



THE BANDIT ZINE

PRESENTS

FEMINISM



ALWAYS FREE. ALWAYS RADICAL.



PRESENTS

.....FEMINISM.....

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WHAT IS FEMINISM? ACCORDING TO US.

When you ask a pool of people, "What does feminism mean to you?" you'll inevitably receive varied responses. Some still believe that feminists are bra-burning misandrists who practice witchcraft and worship Satan, while others simply think that feminism is just an excuse for angry women to whine and complain about men.

The truth is that feminism is a subjective thing. How we think about it and experience it varies from person to person. While we at the Bandit Zine may have different conceptions of it, we nonetheless collectively agree that feminism is about the eradication of all forms of oppression. We don't believe in a feminism that only highlights the struggles of white, middle-class, able-bodied, thin, straight cis-women. Hell no. We're all about intersectionality. For us, feminism is the liberation of all oppressed folks. This zine attempts to capture the personal experiences of each feminist (and their subjective definition of feminism), while it also illustrates how and why intersectionality is critical for the feminist movement. With that, we'll end with this beautifully crafted quote by Audre Lorde, "It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF! → TRIGGER WARNINGS ←

Trigger warnings of this zine include (but not limited to): domestic/relationship abuse, sizeism, body image, problematic substance use, mental health issues, sexual assault, rape culture, femmephobia, transphobia, gender dysphoria. Please take care of yourself and put the zine down, if you need to. Some articles may contain content discussing these issues. We've tried our best to label them with a "trigger warning" that looks like the one below.

• TRIGGER WARNING •

WHY I NO LONGER IDENTIFY AS A FEMINIST: BY LI

I want to talk about the problems in mainstream feminism and why I no longer identify as a feminist, though I am still interested in social justice. There are many more issues and examples than what I talk about here, but these are the first that came to mind. Please understand that I am not personally attacking you, the reader, I am attacking the institution of mainstream feminism and the harmful things it has come to represent.

If your feminism is not intersectional, then it has failed.

Does your feminism acknowledge that racism is tightly intertwined with sexism? That the mantra of “.77 cents to the dollar” only refers to white women?

Does your feminism exclude trans women? Are they jokes or objects of fear to you? Are you a trans-misogynist? Do you subscribe to the “womyn-born-womyn” bullshit school of thought?

Does your feminism exclude other queer people? Do you mock bisexuality? Do you even attempt to respect pronouns?

How about people with disabilities? Do you ever use words like “crazy” (or worse) to mock or describe people you don’t like or don’t understand, whether they have a mental illness or not? How about “lame”?

Do your fictional pop culture feminist icons almost never interact with POC? (Lookin’ at you Buffy the Vampire Slayer). Or is a white-savior paragon of colonialist entitlement more your thing? (Lookin’ at you Daenerys Targaryen, body-surfing on a crowd of nameless brown people).

Most of the feminist discourse I’ve had in the last few years either ignores these questions or answers many of them with a “Yes.” This version of feminism has become a new system of oppression. The outrage I hear when I tell people I no longer identify as a feminist is near-comical. “Do you believe that women are equal to men? Do you believe women are people? Then congratulations, you’re actually a feminist!”

No. It is so much more complicated than that.

Feminism has fucked up. Feminism’s main focus is on white, straight, cisgender, able-bodied, middle-class women. I am none of those things, please stop pretending that my experiences are the same as yours. Please stop pretending these issues can’t be addressed without “watering-down” feminism. These issues are what feminism is about.

And if they’re not, if feminism isn’t willing to deal with them, then I have no need to justify why I am not a feminist.

RECOMMENDED READING

Flavia Dzodan, *My Feminism Will Be Intersection or It Will Be Bullshit!*





Paradox of the ----- Teenage Heartthrob

-----by Rosie Acola

You need to slip through the fingers of lovers like ice cold water on a summer day.
 You must be attainably unattainable-
 the precise distance required to incite riots of lust,
 with undertones of realism.
 You must be hairless, sweet, sleek, and submissive
 a Coquette with wide eyes crammed with promise
 lush lips stained with a semblance of sin.
 A useless terror-
 you must be threatening
 but unable to strike.
 You will be damned.
 Regardless of what you Do or Do Not.
 Whether your curves are sumptuous and sultry
 or you are the oddly societally desirable stature
 of a perpetual 12 year old.
 Whether you kiss with a hunger
 or abstain from it all-
 your body will be a Pandora's boxx
 forbidden to the touch.
 Though they may ignore it you must assert your own humanity.
 Push limits and hemlines-
 sharpen lines of consent
 and proclaim that Teenager Girls are not Lolita's
 suspended in time and youth;
 we're fucking people too.

FEMINISM

BY CASEY MEIGEL

.TRIGGER WARNING.

I didn't realize that it was an issue that needed discussing before.

I thought it only applied in the work place.

In the legal system.

I didn't know it had anything to do with the hoots and hollers I'd receive

if I wore a dress they considered too short.

I didn't know it was an issue.

I didn't know.

But that's only fun, right?

Those comments on my legs won't hurt me, right?

It's nothing to complain about, right?

I'm being dramatic, right?

Until you realize that you're the only one terrified of being out so late.

None of the men that surrounded you then were praying to get home safe.

They didn't take their makeup off or cover themselves in any extra clothing they had

in order to avoid being seen as something someone may crave.

No, instead they were the ones pulling that hoodie off of me.

And they were the ones with the hungry eyes

When they whispered in my ear how badly I had wanted this

Oh! How badly I had wanted this.

I couldn't help but to think-

Had I wanted this?

Was my skirt too short?

I should have known

Not to be out that late, dressed that way

I was asking for it?

I was asking for it.

But those men were not watching the time.

Those men were not following a dress code.

Why weren't they scared?

Because there wasn't anyone who was going to follow them to their car
and rip off their clothes.

They weren't surrounded by their predators.

They were acknowledging their comrades.

Not once that night did they fear for their life.

Not once was I sure I'd make it out alive.



granted permission to grow up groveling

assumed to always answer yes

rebuked, restrained and refused when resistance is rendered

belittled for being born

reliving the reality of rape

to the past with the prevailing patriarchy incinerating internalized ideologies

of idiocy sexist swine, pompous with power

open your ocular orbs

weep, wretch and writhe for the women you have wronged with whips,

words; being without wisdom

equality is easier than you'd expect

hold them how they hope to be held

supplicate , shame-faced searing into your soul

FINDING FEARLESSNESS IN FEMINISM

BY DARCIE DEFOU

.TRIGGER WARNING.

AHLFS SISTERS: SHANNA AND SUSAN
BY SUSAN AHLFS
132" X 50", GRAPHITE ON PAPER



MY FEMINISM ISN'T SEXY BY SARA C. .TRIGGER WARNING.

my feminism can suck all of the air out of a room, watch:

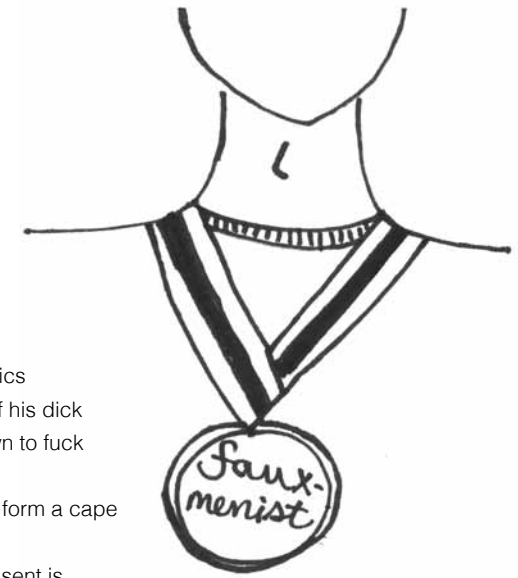
i was raped by a self-proclaimed "feminist"
a label he stuck to himself like a medal of honor
he still uses it to bait his hook

and as i slept with an ice pack between my legs
the numbness spread; kept me docile for five months
no longer pinned down to a mattress by body mass
but pinned down to my bed by the ideologies of other
"feminist" men whispering for me to hush
while pouring beer down my throat
anything to get me to shut up

(modern cis men ache to be cool, and
gaslighting, objectification, and microaggressions are hip
whether you play guitar, football, or Nintendo)

i order a pizza the day before i study abroad
a day meant to be spent in the company of those who love me
and he's standing there when i open the door
i briefly felt guilty for not tipping him
how fucked up is that?
pizza isn't even safe anymore
it sounds funny, right? and it is a little funny
funny in the way that sad things get funny
because you're tired of them being sad

a year later I started the process of reporting him to my school
the police wouldn't approve my personal protection order
unless I go to court with my rapist in front of the judge
the thought of having to hear him lie, tell "his side of the story"
makes me want to implode inward, screaming
go deep until i find a place quiet and safe and warm



he's still walking around spewing rape statistics
he's still making everything about the state of his dick
he still wants everyone to know that he's down to fuck
because he's just that "sex-positive"
my attempts at justice just roll off his back to form a cape
a hero for all those feminist men
who don't understand that knowing what consent is
is not the same as putting it into practice

my college sent him the letter
he posted a call for cuddles because it made him sad
so the rapist gets sad for being called a rapist
what does our "hero" do?
he tries to manipulate someone else into sleeping with him
the logic is breathtaking and terrifying
it's terrifying

i used to be a calm feminist, a pretty feminist
a Good Feminist
now I want to be terrifying, unapologetic
and i no longer care about being universally fuckable
and i no longer care about dulling my words
and I no longer care about being palatable to men
cause when a "fellow feminist" man rapes you
things get put into perspective
and patterns emerge
i know now my experience is not an outlier

so my feminism is not sexy
it is ugly, it is powerful, and it's about time
to break the silence around rape culture
with hands strong and shaking, dancing or crying
no wolves in sheep's clothing allowed

MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES: PATRIARCHY + GENDERQUEER IDENTITY

ZERAPH DYLAN MOORE

. TRIGGER WARNING .

There was a time when I didn't know how to approach feminism or a feminist identity. I saw that feminists had defined different roles, both overtly and subtly, for men and women who want to come to a feminist identity or become allies to feminists and women generally. As a genderqueer person, I could not exclusively assign myself to either road. My gender itself defied attempts to anchor it to a particular position, much less a binary one, and I couldn't begin to understand how to do the complex work of unpacking my beliefs in a feminist context.

I'm happy to report that this is no longer the case for me, and I have feminist theory and philosophy to thank, in large part, for that shift. A few years ago, I took a feminist philosophy class at my university, part of my attempt to wrangle my ecology degree into something I could really get into. (I failed, by the way; I'm now pursuing psychology.) The texts that we read were frequently dense and academic, and they were counterbalanced by class discussions about our everyday lives and the applications of what we were reading. In feminist philosophy I found what I needed, and what had been lacking from the activist writing that I'd been exposed to. I found full-fledged, well-defended, and fascinating explanations of what gender itself was. I thrived on the questions and the explanations both. No easy slogans and catchphrases here-- and

these had never helped me anyway, since my own gendered position in the world and within myself was so amorphous, and my own orientation toward patriarchy so complex. Here I found the meat and bones of gender theory, as well as the texts that had inspired so many of the ways gender and sexuality are talked about in contemporary activist writing.

The theory I read seemed to get inside me like a lockpick kit, unpacking and clarifying my experiences and beliefs, and I couldn't have been more ecstatic to have that happen. As I had this experience, something became quite clear to me: As a genderqueer person, I carried within me both the pain of being victimized by patriarchy as well as misogyny of my own. I was neither victim nor victor, neither purely oppressed nor oppressor, not even on the axis of gender alone.

I am a genderqueer person who was assigned female at birth and raised to be a woman, and I came out at the age of 16, in 2003. The world that I came out into was both similar and dissimilar from the one I experience today. Public consciousness about trans people did exist, but it was in its early stages and geographically disparate. While today I see young people in their mid teens posting on Tumblr about their non-binary gender identities, this was not the case in 2003 -- at that time, it was difficult to find community even on the

internet. There were few news stories about trans people, and they were sensationalistic and misgendering. When I began to explore my own identity, I knew about trans people solely from Jerry Springer. The trans community, both on and offline, tended to be older and much more binary-oriented. Older trans people who I met in person sometimes did not put much stock in non-binary identities or non-transitioning trans people; physical transition was the defining characteristic of trans-ness, and most resources were oriented toward achieving it.

I speak about all of these things because I think that they lend some perspective to my own tumultuous early years as a trans-identified person. The emphasis on binary gender and transition for all trans people, as well as my own unexamined, internalized misogyny, played major roles in my problematic thoughts and behavior. As a young genderqueer person, I believed that my only option was to identify as unequivocally male, especially in a public sense. Though I was femme in some ways, I focused on a core identity as a man and clung to it fiercely. I had to explain and defend my identity on a constant basis against people who attacked it in sexist ways. I was often told I wasn't a man because of various traits I had, whether physical, social or emotional. Today, I would refute these statements by questioning these binary and restrictive roles; I would bring the conversation back to respecting people's stated identity. Back then, I defended myself by digging in and pointing out ways that I was masculine enough, man enough. But more importantly, I dug in by becoming more masculine -- by trying harder to pass, by flattening my personality and emotional affect, and by letting my misogynistic feelings

remain strong within me. Even being sexually assaulted strengthened my misogyny, as I assigned fear and hatred to the body parts that I felt had "made me" vulnerable.

Looking back on this time, what amazes me is how similar my experience as a genderqueer trans boy mirror the experiences of cis men. Like many cis men, I felt insecure in my male identity and constantly wanted to prove myself. Like many cis men, I adopted misogynistic attitudes as a way to differentiate myself from women and as a reaction against the power of women in my life. The circumstances were different in some cases -- for example, I was always afraid I'd be cast aside by a male lover in favor of a cis woman, and this played heavily into my insecurity about being trans, about being "gender trash." This caused me, in turn, to resent and hate cisgender women that I perceived as competitors and more privileged than myself. This is not an experience shared by many cis men, and yet the result was eerily similar -- the perceived power of women around me caused me fear and loathing which I did not understand how to deal with.



It is lucky for other people that my misogyny didn't become a force for harm in the world – I don't usually date women, and I had primarily male friends. The women I did become friends with were "excluded," in my mind, from my generalized hatred of women. And I often kept my thoughts and feelings to myself.

Many years passed without a great deal of change in my attitudes. I continued to be intensely dysphoric about my body, and I continued to present myself as a trans man, with a binary gender identity. Around me, people were embracing non-binary identities, and a culture was forming that allowed people to ably discuss these identities and their implications in non-academic language. A sort of non-binary revolution was occurring within the trans community as more and more people felt comfortable coming out into non-binary identities. It was a far cry from my experience, which had felt like being born into a dark wilderness. Now, some people are able to come out into already-formed, supportive communities – something that still amazes me. Yet, even knowing all of this, I still felt afraid to make the shift myself, even though my identity had always been genderqueer on the internal level.

I pushed things to their maximum before I really began to reexamine my life. When I decided to take a closer look at my own identity, it was eight years later and I was on the bus to my doctor's office for a prescription for testosterone. I never made it there because I got physically sick, probably from the stress and the knowledge that I was not doing what my heart really desired, but what I thought I

had to do to escape my fear. I stopped seeking testosterone, chest surgery, and I stopped grasping at an identity and started looking at how to be myself.

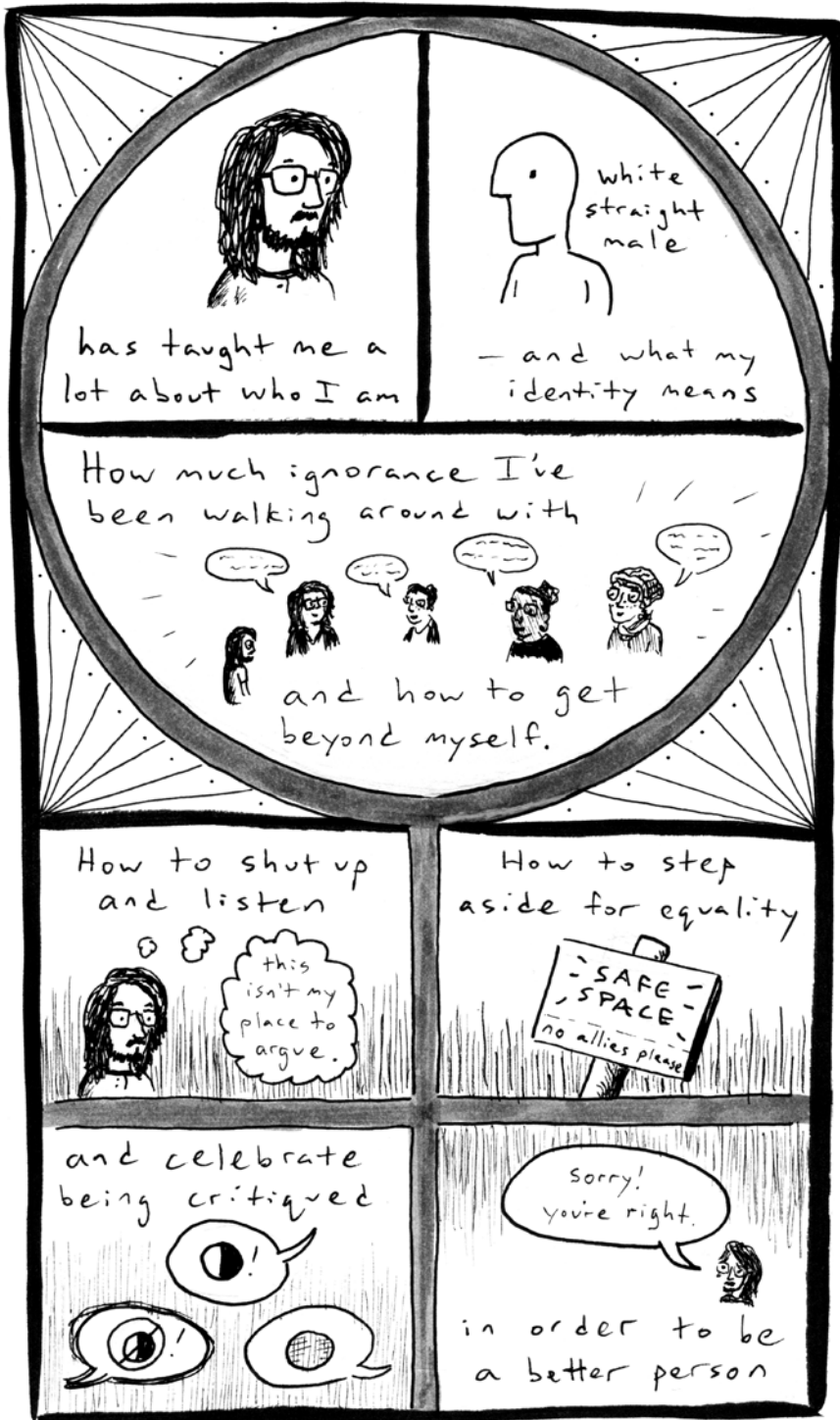
It was around this time that I took my feminist theory class. When I look back on my experience around that time, it seems magical to me, and a little indescribable, as if someone had pried open the whole workings of gender and laid them out for me like a starmap, and I felt relief as all the little spaces were unfolded and exposed to the light of rationality and order. It still gives me pleasure to think about it. Meanwhile, something even more interesting was happening: I was understanding the gendered oppression I'd experienced myself, as a female-assigned person, a four-time survivor of sexual assault, and a gender variant person who doesn't perform femininity according to society's expectations. And even more wonderfully, I was taking in activist writing from the internet that was teaching me about the internal and sovereign definition of gender identity. Gender identity, I saw, was not something that could be defined by others, and nor did it have to conform to expected norms. There were no rules. With this realization, my desire to defend myself through internalized misogyny was fading. I saw myself as completely worthy of existence and of whatever identity I chose to have. I felt huge love for the community of non-binary and binary trans people who had argued and ranted and wrote and made this theory of gender sovereignty valid in the real world and communicable to both allies and enemies.

For a long while, I struggled with femininity still,

and with my fear of being perceived as feminine. I did something that changed me for the better: I periodically dressed femininely and I grew out my hair. I hated almost every moment of this practice, which I undertook at college as well as when I went out around town. But intuitively I trusted in myself and my desire to put myself through this. I lived within the femininity that I had run from, and I didn't perish. In fact, I gained new appreciations for my own femininity. I saw my hidden genderqueerness emerge, beautiful and delicate and free of the guilt I'd thrust upon it. Today, I like to be feminine-looking sometimes, and it feels fun and wonderful. This exercise started out as a sort of punishment, but it became a kind of homecoming.

Nowadays, I am happy to live without gender labels, but I am aware of what has brought me to this point, of my past identifying publicly as a man as well as my childhood as a female-assigned person. I'm aware of the threads of misogyny and patriarchal oppression that have affected my life. I want to be alert to these things always, because I don't think this work is done within myself, nor do I want it to be. It is fascinating work to do because it connects me to everything, and to millions of other people doing the work of untangling patriarchy within themselves, both as oppressors and as oppressed and sometimes as both. As a genderqueer person, I see myself from many perspectives, and I know that I have multiple experiences within frameworks of patriarchy and male supremacy. This is no longer overwhelming and it does not push me away from feminism. Instead, it is fascinating and it draws me in. The impulse toward understanding is an impulse toward wholeness, and it's one I undertake with enthusiasm and hope to share with others.





NO, I WILL NOT PUT A RING ON IT



ALSO STATED AS, "WHY I WON'T PARTICIPATE IN YOUR OPPRESSIVE INSTITUTION" **BY BRITTANY DEMBERGER**

In Western culture, marriage is not only viewed as a celebrated rite of passage, it serves a fundamental purpose as a social institution; marriage marks the moment when friends, family, and society at large recognize these two individuals as a new couple, a family unit. I refuse to participate in this social institution.

As a white, twenty-something, cis-gender woman in a ten-plus year relationship with a cis-gender man, I often am questioned about my refusal to "put a ring on it," much to Beyonce's chagrin. Why do I reject this revered social institution?

The roots of marriage can be traced back to misogyny and patriarchy. It is important to note that our celebration of "two becoming one" historically translates to that "one" being the man, with the woman losing her identity and many legal rights. In addition to the surface level name change, historically upon marriage, women's property automatically became the property of her husband to do with as he pleased. The saying "rule of thumb" originates to the law that stipulated a man could beat his wife with an instrument as long as said instrument was not wider than his thumb. Women could not open credit cards or take out loans without their husband's signature until 1974, and marital rape did not become illegal in all 50 states until 1993.

Outside of this troubled history, there are inherent dynamics of the traditional wedding

ceremony, still practiced today, that are rooted in patriarchy. The father walking the daughter down the aisle to her future husband symbolizes a transfer of property between males as he "gives her" to her betrothed. Traditional wedding vows ask the woman to "love, honor, and obey" while the man is asked to "love, honor, and cherish." Is "cherish" synonymous with "obey"?

Women still do not have the same legal rights as men within the institution of marriage. Some states still have "spousal abandonment" laws that specify the man's address is the official address for the couple. Thus, if a married woman moves to a new state and her husband insists that their original address is their legal domicile, legally, the law would be in his favor and the woman could be charged with abandonment. However, if the situation were reversed, and the man moved to a new state and claimed the new address was the couple's legal domicile, the law would again be in his favor because he has the legal right to decide where the couple lives. Yes, these laws still exist.

And we will not even get into the dynamics of how interracial marriages were illegal until 1967 and that my LGBT friends still do not have access to this institution in the state of Michigan. So, when people ask why my partner and I have not gotten married, it is with all of these reasons in mind that I politely (or not so politely, depending on my mood), inform them that this is a deliberate choice. I consider it one of my personal forms of feminist activism to not engage in this troubled and problematic institution.

WHY THIS GAY MAN NEEDS Feminism

BY BEN KLEYN

I saw a lot of Disney movies and general kids' movies when I was a kid. That's all fine and good, but the experience somewhat confused my identity—at least later in life—because of the narrow set of gender roles portrayed in these films. You probably already know how it is: men are the self-assured, headstrong heroes who never show too much emotion, and women are weak and emotionally unstable and in constant need of rescuing. Later I came to understand this as sexism, but as a kid I saw it as a fact of life. I had no problem with my identity as a male, yet I had autism and not-yet-identified gayness, so I was not a confident, borderline-egotistical hero. I was much more like a damsel in distress, because the world around me confused me and reminded me I was the weird "gaywad" who pouted too much.

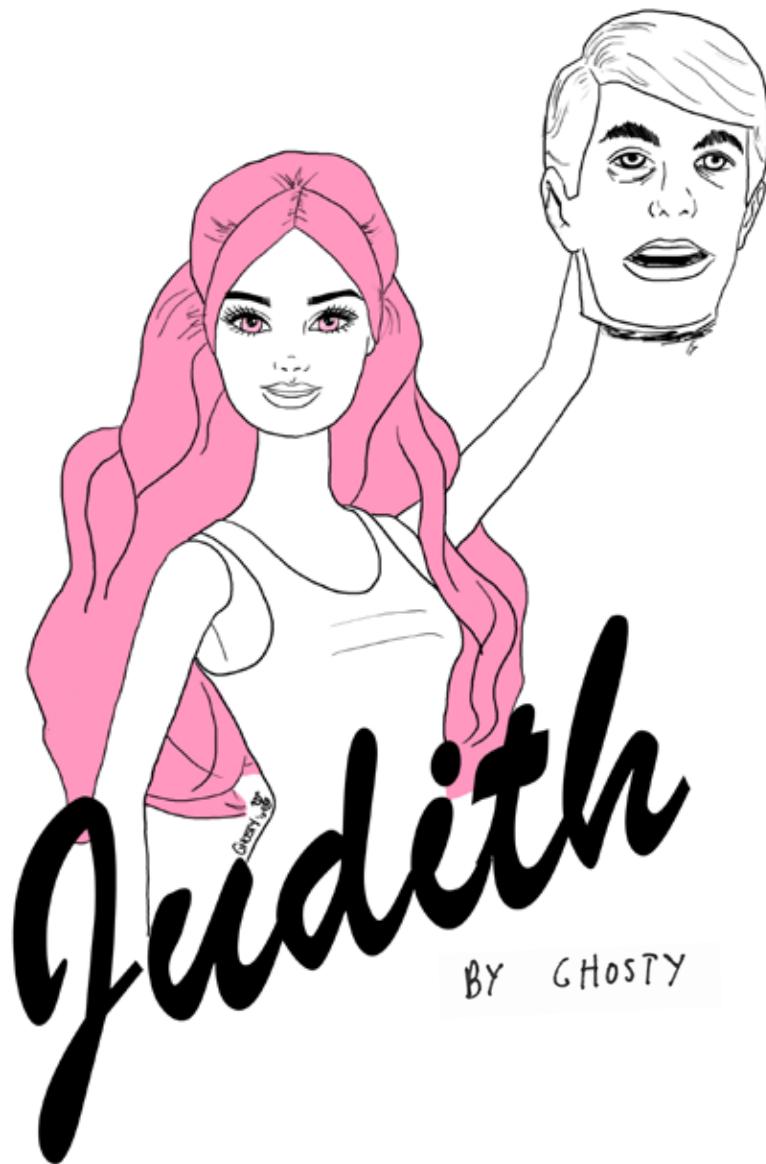
And of course it's fine to be "gay" and gay and weird and sad and confused and to be a boy who enjoys playing Cinderella in his mom's old dresses and shoes. But what is NOT okay is the way that I and probably many other people were made to understand gender and identity and all that shit as black-and-white with no room for anything else.

Near the beginning of college, I did have an identity crisis. I knew that I would be more "appropriate" if I were female. All that Disney and binary nonsense made me feel like there wasn't really a place for me in the world. And I knew life would have been easier if I was able to fit in somewhere. However, I wasn't a matter of me feeling like I was in the wrong body. I was instead feeling like I was the wrong me. Because men are supposed to be everything I wasn't. But I wasn't a woman, either, because the girls at elementary school would exclude me from "girl talk" and from coloring pretty pictures as much as I excluded myself from the boys playing sports. And I liked having a penis.

I'm better now. But I had a hell of a time getting here, and I wonder how many other people struggled with this gender binary bullshit, too. There's nothing wrong with Disney having a strong man and a vulnerable woman, but the problem is that this is the standard, and this is probably causing other kids out there to feel like they don't fit into that mold, and then these kids probably feel like they don't belong in the world or that there's something wrong with them or that they need to censor themselves or become something they're not. Of course, the problem is bigger than just Disney, but it is important for kids to have characters to identify with. Given how much kids love to act out their favorite scenes in movies, I'm sure that gender roles in these movies have a significant role in shaping children's identities. If they don't see characters breaking the mold, they're going to assume that the mold shouldn't ever be broken, and those who break it should be ridiculed and maybe even punished, because the mold is a very serious thing, because this is what all proper characters are like and have always been like.

So, I need feminism because I needed to see early on that it was okay for a man to cry and to need help and to be gay and for a woman to be collected and confident and powerful and capable of rescuing her own damn self. I needed to see that gender isn't defined by blue or pink or even by anatomy, and that characters (and likewise people) do not have to be either male or female, because gender and identity and simply being human transcend these things. I needed to see all this not instead of but in addition to the traditional roles of gender in movies, so that I could have understood from the beginning that it was okay for me to have all the feelings I felt and to be exactly how and who I was and to not feel guilty or wrong or weird—not just as an autistic homosexual but as a human being.





. TRIGGER WARNING .

October, 2008

My classmates are furious that I do a presentation about Marilyn Minter that includes slides of her paintings based off of images in porn. They confront me after class. I calmly inform them that the professor approved all of my slides in advance. I do not tell them, "Look, a blowjob isn't any prettier when you do it". Transferring to a different college is starting to look like a better idea.

October, 2009

I get to regale this experience to Marilyn Minter at an arts symposium. She expresses her disappointment that "women still cannot own their own sexuality".

September 1994

"Patricia, we are calling you because your daughter said she had sand in her vagina on the playground this afternoon".

"Is she okay?"

"Yes, it sounds like she fell down, and we took her to the restroom. Do you know where she might have learned that word?"

"My husband and I think it's important that our daughter learns the proper scientific names for all of her body parts".

April 2007

Painting four nude women in an honors art class is okay. Painting four nude women while wearing a tank top is not okay because shoulders are inappropriate (at least according to the school principal).

May 2013

I start a job at a well-known cosmetics retailer. I'm given six pages of uniform guidelines. I need formal, all-black dress clothes and shoes. Everything must cover my shoulders, skirts can't be shorter than three inches above the knee, and nothing can have "excessive embellishments". The beginning of May is the worst time of the year to find plain, all-black, conservatively-cut, embellishment-free clothing.

November 2011

I manage to pull on my underwear, jeans, boots, sweater, and jacket without waking him up, and quietly sneak out of his apartment. Once I'm home, I tear everything off and take a shower. My roommates are too hungover to even notice my absence from the night before.

May 2012

My roommates and I are watching the pilot episode of *Girls*. I can't make it through the entire episode, and spend fifteen minutes curled up on the bathroom floor. My roommates think this is funny.

February 14, 2012

"Why didn't you go to the police?"

"Have you seen a doctor?"

"Do you need to come home?"

September 2011

My roommate's boyfriend picks her up and slams her against the bathroom wall. She does not call the police because he is the son of a professor, and she is producing his senior thesis film.

February 2012

I'm on a film shoot, and the 2nd AC1 refuses to greet me, or even make eye contact in the elevator, despite the fact that his cock has been in my mouth on numerous occasions.

October 2012

I go 65 dollars further into credit card debt, but I needed a new sweater to replace the one I can't wear anymore.

February 11, 2012

It's not every day that your first date involves running out of the bar because the owner called the cops because you threw the remnants of a Midori Sour in your abusive ex's face.

February/March 2013

"Well, if I'm going to spend the night, you should know that I have a bad habit of sleep-punching people". I barely get any sleep because I am so terrified of having a nightmare and clocking him in the face

A Monday in April 2013, at therapy

"What hurts the most?"

"He was auditioning me, and I hate going into an audition unprepared".

October 2011

It's amazing what we choose not to see. Six different guys share my not-quite-a-bed-more-like-an-army-cot, and none of them comment on the scores of angry scars on my thighs and stomach.

July 2013 (probably a Wednesday)

What I want to say is "Oh? You feel like you're being used? Being used by another person hurts? Really? Please tell me all about this phenomenon, as I have never experienced this before in my life – and ESPECIALLY NOT WITH YOU". What I actually say is "You know, there's a really good Neil LaBute play you should check out..."

August 4, 2013

I spend 45 minutes staring into the bathroom mirror because I cannot recognize the person staring back at me.

September 2013

A drunk asshole outside of Stella's asks me "What's in the bag?" Without skipping a beat, I say "I like to cut off men's dicks and put them in this bag". He responds by saying "You can cut off my dick anytime."

Artprize 2012, 2013

Evidently my ass, legs, and tits should all win Artprize. As much as I'd love the extra 250k, I don't appreciate the constant harassment.

Halloween 2012

I have no qualms walking 3 blocks in my Killer Playboy Bunny costume. Having to talk to people at this party scares the living shit out of me.

"Yeah, he said that he didn't stop because he liked how the convulsions felt"

"Ugh, I am so sorry." We hug.

September 2013

I make a distress call to my social worker friend. "What the fuck should I do the next time he starts whining to me about his shit?"

"Next time, tell him that you don't bill to insurance and that he needs to pay the counseling fee up front and in cash."

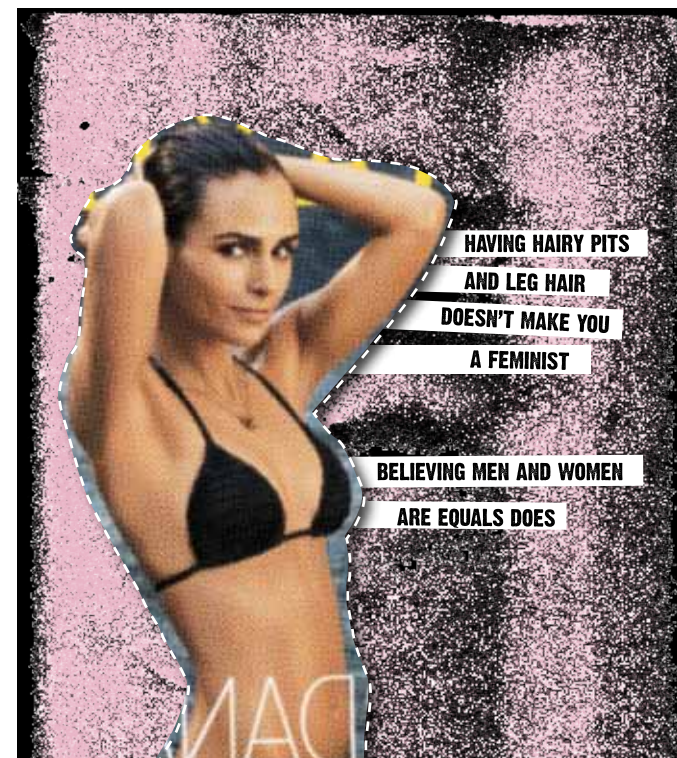
Christmas 2012

We visit my grandfather at the assisted living facility. He's doing better, and lights up when he sees me. He asks me "When am I going to walk you down the aisle?" I don't know how to answer second assistant cameraman—AKA "dude who holds the camera and gets pissy when you steal his gaffer tape."



FEMINISM

THE POWER TO CHOSE HOW YOU
WANNA LIVE YR LIFE!
(REGARDLESS OF WHAT IS EXPECTED
OF YOU CUZ FUCK THAT, AMIRITE?)



HAVING HAIRY PITS
AND LEG HAIR
DOESN'T MAKE YOU
A FEMINIST

BELIEVING MEN AND WOMEN
ARE EQUALS DOES



IF ALL YOU KNOW ABOUT
FEMINISM HAPPENED
FROM 1940 TO 1970

YOU'VE GOT A LOT TO LEARN

THE F-WORD
BY LYDIA VANHOVEN

The artist of this recognizes the
diverse gender spectrum and
respects non-binary identities.

ON BEING A FEMINIST DRAG VOCATE

BY VICTORIA BELLE MARCETTI

[I'm gonna talk about drag culture. Of course I don't mean to encompass ALL of the iterations of drag that exist because I think we can agree that to make a blanket statement of any group of people or movement is just silly. Drag culture is as varied and nuanced as any other form of personal expression and I don't intend to cover it all.]

I'm not going to bury the lead here: I love drag queens. When I see a queen dancing, lip-syncing, or singing her heart out I have to fight back tears, and don't get me started about how many times I've cried while watching RuPaul's Drag Race, To Wong Foo, or Paris is Burning. Seeing people boldly follow their dreams has always made my heart swell, and those painted and padded beauties are no exception.

Beyond my love for the performance and art aspect of drag is a serious respect for its contribution to challenging the idea of "normal" gender identity and roles. That's a large part of our goal as feminists, isn't it? I think so, and I think drag can and does serve as a strong ally to the feminist movement. Because of the pride and courage and passion I've witnessed within drag, I've always closely associated with the strength of the feminist movement.

Feminism is not an exclusive club that only female bodied people contribute to. It is not

a cause that only cares about and caters to female bodied people. It is concerned with equality for all, regardless of gender and sexuality. And that fight can be taken up by anyone of any gender no matter what they're wearing or the amount of makeup on their face.

Lately I've come across some rumblings about how hateful and offensive drag is, some even comparing it to blackface in a claim that drag is meant to disparage the already downtrodden woman. Pretty intense claim. They state men who dress in drag are doing so in an attempt to be accepted by mainstream culture, and hating women is apparently the best way to do that. These opponents of drag seem to cite mostly garish, partially executed attempts at female impersonation like hairy chested cleavage, slathered makeup, and a stand up act about how women are soooo crazy! But girl let me tell you, slapping on a dress and some makeup in order to get a few laughs is not drag. Drag is passion, fashion, art, and performance all put together (and sometimes rolled in glitter). In the midst of imitation, a lot of drag exaggerates physical traits that are usually attributed to women—like boobies and butts and big hair and lots of makeup—but most often it is not in the vilifying way that these claims want you to believe. Drag queens like gettin' dolled up, I won't fault them for that. I wouldn't tell a woman that she is incapable of contributing to feminism because she's comfortable wearing a dress and high heels and makeup, so why would I say it to a man? That whole wear-what-you're-happy-wearing thing extends to everyone.

Furthermore, drag does not need to be accepted by mainstream culture. Yes, drag queens would probably love more people to

come to shows and give them money so they can quit their shitty day job, but that's pretty much all the mainstream has to offer to anyone, right? The communities that have grown within drag have provided support and encouragement and love to countless individuals struggling with self identity, self expression, and a desire to be a part of a family. Within that family people grow and learn. If you talk to a passionate queen, he will likely drop some goddamn knowledge on your dome about the strong women he looks up to and pays tribute to. From women of the silver screen to political figures to musicians to their own mommas, most queens know their ladyroots and are willing to educate if you are willing to learn.

I guess sometimes it's easier for people to lump a ton of things together and be mad at it all rather than recognize the gradations of a culture and appreciate the good parts. I've witnessed far too much love within drag to believe that it is fueled by hate, and I consider it an important part of feminism.



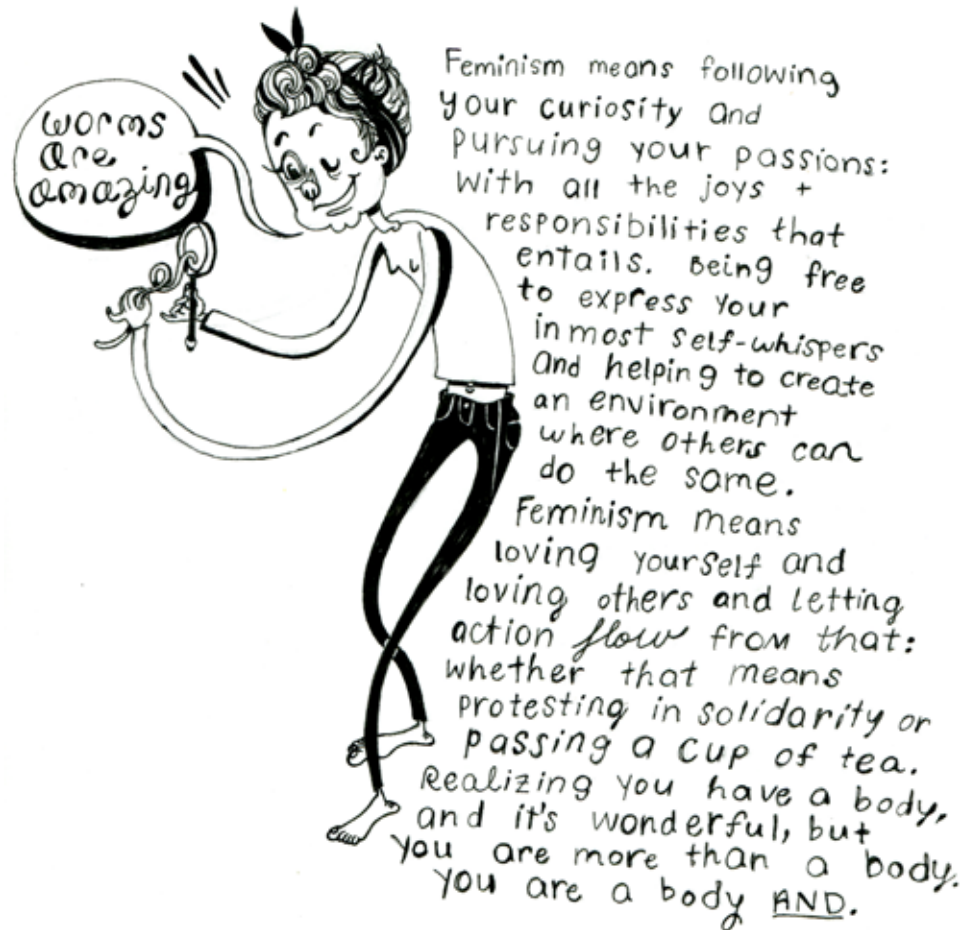
EVOLVE

BY SASHA JACOBO

Feminism is who we strive to be, it's the goal we have and will be working towards. It's the reason I can wear a dress and not get cat calls, it's the reason my clothes don't have to be a trigger for some drunk guy with overbearing testosterone, it's the reason I can stand in front of the mirror and smile at the person looking back at me because I know that I am love and I am amazing. It's the girl who plays football and the guy who's a cheerleader, the curvy girl with amazing fashion sense and the skinny girl with an artistic flare. Feminism is what unites us, all of us; men, women, boys, girls, we are all a part of this and we will keep it going, for the future of our children. The future is brighter now. I can't wait until I have a beautiful child, to shower it with love and compassion, to teach it to love itself rather than judge itself or others, the moment they can look at themselves and say "yes I am beautiful, inside and out", that is what Feminism means to mean and what I hope comes from it.



WE'RE ALL
BEAUTIFUL



BODY AND. BY LIZ ANN

UNDULATING OUT OF FEMINISM

BY JULIE SEAWARD

Sometimes I ask myself whether or not identifying as a feminist [in the USA] is still relevant. In 2013, you're either a feminist or you're an asshole.

I don't remember how old I was when I started calling myself a feminist, but I fell dove head first. **I wanted to be a teenage feminist, and that I was.** In high school, I remember reading *Venus Zine* and *Jane* while listening to Courtney Love, Kathleen Hanna, and Sleater-Kinney. I added *The Feminine Mystique* [cringe!] to the top of my favorite reads on Livejournal, Myspace, and any other antiquated social media, just so everyone clicking around the digital netherworld could know just how much I cared about *womyn's* issues.

I felt offended a lot of the time, but even more so, I let others know. Before expounding an argument I would begin with, "As a woman...." At some point, a boy I was dating hesitated bringing his friends around me because of how "intense" my feminism was, and he "dreaded" the foreseen confrontation. In hindsight, he just needed new friends, and I needed ~~a new~~ **boyfriend** alone time.

My propensity towards drawing and painting lead me to art school, and my favorite identifying factor only escalated from there. I, like many other 20-something art girls trying to be edgy at a mid-sized liberal arts college, decided to give feminist art a whirl. As a feminist artist, my body was my canvas [duh!] and the

camera was my statement. I would wrap myself in plastic. I would adhere prosthetics and apply gruesome makeup to my face while wearing lingerie. I would slap UPC barcodes on pictures of myself and caption it, "A Perfect Woman." Signed book from bell hooks – **Check!** Intro to Gender Studies – **Enrolled!** Understanding the Gay Cycle – **Enrolled!** Crimes Against Women – **Enrolled!**

Blah [changing your last name to your husband's is anti-feminist] **Blah** [having a baby is anti-feminist] **Blah** [your penis is anti-feminist].

[Where am I going with this?]

Last weekend I was dancing at my friend's wedding with a handful of other feminists [feel free to name your next poem, "Dancing with a Handful of Feminists"]. One friend asked the bride, "Melissa, did you change your last name?! I heard Ashley (another friend, and the officiator of the wedding) announce you as Mr. and Mrs. ____!" Melissa chuckled and exclaimed "Yes!" Then, all while dancing, she recounted a story of an older woman asking her the same question and scoffing at her answer. Melissa replied to her with, "Yeah I'm a bad feminist." The woman agreed with her, and even seemed to take issue with her getting married.

Then I, and the handful of feminists laughed. "She is just a Second-Waver! She doesn't know any better!"

I am happy I no longer feel the need to rain on anyone's parade [or their wedding] unless they're being an asshole [hello certain members of congress who just want a paycheck from Fox News after their political career festers!].

Want to change your last name to your husband's? – **Perfect!**

Want to protest topless with "Fuck Your Morals" written on your breasts? – **Amen!**

Want rights as a sex worker? – **Why not!?**

The women who made vast changes during the First and Second Waves of feminism were AWE-SOME. Thank you! But, the Third Wave is even better, anything goes! Which is why I often ask myself if feminism is still relevant.

I am not saying there is not a need for activism anymore, there definitely is. I am questioning how we want to organize, and what kind of language we will use. Why do men want to legislate women's bodies? ~~I don't know~~, actually I do know, but this isn't a zine about metaphysics. Either way, wrapping myself in plastic and documenting the process so as to confuse five-seven art students, who grew up in the Midwest, is doing nothing.

Feminism? Maybe it's because I am older, but it sounds so limiting. I want to be inclusive, and have real dialogue. And one day, Western culture will realize it's not about women and men; our culture will catch up and recognize more than two sexes. It's not us vs. them, unless you're an asshole.



HIRSTORY BY CAROLINE CASWELL

Elementary School: bold, weird, puberty, breasts, confidence. **Middle School:** drowning in a sea of fish, awkward feelings all the time, boys boys boys, crush, death. **High School:** whoa, change, depression, distance, awkward feelings all the time, stress, awakening, fag hag, friends are family. **College/Ch. 1:** whoa, distance distance, awkward feelings all the time, depression, tired, friends are home, fuck the patriarchy, get out, go west. **Hiatus:** breathe, accelerate, life, fall in love, travel, food, create, awake, alive. **College/Ch. 2:** get ready get set go, love, create, stimulate, awake, asleep...

Through all of these stages there was an underlying feeling of "I-do-not-belong-ness." If I wasn't thinking it, someone else reminded me through their words and their actions. I quickly learned that I needed to be put in my place, and that place was the patriarchy.

Through all of these stages I had different outlooks on relationships and gender because of my father. When I look back at my life retrospectively, it is separated into stages heavily influenced by my father's marriages. With each wife came a new set of kids (wife #2), a new city to visit every other weekend (wife #3), or the footsteps of death/hell in spandex (wife #4).

I won't go into every dirty detail, but I will say that my father was both a blessing and a curse. He was a very odd man (to most everyone, except me). Oddity is something we have in common. We had a connection that no one except for us really understood. Some blamed

his oddness on his father, some on his brain tumor, and some just thought he was mad. He committed suicide when I was 13 years old. His death caused me an immense amount of pain and depression. I had experienced more dysfunctionality at age 13 than most people in my small town could fathom. My family members would always compare the two of us and say that I had inherited his personality traits. This scared me because of his poor life choices. I didn't want my life to end up like my fathers. Unlike my father, I was strong when he was weak. This is partly why I say his choices are a blessing. His poor life choices taught me what not to do and also opened up my eyes. He would do something stupid and I would think, "what the fuck is he doing?!", at age 9. That same reaction carried over into other aspects of my life. His choices made me more cautious of relationships and therefore questioning to the status quo of gender roles. Once he died, I felt free of all of those negative stages in my life. It took a few awkward years, but I now feel free to choose my own path and question those that others have taken.

Despite all of my father's mishaps, I still have my mother: the most courageous woman I have ever met. She was my rock growing up. When my father made a mistake, I would cry and thank my sneakers that my mother was there for me. While he was going through marriage after marriage, divorce after divorce, she would continue to raise two children, run a household, and hold a high position in her workplace. Without her, my life would follow my father's.

It is hard to differentiate the "weird girl" who didn't belong, from the "wounded girl" who had a shitty dad. I can't say which one came first, or which one led me to feminism, but I believe it is a little bit of both. I can't leave out the influential teachers, literature, films, music, and the greatest friends in the world.

The Patriarchy is what has led me to feel like an outcast. Feminism is the answer and my saving grace. It took me many awkward and troublesome years to come to that conclusion, but alas, I am finally here. Now it is just a matter of getting everyone else on board.



NEXT ISSUE:

HEARTBREAK
..... AND
FORGIVENESS

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