators' "grandstanding and shameless self-promotion" in a story line in which the "Senate Ethics Committee" (157) questions her. Furthermore, Dow argues, Murphy's professional success comes at the cost of her personal happiness, which renders her a comic scapegoat. "Unmarried, childless, and without a satisfying romantic relationship, Murphy's character embodies what media constructions of postfeminism posit as the negative consequences of female independence" (144).[15] Thus, while for many popular press critics (as Dow acknowledges) *Murphy Brown* represents the success

of feminism, Dow shows that that success is empty both of feminist specificities and of femininity.

Some popular press critics, like Dow, are suspicious of the emergence of the masculine New Woman (such as Murphy Brown), arguing that, although women's equality is important, it is unfortunate that women have to become just like men to be professionally successful. Generally, unlike Dow (who addresses complex activist feminism), these critics represent the masculinized New Woman as a problem because her feminist desire for equality with men means she must repress her maternal feminine side —her desire to have children or even just to nurture in any context—in order to succeed. Thus, these examples set up a tension between work and (heteronormative) family, which is supposedly produced by feminism's demand for women's equality. Erica Jong (1986) draws on (antifeminist feminist postfeminist) Hewlett to make this kind of argument in *Vanity Fair,* defining second-wave feminism as having been focused on equal rights and thus leading to "career paths [for women] identical to men" (118). For Jong, this is a problem because it denies women's "biological need" (119) to have children. While she does not go so far as to claim that women "need" to have children, Geneva Overholser (1986), writing in the *New York Times*, also worries over professionalism's interruption of maternalism when she criticizes what she sees as two related versions of postfeminism: the idea that working women are cheating their families and the idea that women are beginning to work part-time because they are realizing that work is not so great after all. While Overholser accepts the premise that "no women, even superwomen" can do all the work both at the office and at home, she rejects what she defines as postfeminism's assumption that women need to make even more changes. As Arlie Hochschild (1983) does in *Mother Jones*, Overholser suggests that men need to change at home to match women's changes at work and thus to eliminate (or at least reduce) the profound tension between work and family in women's lives. Both Overholser and Hochschild paradoxically move in a simultaneously progressive and conservative direction by making a feminist argument for the social transformation of gendered family roles, while nevertheless depending on a heteronormative middle-class conception of the male/female two-parent middle-class nuclear family in which one or both parents would have the economic resources to be able to work less in order to spend more time providing child care.

Mary Anne Dolan (1988) addresses the issue of nurturing in the workplace, rather than in the family. In a *New York Times Magazine* article she

explains that despite her efforts as "the first woman in America to rise through the ranks to the editorship of a major metropolitan newspaper" (21) to hire as many women in high-level positions as possible, her feminist "experiment" failed (22). The women, she says, simply acted like men, chasing power and "goodies" and mistreating their employees in the process. In her *Washington Post* review of *Working Girl* (1988), Ellen Goodman (1989) defines postfeminism similarly, arguing that as postfeminists, rather than change patriarchy, women simply become like men. She writes, "Finally, what makes this a truly postfeminist flick is that not even the heroine really expects that women can change the system anymore. Tess just wants a chance to get in it." Like Dolan, Goodman seems to prefer representations and contexts in which women *are* able to bring a (feminine) "difference" into the workplace.

Other articles are similarly pessimistic about New Women postfeminists, not because they reject femininity but because these "New Women," especially young New Women (whether or not they act like men and/or neglect their families), take feminism for granted. Susan Bolotin introduces this idea in her October 17, 1982, *New York Times Magazine* article, "Voices from the Post-Feminist Generation," which Walters (1991) suggests was probably the first use of "the term 'postfeminism' . . . in *public* discourse" (105).[16] After interviewing a number of professional women who had recently graduated from college, Bolotin calls their attitudes toward feminism "post-feminist" because they accept what she defines as the basic principles of feminism but reject the label of "feminist" and criticize those who do label themselves feminist for being "bitter" and "unhappy" and for lacking "warmth" (31). Barbara Ehrenreich (1987) also suggests that "especially on the elite campuses [some young women have] the assured conviction that, whatever indignities women may have suffered in the remote past (for example, 1970), the way is now clear for any woman of spirit to rise straight to the top of whatever fascinating, lucrative profession she chooses" (168). Pointing out the class specificity of this particular version of feminism, Ehrenreich nevertheless does accept that feminism was a success in a middle-class context and that—as a result of its success in that context—it has now foundered.[17] Thus, while her *Ms.* article is relatively unique because it addresses class issues, Ehrenreich also reinscribes the focus on professionalism in much postfeminist discourse. By December 1989, writing in *Time,* Claudia Wallis coins a term for the type of young women Bolotin and Ehrenreich discuss: she calls them the "no, but . . ." generation; "no," they are not

feminists, "but" they expect to be treated "equally" in their professional lives. As she puts it, "In many ways, feminism is a victim of its own resounding achievements. Its triumphs—in getting women into the work place, in elevating their status in society and in shattering the 'feminine mystique' . . .—have rendered it obsolete, at least in its original form and rhetoric" (82).[18]

It is important to point out that the no, but . . . woman is a media construction, a figure that contributes to the cultural "posting" of feminism. This figure is perpetually young and dismissive of the women who preceded her, emerging in 1982 as a recent college graduate (Bolotin), reemerging in 1987 as a college student (Ehrenreich), and returning again in 1989 for Wallis's use.[19] The no, but . . . woman has faith that feminism has paved the way for her and other women and as a result is no longer useful. Because this particular postfeminist woman is young, she is on the verge of entering professional life and has not yet had to confront a tension between work and family. Nevertheless, most writers reintroduce the issue of family, confronting the no, but . . . woman with what the authors portray as an inevitable conflict. Wallis, for example, claims that working mothers (who are the implied future for the no, but . . . woman) feel cheated because they are discovering that they cannot manage "it all." Like Hochschild and Overholser, Wallis ends with a call for more men to participate in child care by quoting Gloria Steinem: "If men start taking care of children, the job will become more valuable" (89).

Overall, these articles initially set up a tension between work and family, defining these two aspects of women's lives as "it all." They then suggest, first, that women want "it all" but, second, that women cannot successfully have "it all" because they turn into men as a result of their professionalism and therefore are not able to remain nurturing in the workplace or at home. While some of the authors suggest that more involvement by men with child care will help, others revert to what Elspeth Probyn (1990, 1993) calls "choiceoisie." Separating the feminist concept of "choice" from the particular issue of abortion and linking it to a more nationalist concept of "equality," postfeminist representations use choice to set up an equivalency between work and family as either/or options.[20] Thus a woman can "choose" to work (New Woman), or she can "choose" to have a family (new traditionalist), or she can "choose" to try to do both (failed feminist).

The topics of choiceoisie and the tension between work and family that I describe throughout this section reveal the class biases of postfemi-

nism: only middle-class mothers who have some nonwork means of support (i.e., a working husband/partner) could, theoretically, make such a "choice" between work and family. Furthermore, because the women pictured, quoted, and discussed are overwhelmingly white and inattentive to issues of race in any context, these examples illustrate the dominance of whiteness in postfeminist discourse. These examples reveal how postfeminist discourses define and depend on a version of feminism that focuses on individual rights rather than, for example, a structural analysis that might suggest that unequal pay at work, the intersection of racism and sexism, and cultural assumptions about femininity make the concept of "free choice" an oxymoron.[21] From this perspective, there is little difference between these pessimistic and optimistic representations of women's relationship to postfeminism. Whether celebrating feminism for enabling women politicians who are on the verge of breaking through the glass ceiling or bemoaning feminism for encouraging the masculine and self-centered behavior of professional women, collectively these examples define feminism as no longer necessary because it already has successfully secured access to equality and choice for middle-class white professional and/or family women.

Choosing (Hetero)Sexuality

In the 1990s, popular media began to represent choiceoisie as a *three-way* tension among work, family, and dating/sexuality; now postfeminism includes women's "choice" to engage in heterosexually attractive bodily behavior. Elyce Rae Helford (2000) argues that even female action heroes who "shed traditional feminine traits, such as passivity, gentleness, and emotionality" (294) and have "thin, fit bodies and prowess with a weapon are saved from being alienatingly strong by the camera's emphasis on their bodies" (295). Furthermore, Helford argues that postfeminists who "choose" sexuality "find their individual 'activism' primarily in battle against what they must first establish to be a legacy of feminist antisexuality" (296). This celebration of (hetero)sexuality is in tension with representations of women who, having supposedly achieved professional success, now realize that "having it all" often means giving up a boyfriend/husband and a family (e.g., Suplee 1987). Thus, along with challenging an assumed "sex-negative" feminist legacy, these discourses construct sexual interaction with men as a core desire for women. In other words, these

discourses suggest, if feminism means not sacrificing personal desires and aspirations, why should women have to give up (hetero)sexuality in order to have a professional career?

Ally McBeal is a good example of this angst over the lack of a husband/family combined with excessive displays of active sexuality (Heywood 1998). Furthermore, her hyperthin body, in opposition to the contemporary wave of self-defense feminists (McCaughey 1997) and muscle-bound action heroes like those Helford discusses (e.g., the television character Xena and WNBA and Olympic athlete stars), functions as part of choiceoisie. In other words, the existence of highly sculpted muscle-bound women naturalizes Ally's hyperthin body as a viable alternative (choice) rather than as a cultural imperative. As Robert Goldman, Deborah Heath, and Sharon L. Smith (1991) put it, "Meanings of choice and individual freedom become wed to images of sexuality in which women apparently choose to be seen as sexual objects because it suits their liberated interests" (338). In the 1990s, women simply "choose" either sculpted muscles or hyperthin bodies.

This celebration of women's play with the heterosexual male gaze—their invitation of the gaze and their own fascination with and attention to the object of that gaze (their own bodies)—not only intensifies heterosexuality within the postfeminism depicted in the popular press, but it also ensures a place for femininity in postfeminism. Advertising, in particular, contributes to this version of postfeminism, celebrating women's "equality" and their access to "choice" (feminism), while marketing commodities that call for and support constant body maintenance (femininity). Goldman, Heath, and Smith call this "self-fetishization" and argue that "commercial attempts to choreograph a non-contradictory unification of feminism and femininity have given rise to an aesthetically depoliticized [commodity] feminism" (334). Whether advertisements encourage women to buy products, such as comfortable jeans, as "the agent of progressive social transformation" (347) or to buy products, such as makeup, because women have the freedom to "choose" to engage in femininity, the ads link feminism and femininity so that they become "interchangeable alternatives" (348) and feminism becomes a style, easily acquired and unproblematically worn.

While these examples are concerned with *women's* pleasure in relation to commodity feminism and pro-sex postfeminism, other postfeminist discourses celebrate the "return" of (hetero)sexuality for the pleasure it provides to *men*: a to-be-looked-at postfeminism. For Michael Angeli (1993), writing in *Esquire,* Teri Hatcher/Lois Lane (of the television series *Lois and Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*) embodies this sensu-

ous, feminine, to-be-looked-at postfeminist woman. Teri/Lois is "equal" to Superman (Angeli describes her as "faster than a speeding bullet," "more powerful than a locomotive," and "able to leap tall buildings in a single bound"), yet still a sensuous and vulnerable woman. More specifically, it is Teri Hatcher's *stereotypical femininity* as the "postfeminist Lois Lane" (98) that makes her "equal" to Superman. For example, Angeli argues that Hatcher is "more powerful than a locomotive" because she has failed. He quotes her as saying, "I've been knocked flat on my face, sure. But it just makes me stronger" (98). Similarly, he argues that she is "able to leap tall buildings in a single bound" because she is a vulnerable and compulsive consumer. He quotes her again as saying, "The only way to get anything wonderful out of life . . . is to risk big and jump off the cliff. It makes you incredibly vulnerable, but you know that on the other side, that's where all the *goodies* are" (98, emphasis added). Finally, Teri/Lois is a "woman of steel" because she "could tempt even the Man of Steel to abuse his X-ray vision" (98). Angeli's version of postfeminism equates gender equality with failure, compulsive consumption, and (most important in the context of *Esquire* magazine) exhibitionist feminine beauty. More recently, David Handelman (1996) titles his *Vogue* review of two of John Dahl's films (*Unforgettable* [1996] and *The Last Seduction* [1994]) "Postfeminist Mystique." His article seems to suggest that this "mystique" is a "dangerous, mysterious element" of women that men find "quite appealing" (295). Similarly, in Peter Plagens's (1996) *Newsweek* review of three women painters he celebrates their postfeminism, defining it as "some of the best—the craftiest, funniest and, in a dark way, sexiest—art around" (82).

Other male columnists seem more irritated with women's postfeminist play with feminine heterosexuality than attracted to it. For example, in James Wolcott's (1996) *New Yorker* review of Maureen Dowd's journalism he repeatedly discusses his irritation with her for "becom[ing] increasingly kittenish in her columns. She rubs up against the reader's leg. Her work lacks any sense of social dimension: everything is about her, her, her" (57). Furthermore, he repeatedly calls her a "chick," claiming that the term has made a comeback as a way to describe "a postfeminist in a party dress, a bachelorette too smart to be a bimbo, too refined to be a babe, too boojy to be a bohemian" (54).[22] Throwing around insulting terms because (he says) they have now made a comeback, Wolcott aptly defines a postfeminist chick as fashionably feminine (party dress) and professionally successful (smart, refined, and bourgeois).

Other postfeminist discourse discusses "do-me feminists" whose active sexuality is as much for themselves as for the male gaze, whether appreciative (like Angeli's) or irritated (like Wolcott's).[23] Mary Ann Doane's (1982) theorization of the masquerade is relevant here. Drawing on Joan Riviere's psychoanalytic work, Doane attempts to theorize women's film spectatorship through characters that heighten femininity so much that they draw attention to its social constructedness. Thus, the excessive femininity becomes a "mask," making it possible for a woman (character or spectator) to perform femininity while simultaneously functioning independently and successfully in masculine arenas.[24] This theoretical model explains both the excessiveness of do-me postfeminism's femininity (e.g., the impossibly short television skirts of *Melrose Place*'s Amanda and *Ally McBeal*'s Ally) and the ironic combination of this bodily display with aggressive and successful professionalism. Doane's original theorization of the masquerade was, in part, an attempt to get beyond the impasse of masochism and male-identification for a woman spectator in 1970s psychoanalytic film theory. Analogously, the masquerade works in postfeminism as a way out of the impasse of new traditionalism in the home (masochism) and nonnurturing masculine behavior at work (male-identification).

As with most versions of postfeminism, critics find this do-me masquerade postfeminism both disturbing and pleasurable. In the *New Republic*, Ruth Shalit (1998) criticizes it in the televisual representation of Ally (*Ally McBeal*), Dharma (*Dharma and Greg*), and Ronnie (*Veronica's Closet*) because it emphasizes self-absorption and consumerism. "To them, a job is a lifestyle accoutrement, a crisp stratagem to make themselves more attractive" (29). Furthermore, their sexuality is paired with professional failure and vulnerability, all of which "are supposed to be part of [their] charm" (30). While Shalit acknowledges that Ally "has been embraced as a canonical statement of postfeminist exhilaration" (30), this version of postfeminism only works, she argues, because it attracts men. Similarly, Ginia Bellafante (1998) suggests in *Time* that feminism is indeed dead because it succeeded for a select group of middle-class women and then "devolved into the silly. And it has powerful support for this: a popular culture insistent on offering images of grown single women as frazzled, self-absorbed girls" (58). While she acknowledges the role of cultural representations in the production of this version of postfeminism (the critical approach I take here), she nonetheless also blames feminism for moving toward sexuality: "You'll have better luck becoming a darling of feminist circles if you chronicle your adven-

tures in cybersex than if you churn out a tome on the glass ceiling" (57). Paradoxically, she then praises antifeminist feminist postfeminist Camille Paglia for "catapult[ing] feminism beyond an ideology of victimhood" (58) but nevertheless critiques "lesser minds" for using Paglia's work as "an excuse for media-hungry would be feminists to share their adventures in the mall or in bed" (59).

In contrast to these irritated responses to postfeminist self-directed sexuality, Plum Sykes (1998), writing in *Vogue*, is not at all disturbed by her desire to link work with sexuality. In a discussion of her pursuit of the perfect postfeminist bra (a pursuit made possible by her class privileges), she suggests that both the frilly feminine styles and no-nonsense practical styles that she can find off the rack at her local department store do not go with her "trouser suit[ed] . . . fashionably postfeminist New Me" (142). Eventually, she writes that she had to have a bra personally made for her. The designer came up with a reversible bra: "The Prince of Wales check flips over to reveal blood-red satin" (144). Similarly but more graphically, the "Postfeminist Playground" Web site celebrates the fact that *Playboy* online chose it as a "pick of the day" on July 2, 1998.[25] As an announcement sent to their e-mail list says, the site celebrates books such as *The Great Taste of Straight People*, "written by Lily James of the Postfeminist Playground. . . . 19 short stories about sex, math, vivisection and real estate will vibrate your mind, your muscle, and your wicked sense of humor. WARNING: This book may offend diehard feminists." On the Web, a potentially more sexually explicit forum than the mainstream press, the heterosexual and antifeminist focus of masquerade postfeminism is more explicit, in part through its ironic humor.

Overall, then, whether a postfeminist woman engages in active, even excessive, bodily display of (hetero)sexuality—what I have termed masquerade postfeminism—in pursuit of a man, to irritate others, to get ahead at work, or to please herself, these representations assume the centrality of heterosexuality in women's lives in opposition to what postfeminist discourses portray as an antisex feminism. While these examples "add" sexuality to the postfeminist mix, they also link that sexuality, if only tenuously, to either work, family, or both. In other words, in the 1990s, consumerism, bodily display, and active sexuality are the routes provided by postfeminist discourses out of the (alleged) feminist-produced impasse of having to choose between family and work, routes that lead women right back to the individualism of "equality" or the compulsory heterosexuality of "new traditionalism."

Postfeminist Men

Most of these versions of postfeminism focus on women, whether they are raving feminists who need to be eliminated, new traditionalists who "choose" home, successful professionals who depend on but no longer need feminism or who act like men, unfulfilled successful professionals, or sexily feminine heterosexuals. Nevertheless, men do appear in the background of some of this discourse, as negative, nonnurturing role models that women too readily adopt; as heterosexual gazers, delighted with postfeminism's turn toward hypersexualized women in the 1990s; or as objects of desire, just beyond the reach of the professional woman who thought she could have it all but has since found that all she has is her job.

Occasionally, though, men emerge at the center of postfeminist discourses. A number of articles shift the focus from women's to men's oppression, arguing, like the antifeminist feminist postfeminists, that "the women's revolution has succeeded to an amazing degree" (Mansfield 1998, 14). This success, they argue, has led to the "Post-Feminist Male (PFM)—and he is a lugubrious specimen indeed: trend-whipped, wary, variously deranged" (Suplee, B1). Men's mistake, Curt Suplee (1987) suggests in the *Washington Post,* is to become passive (read: feminine), thus, he argues, allowing women to define masculinity. According to Suplee, it is women/feminists (like most postfeminist discourse, he collapses the terms) who have produced the "Mr. Right" who "turn[ed] out so wrong" (B1).

While Suplee constructs a bleak picture of the postfeminist man produced by feminism, other articles focus on what they call the "nascent men's movement" (Allis 1990, 80) as a potential savior. While the feminist movement is still at fault for producing the postfeminist wimp through "two contradictory messages—'Open up and share your feelings' alternating with 'Shut up, you disgusting beast!'" (Epps 1987), the emergent men's movement redefines the postfeminist man as an agent on a path to self-discovery. Sam Allis (1990) writes in *Time,* "In the wake of the feminist movement, some men are beginning to pipe up. They are airing their frustration with the limited roles they face today, compared with the multiple options that women seem to have won" (80). Allis suggests that feminism has been so successful in reversing patriarchal power and authority that women now oppress men; therefore, men need a social movement. Harvey Mansfield (1998) is optimistic about this new masculinity, arguing in the *Times Literary Supplement* that now that feminism has succeeded, "manliness," which he defines as a complex form of

courage, can be "humaniz[ed]" and turned into a "virtue." He is even willing to let women express this new version of masculinity themselves, just as they have succeeded in participating in (men's) professional life:

> The price of humanizing manliness, of raising it from quality to virtue, is allowing women to participate in it. It will not be equal participation, because, as Aristotle said, men find it easier to be courageous—and likewise, women find it easier to be moderate. . . . For the most part, men will always have more manliness than women have, and it is up to both sexes, having faced that fact, to fashion this quality into a virtue. (16)

Like the postfeminist discourse that assumes nurturing is an essential female quality/virtue, but one in which men can learn to engage, Mansfield assumes that courage is an essential male quality/virtue, but one to which women now have access. In both cases it is the success of feminism, and thus the existence of postfeminism, that makes this revaluing of traditional descriptions of "sex differences" possible. Overall, in the postfeminist discourse that focuses on men, feminism (and by default women in general) produces miserable and unappealing men; as a result, men must (re)take center stage and return to their traditional roles as "manly" saviors in order to fix what women/feminists unwittingly have made inoperable.

While the above examples focus on returning masculinity to men, another version of postfeminism represents men who take over women's roles as feminine subjects, feminists, or both. For example, Wolcott's critique of Maureen Dowd as a "chick" sets him up as a better feminist than she, because he understands that he needs to be "serious" and he pays attention to the history of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s. Tania Modleski (1991) has termed this version of postfeminism "feminism without women." In her book of that title, she details how in popular culture men replace women as mothers (including even sometimes disguising themselves as pregnant women [77]) and how women celebrate this new nurturing masculinity. For example, she argues that in *Three Men and a Baby* (1987) "father's rights, male appropriation of femininity, and male homoeroticism fuse perfectly in a film that nearly squeezes woman out of the picture altogether, just as the mother is squeezed to one side of the frame in the last shot of the film" (82). The film "constitutes a flagrant encroachment of the (ever multiplying) fathers onto the mother's traditional domain" (86).[26] Similarly, in her analysis of *China Beach,* Leah R. Vande Berg (1993) claims the television series portrays "male Vietnam warrior veterans as the only characters equally capable of performing

traditionally female roles and values (nurturing children) as well as traditionally masculine roles (fighting wars)" (359). In both of these examples, while men may take on markers of femininity, even discourses of (particular versions of) feminism, they nevertheless do so without giving up their centrality within the narrative. Thus, men embrace feminism, but only as long as women are absent from it.

Conclusion

As a discursively produced concept that incorporates, coopts, and reworks feminism, postfeminism is extremely versatile, containing appeals to multiple and contradictory audiences. Given its many configurations, some of which almost seem to be opposites of each other (e.g., the new traditionalist versus the woman who plays with sexuality on the "postfeminist playground"), postfeminism refers to many aspects of contemporary women's lives. There is linear dead-feminism postfeminism; assaultive backlash postfeminism, which includes antifeminist feminist postfeminism, new traditionalist postfeminism, and bad news women postfeminism; equality postfeminism, which includes New Women postfeminism, women on the verge postfeminism, masculine women postfeminism, no, but . . . postfeminism, and choiceoisie postfeminism; pro-sex postfeminism, which includes commodity feminism postfeminism, to-be-looked-at postfeminism, do-me postfeminism, and masquerade postfeminism; and men's postfeminism, which includes wimpy men postfeminism, masculine men postfeminism, and feminism without women postfeminism. In these contexts, feminism is understood variously as a former event, obsessed with victimization, all-powerful, threatening to the family, successful in having achieved individualistic equality and choice for women, in pursuit of masculine identities for women, rejecting of women's nurturing roles, antisex, and antimen.

Importantly, most versions of postfeminism can function as either a condemnation or a celebration of women and feminism. For example, equality postfeminism can lead to bitter, nonnurturing masculine women or to women either on the verge of or having achieved professional success. Similarly, postfeminist definitions of feminism can celebrate the achievement of equality at work or condemn an all-powerful victim feminism. This collective ambivalence in the popular press about postfeminism and the feminism it replaces leads to perpetual discussions about the central issues of postfeminism—work, family, sexuality—and naturalizes the proliferation

of multiple forms of postfeminism, each of which is concerned with the effects of feminism on contemporary culture and life. In short, the collective ambivalence ensures that postfeminism is wide-ranging, versatile, and influential.

Despite the multiplicity of postfeminism and its definitions of feminism, it also has many consistencies—especially the assumption that feminism is no longer necessary and the promotion of white, middle-class, heterosexual women and men as culturally central. Postfeminism's multiplicity, however, makes it more difficult to see such consistencies. In other words, if some postfeminist discourses celebrate what feminism has wrought while others bemoan changes produced by feminism, it is harder to see that *all* these discourses imply that feminist activism is no longer needed. And if, for example, as is the case in the majority of postfeminist discourses, questions about sexual identity never even emerge, heterosexuality is naturalized for contemporary women, whether they prefer to practice that heterosexuality in the confines of a middle-class home or the confines of an independent single-girl life. Similarly, if the feminism that postfeminist discourses depict is not attentive to class difference, then a possible tension between working women who work because they have to and working women who work because they are beneficiaries of the "right" to work for which 1960s and 1970s feminists supposedly fought dissipates. And because women of color *do* appear in some postfeminist discourse as assimilated "equal" beneficiaries of the same "rights" that feminism supposedly provided to white women, the specific intersection of gender and race oppressions that women of color may face in the United States is ignored.

In short, postfeminism is the depiction of the present as the end point of a linear feminism that promotes "equal rights," "choice," and individualism for white, middle-class, heterosexual women. Having achieved (or even almost achieved) this version of equality, in which women can choose "to have it (work, family, [hetero]sexual expression) all" or choose not to have it all, the contemporary era follows a feminist era and inherits the benefits, failures, and pitfalls of that feminism, whether or not particular writers interpret the postfeminist era as having profited or suffered from the feminism that preceded it.

In this chapter, I have emphasized the ways much of this discourse defines the era since the early 1980s as postfeminist, as a historical moment that follows a presumably prior feminist moment. Much of the scholarship on postfeminism in popular culture draws on a similar model, arguing that

postfeminist discourse emerged in a particular historical moment as a response to feminism. For example, Modleski subtitles her book "Culture and Criticism in a 'Postfeminist' *Age*" (emphasis added) and Dow (1996b) details the shift from what she defines as depictions of feminism in 1970s television sitcoms, such as *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *One Day at a Time,* to depictions of postfeminism in 1980s and 1990s television shows, such as *Murphy Brown* and *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*.[27] And certainly, it is important to my own argument throughout this book to point to the historical context of the late twentieth century as an era during which sustained feminist activism is less often visible in the popular media than are postfeminist women.

Nevertheless, throughout this chapter, by emphasizing popular culture discourses and representations, I have suggested that it is also useful to approach postfeminism as a cultural *discourse*—an attitude, a reaction formation, an always available hegemonic response to feminism—not entirely linked to any particular historical moment. From this perspective, it is no surprise that postfeminism emerged as a concept in the 1920s United States as well, immediately after women got the vote.[28]

Thinking critically about postfeminism in this way, first, helps resist a linear historical trajectory that defines postfeminism as the natural updated progeny of (a no-longer-needed) feminism along an evolutionary continuum. Rejecting the historical linear representation of the relationship between feminism and postfeminism helps reveal the ways feminism continues to exist not only as a discursively defined thorn in the side of postfeminist popular culture but also as a complex and varied social movement; an epistemological and philosophical standpoint; a critical and analytic methodology; a race-, sex-, and class-based pedagogy and scholarship; and a powerful strategic rhetoric (among other things). Furthermore, critically resisting postfeminism's linear narrative, in which feminism has supposedly already been successful, makes it possible to see ways women are not necessarily on a long march toward equality but instead, for example, continue to be unemployed or underemployed and to make less than men for doing the same job, continue to struggle for access to legal abortion, and continue to face sexual and racial assault and sexual and racial harassment in their work and home lives.[29] Thinking of postfeminism discursively helps illustrate how postfeminism is a *cultural response to feminism,* one that seeks to rework—to *steal* rather than to supersede—feminism.

Second, paying attention to postfeminism as a cultural discursive strategy, rather than as an "actual" historical event, also helps emphasize how

easily the discourse moves between "real" women and fictional women (like the *Time* cover's move from Steinem to McBeal) without considering any differences between them. This collapse of "women" with "women in popular culture" helps carry the weight of the discourse's suggestion that postfeminist attitudes have become pervasive and that gender traits are innate, since they appear both in polls (whose methodologies are never divulged) and on fictional television. As a result, no attention to actual women's complex relationships to work, family, sexuality, and feminism in the contemporary moment is necessary. Using a critical and theoretical analysis of postfeminist discourse in response to its claim of universality helps to emphasize that the fictional Ally McBeal and the living no, but . . . women Bolotin and Wallis interview are *both* cultural constructions that do the work of defining both feminism and postfeminism in at least some of the many ways they function in late-twentieth-century culture. This critical perspective, which I endeavor to take here, helps dismantle postfeminism's ubiquity by insisting on a disjuncture (which postfeminist discourse seeks to deny) between representations of postfeminism and the complexity of women's actual lives.

In short, my goal is to understand postfeminism both as a self-defined particular historical moment and as a versatile cultural discourse, one that negotiates, defines, and ultimately limits what feminism is within popular culture. Nevertheless, I also consider it important to acknowledge the space some postfeminist discourses make for feminism within popular culture. This is a space in which many rape narratives emerge. As I discuss in the next chapter, discourses of postfeminism, feminism, and rape intersect in this space, simultaneously transforming and reinforcing each other.