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DIY FEMINISMS IN THE THIRD SPACE: FEMALE RHETORICAL TECHNIQUES PERFORMED IN MULTI-GENERATIONAL ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

Cristen M. Fitzpatrick
Saint John's University, Jamaica New York

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Cristen M. Fitzpatrick

Date Submitted _____ Date Approved _____

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Cristen M. Fitzpatrick Granville Ganter

ABSTRACT

DIY FEMINISMS IN THE THIRD SPACE:
FEMALE RHETORICAL TECHNIQUES PERFORMED IN
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This dissertation looks at the creation of both a literal and figurative clubhouse created by women, for women, through alternative publishing endeavors, including pamphlets, zines, and blogs, as women patchworked a "do-it-yourself" (DIY) feminism from the mid-20th century through today. I discuss alternative media utilized by marginalized, radical feminist groups and the application of newly-discovered feminist rhetoric throughout. I begin with an overview of feminist literacy and rhetoric, leading to a discussion of the pamphlets of the Women's Movement in the 1960s. This sets the stage for the zines of the next generation, the 1980s and 1990s, in which women once again figuratively and literally copy and paste images and text, creating self-published pamphlets for dissemination among like-minded women, creating, in effect, a virtual clubhouse. I conclude with a discussion of the feminist blogosphere as it stands today, as a new iteration of ephemeral media and DIY feminism. My conclusions include the importance of the use of alternative medias throughout American feminism to engage in a participatory type of meaning-making for women, who were and are typically marginalized and often excluded from mainstream media.

I examine alternative media publication as a means of creating a place and a space for (almost) any woman to express herself, in any way she sees appropriate, necessary, or appealing. Building on decades of research into alternative media and marginalized discourse, this dissertation seeks to underscore and expand upon the production of alternative media during the recent waves of feminism. Women's blogging offers more

opportunities than ever before for networking, profit, society, politics, and activism. Both the DIY aspect of zine culture and the new methods of communication and languaging that have sustained a rhetoric of inclusion that is carried across generations.

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Background

In first-wave feminism, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, women banded together to fight against society for female suffrage. They stood shoulder-to-shoulder to voice their grievances and demands, and they won. First-wave feminism made huge strides towards equal rights for the sexes, culminating in the ratification of the 19th amendment for women's suffrage in 1920. Suffrage was granted, and feminism was largely disbanded. From the 1910s, the first wave of feminism, to the late 1960s (the second wave of feminism) feminists became less visible for a variety of different reasons, including a lack of a unifying goal and the consequences of the Great Depression, followed by WWII and the Cold War. Women once again were required to put their heads down and do the dirty work that needed to get done to help their families and their country out of hard times. Without a clear purpose, and without the luxury of time or money, women's rights were largely overshadowed in the 30s, 40s, and 50s. Thus, it was not until the late 1960s that women once again came together in a uniform way to fight for social equality. These second-wave feminists fought for things such as reproductive and sexual rights, equality in the family and in the workplace, and individuation outside of men. Like the feminists in the first wave, these new feminists worked towards equal rights and truly made a difference in the history of women's equality.

But by the time second-wave feminism started to gain momentum, the feminist movement became less about men and more about women understanding that they must confront their own sexism and socially-constructed beliefs before they can expect

mainstream society to do the same. As bell hooks writes in her small primer *Feminism is for Everybody*, "Simply put, feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression" (1). She makes it clear that feminism is not just a male or female issue. It fights against the sexism that is deeply and socially ingrained in all children from birth under the patriarchy that exists in most places in the Western world. Both women and men are saddled with inert sexism and society-prescribed gender roles, and they must both unlearn what they have been told is true and real and essential. Women during these times were beginning to recognize what bell hooks was writing: that feminism must begin from within if it is ever going to make significant change throughout society.

This dissertation takes up the story beginning in 1968 when radical women turned their backs on the society that they fought against so valiantly in the 1900s and started writing their own stories. They turned inward, toward each other, to begin that hard work of better understanding who they, and we, are as women. This is the beginning of what is known as intersectional feminism, when women begin to understand that there is no one, singular version of feminism. There is not a single, unifying principle under which feminists can organize because all women are different. Feminism as we had understood it before was a white-washed, middle-to-upper class version of feminism. It excluded Black, brown, and indigenous women. It excluded lower-class women. It excluded queer women, in all their facets. The Women's Liberation Movement recognized these disparities, and, beginning with the pamphlets of the late 1960s and early 1970s, women were writing for themselves. They left the mainstream and moved to the margins to have these sometimes-difficult conversations with each other. As a result, these alternative media were not meant for wide-spread public consumption. They were not meant for

men. These women were writing for themselves, to have conversations and exchange ideas, to network and educate.

We see this again in the late 1980s and early 1990s, in what we could presumably consider the third-wave of feminism. Women, sometimes just young girls themselves, re-appropriated the zine culture of the punk movement and the pamphlet culture of second-wave feminism to create their own underground media meant for each other. These were safe places were girls could learn, experiment with identities, and be creative outside of the patriarchy. These medias were once again meant only for themselves. And in the most recent iteration of alternative feminist medias, the blogosphere is the digital version of all of this. Women, young and old, are writing for each other, in the marginalized abyss that is the Internet, to once again connect and discuss and educate.

Drawing on feminist and cultural theorist Gloria Anzaldúa and her notion of "border languages," I will explore the alternative media of the feminist movement, from the 18th century to the "zine scene" of the 1980s and 1990s. This period witnessed the creation of new places to speak, as well as new attitudes about how to speak. I use the term feminisms, rather than the singular *feminism*, very purposefully. It was in the margins of feminism itself, in these woman-made alternative media, that women recognized how *intersectional* feminism actually is and accepted that feminism does not look the same for every woman. Differences in class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and political beliefs led to many different desired outcomes for feminists, and the media born from these contemporary waves of feminism constantly acknowledge and give a voice to many different types of feminists and feminisms. The material I am examining is characterized by multiplicity—there were many different pamphlets, zines, and blogs,

and, consequently, many different attitudes, writers, and purposes. The multiplicity is what makes this archive of expression so unique and valuable.

In 1984, Audre Lorde famously wrote that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" in her essay of the same name. She believes that by using the language and rules and constructs of the patriarchy, women can never break free from it. But the radical feminist pamphlets, zines, and blogs I examine in this dissertation have done exactly that and proven it to be effective. In fact, I argue that you *must* use the tools of the master to dismantle his house; there is no other option. However, as these women show us, you do not need to use those tools as the master intends you to use them. Women create their own uses, and one of the most powerful tools that we have is our literacy, our own form of discourse and language. This new, or alternative, literacies is created from, but lives outside, the tools of the "master," or patriarchy, and it exists in the margins of the dominant culture, rather than under it. Radical feminism has always been forced to use, and manipulate, the tools of the patriarchy to construct their own brand of feminism. Women who participate in DIY feminism are actively resisting patriarchy and working towards their own understanding of the world. They are re-culturating (rather than acculturating) by finding their own ways. They are contributing to new forms of meaning-making, which speaks to the DIY literacy of creating something out of something else. The counterculture is, of course, as varied and contradictory as the mainstream, but it is trying at something new and not taking everything at face value. By questioning and reacting against ideology, these women are getting people to think and reconsider, which is the first step.

In pamphlets, zines, and blogs, feminists, literally, through cutting and pasting text and images, and figuratively, through re-appropriation of demeaning words and phrases, construct their own literacies by using what is available to them under that patriarchal rule of the dominant culture. As a result, feminists create a DIY type of discourse. I use the phrase "DIY literacies" to refer to those means of communication that are created through patchwork. The arguments I make stand on the shoulders of three theorists: Gloria Anzaldúa, bell hooks, and Judith Butler. These three women represent the intersectionality of feminism, where sex, race, and class converge.

My work and research consider forms of tangible peripheral media in the context of Anzaldúa's borderlands and bell hooks' "margins." These borders are certainly physical; Anzaldúa writes about the Mexican-US border, while hooks writes about an actual train track separating black and white America. But both women write about a figurative border, too, which exists not in a physical space but in the minds of others. This figurative border, or margin, is as exclusionary as its physical manifestation. And while 1968 began the proliferation of feminist media in the form of pamphlets such as *Notes from the First Year* and *Voices of Women's Liberation*, it expanded into the feminist zine culture that was so prominent in the last decade of the twentieth century. From there, feminist magazines and zines made the transition to the online spaces, which allowed them to reach much larger audiences. Since then, more and more women have been turning on their computers to find their own communities. These online communities are yet another incarnation of borderlands or margins. The third spaces comprised of blogs, social media platforms, and online magazines fills another void that is left in the wake of patriarchal hegemony. In the context of cyberfeminism, Haraway,

like Anzaldúa, writes about "borders." Haraway's borders are the spaces between the mechanical and the organic, which makes the Internet a third space where these two collide. The borderland of the Internet, then, is a place where people can act outside of norms. Haraway argues "for pleasure in the confusion of boundaries and for responsibility in their construction" (516). To relate this to cyberfeminism, feminist cyborgs should take care in constructing their third spaces, with the knowledge that this new land is paving a way for something radical. At the same time, cyberfeminists should relish in the possibilities of this new frontier that exists outside of heteronormativity.

Chapter 1

In my first chapter, I connect women's journaling practices to the connected, participatory, and cooperative media produced in the second-wave in America. Feminists throughout history have been creating and disseminating alternative media to promote their own versions of feminism and to reach large audiences, which is especially evident in the pamphlets of the 1960s. Through these peripheral media, a new kind of participatory democracy was being formed. By "participatory democracy," I am referring to the reciprocity of information. That is, writers and editors would solicit material and opinions from the readers, creating a cyclical exchange of ideas. Reader letters would be published in second-wave pamphlets in the 1970s, and those readers would then start writing to each other, forming new bonds and reaching audiences otherwise unattainable. In this way, the readers *become* the producers, and the line between those in power and those in subordinated positions is skewed. Subordinated groups found the means by which to create propaganda, helped by reproduction technology. Furthermore, this push

encouraged other feminists to take this grassroots approach by proving that "everyone" could do it. This chapter will include examples of these feminist pamphlets, relying heavily on those second-wave pamphlets archived on RedStockings.com. This site has scanned and annotated the earliest second-wave feminist pamphlets, from 1968-1975.

These peripheral media utilize do-it-yourself (DIY) techniques. DIY culture in feminism represents a new literacy, a do-it-yourself, cut-and-paste literacy in which feminists use the words and language of the dominant culture but re-work them to create new meanings and representations. By repurposing ideology, these pamphlet-makers are satirizing consumerism and pop culture. The effect of this DIY project is that readers can see at a glance how women's magazines are participating in female oppression. The cut-and-paste effect, with many different fonts, sizes, and shapes, shows the audience the vastness of the problem. DIY culture is closely tied to feminism since women re-appropriated the terms "crafty" and "domestic" to be positive, women-centric attributes that prove that women can do it all, and all for themselves, outside of the capitalistic culture of the white male. This chapter will show how prior feminist rhetorical outlets led to the pamphlets of the second-wave. The idea of domesticity and "craftiness" that women have imbued for centuries are realized in the pamphlets of the 1960s and 1970s, as that very craftiness is reappropriated into a means of political and social commentary.

Chapter 2

From the second-wave pamphlets discussed in the previous chapter, this chapter will focus exclusively on zines: how they came about, how they were appropriated by feminists in the 80s and 90s, and how they still exist today. I will also include a literature

review that includes recent scholarship on both zine culture and feminist rhetoric. The zines I site are housed in library collections in Barnard and the New York Public Library, as well as zines that I have personally bought, collected, or borrowed.

As defined by prominent zine researcher Stephen Duncombe, one of the major theorists of zine culture, "zines are noncommercial, nonprofessional, small-circulation magazines which their creators produce, publish, and distribute by themselves" (9). These forms of peripheral media are doing revolutionary work in the margins today. At times, though, with the dates removed, it seems that any pamphlet from 1968 could have been published yesterday, and vice versa. Both second-wave pamphlets and contemporary zines practice similar literacies and rhetorics in their presentation of feminism and their arguments against the hegemonic, capitalistic dominant culture.

This chapter will focus on the rhetoric of participation and community in the zine movement. This is an obvious deviation from traditional, persuasive rhetoric, which relies on talking *at* people, to change their minds, rather than the feminist rhetoric that talks *with* people, while being open to other views. Zines ask readers to share, participate, write, draw, and otherwise become involved. In this way, the DIY and craftiness of the second-wave feminist pamphlets is further embodied in zines as more and more women are called to participate in the making of the media.

Historically, many feminized action or words have been considered in disparaging terms. Things like cooking and knitting, "girly" handwriting, the color pink, and journal writing were considered to be in the women's realm and, therefore, not important or worthy of the stature or pride of the mainstream. Traditionally, women have been expected to be the domestic of the family: cooking, cleaning, shopping, sewing, etc. But

something interesting happens in third-wave feminism; women begin to reclaim domesticity as a means of empowerment. The idea was that women can "do it themselves," without help from a man, and also without having to buy a product and contribute to the male-driving, female-focused consumerist economy. The re-appropriation of domesticity took many forms: an increase in popularity of knitting, an interest in baking and cooking, vegetable gardening, and an influx of women selling artisan products, both in zines and, later, on websites such as Etsy.

I will continue with a discussion of the shared rhetorical technique that calls listeners to action. Zines, far from being passive, ask women and girls to keep going. Some include reading lists, some collect money for feminist causes, some plan meetings. The call to action is an important part of radical feminist media—the idea that it does not stop at the page. The creators of this discourse offer many different suggestions for the consumer to continue practicing, and performing, her feminism outside of the page. The rhetorical discussion in this chapter will consider, among others, the work of Laura Micciche, Lisa Ede, Andrea Lunsford, and Cheryl Glenn, who write about using alternative means of delivery for radical thoughts and who encourage and value questioning as rhetorical knowledge building.

Rather than advocating mainstream values, zines encourage girls and women to ignore it entirely. Working outside of the mainstream in itself is a form of rebellion, by refusing to play by their rules. As a result, these feminists are left to create their own rules, within their own spaces. They encourage women to expand, or raise, their consciousness. Both the pamphlets from the late 1960s and zines from the 1990s include suggested readings lists at the end, often including these same authors. The zinesters say

that women try to change themselves to fit into the hegemony because they do not know anything else. We take what we are taught, and we hope for a better future while doing nothing to change it. They go on to say that instead, women should be building their own "clubhouses," their own spaces, rather than trying to fit into one that does not want or respect them. Thus, women should stop trying to fight the patriarchy from within, with its literacy and its discourses, and instead work from without, from the margins, in their own spaces that are welcoming and understanding.

Chapter 3

This chapter will explain how the Internet boom changed zine culture. Some zines moved online, while others used the Internet to promote their paper zine. Furthermore, the Internet allows for even more opportunities to spread the feminist rhetorical techniques of participatory culture, reappropriation, and call to action. Twitter, Facebook, Etsy, Pinterest, and blogs all contribute to creating a larger feminist presence and also representing the myriad definitions of what it means to be a feminist. Blogs differ from zines in that they are "live" material. Rather than presenting an issue in a neat little magazine form, blogs are constantly changing, and older material moves down the page as newer material takes the spotlight. Readers are able to comment and converse in real time, and the whole thing is more immediate. Furthermore, the DIY culture found a home in the discourse of feminism, as many women currently market their domestic expertise using online tools.

Digital literacy is more accessible and more relatable for young women coming of age today. It offers a way that even lower-educated, or non-educated, women can get

involved. The short-hand of Internet writing, and the popularity of simply re-tweeting what other people say allows women to have a voice without needing to have proper grammar and language. Proper grammar and syntax is not privileged in Internet culture, especially when people only have 280 characters to make a point. These third spaces allow people to better experiment with identities or ways of understanding. Discursive spaces such as blogs and social media allow women to have a different type of representation. That is, they can present themselves differently than they do in the mainstream, and perhaps more truly. Intersectional feminism become popular in the third-wave and has risen to place of even more prominence in cyberfeminism, while the Internet gives everyone a sort of level playing field, at least at first, at least for those who have access to it. Peripheral media on the Internet are women-centric spaces that appeal to marginalized feminists because they are relatively cheap and easy to create and disseminate. It is in the margins of these media that feminists created alternate literacies to communicate with other like-minded women.

Language and Literacy

This dissertation will argue that although alternative feminist media culture borrows from mainstream hegemonic tools and structures, it also represents an alternative to, and a subversion of, those patriarchal practices. An understanding of the framework behind major theories surrounding patriarchal languages and literacies can help us to better contextualize the ways that these radical feminist writers and readers were working against the mainstream and towards a more participatory, discursive language and literacy that allows these women to better communicate and educate.

The male-dominated culture, the patriarchy, represents the ideology that we are all born into. Philosopher Louis Althusser explains that there is nothing outside of ideology, or the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA). There is no escaping it. Ideology, though, is simply imaginary. The first thesis he proposes regarding ideology is that it "represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (693). Thus, ideology allows subjects to feel a real and concrete relationship that does not actually correspond to reality. Individuals have no "real" relationships to anything, but ideology allows them to believe in contrived relations. This understanding can be applied to language and literacy as well. The literacy of the dominant culture is always already an ideological object. The theory of interpellation is the idea that ideology constitutes individuals as subjects through social formation, which occurs through the individual's use of literacy and language and how that usage compares to the literacy of the dominant culture. As a result, we are interpellated through patriarchal language because our ideology allows us to believe it is natural. One thinks she or he is in control and has free will, but everyone is constructed in ideology, which is embedded in material practice. Althusser writes, "you and I are always already subjects" and everything must be considered through this lens. Althusser writes about his theory of interpellation, or the ability of ideology to create social subjects of individuals. This is what Pierre Bourdieu refers to as the "symbolic." What a person acknowledges, and relies on, as "truth" are just ideological constructs meant to construct some form of imaginary, or symbolic, relation between people to their conditions of existence, or to their conditions of literacy.

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's *Language and Symbolic Power* is infinitely referential when considering the feminist movement, which is born from a power

struggle. Bourdieu coins the term *habitus*, which he defines as "socially constructed dispositions," which are inculcated in us all as a result of the ideological structure. Thus, we are not totally void of free will; we still have small agency that allows us to make decisions when it comes to, for example, our speech acts. But those decisions still operate within our socially constructed horizons, the ISA. There are a finite number of speech acts that we can make to still work within the hegemony. But habitus does not fully account for women's performativity.

While Bourdieu feels that our inculcated beliefs determine our decisions, gender theorist Judith Butler insists that he ignores the impact of social situations. Butler argues that people are more likely to act on their understanding of the immediate situation than they are on their beliefs, or habitus—or, at least, they will act in a confluence of the two. Bourdieu sees speech acts as an enactment of our habitus, which is inherently controlled by the symbolic power and versions of censorship in our society. Butler, though, claims that the idea of the inherent habitus does not take into account our bodily speech, or the performativity of our habitus. Just as gender is performative, according to Butler, so, too, is habitus, meaning that women can "play with" or change their habitus as they see fit. These alternative literacies exist in a third space as an act, or a reaction, to social situations. While it may be outside of women's habitus, it is not outside of their performativity.

This co-optation of the ideological habitus by women through performance relates to my concept of DIY literacies, in which women pervert and change existing, dominant literacies, which can be seen as the habitus, to "perform" a different discursive speech act. Bourdieu feels that women are pre-disposed to the acceptance of the ideological

patriarchy. He writes that "women are more disposed to adopt the legitimate language. . . since they are inclined towards docility with regard to the dominant usages both by the sexual division of labour. . . and by the logic of marriage" (50). Seemingly speaking as an essentialist, Bourdieu sees women as predisposed to docility or amenability. As such, they are ready and willing to adopt the "legitimate" (read: hegemonic) language of the patriarchy. He also writes about representation, which is problematic for women living within the patriarchal ideology because all representatives are seemingly working against, or actively ignoring, the best interests of women. While everyone is represented in some way or form, the representation of the feminist movement takes a different meaning than that of the hegemony. In the feminist movement, representatives encourage activism, not passivism. Women are constantly representing themselves, which then allows our representatives within the movement to best understand us and our needs. Working from a different theoretical framework, of the fruitful and unlawful ergots of Chicano and Latinx speech, Gloria Anzaldúa, too, sees a problem with the patriarchal ideology that informs our literacy and our understanding of the world. She believes that women transmit the rules and laws of men because they are forever working within their ideology. Women act as puppets who absorb the dominant culture, both consciously and unconsciously (Bourdieu's habitus), and in enacting those traits, they are aiding in the perpetuation of them.

Drawing from Gloria Anzaldúa's insights into border space, this dissertation uses the metaphor of a kid's clubhouse—a space to meet, improvise, and hangout, often composed of begged, borrowed, or stolen materials, to describe the expressive border space that women created within the alternative media culture. Women created their own

"clubhouses," their own spaces, rather than trying to fit into one that does not want or respect us. Thus, women should stop trying to fight the patriarchy from within, with its literacy and its discourses, and instead work from without, from the margins, in their own spaces that are welcoming and understanding. To that end, feminist media is about more than just consumption of discourse. It is promoting a new participatory literacy, interpolating the reader and calling her to action. Readers are addressed directly, and as they are given a sense of agency, they understand that these medias are written for them. They become participants in the DIY culture, which then leads to the readers becoming the doers. Thus, languaging is used in specific ways to increase participation, agency, and community. Through interpellation, women are able to read themselves into feminist media. They know that this is for them, and they can participate in the movement by simply reading, but then also by talking and sharing.

The study of literacy in academia has traditionally been focused on the dominant, patriarchal version of the term. By giving power to one version of language, one is (consciously or unconsciously) subordinating another. This normalized, unified language presupposes any speaker or listener; it is universally understandable and relatable, and all speakers are assumed to have the same amount of power and influence. The subordinated people, though, have their own language and literacy practices. Rather than being "sub-standard," these alternative, counterculture literacies are hallmarks of revolutionary movements, such as the feminist movement. Feminists take a stand against the white-washed hegemony when they play with language in new ways. In cyberfeminism, these alt-literacies take the form of DIY, in which women are creating their own content and the homes for this content, performing a new kind of meaning-making.

It is through these alt-literacies that radical feminists are able to work outside patriarchy and work towards dismantling the master's house. Women's studies scholar Cheris Kramarae describes the creation of new linguistic practices as making and redefining new words as a way to control language and offer a new understanding of the ways we talk and think and write in relation to sex, gender, class, race, and sexuality. In her 2012 essay "The Difference of View," Mary Jacobus writes about the limitations for women who language in a male-dominated society. She suggests that we become aware of these limitations and work towards using masculine language in other ways—essentially, working within the system in new and contradictory ways.

The DIY, alt-literacies of feminism are an off-shoot of patriarchal literacies, those "master's tools" that Lorde talks about—after all, rhetorical clubhouses are built out of the materials that young people find and repurpose. Alt-literacies are community-based, reciprocal communications through countercultural discourse. They are participatory in nature, as they solicit language from the audience, creating a circle of communication. These alt-literacies are in practice in the margins, or the borderlands, of the Internet. They exist around, or outside, of the hegemony, while working to effectively react against the patriarchal versions of heteronormativity. Today, this is largely done through peripheral media, such as the pamphlets and zines of the third-wave. These zines allow women to practice alt-literacies among themselves. This is done largely through DIY, in multiple forms. Women are cutting and pasting words and language and images of the patriarchy to create their own discourses. Also, they are re-appropriating terms such as "domesticity." creating a world in which "craftiness" is not a bad thing. As a result,

digital wave feminists are proactively pushing against their habitus, and proving that gender, behavior, and, consequently, literacy, is performative.

Rhetoric

This dissertation argues that the zine clubhouse is a co-optation of mainstream rhetorics, deployed for radical feminist purposes. Although the definition of a unique "feminist rhetoric" is still being hypothesized and debated over the past 50 years, this dissertation will seek to show that zines allow us to glimpse how feminists have adopted new expressive platforms and techniques to serve their unique political and personal goals—indeed, the roots of a feminist rhetoric. Rhetoric is traditionally defined as any kind of public discourse that is meant to persuade, which is why it is challenging to adopt and adapt that word for the kind of work that women are doing in the margins, since it was both private and non-persuasive. The popular definition of western rhetoric is traced back to Aristotle, the father of rhetoric. Rhetoric, to Aristotle and to western thinkers historically, was a means through which the speaker could persuade. But persuasion is not, and was not, necessarily a goal in the alternative medias that I am about to discuss. In fact, according to feminist rhetorician Sally Miller Gearhart in "The Womanization of Rhetoric," "any intent to persuade is an act of violence," and rhetoric should not be based, as it traditionally is, on a "conquest model' (195). We cannot say that what women writers are doing is *not* rhetorical. Rather, we must work through a new, modified definition for rhetoric that is not centered in patriarchal tendencies for rightness and winning. Patricia Bizzell examines the historical role of the female as folly, citing

women's prohibition from all public rhetoric as the reason women are often painted as the fool; any attempt to present themselves as knowledgeable or in a position worth listening to exposes the woman as folly, based on patriarchal understanding of rhetoric being a man's endeavor. Bizzell writes about the restrictions put on women, historically, to prevent them from public speaking and publishing. Private discourse was considered the "women's sphere." By re-imagining and re-labeling 'private discourse' as 'women's sphere,' it goes without saying that public discourse, then, is men's sphere. This compartmentalizing of discourse pushes women farther away from any sort of rhetorical authority, essentializing both discourse and gender. Furthermore, women have been so repeatedly pushed out of public discourse, that any woman who *does* make attempts as a rhetorician is made to be seen as a fool. Women, then, had lost any measure of authority in the public realm. Consequently, they looked within to establish authority and create meaning amongst themselves, to remind themselves of their value. The private discourse continues because that is all that is allotted to women, but private discourse took on a much different look and meaning. It became politically-charged, collaborative, reciprocal, fiery, expansive. That is, it was meant to be conversational and educational. It was meant for women to have those hard discussions with themselves, rather than for any sort of outward provocation o. These medias were created to enact change from within, rather than soliciting it from without, which is different from the feminist activism that existed previously.

It is not until the 1970s that academia begins to see female rhetoric as a worthy endeavor. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, Cheris Kramarae, Robin Lakoff, and Sally Miller Gearhart are forerunners in this field, publishing articles about female rhetoric and

rhetoricians in the mid- to late-1970s. In first-wave feminism, few women were rhetors in the traditional sense. They were giving speeches and pushing for real political reform. But the women creating the alternative media of the second-wave through the 1990s and the digital wave of today were creating material for other women, not for public consumption. They utilized the private realm that they were given or granted; they used that tool that was sanctioned by the master, to their advantage and to create material that was wholly theirs. In their 1995 essay "Border Crossings: Intersections of Rhetoric and Feminism," Lise Ede, Cheryl Glenn, and Andrea Lunsford write about the necessary consideration of rhetoric within the realm of feminism, outside of the antiquated emphasis of rhetoric within the public, discursive world. They write:

> Drawing on rhetoric's (potential) plasticity, its attention to context, and its goal of finding discursive forms to meet the needs of particular audiences; and drawing on feminism's insights regarding the ideological freight and exclusionary result of many influential contemporary forms -- as well as on women's long-standing attempts to create alternative discursive patternings -- we may find out way toward a reimagined *dispositio*, one we may both theorize and enact. (63)

It is this "goal of finding discursive forms to meet the needs of particular audiences" that allows these feminist rhetors to search for alternative means of conversation and discourse, since the audience they are writing for is not one that can be successfully reached through previous means of rhetoric. To promote the discursive relationship between "writer" and "reader," and to dissolve the barrier between them, feminists called upon different rhetorical techniques, outside of what is traditionally considered rhetoric. They cite the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary nature of feminism as an example of

the many different types of rhetorics that it employs. Ede, Glenn, and Lunsford break down the "canons of rhetoric" to make a case for feminist rhetoric existing on the borders of society. These canons include: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery, according to most classical authorities. They argue that women are employing each of these canons, too, despite the fact that "the figure of the rhetoric has been assumed to be masculine" until recently (Ede, Glenn, Lunsford 58-59). And in fact, all throughout pamphlet, zine, and digital feminist medias, women are inventing material, arranging it in a recognizable and understandable way, styling it using language and form, committing it to memory (though Cicero admits this is less obvious in written rhetoric than oral), and delivering it to an audience.

Of course, we cannot assume the either "masculine" or "feminine" exist as essential figures in the field of rhetoric. Sonja Foss et. al. write about their debate with Celeste Condit over a new feminist rhetorical theory, reminding readers that "[f]eminist perspectives are numerous, not easily categorized, and not mutually exclusive" (118). They acknowledge that it is impossible to generalize and boil down the idea of "female rhetoric" to a single, essential understanding: "We prefer to move beyond a focus on the construction or reconstruction of gender to a focus on creating a society in which gender is de-emphasized and where certain qualities that are likely to produce equality and mutuality-cooperation, self-determination, and immanent value, for example-are implemented" (119). Of course, this is quite an idealistic way of thinking about feminist rhetoric, as de-emphasizing gender would be nearly impossible in our society. Yet, this is one example of how the field of feminist literacy theory is in itself varied and multi-faceted

In contrast to masculine rhetoric, female rhetors must also reconsider what is valued as knowledge. In terms of invention, though, Ede, Glenn, and Lunsford write that "[w]omen have also sought to include the intuitive and paralogical, the thinking of the body, as valuable sources of knowing" (59). Before even taking the first step towards rhetoric, women have had to challenge that what they know is valuable and worthy. Before they can even "prove" they are knowledgeable, they must first prove that the knowledge they have is valuable. Up until this point, only masculine knowledge, or *public* knowledge, was valued, and the *private*, bodily, intuitive knowledge of women was unvalued. Women had to prove that they were worthy of being heard. It is no wonder women turned their backs on a society that refused to value their minds and instead turned towards each other to value first each other's minds, to lead by example and to carve their own paths towards truth-finding; in fact, feminist rhetorical theory asserts that a shared understanding is the closest we can come to the truth. To eschew contemporary understanding of rhetoricians and become their own versions of rhetoricians—and then, after all of this thought work, can feminists again face the patriarchy and attempt to prove it once again. In their article "Beyond Persuasion," Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin theorize about female rhetoric and rhetorical practices. In contrast to the persuasive, aggressive male rhetoric with which our country is familiar, female rhetoric is more invitational; it is "grounded in feminist principles of equality, immanent value, and self determination…" (70). It opens communicative modes that value things such as understanding, safety, and freedom. Because these are not necessarily values of the mainstream, this female, womanized rhetoric is not typically recognized by mainstream society. But Foss and Griffin argue that the scope of rhetorical theory as a whole must be expanded to include

that of female rhetoric, as one example of non-patriarchal forms of rhetoric. This dissertation attempts to do just that: to examine the female, non-traditional rhetoric of the alternative medias of radical feminists and better understand their marginalized values. In this case, as female rhetorical theorists have concluded, female rhetoric is not about "winning," in the sense that traditional rhetoric is. Rather, it values the perspectives of others and values individualism and individualized beliefs. Theorist Jessica Enoch furthers the assertions of Foss and Griffin by saying that revising the rhetorical canon and discovering female historical rhetorical figures is not enough; in fact, it is still working within the rules of the patriarchy. We should instead by reconsidering how we define rhetoric in the first place, and consider the historical relationships between gender and history. Rhetorical agency as a whole must be interrogated, as we come to a better understanding of who gives and takes agency and how the goal of rhetoric changes when considered under a feminist lens. Ede, Glenn, and Lunsford go on to note:

> In order to claim authority and agency, to function as subjects in the discursive arena and thus further feminism's emancipatory goal, some feminists choose . . . to adhere to the stylistic conventions of traditional western discourse -- conventions that sharply dichotomize the public and the private, that devalue personal experience in favor of 'objective' facts, 'rational' logic, and established authorities. (64)

This is precisely what these authors did when they chose to write and publish their essay through traditional means, as I, too, acknowledge that the very structure of my dissertation, and the means by which and through which I was able to produce it is, too, within the structure that the feminists I write about are breaking free from. That is one

such route that marginalized people have attempted to gain credibility: by utilizing the tools of the patriarchy as a means to an end. This is the "double bind" that they write about. But there are also "a number of women" who "have attempted to forge not only alternative styles but also alternative discourses" (ibid. 65). The authors cite Mary Daly as an example of a women who took the alternative route. Daly "'co-conjured' Websters' [sic] First New Intergalactic Wickedary of the English Language" as "an attempt to 'conceive of language itself as a fabric that was originally woven by women in conversation with one another'" (ibid. 65). Other obvious examples, though, are the pamphlets, zines, and e-zines and blogs later discussed in this paper, where women are working outside of mainstream media.

Personal is Political

In this way, the personal becomes the political, and it is on the shoulders of that adage that alternative feminist media stands. Through an analysis of feminist rhetorical theory, we come to a realization that personal, lived experiences are valued as knowledge. That is, what women previously thought of as personal problems are actually social problems, shared by the women around them. Ede, Glenn, and Lunsford explain that "feminist theory has consistently challenged any public/private distinction, arguing that knowledge based in the personal, in lived experience, be valued and accepted as important and significant" (59). And I will take it a step further to say that lived experiences are not just "important" and "significant" but *the most* important and significant avenues of meaning-making for radical feminists producing these alternative media. Female writers find alternative ways of communication and making meaning. Hélène Cixous, for example, in her "The Laugh of the Medusa" is a champion of using

the feminized body as a medium of communications, a tool through which women can speak. Medusa, here, has a voice. She can speak lies and falsehoods introduced by men to scare women from exploring their own power. Men created the myths that were too dark to explore. Medusa is not deadly, but beautiful and laughing. There is no general, typical woman; there is no female sexuality or experience. Likewise, Trinh T. Minh-ha advises readers to "[s]hake syntax, smash the myths, and if you lose, slide on, unearth some new linguistic paths. Do you surprise? Do you shock? Do you have a choice?" in her book *Woman, Native, Other* (20). She reminds us that woman is not the opposite signifier to man, but is a signifier in her own right, and as such, must create her own rules and paths.

The increased valuation of personal experience in alternative medias makes even more sense when we consider the origin of such media. Diaries, journals, letter-writing, recipe sharing, and scrapbooking are all examples of female-produced media that value personal, lived experience but were and often still are considered less valuable than the masculine writing being done at the time. In her book *Girls Make Media*, Mary Celeste Kearney writes about diary-writing: "[they] have been a part of upper-class girls' culture since the eighteenth century, as religious leaders stressed their role in spiritual reflection and teachers advocated their usefulness in improving girls' handwriting and compositional skills" (30). Journaling and writing about the day-to-day is not an unfamiliar concept to women and girls, as they were often encouraged to write down their feelings and preoccupations. One reason for this is that, traditionally, "writing has not been seen as threatening to traditional gender (and generational) roles;" however, as Kearney explains, "writing has a liberating effect on many girls (30-31). Journaling is where women read/write themselves into critical self-consciousness and develop *possible*

voices and perform various identities, which we see again and again, too, in radical feminist alternative medias. Furthermore, the personal, DIY aesthetic of radical feminist media has a long-standing tradition in women writing. DIY-ing is reminiscent even of religious flap books created by young girls in the 18th and 19th centuries, in which they would illustrate Biblical scenes and use flaps to change and alter the scene as the story goes on, as reported by Jacqueline Reid-Walsh in her article "Modding as Making: Religious Flap Books Created by Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Girls" (196). An example such as this "reveals insights into a girls' DIY or participatory culture hundreds of years ago" (Reid-Walsh 207). These personal texts were also practicing DIY aspects, the likes of which we see throughout alternative feminist medias.

To trace the use of alternative media by feminists in America, one could go all the way back to 17th Century Puritan texts. Katharine Gillespie writes about these early pamphlets, in which women contend that the God-given human nature in both men *and* women lends itself to public discourse inclinations and empowers all individuals politically and socially (Gillespie). Women such as Anne Wentworth used the Puritan notion of abstract individualism to further prove their autonomy and aptitude (ibid. 31). These pamphlets are early examples of women appropriating resources available to them and using them for rhetorical purposes, as they serve their own notion of feminism. Wentworth writes of her pamphlet "doth not come to the view of the World with eloquence of speech, nor any artificial dress, but in plainness of speech, in its own Mother's tongue, not set forth and adorned with the wisdom of men" (qtd. in Gillespie 37). This sentiment is echoed centuries later when bell hooks writes about the limitations and unnecessary denseness of academic feminism. To be able to discuss feminism in any

real way, it must be understandable to the masses. Moreover, academic feminism is not necessary to make any real change. It is limited in audience and it further alienates Black and brown women from the conversation, given the unbalanced nature of higher education in general. For feminism to be inclusive, it must be taken out of academia. Wentworth understood this to be true in the seventeenth century. Zines, too, both offline and online, constitute an exclusionary area of authorship, which has been largely overlooked in women literacy studies. However, it is here, in the margins and the periphery, that women are creating their own discourses through their own language mixing.

Activism

Radical alternative feminists use alternative media clubhouses as a place to enact social and political activism. In their article "Notes on the Political Condition of Cyberfeminism," Faith Wilding and the Critical Arts Ensemble claim, for example, that cyberfeminism allowed for a virtual meeting place, the likes of which feminism had never seen before. "Historically, feminist activism has depended on women getting together bodily . . . Women met together in private to plan their public campaigns for political and legal enfranchisement. In these campaigns the visible presence of groups of women plucked from the silenced isolation of their homes became a public sign of female rebellion and activism" (48). The authors are referring to the consciousness-raising groups of second-wave feminism that allowed women to congregate with a singular purpose to discuss inequity and political and social change.

What these authors are missing, though, is the zine culture of third-wave feminism. Rather than a jump from consciousness-raising groups to cyberfeminism, there

were decades in between in which women created their own, analog networks through zines. The young women in the 1990s did not have access to the external, protest type of activism. Largely restricted by their age, young women once again took matters into their own hands and used what they could find to construct their own brand of feminism. They riffed from the punk rock movement as an example of Other, radical, and underground, and reappropriated zines as a way to communicate radical feelings. Once the Internet became popular, it was possible for young women to reach other young women in a non-threatening way (that is, non-threatening to their own safety). These young women could "practice" activism and feminism behind their closed bedroom doors, once again using what society has constructed as their sandbox. Wilding et al. go on to discuss the Women's Action Coalition (WAC), which began in 1991 and consisted of an elaborate communication system of over eight thousand women across North America. The WAC created phone trees, e-mail blasts, and more, and was considered "an early protoelectronic feminism organization" (49). However, this generalization of networking feminists disregards the proliferating zine scene that began a decade before WAC mobilized. This further corroborates the zine scene as being not only representative of the marginalized, but of the *marginalized* marginalized. That is, women who were on the periphery of the feminist movement created a robust virtual network in the third-wave before mainstream feminism caught on.

Third Space Clubhouses

Women do the job of the patriarchy in the mainstream simply by *living*: by perpetuating the constructed rules and systems that were put into place by men. Anzaldúa

reminds us that "[c]ulture forms our beliefs. We perceive the version of reality that it communicates. Dominant paradigms, predefined concepts that exist as unquestionable, unchallengeable, are transmitted to us through culture. Culture is made by those in power -- men. Males make the rules and laws; women transmit them" (38). Women *transmit* the culture made by men. To persuade women to perpetuate and transmit the patriarchal culture, women are told that rules are in place to protect them, when in fact, culture is there to keep women in the roles created for her by men, and to keep women predictable and, therefore, non-threatening.

One way that these radical feminists fight against the culture that is handed to them by the patriarchy is by constructing virtual clubhouses via these alternative feminist medias. Women have to work towards "a new consciousness," and one way to do that is to "decide to disengage from the dominant culture, write it off altogether as a lost cause, and cross the border into a wholly new and separate territory" (Anzaldúa 101). These alternative medias created by radical feminists are an exemplification of these new, separate territories outside of the patriarchy and created for women by women. These separate territories on the borderlands of the patriarchy are the third space clubhouses where women can "meet." Licona defines her borderland as a "still-spatialized though not necessarily geographic context where two or more things come together and, in doing so, create a third space of sorts. I also mean these third spaces to be understood as the in-between spaces that are created at virtual and material intersections" (4). This is the definition by which I, too, am working, as this dissertation explores the alternative medias of feminism that live in those third spaces.

Generational Differences

Youth culture is an underappreciated element of feminist rhetorical research, as the production and consumption of youth are traditionally considered to be silly, nonconsequential, or frivolous. Pamphlet literature was the first step of a varied voice, as women talk back to a dialogue starting in the public press by writers such as Betty Friedan in 1963. These pamphlets were primarily written by college-education white women who promoted a new kind of participatory education. Once the zine culture of the 1980s and 1990s came to the forefront, though, it was not necessarily just college-education women who are participating. The history of zines, as I discuss in chapter 2, can be traced back through two different lineages: one is the tradition of peripheral media, like pamphlets, in radical feminism. The other lineage, though, is the zine scene that was proliferating in both science fiction and punk rock circles. And it is this group that translates to a younger, less formally educated variety of feminist writers. These non-high-brow writers were not the manifesto writers of the pamphlet tradition, though some did, in fact, publish their own "manifestos." Rather, they were younger and more playful, and as a result, they are often not taken seriously in neither mainstream media nor academia. That youth culture does continue into the digital wave of feminism, with e-zines and blogs, but the participants in general are much more varied, especially when considering hashtag feminism. Digital feminism is enacted by women of all ages, more so than both pamphlets and zines.

But we want to be careful to not fall into the trap of simply defining second-wave feminism by its playfulness, in contrast to the seriousness of the second-wave. In her essay "Goodbye to Feminism's Generational Divide," Lisa Jervis warns against just that,

explaining that "[w]hen feminists engage in this kind of nuance-deprived conflation of age and ideology, we're doing little more than reinscribing the thoroughly debunked notion that we need to agree with each other all the time" (16). By making sweeping generalizations about generations of feminists, we are once again subscribing to the notion of a singular, one-size-fits-all feminism while disregarding the multiplicities and pluralities of women and girls who participate in these varied feminisms. Jervis lists topics that span generations, from second- to third-wave, including "[c]ombating rape and domestic violence" and "[a]ffordable, accessible childcare" and she likens credits second-wave protests and consciousness-raising groups for influencing third-wave "guerilla theater groups," or grrrl groups, respectively (26). The way that radical feminists deal with, writing about, and communicate around these topics may look different in each generation, and, as I explain above and below, the scope of feminism certainly widens with each subsequent generation. But the hard-hitting topics that Jervis lists exist as pain points of every generation of feminists.

Carol Hanish, prominent radical feminist and author of the groundbreaking article "The Personal is Political," wrote about consciousness-raising groups in 1975 in *A Practical Guide to the Women's Movement*. She lists 31 topics to be considered and discussed in consciousness-raising groups: Introduction (introduce yourselves), childhood, puberty, sex roles, self-image-personality, self image-body, friendships, love, mothers, fathers, siblings, marriage, motherhood, pregnancy and childbirth, abortion, children, sex, lesbianism, aging, independence/dependence, ambition, competition, work, power, money, anger/violence, rape, racism, religion, health, and accepting/changing our lives. Hanish's article about consciousness-raising was reprinted in 2017, in a zine called

Trying to Make the Personal Political: Feminism and Consciousness-Raising. Two addenda were added to the zine, after Hanish's article. One, "Supplemental Guidelines for Black Women" by Lori Sharpe added race-conscious topics to Hanish's original list, including roles of Black women, civil rights movement, Black men, and Black culture. Some of Hanish's original topics were on the list, but the talking points were changed. For example, the topic of education asks women to consider feelings regarding Black scholarship ("Does she/he have to have a 'white' degree?"), Black history ("What are the myths and facts? What was Africa to our ancestors?"), and Black studies ("Is it a passing phase? How do women get recognition?") (32).

The second addendum, written by Jane Ginsburg and Gail Gordon, is "Supplemental Guidelines for Youth Women (14-19), which draws attention to the fact that young women were decidedly excluded from much of second-wave feminisms' medias, meetings, and understanding. Increasingly, from the 80s and 90s onward, young girls were becoming more and more interested and vested in feminism, and Ginsburg and Gordon reimagine consciousness-raising talking points to include issues that are particularly important to these young women, such as friendship, siblings, peer pressure, adolescence, gynecologists, and dating. As Sharpe maintained some of Hanish's original topics, so do Ginsburg and Gordon, but once again restructured and rewritten for young women. In this case, questions surrounding education include: "Do I like my school? Does it treat the girls and boys equally? Have I ever had to go to Home Economics while the boys went to Shop?" "Have I ever pretended to be less smart than the boys so that they wouldn't feel threatened by me? Do I feel I am as smart or smarter than boys my own age?" (37). These addenda act as signposts of the changing feminisms, values, and

pain points of feminists across generations. This zine adds questions for both Black women and young women to indicate a change in the landscape of feminism in general, which one can trace clearly through the alternative media of the time.

My project reconsiders these additional questions as I discuss the varied feminisms that present themselves from 1968 onward. The authors of this zine took the foundational consciousness-raising questions and then added an "and also…", "and also…" to find a space for new feminist voices. However, the alternative medias that I discuss mesh these voices together in a singular place.

Race

I do want to account for the lack of Black, brown, and indigenous female voices in these radical feminist alternative medias. As previously discussed, the late 60s and early 70s were a time of radical change in America, and minority groups were beginning to realize that equal on paper does not mean equality for all. Black women found themselves as default members of two radical groups of the time: the Black rights movement and the feminist movement. But Black rights movements, such as Black Power, were generally male-led groups with a reputation for sexism, relegating women to inferior roles within their organizations. On the other hand, while second-wave feminism addressed some gender inequities that also plagued Black women, it largely ignored the plight of lower-class and Black women. Second-wave feminism was primarily meant for college-educated, married, white women who were fighting for social equality, and Black women felt out of place for several reasons. Therefore, Black women were outsiders on both grounds, which necessitated a new movement, a Black feminist movement that promoted the specific issues plaguing Black women. Black radical movements in their

communities were entirely male-led, and women were continually found in a position of inferiority. While men were vocalizing their intentions for equality, they were stepping on the shoulders of the women who allowed them the time and power to speak. In her book *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*, Robin Kelley quotes Margaret Wright who explains, "'We run errands, lick stamps, mail letters and do the door-to-door. But when it comes to the speaker's platform, it's all men up there blowing their souls, you dig'" (Kelley). Within the Black radical movement, women were the workhorses. They did the work behind the scenes to give their male counterparts the spotlight and the praise. As Fran Sanders explains in her essay "Dear Black Man," this is nothing new; this dynamic has been at play for centuries. The Black woman "has waited on the sidelines for generations while the Black man sought his soul in other things. She was a secondary consideration in his quest for a reality other than that of the pick and hoe" (Sanders 89). Even during the time of abolition, Sanders claims that women were a secondary motive for men. As history has shown, Black men were quick to gain voting and political rights, and Black women were largely left behind. Thus, they were the ones working behind the scenes; they never really left the kitchen of the white man.

Black women needed something else to turn to, and having not found that in the feminist movement, they organized and created their own radical movement, coined Afrefeminism, or womanism. In the introduction to *The Black Woman*, Bambara writes about the problem with current literature about women at the time: It is all written by men, from the male point of view. "The 'experts' are still men. Black and white. And the images of the woman are still derived from their needs, their fantasies, their second-hand knowledge, their agreement with other 'experts'" (Bambara 3-4). Black women needed a

platform to finally speak for themselves, and educated and relatively "powerful" Black women like Bambara were able to organize and publish anthologies such as *The Black Woman*. Rather than the small-press medias of pamphlets and zines that their white counterparts could lean on, Black women appropriated the tools of the master in a different way, as they used traditional publishing paths to be heard. By writing and speaking about the personal, Black women were able to create a sense of community; they heard their own stories in the stories of others, and it presumably made them feel less alone and more a part of something larger. "Radical black feminists have never confined their vision to just the emancipation of black women or women in general, or all black people for that matter. Rather, they are the theorists and proponents of a radical humanism committed to liberating humanity and restructuring social relations across the board" (Kelley). Their movement was for the liberation of all humanity, which was only attainable by redefining relationships among each other.

One of the obvious themes of Black feminism is one that is familiar to the feminist movement as a whole: that the personal is political. While Black men were speaking universally and existentially about equality, Black women brought the fight into their homes, their kitchens, and their jobs. They contested that change must be brought about on a personal level. The Black feminist movement reminds readers that it is about all Black women, but it is also about *each* Black woman. Each one is suffering in her own way. As Kelley explains, "We are not talking about identity politics but a constantly developing, often contested, revolutionary conversation about how all of us might envision and remake the world" (Kelley). These personal narratives lend themselves to an understanding about global change. Authors like Audre Lorde further politicize the

personal by writing about something as banal as hair. But she politicizes hair styles by exposing the hegemonic system that requires Black hair to look "white." In her poem "Naturally," she writes: "I've given up pomades/Having spent the summer sunning/And feeling naturally free/. . ./Yet no Agency spends millions/To prevent my summer tanning" (ll. 10-17, p. 15). Here, having natural hair is akin to being "free." She takes this politicization a step further when she remarks that there is no market for preventing Black skin from tanning or burning. These are slights in the capitalistic, patriarchal society that seem to go unnoticed. She continues with, "And who trembles nightly/With the fear of their lily cities being swallowed/By a summer ocean of naturally woolly hair?" (Lorde ll. 18-20). Again, the hair is political. It is not *Black women* who will swallow the white cities, but their *hair*. This synecdoche reminds us that Black women are rarely seen for who they are. They are seen simply as parts that make up the whole: their hair, their features, their clothes. Lorde makes this political by elevating something as benign as hair.

Another point of disagreement between Black women and white women is that of motherhood. It was a common lament of both white and Black feminists that women were *expected* to become mothers. Feminists of all colors argued that women should have a choice, and that motherhood is not the only option. Kay Lindsey writes, "I'm not one of those who believes/That an act of valor, for a woman/Need take place inside her" (Lindsey ll. 1-3, p.13). Conventionally, women at the time were expected to get married and bear children; that would be their greatest accomplishment, on one hand, but all they are really good for, on the other. But Black feminists had an even bigger the issue with the idea of motherhood and childbearing. While white feminists were fighting for birth

control, Black feminists were arguing against sterilization. In her article "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female," Frances Beale explains, "what the authorities in charge of these programs refer to as 'birth control' is in fact nothing but a method of outright surgical genocide" (116). Black women were regularly being sterilized without their knowledge. If they were to go in for a routine procedure, such as a gallbladder removal, they would be sterilized in the process, unbeknownst to them. Beale argues that "Black women have the right and the responsibility to determine when it is in the interest of the struggle to have children or not to have them, and this right must not be relinquished to anyone" (Beale 119). While white women wanted birth control, Black women just wanted to have a say in what happens with their own bodies. "Most black working women wanted more choices, more time, and more resources rather than an outright rejection of motherhood itself" (Kelley). Working Black mothers never spent large amounts of time home with their families anyway, so they were not fighting for the same things; rather than wanting to prevent pregnancy, they were more concerned about work/life balance and childcare. These examples of a divergence of feminist stances and issues made it difficult for these women to come together in a unified way, particularly in the margins of the margins—the radical media that was being created by women with some discretionary time and money.

But Black feminism was not merely an offshoot of white feminism. They had very different platforms – different values and struggles. Second-wave feminism in the 60s and 70s was trailblazing in that it allowed women a voice that they had not had since fighting for suffrage fifty years earlier. Women realized that voting rights were not enough, and that they must be fighting for social equality as well. One of the major

problems that Black women had with the feminist movement is that social equality was not enough for them. In her essay "What's Love Got to Do with It? White Women, Black Women, and Feminism in the Movement Years," Wini Breines writes, "Black feminists felt that feminism was not relevant to their lives as black and primarily working-class women and that white women were insensitive to their concerns, often insulting and obtuse" (1096). To be social equals in their community with Black men still meant being oppressed by white men and women. Moreover, it was not just the social realm that Black women were concerned about. The feminist movement largely consisted of white, middle-class women who were stuck at home with their children all day. As Frances Beale, in her essay "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female," writes, the "white women's liberation movement is basically middle-class. Very few of these women suffer the extreme economic exploitation that most Black women are subjected to day by day" (120). There are issues that Black women are facing that go beyond social concerns.

As I discuss in Chapter 2, we do begin to see a more intersectional and diverse third-wave feminism than its second-wave counterpart. In her article "Charting the Currents of the Third Wave," Catherine M. Orr explains:

> the contradictory character of the third wave emerged not from the generational divides between second wavers and their daughters, but from critiques by Cherrie Moraga, Gloria Anzaldúa, bell hooks, Chela Sandoval, Audre Lorde, Maxine Hong Kingston and many other feminists of color who called for 'new subjectivity' in what was, up to that point, white, middle-class, first world feminism. These are the discourses that shaped, and must continue to shape, third wave agendas in the years to come. (37)

Inclusive, diverse feminism has roots in academia, as feminist theorists and writers of color championed a new, intersectional feminism. As Orr writes, these agendas influenced third-wave feminists, including the radical feminists in the zine scene.

The Internet and the digital wave of feminism further democratized feminisms, especially by way of blogs and Twitter. Social media and blogging platforms "allow… women who once would have been assigned to the margins of debate a platform from which to speak. Through these media, Black feminists have been able to seek redress when and where privileged voices within the movement have sought to speak on our behalf," according to Lola Okolosie in her article "Beyond 'talking' and 'Owning' Intersectionality" (90). As I discuss in Chapter 3, Twitter and the blogosphere have given space and a platform for Black feminists to correct and call out affronts and disrespect and to create a culture of Black feminism that is more visible than ever. Okolosie goes on to explain that "social media has enabled our attempt to position black feminism not as existing on the fringed and in opposition to 'mainstream' feminism, but as centered in our own right" (91). In this way, the Internet works as a gateway to "mainstream" feminism (though, still non-academic in most ways) for Black women to be "seen" and heard.

2 // Our Foremothers: Second-Wave Pamphlets and Designing a Better Feminism

This chapter will discuss the emergence of pamphlet discourse coming out of the feminist movement from 1968. Drawing on the work of Kathryn Thoms Flannery, I show that this movement has several key characteristics. First, it constitutes a political discourse part of a larger radicalism shared by many groups of the era. It is hip, demanding, and un-manicured. Second, pamphlet literature illustrates a multi-voiced media that carries a coherent movement to all women as a kind of popular "university-without-walls" (in Flannery's terminology). But this university is no a monolith of united philosophy. Although figures like Betty Friedan inaugurated the modern women's movement in the 1960s, pamphlet literature carries a third characteristic of a far more plural feminist voice than Freidan herself advocated (who was speaking from a very singular position as a upper-class suburban heterosexual white woman). This third point underscored perhaps the most radical element of this literature: its popular do-it-yourself-ness and multiplicity. Pamphleteers drew on a number of renegade publishing practices to create this literature.

Origins

The first-ever Xerox machine, the 914, was released in 1959, which allowed lay-people, for the first time, to easy access reproductions of their work. Prior to this, the only easy reproductions were created at large printing presses, which feminists had little access to, particularly for a dozen-page pamphlet. But the Xerox machine brought with it

the possibility of dissemination that was impossible before. In his article "How the Photocopier Changed the Way We Worked—and Played," Clive Thompson writes, "Before the 914 machine, Americans made 20 million copies a year, but by 1966 Xerox had boosted the total to 14 billion" (Thompson). Thompson writes about ACT-UP an AIDS activism pamphlet that was disseminated in the 1960s. The authors and creators worked for companies such as Conde Nast and simply used the media giant's photocopier after hours. Comparatively, in the first issue of the pamphlet *Lilith*, from 1968, editor Janet Hews writes, "Please forgive our communicating with you via mass production, but with over 30 of you on the mailing list, and with time being stolen from a University of Washington office to type and reproduce this, you can see why" (1). Thus, corporate America was actually funding this radicalism in the most ironic way. The foreshadows the zine movement of the 1980s and 1990s, which I will discuss in the next chapter, when many alternative media producers Xerox their zines on their company's machines after-hours. *Lilith* further explains that "[t]his magazine is published whenever there is sufficient material available" (frontmatter). This serves as a reminder that these are not corporate-backed publications, but are truly grass-roots, with no ties to the capitalist patriarchy or the consumer-driven society.

The literacy and rhetoric of feminists—the language, media, and purpose for their communication—drastically changed beginning with the Women's Movement of 1968. There was an explosion of print material by various radical feminist groups addressing the lack of inclusivity, action, and vocalism of other women's groups at the time and in previous generations. Feminists were making and publishing pamphlets, magazines, and zines to promote their own versions of feminism and to reach large audiences. As

Flannery explains in her book *Feminist Literacies, 1968-1975*, "Much of this material is of the moment, produced for a particular occasion, intended to incite others to action, and much of it was collectively composed" (x-xi). These pamphlets were typically composed and published and xeroxed or mimeographed quickly, on borrowed time, to be disseminated across the country. Given the ephemeral nature of these medias, there is little scholarship written about them. One website, Redstockings.org, has collected and scanned copies of the first pamphlets, all published in 1968, to memorialize the work done by these collective women. All first-hand sources cited in this chapter were accessed courtesy of the archival work of the women at RedStockings.org.

1968 marked the moment that a new Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) was born, re-igniting the fire that had dissipated since first-wave feminism in the early 1900s. The protest was one such act of rebellion by these new women liberators. About this time, women began creating feminism pamphlets to be disseminated across the country. The first of these progressive, feminist newsletters came from different pockets of the country: Washington, New York, Illinois, Boston, Florida. These pamphlets, published for the first time in 1968, discussed and theorized about what felt like a new kind of feminism—a feminism that was less polite, more radical, and more angry. With this new media came a new rhetorical method, one that did not rely on the rhetorics of the patriarchy, or mainstream society. These pamphlets were created "through volunteer labor with scrounged materials, donated resources, and the very occasional foundation grant" and were "distributed—often for free or at least 'free to anyone who couldn't afford it'—through the informal network that constituted the women's university-without-walls" (Flannery 25). Flannery's idea, here, of the network of women creating a

"university-without-walls" will come up later in this chapter as I discuss the emphasis on alternative education and information sharing. Pamphlets such as these created an underground network that was largely invisible to mainstream media and society. This furthers the second-wave belief that feminism must first be discussed and understood among feminists themselves. This type of meta-feminism is not for public consumption. Rather, the purpose of the pamphlets was to create a participatory reciprocity in which like-minded women can connect and exchange ideas and have open and honest discussions. Women were paving a new way for persuading, conversing, and participating in meaning making. Between March 1968 and August 1973, close to 600 feminist periodicals were published (Flannery 23). Most of these periodicals were newsletters, or pamphlets, which set off the tone for the Women's Movement that quickly became the second wave of American feminism.

In 1968, women gathered on the boardwalk of Atlantic City and threw their bras into burning trash cans. This vivid spectacle of activism was in protest to the Miss America Pageant going on in the hotel behind them. This protest is often seen as one of the most visual turning points for women's liberation.

> We will protest the image of Miss America, an image that oppresses women in every area in which it purports to represent us. There will be: Picket Lines; Guerrilla Theater; Leafleting; Lobbying Visits to the contestants urging our sisters to reject the Pageant Farce and join us; a huge Freedom Trash Can (into which we will throw bras, girdles, curlers, false eyelashes, wigs, and representative issues of Cosmopolitan, Ladies' Home Journal, Family Circle, etc.- bring any such woman-

garbage you have around the house) ... (Redstockings, “NO MORE MISS AMERICA!”)

The protest was meant to give women a voice against the objectification and subjugation of women that takes place in the Miss America Pageant, which awards merit based on physical appearance. The flier calls for women to bring items of restriction (“woman-garbage”) to be ceremonially thrown into garbage cans on the boardwalk outside of the pageant. Such restrictive items include bras, which is where the disparaging term “bra burner” comes from, and also magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Women’s Home Journal* which promote a different kind of “feminine.” These and other magazines and publications are called out in the feminist pamphlets produced during this time as vehicles for female oppression and patriarchal control.

Carol Hanisch, who was present that day, was interviewed in 2003. She said in that interview: “I don't think we need feelings of empowerment, what we need is real power.” When asked to explain the difference, Hanisch explained that empowerment is individualized, while power focuses on the movement as a whole. This was in response to the interviewer asking about women more recently using those very garments that Hanisch and company threw into garbage cans to embrace and celebrate their sexuality: push-up bras, high heels, girdles. The point being made was that reclaiming sexuality is oftentimes a tenant of new feminism. But Hanisch’s response to that explained that this is just *another* form of repression. “Men are all too happy to see us competing with each other over who's the sexiest. It helps keep women in their place. And in my view, women's place is not in front of the mirror” (Hanish). This may be an unpopular opinion, and it further elucidates the divisiveness that defines contemporary feminism, and

perhaps speaks to the idea of "power" as Hanisch originally intended. While some see the reclamation of sexuality as a way of women taking control of their own bodies, Hanish and others see that as just a further step towards male control. That is, it is not necessarily about feeling that you, personally, have power and a voice and an ego, but that the movement is focused on women in general being powerful (Hanish). Other feminists in this movement feel differently. For example, a woman's group called Cell 16 published an untitled pamphlet that was later dubbed "No More Fun and Games; A Journal of Female Liberation," edited by Roxanne Dunbar and Dana Densmore. The editors of *Cell 16* write, "The welfare of a female is directly related to the welfare of her 'Master.' Except for those who must do free-lance work (the freed woman -- prostitute, sex performer.) Their welfare is dependent upon their good looks and age. Life is very short for a Slave" (Cell 16 5-6). Interestingly, the "free" woman here is she whom men depend on for their sexual satisfaction. In this way, the prostitute and the sex worker are needed and are not the ones who need or rely on men. They leverage their sexuality to control and have power over the men who "need" them. This is one small example of how not all women in this movement agreed on the same issues, the same actions, the same goals. But what they did all agree on was that change was necessary and vital. As Hanish goes on to explain, "If we want more real change in our lives we are going to have to organize across generations of those who want to return to this real political movement, and who are willing to struggle for the liberation of all women. Sometimes that struggle even needs to be against each other." She says that not only is it acceptable to debate other women and feminists on issues affecting all women, "It's absolutely necessary" (Hanish).

In her opening thesis in the first issue of *Notes on the First Year*, Firestone echoes this idea as she outlines the trajectory of the women's movement in the U.S. She exposes the unperceived radicalism of Victorian era feminism that led to the ratification of the 19th amendment and she offers reasons for why the movement died down so quickly. One reason Firestone believes the women's movement could not get any traction is "by single issue organizing as opposed to organizing to raise the general consciousness." In this statement, Firestone then announces the new wave of the Women's Liberation Movement to be more diversified. There is no single organizing belief in equality. Firestone explains of the earlier generation: "To reach the people 'where they are at' when they are in the wrong place, is a false approach. Rather, we should be concerned with educating them at all times to the real issues involved." She then adds "... people will catch on soon enough." The new wave of feminists acknowledge that feminism looks different for each feminism. That is, it is possible that feminists are fighting for different things. There is not a central, unifying end goal, as women's suffrage was at the end of the 19th century. Firestone makes the conclusion, then, "that contrary to what most historians would have us believe, women's rights were never won. The Women's Rights Movement did not fold because it accomplished its objectives, but because it was essentially defeated and mischannelled. SEEMING freedoms appear to have been won." She calls out the prevailing belief, for example, that women are equal because there are more women in the workforce. She notes: "...when they come home, there's still that housework to do, the child care, the cooking of supper." This sentiment is refrained again and again throughout the next generation. Today, too, women discuss that second-shift that needs to be done after work. The cooking, cleaning, house-hold management that

still falls squarely on the shoulders of the women in most traditional households. Firestone concludes with three "lessons" that she asserts must be learned this time around if women are to even gain those long-sought-after freedoms: "1. Never compromise basic principles for political expediency. 2. Agitation for specific freedoms is worthless without the preliminary raising of consciousness necessary to utilize these freedoms fully. 3. Put your own interests first, then proceed to make alliances with other oppressed groups. Demand a piece of that revolutionary pie before you put your life on the line." These are the places where she believes women went wrong in the first wave of feminism, and where she believes women in 1968 needed to begin before any change can be enacted.

The 80-page monolith that is the first, untitled, issue of *Cell 16* has an illustration of a naked woman on the cover, surrounded by wild, unruly hair, and no text.

Fig. 1: Cover of Cell 16*'s untitled first issue*

The pamphlet contains poems, prose pieces, and short fiction, authored by various women. The piece entitled "Slavery" likens the women movement to the civil rights movement and other radical movements taking place to fight for the rights of marginalized people. Prior to this new wave of women's liberation, the women of Cell 16 explain that women were aligning themselves to any radical movement that had traction, such as those for "Indians, Chicanos, poor immigrants, poor whites ... women had found movements which proposed benefits to be of dubious relevance to our own plight" (3-4).

Radicalism

Second-wave pamphleteers promote a brand of radicalism different from their foremothers. Despite attempts at congregations and rallies, some of which were successful, the true radicalism of this time was in the margins of society: through the knowledge transfer, meaning making, and redefinition of mainstream values that takes place in the pamphlets themselves. In issue 7 of *Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement*, published in 1969, Shulie Firestone defines "change" as:

> … a disturbing, a threatening of the status quo, a status quo not good enough for us. After all, women's liberation is not just a hip substitute for bullshit ladies' gatherings. We are not just in it once again to do our dilettante thing, to prove to our husbands and boyfriends that 'we have our political interests and activities too.' This will be a real struggle. And struggle is pain. We wouldn't do it if we didn't have to. (1)

She speaks out against the consciousness-raising groups that were so popular in the second-wave and accuses them of being "bullshit ladies' gatherings," which merely

suggest to the men that women have their little "political interests" along with their book club, sewing circles, and tupperware parties. Rather, second-wave pamphlets were meant to incite real change. As Firestone states, this *has to* be done because nothing is coming of the current avenues of activism. Therefore, the pamphlet editors took it upon themselves to promote radical change and "a threatening of the status quo." Flannery writes that "[t]he editorial collectives saw themselves as responsible for making the world a better place," and they operated on three levels to allow readers to read, write, and work their way into the movement (30). The levels of participation are "self-understanding, sociopolitical critique, and collective action," which can be seen in the way that women were asked to become meaning-makers from the editors themselves. Self-understanding became the foundation upon which any woman could challenge her previous beliefs and find a way into the movement by valuing her own experiences and re-thinking what society has told her to value previously. "In explicitly reconceptualizing the relationship between text and reader by inviting active participation, and in struggling to negotiate the tension between authority and creativity, the editorial collectives sought to reshape what would constitute legitimate and politically effective knowledge" (Flannery 25). Flannery suggests that writer/readers were reshaping knowledge and meaning and value, which again suggests the creation of the "university without walls." The deconstructionism that was occurring in these pamphlets allowed writer/readers to reconsider and rethink the knowledge they were fed in the "university within walls," however that may have presented itself: school, society, patriarchy. By changing who and what we value for our meaning-making, these women were redefining knowledge, and therefore reality. As Flannery goes on to explain, "Packed into the very rhetoric of radical feminism was the

double sense that every and any woman's experience could serve as the basis for the development of valuable knowledge at the same time that no one woman, nor any one group of women, could stand for the whole of womankind" (21). The everyday experiences of women, once relegated in print only to diaries and private letters, was now not only made public, but also made *important* and *real*. It became the base upon which "valuable knowledge" could grow, and it alone became enough to make any woman an expert on her own life. Through participation, and through the ubiquitous personal pronoun, women were speaking for themselves rather than for the multitudes. Within the clubhouse of pamphlets, they did not need a unified front.

Another method of radicalism was the sociopolitical critique taking place in second-wave pamphlets. Gearhart lists five rhetorical ways that feminists can critique and transform society: revolutionary action against the system, participation in alternative organizations, reform within the system, re-sourcement, and enfoldment (267). The fourth one, re-sourcement, is defined as "the transformation of the current system through a collective sharing of re-sourced or healing energy among feminist women. This option allows for the enactment of new values, new ways of understanding, and new ways of viewing reality because it constitutes a redemption of female values and life-generating forces" (270-1). According to Gearhart, the act of re-defining and understanding the way knowledge and value works in society is a form of critique on its own, and it is radical and revolutionary in that women are redeeming historically female values and re-appropriating them to be important, meaningful, strong, and necessary. The editors of the 1968 issue of *Notes from the First Year* explain that "a real women's movement is dangerous. From the beginning it exposed the white male power structure in all its

hypocrisy. Its very existence and long duration were proof of massive large-scale inequality in a system that pretended to democracy' (2). In this way, pamphlets call out what many Americans considered to be "progress" towards equality, unearthing truths and rewriting history for women's rights. In the same issue, the editors remind us that "though one third of the women are employed, they have merely taken over the shit jobs. Even when they earn as much as their husbands do, the equal work does not grant them equal status in the family; rather, they are considered to be 'helping out' And when they come home, there's still the housework to do, the child care, the cooking of supper" (6-7). While some men (and women) at that time point to the increase in employment for women as a gain for women's rights, the editors remind us that it simply led to an even more unequal home life, as women then come home to what some call the "second shift": taking care of the home and the children and the meals.

The third level of radicalism enacted in second-wave pamphleting is that of "collective action." The premier issue of *Voice of the Women's Liberation Movemen*t takes the time to first define women's liberation in an editorial titled "What in the Hell is Women's Liberation Anyway?", written by feminist and editor Jo Freeman, who refers to herself as Joreen. She explains that, "The time has come for us to take the initiative in organizing ourselves for our own liberation, and in organizing all women, around issues which directly affect their lives, to see the need for fundamental social change." This call to action is echoed in feminist media over the next 50 years. In the third issue of *Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement*, published in August 1968, Evelyn Goldfield writes an article on the cover entitled "Towards the Next Step" in which she expresses the importance of collective action: "discussion is not enough either to change women's role

in society nor to bring about substantive personal liberation. We must begin to act collectively, both to broaden our movement and to begin to effect change." The pamphleteers of the second wave relied on collective action to gain momentum, to share knowledge and education, and to advance women's liberation principles and ideals. There is an ad in *Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement*, advertising a new pamphlet, *WOMEN: A Quarterly of Women's Liberation*:

> The decision to limit articles written by men stems from a widely discussed position held by many women today: for centuries women have been defined and discussed by men; the time has come for women to create a special published in which they --- and express themselves and their relationship to the social order. The publication rests on the assumption that *women are the best able to define themselves and discuss their problems*. Articles by men will be published on assignment only [emphasis mine] (3).

It is a radical thought that women know more than men when it comes to making political and social commentary and change about their own bodies. In fact, this remains radical today, as women still fight for bodily autonomy in the public eye. But one such action item that women put on the table was to allow women to write and speak for themselves.

In the first issue of Cell 16's untitled pamphlet, there is a call for women to unite under the radical movement "as the most effective way to achieve their own independent identity and the liberation of all women, and to bring about the truly total revolution -- the establishment of a radical society without oppression" (Davidica 43). Davidica goes on to write, "The economy programs women to use all that heralded buying power to keep our superconsuming plastic society inflating ever onward. Certainly by keeping half

the population in politically and economically powerless roles the continuation of the present system is all but insured" (43). This radical society without oppression, and the call to action in general, is rooted in economic freedom. Women, by being economically and politically oppressed, are merely cogs in the machine that is patriarchal capitalism.

A Multiplicity of Voices

Betty Freidan wrote *The Feminine Mystique* in 1962, in which she coins the term "feminine mystique," which is meant to describe the unhappiness that pervaded the lives of 1940s and 50s housewives. But by universalizing and generalizing the female experience, Freidan is submitting to a form of essentialism that posits that all women feel the same way. This line of thinking will always exclude some women in some way, which is a solid argument *against* essentialism. If it is not inclusive of all biological females, then it cannot really be of, or from, the female *essence*. The word "essence" means that it is innate and natural. By that definition, it must be universal. But as Audre Lorde is astutely notes in her essay "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference," there is no universal or general. There are so many factors to consider when discussing the rights and equality of women, and they are not all related to sex and gender. Race, class, economic status, and more all play a role in how a woman is seen in society, and there is no universal that can cover everyone. In fact, when Friedan helped found the National Organization for Women (NOW), she petitioned against rights for lesbians because she disagreed with their political platform. Lesbians did not fit into this universal, feminine mystique, and she was uncomfortable with this otherness.

This exclusion remained a critique of the women's movement through the 1980s when Lorde wrote, "By and large within the women's movement today, white women focus upon their oppression as women and ignore differences of race, sexual preference, class and age. There is a pretense to a homogeneity of experience covered by the word *sisterhood* that does not in fact exist" (855). It is this "sisterhood" that Friedan was preaching in *The Feminine Mystique* and through the foundation of NOW, but as Lorde explains, there is no true universal sisterhood that can apply to all women. Therefore, this is no *essential* female plight that we are all fighting against. Rather, social construction has aided in creating *levels* of oppression for women, and those who fall below the basic level of oppression were largely ignored in second-wave feminism.

But if we look at the radical work being done underground during second-wave feminisms, as modeled by these pamphlets, we can see a more intersectional approach to women's rights. We also see the understanding in these periodicals that *not* all feminists are like-minded. Unlike the feminists before them, these Women Liberation feminists made very clear that "women" are not a unified group. They are racially, economically, ethically, and culturally diverse, and, therefore, there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all feminism. These periodicals served as an opportunity to "make visible a racially, ethnically, and economically diverse female world by reporting what women have done in the past; by making space for what they were currently doing politically, artistically, spiritually; and by point the way to what they would still need to do" (Flannery 32). Radical feminism required not just a discussion about all the different iterations of feminism, and all the intersectionality that exists in the movement. Further, the periodicals made clear that the editorial boards, inasmuch as that sort of hierarchy

existed, which was not much, were made up of a diverse population. “It was not good enough simply to report on the diversity of womankind; it was necessary to ensure that the editorial collectives were themselves composed of such a diversity” (Flannery 57).

While feminism was seen as something for white women, ala Friedan, these radical publications were actively attempting to represent the vast diversity of women both in opinion and content, but also in staff and editorial hierarchy. Friedan’s text, published in the conventional way, is representative of what was understood to be conventional feminism. But the pamphlet writers represented the marginalized of the marginalized. That is, they published through non-conventional ways as an approach to a more non-conventional feminism. One that relies both on external and on internal activism. It is both about enacting change and *understanding* how and why these changes need to take place. It is about doing work on society and taking control over one’s self. Flannery writes that “[t]he editorial groups assert that women can do virtually anything, that they can (and must) take control of their lives. The material products--the papers, newsletters, and journals-- themselves serve as proof of what women can do.” For anything to be representative of these women, it must come from themselves, from conception to production to publication. That is not to say that they did not largely convey a whitewashed version of feminism themselves, though. In the first issue of *Notes from the First Year*, Carol Hanish and Elizabeth Sutherland have a “conversation,” in which the authors respond to various comments they have heard made about women’s liberation. In this section, the authors respond to a comment regarding the “whiteness” of their groups. Among other points, they write, “At the moment, our group is largely white.” The reason they give for this is, “We figure black women may want to get

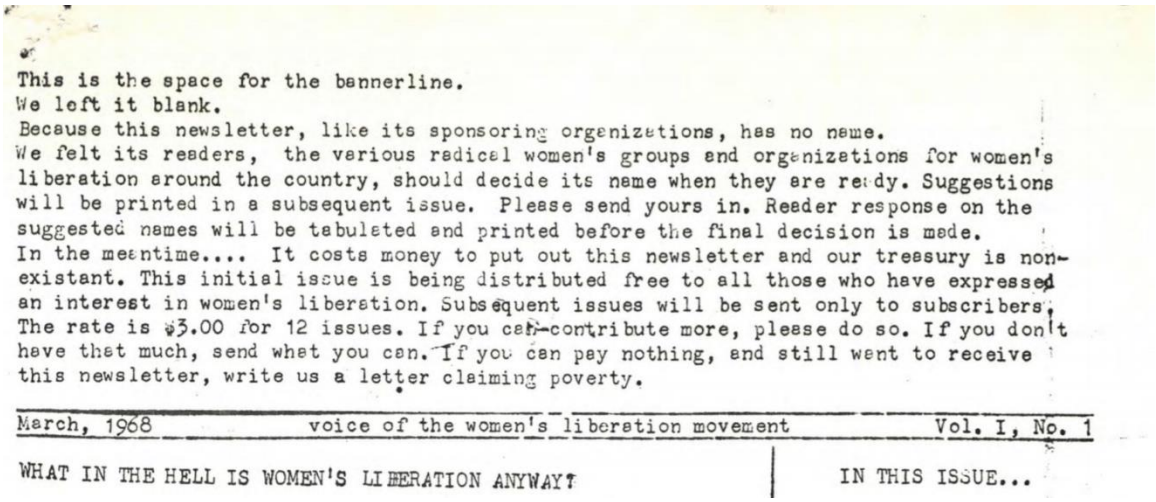
together themselves first. Furthermore, we're all sisters but some of our problems are different" (12). While one could critique that the majority of writers were white, both editors and writers regularly attempt to recognize and speak to the differences between all women. More so than first-wave feminism, second-wave feminism worked towards more intersectional feminism.

Ultimately, though, it becomes clear that one of the biggest disparities between Black and white feminists was class. As hooks explains, "Class struggle is inextricably bound to the struggle to end racism" (3). But this is not a platform in white feminism. Most white feminists do not have a problem with their class, but with the way they are expected to sit idle while their husbands work. hooks goes on to write, "The willingness to see feminism as a lifestyle choice rather than a political commitment reflects the class nature of the movement" (27). For the middle-class white women whom Freidan writes about, they have a choice of whether or not to join the feminist movement: they are either happy as housewives, or not. But for Black women, there was no choice. Feminism is a "political commitment," without which all Black women will continue to suffer in subjugation. Black women "are paid less for the same work that men do, and jobs that are specifically relegated to women are low-paying and without the possibility of advancement" (Beale 114). Classism is just another facet of feminism, which is wholly misunderstood or ignored by second-wave white feminists. Beale explains that "it is idle dreaming to think of Black women simply caring for their homes and children like the middle-class white model. Most Black women have to work to help house, feed, and clothe their families. Black women make up a substantial percentage of the Black working force, and this is true for the poorest Black family as well as the so-called

'middle-class' family" (Beale 111). Women are an integral part of the workforce in Black communities. They do not have the same struggles as the middle-class white women who dominate the second-wave feminist movement.

Despite this, there are attempts at inclusion. For example, the dialogical nature of second -wave feminism in general, and second-wave pamphlets specifically, makes possible some difficult conversations. A participatory democracy was created through the dissemination of and participation in the pamphlets of the Women's Liberation Movement. By "participatory democracy," I am referring to the reciprocity of information. That is, writers and editors would solicit material and opinions from the readers, creating a cyclical exchange of ideas. Also, reader letters would be published, and readers would start writing to each other, forming new bonds and reaching audiences otherwise unattainable. In this way, the readers become the producers, and the line between those in power and those in subordinated positions is skewed.

One flagrant example of participatory democracy is seen in the pamphlet that would later become *Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement*. The top of the first issue, reads: "This is the space for the bannerline. We left it blank. Because this newsletter, like its sponsoring organizations, has no name. We felt its readers, the various radical women's groups and organizations for women's liberation around the country, should decide its name when they are ready" (Fig. 1).



This is the space for the bannerline.
We left it blank.
Because this newsletter, like its sponsoring organizations, has no name.
We felt its readers, the various radical women's groups and organizations for women's liberation around the country, should decide its name when they are ready. Suggestions will be printed in a subsequent issue. Please send yours in. Reader response on the suggested names will be tabulated and printed before the final decision is made.
In the meantime.... It costs money to put out this newsletter and our treasury is non-existant. This initial issue is being distributed free to all those who have expressed an interest in women's liberation. Subsequent issues will be sent only to subscribers. The rate is $3.00 for 12 issues. If you can contribute more, please do so. If you don't have that much, send what you can. If you can pay nothing, and still want to receive this newsletter, write us a letter claiming poverty.

March, 1968 voice of the women's liberation movement Vol. I, No. 1

WHAT IN THE HELL IS WOMEN'S LIBERATION ANYWAY? | IN THIS ISSUE...

Fig. 2. Bannerline from vol. 1, iss. 1, Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement

The writers then ask readers to mail in suggestions for titles. This gives readers ownership over the pamphlet before it even gets off the ground, and readers could visualize themselves participating in a movement that they may have otherwise been cut off from, for various reasons, but many related to race, class, and age. The diversity of the readership of these radical pamphlets in second-wave feminism is exactly what allowed feminists to move forward, and to see themselves as individuals rather than as a single "woman." Flannery explains:

> That a spectrum of women writes for the periodicals and that a spectrum appears in the visual representations announces to readers that, unlike the mainstream media, the publications of the women's movement allow all women to participate in the women's movement through print, to find matter that speaks to their concerns and interests and ideally to contribute through print or graphics to the ongoing project of mutual education. (Flannery 33-34)

"Mutual education" becomes part of participatory democracy, as I will discuss later in this chapter, because women are actively educating themselves as well as others, and

there is reciprocity of knowledge sharing and building and breaking that takes place at these sites. *Notes from the First Year*, for example, published in New York in June 1968, and edited by Shulamith Firestone, cost "$.50 TO WOMEN / $1.00 TO MEN" (Fig. 2)

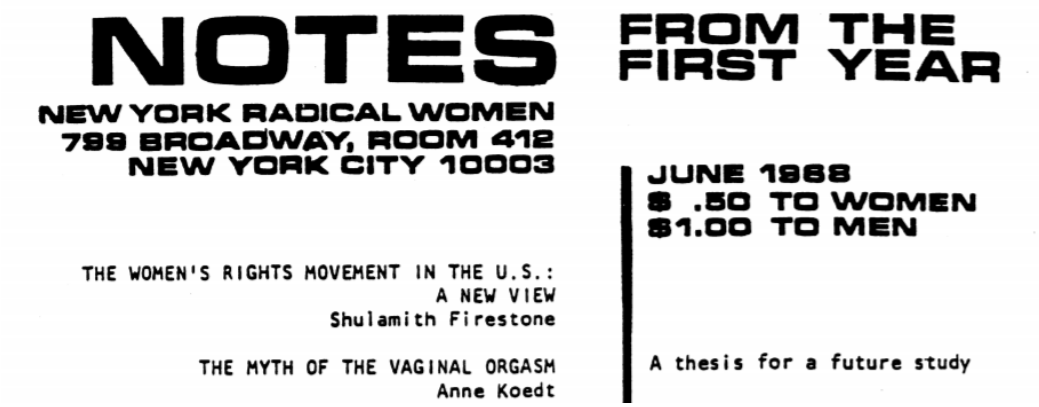


Fig. 3. Header from Notes from the First Year*, vol. 1, iss. 1*

The articles in the first issue were written "through growing from a year of group discussion and activity." These were the written, published versions of the very discussions occurring behind closed doors in consciousness-raising meetings over the previous year. This serves as an early example of participatory media in feminism, in which the public creates the content and the audience is not passive readers. Rather, the audience is called upon to do the doing. These pamphlets also print papers from women whom they have never met, such as Patricia Robinson from New York, furthering the feminist agenda of inclusivity and conversation. "The papers came to us in handwritten form because they were composed in the homes of poor women where there are no typewriters" (*Lilith* 7). The pamphlet ends with a line: "Don't submit: Contribute!" (25).

Another example of the dialogical, participatory nature of second-wave feminism as illustrated in these pamphlets comes from the first issue of *Notes from the First Year*.

It included an "article" about sex and masturbation and gratification written entirely as a dialogue between two unnamed women. This unusual technique further speaks to the communal, participatory, and conversational rhetoric that the Women's Liberation Movement upheld. Rather than writing a single, pedantic article about sexual health, Firestone decides to write a conversation, a back-and-forth, in which both women do not necessarily see eye-to-eye, but are very much trying to listen to each other and figure things out. The takeaway is that there does not seem to be one single answer. Rather, we should work towards having that dialogue with other women and work towards a fuller understanding of the dynamic, multifaceted lives that women lead. This, too, hearkens back to Firestone's belief that a single, unifying cause around which women can rally is a detriment to the women's movement at large (*Notes*).

In "A Year of Living Dangerously: 1968," Dana Densmore writes about her Cell 16 pamphlet. She explains that "it was 'a' journal, not 'the' journal, thus inviting others to publish other journals, each contributing the particular perspective of their group to weave a rich tapestry of female liberation theory" (*Feminist Memoir Project*). Community building in feminism has deep roots. In second-wave feminism, women created and joined consciousness-raising groups where they shared their thoughts and frustrations about everyday life. Women grouping together is not foreign to us. I think of book clubs, Tupperware parties, wine and paint nights. Communities give women something that they desperately need: a sounding board that understands and can commiserate, and people who don't infantilize or patronize women who "whine" about housework, childcare, part-time jobs, or full-time jobs. Historically, women have sought out other women in informal ways to act in this participatory culture, which has always

taken place in the margins. For example, it is clear from Janet Hews's letter from the editor on the first page that *Lilith* was written in response to the other pamphlets circulating in 1968. "Please put Seattle on your map. Here are the fruits of our labors during the past few weeks. We hope you are as stimulated by them and we were by your various publications." Hews goes on to write, "Please feel free to reprint any article you wish. We should be delighted to send further copies for you to sell, and reluctantly ask you to second us 50c for the copy we send you, (unless you are in real penury!), as we are quite a bit out of pocket on paper cost, electronic stencils for the art work, etc. Material from any of you would be welcome for our next issue" (1). The disparate groups of women across the country used these periodicals as a means of staying in touch and reaching a larger audience. As Hews's petition, above, shows, and as Flannery further explains, "These periodicals sometimes overlapped in their coverage, with one periodical reprinting an article from another across the country, but they nonetheless defy any attempt to specific some centralized theory or practice that could stand for the whole of the women's movement" (Flannery 41). Interestingly, though articles and ideas were being shared, there was still no centralized goal of the movement, which added even more to its grassroots identification.

But do not mistake disparate for unorganized or otherwise less impactful. It was precisely the large community that made second-wave feminism what it was and allowed it to be as successful as it became. Most women could find an entry to second-wave feminism in some way and were encouraged to use their own voices.

DIY

The participants in the alternative medias of the women's movement are creating their own feminism, their own media, and their own rhetoric outside of the patriarchy by piecing together various ideas, theories, essays, and conversations. Yet another principle of do-it-yourself (DIY) feminism is the idea of repurposing, or, more bluntly, reappropriating or stealing: content, time, and materials. Associated with all of this "borrowing" is the incredible disregard for any sort of copyright, trademark, or corporate monies, furthering the feminist principles of anti-consumerism and anti-capitalism. This also recapitulates the emphasis on free education and free knowledge transfer, but is also a testament to how little money, time, and labor these women were working with. The literal cutting-and-pasting takes two forms, and often the two overlap: image de- and re-construction and text de- and re-construction. These women are cutting and pasting text and images from mainstream media and reappropriating those pieces of paper by deconstructing them and re-constructing them to support and voice these tenants of second-wave feminism. Again, they are quite literally using the tools of the master to dismantle his house. For example, the first issue of the Untitled Cell 16 pamphlet contains two cut-outs from what seems like magazines. One is the back of a man's head with a switch that reads "Off." The other, separate, cut-out, is text that reads "CLiCk, [sic]" (Fig. 3) (17).

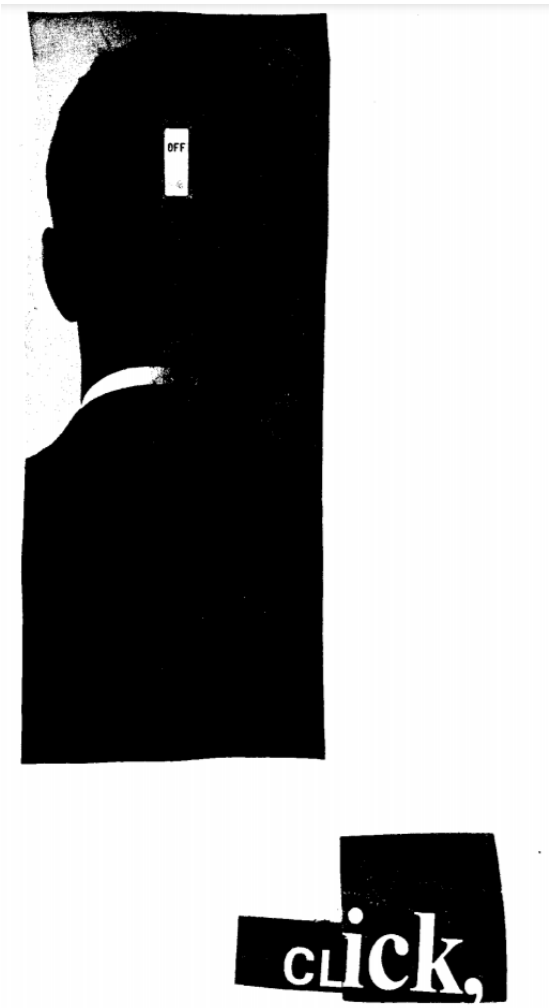


Fig. 4. Untitled Cell 16, iss. 1

This cut-and-paste technique is used throughout feminism medias to serve multiple purposes. First, rather than creating text on a typewriter, computer, or by hand, women are once again appropriating the text created by mass media available to them. But by cutting it up, they are dismantling the very media that is meant to control them. They are changing it and using it to their own advantage. They are using mainstream media as a way to further their own agenda, which is a tenant of DIY feminism as I describe and define it. The de- and re-construction of mass-market media to create new knowledge and

value systems further their own agenda. In the second issue of *Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement*, the editors included a silhouette of a woman. Within the silhouette are cut and pasted headlines from popular magazines, which speak to the role of the woman in current times. These headlines assume what women want to read: about fashion, shopping, beauty, and weight loss (Fig. 4).

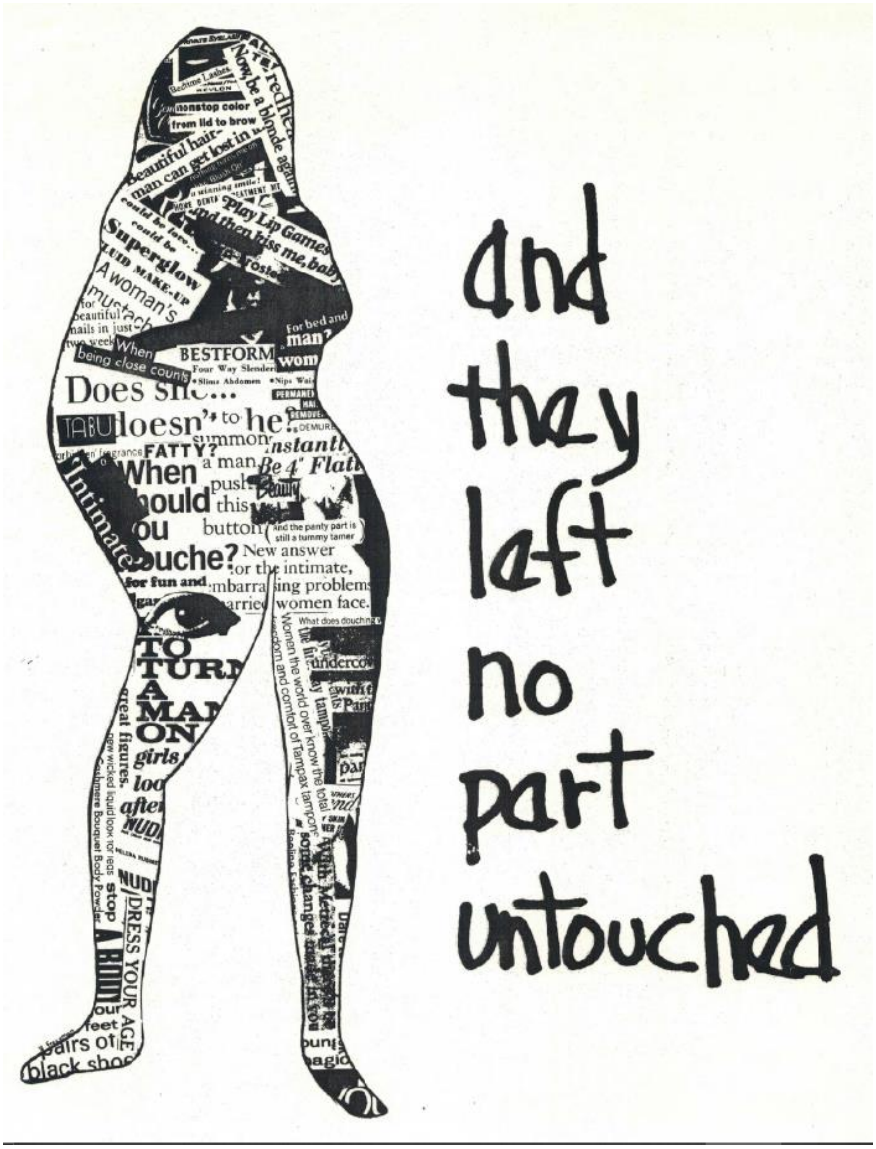


Fig. 5. Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement*, iss. 2*

The accompanying text reads, “and they left no part untouched,” alluding to how mainstream culture takes control of a woman’s body and mind by forcing specific gender norms onto her. She is “free game” for all of society to use and comment on. Second-wave pamphleteers are using DIY to call out mainstream culture for putting such demands upon women.

In July 1968, Beverly Jones and Judith Brown published *Toward a Female Liberation Movement* in Gainesville, Florida, and the cover was created by copying and pasting headlines and snippets from popular beauty magazines (“how to transform yourself with a curling iron,” “But there are two parts of your body you’ve completely neglected. And there they stand, wrapped in dry, rough skin. Your two ugly feet”) and a picture of a woman wearing a shirt that reads “slave” and a man wearing a shirt that reads “master” (Fig. 5).

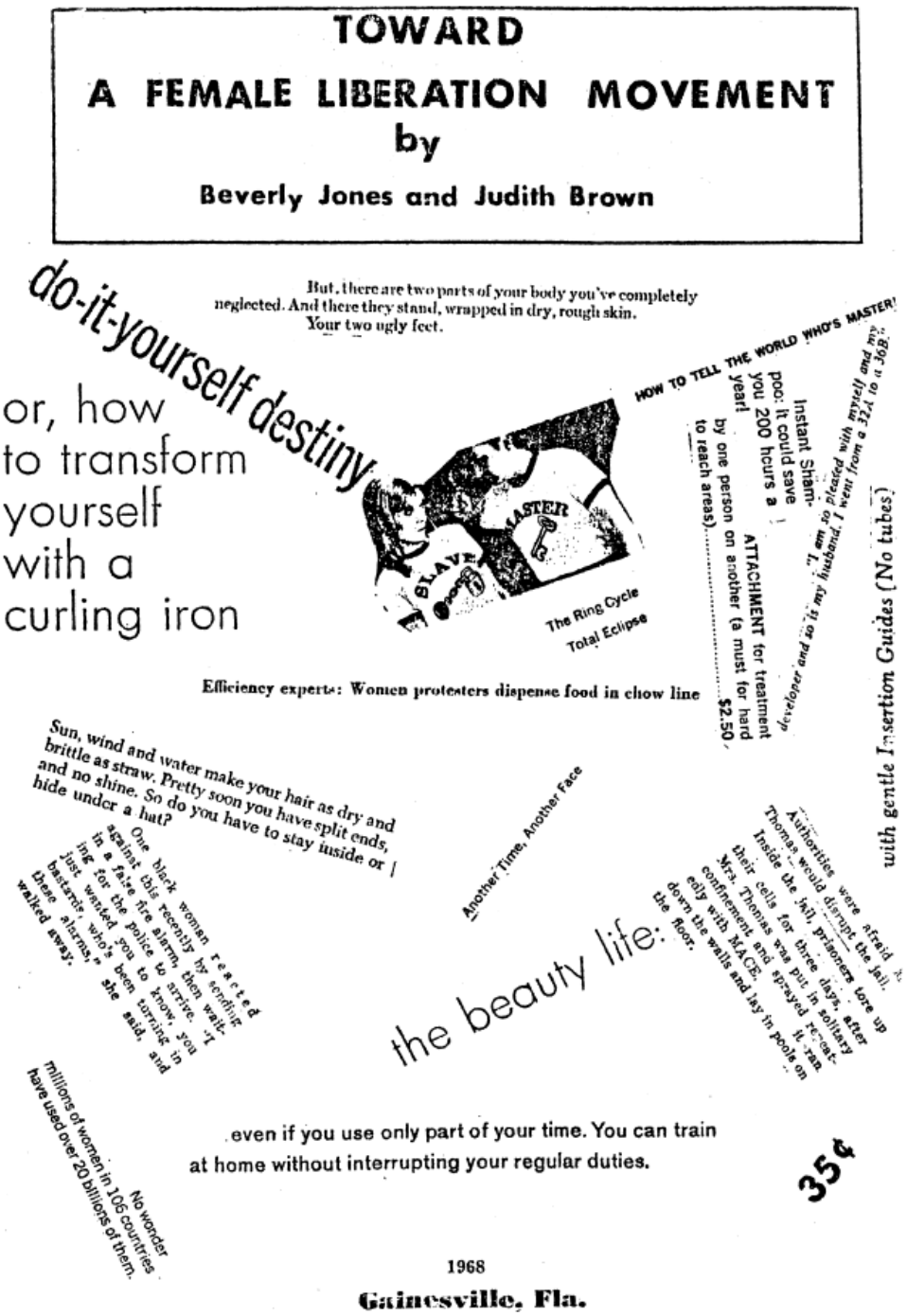


Fig. 6. Toward a Female Liberation Movement*, iss. 1*

Again, we see pamphleteers using headlines and phrases/paragraphs from mainstream culture to display the prejudice and sexism. By placing all the text on a single page, the

message is doubled down and becomes even more powerful. Women are receiving these almost subliminal messages everywhere they turn, but by seeing them altogether, it elucidates the inculcation by the patriarchy.

Participatory culture is another way that second-wave feminists are able to do-it-themselves, to make it up, to come together and create something. Rather than being didactic, the writers are inviting readers in, inculcating them in the process of creating this version of radical feminism. Kramarae explains how women's perspectives are wholly absent from not just education, but from language itself. "Women's modes and realms of interaction are not seen as important to study because white men's communication is considered the standard" (42). She cites a standard dictionary as evidence for this, explaining that the white male's perspective is treated as if "they are natural and the only perspectives possible" (42). As a result, there must be not just a reclamation of knowledge, but an entire reclamation of language itself. And the pamphlets are examples of how women play with language and words, and actively deconstruct both language and knowledge to work with words and images to create new meaning.

Education

bell hooks specifically calls for feminists to promote literacy among women in her book *Feminist Theory: From the Margin to Center*. One of her biggest contentions with feminism is that most of the materials disseminated are written, which holds its own class biases. We cannot assume that every women can: a) Read and write, and b) Access these materials. Hooks writes, "The political importance of literacy is still understressed in

feminist movement today. . . . It is not too late for feminist activists to emphasize literacy and to organize literacy training programs from women" (hooks 109). Women must learn how to read, and read properly (i.e., understand and analyze), in order to understand and participate in the current conversation about feminism. hooks recognizes this, and asks women who can read and write to promote the literacy of those who cannot. Literacy is power, as Bourdieu explained, and hooks understands the importance of cultivating a feminist base that is literate in traditional ways.

Once feminists understand the social and patriarchal implications of on traditional literacy, they can then use and reappropriate that literacy to their advantage. In her book surveying feminist media since 1970, Agatha Beins explains the role of literacy in the feminist movement: "Charlotte Bunch, who was deeply embedded in 1970s feminist activism and publishing, argues that feminist reading, writing, and publishing are a necessary part of resisting the forces of patriarchy because they expanded women's literacy giving them the intellectual and material tools to imagine and create alternative ways of being" (67). Women must understand the literacy of the patriarchy in order to create their own literacy and discourses to fight against it. Women, then, "create alternative ways of being" through their alternative literacies, which provides them a platform to work towards a more just society.

To create their own version of feminism, women must learn about what other women are saying and writing. But this is not something that could have been learned in a typical classroom, for myriad reasons. For one, the voices of women, particularly women of color, queer women, and otherwise further-marginalized women, were wholly absent from traditional academia. And furthermore, many women were blocked from

what little academic conversation there may have been about feminism for various economic and social reasons. In the first issue of *Notes from the First Year*, the very first essay leads a discussion about the reason for women to works toward educating themselves outside of a system that is not properly educating its marginalized people.

> May I suggest the reason for this, why women's history has been hushed up just as Negro history has been hushed up, so that the black child learns, not about Nat Turner but about the triumph of Ralph Bunche, or George Washington Carver and the peanut? And that is that a real women's movement is dangerous. From the beginning, it exposed the white male power structure in all its hypocrisy. (2)

The idea that women can be *dangerous*—as dangerous as the "Negro" —is revolutionary in itself, and it leads uninformed readers to be curious about just what type of dangerous history is being covered up, or washed over. The call to action is clear: women must uncover their own dangerous history and disseminate it to avoid being "hushed up" once again.

The education promoted by second-wave pamphlets was meant to cast a wider net of conversation. It was important for women to leave the door open, to always be learning, to teach themselves and others like them. And the writers and editors of these pamphlets were careful to leave that door open by giving lists of suggested readings. *Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement*, for example, includes a list of readings at the end that includes "Towards a Radical Women's Movement" by Marilyn Salzman Webb and "The Look is You: Towards a Strategy for Radical Women" by Naomi Jaffe & Bernadine Dohrn. The idea of continuing education and pointing women towards more women—towards more scholarship—continues through today, and can even be seen as a

precursor to hyperlinking in blogs. It sets up a web of conversation and communication, and these pamphlets, along with the xeroxed articles that readers can purchase, are passed around from woman to woman, further deepening the sharing, participatory, communicative construction of this DIY feminism. Paper is exchanged as ideas are exchanged. In the same vein, at the end of the issues of *Lilith*, the editors add a section they call "Mind Food," where they list additional resources for like-minded women. They include other pamphlets such as *Notes from the First Year* and *Voice of the Women's Liberation*, texts such as Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* and Anais Nin's *The Diary of Anais Nin*, and even music such as Nina Simone's "Blues for Mama." This reading list furthers the radical feminist emphasis on education and the promotion of others.

Interestingly, rather than being concerned with illiterate women being able to read the text, a more real concern was that literate women read and *understand* the text to be able to orally communicate the message of the editorial group to both literate and illiterate women. As Flannery notes, "In this sense, literacy should be understood as involving not only those who wrote for and read the papers but also those who participated in the exchange of literate knowledge by listening to and talking with others who had read the papers. The literacy event, in other words, involved not only print but also talk" (35). Thus "word of mouth" became increasingly important as the publishers and creators of these pamphlets expected readers to not just *read* or *pass on* the pamphlets, but to start conversations with other women by *explaining* what they had read. The pamphlets, then, were meant to be conversation pieces rather than static ephemera. So, "right" and "final" are replaced with ideas of "knowledge" and "action." The feminist

polemics in these pamphlets are not centered around argumentation, but on knowledge production and activism. Essentially, writers are not necessarily providing that ethos that contemporary society had become so used to finding in their writers. Readers are then forced to come to their own conclusions, and rely on themselves to provide the ethos--to trust themselves that the scaffolded knowledge they've collected can lead to appropriate actions. Flannery explains that,

> Teaching and learning, in this sense, operated less as stable oppositional functions and more as reciprocating activities: women who wrote for the periodicals had to teach themselves not only about feminism but also about writing, and as they taught themselves, they made their learning visible for readers, who could in turn teach themselves. (25)

By making their education a public process, other women could learn *how to learn* in a sense, and they could model their re-education on that of others. This is the mutual education discussed earlier in which women "practice" or perform their education publicly in these pamphlets, which allows readers to practice their own education and meaning-making, employing linguistic techniques, reassessment of values, and emotions. For example, "women's rage" is one such emotion that these feminist polemicists employ as a device for meaning-making and knowledge-production. Historically seen as anti-productive or useless, the rage of women acts as a form of polemic that sheds a light on that particular moment in time and allows readers a better sense of the repercussion of such oppression.

3 // Zines: Creating a New Media Clubhouse for a New Feminism

In the last chapter, I discussed how second-wave feminists created a new, alternative media by writing and publishing pamphlets in a grassroots effort to network and connect across physical boundaries. These women blurred the lines between authorship and readership and relied on education to further incite activism. This chapter argues that the third-wave feminist zines of the late 1980s and 1990s continue that work in the margins through a new media. The zines created what Anzaldúa calls a "third space" of feminist discourse, but which I call a kind of rhetorical "clubhouse." I trace the emergence of zines from 60s pamphlet culture to punk music fan-zines. I show that zines not only developed because of the technological potential of cheap and easy photocopying but because the users of this new media saw the possibility of its political and educational value that had not existed before. Intersecting with some academic discourses about feminist philosophy but remaining steadfastly popular, young, and do-it-yourself, these zines created a playful place for young feminists to express themselves, a sort of rhetorical clubhouse. Profoundly multi-authored, and composed of re-purposed ideas, phrases, and images, zines illustrate the creation of micro-communities of education, socialization, and fun.

In 1992, Rebecca Walker first used the phrase “third-wave” in her article “Becoming the Third Wave” published in *Ms.* magazine. The article was in response to the Anita Hill Senate hearings, and Walker asks, “Can a woman’s experience undermine a man’s career?” (78). She reminds readers that “[m]en were assured of the inviolability

of their penis/power. Women were admonished to keep their experiences to themselves" (78). Again, the lived experiences of women are discredited and rendered useless, meaningless, and invaluable in popular, mainstream, patriarchal culture. Walker's response to this public, overt devaluing of the female experience is to encourage women to rise up once again. She recalls a moment on a train when two large, aggressive men approach her and another woman with her daughter, in lewd and inappropriate ways: "I begin to realize that I owe it to myself, to my little sister on the train, to all of the daughters yet to be born, to push beyond my rage and articulate an agenda" (79). The necessity of the agenda is apparent everywhere from Senate hearings to the train, and it becomes partially realized in zine culture, as girls once again value lived experiences and personal stories. They become a means for communication and connection.

Zines mark a crucial cognitive shift in DIY feminist discourse toward a more democratically broad, anyone-can-participate, social philosophy. In contrast to academic feminism (which went on at the same time, and in many ways ideologically fertilized the zine movement, but which essentially requires "higher education" access), zines helped popularize the practical elements of women expressing themselves in public while growing as feminists and radical individuals. This chapter will discuss the proliferation of feminist zines during the third-wave, which is commonly considered to span the late 1980s to 2000. Feminist zines function as third spaces where non-academics can perform their identities and attempt to enact social change. I will draw on the pioneering work of zine theories Stephen Duncombe, Michelle Comstock, and Jessalynn Keller, as well as lean on Adela Licona, who expands upon Gloria Anzaldua's concept of the borderland to describe third-wave feminism's use of the third space.

Xerox Revolution and the Punk Rock Influence

Zines are small, self-published, rudimentary magazines that are typically copied at copy machines. The origin of zines is debated. Some go all the way to Martin Luther's "99 Theses" as an early example of a zine, while others look to Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" and Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanac to be some of the earliest zines. Others go back even farther, citing zines about witchcraft from the 1400s, as noted by Joe Biel in his book *Making a Zine*. But the first feminist zine is commonly agreed to be Janice Bogstand's 1975 feminist sci-fi zine *Janus*. The science fiction zines of the 1950s were the most contemporary relation to the 1990s feminist zines I discuss in this chapter, so it would make sense that the first feminist zine was, in fact, a sci-fi feminist zine. Zines as we know them today seem to have roots in science fiction fanzines dating back to the 1920s and increasing in popularity in the 1950s. When feminist zines first hit the scene, they were closely tied to music, particularly because of the influence of the punk rock scene.

The mimeographed pamphlets of the 60s and early 70s, and photocopied zines of the 80s and 90s, share some similarities but the differences proliferate. Zines relied on a more punk, outspoken attitude–a DIY philosophy that was assisted by increasing access to Xerox machines. An important difference from the pamphlet tradition before them is that zines emerged from music fan culture. But it was the punk rock scene of the late 1970s that really launched the zine culture we see brought to life by third-wave feminists. The first punk rock zine was *Sniffin' Glue*, published in 1976 by Mark Perry. *Sniffin' Glue* was "a typewritten affair with his own homemade artwork. It's a genius piece of

DIY and one of the ultimate punk state-ments," according to John Robb in his book *Punk Rock: An Oral History* (203). This comes from the chapter titled "1976 Part II: Year Xerox." The authors credit the xerox machine for the proliferation of punk rock zines at the time. Perry said of *Sniffin' Glue*, "At first I printed about 50. It was a joke really! I didn't go to a printer's. I just printed it out on a typewriter, and I did the felt-tipped headings'n'that. And my girlfriend took it to work and got it photocopied on a really old photocopier" (204). See, for example, the cover of issue 7 (Fig. 6).

Fig. 7. Cover of iss. 7, Sniffing Glue

The hand-written title and subtitle, the cut-and-pasted images, and the typewritten header ("... Black … White … Black … White …) are all elements of media mixing that establish the DIY culture that proliferates in both zine culture and third-wave feminism, and once again, some sort of "stealing" from a corporation -- in this case, his girlfriend's job's Xerox machine. Perry goes on to say, "To do a fanzine, you didn't even need a typewriter. Shane MacGowan [frontman of the Celtic punk band *The Pogues*] did a fanzine inspired by *Sniffin' Glue*. He called it Bondage and he used to have a go at us 'cause we used a typewriter! He just scrawled it in a pen. That was more punk than us" (206). It is almost as if the more crude and rudimentary the publication, the more radical and subversive it is, which only adds to the ethos of the author.

Media does not change linearly; it can also change within itself, as technology updates, advances, and otherwise develops. In her lecture about emerging media, "The Emerging Media of Early America," Sandra M. Gustafson writes about how media themselves cannot be seen as simply an avenue to new medias. Rather, the media itself "change internally, and they change in relation to one another. Manuscript was more than a way station on the road to print, but rather developed new forms and social functions" (218). I am most intrigued by her claim that medias develop social functions, and we see this explicitly in zine culture. As Gustafson attests, zines were not just an advancement of pamphlets and a hold-over for Web-based publishing. They were also not a revision of the pamphlet – a shorter, more carelessly written version. Rather, they had, and still have, a social function all of their own. Most importantly, the ease of access to photocopy stores like Kinkos really opened up the DIY potential of zines and led to the idea that "anyone can do it." Zines allowed young women to patchwork a clubhouse via a pastiche

of the words and images of others, combined with their own thoughts, opinions, drawings, and more. Gustafson establishes a new definition for emerging media which is not linear or residual. Furthermore, one media does not phase out as another is created. "Competition, a metaphor based on an understanding of media as essentially market-driven phenomena, is one mechanism of textual emergence, but it does not exhaust the possible modes of interaction between emerging media" (Gustafson 230). To that point, zines did not die when the Internet gained popularity. There is merit in the media itself, and many young women still prefer to publish paper zines over blogs and social media. Access to cheap photocopying cannot be overstated as providing a qualitative change to this media, as popular feminism emerged concurrently with a cheap, accessible medium. As I discussed in the previous chapter, rudimentary, unreliable photocopiers existed in the 1970s and, often, people stole company time and supplies to xerox pamphlets, flyers, and more. But one of the main developments in the 80s was the establishment of a Kinkos-type store in almost every American city.

These photocopiers changed the mediasphere as it was once known. In his *Smithsonian* article about Xerox machines, Thompson calls out the feminist zine movement: "The Riot Grrrl movement of young feminist musicians in the '90s, appalled by mainstream media's treatment of women, essentially created their own mediasphere partly via photocopiers. 'Beyond its function as an 'office tool,' the copier has, for many people, become a means of self-expression,' said the authors of *Copyart*, a 1978 guide to DIY creativity" (Thompson). The book quoted here, *Copyart*, is subtitled: "The first complete guide to the copy machine." (Ironically, and worth noting, the only place this book seems to be currently available is an illegal scan online, in its entirety.) The book

goes into deep detail of how to achieve specific effects on a copy machine, such as collages, visual diaries, matrixing, paper murals, and masks. The authors write in the preface, "In some strange and mysterious way, the copier is a 'magical machine.' You will find that very often the 'accident,' the 'unplanned,' and the 'unexpected' will produce results you could not even begin to imagine. There is little doubt that copiers are here to stay. The question is, what will they do next?". The "next" that we see is the zine scene that begins in the punk rock radical sector.

Once punk rock appropriated zine-making in the 1980s, again we saw the rise of feminist punk rock zines before feminism ran with the zine scene entirely. These fanzines became appropriated by the 1980s punk scene, and young men, mostly, would disseminate their self-made publications at concerts. The zines of the 1980s and 1990s were born from fan subcultures and punk rock zines, and as such, they had a firm foothold in alternative scenes. Women, too, were drawn to the alternative music scenes of punk rock and hip hop as they began "[s]eeking out alternative arenas for their resistance to traditional gender roles and dominant society," Kearney writes (40). For these young women who were tired of the gendered roles prescribed by the patriarchy, these music scenes offered an opportunity to find the "heterosocial interaction that they found lacking in the separatist culture privileged by feminists" (Kearney 40). In sharp response to second-wave feminists, who separated themselves from society entirely, early third-wavers sought heterosocial activities with men who also considered themselves to be marginalized in some way. Kearney goes on to say, "many teenage girls found punk and hip-hop to be useful arenas for experimenting with forms of identity, behavior, and cultural practice that differed from not only those privileged in mainstream society, but

also those associated with feminism" (40). Hip hop and punk rock underground scenes allowed young women to practice their identities in a way that mainstream society does not permit, and Kearney here mentions class as well as feminism, reminiscent of second-wavers denouncement of the pre-packaged feminism offered by Friedan. Just as those second-wave feminists rejected the upper-, middle-class, whitewashed feminism that Friedan writes about, these soon-to-be-third-wavers sought to find a new version of feminism, outside of and different from their foremothers. It was in these underground music scenes that young women practiced their alternative identities, feminism being one of them.

Interestingly, and contradictory, it was a margin of the margins, an incredibly small niche, which then became appropriated by these same female punk rock fans who once again saw themselves written out of their culture. It was not until the RiotGrrrl movement in 1990 that feminist zines really took off, and they grew in intensity and popularity through the 20th century. Biel writes of this phenomenon: "Soon, dozens of riot girl zines appeared, showing women as equals while saying 'we are creative and like to have fun too.' Riot Grrrl put the women on the stage--literally and metaphorically--to inspire other women in the audience to feel like they belonged there too" (37). Here, Biel hits on the essence of feminist zines: bridging the gap between author and reader, and empowering readers to be seen and heard and to feel worthy.

Riot Grrrl is widely considered to be the first feminist zine, published in the 1990s by the band of the same name. The feminist zine culture of the third-wave was a direct response to the sexism of the punk rock scene, and female bands and musicians started their own "fanzines," as they were then called. These zines were DIY, and they

were unlike anything that had been in the music scene or the feminist scene before. In *The Riot Grrrl Collection*, a photographed archive of Riot Grrrl material from NYU's Fales Library and Special Collections, Lisa Darms explains, "Reading these zines ... you'll see plenty of spelling mistakes, sharpie-marker redactions, gaps, rough edges, and last-minute additions. No one used spell-check, but no one cared. There was an urgency to get the message out that superseded perfection. This urgency exemplifies both the aesthetics and politics of riot grrrl, and drives my desire to build the archive" (12). Here, then, is DIY literacy at its best: cut-at-paste, cross outs, misspellings. This is entirely against mainstream literacy and discourse, both at that time and today. Darms writes that "no one cared" about being perfect; urgency outweighed the search for perfection, and this urgency is what necessitated the DIY. The materials might not have been available for these women to make glossy, perfectly typeset magazines, but neither was the time or the concern for such a thing. Essentially, the message overshadows the means of communication. Natalie M. Fletcher writes, "In zining, the DIY ethic is completely explicit: inspired by the punk and sci-fi movements, zinesters incarnate the notion that anyone can take action and make their voice heard" (60). The very definition of DIY intimates the personal, individual nature of zining, and it elevates the everywoman to author, producer, distributor, and expert of her own lived experiences.

Often, these zinesters write in all lowercase letters -- including those at the beginning of the sentence and the "i," further extenuating the girliness of it all. In this way, these third-wave feminists were working out their own forms of communication and literacy. Concurrent to *Riot Grrrl*, the band *Bikini Kill* also produced a feminist zine, named after themselves. In her song "Reject All American," *Bikini Kill* frontwoman

Kathleen Hanna sings, “We are turning cursive letters into knives,” and Johanna Fateman, in her essay in *The Riot Grrrl Collection*, explains: “Kathleen’s lyric alluded to a literary and visual style that she had helped to innovate. . . And in a new tradition of self-publishing, girls used loopy cursive, hearts, stars, photo-booth portraits, and kitsch images . . . to set off type of handwritten communiques, cultural criticism, fiction , and philosophies” (13). Cursive lettering, under the dominant ideology, is considered cute and non-threatening, but Hanna claims that women can be feminine and threatening, cute and revolutionary.

Production and Consumption

Most feminist zines had incredibly small print-runs and were short-lived. Young women often “aged out” of zine making by the time they went to college, or they could not sustain the time and material needed to create quality publications. Others, like *Bitch* and *BUST* transitioned from being small zines to being published as a glossy magazine, in stark contradiction to the magazines available to young women at the time, such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Teen Vogue*. Primarily, though, feminist zines live in this third space, outside of mainstream but also not entirely underground. Anzaldua writes about the border language: Chicano Spanish, which can be compared to the border language of feminism. Anzaldua writes of the border language as “[a] language which they can connect their identity to, one capable of communicating the realities and values true to themselves -- a language with terms that are neither *espanol ni ingles*, but both. We speak a patois, a forked tongue, a variation of two languages” (77). Chicano Spanish straddle the border between two languages and they reconcile this border by creating a mash-up of languages. So, too, are feminists creating a mash-up language in periphery medias such

as zines. These young women forged a niche for themselves that did not previously exist by using those tools that were available to them: the punk rock and hip hop scenes, the scissors and glue from their rooms, the copy machine at work. They truly patchworked an entire genre that did not previously exist, using and mis-using those master's tools that Lorde said we should not, or could not, use to dismantle the master's house.

Zines are largely absent from academic discourse, which puts zine writers in a unique position. Rather than looking for authors to emulate, zine writers are constantly acting against the mainstream. In their article, "The BUST in' and Bitch in' Ethe of Third-Wave Zines," Brenda M. Helmbrecht and Meredith A. Love celebrate this distinction, noting that "[t]hird-wave women do not wander the library . . . searching for Shakespeare's sister. Indeed, third-wave women can look to Supreme Court justices, presidential candidates, and scientists for role models. In other words, these cultural markers greatly affect the subject positions from which these women write" (152). Feminist zinesters are a direct product of the social and political environs that surround them, and as such, they are not limited or restricted by academic rules and ceilings. While some people may argue that zines are not academic enough, or not an appropriate or successful place for feminists to work together, others believe that academic feminism is not always the answer. bell hooks writes, "The value of a feminist work should not be determined by whether or not it conforms to academic standards. The value of a feminist work should not be determined by whether or not it is difficult reading" (ibid. 113). While zines may not be difficult to read, or may not conform to the standards of academia, hooks believes that they should be considered as valuable pieces of the movement. If the revolution begins the margins, these zines are it. In agreement with

hooks, Elke Zobl writes about zines as sites of "oppositional history" in her article "Cultural Production, Transnational Networking, and Critical Reflection in Feminist Zines":

> Zine makers turn to self-publishing for a variety of reasons: for personal expression, as an outlet for creativity, out of isolation, as a supportive space and network tool in search of like-minded friends and community, and as a form of cultural resistance and political critique. But one of the main reasons is to create an oppositional history and an alternative to the narrow and distorted mainstream representation of women, queer people, and transgender people, an alternative that reflects and resists their cultural devaluation. (5)

Zines, then, offer marginalized people an option to find themselves outside of mainstream culture and to reculturate themselves with value and meaning. Third-wave feminist zines occupy the border, or the margins, of society, and while it may not be possible to exit ideology entirely, it is possible, and important, for women to find their way to the margins, to incorporate their own literacies, and to make something that matters. Michelle Comstock discusses the idea of extracurricular writing, or non-academic writing, within the space of feminism in her essay "Grrrl Zine Networks: Re-Composing Spaces of Authority, Gender, and Culture." Comstock attests that grrrl zines "challenge both dominant notions of the author as an individualized, bodiless space and notions of feminism as a primarily adult political project" (383). DIY feminism through zines is both a community effort and open to women of all ages. It enacts an intersectional feminism that appeals to women of all kinds. Duncombe, too, writes about life in the margins for feminist zinesters:

> Defining themselves against a society predicated on consumption, zinesters privilege the ethic of DIY, do-it- yourself: make your own culture and stop consuming that which is made for you. . . . the zine community is busy creating a culture whose value isn't calculated as profit and loss on ruled ledger pages, but is assembled in the margins, using criteria like control, connection, and authenticity. (5)

Consumption, then, is the ideology. It is the system under which we are born, and it is the culture that addresses women. By creating their own work, in the margins of a capitalistic society, that does not value profit, women are creating their own type of discourse, which privileges authenticity over profit. This rejection of consumerism is, of course, not unique to the feminist movement. In fact, it is in the punk rock and hip-hop music scenes that these zinesters encountered rejection of the mainstream. Comstock writes, "By appropriating the political tactics and writing practices of both the punk zine scene and the larger feminist movement, the grrrl zine network is creating new spaces for postfeminist authorship" (384). "Postfeminist" is not a term I would use to define these writers, particularly because even today, we are not "post" anything, but the sentiment remains that this new, third-space of authorship for feminist writers has given voice and meaning to people and ideas that were otherwise left out of academic discourse.

As an extracurricular writing medium, zines must also look for an extracurricular distribution process. These zines were obviously not being produced by, for, or within the mainstream, so a bit of creativity had to be put into distribution, as well. Comstock writes, "Like its style and tone, the distribution methods associated with grrrl zine publishing are networked, rhetorical practices that form an integral part of the overall

writing process" (396). The distribution of zines is just as important as the making of zines, since it was often also a personal process. Zines, especially in their early stages, were most often handed to individuals at school or concerts, and they were passed from friend to friend, further heightening the "personal" and "lived experience" emphasis. More often than not, feminists would hear about and read from zines because their friends wrote them or handed them out. The distribution of zines in this fashion also speaks to the movement against capitalism. Comstock continues, "Slow production time and erratic release dates also illustrate that the primary reward for writing is not necessarily monetary profit (though economics are important), but entry into the world of misfits and independent grrrl publishers" (396). Time and materials were often scarce, and girls could and would take their time producing zines that met their specific aesthetic and took into account their audience. As Comstock explains, this erraticism further solidifies girl zinesters as outside of the mainstream and as independent thinkers and creators.

Age and Social Activism

While lived experiences were a defining feature of second-wave pamphlets and feminism, identity *performance* was otherwise lacking from our second-wave foremothers. While pamphlet authors used the space to enact their own education, and that of others, zine authors take this to a new level, practicing and enacting their own education, but additionally practicing and enacting identities and using zines as a site of identity performance. This could partially be credited to the lowered age of authors. Whereas most second-wave pamphlet authors were adults and young adults, many of

them married or mothers, zine authors were decidedly younger, partially, perhaps, because zine writing could be likened to journal writing, and it has an inherent benefit without even an audience. These younger authors were less conditioned by society and also less developed, socially, personally, etc., so they are able and willing to ask, in the presence of an unknown audience, *Who am I, really?* Third-wave feminism in general is a celebration of girlhood and "Girl Power" in a way that was decidedly and obviously missing from second-wave feminism. According to Jessalyn Keller in her article "Feminist Editors and the New Girl Glossies: Fashionable Feminism or Just Another Sexist Rag?", this glorification of girlhood "married easily with the third wave's brand of 'fun,' pop-culture-based feminism." (2). In fact, critiques of the 'girlie' focus of the third-wave include those who deem it to be based on consumption and consumerism. But as Elizabeth Groeneveld attests in *Making Feminist Media: Third-Wave Magazines on the Cusp of the Digital Age*, "Third-wave magazines like *Bitch* emphasize the importance of valuing girlhood while also rewording what constitutes a girl in the first place" (2). Just as the LGBTQ community reclaimed the word "queer," third-wave feminism reclaimed the world "girl" or "girly," to mean something much more powerful than a young female. The riot grrrl movement takes this reclamation even further by replacing the "i" with three "r"s to mimic a growl, the rallying cry for third-wave feminists. "Girlhood," as reclaimed by zinesters is meant to represent and revive the playfulness associated with "girls," while also remaining politic-minded and socially rebellious. It is not one or the other, but both and the same.

The zine culture of the third-wave further appropriates the 'girlie,' playful aesthetic, to embody their DIY-aesthetic. In her article "Girl power's last chance? Tavi

Gevinson, feminism, and popular media culture," Keller writes, "riot grrrls not only encouraged girls to be media producers, but motivated girls to create alternative representations of girlhood that challenged those created by the commercial culture industries" (278). Rather than *consuming*, feminist zinesters were esentially *stealing*: time, content, images, paper. It is the reappropriation of girlhood that so well defines the zine scene and allows young women to be themselves, rather than either: having to be themselves behind a closed door, or very quickly conforming to the demure female that society expects them to become. We can see this reclamation of the word "girl" quite literally in the first issue of feminist comic zine *Real Girl* in 1990s. Author Rebecka Wright explains the purposeful move from "woman" to "girl":

> Isn't 'girl' a patronizing term for an adult female? Listen, junior, while it's true that this form of address is best reserved for intimates, some of the best people around call themselves girls. Quite a few call themselves women. The twain often meet, even in the same person, but there are some philosophical differences. Sex, just to choose an example at random, has certain, well, serious and lasing connotations for women that just don't appeal to girls. A 'fallen woman' is ruined; a 'bad girl' is naughty . . . Not that it's all a game for girls, but there don't seem to be quite so many lurking consequences for this. There is a certain amount of freedom of action accorded adult girls, as succinctly put by this popular bumpersticker: Good Girls Go to Heaven. Bad Girls Go Everywhere" (qtd. in Robbins 114).

The idea of the "bad girl" versus the "good girl" is one such way that zinesters reappropriated the word. "Girl" does not innately equal "good." Walker explains that a

female can be both a "woman" and a "girl," and, in fact, many females do refer to themselves as both. But the differences outlined by Walker are laid out: girls have less consequences and more freedom. Helmbrecht and Love write, "Most remarkable is the overriding urge of third-wave writers to make feminism less serious and more light-hearted, warmer and more familiar, to make it 'hot, sexy, and newly revolutionary'" (151). And this is not just about teen sexuality and miniskirts, but also about a reclamation of sexuality and a recognition of it in its nascent forms, rather than ignoring this aspect of girlhood. These young women were almost more playful in their *practice* of feminism, and I use the word *practice* very deliberately. Zinesters were very much practicing and playing with their identities, which readers get to see unfold in real time by reading their stream-of-consciousness productions.

However, I'm concerned here that Helmbrecht and Love's use of "hot, sexy, and newly revolutionary" reads as "marketable," which was certainly not the purpose of these zines -- at least not in the capitalist definition of the term. Feminism, for third-wave zinesters, was very much different than second-wavers, and they did talk and write about more taboo, contemporary topics, such as sex, lesbianism, makeup, and modeling. But it was not packaged in such a way to be palatable to the mainstream. These zines were still very much underground and very much written only for themselves: the authors and readers, between which the lines were often blurred. Helmbrecht and Love write,

> The zines' contributors make the mainstream central to their publications by simultaneously indulging in pop culture and distrusting the consumer-driven nature of it. Their third-wave audience could be characterized as a sort of an 'alternative public sphere,' a readership that is invested in popular feminism and

> culture, one already consubtantial with feminist issues and the inevitable frustration that comes with living out feminist principles. (155)

The "alternative public sphere," or third space, of the zine scene married pop culture with feminism and activism. The investment in pop culture that is ingrained in the zine scene is largely a result of growing up in 1980s America. Consumerism and capitalism are everywhere, and these young women cannot be expected to eschew all trappings of their upbringings.

But Helmbrecht and Love also make another valuable insight about the zine scene: that while operating under the assumption of a common cause with most readers, zines advertised a remarkably un-dogmatic feminist philosophy, open to many styles and permutations, but with a baseline mistrust of society in general. That is, zinesters are not trying to "flip" any readers. There is very little pushing and prodding of readers to change their opinions. Rather, it seems to be understood that readers generally feel the same as the writers. We saw this, too, in the second-wave pamphlets, where women were writing for like-minded women. As a result, it is difficult to define the agenda of third wave feminism. Without a unifying opinion on key feminism issues such as prostitution, birth control, motherhood, etc., the third wave seems to rather "prioritizes the entitlement of each individual to define feminism for herself, which leads to an embracing of contradiction, conflict, and messiness when it comes to agreeing on a specific third wave agenda," as Keller writes ("Feminist" 2). This brings to light another important tenant of feminist zines: individualism and multiplicity. While these may seem like conflicting points, it is clear that feminist zinesters did not offer sweeping opinions or agendas for

their readers. Rather, we see young women recognizing and acknowledging the myriad voices and opinions of other young women.

If we remember that these zinesters are young, we realize that a new form of activism begins to take place. Young zinester politics often differed from earlier eras, most notably from their mothers' generation. These girls did not, for example, go to the 1990s-equivalent of a bra-burning protest of *Miss America*. In contrast to organizing public demonstrations, these girls worked from their homes, often behind their bedroom doors, and as a result, a sort of bedroom activism was born. Zines became sites of activism, which looked more like cultural reflection, education, and personal reflection than any sort of demonstrative public exhibition. But bedroom activism is not to be overlooked in the history of feminist activism in general. In fact, Zobl writes of feminist zines, "They have emerged out of the alternative press of the feminist movement [Steiner 1992] and stand in interrelation to other artistic, social, and political movements such as dadaism, surrealism, situationism, agitprop, anarchism, and punk, in addition to lesbian, queer, and transgender liberation movements" (2). Zobl makes connections between these young women zinesters and such transformative activism movements as anarchism and surrealism. She places it within the context of the lesbian, queer, and transgender movements that took place decades before, but which are still, also, taking place in these zines themselves. The bedroom activisms of feminist zinesters, as I will discuss later in this chapter, were as meaningful and powerful as rallies, marches, and sit-ins.

Feminist media is about more than just consumption of discourse. It is promoting a new participatory literacy, interpolating the reader and calling her to action. Feminist zine activism works in three ways: cultural reflection, education, and personal reflection,

though these facets of activism are not working linearly. Rather, it is a cyclical pattern that allows young women to constantly educate, reevaluate, and reconsider themselves and their place in the world. Zobl writes that "the process of reading, making, and distributing feminist zines has an empowering effect on the personal, professional, social, and political lives of many editors. Zinesters not only exchange knowledge among themselves … but they also create a cultural, semientrepreneurial activist network" (10). Zines work to both empower writers and readers, and the reciprocity of education and information networks further promotes activism among these young women. Cultural reflection takes place when zinesters expose society and allow readers and writers the space to consider alternatives to what society tells them is right or meaningful or appropriate. Again and again in zines, we see authors calling out mainstream society for trying to convince young women to look a certain way, buy specific products, listen to certain music. The list goes on. Zines offer a space outside of this culture for young people to reflect on who is in charge of these messages and how to navigate outside of certain cultural practices. This leads to education, in which authors encourage readers to continue these thought processes outside of the zine. They offer suggested readings, as did their foremothers in second-wave pamphlets, and they encourage outside-of-the-box-that-is-society thinking. This then causes personal reflection, in which zine readers and thinkers are able to look at themselves and see what role they play in society and consider what role they would *like* to play.

It is also through personal reflection that many young women are able to heal, purge, emote, and otherwise rehabilitate. Furthermore, feminist theorist Laura Miccichi writes, "For feminists, writing is always political because language reflects and deflects

power relations" (--). She explains that "stealing language" is crucial to female agency, particularly because they do not have their own language to use. They must work *with* the tools of the master to create a platform of activism in the margins. Stealing language occurs when women use the language of the "master," or the patriarchy, to create their own literature and media, since there is no readily available "feminist language" to use. Women must use the words, and even the grammatical and syntactical rules at times, of the mainstream to construct their own

In her book *Liberation in Print: Feminist Periodicals and Social Movement Identity*, Agatha Beins uses Althusser's theory of interpellation to explain how addresses work in feminist magazines to give readers a sense of community and agency. Readers are addressed directly, and as they are given a sense of agency, they understand that these medias are written for them. They become participants in the DIY culture, which then leads to the readers becoming the doers. As Althusser explains, the individual becomes the subject by understanding that the address is meant for him or her; so, too, the readers of the periodicals become participants by understanding that the address is meant for her. Thus, languaging is used in specific ways to increase participation, agency, and community. "[W]ithin the direct address a social and political community forms both between the addresser and the addressee as well as between the address and a multitude of other sisters across the world whom interpellation brings into the feminist fold" (Beins 110). Through interpellation, young women are able to read themselves into feminist zines. They know that this is for them, and they can participate in the movement by simply reading, but then also by talking and sharing. Helmbrecht and Love explain how "the zines develop several types of ethos or ethe, which not only define them as feminist

rhetorical texts but also define readers as either participants or outsiders to their newer manifestation of feminism" (152). Through the ethos constructed by the zine writers, readers can identify as participants and relate to the author's particular brand of feminism. Since these zinesters are operating with the understanding that their readers feel the same way that they do, they can very quickly establish this ethos, and readers are more likely to feel like they are a part of the zine they are reading. Helmbrecht and Love further this point, "These third-wave publications foster a sort of 'in the know' attitude, addressing an audience they rightly assume is 'up' on the latest of the latest" (154). In turn, readers are more likely to participate in the zine in more meaningful ways, from as small as writing a thank you letter to as large as co-writing or -editing. Just as we saw in second-wave pamphlets, these feminist zines relied on readers to submit, review, discuss, opine, and rant about whatever is on their minds. As a result, "extensive attention to letters and reviews makes grrrl zine writing less about individual expression (though there is emphasis on that) and more about providing a network or forum for writers, artists, and musicians on the fringes of mainstream culture" (Comstock 395). A network is produced in which the line blurs between reader and author, as the reader becomes an active participant in the meaning making. This, of course, further patchworks content, mediums, opinions, and topics. Keller says that "readers become active cultural agents rather than merely passive absorbers of corporate culture" ("Feminist" 1). In this additional step away from and outside of consumerism, readers are not passive consumers of information. When young women read *Cosmopolitan* or *Teen Vogue*, there is a wall up between reader and author that seems insurmountable. But when they read and interact with feminist zines, they are "seen" in more ways than one. First, they are

reading about topics that they care deeply about, or that they did not previously know they cared deeply about. And second, they can then immediately pick up a pen or go to the computer and contribute their own thoughts and work through their own understanding.

The very fact that zine writers can operate on the premise that readers are already on the same page is what makes alternative medias so effective. These feminists do not have to do the leg work of proving themselves. They are operating with a strong ethos, and that credibility and trust can lead to more political and social change than when an author must first prove herself to be right. Women who make and read zines are actively resisting the patriarchy and working towards their own understanding of the world. They are re-culturating (rather than acculturating) by finding their own way. Duncombe explains, "In reaction against the dominant culture, and drawing upon residual models of participatory culture, zinesters have produced their own alternative meaning systems and representations. This counterhegemonic culture—like all others—is shot through with contradictions, but within it lies the potential for political resistance" (191). His use of the phrase "alternative meaning systems and representations" speaks to the DIY literacy of creating something out of something else. Duncombe acknowledges that the counterculture is as varied and contradictory as the hegemony, but at least it is trying at something new and not taking everything at face value. By questioning and reacting against what Althusser terms the ideological state apparatus (ISA), zinesters are getting people to think, which is the first step.

For example, in the second issue of *Bikini Kill* zine, the authors write, "OF COURSE I'M GONNA BE EMOTIONAL WHEN I AM FORCED TO DESCRIBE

THE BARS ON THE CAGE THAT I FUCKIN LIVE IN. It is time we stopt describing the bars and time to fucking make our move. We are bustin outta this joint" (qtd. in Hanna and Fateman 132). This rally cry is similar to their comparison to the patriarchy as a clubhouse, as I will later discuss. Here, it is a jail, and women are inside, trying to write, describe, or talk their way out. The authors insist that rather than wasting time talking to people who will never understand, women should leave that ISA (bubble, clubhouse, jail) and work outside the mainstream, effectively "bustin outta this joint" and turning outward to each other. This is the way third-wave activism occurs in the zine world, where young women and girls can be the producers of culture rather than the puppets of culture. According to Zobl, "one of the most important characteristics of zines is their potential for critical reflection" (9). Critical reflection is one such way that feminist zines *enact* their activism, by allowing and requiring authors and readers to pull of the veil of patriarchy, consumerism, sexism, racism, etc., and evaluate both society and themselves. It is the evaluation of themselves that brings us to the third area of feminist zine activism: personal reflection. Fletcher explains, "This shift is significant in itself given they are usually relegated to the status of cultural consumers, ingesting adult-generated content in the form of picture books, animated films, video games and the like, often created with corporate interests in mind" (64). Rather than being targeted consumers, zinesters turn back at consumerism and expose corporate America. The production of anti-consumerist ideology proliferates in feminist zines, as girls "can exert a politicizing influence by helping individuals realize their own power" (Fletcher 61). For example, in "Pocahontas: A Walt Disney Film," Mrs. McFeelme reviews *Pocahontas*, a film that essentially whitewashes Native American and European relations in the 16th century by packaging it

all in a love story with a soundtrack. She writes, "A Word of Advice: Disney keep your greedy corporate fingers out of the history books and stick to what you do best; ripping off other people's movies and exploiting families and children" (qtd. in Caputi 82). *Pocahontas* is of course just one small example of how corporate America targets young women and expects them to passively and ignorantly buy into (literally and figuratively) the mainstream, patriarchal ideals. Mrs. McFeelme voices her own disdain for this particular cultural phenomenon, and as a result, other young women see and learn that they do not have to accept everything that society hands them. In this way, zinesters are become producers rather than consumers.

The merging of academic and non-academic voices reaches across venues and gives access to readers and writers to learn about and articulate their opinions on feminist issues. In the March 2017 issue of the zine *Femme Frick*, the author and creator Laramie Rae asks readers to put down the zine and go read women such as bell hooks, Audre Lorde, and Barbara Smith if they haven't already. "And learn, read, dig, and dive into these and discover beyond!" She is encouraging women to expand, or raise, their consciousness in the same way that the pamphlets from the late 1960s and zines from the 1990s include suggested readings lists at the end, often including these same authors. The third issue of the same zine features an interview with Trinh T. Minh-ha, a writer and filmmaker, but also well-known in women's studies and in academia. Tina Spangler, zine editor, asked her questions regarding the politics of film, and Minh-ha cites Foucault as she discusses power relationships and "the feminist struggle" that has "contributed to breaking down the dichotomy between the private and the public or the personal and the societal" (qtd. in Fletcher 120). It is the confluence of academic and non-academic

feminists that further facilitates discussion and reflection on a new feminism for these third-wave zinesters. Catherine Belsey explains this same concept in her article "Writing as a Feminist." She writes that "feminists want readers to look up occasionally from the text, not to read another necessarily, but to reflect, compare, differ--in a word, to consider" (160). Clearly, both marginal, non-academic, feminist writers and more academic writers (Laramie Rae and bell hooks, respectively) are both calling for the same thing: for women to read.

Doing it Themselves: DIY in the Zine Scene

Just as zines call out a DIY education from its readers, the media itself emphasizes this cut-and-paste quality, a playful bricolage of ideas and images. Zines are DIY, do-it-yourself, patchwork collages of information, text, images, sketches, and more. The creation of this space very much relies on the DIY techniques and literacies of these young women as they create and distribute their zines. Comstock writes, "Zinesters are notorious for mixing genres and strategically combining personal stories, fiction, rants, poetry, and essays, which are practices that are facilitated by photocopiers and cute-and-paste desktop publishing programs" (385). In this way, young women are creating their own spaces and carving out, sometimes quite literally, room for themselves and their opinions and their creativity. As defined in the 2010 zine *Fallopian Falafel*, DIY "is anything we create without letting conventional guidelines limit us – Big Man Corporations, publication companies, commercial record labels all of those who restrict

us, our freedom of expression, and limit our ability to create." For example, the 2017 zine *Overthrow the Status Quo* seems to be created by cutting and pasting text, images, and the creator's own handwriting to piece together the zine (Fig. 7).

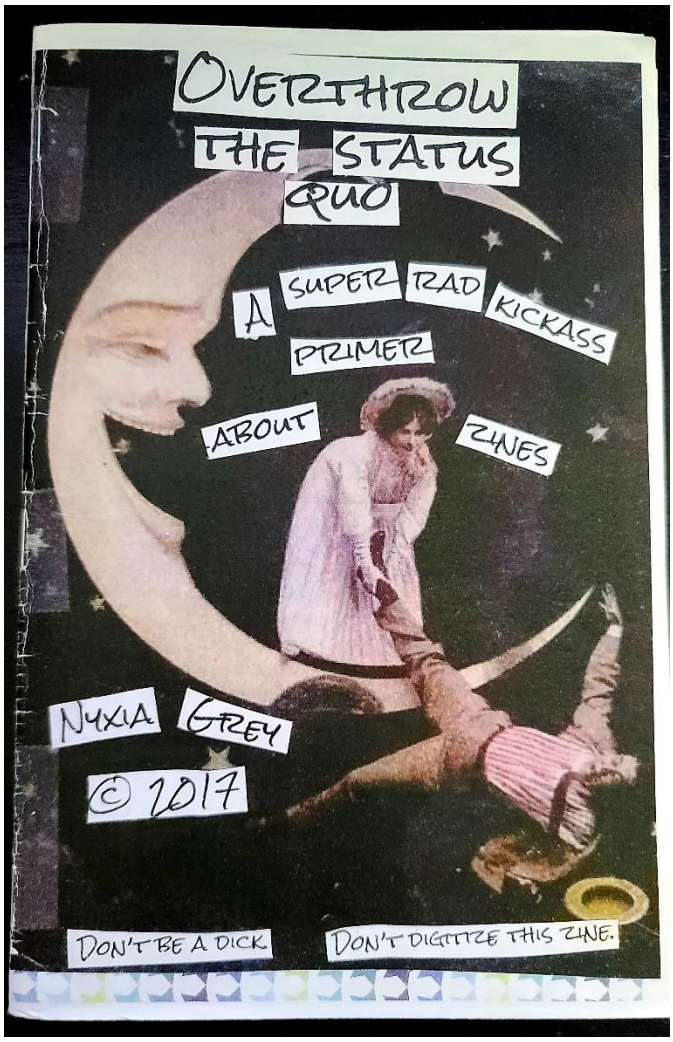


Fig. 8. Cover of Overthrow the Status Quo*, 2017*

The scotch tape that was holding the pages together can be seen in the xeroxed zine, furthering the DIY tenants of radical feminism. Nyxia Grey, the creator, explains:

> We somehow convince ourselves that in order to create something, it must be perfect otherwise there is no reason to be creating it in the first place. We become

> scared of our true thoughts and feelings and cannot fathom exposing our sacred selves to blank pages and strangers. Where did we learn this from? I suspect it is wrapped up in all the patriarchal bullshit that we are force fed our whole lives. But I'm here to tell you that this bullshit can and is overcome through the process of making zines.

Here, Grey promotes the crafty, DIY-nature of zine culture, which allows women to be imperfect. The end goal is not perfection, but is more about finding a voice, and through that voice, finding an audience that then becomes a community. Zine-making is community-building. Grey blames the patriarchy for encouraging women to believe that they should strive for perfection in all areas. "Perfection" itself is, of course, subjective, and Grey believes that by making zines and forgetting about this idea of being perfect, girls and women can make their own mark in their own way. Biel explains, "Each issue is an original, limited edition piece of art. These zine makers have reclaimed the means of production--in every way--writing, designing, printing, distributing, and financing" (18). Young women are DIYing their way through every part of zine production and distribution. Many of these girls knew nothing of, for example, printing or distribution. They learned from each other and they figured out ways to trick the system (even if "the system" is just their parents) and get their zines into the hands of like-minded readers.

Zinesters create new ways of communication, through both the medium and the new ways of languaging. As is seen in the cutting and pasting of words and images, feminists are bridging the gap between visual and literary, between high-brow and low-brow. They are taking language and images that are not their own, but claiming ownership of it by re-making it. Looking through third-wave zines, it is clear that DIY

literacies are presenting living language as well; you can almost feel the pages breathing. The connections between zines and Anzaldua's borderlands is further discussed in Adela C. Licona's article "(B)orderlands' Rhetorics and Representations: The Transformative Potential of Feminist Third-Space Scholarship and Zines." This article explains the connections between academic discourse and zines (or, non-academic discourse). Licona uses Gloria Anzaldua's notion of borderland rhetoric to address the borderland identities (both/and, neither/nor) of feminists and other minorities. The author explains that both academic and non-academic discourses employ versions of feminist rhetoric that is beyond dichotomy; it is contradictory. This is the result of borderland existence of feminists, and the space that they create for themselves, outside of the dominant culture. Zines are those spaces outside of the mainstream, where zinesters are "doing it themselves" to create a third space where they can identify and practice their borderland identities. Licona uses the term "(b)orderlands' rhetorics" to define the language structures that take place in third spaces that I introduced earlier in this chapter, which are defined by "ambiguity and even contradiction" (105). Borderland subjects represent the both/and rather than the either/or, according to Licona. That is, rather than being firmly on one side or the other, the borderland people, feminist zinesters in this case, take and perform aspects and traits from both sides. They are non-binary and non-conformative. Their writing is informed by both the mainstream and the marginalized, and they package it in such a way that it becomes both palatable and understandable, veiled in personal and lived experiences.

An explicit example of DIY at work is the second issue of *My Life and My Sex Thrive in the J. Crew Catalogue* by Leora Wein (Fig. 8).

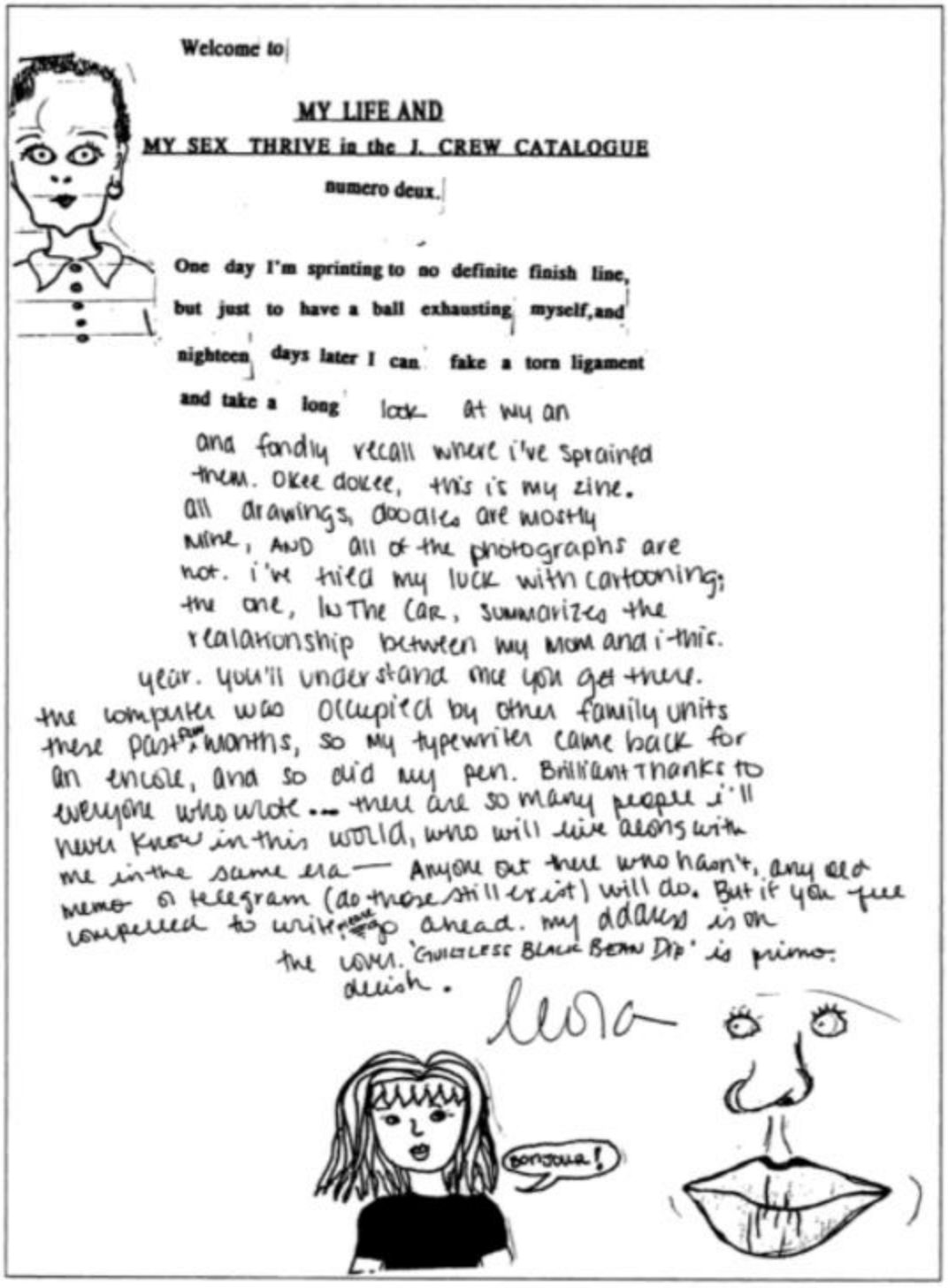


Fig. 9. My Life and My Sex Thrive in the J. Crew Catalogue *by Leora Wein*

The first page typed out on a typewriter. and then she switches to a pen half-way through a sentence: “the computer was occupied by other family units these past few months, so my typewriter came back for an encore, and so did my pen” (Wein 82). Immediately apparent is the DIY jumble of methods and techniques: computer, typewriter, pen. But also here is evidence of both the youthfulness and drive of these zinesters. They are very much constructing these zines in their bedrooms, or in the family computer room, using a shared computer. Despite not being able to get a sufficient amount of computer time that month, Wein quickly changes course and uses other means by which to get her feelings out on paper and in the hands of like-minded readers. Here, too, we see an example of third-wave zinesters disregard for copyright and attribution. Wein writes, “all drawings, doodles are mostly mine, and all of the photographs are not” (Wein 82). That’s as much credit as she gives to other people, and it’s as much as she lets her readers know about what she personally drew and what she did not. Because it does not matter. There was no need for attribution or any copyright consideration because neither the authors nor the readers cared; and furthermore, *no one* who cared about these things would ever see this zine. It was understood that these zines would forever live in the margins of society and outside of a world that cares about copyright. Thus, a patchwork of content, mediums, and techniques fueled the DIY movement.

Yet another tenant of DIY seen in figure 8 is that of an amalgamation of topics, from the serious to the perceived frivolous. Wein writes, “Brilliant Thanks to everyone who wrote … there are so many people i’ll never know in this world, who will live along with me in the same era” (Wein 82) and in the very next sentence, she writes,

"'GUILTLESS BLACK BEAN DIP' is primo," in a stream-of-consciousness mash-up that is produced unapologetically and consumed at face value. The series sentiment that there are friends out in the world whom Wein will never meet, but who "live along with me in the same era" and who share so many commonalities, is immediately offset by a rave review of a bean dip that she must have ate earlier -- or is perhaps currently eating. These are the lived experiences that we are talking about.

Collaging is one such technique that zinesters use in their DIY endeavors. Images, words, and topics are pasted and patchworked together to create a sort of mind map of lived experience. In their book *Girls Guide to Taking Over the World: Writings From The Girl Zine Revolution*, Tristan Taormino and Karen Green explain that "[a] big part of the thrill in making zines is the manual work it takes to put them together. Most zine makers put a lot of effort into paste-up and often zines are full of collage-art. And from the many stickered, starred and sparkle-covered letters we received, we'd say these girls enjoy the physical labor. From our experience, this labor can be cathartic as well as inspiring" (xix). Interestingly, the love labor that goes into zine making is just as cathartic for these young women as producing the content. The reasons for this are multifold, I'm sure, but the act of crafting hearkens back once again to the idea of the "girly." Perhaps it is because mainstream society tells young women that crafting and collaging is girly and dainty, and perhaps because these girls have been told by society that it is not something *women* would do, that the very act of cutting and pasting and gluing and collaging seems revolutionary. That is, the very medium of collaging is appropriated by these young girls as a form of rebellion. As a result, we see zines that are "hand-made on specialty paper or brown grocery bags, bound with twine, hand or machine sewn bindings, fastened with

metal brads, rubber bands or duct tape, adorned with stickers, glitter, photographs, or rubber stamps, and covers lovingly silkscreened by hand or printed by Gocco, a japanese toy that creates a handy way to put ink onto paper at home" (Biel 18). Often, these zines have more in common with art than with magazines. Girls spend hours and weeks and months writing and decorating these individual pieces of art that would never be available in mainstream society, particularly because of the very small economic margins. Many times, much more money was put *into* zine production than ever came out of it.

Consequently, feminism itself is a DIY process. Zinesters are DIYing the means of expressing their feminism, even if they are not aware of it, and as a result, feminism itself becomes patchworked together. Just as in second-wave pamphlets, third-wave zines rely very much on community participation, and when that happens, it is not only one person's thoughts and ideas being pasted together, but those of an entire community of young women. This community of young women creates a sort of clubhouse that promotes inclusion, discussion, and meaning making.

Clubhouse

One of the most significant aspects of the DIY ethos and education that zines manifest if their creation of a (metaphorical) welcoming, homemade space that provides an alternative to the patriarchal structure. Licona calls it a "third space," but I argue that "clubhouse" is a better metaphor for this rhetoric. By using the word "clubhouse," I am once again stealing the language of the patriarchy and appropriating it within the context of third-wave feminism. Within this clubhouse, women are participating in knowledge

construction and meaning making, which strengthens the feminist and DIY ideologies. Helmbrecht and Love wrote of *Bitch* and *BUST* that they "assume their readers have a working knowledge of traditional feminist principles and share common concerns, such as reproductive rights, equal pay, and equal access," but this is true of many feminist zines (154). Since they are writing to their own community -- to themselves, essentially -- they build an ethos by assuming that readers are on the same page about feminism and also those major issues that define third-wave feminism, such as reproductive rights. Helmbrecht and Love go on, though, to say that "the zines also make concerted efforts to account for multiplicity, or the relationship among race, class, gender, sexuality, and global cultures, and seek to teach readers to see the world through a similar lens" (154). As I previously discussed, some zines, of course, "account for multiplicity" better than others, but there is certainly an overarching drive towards intersectionality in the third-wave in general, and in the zine movement specifically. Zinesters effectively balance a general assumption of understanding regarding feminism with a specific awareness of multiplicity and multiculturalism.

Zines create a "place" for young women to be, outside of the patriarchy. It is a metaphorical meeting place. In her article "Sticking it to the Powers That Be," Ariel Fox writes about her experience with zines: "As I read those zines and corresponded with their creators, I became part of an underground community. These zinesters spoke their minds and knew that girls could be as powerful and shouldn't have to put up with standing in the back at shows, getting harassed when they walked down the street, or being told to lose weight" (80). Fox felt interpolated into the underground zine scene through both correspondence and an appreciation of the content. By empowering their

readers, zinesters effectively created an underground community that worked in reciprocal ways, and these zines played "an important factor in combating the silence around issues which are pertinent to women's existences" (Morrow 138). The silence surrounding these issues can be credited to the major glossy magazines that skirt around major women issues and mainstream society in general. But these zine authors do not hold back, and they are not afraid to discuss issues that would otherwise be considered taboo. For example: religion ["I think that many religions are based on the concept of controlling their followers. It is important to many people to be spiritual in their own way, be it through a major religion or their own personal system of beliefs" (Collette 157)], homosexuality [as in a personal story in zine in which a girl is 'seduced' by a female classmate, and then the school turns on her and not the other girl (Nelson 18)], and even the refugee crisis ["Fluent in six languages, including French, English, Swahili and Tshiluba, Maika was educated in Belgium and Zaire, and earned her Master's degree with a scholarship from the Canadian government. Before immigrating to America four years ago, she managed import and export for an oil company in Zaire. … But it took Maika two years of sending out job applications and faxing hundreds of resumes to find a job in California" (Barack 53)]. Topics like these, and so many more, enable young women to have open discussions about things that society has told them are off-limits, especially to girls, who are taught to *not* have minds of their own. Consequently, the community grows stronger and closer and more educated together.

It is not just worldly issues that create a community, though. By elevating the everyday and prioritizing lived experiences, and by finding validity in the personal, readers themselves feel validated. In many instances, zinesters are giving voice to the

very things that readers are trying to say. In an issue of *KUSP*, Sara Marcus posts a reproduction of a page from her high school yearbook, with the eyes of the students crossed out.

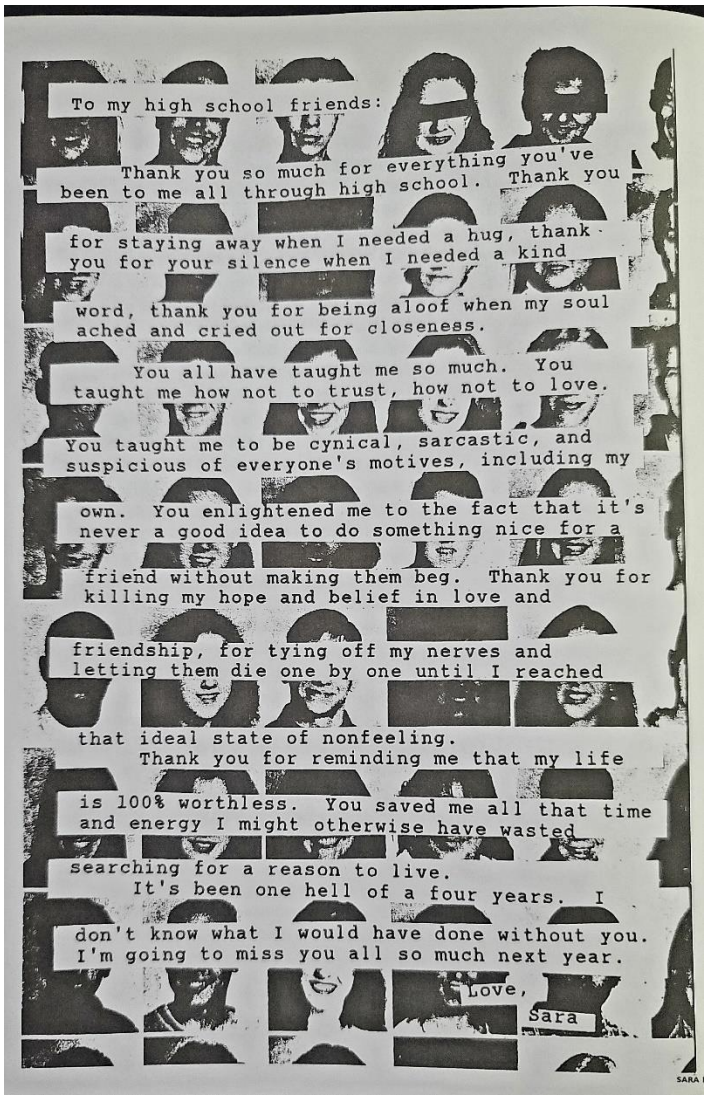


Fig. 10. KUSP*, by Sara Marcus*

This alone is something that many teenagers (at least at that time) can relate to, vandalizing yearbooks (yearbooks themselves an enactment of bedroom literacies), but Marcus then types out, cuts up, and pastes a letter over that page. The letter is written “To

my high school friends" and thanks them "for staying away when I needed a hug, thank you for your silence when I needed a kind word, thank you for being aloof when my soul ached and cried out for closeness." She goes on to write about how she learned "how not to trust, how not to love," "to be cynical, sarcastic, and suspicious," and was reminded that her "life is 100% worthless" (Marcus, qtd. in Green and Taormino 76). Marcus expresses her own lived experiences, and we can imagine girls reading this and nodding their heads. Zines, for young women like Marcus, were outlets for emotions that would otherwise be left unexpressed. Authors' personal, private experiences are rendered "public" without preaching or being patronizing. They simply create a place where some people might identify and heal.

Thus, zinesters are not just working outside of academia, but outside of the patriarchy itself. Orr writes, "The importance and intrigue of these publications are found in their overtly declared dissatisfaction with mainstream representations of girls and women" (Orr 38). As I discussed in the introduction to this chapter, the reclamation of "girl" and "girlhood" allowed zinesters to redefine what it means to be a female within the patriarchy. Authors and readers eschewed mainstream understanding of what girlhood should look like, and instead made "girly" synonymous with "powerful" within the pages of their zines. This empowerment of women was seen in second-wave pamphlets, too, and it's important to note that it does not stop when the zine stops. Readers are left feeling worthy and meaningful, and that is when real change can come about. In her book *Making a Zine*, Biel outlines general rules and helpful information for aspiring zinesters. Among these tips are: "No one needs to approve your ideas as 'good enough.' The very fact that they are your ideas make them worthy of sharing with your peers" (17)

and “Write in the voice that comes naturally to you rather than the one that you think is ‘correct’” (60). This serves as a reminder that zine-writing is not about academic discourses and perfect grammar. Rather, zinesters are encouraged to write *what* they know and *how* they know. Biel explains that “[w]ithout gatekeepers, zines allow their creators to be as authentic, expressive, and weird as they desire” (17). It is this authenticity that creates an ethos among readers and writers. In "Designing a Space for Thoughtful Voices: Aligning the Ethos of Zines with Youth-Driven Philosophical Inquiry,” Fletcher writes, “Zines can be deemed revolutionary as a communication tool in the sense that they have enabled ordinary people to carve out a space to voice their ideas, concerns and convictions within a cultural, political and media landscape that largely fails to represent their lived reality” (58). The emphasis on lived reality in feminist zines is what allows the elevation and empowerment of the individual. Zines essentially say that wherever you are in life, education, or understanding, that is worthy and meaningful, and, furthermore, it is enough to deserve to be seen and heard. Licona goes on to explain that these lived experience allow “[t]hird-space subjects [to] (perpetually) slip and slide across both sides of a border to a third space, between the authentic and the inauthentic, the legitimate and the illegitimate, the pure and the impure, and the proper and the improper. The point of the theoretical undertakings in third-space sites is to uncover Other ways of being, and of knowing, in order to make meaning of the everyday” (106). Zinesters are allowed and encouraged to make meaning of the everyday by placing *value* on the everyday, and the readers further perpetuate that value. This is wholly outside of the previous understanding of what meaningful discourse can and should look like.

And community building can even lead to something outside of the zine itself. As we saw second-wave pamphlets advertising meet-ups and conferences, so, too, did third-wave zines (to a lesser extent, though, since these girls are generally younger). For example:

> A couple years ago, my friend Andrea and I put together a zine called See No, Hear No, Speak No. Our goal was to open up the discussion about abuse and consent in our community and among our friends, to get people talking and questioning all the sometimes-subtle ways abuse happens. We made copies and passed it out to everyone we knew -- and plenty we didn't know, too. We scheduled a workshop/discussion about consent that would take place one week after the zine came out. We met with educators from the rape crisis center and asked them to help facilitate the workshop. (Crabb 196)

Since smaller zines are typically handed out to readers, these women would likely be in geographical proximity to one another. And by creating a community around a specific taboo topic, the zinesters can move the community outside of the page and into a room, where women can then speak about this taboo topic that was otherwise unable to be verbalized, most likely. In this way, among others, community building in the feminist zine world enacts real change and healing.

While second-wave pamphlet authors were generally white women, despite some efforts towards inclusivity, third-wave zine authors were a bit more diverse. It still stood that many authors were white and middle-to-upper class, since discretionary time and some money is always a starting necessity for alternative publications, but there was racial and class diversity to be found, because despite their origins, zines have inspired a

kind of clubhouse inclusivity that mainstream structures have not. This is partly because not *much* time or money was needed, depending on the specific goals of the zine author, and also partly because girls of color found an easy way to include themselves in the zine scene if they felt under- or mis-represented: make your own zine. *Bamboo Girl*, first published in 1995, is credited as the first feminist zine by a minority woman, Sabrina Sandata. Sandata has said:

> I think the coolest thing about it is that I've met so many girls like me who are also ethnic mutts who have felt silenced, who feel like they have a place to air their issues in a really direct, 'don't fuck with me' kind way. And also, this is a very big also, to break the racial/ethnic/homophobic stereotypes that even I believed to a certain extent, even though I clearly knew what I was--a queer mutt. (Sandata 98)

She admits that even she bought into the stereotypes that society had created for people who identity like her, and it was not until she created her zine that she realized just how silenced she was. Her zine was one of the first to celebrate minority girls in the zine world (Fig. 10).

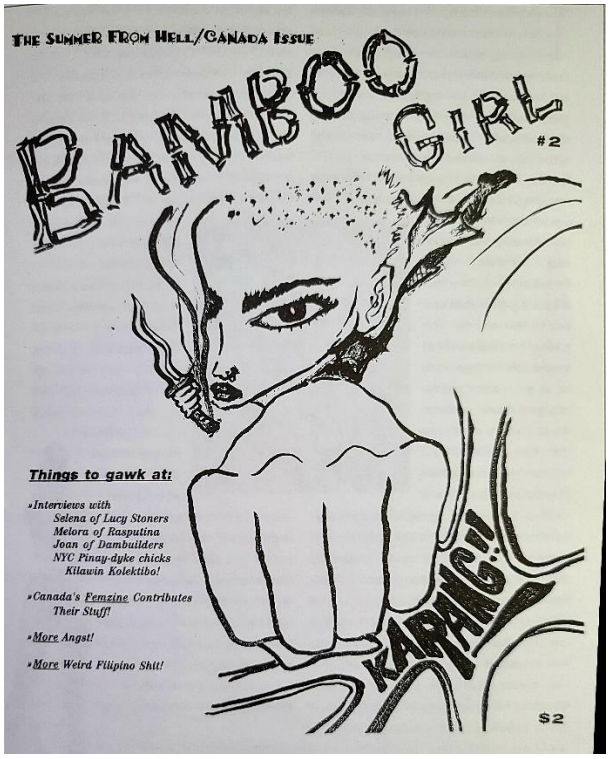


Fig. 11. Bamboo Girl *by Sabrina Sandata*

On the cover of the issue above, she advertises "More Weird Filipino Shit!" and includes interviews with other zinesters-of-color. Through *Bamboo Girl*, Sandata was able to reach girls like her and also to break stereotypes and redefine what it means to be like her, a self-defined "queer mutt." She even attempts to compile similar narratives in book form. An early ad reads:

> The creator of *Bamboo Girl* (a zine by/for/but not exclusively to feisty young women of color within the hardcore/punk community) is inviting young women of color to make their mark in breaking Racist, Sexist, Homophobic, & Ethnic stereotypes by submitting their non-fictional essays for a book she will contribute to, compile, and edit, entitled *Raw Like Sushi: An In-Your-Face Collection on Identity By Young Women Of Color*. (Sandata 134)

The book does not seem to have been made, but we must first commend the attempt at inclusivity in a world that does not celebrate it, both mainstream culture but also, to some degree, the feminist zine scene in general. What Sandata realized is that if she can find a way to change the way she sees herself and attempt to change the way that people see her, too, she can use her platform to encourage other girls to do the same.

In the second issue of *Bikini Kill*, the authors articulate this idea in the underground, alternative way of zinesters. They write:

> . . . i have come to the conclusion that we are banging our heads against a big wall. We are trying to find that magic word that will change their minds, make them see. we are trying to fit thru the doors of a clubhouse that is smelly and gross inside anyways. . . we only want in cuz we've been taught to want in . . . we change ourselves to fit, alter what we say, how we say it, just hoping, hoping they will change their rules. . . and all the while the clubhouses we could be building are going unbuilt and us girls are knocking one by one, on a door that will never ever open. (qtd. in Hanna and Fateman 130)

One can see the differences in how Jacobus and Anzaldúa express this idea, in comparison to the writers of *Bikini Kill*. But it remains the same idea. The zinesters say that women try to change themselves to fit into the hegemony because they do not know anything else. They do not know any better. We take what we are taught, and we hope for a better future while doing nothing to change it. They go on to say that instead, women should be building their own "clubhouses," their own spaces, rather than trying to fit into one that does not want or respect us. Thus, women should stop trying to fight the

patriarchy from within, with its literacy and its discourses, and instead work from without, from the margins, in their own spaces that are welcoming and understanding.

More recently, research and praxis are being done around incorporate zines into college classrooms and managing zine collections in libraries, which is a small step towards acknowledging the value of these virtual, feminist clubhouses that existed only outside of the patriarchy or any sort of hegemonic establishment. The largest collection of zines in an American academy library is at Barnard College in New York City. Over 3,000 feminist zines are housed there. The curator, Jenna Freedman, writes in "Grrrl Zines in the Library," "Zine writers, especially those coming out of the riot grrrl movement … question, explore, lecture, and rant with not only a broad spectrum of opinions but also a shared openness and authenticity" (53). Freedman writes about her push to have these feminist zines archived and recorded in CLIO, the online catalogue shared between Barnard and Columbia. The example that Freedman gives is that people can now search for "fat" and "women" and "health," now brings up fat-positive zines such as *Figure 8* in addition to the academic articles that tend to be fat-negative. As a result of canonizing zines in the academic world, women and men alike are given access to a wider net of people and opinions. Zines like *Figure 8* are placed in CLIO among more "academic" and "canonical" texts, and the hope is that more and more academic libraries and people will recognize the merit, authenticity, validity, and importance of the rhetoric being done in zines. Zinesters "have challenged not only the gendered hierarchies of alternative writing cultures, but also the exclusionary sites and practices of mainstream authorship" (Comstock 385). They have paved the way and made history

two-fold: first by creating meaningful media outside of the mainstream, but also by doing so while being female.

4 // Moving to the Digital Space: E-Zines, Blogs, Twitter, and DIY Feminism

Throughout the chapter I acknowledge corporate restrictions of feminist digital writing (from male-biased social media engineering and censorship), but depart from Audre Lorde's warning that the master's tools with never dismantle the master's house. As this dissertation argues, women, even young women in their digital clubhouses, have been dismantling it all along. In this chapter, I examine the shift from paper zines to digital blogs, e-zines, and forums. Most significantly, blogs and e-zines continue to develop the "clubhouse" rhetoric I have traced in zines of the 80s and 90s. Whereas earlier zines required scissors, glue, photocopies, and some sort of distribution abilities, blogs and e-zines require a keyboard, an internet connection, and (sometimes) software. As with traditional zines, the e-zine "clubhouse" is both a metaphor for backyard collaboration and experimentation, but also a "real" materialization of a digital place to meet and talk in near real-time that paper zines could only emulate. Although I acknowledge several material and corporate limitations and shortcomings of these modes of expression, on the whole, they illustrate a massive popularization of women's feminist agency and political voice, should they wish to express it in those ways. As with zines, the DIY feminism that these blogs manifest is significant for both its connection to youth culture and plurality. Even more than paper zines, DIY feminist e-zines and forums are constellations of accessible, activity-based practices of feminist expression notable for their provisionality, collaboration, life-in-the-moment, and fun. Working in tandem with more academically-based feminist philosophy but not (always) restricted by dogma, DIY

feminist e-zines are both an educational and *participatory* venue for feminism of the current century. In this chapter I trace the emergence of a "cyber" ethos to feminism in the aftermath of Donna Haraway's anti-essentialist manifesto and its effects on feminist digital writing, which often takes the form of a more playful, accessible feminism that has changed from the seriousness of the feminism of our foremothers from the second-wave. What defines this digital feminism is its connection to youth culture that makes it more understandable and popular, its multiplicity and participatory nature that leads to the creation of both a metaphorical and a real clubhouse, and a greater awareness of personal differences that lends itself to even more inclusive feminisms.

The New Media

Zines marked a crucial turning point for feminist agency, as women and girls shifted the educational and participatory elements of a feminism from older, traditionally-published academic voices to younger authors who themselves are able to express and propagate the ideas that interest them. Blogs and e-zines make that transition even more pointedly, as what is considered radical feminist media becomes even more popularized and accessible to females of all ages. Although the youth of its authors is not a necessary requirement of this literature, its breadth, its connection to youth culture, and its playfulness is what allows e-zining and blogging feminists to build and experiment for the moment, not philosophizing for the ages. Though that building and experimenting does allow for an identity construction that would likely not be taking place within the mainstream. And taking a lesson from the youth culture from which this literature often springs, I argue that women's zines and blogs often (but not always) embody a kind of "clubhouse" rhetoric of expressive practices, experimentation, and play. The multiplicity

of these experiments and venues (which, admittedly, are not always feminist in the ways our second-wave foremothers might want) perhaps captures its greatest political potential for future feminisms. These new media outlets illustrate the agency of younger generations to share and make their own philosophies, rather than simply read about them in college from a distance. In this way, girls are already familiar with feminism in general and feminist principles specifically years before society introduces it to them, in a general and obtuse fashion.

In late September of 1997, the First Cyberfeminism International (FCI) conference was held in Kassel, Germany, where women came together for the first time to discuss the relationship between digital technology and feminism. According to Anna Everett in her article "On Cyberfeminism and Cyberwomanism: High-Tech Mediations of Feminism's Discontents," "The FCI at Kassel was notable for its apparent redeployment of second-wave feminism's consciousness-raising encounters, which were repurposed for the contemporary realities of 'wired woman'" (1280). The consciousness-raising circles of second-wave feminism are reimagined in the digital world, as women can "meet" at any time, across countries, time zones, and generations, creating a more nuanced network of feminism. Everett likens this to the consciousness-raising circles of the second-wave, but it is also reminiscent of the network of feminist zines in the third-wave. Participants in the FCI "argued for creating a cyberfeminist search engine to link feminist Web sites across the globe" (Everett 1281). But a search of "cyberfeminist search engine" on Google today only brings up this article itself, a reminder, perhaps, of the work yet to be done. While digital wave feminists have access to a platform, they

continue to work with the master's tools to mold the platform to their agenda and attempt to create a clubhouse for women and girls to learn and connect.

Part of the work of this dissertation is to work out some of the ways that the Age of the Internet has brought about new and exciting ways for girls to enact and practice feminism. Digital literacy is more accessible and more relatable for young women coming of age today. It offers a way that even lower-educated, or non-educated, women can get involved. Just as girls, grrls, and zines were considering or making the transition from paper to web in 1998, Aliza Sherman, of cybergrrl.com, wrote a book called *A Woman's Guide to the World Wide Web*, explaining how girls can make the most of the internet. The first chapter is titled simply, "What is the Internet?" but by chapters 17, 19, and 20, she gets into topics such as "Wired Businesswomen," "Educators and Activists," and "Women Doing Research," respectively. Sherman lists websites throughout, for and by girls and women, including feminist websites such as feminist.com and now.org, but also what she calls "Online Publications" (zines), such as gurl.com, maximag.com, and nrrdgrrl.com.

Digital wave feminists are moving away from doctrinaire feminists of the second-wave toward a more open-ended view of how expression online may have a feminist value. For example, the short-hand of Internet writing, and the popularity of simply re-tweeting what other people say allows women to have a voice without needing to have proper grammar and language. Proper grammar and syntax are not privileged in Internet culture, especially when you only have 280 characters to make a point. The new media, while limited in terms of accessibility, required less physical labor and less money, once Internet service was procured. Digital wave feminists have created discourses and venues

that manifest many aspects of Donna Haraway's "cyborg." Haraway famously writes about the cyborg, a half-human, half-machine that emerges with the Internet, as the line blurs between organic and inorganic. To Haraway, "A cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction" (174). The radical feminist, though, has always been a cyborg: part real, part fiction. We saw the second-wave pamphlet-writing feminists as well as the third-wave zinesters work in that third space to create meaning and practice identity formation and enact grassroots activism in much the same way that digital-wave feminists work in the third space of the Internet. The creation of something that did not previously exist, using the tools of the master, defines the cyborg, as she deconstructs and reconstructs media but also ideologies and feminism and social constructs. Haraway explains that cybernetics is, and has always been, a "border war," reminiscent of Anzaldúa's margins. "The stakes in the border war have been the territories of production, reproduction, and imagination" (174). Production, reproduction, and imagination: that is what the cyborg, the radical feminist, is fighting for in this digital wave of feminism. She goes on to say that "[l]iberation rests on the construction of the consciousness, the imaginative apprehension, of oppression, and so of possibility" (174). Women are liberated through digital feminism when they apprehend their understanding of oppression and create new possibilities for freedom. The Internet is that never-ending, forever discursive, third space where possibilities lie for women to work on the production and reproduction of feminist thought. The "cyborg myth" that Haraway writes of "is about transgressed boundaries, potent fusions, and dangerous possibilities which progressive people might explore as one part of needed political work" (178). These "potent fusions" have already been taking

place in marginal feminist media, such as pamphlets and zines. Women have already been coming together to create meaning and understanding. Thus, another cyborg is created: "cyborg writing," which consists of multiple points of view and a blurred line of authorship. It is "about the power to survive, not on the basis of original innocence, but on the basis of seizing the tools to mark the world that marked them as other" (198). Radical feminist have been "seizing the tools" of the mainstream patriarchy and using them to rewrite history. The Internet, though, further speeds up this process, and there is power in the efficiency and the distribution. Orr writes that "cyberspace is a forum that has, theoretically, more than enough room for everyone. The playing field between producer and consumer is significantly more level than, say, in television, film, or even popular music" (Orr 40). As in both pamphlets and zines, we once again see the ambling relationship between writer and reader, particularly made possible through comments and links.

Women used to be considered as representatives in two different realms: personal and political, home and work, etc. Now, though, because the boundaries are becoming increasingly blurred, Haraway explains that women are seen more as a network with "permeability of boundaries" (528). The more women take on, the more they tend to code-switch between realms, the more they are forced to network. This lends itself well to Internet culture, which requires us to network, both literally and figuratively. Cyberfeminists, these cyborg women, are accustomed to the networking that is required of them because it is something that they have been doing for centuries. The permeable boundaries of real life and the Internet become just another boundary type that women work through. The intersectional of the real and the ideal is realized in the online space --

where women can both sympathize, commiserate, and discuss their oppression and marginalization, but also mobilize in ways of protest, physical and technological, that might insight change, and, furthermore, can enact and rule in spaces that are female-centric. We were/are conditioned to believe that man is equal to human; thus, *not man* is equal to *not human*. In her book *The Posthuman*, Rosi Braidotti writes about the de-centering of "man," which was previously the measure of all things, as an effect of the rise of the Internet. Anything "other" than man, or "other man," is lacking humanity -- women, specifically, are lacking humanity. Braidoitti exposes man as a sociohistorical construct, which eventually leads to the conclusion that humanism itself is not real. Foucault's idea of the "death of the author," forty years earlier, precluded the notion of a third objectivity, outside of the socially-constructed binaries. Technology such as the Internet is what truly realizes de-humanism.

Alternative feminist medias are simply a contemporary manifestation of the "augmentation" to humankind that media revolutions have been accomplishing for many generations. For this reason, among others, these alternative media are worthy of scholarship and serious canonical consideration. To this point, in her article "It's a gURL Thing," Michele Polak writes:

> I have found that personal web sites fall into the position of combining both the pop culture and contemporary content interests of commercial web sites and the empowerment messages created by institutional web sites. Here is where gURLs [...] are finding a girl-focused netspace free from product promotion and censors with a guaranteed space for their voice and space for creating identity. (83)

While the phrase "free from product promotion and censors" is problematic, as I will later discuss, there is certainly the sense of being outside of man/society/sexism if and when these girls are creating their own spaces and performing their preferred identity. These third spaces allow people to better experiment with identities or ways of understanding. Discursive spaces such as blogs and social media allow women to have a different type of representation. That is, they can present themselves differently than they do in the mainstream. Many early digital feminists appropriated the world "girl," as we saw the zinesters do in the third-wave. In this case, rather than the "grrrl" spelling, it changes to gURL, and "many gURLs wear that title with pride, using it to create links to their biographies, such as with 'the girl most likely' or simply, 'The Girl'" (Polak 187). "Girl" is redefined and reappropriated as a term of empowerment once again, and digital feminists use it often to define themselves.

The action of appropriation and redefinition is one way that women can regain agency from the patriarchy and find a voice of their own. Betty McLellan writes about the silencing of radical feminists throughout American history. She advises, "The task radical feminists have set for themselves in the twenty-first century is to be alert to the tactics of silencing and commit to speaking through the silencing with the deliberate aim of defying and disrupting those forces intent on violating, subordinating and excluding women" (McLellan 219). Twenty-first century feminism is about exposing the silencing techniques of the patriarchy and women finding their own voices by speaking through the silence to disrupt patriarchal forces. The internet is a prime location for this to happen, as space is unlimited and speech is largely free. McLellan concludes her book with a chapter about feminism in the 21st century and leans on virtual space theory to contextualize

feminist blogger activism: "[F]eminists of all ages are involving themselves in feminist email discussion lists. Some have designed and created websites devoted to feminist pursuits. Feminists are also making good use of the internet by presenting opinion pieces for publication online" (233-234). These women are finding spaces on the internet where they can create and consume feminist theory, albeit popularized feminist theory at times. It is about taking up space and finding like-minded women who can contribute to the creation of a political individual. McLellan sees alterative, fringe media as being a huge part of feminist agency, which is an insight I strongly agree with. However, she does not see the value of fringe yet, continuing to think in terms of "centrist" philosophy, as in her observations about digital activism. She writes:

> Activists of all ages—feminists, Indigenous women and men, dissidents in every area—have turned to virtual space because they have been systematically excluded from the mainstream media and other arenas controlled by the power elite. Such a situation must suit those in power because, if protests and criticisms can be contained in virtual space, dissidents will offer no challenge in the real world. (McLellan 234).

Here, she is missing an important part of virtual activism, which is the construction of personal agency which can lead to a politicized individual. And since digital feminist consumers and producers tend to be young, the internet is facilitating the construction of a political identity earlier than the mainstream.

Connection to Youth Culture

Feminists, especially those creating radical feminist media, are getting younger and younger, and academics often do not take youth culture and medias seriously. One example of a young feminist who made a name for herself in the digital realm is Tavi Gevinson, who started a style blog named *Style Rookie* at just 12 years old in 2010. *Style Rookie* became a full-blown feminist site in just a few years, as Gevinson shifted gears from street style to hard-hitting topics and interviewing interesting, feminist women such as Gloria Steinem, Iris Apfel, and Lena Dunham. Keller writes that Gevinson

> uses the opportunities afforded by digital media production to perform and circulate alternative girlhood subjectivities that draw on discourses of girl power articulated by riot grrrl, including those that incorporate feminism, friendship and politics as part of contemporary girlhood identities. ("Girl" 274)

Hearkening back to the Riot Grrrl movement that kick-started the feminist zine scene, Gevinson eschews typically "rules" of digital publication and chooses instead to celebrate her and others' eccentricities in a "significant deviation from the apolitical media for girls primarily created by adults" ("Girl" Keller 274). Third-wave zinesters were also attempting to create a media outside of "adult"/society's control, so this step to the digital realm for younger girls in the 20-aughts makes sense. They continue to find new ways to make meaning and connection. Rookie.com is intended for the same demographic as gURL.com, women in their teens and 20s, but the messages are vastly different. Notice here that Rookie.com does not have any photographs of women, but, rather, features art and illustrations by women. And no celebrities.

Today, Gevinson is in her 20s and is no longer blogging on thestylerookie.com. Rather, she uses Instagram to continue to promote social activism and girl power. Keller

notes that by "identifying publicly as a feminist Gevinson performs a political subjectivity, challenging hegemonic postfeminist discourses that suggest girls are apolitical and not interested in feminism, and creating discursive space for feminist politics within a postfeminist media culture" ("Girl" 278). For example, she posted consistently about voting information and the working class family platform leading up to the 2020 presidential election. She is a prime example of a cyberfeminist who uses her platform for feminist activism. Of course, this activism is practiced *through* a corporate platform (i.e., Instagram), which could be seen as antithetical to the feminist agenda in general, especially because Big Data harvesting is shaping our world, through the reading, labeling, categorizing, buying, and selling of all of the information that we offer up to the Internet. It could also be considered, though, as another example of using the master's tools to dismantle his house. For example, one of the most successful moments in hashtag feminism was the organization of the Women's March, which was organized solely on the Internet, primarily through a hashtag. In fact, *Ad Week* reported that while 12 million people tweeted the inauguration of Trump, 11.5 million tweeted the Women's March. Those are some impressive numbers. The March was demonstrated by over five million women and men worldwide, in over 400 cities, and it was all made possible by the Internet. Compare this, for example, to the 1970 women's march to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the right to vote. On that day, about 150,000 women marched in 90 cities. One can clearly see the impact of the Internet on large movements and demonstrations. This is one way that digital wave feminist activism for finds a home in the margins of the Internet: in the comments, the hashtags, the discursivity of link exchange. In her article "Making Activism Accessible: Exploring Girls' Blogs as Sites of Contemporary Feminist

Activism," Keller writes that "girls' marginalization from traditional places of activism - the public street, the voting booth, or the town hall, for example - has resulted in the creation by some girls of alternative spaces where they can perform activist identities and engage in projects of social change" (261). Of course, these smaller-scale occurrences of activism have been happening for decades before the dawn of the digital age. Women, but also all oppressed peoples, have been pushed to the margins and had to find a space to practice their activism when unwelcome from the "mainstream" oppressed. This took place in the pamphlets in the 1970s, zines in the 1990s, and blogs and social media today.

Blogs are centers of knowledge production and distribution where these feminists practice their activism. Keller quotes a college student in this article as asking "Where are all the millennial feminists?" ("Activism" 261) They are exactly in the same place that hundreds of women were before them - creating their own activist medias in the margin and re-defining what it means to be a feminism and an activist. For young feminists, blogs act as "a mediated space [in which] girls are actively *producing* as a way to participate in a contemporary feminism" ("Activism" 261). The lines between production and consumption again blurs, as these girls produce meaningful media that promotes feminist activism, rather than acting as passive consumers. Just as third-wave zinesters practiced bedroom activism, so, too, do digital wave girls "understand these practices as *accessible* activist strategies based upon their social positioning as *girls*" ("Activism" 262).

As discussed in the previous chapter, girls are limited in way they practice activism, confined by age and without real authority in their public lives. But the private life of Internet activism allows these girls to become political: something that their public

lives are decidedly missing, especially in mainstream culture. Much of this digital activism is done through education, which was a tactic in both second- and third-wave media producers and consumers. While these girls might not be able to protest on the streets, they can share information about sexism, classism, and racism. Keller goes on to explain that "[e]ducation, in this sense, is understood by bloggers as necessary for feminism social change and is best practiced through blogging and other online platforms" ("Activism" 267). This happens at a rapid pace, as bloggers include links to other sites, and as girls practice re-tweeting and re-posting, cycling information faster than ever before. Moreover, feminist bloggers are receiving questions from readers about feminism, and they have a direct line to their audience.

One blogger posted a reminder to readers to vote. While we cannot be sure of the effectiveness of this image to inspire women to get up and go vote, it still creates a sense of political agency. Keller warns against looking for tangible and quantifiable effects of these calls to activism taking place in the feminist blogosphere because it "ignores results like the production of feelings. That it is women and girls whose activism often involved this emotional labor is not a coincidence; it reveals the gendered way in which we often still talk about activism" ("Activism" 269). The gendered way she mentions here is that we still, as a society, measure activism by measurable results. But there is an emotional labor, a rethinking and reunderstanding and reorganizing of thoughts, that lives in the private, feminized realm, that is equally as effective as a form of activism because it is deep and it influences these girls every decision and movement throughout their lives -- not just one vote or one protest. "[G]irl bloggers describe how fostering a coalition of young feminist bloggers was viewed as activist, in part because it resists dominant

discourses of individualism, which are foundational to our neoliberal cultural context" (Keller "Activism" 269). In this way, girls are activists simply by being part of a coalition, which goes against how valued the individual is in our society. By banding together, even just in a small, digital, way, girls are participating in rebellion. They may be alone, behind the closed doors of their bedrooms, but they are also very much a part of an activist community through the Internet. In this way, "In this sense, community is less about bonds created through shared physical places and more about shared identities and political goals that coalesce through virtual spaces" (Keller "Activism" 270). We already saw these community centers, or virtual clubhouses, in both second- and third-wave feminism, and here again in the digital wave. These young women are traversing locales and making political connections across space.

Multiplicity and Participatory Nature

The participatory nature of digital feminism lends itself to a grassroots, DIY feeling. Not only are images and texts cut and pasted, but attitudes, opinions, and questions are collected from many different women, creating a collage of feminist thought and language. Comstock writes, "Internet authorship, more than mainstream print authorship, seems amenable to the DIY ethic of the print zine movement. Those privileged enough to have access to a computer, modem, Internet software, an e-mail account, and some Web design knowledge can publish online" (402). In the beginning of the digital wave, having a computer, modem, Internet access, email, and design knowledge might have been a big request, but more and more people have the opportunity to use computers and Internet today, with places like the library offering free computer and Internet access, and sites offering free emails. Moreover, digital feminists

today do not need to acquire knowledge of Web design when social media platforms such as Instagram and Pinterest are increasingly user-friendly.

Instagram and Pinterest also have an inherent collage-like layout, which is reminiscent of the cut-and-paste zines of the 1990s. The way that these social media sites allow users to present their photos act as a virtual collage, where users can present themselves as multi-faceted individuals, with varied interests. For example, here is a screenshot of Tavi Gevinson's Instagram (Fig. 11).

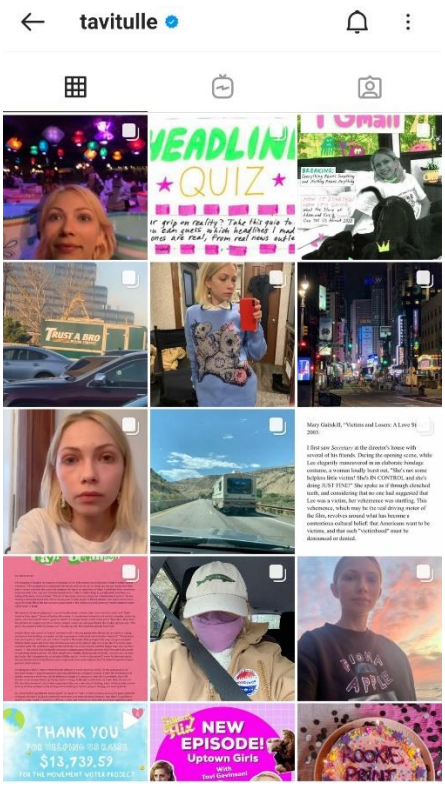


Fig. 12. Tavi Gevinson's Instagram grid, January 2021

In her grid (the layout of her Instagram posts), she includes un-edited, personal photos of herself, pictures of her e-zine that she is selling on Etsy, political posts, and the results of a charity fundraiser that she organized at the end of 2020. This pastiche of images, along

with their accompanying captions and hashtags, act as a virtual college, reminiscent of the pamphlets and zines of her foremothers.

Digital feminism gives women an outlet to voice their opinions on the Internet, even when they might not have that same opportunity in real life. An older example of this is Chickclick.com, which was created in 1998, as an umbrella site of twenty feminist zines that used to be published as paper copies. It folded about five years later, but in this image of the front page from December 1998, one can clearly identity its target audience. The subheading explains that it is for "girl sites that don't fake it," and those zine titles are listed in the header at the top as links that re-direct to each individual site.

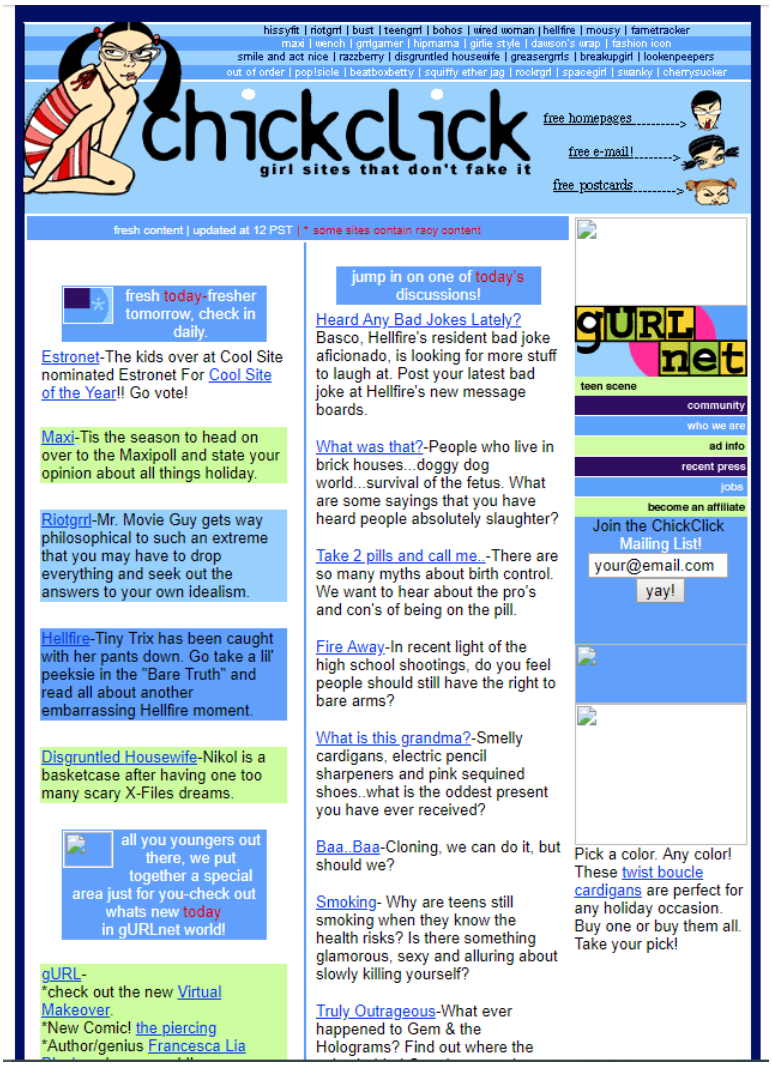


Fig. 13. Chickclick.com, December 1998

The frontpage highlights issues that are contemporary and important to digital wave feminists, including birth control, school shootings, smoking. However, the "girly" is once again present, as well. For example, the bottom right of the page links to a cardigan that is "perfect for any holiday occasion." The Wayback Machine makes it possible to trace the trajectory of a site throughout its run, and when going through the early history of Chickclick.com, one can see that the site quickly added "chickpages," which allowed women to create their own pages, with their own thoughts and opinions.

Fig. 14. Chick Pages

Anyone with an Internet connection has a voice that is believed to be valued enough that these websites are giving them a platform to express it. We continue to see this today, though social media sites like Twitter and Instagram, where consumers can shape the cultural environment, thus becoming a practical usage of theoretical feminism.

Yet another new "clubhouse" for readers is the comments section. Keller explains that "[t]he exchanges on the comment section … function as a significant example of intergenerational feminism, as teenage girls are actively participated in feminist conversation with women who have identified themselves as in their twenties, thirties, and forties; an experience which challenges the logic of 'disarticulation'" (Keller "Girl" 279). The comments section is where the authorship changes, and people of all ages can "meet" and discuss. Again, girls are able to practice their feminism here, engaging in often difficult conversations and shaping their opinions, or strengthening their conviction, as they continue the discourse. Faster and more immediate than the "reader letters" published in zines a decade before, the comment section provides an opportunity for anyone with a computer to participate in the conversation. Thus, even an article with a single author is not a static piece of media. Everything is a conversation.

Hyperlinking is an opportunity for digital feminists to create and support their communities. These girl and gURL sites include external links throughout, and

oftentimes a supplementary list in a sidebar, to direct readers to further reading: zines and blogs that they have swapped links with, sites of social activism, and even online stores that promote their sense of feminism -- often, sites like Delias.com that offer "Girl Power" t-shirts and rainbow and smiley face covered merchandise, further reinforcing the appropriation of "girly" things as a means of empowerment. Polak writes, "I have yet to find a gURL site that does not list links to other gURL and gURL-related web sites. Many of these web sites structurally support each other by sharing artwork or frames for design. It is common to see the same gURLs posting in various web sites within a webring" (185). These webrings are reminiscent of how feminist zinesters would promote each other in print-form, by offering names and addresses of other like-minded zines for readers to purchase or solicit. In his article "You Say You Want a Revolution? Hypertext and the Laws of Media," Stuart Moulthrop writes, "In hypertext systems, this ethos of connection is realized in technics: users do not passively rehearse or receive discourses, they explore and construct links" (697). The ethos of the author is not necessarily dependent on discourse; rather, it is through the exploration of the link trees that the author provides that strengthens her ethos. The more those links align with the brand of feminism generally agreed upon by the readership, the more reliable the author becomes. In their article "Learning about Feminism in Digital Spaces," Jessica McLean et. al. use the phrase "more-than-real" to describe digital spaces that allow an excess of discursive opportunities. This term works to "highlight the excesses of digital spaces: the effect that social media generates, and is generated by, characterises the more-than-real, where extremes in productive and corrosive relations can permeate." These digital confrontations are more-than-real because they represent a confluence of thoughts, ideas,

voices, and opinions that would not, and could not, exist in "reality," outside of the Internet, with the same immediacy and responsiveness. The discourse and discursive opportunities are "more-than-real," because they are inhuman. They do not take place in any real time; they move quickly back and forth across past and present, as girls network and mesh ideas and comments and stories.

This takes place, too, in social media. Hashtag feminism, for instance, allows people -- strangers -- to connect to each other and to create a community that reminds them that they are not alone. Rather than a physical space, hashtags create a virtual clubhouse, a virtual community, that allows people to take up an imaginary space of the Internet with other like-minded people. It goes without saying that these people would not have met before the Internet, or even if they had not used the same hashtag. For example, here is a screen grab of the trending hashtag #womenshistorymonth from Twitter and Instagram. Women can follow or use that hashtag to connect to other women internationally.

Another popular site of community-building among women are celebrity gossip sites, where gossip becomes a kind of 'third space,' or borderland, where women create an intimacy among each other by engaging in meaning-making conversation about a third party. In these conversations, women are able to consider how dominant culture portrays women. This is rooted in women's (and men's) tendency to gossip about people behind their backs. Yuval Noah Hararri writes about gossip in his book *Sapiens* and posits that it was when humans learned to gossip that our reign on Earth began. He writes, "Social cooperation is our key for survival and reproduction. It is not enough for individual men and women to know the whereabouts of lions and bisons. It's much more important for

them to know who in their band hates whom, who is sleeping with whom, who is honest and who is a cheat" (#). Harari considered gossiping as a form of "social cooperat"on" that builds trust. While it is judgmental, it is also a form of community building, linking the two gossiping parties in their own understanding of what is acceptable. The jump to celebrity gossip, then, makes sense. Women are able to continue negotiating their perceptions with that of the dominant culture in seemingly harmless ways, as celebrities increasingly become seen as 'public property.' The popularity of print gossip magazines is most obvious when looking at the surge in sales in the early 2000s. But by the end of that same decade, women began looking on the Internet more often for their dose of celebrity gossip. Blogs and websites have the added benefit of their immediacy, while print magazines have to wait a week or so to write about a "breaking news story" about a celebrity pregnancy, drug overdose, or award ceremony dress. Additionally, the online forum allows for more anonymous, and more frequent, gossip. The participants – the commenters – are joining together in a form of meaning-making where they try to make sense of their world by critiquing those whom we tend to hold to a higher standard for being in the public eye. What is even more interesting is what women are writing. While some women champion for the celebrities and explain that it is not their job to look good or to make us feel something, the majority of women simply further the patriarchal norms that are forced upon women daily. In this realm, women join in fat-bashing, bump-watching, and outfit-slamming conversations that seem to halt, or regress, the strides that feminists have made to prevent such a way of looking at women. It is a discursive space that puts up with many failures, and that's the key to its appeal. In this way, online gossip sites allow women to "work out" their own opinions on feminism, as a way of "test

driving" what they, themselves, believe to be true about women and the ways that women present themselves. While it is maybe easier to say something that you think you should say in person to someone in person, the anonymity of the comments section online is where women can say what they are really thinking. This demonstrates the idea of "talking out" or "thinking out" our own relationships to feminism, and because it seems so innocuous to judge celebrities, these online sites become think tanks for women to work out their own perceptions of women and feminism.

A Transient Platform

This is not to say, of course, that dominant power structures regarding gender construction in the world, regulated by media outlets, for example, are not present in large form in the digital space. Connie Morrison, in her article "Creating and Regulating Identity in Online Spaces," writes about the gender conformities that are still in place when girls are asked to create avatars of themselves in the digital world. Morrison explains "how even in an online world where girls have claimed a virtual space, the construction of personalized avatars and the girls' reflective comments about them serve as evidence of a greater understanding . . . of the power structures (still) residing within girlhood" (244-245). It is impossible to claim that dominant discourse has not had an effect on the digital lives of girls, just as it has an overwhelming effect on the analog lives of girls. One of the most famous early feminist site was gURL.com, which began in 1996 by friends Esther Drill and Rebecca Odes. But today, when you navigate to gURL.com, it redirects to seventeen.com. *Seventeen* magazine is one of the very magazines that third-wave zinesters were writing in opposition to, accusing it and others of being too

superficial, too commercial, and too corporate, among other things. The homepage today, in December 2020, is largely "gift lists" of things to buy for everyone on your Christmas list: "your coolest friend," "every college student," and "any BTS ARMY member" (BTS is a popular South Korean pop-singing group). The women featured are all thin and traditionally "pretty," which goes against the very essence of the original gURL.com, which highlighted women's art and used cartoons instead of real people. For instance, here is a screen capture of the website from December 1998:

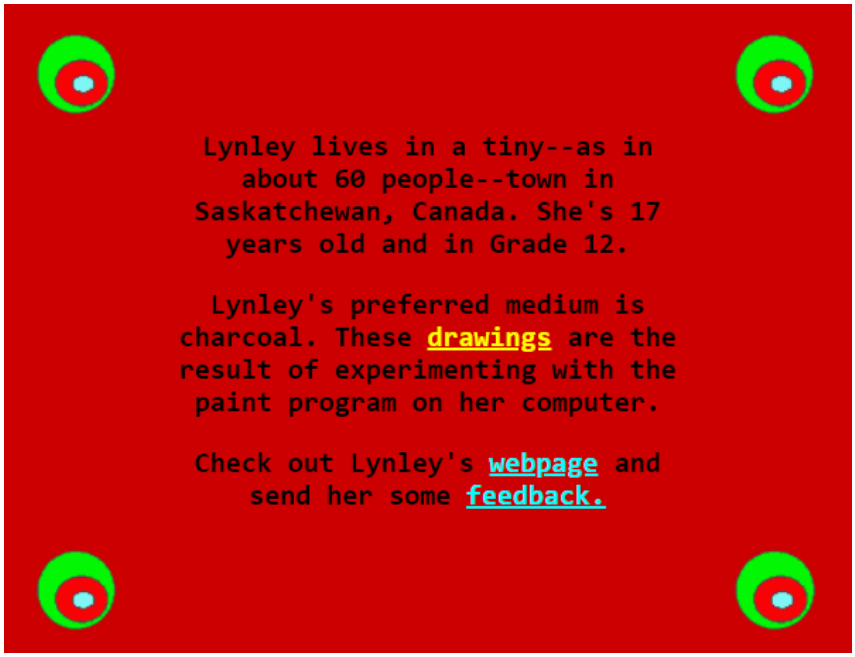


Fig. 15. gurl.com, December 1998

Notably, the girl being featured is 17 herself, but it is about her charcoal drawings and celebrating her talent. Another early incarnation of the zine, here from the year 2000, is familiar to any girl who grew up in the 90s. Girls are polled about whether or not tennis is boring, they can get a free email account, read about why they are stressed, and chat about things like birth control.

Fig. 16. gurl.com, 2000

In an interview with TheCut.com in 2014, the founders explained that they chose to never include photographs “because we wanted girls to be able to insert themselves and not compare themselves.” In contrast, the subheader of seventeen.com is “Cute Hairstyles, Celeb News, Fun Quizzes, Beauty Advice, and Teen Fashion.” In another article from 2014, Odes and Drill explain why they started the site: “‘We started an ongoing conversation about what we didn’t like about Seventeen magazine,” Drill says, “which I pretty much hated and could not stand to read, and which Rebecca had a more love/hate relationship with — hated and could not stop reading’” (TheCut). They started gURL.com to combat the very magazine that eventually bought them out, which is an explicit example of being “co-opted.” This is just one such example of more popular alternative feminist medias being corporatized. It shows how influential the mainstream is and how difficult it is to say no to things like money, when confronted with it, when we live in a culture that requires money to survive, and the more you have, the better. As

Comstock writes, “it is becoming increasingly difficult to discern who exactly sponsors or regulates these newly formed sites of critical literacy,” particularly when “disputes over the boundaries of grrrl text space continue and more e-zines editors are forced to post corporate banners and logos,” which typically occurs when using a free hosting site such as the original Geocities.com, which was since bought by Yahoo (399, 402). It is easy to romance the Internet into a bodiless, genderless space where everyone has equal opportunity, but that is simply not the case. To create a website or a blog, for example, one must use a corporate owned content management system, such as WordPress or Google Sites. Wilding explains that “[c]yberspace does not exist in a vacuum; it is intimately connected to numerous real-world institutions and systems that thrive on gender separation and hierarchy” (50). It is likely that many digital feminists are not concerned with, or aware of, their contribution to the corporate, consumer culture that drives the Internet, as they produce more content. On the other hand, it is yet another example of using the master’s tools to fulfill their own agenda. There are important, discursive movements in the digital realm that actively work to combat these interpolations of girlhood and femininity. An analysis of these places forces us, as academics, to sometime talk out of both sides of our mouths. These online sites are both locations of resistance and co-optation, and that is not an easy lesson or understanding to incorporate into a traditionally “feminist” canon of critical literacy.

A New Brand of Feminism

A hallmark of digital-wave feminism is its increase in inclusivity of all races and class systems, especially as the internet becomes more and more available to people.

Today, the internet is at the fingers of any young person of moderate social finances/class. We see this inclusive feminist activism enacted in the women's march when signs such as "Make (Her)story" and "Women's Rights are Human Rights" were held up next to signs like "#BlackLivesMatter" and "Protect Queers" and "Science Doesn't Care About Your Opinion." More than ever in history, feminism seems to be converging with other human rights campaigns. Many feminists today subscribe to the constructionist belief of gender. Jessa Crispin, in her 2017 book *Why I'm Not a Feminist* writes, "Our belief in innate gender qualities comes through clearly with the language we use to discuss the situations of both men and women. We use terms like 'toxic masculinity,' we refer unquestioningly to the 'problems' testosterone creates in a way we would become outraged by if men referred to the 'problems' estrogen creates" (71). This book, like many other recent feminism texts, confronts the issues that men and women have with the term 'feminism.' One of the points Crispin is addressing here is how different men and women seem to use the essentialist argument. While women would not stand, today, for men to essentialize women, she explains, women still tend to essentialize men. So even if we do not believe in essentialism, our language says something different. Words are powerful, and we need to be careful about what we say and how we say it. Crispin goes on to write, "Saying or believing that women are special also, by default, dehumanizes men. . . . And if these qualities are innate, then we can dismiss the entire male gender. And in doing so, we are being merely descriptive, not judgmental" (72). When we argue that "male" or "female" come with innate qualities, we lose the ability to judge or condemn those qualities. Contemporary feminist writers such as Jessa Crispin and Roxanne Gay in her book *Bad Feminist* are attempting to refocus

feminism. They both make it clear that women cannot "win" this fight if we continue in the same line of thinking that was set forth in the first-, second-, and third-waves of feminism. Just as women like Butler, Rubin, and Spivak were making strides in the 60s and 70s, so, too, women today are working towards a better understanding of equal rights.

So, too, does the internet give space for Black feminists to engage in political conversations. Hashtag Black feminist activism grew as #BlackLivesMatter became more and more popular. Author Caitlyn Gunn writes a fascinating article about how hashtag culture is appropriated by Black feminists to connect, assemble, condemn, and act. Gunn writes, "Through the use of hashtag conversations like #SolidarityIsForWhiteWomen, #Ferguson, and #BlackLivesMatter, Black women, indigenous women, and other women of color have utilized the Twitter platform to express their lived experiences and move their voices from the margins to the center of public feminist discourse" (21). The center of public feminist discourse here is Twitter and popular culture, as trending hashtags become home base for political discussion and activism. Gunn goes on to write, "Framing the actions of women of color on Twitter as feminist consciousness-raising serves a specific purpose: to contextualize this kind of activity within feminist discourse, to make it legible to those more familiar with feminist studies and feminist studies concepts and terminology" (Gunn 23). Throughout the article, she likens hashtag activism to second-wave consciousness-raising groups to make it more palatable to the mainstream feminist audience. While some may consider Twitter – and not just Twitter, but the hashtags on Twitter – to be provincial and pedestrian, Gunn makes the argument

that it should be not only taken seriously but also theorizes alongside other serious feminist endeavors.

5 // Conclusion

The pamphlets that grew out of the female liberation movement incited in 1968 reflect the radical feminist leanings of their writers, readers, and editors. These pamphlets attempted to represent varied voices and were participatory in nature, soliciting material from readers and creating a discursive environment that relied on education, meaning-making, and knowledge-formation. The pamphlets being published at the time were not just commentaries on women's rights, but also acted as commentaries on society as a whole. Capitalism, racism, church and family, and more were topics of discussion throughout second-wave pamphlets. These women relied on a DIY technique to pastiche their thoughts and opinions. They passed judgment on mainstream media by cutting and pasting popular magazines and newspapers and calling attention to the men and women actively working against them. These attributes of feminist pamphlets lend themselves nicely to the tenants of third-wave feminism that finds a home in radical feminist zines a few decades later.

It is important to consider these third-wave zinesters as rhetoricians within their own right. Now that we are beginning to recognize the importance of alternative media and discourses to history, society, and individuals, avenues begin to open for them to be studied more seriously. These "girls" are doing the hard work of reimagining what is means to be a contemporary "girl" and how feminism fits into that agenda. They are playful, yes, but also political. The new generation of third-wave feminists carved a space in alternative media and discourse to patchwork a new version of feminism. We see remnants of second-wave pamphlet ideals, such as the participatory nature of the zine scene and the community building that it promotes. Here, we see DIY in an even more

literal sense, as zinesters use whatever they have around: paper, stickers, needle and thread, tape, glue, computers, etc. These zines, like the pamphlets of their foremothers, created pods of activism, though that activism worked in different ways. Whereas second-wave pamphlets included calls to action that often required money or transportation, the bedroom activisms of the zine scene were more personal. Girls were encouraged to redefine themselves and others, while they read about topics that were previously inaccessible to them. They were participants in this culture, furthering the tenants of inclusivity and DIY. And studying these feminist zines has led to a revival of their importance in gender and media studies, and also in rhetorical theory.

The digital age brought about exciting new ways for girls to perform and practice a new brand of feminism. While access is limited, particularly in the early stages of the Internet, to mostly middle-class individuals, Internet access is becoming more and more accessible, and girls are casting a wider and wider net as they continue to network and connect. The Internet allows for myriad discursive possibilities, further complicating the idea of "authorship," as girls are "meeting" in the comments section, through hashtags, and on gossip sites to practice and perform their feminism and to further deepen their activism.

The use of alternative medias throughout American feminism engage in a participatory type of meaning-making for women, who were and are typically marginalized and often excluded from mainstream media. In this dissertation, I trace feminism's alternative publishing endeavors from the second-wave, third-wave, and digital-wave. These pamphlets, zines, and digital media create both a literal and figurative clubhouse through which women patchworked a "do-it-yourself" (DIY)

feminism from the mid-20th century through today. I have shown how the DIY aspect of alternative media culture and the new methods of communication and languaging have sustained a rhetoric of inclusion that is carried across generations.

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Vita

Name	*Cristen Fitzpatrick*
Baccalaureate Degree	*Bachelor of Arts*, *St. Thomas Aquinas College, Sparkill, NY* *Major: English*
Date Graduated	*May 2008*
Other Degrees and Certificates	*Master of Arts, Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY* *Major: English*
Date Graduated	*May 2010*