



Tracing Family Lines: The Impact of Genealogy Research on Family Communication

Amy M. Smith

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Family genealogy research has grown exponentially over the past decade, making it an area worthy of scholarly inquest. *Tracing Family Lines: The Impact of Genealogy Research on Family Communication*, by Amy M. Smith, explores the connection between women and genealogy by examining the ways inherited familial narratives and data work to position women within American culture. Although studies of women's lives are on the rise, the standpoint(s) of women has historically been marginalized, particularly as women continue to be relegated to domestic and family care. Through researching these standpoints, we are better able to see the political constructions of sexist oppression, as well as the ways genealogy offers a possible site for resistance. Interviewing women who are engaged in the act of researching their own family genealogy provides insight into their motivation for doing so. In documenting the family communication that surrounds the genealogical data, as well as studying the family organizational structure, this study contributes to the existing research regarding family history and family narrative. As many of these women are members of local genealogical societies, they are also able to address aspects of community membership, and the positioning of women within these organizations. As women and genealogy are both under-researched, *Tracing Family Lines* illuminates the experiences of women genealogists, to understand the impact of genealogical data upon family communication, and to explore family genealogy as a site of feminist resistance to the socio-political marginalization of women.

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