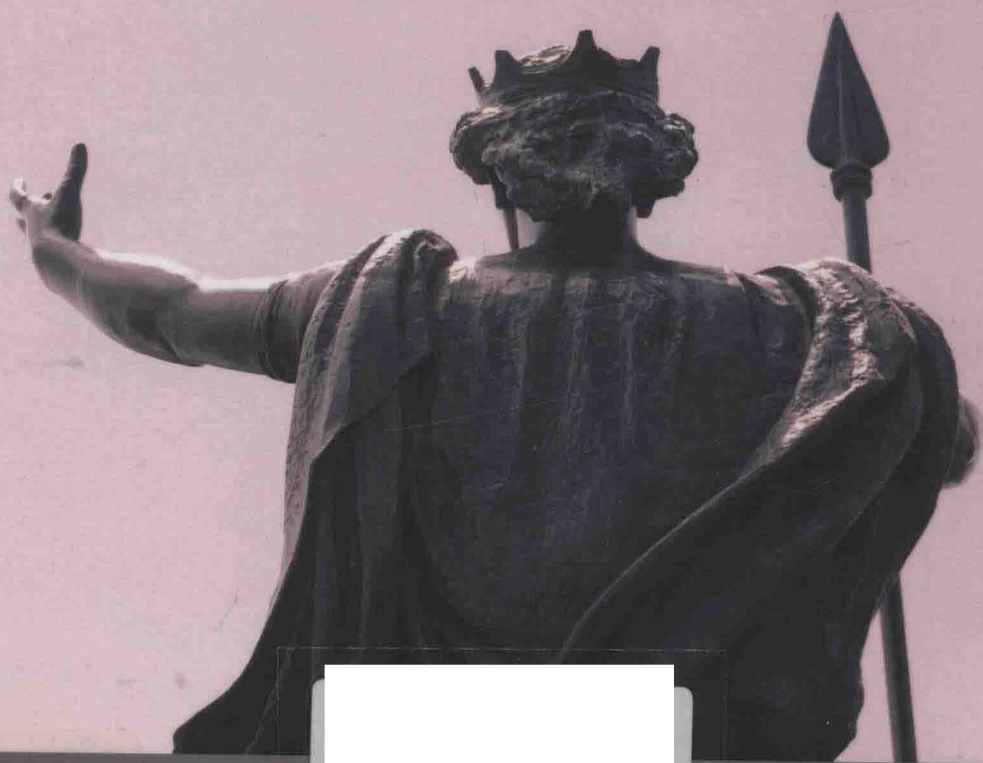


Studies in Feminist Philosophy

Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender



EDITED BY

Andrea Veltman
Mark Piper

Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender

Edited by Andrea Veltman
and
Mark Piper

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide.

Oxford New York
Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in
Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece
Guatemala Hungary Italy Japan Poland Portugal Singapore
South Korea Switzerland Thailand Turkey Ukraine Vietnam

Oxford is a registered trademark of Oxford University Press
in the UK and certain other countries.

Published in the United States of America by
Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016

© Oxford University Press 2014

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a
retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior
permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly permitted by law,
by license, or under terms agreed with the appropriate reproduction rights organization.
Inquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the above should be sent to the
Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the address above.

You must not circulate this work in any other form
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Autonomy, oppression, and gender / edited by Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper.
pages cm.—(Studies in feminist philosophy)

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-0-19-996910-4 (hardcover : alk. paper)—

ISBN 978-0-19-996911-1 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Autonomy (Philosophy) 2. Feminist theory. I. Veltman, Andrea.

B808.67.A985 2014

126—dc23

2013044775

1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2
Printed in the United States of America
on acid-free paper

Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender

Studies in Feminist Philosophy is designed to showcase cutting-edge monographs and collections that display the full range of feminist approaches to philosophy, that push feminist thought in important new directions, and that display the outstanding quality of feminist philosophical thought.

STUDIES IN FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY

Cheshire Calhoun, Series Editor

Advisory Board

Harry Brod, University of Northern Iowa

Claudia Card, University of Wisconsin

Lorraine Code, York University, Toronto

Kimberle Crenshaw, Columbia Law School/UCLA School of Law

Jane Flax, Howard University

Ann Garry, California State University, Los Angeles

Sally Haslanger, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Alison Jaggar, University of Colorado, Boulder

Helen Longino, Stanford University

Maria Lugones, SUNY Binghamton

Uma Narayan, Vassar College

James Sterba, University of Notre Dame

Rosemarie Tong, University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Nancy Tuana, Penn State University

Karen Warren, Macalester College

Recently Published in the Series:

Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self

Linda Martín Alcoff

Women and Citizenship

Edited by Marilyn Friedman

Women's Liberation and the Sublime: Feminism, Postmodernism, Environment

Bonnie Mann

Analyzing Oppression

Ann E. Cudd

Ecological Thinking: The Politics of Epistemic Location

Lorraine Code

Self Transformations: Foucault, Ethics, and Normalized Bodies

Cressida J. Heyes

Family Bonds: Genealogies of Race and Gender

Ellen K. Feder

Moral Understandings: A Feminist Study in Ethics, Second Edition

Margaret Urban Walker

The Moral Skeptic

Anita M. Superson

"You've Changed": Sex Reassignment and Personal Identity

Edited by Laurie J. Shrage

Dancing with Iris: The Philosophy of Iris

Marion Young

Edited by Ann Ferguson and Mechthild Nagel

Philosophy of Science after Feminism

Janet A. Kourany

Shifting Ground: Knowledge and Reality, Transgression and Trustworthiness

Naomi Scheman

The Metaphysics of Gender

Charlotte Witt

Unpopular Privacy: What Must We Hide?

Anita L. Allen

Adaptive Preferences and Women's Empowerment

Serene Khader

Minimizing Marriage: Marriage, Morality, and the Law

Elizabeth Brake

Out from the Shadows: Analytic Feminist Contributions to Traditional Philosophy

Edited by Sharon L. Crasnow and Anita M. Superson

The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and Resistant Imaginations

José Medina

Simone de Beauvoir and the Politics of Ambiguity

Sonia Kruks

Identities and Freedom: Feminist Theory Between Power and Connection

Allison Weir

Vulnerability: New Essays in Ethics and Feminist Philosophy

Edited by Catriona Mackenzie, Wendy Rogers, and Susan Dodds

Sovereign Masculinity: Gender Lessons from the War on Terror

Bonnie Mann

Autonomy, Oppression, and Gender

Edited by Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper

{ NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS }

Paul Benson is professor of philosophy and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Dayton. He works in the areas of moral psychology, action theory, and social philosophy. He has published on autonomy, free agency, oppressive socialization, and moral responsibility in journals such as *Journal of Philosophy*, *Hypatia*, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, *Philosophical Studies*, and *Journal of Social Philosophy*. He has also published in edited volumes on autonomy including *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism* (Cambridge, 2005, ed. Christman and Anderson), *Personal Autonomy* (Cambridge, 2005, ed. Taylor), *Moral Psychology: Feminist Ethics and Social Theory* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2004, ed. DesAutels and Walker), and *Relational Autonomy* (Oxford, 2000, ed. Mackenzie and Stoljar).

John Christman is professor of philosophy, political science, and women's studies at Pennsylvania State University. His is the author of various essays and books, including *The Myth of Property: Toward an Egalitarian Theory of Ownership* (Oxford, 1994), *Social and Political Philosophy: A Contemporary Introduction* (Routledge, 2002), and most recently *The Politics of Persons: Individual Autonomy and Socio-historical Selves* (Cambridge, 2009). He is editor of *The Inner Citadel: Essays on Individual Autonomy* (Oxford, 1989) and *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism: New Essays* (Cambridge, 2005, with Joel Anderson), and *Contemporary Debates in Political Philosophy* (Basil Blackwell, 2009, with Thomas Christiano).

Marilyn Friedman is W. Alton Jones Professor of Philosophy and professor of political science at Vanderbilt University. She works in the areas of political philosophy, feminist theory, and ethics and has published extensively in those areas. Her authored books include *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* (Oxford, 2003), and her edited collections include *Women and Citizenship* (Oxford, 2005). She has also published articles in journals such as *Ethics*, *Journal of Philosophy*, and *Hypatia*, as well as numerous book chapters in edited collections.

Nancy J. Hirschmann is professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania. Her books include *The Subject of Liberty: Toward a Feminist Theory of Freedom* (Princeton University Press, 2003), which won the 2004 Victoria Schuck Award for the best book on women and politics from the American

Political Science Association; *Gender, Class and Freedom in Modern Political Theory* (Princeton University Press, 2008); and *Rethinking Obligation: A Feminist Method for Political Theory* (Cornell University Press, 1992). She is also co-editor of several volumes including *Revisioning the Political: Feminist Reconstructions of Traditional Concepts in Western Political Theory* (Westview Press, 1996) and *Feminist Interpretations of Thomas Hobbes* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). She is also the author of many articles and has held fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Institute for Advanced Study, American Council of Learned Societies, and Princeton University Center for Human Values.

Anita Ho is associate professor at the W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics at the University of British Columbia and director of ethics services at Providence Health Care. She specializes in bioethics, social/political philosophy, and disability studies she has published on themes such as autonomy, informed consent, disability, and trust in journals including *American Journal of Bioethics*, *Journal of Medical Ethics*, and *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*. She has also co-edited an anthology titled *The Reflective Woman* (Coply, 2002) and an issue of *Teaching Philosophy* (Special Issue on Disability in the Classroom, 2007, with Anita Silvers). She is currently working on a project on trust and autonomy in clinical and research medicine, supported by a research grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and another project on supportive decision making in health care, funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Catriona Mackenzie is associate dean (research), professor of philosophy, and director of the Research Centre for Agency, Values and Ethics at Macquarie University, Sydney. She is co-editor of several volumes, including *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self* (Oxford, 2000, with Natalie Stoljar), *Practical Identity and Narrative Agency* (Routledge, 2008, with Kim Atkins), and *Vulnerability: New Essays in Ethics and Feminist Philosophy* (Oxford, 2013, with Wendy Rogers and Susan Dodds). Mackenzie has published widely in moral psychology, ethics, applied ethics, and feminist philosophy in a variety of edited collections and in journals including *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, *Hypatia*, *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, *Journal of Social Philosophy*, and *Philosophical Explorations*.

Diana Tietjens Meyers is emerita professor of philosophy at the University of Connecticut. She has held the Ellacuría Chair of Social Ethics at Loyola University, Chicago, and the Laurie Chair in Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers University. She works in four main areas of philosophy—philosophy of action, feminist ethics and aesthetics, and human rights theory. Her

monographs are *Inalienable Rights: A Defense* (Columbia University Press, 1985), *Self, Society, and Personal Choice* (Columbia University Press, 1989), *Subjection and Subjectivity: Psychoanalytic Feminism and Moral Philosophy* (Routledge, 1994), and *Gender in the Mirror: Cultural Imagery and Women's Agency* (Oxford University Press, 2002). *Being Yourself: Essays on Identity, Action, and Social Life* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2004) collects some of her previously published essays as well as presenting one new one. She is at work on a new monograph, *Victims' Stories and the Advancement of Human Rights*, and a new edited collection, *Poverty, Agency, and Human Rights* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

Marina Oshana is professor of philosophy at the University of California, Davis. Her research focuses on issues in personal autonomy, responsible agency, and self-identity. She teaches classes in normative ethics, moral psychology, philosophy of law, political philosophy, and feminism. Her publications include *Personal Autonomy in Society* (Ashgate, 2006) and *The Importance of How We See Ourselves: Self-Identity and Responsible Agency* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2010).

Mark Piper is assistant professor of philosophy at James Madison University. His principal research interests are in normative ethical theory, with a special concentration on the topics of autonomy and well-being. He has published articles and book chapters on autonomy, virtue ethics, well-being, justice, and the value of education in venues such as *Journal of Value Inquiry*, *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, and *Southwest Philosophical Review*. He is also the author of "Autonomy: Normative" in the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. He is currently working on a monograph on the principle of respect for autonomy.

Natalie Stoljar is associate professor in the Department of Philosophy and the Institute for Health and Social Policy at McGill University. She is co-editor of the collection *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency and the Social Self* (Oxford University Press, 2000, with Catriona Mackenzie). She is the author of many articles on the philosophy of law, feminist philosophy, and autonomy, in journals and edited collections including *Philosophical Topics*, *Legal Theory*, and *Journal of Political Philosophy*. She is working on a book on self-government under conditions of oppression.

Anita M. Superson is professor of philosophy at the University of Kentucky. She specializes in ethics, including metaethics, moral psychology, normative and applied ethics, and feminism. Her recent books include *The Moral Skeptic* (Oxford University Press, 2009) and *Out from the Shadows: Analytical*

Feminist Contributions to Traditional Philosophy (Oxford University Press, 2012, co-edited with Sharon Crasnow). She is working on a book on bodily autonomy.

Christine Tappolet is full professor in the Department of Philosophy at the Université de Montréal. Her research interests lie mainly in metaethics, normative ethics, moral psychology, and emotion theory. She has edited a number of volumes, including *Weakness of Will and Practical Irrationality* (Oxford University Press, 2003, with Sarah Stroud), *The Modularity of Emotions* (*Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 2008, with Luc Faucher). She is the author of numerous articles on themes such as values, normativity, weakness of will, procrastination, autonomy, and emotions and of two books, *Émotions et valeurs* (Presses Universitaires de France, 2000) and *Les concepts de l'éthique. Faut-il être conséquentialiste?* (Hermann Éditeurs, 2008, with Ruwen Ogien). She is currently working on a book manuscript titled *Emotions, Values, and Agency*.

Andrea Veltman is associate professor of philosophy at James Madison University. She has edited *Social and Political Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 2008), *Oppression and Moral Agency* (Special Issue of *Hypatia*, 2009, with Kathryn Norlock), and *Evil, Political Violence and Forgiveness* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2009, with Kathryn Norlock). She is also author of articles on feminist ethics and on Simone de Beauvoir, Hannah Arendt, Jean-Paul Sartre, Kant, Plato, and Aristotle in journals such as *Hypatia* and *Journal of Value Inquiry*. She is currently working on a monograph on meaningful work and human flourishing.

Andrea C. Westlund is associate professor of philosophy and women's studies at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. She works in ethics, moral psychology, and feminist philosophy and has published in journals including *Hypatia*, *Monist*, *Philosopher's Imprint*, *Philosophical Studies*, and *Philosophical Review*. Her research focuses on relational autonomy, authority, and self-regarding attitudes, and she is currently working on a series of papers on narrative, meaning, and the self.

{ CONTENTS }

Notes on Contributors vii

1. Introduction 1
ANDREA VELTMAN AND MARK PIPER

PART I Autonomy and Independence

2. Three Dimensions of Autonomy: A Relational Analysis 15
CATRIONA MACKENZIE
3. Relational Autonomy and Independence 42
MARILYN FRIEDMAN
4. Autonomy? Or Freedom? A Return to Psychoanalytic Theory 61
NANCY J. HIRSCHMANN

PART II Autonomy and Normative Commitments

5. Feminist Commitments and Relational Autonomy 87
PAUL BENSON
6. The Feminist Debate over Values in Autonomy Theory 114
DIANA TIETJENS MEYERS
7. A Commitment to Autonomy Is a Commitment to Feminism 141
MARINA OSHANA

PART III Autonomy, Reasons, and Care

8. Emotions, Reasons, and Autonomy 163
CHRISTINE TAPPOLET
9. Autonomy and Self-Care 181
ANDREA C. WESTLUND

PART IV Autonomy, Oppression, and Adaptive Preferences

10. Coping or Oppression: Autonomy and Adaptation to Circumstance 201
JOHN CHRISTMAN
11. Autonomy and Adaptive Preference Formation 227
NATALIE STOLJAR

PART V **Autonomy in Social Contexts**

12. Raising Daughters: Autonomy, Feminism, and Gender Socialization	255
MARK PIPER	
13. Autonomy and Oppression at Work	280
ANDREA VELTMAN	
14. The Right to Bodily Autonomy and the Abortion Controversy	301
ANITA M. SUPERSON	
15. Choosing Death: Autonomy and Ableism	326
ANITA HO	
Index	351

Introduction

Andrea Veltman and Mark Piper

If feminism is a response to the oppression of women, and if resistance and emancipation include living according to one's own lights, then autonomy is central to issues in feminist philosophy. Classically defined as self-determination, autonomy includes the ability to shape our own lives and to live authentically rather than being directed by external forces that manipulate or distort us.¹ Some influential accounts define autonomy as requiring a process of critical self-reflection, whereas others emphasize several agential competencies, values, or self-regarding attitudes. Still others argue that autonomy requires control over one's circumstances, a range of options that one can hope to achieve in the development of her life, and a lack of severe constraint, coercion, or subordination in which one would be subject to the dictates of others.² Each of these kinds of accounts of autonomy can recognize the social and relational character of human agency, and each can acknowledge that autonomous abilities can be undermined by severely oppressive social forces, for instance by stifling the development of critical intellectual faculties or by blocking life options among the oppressed.

Autonomy provides not only an emancipatory ideal for those who cope with systemic abuse, degradation, domination, or other forms of oppression but also a lens for illuminating philosophical issues surrounding women's desires, choices, and identities. Feminist philosophers working in this area ponder, for instance, whether women can freely or authentically accept conditions that support their own oppression. Should we give credence to reflectively endorsed desires and choices that are the result of socially subordinate positions? Is the pursuit of desires that issue from patriarchal norms consistent with autonomous agency? What do we say about women who are willingly self-abnegating or wholly deferential to the interests of others? An analysis

¹ As characterized by John Christman, "Autonomy in Moral and Political Philosophy," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, August 2009.

² Marina Oshana, "Personal Autonomy in Society," *Journal of Social Philosophy* 29:1 (Spring 1998): 81-102; Oshana, *Personal Autonomy in Society* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2006).

of autonomy serves crucially in illuminating these and related questions, informing evaluations of women who adopt symbols of gender oppression, who define themselves through unequal personal relationships, or who harm themselves or others in conforming to cultural norms.

Autonomy plays an important role not only in feminism but also, more broadly, in ethical theory, applied ethics, political philosophy, and the philosophy of education. In the area of ethical theory, it has been argued that autonomy is integral in living well—that is, that autonomy is one primary good among others that a person needs to lead a good life or to achieve human flourishing. Autonomy also supports such basic human values as dignity, respect, truthfulness, and moral responsibility: in the vein of Kant, mature and rational human beings are seen as free and responsible moral agents in virtue of our capacities to control ourselves through the exercise of our autonomous wills. In applied ethics, autonomy informs ever-burgeoning debates on issues surrounding, for example, abortion, birth, physician-assisted suicide, and same-sex marriage. A principle of respect for autonomy also lies at the core of liberal democracies, and political philosophers often invoke autonomy in evaluating social and political principles and political power as well as in grounding individual rights or in criticizing paternalistic policies or practices. Since enhancing autonomy ranks among the most important goals of a free society, some also argue that promoting autonomy is among the most important goals of a liberal education.³ These branches of philosophical interest in autonomy intertwine with feminist work on autonomy, as issues involving gender and oppression deeply permeate ethical and political philosophy.

Insofar as liberal democracies value individual autonomy, ideals of autonomy provide norms for critiquing oppressive practices that stifle agency and limit opportunities. If living autonomously requires an agent to have “a significant array of opportunities to act in ways that reflect what deeply matters to her,” as Marilyn Friedman writes, then social conditions “should not so limit her options that she cannot choose or act for the sake of any of her deep values and commitments.”⁴ Oppression not only limits opportunities and life options, thus preventing an oppressed person from acting autonomously in ways that reflect her values and commitments, but also deforms desires and infects “the conditions under which growing persons are socialized.”⁵ Oppressive socialization can damage a person’s concern for herself and stifle the development of cognitive capacities, such as those employed in self-reflection or the critical appraisal of social norms.

³ For more on the importance of autonomy in normative philosophy, see Mark Piper, “Autonomy: Normative,” in the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, December 2010.

⁴ Marilyn Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 18.

⁵ Friedman, *Autonomy, Gender, Politics*, 19.

Classically defined as a weighing down or as harsh dominion, oppression is characterized in contemporary feminist philosophy as structural or systemic in nature. In her landmark feminist analysis of oppression, Marilyn Frye writes that it encompasses "a system of interrelated barriers and forces which reduce, immobilize and mold people who belong to a certain group, and effect their subordination to another group."⁶ Others add that oppression presents multiple faces, including marginalization, exploitation, and powerlessness, and extends beyond economic and political forces to include psychological barriers that reduce, limit, or mold people as members of certain groups.⁷ Ann Cudd also clarifies that, by means of physical violence, economic domination, and psychologically coercive forces, oppression is essentially "an institutionally structured harm perpetrated on groups by other groups," in which a privileged social group benefits from the harm endured by the oppressed.⁸

Oppression can distort or damage the self-conception of an oppressed person, alienating her from her authentic self and further molding her into subordinate positions. As Sandra Bartky highlights in her work on the psychological dimensions of oppression, an oppressed person can come not only to adopt desires and values that are not her own but also to hold beliefs about herself that reflect social positions of inferiority: "to be psychologically oppressed is to be weighed down in your own mind; it is to have a harsh dominion exercised over your self-esteem."⁹ The oppressed internalize a message of inferiority, as when, for instance, women are regarded by others and come to regard themselves as childlike, as cheap labor, or as objects for the gaze or sexual pleasure of others.¹⁰ As Michael Walzer writes in conveying another example from working life, "When a garbage-man feels stigmatized by the work he does... the stigma shows in his eyes. He enters 'into collusion with us to avoid contaminating us with his lowly self.' He looks away; and we do too. 'Our eyes do not meet. He becomes a non-person.'"¹¹ To feel oneself inferior or to feel oneself worthless as a person poses a threat to autonomy by undermining self-respect, which is necessary for the realization of autonomous agency on some accounts.¹²

⁶ Marilyn Frye, *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory* (Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1993), 33.

⁷ Sandra Bartky, "On Psychological Oppression" and Iris Marion Young, "Five Faces of Oppression" reprinted in *Feminist Theory: A Philosophical Anthology*, edited by Ann Cudd and Robin Andreasen (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005).

⁸ Ann Cudd, *Analyzing Oppression* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 26, cf. 23–27.

⁹ Bartky, "On Psychological Oppression," 105.

¹⁰ Bartky, "On Psychological Oppression," 106, 112.

¹¹ Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 176. Walzer here cites Stewart E. Perry's *San Francisco Scavengers: Dirty Work and the Pride of Ownership* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 7.

¹² As Joel Anderson and Axel Honneth write, practices that confer denigration or humiliation threaten "self-esteem by making it much harder (and, in limit cases, even impossible) to think of oneself as worthwhile. The resulting feelings of shame and worthlessness threaten one's sense that there is

In thinking about autonomy and gender oppression, it is important to recognize at the start that autonomy has “long been coded masculine,” as Jane Dryden writes.¹³ Given historical and ideological exclusions of women from ideals of autonomy, some feminist philosophers have looked askance at conceptions of autonomy, at times rejecting the value altogether. One classic criticism, in circulation since the 1980s, is that autonomy is drawn from male biographies and bound up with socially atomistic and individualistic conceptions of human beings, such that autonomy is antithetical to the personal connections and social bonds around which many women reflectively form self-identities. In this earlier wave of feminist scholarship on autonomy, basic questions asked by philosophers concern whether autonomy requires self-sufficiency at the expense of human connections, whether women find the ideal of autonomy alienating, and whether feminine or feminist moral concerns require different conceptions of autonomy, relative to those that have been dominant in the history of philosophy or in contemporary moral and political philosophy.

This skeptical stance toward classic ideals of autonomy forms part of the starting point for work on relational conceptions of autonomy, in which feminist philosophers rehabilitate autonomy to accommodate the social character of human agency. Accounts of relational autonomy draw attention to the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which agents are embedded and to the fact that autonomy is a capability of human agents who are not only rational but also “emotional, embodied, desiring, creative and feeling.”¹⁴ Those who offer accounts of relational autonomy also analyze the effect of oppressive socialization upon human agency and underscore that autonomy should not be cast as antithetical to human connections, including those manifested in love, friendship, appropriate care, and even loyalty and devotion.

Feminist accounts of relational autonomy have now changed the landscape of autonomy studies, shifting philosophical thinking about autonomy toward the social and interpersonal dynamics that shape agency, desires, and choices.¹⁵ Feminist scholarship has focused attention on the need for a finer and richer account of agency, and there is now a fair amount of agreement that autonomous agency is saturated with self–other relations. As Friedman notes,

point to one’s undertakings. And without that sense of one’s aspirations being worth pursuing, one’s agency is hampered.” Anderson and Honneth, “Autonomy, Vulnerability, Recognition and Justice,” in *Autonomy and the Challenges to Liberalism: New Essays*, edited by John Christman and Joel Anderson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 131.

¹³ Jane Dryden, “Autonomy: Overview,” in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, November 2010.

¹⁴ Catriona Mackenzie and Natalie Stoljar, “Introduction: Autonomy Refigured,” in *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency and the Social Self*, edited by Mackenzie and Stoljar (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 21; Natalie Stoljar, “Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy,” in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Summer 2013.

¹⁵ See, e.g., John Christman, “Autonomy in Moral and Political Philosophy.”

philosophical conceptions of autonomy—as opposed to conceptions of autonomy that may be culturally dominant—now seldom suggest that autonomy requires a self-sufficient or self-made person.¹⁶ Adaptive preferences formed in the context of oppressive circumstances, such as preferences for subservience or for iconic symbols of gender oppression, also now serve as formidable potential counterexamples to purely proceduralist accounts of autonomy, which typically hold that an agent's autonomy in relation to a commitment is secured merely by the agent's endorsement of it, assuming the agent's reflection is suitably independent.

Since the publication of the landmark collection *Relational Autonomy* in 2000, feminist philosophers and autonomy scholars have continued debate over the conditions necessary for autonomous choice, the satisfactoriness of value-neutral accounts of autonomy, and the respect-worthiness of preferences formed in adaptive contexts, among other issues. For instance, in developing feminist accounts of autonomy, some theorists maintain that women who act subserviently or upon preferences formed in oppressive circumstances are not autonomous.¹⁷ Others, however, argue that respecting the agency and deliberative capacities of oppressed women requires that we not characterize such women as “compliant dupes of patriarchy”¹⁸ and that women living in severely oppressive conditions find outlets for the exercise of autonomy.¹⁹ Both lines of argument initially appear plausible: as Diana Meyers observes, value-neutral accounts of autonomy, in which autonomy does not require choosing particular values, such as equality or independence, appear attractive partly on account of showing respect for women who choose subservience or deference. On the other hand, value-saturated accounts appear attractive on account of highlighting the autonomy-subverting costs of living under oppressive systems.²⁰

In *Gender in the Mirror*, Meyers notes that both value-neutral and value-saturated accounts of autonomy are troubling: value-saturated accounts appear to stigmatize some women as victims, to homogenize autonomous and

¹⁶ Marilyn Friedman, “Autonomy, Social Disruption and Women,” in *The Feminist Philosophy Reader*, edited by Alison Bailey and Chris Cuomo (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008). See also Friedman's chapter “Relational Autonomy and Independence” in this volume.

¹⁷ Natalie Stoljar, “Autonomy and the Feminist Intuition,” in Mackenzie and Stoljar, *Relational Autonomy*.

¹⁸ Uma Narayan, “Minds of Their Own: Choices, Autonomy, Cultural Practices and Other Women,” in *A Mind of One's Own: Feminist Essays on Reason and Objectivity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002).

¹⁹ John Christman, “Relational Autonomy, Liberal Individualism, and the Social Construction of Selves,” *Philosophical Studies* 117 (2004): 143–164; Andrea Westlund, “Rethinking Relational Autonomy,” *Hypatia* 24 (2009): 26–49; Serene J. Khader, *Adaptive Preferences and Women's Empowerment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

²⁰ Diana Tietjens Meyers, *Gender in the Mirror: Cultural Imagery and Women's Agency* (New York: Oxford University Press 2002), 11.

authentic lives, and to overlook the agency women exercise even in contexts of oppressive circumstances. Yet value-neutral accounts serve poorly as tools of social critique and suffer on account of packing autonomy into purely procedural processes of reflection that effectively “neglect the possibility that a well-integrated, smoothly-functioning self could be in need of rigorous scrutiny and drastic overhaul.”²¹ In light of potential pitfalls of both approaches, Meyers argues that a compelling feminist account of autonomy “must acknowledge that oppression impedes autonomy without stripping women of that autonomy which they have managed to wrest from a patriarchal, racist, heterosexist, ageist, class-stratified world.”²² In her contribution to this volume, she further distinguishes ways values enter autonomy theories, demarcating new conceptual axes along which to position accounts of autonomy.

In this collection of new papers, leading scholars carry forward examinations of central theoretical and practical issues at the intersection of autonomy studies and feminist philosophy. Contributors examine fundamental components and commitments of autonomy, examining for instance the role of reflective deliberation, reasons, values, cares, emotions, self-worth, self-care, adaptive preferences, social and political commitments, and norms of independence in accounts of autonomy. Some papers pursue the question of whether autonomy is compatible with subordination, including forms of gender subordination and class-based subordination. Others examine how ideals of autonomy are affected by capitalism, political commitments to inclusivity, and feminist emphases on the relationality of human agency. In looking at autonomy amid oppression, the volume represents a plurality of perspectives about autonomy. Some contributors examine the agency of women and oppressed persons through the lens of value-neutral accounts of autonomy, whereas others utilize dialogical accounts, capabilities accounts, or thicker value-saturated accounts. Still others make meta-arguments about the merits of different kinds of approaches relative to feminist ambitions. A number of papers focus on assessing autonomy in social contexts in which agents form adaptive preferences or internalize gendered norms, and some focus on how autonomy bears in social and personal contexts of raising girls, working, pregnancy and abortion, and end-of-life decisions.

We have organized the papers in the volume into five sections, beginning with an initial cluster that explores key dimensions of the concept of autonomy, especially in regards to its relational character and associated notions of independence and freedom. In Chapter 2, Catriona Mackenzie focuses on the concept of autonomy itself. According to Mackenzie, one of the key reasons that autonomy remains a contested value is because philosophers have tended to

²¹ Meyers, *Gender in the Mirror*, 16.

²² Meyers, *Gender in the Mirror*, 16.