



## Between Women and Generations: Legacies of Dignity

By Drucilla Cornell

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### Between Women and Generations: Legacies of Dignity By Drucilla Cornell

This book defies easy categorization but will be one of the most original, thoughtful, and genuinely interesting books published next year. Before the author's mother died, she asked her daughter, Drucilla, to write a book 'that would bear witness to the dignity of her death [and one that] her bridge class would be able to understand.' As if that wasn't difficult enough, Drucilla's mother, who had a degenerative disease, decided to end her life by ingesting a lethal cocktail of drugs. Drucilla was in the unenviable position of bearing witness to her mother's act. Unsentimental yet poignant, candid and courageous, this is the book that Drucilla promised her mother she'd write. Unlike her earlier academically-oriented books, *Between Women and Generations* is an intensely personal narrative which interweaves the personal and political decisions Drucilla's made throughout her life. She uses the personal as a springboard to talk about larger philosophical issues such as how one achieves dignity in life and in death, and the nature of intergenerational relationships between women. Drucilla speaks candidly of her relationship with her mother, about her decision to adopt a non-Western child, and about her commitment to UNITY, a cooperative of house cleaners in Long Island, New York. This book will resonate strongly with Western women.

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## Between Women and Generations: Legacies of Dignity By Drucilla Cornell Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Cornell, a playwright and Rutgers University political science professor, made a deathbed promise to her mother to write a book that "would bear witness to the dignity of her death and that her bridge class would be able to understand." Cornell's premise in this self-righteous, repetitive and sometimes incoherent treatise, is that "white Anglo feminists" need to respect the dignity of mothers, grandmothers, daughters and the women who work for "us" (thereby assuming, it seems, that her readers are "white Anglo feminists"). Respect allows other women to develop their "imaginary domain" so they can dream and become who they "seek to be." After some musings on her grandmother's career, Cornell detours into feminist psychoanalytic theory, reworking Spivak, Gurewich and Butler's various interventions in feminist and Lacanian debates. Fond of the sport of renaming everything, Cornell replaces "care" with "ethical and affective attunement," "gender" with "the feminine within the imaginary domain" and "dignity" with "the law of psychic separation." After pages of postmodern bravado, Cornell's narrative returns to her adoption of a six-month-old Paraguayan girl. The need for a nanny in New York City raised Cornell's awareness of the underworld of undocumented Latinas, so she interviewed some women from a housecleaners' co-op for the last section of her book. While priding herself on having learned "to listen," Cornell can't resist upstaging her interviewees by offering more dramatic moments from her own working life or by explaining to them how racism works. Cornell's academic friends may be impressed with her effort, but the bridge club will have its doubts. Photos. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

Before she committed suicide, Cornell's mother, who had a degenerative disease, asked her daughter to write this book as an affirmation of her decision to take her own life and a recognition of her dignity. With uncompromising honesty, Cornell (political science & women's studies, Rutgers; *Beyond Accommodation: Ethical Feminism, Deconstruction and the Law*) writes of her relationship with her mother, using it as the backdrop to discuss intergenerational relationships between women and to argue that every woman, no matter how physically or emotionally bruised, must preserve her dignity. Although the introduction and first and final chapters trace Cornell's reflections on the influence of the lives and deaths of her mother as well as her grandmother, the book's structure seems fragmented, especially in the middle chapters, where Cornell branches out to discuss feminist theory and include interviews with a Long Island cooperative of women house-cleaners, who assert their dignity individually and collectively. Cornell intended to make this book accessible to nonspecialists, including her mother's bridge club, but the theoretical chapters will be difficult reading for those unfamiliar with the theories of Jacques Lacan, Jacques Derrida, and several others. For this reason, the book is likely to be confined to academic collections. Patricia A. Beaber, Coll. of New Jersey, Ewing  
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Review

"Drucilla Cornell's work combines scrupulous cutting-edge thought with an overflowing, compassionate and personal humanity. May her concept of dignity influence the thinking and actions of her readers." - Alicia Ostriker, author of *The Nakedness of the Fathers*

"*Between Women and Generations* is a great gift to the present. Drucilla Cornell is among the most courageous, probing, and far-sighted of feminist thinkers." - Catharine R. Stimpson, New York University

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#### **Daphne Shew:**

As people who live in the modest era should be update about what going on or information even knowledge to make these individuals keep up with the era that is always change and move ahead. Some of you maybe may update themselves by reading books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to an individual is you don't know what type you should start with. This Between Women and Generations: Legacies of Dignity is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and need in this era.

#### **Robert Dunham:**

Nowadays reading books become more than want or need but also turn into a life style. This reading habit give you lot of advantages. Advantages you got of course the knowledge the actual information inside the book which improve your knowledge and information. The details you get based on what kind of publication you read, if you want have more knowledge just go with training books but if you want really feel happy read one having theme for entertaining for example comic or novel. Typically the Between Women and Generations: Legacies of Dignity is kind of guide which is giving the reader capricious experience.

#### **Pamela Prince:**

Reading a guide tends to be new life style with this era globalization. With reading through you can get a lot of information which will give you benefit in your life. Along with book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Books can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire all their reader with their story as well as their experience. Not only the story that share in the publications. But also they write about the data about something that you need instance. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your kids, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors on this planet always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some research before they write to the book. One of them is this Between Women and Generations: Legacies of Dignity.

#### **Carla Helton:**

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