



# Inventing Herself: Claiming a Feminist Intellectual Heritage

*Elaine Showalter*

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## **Inventing Herself: Claiming a Feminist Intellectual Heritage** Elaine Showalter

Sure to take its place alongside the literary landmarks of modern feminism, Elaine Showalter's brilliant, provocative work chronicles the roles of feminist intellectuals from the eighteenth century to the present. With sources as diverse as "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" and "Scream 2, Inventing Herself" is an expansive and timely exploration of women who possess a boundless determination to alter the world by boldly experiencing love, achievement, and fame on a grand scale. These women tried to work, travel, think, love, and even die in ways that were ahead of their time. In doing so, they forged an epic history that each generation of adventurous women has rediscovered. Focusing on paradigmatic figures ranging from Mary Wollstonecraft and Margaret Fuller to Germaine Greer and Susan Sontag, preeminent scholar Elaine Showalter uncovers common themes and patterns of these women's lives across the centuries and discovers the feminist intellectual tradition they embodied. The author brilliantly illuminates the contributions of Eleanor Marx, Zora Neale Hurston, Simone de Beauvoir, Margaret Mead, and many more. Showalter, a highly regarded critic known for her provocative and strongly held opinions, has here established a compelling new Who's Who of women's thought. Certain to spark controversy, the omission of such feminist perennials as Susan B. Anthony, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Virginia Woolf will surprise and shock the conventional wisdom. This is not a history of perfect women, but rather of real women, whose mistakes and even tragedies are instructive and inspiring for women today who are still trying to invent themselves.

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