

**Reclaiming Agency: An Autotheoretical Exploration of Meena Kandasamy's *When I Hit You* and Spousal Violence in India**

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**Abstract:** *The term “autotheory” has evolved to characterize the practices of engaging with theory, life, and art from the perspective of one’s lived experiences. It incorporates theory or philosophy with autobiography. When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife (2017) by Meena Kandasamy is similar to the work of feminist artists who actively incorporate their bodies and personal experiences into their work. She theorizes the ideas of agency, sexual autonomy, and consent in India through self-writing and self-theorizing. Hence, the narrative presents a discussion where her personal story is used as a primary text and discussed through select feminist theories as an instantiation of a theoretical point. This paper intends to highlight the feminist theoretical contentions used in When I Hit You to narrate the personal experiences of intimate partner violence in the Indian context.*

**Keywords:** *autotheory; spousal violence; marriage; marital rape; feminist; India; Meena Kandasamy;*