



# Power, Agency, and Identity: Reflections on *Girlhood*

## Melissa Febos

Author of the brand-new bestselling essay collection *Girlhood*, the memoir *Whip Smart*, and the award-winning *Abandon Me*. Associate professor in the Nonfiction Writing Program at the University of Iowa.

## Heather Havrilesky

*New York* magazine's "Ask Polly" advice columnist. Author, *What If This Were Enough*, *How to Be a Person in the World*, and *Disaster Preparedness*.

**Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 7:00 PM Central**  
[www.bit.ly/FebosFANWebinar](http://www.bit.ly/FebosFANWebinar)

### PLUS: After-Hours Event!

Purchase a copy of *Girlhood* from FAN's partner bookseller The Book Stall to receive a link to an interactive "After-Hours" event hosted by Ms. Febos and Ms. Havrilesky. Details on the webinar registration page.

Presented by **Family Action Network (FAN)**,  
 in partnership with **Compass Health Center, Fusion Academy, Mindful Psychology Associates, Roycemore School, and Wintrust Bank.**

This event is #freeandopentothepublic and will be recorded.

NOTE: This webinar may include frank discussion of adult topics and may not be suitable for some youth. Parental discretion is advised.  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MELISSA FEBOS**

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**Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 7:00-8:00 PM, Power, Agency, and Identity: Reflections on *Girlhood*, a FAN webinar featuring Melissa Febos in conversation with Heather Havrilesky.**

**Note:** This webinar may include frank discussion of adult topics and may not be suitable for some youth. Parental discretion is advised.

**REGISTER:** [www.bit.ly/FebosFANWebinar](http://www.bit.ly/FebosFANWebinar).

**BONUS AFTER-HOURS EVENT:** Attendees who purchase a copy of *Girlhood* from FAN's partner bookseller *The Book Stall* are invited to attend an AFTER-HOURS event hosted by Ms. Febos and Ms. Havrilesky that will start immediately after the webinar. Details on the webinar registration page.

In her vivid, powerful, heartbreaking new memoir ***Girlhood***, author **Melissa Febos** examines the narratives women are told about what it means to be a girl and the realities of growing up female in a world that prioritizes the feelings, perceptions, and power of men at girls' expense.

Ms. Febos was eleven when her body began to change, and almost overnight, the way people spoke to, looked at, and treated her changed with it. As she grew, she defined herself based on these perceptions and by the romantic relationships she threw herself into headlong. But in her thirties, Ms. Febos began to question the stories she'd been told about herself and the habits and defenses she'd developed over years of trying to meet others' expectations. The values she and so many other women had learned in girlhood did not prioritize their personal safety, happiness, or freedom, and she set out to reframe those values and beliefs.

Ms. Febos's first book is the critically acclaimed 2010 memoir, *Whip Smart*, which chronicles her college years working as a dominatrix in a Manhattan dungeon in New York City while addicted to heroin. Her second book, the 2017 essay collection *Abandon Me*, was a LAMBDA Literary Award finalist, a Publishing Triangle Award finalist, an Indie Next Pick, and was named a Best Book of 2017 by *Esquire*, *Book Riot*, *The Cut*, *Electric Literature*, *Bustle*, *Medium*, *Refinery29*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Salon*, *The Rumpus*, and others.

Ms. Febos has been published in *The Paris Review*, *The Sun*, *The Kenyon Review*, *Tin House*, *Granta*, *The Believer*, *The New York Times*, *McSweeney's*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *Lenny Letter*, *The Guardian*, *Elle*, and *Vogue*. She is an associate professor at the University of Iowa, teaching in the Nonfiction Writing Program.

Ms. Febos will be in conversation with **Heather Havrilesky (FAN '18)**, critic, memoirist, and *New York* magazine's "Ask Polly" advice columnist. She is the author of *What If This Were Enough* (2018), *How to Be a Person in the World* (2016), and *Disaster Preparedness* (2010).

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