# Choosing Betrayal

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I respond to the foregoing essays and take up an ambivalent defense of Hirshman's argument. While agreeing with various points the contributors make, I highlight the fact that women's choices are still made under conditions of oppression that shape not only the options women have, but the desires themselves that shape their choices. Recognizing oppression as a social phenomenon allows feminists to accept a wider range of individual choices than we might think acceptable under the feminist umbrella, but it also requires a distinction between making a feminist choice and offering feminist support for choice.

There used to be a pro-choice slogan that went "a woman's life is a human life." What this meant within the context of abortion was that the "pro-life" emphasis on the fetus obscured that the woman in whose body the fetus resided is a human being too, with a life of her own: dreams, ideals, the ability to form a "plan of life" and act on it. Instead, in the pro-life philosophy, a fetus's life is the only one that matters.[1] So the rhetoric of choice in abortion rights was not really about choice per se: it was about recognizing that women are full fledged human beings, not the half humans that they have been conceived as since Aristotle. For the unique feature of human beings is the ability to make choices and act on them as autonomous agents, and that was being denied to women. In other words, it was about fighting oppression.

It is this struggle for recognition of women's humanity under conditions of oppression that has made choice so paradoxical for feminists since at least the early days of the so-called second wave, when the freedoms that feminism sought for all women ended up being important only to a subset of them, particularly the freedom to compete in the male-dominated professions. Moreover, as liberalism has long recognized, when you make "free choice" a central part of your philosophy, you will be forced to confront the fact that people won't necessarily make the kinds of choices you want them to make. Early social contract theorists addressed this problem through "hypothetical consent" maneuvers like Locke's "tacit consent," and those moves set the terms for subsequent liberal thinking about this paradox that choice poses to the Englightenment goal of freedom. Deciding what people *would* choose if they were rational or educated defines the condition of their freedom, whether they think that is the choice they want to make or not.[2]

The paternalistic character of such a philosophy poses obvious problems for liberals, but even greater ones for feminists, whose movement is grounded in the rejection of patriarchal claims about what women "really" want and what choices they "should" make. That such choices—such as motherhood—cohered with restrictions on access to resources, like education, that women would need in order to make different choices is a hypocrisy that feminists since Astell and Wollstonecraft have highlighted. Accordingly, feminism has long advocated changing the conditions of women's lives to allow them to imagine alternatives for themselves, to create the lives and make the choices that they themselves decide on.

So one can see a certain logic in the apparently paradoxical argument that a woman's choice to quit her high-powered Wall Street job to be a stay-at-home wife and mother is not post-feminist at all, but rather the height of feminism. Feminism, after all, was instrumental in pointing out the importance and value of the work that women traditionally did in the home; caring for children produced not just happier children, and therefore laid the groundwork for responsible citizenship, but generated an entire epistemological framework of "maternal thinking" that was a ground for pacifism and a caring, more humane society.[3] Carol Gilligan's "ethic of care" had a profound effect on feminist scholarship, leading to arguments for care as a basis for citizenship, epistemology, and intersectional theories of race and gender.[4] In this literature, mothering is an ethical and political practice that crosses the race and class boundaries that have traditionally divided the feminist movement.

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Particularly during the welfare reform efforts of the 1990s, many white feminist academics wrote reams on the injustice of welfare reform, which impacted particularly harshly on poor single mothers, white and black.[5] Choosing to mother, it would seem, is not just feminist; it has the potential to serve as the healing salve for a divided and fractured feminism.

So why does Linda Hirshman (no relation) want to rain on our parade? Because despite the improved options that many women have today, "choices," including the choice to mother, are still made under conditions of oppression, as various contributors here have suggested. I would not go so far as to say that "there can be no effective *individual* freedom in the face of oppression," because I believe Foucault is correct that the possibility of freedom always lies in resistance.[6] But oppression decidedly creates conditions that undercut the innocence of individual choice, as all the contributors have indicated in different ways. Women's choices are constructed for them under conditions of systematic inequality, so when we focus *only* on choice as the measure of our freedom, we forget that women choose to return to abusive spouses; that they choose to get pregnant when they are teenagers because they see that as the only way to achieve a stable relationship; that they choose to take drugs when pregnant; that they make all sorts of choices that are not just bad for themselves, but in themselves "unfree." That is, they are "choices" that they have been conditioned to make by circumstances of oppression. Highlighting the failure of feminism to change men's attitudes toward sharing household responsibilities, and women's attitudes about their roles and responsibilities as mothers, Hirshman argues that such choices are the product of the same old patriarchal line that women have been force-fed for decades; only now, because in theory women have other options, other possibilities for living their lives, women's taking up the same old responsibilities has the *illusion* of choice. She maintains that the best way to fight women's oppression is through different choices: If women go out and work, their absence from the family will force a redistribution of labor within the family, and their increased economic power will give them leverage to bargain successfully to enforce such changes.[7]

Regardless of what we think of the outcome of such arguments—whether they seem "heartless" in appearing to value money over love, invoking the "careerism" for which early white middle class feminism was criticized, whether they seem to shore up boring, mainstream heterosexuality, whether they are a long overdue wakeup call to today's young women, many of whom will end up divorced from their breadwinner husbands, or whether one has a hard time seeing a choice to work for corporate America as a strategy of "resistance" to oppression—Hirshman and other "second-wave" feminists in fact seek a balance between the two poles of economic power and affective life. That is something that many "third-wave" feminists misunderstand. It is when men exclusively make the money, and women are exclusively in charge of affective production, that power distortions occur within families and in relationships to feed and reinforce systematic gender oppression. Realigning those power imbalances is necessary to effect change that will establish freedom for women. The breezy assertion of diversity, individuality, and choice typical of third-wave feminists simply ignores the fundamental realities of oppression.

For such choices are not just innocent pursuits of happiness; they have a history. Some of the choices that feminists fought for in the 1980s turned out to be not so great; women could be lawyers and investment bankers and doctors, but only if they drove themselves crazy being "supermoms" because there was no high-quality childcare and husbands still failed to share equitably. The backlash resulted in women's opting out, at best entering the part-time labor market. Hirshman's response is that those women should not have backed off from the fight, but instead agitated harder for better childcare, and certainly for men's greater responsibility for household labor. There's a certain validity to that position: after all, that women continue to perform the majority of household labor, even when they work outside the home, does not negate the improvements in the redistribution of the sexual division of labor that *have* in fact taken place: women still do more housework than men, but men do more than they used to.[8] But Hirshman's position is also somewhat obtuse. Women have been making these demands for decades; some women go so far as to divorce their husbands, thinking that might get the point across, and thinking that poverty is a better alternative than being taken for granted and not being recognized as a "human life." Maybe carving out some compromises that at least give us some satisfaction with our daily lives isn't such a bad thing. If that means we drive our kids nuts by a compulsion to justify our existence—chauffeuring them to endless organized activities rather than just leaving them alone to play in the yard—then too bad for them. A woman's life is a human life.

Hence, I myself have some sympathy with the ideals underlying the general notion of "choice feminism" because, like third-wave feminists, I believe that there is a much wider range of choices that women and men can make that are consistent with feminism than is usually thought to be the case. And spending more time with your kids is certainly a valid choice. The key, however, is what political and ethical justification one makes for the choice—the reasons one offers—rather than the choice itself. For instance, opposing abortion because women are ordained by God to bear children cannot be a feminist choice, regardless of whether a woman makes it, because fetuses' lives thereby count more than women's. But one *could* take a principled feminist position in opposition to abortion if



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one viewed that as the most effective way to pressure policy makers to fund universal healthcare and improved prenatal care for poor women, to increase public assistance benefits, and to provide for federal childcare.

That is not quite the same as the "political consciousness" urged by some third-wave feminists that other contributors have mentioned; for the Christian fundamentalist may be very conscious of the political implications of her position. It's just not a *feminist* politics. Indeed, the position that "anything goes" for feminism as long as a woman *chooses* it betrays a kind of deep essentialism that second-wave feminists have long struggled against, and hopefully have left behind. The third-wave emphasis on "political consciousness" takes an extremely naïve view of politics, a point implied by Ferguson as well. It *may* be a radical challenge to pose for *Playboy,* as Snyder-Hall notes, but the men reading *Playboy* are more likely to think that, for all our talk of equality, feminists really do want to be objectified. That's not radical, it's regressive.

Similarly, the argument that raising children is more socially meaningful work than ordering photocopy supplies is certainly valid, but it does not change how the unequal bargaining power produced by economic dependence affects women's freedom, not to mention their children's welfare.[9] It is also elitist—something third-wave feminism supposedly opposes—since many women whose jobs do entail ordering photocopy supplies are not in the class of women who have the luxury of "choosing" whether to work. So third-wave feminism is self-contradictory in its failure to think through the political implications of its position.

We also need to keep in mind that the psychology of choice is material at base; the availability of options changes how you think about yourself, your life, and your choices. In other words, we cannot forget the basic idea of adaptive preferences. How do we know that what I want is "really" what I want, rather than that I have simply adapted my preferences to an unjustly limited set of options?[10] It is this possibility that led famous liberty theorist Isaiah Berlin to express some reservations about thinking of liberty in terms of the simple absence of interference with choice:

> A man [*sic*] is not free merely when there are no obstacles, psychological or otherwise, in the way of his wishes—when he can do as he likes—for in that case a man might be rendered free by altering not his opportunities of action, but his desires and dispositions. If a master can condition his slaves to love their chains he does not thereby prima facie increase their liberty, although he may increase their contentment or at least decrease their misery.[11]

This problem, as Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum have argued, has particular relevance to women, who because of circumstances of oppression may make "choices" on a regular basis that conform to the demands of their own limitation and oppression.[12] Similarly, Martha Mahoney points out that circumstances such as domestic violence can shift the opportunity costs of particular choices to such an extent that a woman may, for instance, "choose" to remain with a batterer because leaving him would actually put her in even greater danger. Her preferences adapt to oppressive conditions, and she chooses accordingly.[13] But this leads to a deeper notion of adaptive preference when women start to internalize and embody the abuse such that they accept it as an appropriate way to live their lives.

The argument of adaptive preferences, of course, directly contradicts choice feminism. As Ferguson describes it, for choice feminists "it is definitionally impossible for a woman to choose her own oppression; all choices she makes are equally expressions of her freedom, and therefore equally to be supported."[14] Thomas Hobbes, the master of Enlightenment choice thinking, couldn't have said it better: "of the voluntary acts of every man, the object is some Good To Himselfe." All free action results in things you want, by definition. Yet of course Hobbes immediately follows this with a classic account of the paradox of choice: for the state of nature is so "nasty, brutish, and short" that we *must* consent to a social contract that gives a sovereign absolute authority. The need for such consent is so self-evident that anyone who refuses to consent violates his own interests and "is not to be understood as if he meant it." Thus all are obligated to the contract, for "as well he that *Voted for it,* as he that *Voted against it,* shall *Authorize* all the Actions and Judgements, of that Man, or Assembly of men, in the same manner, as if they were his own." Hobbes justifies this argument by declaring "there be some Rights, which no man can be understood by any words, or other signes, to have abandoned, or transferred," particularly the right to self-preservation.[15]

The parallel to choice feminism is disturbing; for what should feminists say when a woman seeks to abandon or transfer such a right by giving up her economic power to a man who may leave her struggling to support their children? Should we say, like Hobbes, that she "is not to be understood as if [she] meant it"? Should feminists seek to stop her from making such a choice in the first place?

Snyder-Hall clearly thinks not; while correctly acknowledging that "women's choices are often over-determined by social structures,"[16] her advocacy of third-wave feminism seeks to allow a wide variety of choices under the feminist umbrella that are not obviously feminist, such as erotic domination. I applaud her attempt to get beyond the carefree attitude that "feminism is whatever you want it to be" by acknowledging that many of the choices women make to cohere with patriarchy are difficult ones. I heartily agree with her distinction between making a choice because it feels good and making a choice upon which one has reflected and sought to reconcile with the fundamental ideals of self-determination, noncoercion, and equality (all of which sounds pretty second-wave to me; indeed as Snyder-Hall notes, S/M lesbianism was also part of the second wave).[17] But many, perhaps most, self-proclaimed



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third-wave women do not engage in such reflection particularly deeply. When my Ivy-League feminist undergraduates explain that they want to be stay-at-home mothers because taking care of children is the most important social activity that "anyone" can engage in, this never leads them to question why men do not do this work if it is so important; nor why, if it is so important, there is no financial remuneration for this labor, because they accept the "fact" that their husbands will support them without acknowledging the economically vulnerable position this puts them and their children in.

Snyder-Hall might say that these women are therefore not really feminists insofar as they fail the critical reflection test, but that of course gets us into a circular argument. After all, how are those criteria determined? But even the women who engage in such reflection do not often *live* their ambiguity: instead of proclaiming their choices are feminist, why not acknowledge the conditions that have shaped their choices, and work to change those conditions insofar as they can? It is valid to note the prostitutes who have control over their businesses and thus can view their choices as empowering, but it is bad faith to ignore the much larger number of prostitutes who are drug addicts and otherwise depend on exploitative pimps or organized crime. If, as Snyder-Hall notes, third-wave feminism "rejects judgmentalness,"[18] then politics is undermined, because you cannot be nonjudgmental and oppose patriarchy at the same time; that requires public, political engagement. And without politics, where is critical self-reflection going to come from? Indeed, without politics, what is feminism?

This is Ferguson's issue with choice feminism: she is concerned that such women are using feminism as an excuse to avoid politics. I agree with much of her argument; hiding behind the rubric of "it's my choice," these women defy being judged, claiming that judgmentalism is the ultimate patriarchal trap. She argues that feminists must judge, and be willing to disagree and conflict with each other about the choices they make; and really, what's wrong with that? Since when does judgmental reaction to something *prevent* you from doing it? Are such women confusing "judging" with "condemning," which is a particular *act* of judgment? The trap that third-wave feminists fall into is the fear of being criticized. That fear comes, I believe, from a fear of facing a reality that most women understand, but do not wish to say out loud: that our "choices" are often just a product of oppression, and we make these choices because we are afraid.

Marso suggests that the way to combat this fear is through community and solidarity with other women, another valuable insight into how oppression can be resisted. Forming a "genealogical" community does not require us to agree, she asserts; community provides the condition for choosing to be different from one another. "Political consciousness" requires an examination of what feminism entails, the principles that shape and guide it, and the extent to which one is comfortable with one's choices even when they go against feminism. I agree that creating feminist contexts is vital to women's ability to make free choices. As I have argued elsewhere, free choice for women requires changing the context so that women "participate in creating the options from which they can choose."[19] That context will of necessity allow for a wider, though less than perfect, range of choices for women. But as with Snyder-Hall, I would like Marso to go further: for instance, when she says a woman who removes her children from public schools because of misogynist attitudes in the schools "*might* be persuaded to turn her energy towards changing sexist attitudes in the school rather than withdrawing her child,"[20] I would suggest that does not go far enough. For the real question for feminists is: why *isn't* she fighting the school? Why is it *ever* acceptable to leave other kids to be subjected to misogyny? Feminism has never been about just my own freedom, much less about just my own kids: it's about freedom from gender constraints for all. Indeed, that is the insight of oppression that Marso sees: freedom is often seen as an individual concept, something that requires individuals to take action for themselves. But oppression acts across classes of people in ways that uniformly limit the possibilities of choice and action for individuals within the class. Hence, as Marso herself notes, a central problem with choice feminism is its return to the hyperindividualism that feminists have long critiqued: sexism is a structure of oppression, and it cannot be fought by individual withdrawals. But in that case, home schooling is not a feminist choice unless it is part of a larger, coordinated, collective effort to fight a structure of oppression.

I would dare to say that it's not even a *valid* choice, which brings me to the next point that these essays, choice feminists, *and* critics like Linda Hirshman all fail to see: Does feminism have to define every aspect of a feminist's life? Ferguson says that her students are reluctant "to condemn homemaking as a valid choice for women" because it would mean condemning "their own mothers—which they cannot do."[21] Aside from the fact that they in fact *can* do so but simply *do not wish to*—thereby ironically deflecting responsibility for a choice that they *do* make—that is to forget that feminist choices are not the only valid ones. We can support and love people who are not feminist, and even fight with them if they try to oppose our feminism. I judge my Republican father's electoral choices all the time, sometimes heatedly, but I still think he's a good person and I value him greatly. Marso suggests that if I voted for Clinton I might not be a feminist because of her record on the Iraq war. But like Ferguson's students, she conflates "feminist" with "valid." There were many reasons to favor Obama over Clinton in the Democratic primary, but feminism wasn't one of them. Clinton was



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the only self-identified feminist running for president who cared about women's rights and welfare, and advocated for women's empowerment and freedom on a wide range of issues, both domestically and internationally. Recall her speech at the 1995 U.N. Conference on Women in Bejing, which members of her own husband's administration did not want her to attend because of a single male Chinese prisoner. The theme of that speech was "women's rights are human rights," echoing that 1970s abortion slogan, sadly suggesting we haven't come very far at all. For all of Obama's good qualities, he did not attend to women until he won the nomination, and then only to the limited issues of equal pay and abortion. Indeed, he behaved in a dismissively sexist way toward Clinton herself on a number of occasions.[22]

But again, not everyone has to be a feminist; and feminists do not have to make every choice cohere with their feminism. That would set an impossible standard that no other political position requires. As all the contributors maintain in different ways, ambiguity is something that feminism must incorporate. Lots of things can justify valid choices, and feminists can value lots of things that are not specifically feminist, even if they are part of the larger leftist project of which feminism is also a part. I can even support your choice without accepting that it is a feminist one.

What this gestures toward is something that hovers on the edge of all of these essays but is never clearly identified by any: the distinction between *making a feminist choice* and *feminist reaction to a particular choice.* Contrary to Marso's opening paragraph, I find it hard to imagine circumstances where staying with an abusive partner is ever a *feminist choice,* but I can certainly see a feminist *supporting* such a choice. If the police cannot protect her and the woman will be safer if she stays, a feminist should seek to support and help her, perhaps giving her an emergency cell phone to help get her out of crisis situations, fighting for increased funding for housing alternatives and better employment training for women who have been out of the labor market, and working with police to be sure that protective orders are enforced in ways that protect the woman, and not the abuser.

Or, as Kirkpatrick suggests in her introduction, consider Sarah Palin. Palin was not a feminist choice for John McCain's vice-presidential running mate because of her opposition to issues of vital importance to the great majority of women, such as access to safe and affordable abortion, economic empowerment for poor women, or federally-funded childcare. It would be absurd to suggest that feminists were required to vote for her simply because she is a woman. However, feminist reaction to her nomination would have to condemn the multiple acts of sexism perpetrated by those on the left, who are supposed to support feminism: the rumors that her Down syndrome baby was really her daughter's, indeed fathered by Todd Palin (which was a classist as well as a sexist attack); the charges of hypocrisy because Palin is a "family values" Republican who won't be home taking care of her children (as if her husband couldn't do that, and as if a similar criticism would be made of a man); the "Palin is a Cunt" t-shirts (echoing the Clinton doll featuring a bear trap between its legs); and even the scornful moniker "beauty queen" (Palin was first runner-up in the Miss Alaska contest, her first and only pageant, only two years after she captained her high school basketball team to the state championship. She did not receive an athletic scholarship to college, as a boy would have, so turned to Miss America for what Title IX could not give her).[23] We might also critique the media's vaguely pornographic obsession with "is she ready?" which virtually upstaged her presidential running mate's long experience and his opponent's similar lack. This last point is even more amazing when we recall how little attention was paid to Joe Biden despite repeated verbal gaffes, and that Dan Quayle was all but ignored by the press in 1988.[24]

None of these reactions are tolerable by feminist standards. As feminists, faced with a choice we oppose, a choice that is clearly not feminist, we still have an ethical obligation to apply feminist standards to women and men with whom we disagree, who have made choices that we do not think fall under the feminist umbrella, when those choices are subjected to sexist evaluation. There were other ways, and valid reasons, to defeat the Republicans without turning Palin into our favorite punching bag.

What, then, does that mean for feminists puzzled by how to react to a well-educated professional woman who decides to give it all up to be a stay-at-home mother? To a significant degree, it requires doing what Linda Hirshman does. The fact that she critiques the way in which women have hidden behind the rubric of choice to excuse their reliance on traditional sexist patterns of social relations should not obscure that her argument is not really about choice per se: it's about the failure of women to take responsibility for their own lives. As noted feminist economist Heidi Hartmann has argued, women who have benefited from terrific privilege and social resources are failing to realize their potential, to take leadership positions, and hence, most importantly, to give back.[25] Because of these failures of responsibility, they have failed to change the power dynamics in the family and in society. They have thus turned themselves into victims while also being forced to reject that label so that they are unable to see they ways in which they are structurally disempowered. Such a woman may support abortion rights, public assistance for poor single mothers, and volunteer at a local domestic violence shelter. Those parts of her life cohere with her feminism. But it trivializes feminism both as a political stance and as an epistemological and ethical framework to call it *feminist* when a woman chooses to make herself and her children vulnerable to economic ruin by depending on the good will of an individual male; when she compromises



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her own goals for a man's simply because he's a man and she's not; when she fails to challenge the sexual division of labor that has been key to keeping women powerless in the modern era. It may be the best choice for her, she may have all sorts of valid reasons for making it. But it's not feminism. And perhaps that's fine.

In this, Ferguson's suggestion for "*practicing* judgment . . . a political skill we learn to do better by practicing it in the company of others"[26] is important to bringing out the distinction between judging a person and judging her choices or her acts. Politics should not be about who we are; it should be about what we do.

But of course what we do—the choices we make—occurs within a structure that is blatantly sexist. And seeing that requires the kind of community that Marso advocates, as well as the political self-awareness that Snyder-Hall suggests. From social pressure to have children, to hysteria about a child abuse "epidemic" in day care centers, to men's failure to adjust their work schedules to accommodate their parenting responsibilities, women are coerced, both subtly and overtly, into removing themselves from the labor market and be mothers. That is why the tax code provides such an interesting example of the kind of cultural reinforcement of patriarchy that Hirshman critiques; and it provides insight into both the materialism of psychology, and what the "second-wave" critique of "third-wave" feminism is about, namely realism. Hirshman cites Edward McCaffrey, who points out that the current tax code is a holdover from policies established in the 1930s and 1940s when the majority of married women were stay-at-home mothers. The code was altered to favor that arrangement, and taxed dual-income couples more heavily than single-income couples, particularly when adding in Social Security. Given that the former also needs to buy services like childcare and housework, and probably faces higher food costs due to time constraints, the marginal utility of the wife's additional income often made the family *worse off economically*. The clear message to her was: stay home and take care of your family.[27] This was made even worse in 1969, when a perceived penalty to single taxpayers was adjusted, and again in 1997 under the Clinton administration and the creeping inflation of the alternative minimum tax.[28] Even more ironic—or, depending on how cynical you are, more telling—is the fact that the more equal the spouses are in their earnings, the harsher the tax penalty.[29]

It makes sense in such a situation for women to choose to stay at home. We all want our work to be worth something, and in our society take-home pay is an indication of that. None of us wants to work twice as hard and end up worse off economically; that was a key theme of the feminist reaction to welfare reform. But such a decision comes from and reflects sexist structures that women inadvertently support by and through their choices.

The second-wave critique is not about money, however, but social value: it is concerned about women's leadership, about women's contributions to society, about women's serving as role models, about changing the way in which society is structured. When privileged women choose to be stay at home mothers, they turn their back on the essence of feminism. Feminists, ironically, must defend the rights of women to reject feminism; but we also are entitled to—indeed, must—point out how foolish that would be. To keep silent, to refuse engagement, to refuse judgment, is a choice for feminism's ultimate betrayal.

## Notes

1 Ironically, the disingenuous "compromise" slogan—"choose life"—does the same thing, as if choosing to have an abortion does not involve a woman's choosing to live her own life.
2 Pitkin 1966.
3 Ruddick 1989.
4 Gilligan 1982, Collins 1990, Hirschmann 1992, Smith 1987, Tronto 1993, Taylor, Gilligan, and Sullivan 1997.
5 E.g. Mink 1998, Sainsbury 1999, Hirschmann and Liebert, 2001.
6 Kruks 1995, 90; Foucault 1990.
7 Hirshman 2006. See also Mahoney 1995.
8 Hochschild 2001.
9 Fineman 1991.
10 Elster 1983. For a feminist take on adaptive preferences, see Nussbaum 2000.
11 Berlin 1979, 193.
12 Nussbaum 2000; Sen 1985.
13 Mahoney 1991.
14 Ferguson 2010, 248.
15 Hobbes 1985, ch 14., 192; ch. 18, 229. I discuss Hobbes's theory of freedom at greater length in Hirschmann 2008.
16 Snyder-Hall 2010, 256.
17 See, for example, Califia 1979. Indeed, The stereotypes that the third wave uses to describe second-wave feminism, while claiming a wide diversity for itself, presents a level of intellectual dishonesty that all of us in this symposium have been too polite to address in the interest of confronting the broader issues of freedom.
18 Snyder-Hall 2010, 259.
19 Hirschmann 2003, 221. Like Marso, I also draw on the Milan Women's Bookstore in my account of feminist community.
20 Marso 2010, 268, emphasis added.
21 Ferguson 2010, 249.
22 See Morgan 2008 for an excellent account of the feminist case for Clinton over Obama. See also Seligson 2008 and Carroll 2009 on sexism in the election. A number of examples of Obama's sexism during the campaign are available at the *Weekly*



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*Standard* website, http://www.weeklystandard.com/weblogs/TWSFP/2008/05/barack_obama_sexist.asp.

23 McCaffrey 2008.

24 Indeed, see Susan Rasky's (1988) highly complementary write-up of Quayle in which she said that Republicans thought he would "help overcome the 'gender gap'" because he was "attractive." Though it is arguably the case that Quayle had more experience than Palin—4 years in the house and one term in the Senate—that was not more than Hillary Clinton, who had 8 years in the Senate and 8 more as a proactive first lady—experience for which she was continually mocked, as if her experience as first lady was no different from that of Barbara or Laura Bush. As Tina Fey's send-up with Amy Poehler illustrated, the sexist parallels between Clinton and Palin's treatment in the media are significant, even if quite different in substance: Palin is excoriated for being a "girl," Clinton for being a "ball buster," but both are hated for being women. See the clip at http://www.nbc.com/Saturday_Night_Live/video/clips/palin-hillary-open/656281/

25 Hartmann 2004.

26 Ferguson 2010, 15.

27 McCaffrey 1997.

28 McCluskey 2003. Some minor relief was provided in 2003, under the Bush administration, ironically, but these changes will expire in 2010. Moreover, they help only those couples in the lowest tax bracket who do not itemize—clearly those most in need, but suggesting that poverty, not gender, was the motivating concern.

29 McCaffrey 1997; Stritof and Stritof, nd.

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