

ABSTRACTS

“Happily ever after...”: Representation of Intimate Partner Violence against Women in a Hungarian Television Series and Viewers’ Responses

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The article examines how intimate partner violence (IPV) is constructed and presented in one of the most popular and widely-watched Hungarian TV series. *Barátok közt* (*Among Friends*), which has an audience of more than one million viewers, is analyzed in order to explore the kinds of myths it reinforces or deconstructs in its representation of partner violence. Drawing on relevant literature, the authors discuss the main traits of IPV and then examine to what extent the specific cases of IPV that are presented in the soap opera comply with them. In the second half of the article, the audience’s reactions are surveyed. The semi-structured interviews with people who regularly watch the series mirror the dual nature of representation: elements reinforcing as well as elements denying the myths that surround IPV. Whether the reason for these attitudes is to be looked for either in our social institutions or in the impact of the series itself, such representations do invite strong responses from the viewers.

Feminism: “Old” or “New”? Hungarian Women’s Disposition towards Feminism and Feminists

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The paper deals with contemporary interpretations of feminism in popular journalism, more specifically with the concept of “new” feminism as it is presented in the Hungarian version of *ELLE* magazine. *ELLE* tries to rebrand feminism, reflecting on “old” feminism in many different ways. This

presentation of “new” feminism is not free of contradictions: although journalists do not explicitly deny feminist traditions and their aims are positive, from time to time they use concepts and expressions from anti-feminist argumentation. The target group of *ELLE* are women between 25 and 49 years old, so the second part of the article presents the results of an online survey that focuses mainly on the age-cohorts representing the Hungarian target group and their attitudes towards feminism and feminists. The analysis shows that these women perceive feminism from a hostile perspective: they tend to single out negative aspects (aggression, extremism, misandry) for its constitutive features.

Feminist Media as a Basic Discursive Space for the Images of Women

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The aim of this paper is to compare the construction of “woman” in the strategies and rhetorical practices of feminist discourses in two Hungarian feminist magazines at two critical historical moments and to examine whether they changed the dominant images of women. The author compares two periodicals, *Nő és Társadalom* from the beginning of the 20th century when the Hungarian feminist movement was born and *Nőszemély* that appeared during the regime change of 1989, and how they shaped the images of women in Hungary. *Nőszemély* provides especially good examples of modern discursive formations because its authors took into account other countries’ feminist discursive practices and situated themselves in the international and national public and political discourses of feminism while dealing with questions of gender equality and the equality of women in the wake of the regime change.

Representation of Women in Hungarian Political Posters of the 1950s

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In my paper, I examine the gendered representations of Hungarian propaganda posters in the 1950s. The representations of female figures are interpreted based on the literature of Hungarian poster art in the context of the Stalinist culture and the results of several social scientific researches about the period. The analysis of the representations is organized into two major sections: one studies the posters that were connected to the public sphere and the other examines the posters that were related to the private sphere – all embedded in the political, social, and cultural relations of the era. Through the study of the propaganda posters of the time, I reveal the way the image of the “ideal” woman was constructed and used for the ideological interests of the politics of the period. I argue that the “masculine” illustration of the female body and/or the portrayal of women in “masculine roles” do not suggest emancipating efforts or gender neutralism, but display the restoration of the patriarchal social order: a woman can only be equal if she takes on some type of “man’s quality”, and the female body must not be visible in its own sexual (erotic) nature.

Ethnicity Constructions through the Discourses of Virginity and Marriage

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In this paper, I discuss how ethnicity gets constituted within teenagers’ discourses on sexuality. To answer this question, I conduct qualitative discourse analysis on transcripts of group interviews with Hungarian secondary school students. I focus on “virginity” and “marriage” as two significant discursive sites in the constitution of my respondents’ sexualities, in order to find out how my Gypsy respondents constitute their ethnicity, how they create ethnic group boundaries, how they set up a “hierarchy within the Other”, and how they position themselves within this hierarchy through the

discourses of virginity and marriage. I also inquire whether virginity and marriage are discursive sites for the constitution of “Hungarian” ethnicity as well and how neoliberal/postfeminist discourses on women’s free choice and sexual agency influence Gypsy and Hungarian girls’ discourses and practices related to “losing” virginity. I argue that in the case of Gypsy girls, “giving” virginity to the “right” boy in return for love, loyalty, and a stable and long-term relationship (which may turn into a marriage later) is the “modernized” version of traditional virgin marriage. At the same time, those respondents who do not follow ethnicized “Gypsy” traditions, indirectly constitute their majority “Hungarian” identity through comparing their practices with these traditions and emphasizing that only Gypsies follow them. In my discussion, I also reflect on the ethnic differences within the symbolic and socio-economic significance attributed to giving away virginity and getting married.

Old Men and Old Women in a Monolingual Hungarian Dictionary for Teenage Students

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In the *Értelmező Szótár (Hungarian Dictionary)+*, old people are often presented in gender roles according to outdated social conventions. At the same time, in the spirit of traditional values, *ÉrtSz* does its best to educate teenagers to respect the elderly. The paper demonstrates how sexism and ageism are interwoven in the lexicographers’ illustrative examples, highlighting the difference between representations of *grandmother* and *grandfather*. As the entries are not intended for trained lexicographers, information is provided about the nature of stereotypical example sentences and also on how to avoid them. Several controversial examples are also pointed out: in spite of their blatant sexist or ageist content, they illuminate the sense and usage of a headword so exceptionally well that their employment is essential.

Life Writing, Gender, and Trauma

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In this study, I discuss the interdisciplinary and broadly inclusive genre designation “life writing,” which by expanding generic boundaries can move outside of the canonical constraints of traditional autobiography. Feminist criticism early on perceived traditional definitions of autobiography as masculinist and tried to redefine the canon to fit the different pattern of women's lives, showing that the overhaul of the term “autobiography” and the works it legitimized was needed. Scholarly interest in life writing has also burgeoned in the last decades of the twentieth century, not only owing both to the impetus of feminist studies but also to the interdisciplinary turn in literature and cultural studies and the concomitant interest in postmodern issues of subjectivity, the body, identity, memory, trauma studies, disability studies, and the concern for the uneasy relationship between ethical positions and the aesthetic of literary works, among other theoretical issues. Today, various subgenres of life writing are also assuming increased salience in the wake of postcolonial theory and the changing face of feminism(s), race, ethnicity, class, geographical location, ability, and personal history, among other issues. In this context, I discuss examples of various subgenres of gendered life writing in relation to trauma, including alimentary, graphic, transnational, postcolonial life writing, autopathography (or illness narratives), and, finally, the life writing of war.