



Gilmore Girls and the Politics of Identity: Essays on Family and Feminism in the Television Series

Ritch Calvin (Editor)

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

Gilmore Girls and the Politics of Identity: Essays on Family and Feminism in the Television Series

Ritch Calvin (Editor)

Gilmore Girls and the Politics of Identity: Essays on Family and Feminism in the Television Series

Ritch Calvin (Editor)

This work examines the *Gilmore Girls* from a post-feminist perspective, evaluating how the show's main female characters and supporting cast fit into the classic portrayal of feminine identity on popular television. The book begins by placing *Gilmore Girls* in the context of the history of feminism and feminist television shows such as *Mary Tyler Moore* and *One Day at a Time*. The remainder of the essays look at series' portrayal of traditional and non-traditional gender identities and familial relationships. Topics include the hyper-real utopia represented by *Gilmore Girls*' fictional Stars Hollow; the faux-feminist perspective offered by Rory Gilmore's unfulfilling (and often masochistic) romantic relationships; the ways in which "mean girl" Paris Geller both adheres to and departs from the traditional archetype of female power and aggression; and the role of Lorelai Gilmore's oft-criticized marriage in destroying the show's central theme of single motherhood during its seventh season. The work also studies the role of food and its consumption as a narrative device throughout the show's development, evaluating the ways in which food negotiates, defines, and upholds the characters' gendered and class performances. The work also includes a complete episode guide listing the air date, title, writer, and director of every episode in the series.

Gilmore Girls and the Politics of Identity: Essays on Family and Feminism in the Television Series Details

Date : Published June 1st 2008 by McFarland & Company (first published May 1st 2008)

ISBN : 9780786437276

Author : Ritch Calvin (Editor)

Format : Paperback 221 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Feminism, Writing, Essays, Media Tie In, Tv, Culture, Pop Culture

 [Download Gilmore Girls and the Politics of Identity: Essays on F ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Gilmore Girls and the Politics of Identity: Essays on ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Gilmore Girls and the Politics of Identity: Essays on Family and Feminism in the Television Series Ritch Calvin (Editor)

From Reader Review Gilmore Girls and the Politics of Identity: Essays on Family and Feminism in the Television Series for online ebook

Julianne Dunn says

Recommended by Alex Thomas

Amanda Raab says

I was never an avid watcher of the show, mostly because I was involved with other fandoms, and even I could only take so much pop culture-filled banter. (I know; surprised me, too.) But I always liked the show, in general, watched about 2/3ds of it, and I loves me a good pop culture deconstruction.

Highlights from the collection include a celebration of the brittle and brutal Paris Gellar ("Reinventing the bitch : the dynamicism of Paris Gellar" by Anglea Ridinger-Dotterman), an insightful look into myth of Rory's goodness ("Drats! foiled again : a contrast in definitions" by Anne K. Burke Erickson), and food as power for women ("Wheat balls, Gravlox, Pop Tarts : mothering and power" by Melanie Haupt).

"Got MILF? Losing Lorelai in season seven" by Tiffany Aldrich MacBain and Mita Mahato elicited the strongest reaction from me. I actually watched most of that final season and was rather amused with the outrage from GG fanbase when the new MALE show-runner had Lorelai marry Christopher in a moment of heartbreak-filled impetuousness. This essay fully stands by that rage, citing how out of character it was for Lorelai to do so and how it neutered the flirty, sexy single mom. She was now a wife, ruining the fantasy of millions of married female watchers who wanted to be her. The authors say her eventual divorce and journey back to soulmate diner proprietor Luke was the show writers' hasty retreat from an ill-advised storyline.

But I must disagree. Lorelai finally giving in to Christopher's romantic entreaties are perfectly in character. She has known and loved him all her life; he's the father of her child. And she always seemed tempted to follow that "what if" of actually having an adult relationship with him. Marrying Christopher was a mistake* she had to make, to kill the curiosity and for her to finally figure out what she wanted in life and love. And the essay supports this, articulating the issues of class, money, and parenting values (re: Chris' daughter Gigi) that doom Lorelai and Christopher to failure. And it was great to see the issues played out with a peer, rather than in yet one more Friday night dinner argument with her parents.

We as an audience should also realize that at this point Lorelai has an empty nest; Rory is in her final year of college and living on her own so Lorelai is not so much the day-to-day mom anymore. If anything she's following a parallel path of inquiry with Rory: do I enter the realm of wealth and privilege of my significant other (Chris and Logan) of dubious reliability or maintain a more independent path? Obviously, they both choose the latter (Rory reporting on the Obama campaign and Lorelai reconnects with Luke, who, in his Bridget Jonesian way, likes Lorelai just the way she is).

The essayists do make an intriguing argument on the influx of men in the plots of season seven: Luke attempting to gain custody of his daughter, Christopher's new pronounced role in Lorelai's life, Logan's attempts at maturing, Richard's health problems, Jackson lying about getting a vasectomy**. Here there

instances of women of the show becoming subservient to men in ways they haven't been before, as Sookie goes ahead and has the kid (just bad), and Rory tries to civilize and domesticate Logan (how cliché!). But classifying Lorelai helping her father after his heart attack as subservient is a bit too cynical for me. Her father almost died; wouldn't she be by his side at the hospital? Wouldn't she be concerned about his recovery? Since when is natural familial love an affront to independence? And anyway, I believe most of her time was spent helping Emily adjust to life with an infirm husband. Emily, who's only successful role has been as the elegant corporate wife and is freaking out at the thought of losing the man who has defined her life. Lorelai is the one who calms her down and teaches her how to be more independent, and deal with finances. The only absurdly contrived storyline was Luke's magically appearing daughter***, and she was introduced by the show's creator in season six.

*The marriage was a mistake, of course, and the character seemed to know it immediately, denting one of the essayists' assertions. After a falling out with Luke she ran to the person she knew would always be waiting for her; so the relationship was rooted in disappointment and an element of complacency.

**This situation was also mined for comedy on 30 Rock and I don't get what's so funny about it: pregnancy is a huge deal and it takes an incredibly cowardly, thoughtless man to do that to the woman he supposedly loves. So he gets snipped and has a few days of discomfort. Try shoving a casaba melon through your dick and dealing with the physical and emotional ramifications of that, dude.

***April was still more tolerable than Dawn, though.

Kyla says

A rag-tag collection of dubious insights on a great TV show - too uneven to recommend.

Noora says

Kiinnostava lukea tieteellistä tekstiä yhdestä lempisarjoistani. Osa artikkeleista oli erittäin mielenkiintoisia, osa taas tuntui hieman kaukaa haetuilta ja välillä tuntui, ettei kirjoittaja ollut katsonut lainkaan samaa sarjaa edes... Uusia huomioita tekstien lukemisesta kyllä sai ja voi olla, että joitain sarjan jaksoja katsoo jatkossa hieman eri tavalla. Muuten en usko esseiden vaikuttavan Gilmoren tyttöjen katseluuni juuri mitenkään, paitsi että kirjaa lukiessa teki mieli alkaa katsomaan jaksoja dvd:ltä...

Esther says

Patchy. Some parts I really enjoyed, others had me dozing. Could definitely have used some subbing - both in the copyediting sense and the wider editing sense.

Jennie says

****~~~~GILMORE GIRLS SERIES SPOILERS~~~~****

I randomly searched my library's catalog for Gilmore Girls a few weeks ago and this popped up. Cool! I put it on hold and finished it over the weekend.

GUYS. It was TOTAL CRAP CRAP CRAP CRAP! I was so pissed off on the plane I wanted to punch someone.

Here are a few jems that I found. I stopped making notes at a certain point because I was so mad. I skimmed the other essays and they were as ridiculously error-prone and had just as big of suggestive leaps.

“Rory Gilmore and Faux Feminism” by Molly McCaffrey (page 35)

Page 35 - “Though Rory’s father was willing to marry Lorelai and her parents were willing to let her reside at home during her pregnancy, Lorelai refused both offers of support...”

WRONG. Lorelai DID live at home during her pregnancy. She didn’t leave until after Rory was born.

Page 38 - “Soon, Marty, like Jess, is driven away by Rory’s fickleness, revealing her desire not to be with a man who treats her as an equal and with respect.”

HOW ON EARTH can this assumption be made? The page goes on to suggest that because Rory didn’t return Marty’s feelings, she clearly doesn’t understand that romantic relationships have friendship foundations.

MAYBE SHE JUST DIDN’T LIKE MARTY ROMANTICALLY????

Page 39 - “In another revealing scene, Rory expresses a need to change out of her stuffy Daughter of the American Revolution clothes, and Logan stops her, claiming she has the “hot librarian thing going on”, effectively reducing her to a physical trophy.”

SO, any comment on looking good reduces a woman to a physical trophy?

Page 44- “Interestingly, the pressure that the senior Gilmores exert on Rory is most often related to her grandfather’s desire for her to go to Yale even though both Emily and Richard went to school there.”

WRONG. Emily didn’t go to Yale.

Page 46 - “Without considering the consequences of her actions, she allows her grandparents to pay for her tuition at both Chilton and Yale, buy her a new car for her high school graduation, and decorate her freshman dorm room like a luxury hotel.”

UM, WHAT? I don’t think that Rory had any say in her grandparents paying for Chilton. And the car was a gift. How do you refuse a gift from YOUR GRANDPARENTS?

“Food Fights” by Lindsay Coleman (page 175)

Page 189 - Indeed, Rory’s reference to Luke as Hagrid is one of the more apt references/analogies which the series has formulated.

WRONG! April told Luke that ANNA and her friends call him Hagrid!

Alia says

Gilmore fun

It isn't that often I come across a book whose only flaws are a few typos and the fact that seemingly no one has noticed that Lorelai ran away when Rory was one. Statistically speaking, though, I guess it was bound to happen.

Emily says

I mostly liked the essays in the book, though some of the inaccuracies made me want to pull my hair out.

kate says

i can't believe someone wrote this and that person wasn't me tbh

Melanie says

I have an essay in this book. Read it!!!

Katy Mulvaney says

I annoyed even my friends who enjoy talking about the problems in Gilmore Girls going on and on about this one. Luckily, two of my friends were watching the series for the first time with the benefit of not being established fans.

My one wish is that the book had been written after the Netflix revival so that it could incorporate the complicated mess it made of many of the issues addressed in the series.

Not all essays were equal -- I thought describing the relationship between Lorelai and Rory as masculine/feminine was tortured -- but the dissection of Rory and the multiple layered takes on Paris were a mix between revelations and much-needed affirmation that others saw the problems I did in the series as an adult looking back. Even while watching, truth be told, from the second half of season three forward.

It doesn't knock the drop in writing or color palette the way normal online criticism does but applies academic theories in a (usually) quite readable way that aims to address the way that soft fantasy escapist television shows that want to be about women without being quite feminist operate in our cultural landscape.

Okay, that last sentence was too much academic speak. Apologies.

Ariana Brinckerhoff says

Not the best written essays of all time, but a nice variety of topics and perspectives.

Carol says

Found several errors already. "Pendleton Lott." Really? And Emily and Richard both went to Yale. Huh. And did you know that the Dragonfly was a B&B? All of these mistakes made me feel that the essayists didn't know their subject as well as they should have. Some interesting ideas, though. One topic on music was interesting, pointing out that there isn't as much of a generation gap as in previous generations because we all listen to the same music. Another made the point that Lorelai's character traits could be seen as masculine and that Rory was feminine to balance her out, and that demanded that the guys they fell for keep that same balance. (Although I conceded the point, I sincerely think that Luke Danes would beat you up for calling him feminine.) There was a chapter discussing food and food flirting. The last chapter on how the internet now provides fan interaction on a whole new level was interesting.

All of this was thought-provoking, but sometimes when I read introspective stuff like this I just think, sure, it could be a symbol of some larger meaning...or could it just be that Amy and Dan wrote it that way because it sounded funnier.

Susan says

This book was fun, an intellectual dissection of one of my most favorite shows. Interesting reading if you liked the show and also enjoy intellectual commentary on symbolic meanings of the characters and plotlines.

Jessica says

Some of the essays were really insightful, but most of them were just ridiculous and hard to read. Overall, I wouldn't really recommend it.
