

Title: Vladimir Nabokov's Story "A Slice of Life" as an Anti-Parody of Female Writing
Author: Mariya Lomakina, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Nabokov's Russian story "A Slice of Life" (1935) has drawn several controversial responses regarding the effectiveness of this literary piece as a work of art. The only story in Nabokov's oeuvre written from the point of view of a female narrator raises inevitable questions about Nabokov's attitude to female authors and the specifics of his art from the gendered point of view. Does this story represent everything Nabokov dislikes in women authors, or does it surpass "the seeming parody on female melodramatic writing" (Linaker 171)? Parody exaggerates the flaws and emphasizes the aesthetic mistakes. Yet, it is not the only way of using an already existing work of art as material for another writer. In his lectures on Russian literature, Nabokov refers to "one more method of dealing with literature" (150) that he considers "the simplest and perhaps the most important one" (150). "If you hate a book, you still may derive artistic delight from imagining other and better ways of looking at things, or, what is the same, expressing things, that the author you hate does" (Nabokov 150). By "reading in" Nabokov's "A Slice of Life," this paper attempts to see this story as an "anti-parody" (Ronen 65) of a female voice and suggests another interpretation of Nabokov's artistic purposes. Instead of creating a parody of a woman's voice, the writer reveals his aesthetic preferences of how short fiction should be written.

Works Cited:

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