



# **Under the Sign of Hope: Feminist Methodology and Narrative Interpretation (Suny Series, Identities in the Classroom)**

*Leslie Rebecca Bloom*

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*Examines the practices of life history, ethnographic fieldwork, and interpretation of women's narratives, ultimately asserting the importance of self-reflexivity for feminist methodology.*

"The strength of this book lies in its careful consideration of the tensions feminist methodologies open, the problem of intersubjectivity when subjects are themselves posed as non-unitary (or split between conscious and unconscious desires), and the juxtaposition of theories of methodology that grapple with language and cultural dynamics." -- Deborah Britzman, author of *Lost Subjects, Contested Objects: Toward a Psychoanalytic Inquiry of Learning*

*Under the Sign of Hope* examines the practices of life history, ethnographic fieldwork, and interpretation of women's narratives, ultimately asserting the importance of self-reflexivity for feminist methodology. Bloom takes the stance that what is critical to research is an ability to analyze the complexities of researcher-participant relationships and the limitations of narrative interpretation.

"I like the ways in which Bloom problematizes popular notions of what constitutes a feminist methodology for narrative and interpretive research. In doing so she does not blithely dismiss such notions, but she exposes contradictions that are both potentially harmful and beneficial depending on context and use. From the working-through she develops her own eclectic blend of approaches (theories and methods), and implicitly encourages others to do the same. A theory, after all, is itself a kind of autobiography. I also especially appreciate her attention to women and (auto)biography. Her rereading of theories from ethnographic anthropology, literary criticism, and poststructural 'psychoanalytic' literature through the frames of her experiences interviewing two women has inspired me to explore the territory further myself, and to revisit works that I have ignored for too long. Indeed, I found myself wishing that I had read this book before having completed my own!" -- Susan Huddleston Edgerton, Western Michigan University

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