



# **Designing Speculative Futures for Feminism:**

The Role of Designers  
and Participants In the  
Exploration of  
Social Movements

Christina White  
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# ABSTRACT

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Language is a medium of communication that allows us to categorize, objectify, obscure, or abstract the world around us. While it provides us with structure, it also tightly connects us to societal conventions, which are not always egalitarian in nature. This is particularly relevant as it pertains to the persistence of socially imposed gender disparities - both genders are consistently victimized by the use of negative value judgments and derogatory terms based on appearance, personality, beliefs, or perceived status in relation to their gender. In contemporary society, feminist groups have long attempted to address this issue. Despite this, changes in North American society's characterization of women and men have been insufficient to rectify the problem. Further, over the past decade the term 'feminist' has itself become largely pejorative due to the movement's lack of cohesive direction and disconnection with prior definitions, as well as various stereotypes associated with the ideology.

This thesis explores the potential of textiles and worn or consumer based product based artifacts as means to incite discussion and reflection on the frequent redefining and recontextualizing of the term 'feminism' in North American society. To that end, it

reviews academic literature and examples of North American popular culture that pertain to both positive and negative uses of the word, and subsequently designs satirical artifacts to break down contemporary feminist discourse and gain an understanding of the polarizing theories within the movement. Phase one includes artifacts created by myself, the designer, while phase two and three contain artifacts created through collaboration and discussion with participants. This body of work describes an evolving generative model in which the designer acts first as an instigator of designed content, to a facilitator of speculative co-creation that draws on participants' abilities to create narratives and 're-imagine' garments and finally to designer as reactive speculator where participant created artifacts are expanded upon in order to open up sites for further discussion and future actions.

*keywords: feminism; co-creation; speculative design; design for social innovation; critical artifacts.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Abstract	3
Table of Contents	4
Acknowledgements	6
Glossary	7
Introduction	10
Design Aim	13
Phase 1: Designer as Instigator	17
a. Methodology	18
b. Pantsuit Exploration & Deconstruction	23
c. Feminist Leading the People	29
d. Feminist Barbie and Ken Dolls	34
e. Intersectional fabric	41
f. Glitches – Abrasive exploration	44
g. Juxtaposing voices posters	47
h. Phase 1 Conclusion	49
Phase 2: Designer as Facilitator	54
a. Methodology	58
b. Findings	
i. Make activity findings	61
ii. Say activity findings	67
c. Phase 2 Conclusion	69
Phase 3: Designer as Reactive Speculator	70
a. Feminist Guides	
i. Methodology	72
ii. Process	73
iii. Reflection	81
b. Future Feminism Role-play Game	
i. Methodology	82
ii. Process	83
iii. Reflection	91



Conclusion	92
Annotated Bibliography	95
Appendices	106
a. Graduation Exhibition Photos	108

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# GLOSSARY

★ Note: The following definitions will also appear within the document upon the word's first appearance within the document in footnote form.

**Allegory:** a symbolic representation that stands for ideas about human life or for a political or historical situation (*Merriam-Webster Online*).

**Cosplayer:** a person who partakes in the art or practice of wearing costumes to portray characters from fiction (such as cartoons, comics, science fiction, movies, animes, mangas, television shows) (*Dictionary.com*).

**Commodity fetishism:** transforms the subjective, abstract aspects of economic value into objective, real things that people believe have intrinsic value. (Felluga, 2011)

**Data:** within the context of this thesis refers to the creative and qualitative findings derived from the co-creative activity.

**Egalitarian:** a belief in human equality especially with respect to social, political, and economic affairs (*Merriam-Webster Online*).

**Fourth wave feminism:** the most recent wave of feminism (the rise of the internet - present day), which is characterized by its intersectional nature and tendency to call attention to instances of sexism and micro politics within public rhetoric spaces (Munro, 2013).

**Gendered garments:** pieces of clothing that are socially and culturally connected and enforce the gender binary (Paoletti, 2012).

**Glitch art:** A type of art that uses software to intentionally disrupt the information contained within a visual file to create a different looking visual file (Geere, 2012).

**Intersectionality:** examines how biological, social, and cultural categories such as: gender, class, race, ability, location, culture, sexual orientation, religion, and other axes of identity interact on different levels and contribute to both social inequality and injustice (Carastathis, 2014).

**Irony:** is a tool that can be used to express a meaning that is opposite to what is understood or expected (*Merriam-Webster Online*).

**Patriarchy:** a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it. (*Dictionary.com*)

**Pantsuit:** a woman's suit consisting of a jacket and pants that are often made of the same material; coordinate (*Merriam-Webster Online*).



**Privilege Theory:** is the sociological concept that some groups of people have advantages relative to other groups based on their race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability and social class (Twine, 2013) .

**Radical school:** feminism based on the thought that posits a comprehensive and transformational shift in paradigm is required to end sexism and the oppression of all women (Hooks, 2000).

**Reformist school:** feminism that seeks to overcome sexism and patriarchy through the gradual promotion of gender equality and women's rights within the current paradigm (Hooks, 2000).

**Role-playing:** To assume deliberately the part or role of another person or character; to act out (*Dictionary.com*)

**Satire:** is a tool that can be used within critical design as a way of using humour to critique the everyday (Dunne & Raby, 2013).

**Table-talk role-play game:** a form of role-playing in which participants describe their characters' actions through speech. Participants base those actions on their characters' personality traits (Kim, 2008).

**Tessellated repeat:** a pattern arranged in or having the appearance of a mosaic, where the graphic element interlocks in such a way that there are no overlaps or uneven whitespace (*Dictionary.com*).

**White privilege:** deals with the notion that certain voices are discredited based on their race, while Caucasian voices are credited (Hooks, 2000).



# INTRODUCTION

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## Feminism and Social Change

Since the creation of the feminist movement there has been a strong divide between two polarizing schools of thought: radical thinkers and reformist thinkers. In North America, the reformist school of feminism seeks to overcome sexism and patriarchy through the gradual promotion of gender equality and women's rights, while the radical school posits that a comprehensive and transformational shift in cultural and societal paradigms is required (Hooks, 2000). The mass media tends to focus on ideas from the reformist school of thought when discussing feminism, presenting a feminism that wishes to alter the existing patriarchal structure (Hooks, 2000). The current definition of the term feminist as "a person who believes in the political, economic and social equality of the sexes" (*Merriam-Webster Online*) corroborates this perspective. It is important to recognize however, that throughout the past decade this definition has come under fire for being culturally loaded with misconceptions and myths.

Current feminist stereotypes and misrepresentations include (Kim, 2012):

1. Only women can be feminists.

2. Feminists hate men, blame men for hundreds of years of oppressive behaviour, and think that all men are malevolent or morally reprehensible, or that "all men are rapists".

3. Feminists are angry and combative, and often use sensationalist rhetoric at the expense of accuracy in order to provoke public interest or excitement.

4. Feminists are usually lesbian.

5. Feminists victimize women.

6. Feminists not concerned with men's issues, such as the victimization of men, the pressure to conform to masculine ideologies, and men's rights.

7. Feminists are unfeminine in manner and appearance, and are unattractive.

Due to layers of misrepresentation and negative stereotypes, the dictionary definition of the word no longer aligns with the social and cultural understanding of feminism, which has lead to the term being used in the pejorative context (Redfern & Aune, 2010). It has also resulted in a lack of cohesive usage of the term 'feminist'.

**Radical school:** feminism based on the thought that posits a comprehensive and transformational shift in paradigm is required to end sexism and the oppression of all women (Hooks, 2000).

**Reformist school:** feminism that seeks to overcome sexism and patriarchy through the gradual promotion of gender equality and women's rights within the current paradigm (Hooks, 2000).



Online movements such as #YesAllWomen, #WomenAgainstFeminism, #FemFuture, #HeForShe, and satirical responses such as 'Confused Cats Against Feminism' as well as several feminist memes are indicative of this trend (O'Neil, 2014).

These online movements, which address various misconceptions, have allowed for members of the feminist movement to engage in the conversation by providing a platform that encompasses different types of feminist thought. Conversations that have been occurring online include critiques and arguments about the role of feminism in rape culture, race issues, gender binaries, sustainability, oppressed groups' rights, and many other socio-political issues. The broad range of concerns and contexts that these conversations cover has caused contemporary feminism to encompass "intersectionality – the idea that different axes of oppression intersect, producing complex and often contradictory results" (Munro, 2013). While online forums have had a positive effect of connecting feminists, they have also led to the decentralization of feminist thought. As the personal manifestos of proclaimed feminists no longer automatically align with the intent, methods, or approaches of reformist feminism – feminism is no longer

just about equality. In our online social spaces, such as the websites Tumblr, Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Reddit, and other blogs, individuals can now create and share their own versions and interpretations of feminism. Individuals can expound upon their opinions of current feminism, incite discussions with others, and call attention to perceived injustices within events in the media or everyday life. Through the capacity for others to comment on or respond to these posts, groups and individuals can debate and converse about feminism. Blogs and content tags such as 'WomenAgainstFeminism' and 'WhoNeedsFeminism', in which individuals are encouraged to challenge and question the current understanding of feminism, illustrate an emerging dichotomy in the digital space. As a result of this counter-movement, online debates often escalate towards a more aggressive response, often leading discussion towards the more radical approach to feminism (Ham, 2014).

While the multifaceted feminist model described above is inclusionary and encompasses more people than the relatively closed realm of academic discourse, its disorganization has led to widespread confusion. The intent of the current feminist movement's agenda is unclear

(Boesveld, 2014). In the media, the usage of the term and its denotative meanings can vary significantly depending on the media provider's stance, and recently many outlets have used samples from these online movements to justify feminist stereotypes while discussing women's issues (Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991)

It is clear that feminism has become an important topic for the mainstream media due to the amount of coverage it is receiving (Brodsky, 2014). Pop culture icons such as Beyoncé, Emma Watson, Taylor Swift and Lorde are allowing for a "shift in how pop stars – and their fan armies – think about feminism, particularly young women who rarely hear an accurate portrayal of feminism outside of a classroom" (Brodsky, 2014). While the media has enabled this conversation to occur, some outlets have moved to ban the word entirely. In their annual "Words That Should be Banned" poll, TIME Magazine (Steinmetz, 2014) stated that "feminism" should be prohibited alongside phrases such as "yolo" and "yaaaaa", indicating significant backlash against the increased usage of the term. TIME later apologized for the term's inclusion in the poll and edited their post, stating that they intended to draw attention to the way in

which the term had been used rather than to cast down the term itself. (Steinmetz, 2014)

## Design and Social Change

Within current design discourse two examples of approaches that aim to affect behaviour are Critical Design and Design for Social Innovation. Both address social issues and work towards affecting cultural and societal paradigm shifts.

Critical Design takes the tack of translating critical thought into materiality. Here thinking through difficult topics is done via the production of designed artifacts. The language of design is used to engage and challenge people think to think about their everyday lives in new ways - to raise awareness of alternatives. This is often done by envisioning and proposing alternatives that make strange (Dunne & Raby, 2013) and defamiliarize existing everyday objects (G. Bell et al, 2005). Designers achieve this through the use of: satire and critique, inspiration, reflection, highbrow entertainment, aesthetic explorations, and speculation about possible futures and catalysts for change (Dunne & Raby, 2013). For Critical Design to be successful, viewers need to be given cues that trigger both their

imagination and their intellect (Dunne & Raby, 2013). The designer must be able to enable viewers and participants: to imagine an alternate future for the issue at hand; to challenge their existing values, ideals, and beliefs on the subject.

Design for Social Innovation recognizes that complex problems cannot be addressed from a single point of view, and that it is important to place the user at the center of the process (Burns et al., 2006). When Design is applied to Social Innovation the designer moves from taking on the role of the author of content and ideas to facilitator of others' ideas (Burns et al., 2006). Participatory design within social innovation pays attention to 'weaker' voices and social exclusion (Burns et al., 2006). The nature of this intent demands more than a short design intervention (Burns et al., 2006). Within this practice designers do not create a final end result. Rather, they seek to catalyze an emergent system that will continue to change and re-configure after they have left the scene (Burns et al., 2006). Prototypes produced within Social Innovation interventions take on the role of "vehicles able to question and highlight controversies and dilemmas" (Hillgren et al., 2011). Similar to Critical Design the artifacts created through this process can encourage

and enable viewers to speculate and envision how radical change can affect their views on social, political, and cultural issues (Hillgren et al., 2011).

### The Designer's Role in relation to the North American Feminist movement

In this thesis I seek to leverage Critical Design's notion of speculative artifacts as a means of social critique, as well as Design for Social Innovation's notions of prototyping and the role of the participant. Through these approaches, I plan to address, work through, and attempt to catalyze answers for the questions that I have begun to ask within my design hypothesis.

I posit that designers can use speculative design methods as a means of rethinking the change that is occurring within North American rhetoric pertaining to: the fourth wave feminism; the validity of the word 'feminist' in contemporary society; and the potential future of feminist thought. As designers, we should be facilitating dialogue that enables North American society to critique and question the status quo. This assertion brings several pertinent questions to the fore:

**Fourth wave feminism:** the most recent wave of feminism (the rise of the internet - present day), which is characterized by its intersectional nature and tendency to call attention to instances of sexism and micro politics within public rhetoric spaces (Munro, 2013).



1. Can designers effectively use current feminist reformist ideologies, such as adjusting and challenging our current understanding of sexism and inequality, within the current North American socio-cultural paradigm?
2. Should designers aid in speculating more radical feminist ideologies such as revolts and other forms of activist critiques of current North American feminist discourse to incite a total paradigm shift?
3. Can designers help people to get past a whole range of misconceptions evident in the media and academia regarding current feminist discourse?
4. Can designers provide forums that allow participants and viewers to play, imagine, and speculate the future of feminism through making?

## **DESIGN AIM**

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Contemporary literature and media exhibits an extensive lack of cohesion in the feminist movement. The re-signification and appropriation of the term feminist is drastically altering and accelerating both pop

culture and academic discussions around: the potential need for a defined feminist image (Felski, 1989) the need for intersectionality (Carastathis, 2014) the multiple identities of feminist women of colour and how they are portrayed (Sanchez-Hucles, et. Al, 2012) and radical feminist strategies for change (Bridgeman, 2011). As a self-identified feminist and designer, this social/ cultural/ political condition is relevant and permeates my everyday life. As with most of North American society I frequent online sources on a daily basis. My routes and the spaces I frequent online demonstrate repeatedly that feminist discourse is changing rapidly and that an intervention or critical discussion is needed in order to incite a paradigm shift so that sexism is no longer socially or culturally acceptable.

As a communications designer I wish to utilize both my critical design and visual communication skills to aid in this critical dialogue. My research explores the use of worn artifacts and critical design strategies, such as mimicry and satire, as methods for rethinking, redefining, and challenging the word 'feminist' and notions of feminism. It further seeks to allow others to participate in the discussion around the future use of the term, and develops a model to facilitate and

encourage such discussion. To that end, this thesis is broken down into three phases, each of which builds upon prior phases:

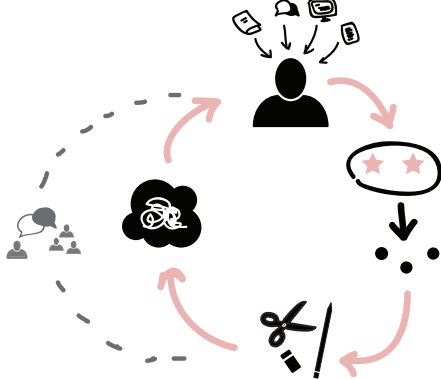


figure 1: illustrates Designer as Instigator

## Designer as Instigator

Phase one describes the initial stages of my work, which revolved around collecting data and assessing the problem space. This phase of work allowed me to gain a better understanding of the issues within the past decade of feminism. In doing so I was able to pinpoint and focus on the two major issues within North America's fourth wave, those being intersectionality and privilege. After I had identified the two issues main issues within the current movement I was able to continue to investigate the current and prior understanding of both issues through reading both academic and pop culture literature. I consistently visually reacted to what I was

reading through acts of making. While my making was primarily reactionary in nature, the explorations in this phase encouraged me to examine the potential of both textile-based and consumer-based products . I used these to critique the approaches I had identified within feminism: reformist feminism, radical feminism and the use of stereotypes that attempt to explain and combat intersectionality and privilege. With the use of satire, I was able to create artifacts that allowed me to visualize and challenge the existing visual representations of privilege and intersectionality. From this making, I was able to gain further insights that allowed me to illustrate how designers can research through design to obtain a holistic understanding of current feminism. This new found knowledge enabled me to begin to formulate a co-creative session as a means to explore the potential of eliciting new perspectives and design responses by inviting others into my creative work space.

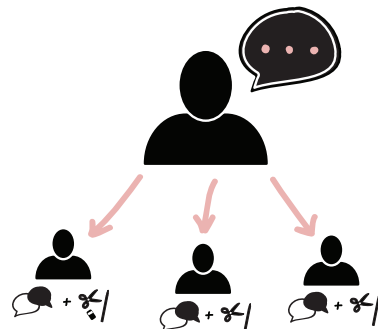


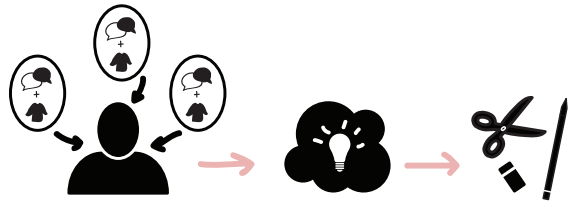
figure 2: illustrates Designer as Facilitator

## Designer as Facilitator

Phase two details a shift in focus away from my own isolated acts of making. In striving to connect my problem space with the perspective of others and create a more inclusive space to discuss feminism, I designed and facilitated a speculative co-creation session. The objective of this session was to prompt participants to create, play, deconstruct, and re-imagine women's clothing within the context of the feminist issues I was attempting to tackle. Participants intuitively engaged in creative re-assembly of clothing that resembled dress up games of children and involved their own self-driven creation of fictional characters. Through this body of work I was able to incite a continuation of my own making activities that occurred in phase one. This provided new perspectives and changed up several of my previous assumptions about work that ties feminist concerns and designers potential to activate these concerns.

## Designer as Reactive Speculator

Phase three consists of a body of work where the created 're-imagined' garments and created characters derived from the co-creative study were applied to the design of

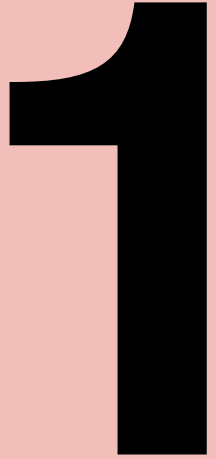


*figure 3: illustrates Designer as Relative Speculator*

a series of conceptual futures (Bosch, 2012). Derived from the re-imagined garments and conversations with participants of the co-creative study, the fictional personas, designed outcomes and their fictional situational placement are intended to act as further mediators of feminism. The final product of this phase was the creation of character cards for a fictional feminist role-playing game, where players could choose a character card to act through a narrative told to them as the character, similar to the role-playing that occurs in games like Dungeons and Dragons.

The aim of this phase was to explore the capacity of the designer as speculator and the role of the designed artifact as a means of pulling existing content, which is already conversational in nature, into further sites of discussion. Design in this instance takes on the role of creating foci that allow both participants and other designers to move beyond situations that privilege both reformist and radical feminist discourse towards the fostering of ideologies and discussions that push the boundaries of current discourse into a more positive and clear critical space over the long-term.

Data: within the context of this thesis refers to the creative and qualitative findings derived from the co-creative activity.

A large, bold, black number '1' is positioned in the upper right corner. A thick horizontal black bar extends from the base of the '1' to the left edge of the frame.

## **PHASE 1: Designer as** **Instigator**

visualizing and challenging  
stereotypes;  
authoring;  
understanding through making.



# 1A. METHODOLOGY

Phase one presents the methodological approach that allowed me to gain a better overall understanding of current feminist discourse. Figure 1 illustrates the process I took to create each artifact. The cycle is broken down into four stages: incubating, identifying key concerns and approaches, reacting, and reflecting. Each activity is explained below.

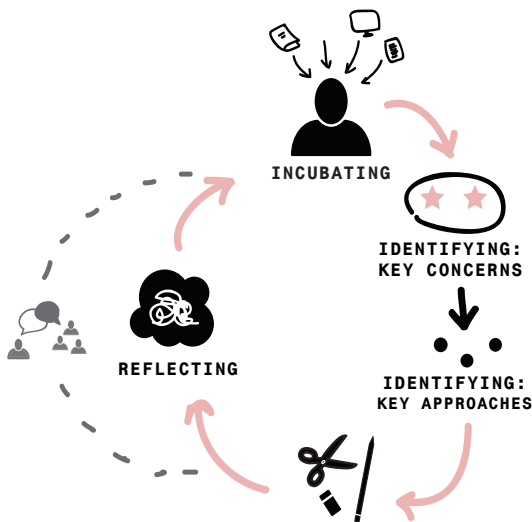


figure 4: The four-stage process used in phase one.

**Incubating (collecting and initial synthesis of primary research):**

The incubation stage was a means for me to collect and map out a significant amount

of information about the current feminist movement: its ties to prior movements; its relation to pop culture, feminist and anti-feminist theories; current usages of the term feminist; and current contexts / sites of discussion and action. This was achieved by: frequenting online forums, reading online articles and academic journals, reviewing feminist theory books and papers, having conversations with feminists and non-feminists, collecting visuals, and creating mind maps.

**Identifying (noticing and applying key concerns and approaches):**

Once I had a more solid understanding of the current feminist discourse I was able to identify key areas of exploration through mind mapping. The two main areas of potential exploration within current feminist discourse that arose were privilege theory and intersectionality. Upon further research through reading modern social theorists and online forums, it became evident that there were three approaches that individuals took while discussing the two issues, those approaches being the use of: radical feminist ideologies, reformist feminist ideologies, and stereotypes. As both privilege theory and

**Privilege Theory:** is the sociological concept that some groups of people have advantages relative to other groups based on their race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability and social class (Twine, 2013) .

intersectionality are large multifaceted social issues within feminism, I was able to create a large generative exploration space for myself. Here I was able to produce artifacts that could critique the multifaceted issues as well as my own process through reflection and iteration.

As a start to this process, I visually surveyed contemporary visuals created from the feminist movement. I achieved this by collecting images from the online forums where feminist and anti-feminist discourse was occurring, such as Reddit's r/feminism thread (Reddit Inc., 2015), hashtags such as 'WomenAgainstFeminism' 'WhoNeedsFeminism', Facebook groups such as 'EverydayFeminism' (Facebook, 2015), Twitter accounts such as '@FeministaJones' (Twitter, 2015), and Instagram accounts such as 'feministprobs' (Instagram, 2015) and 'rookiemag' (Instagram, 2015). The aim was to have a greater understanding of the current state of feminism and its ties to prior movements.

This review, brought to the fore the movement's use of humour and pop culture references and icons as a means to call out injustices (Shifman & Lemish, 2011). By satirically reappropriating visuals and artifacts

from prior movements and illustrating them within a pop culture context feminists are able to create a visual language that appeals to the masses that frequent online media sources, a tactic that was not utilized in prior movements and has only come to being because of popularity of social media. A significant example of this tendency can be seen in the work of Guerrilla Girls, an activist art based group of anonymous feminists whose use of humour, satire, and pop culture consistently acts as a call out against injustices against women within the media (Guerrilla, 1995). Given this tendency, I realized that satire would be a germane means for designers to critique existing understandings of feminism. In the reacting stage of my process I applied visual satire to existing artifacts in order to explore the four areas I had previously identified: privilege theory, intersectionality, reformist vs. radical feminism, the media's usage of stereotypes.

### Reacting (making):

Once I had identified the areas of desired exploration and a pertinent means of critique (satire), I began to respond to the information I had previously collected through the creation of artifacts. My artifacts played two roles within the reacting stage. Firstly,

**Irony:** is a tool that can be used to express a meaning that is opposite to what is understood or expected (Merriam-Webster Online).

through explorative making, which centred on the subjects of feminist stereotypes, radical feminism, and reformist feminism, I was able to investigate and draw conclusions about intersectionality and privilege theory in contemporary feminist discourse. It was through making that the debate around white privilege (Hooks, 2000), the validity of white feminist oppression (Hooks, 2000), and the confusion derived from the intersectional nature (Munro, 2013) of the movement was brought to the fore.

It was through making and physically working through these two major issues within North American feminist discourse that I was able to create a framework for myself to work within. Through making, conversing with my peers, and surveying the visual discourse of current feminism, I was able to determine which visual approaches effectively depicted the issues and which did not, and was further able to create a space in which I could facilitate and create pertinent potential feminist dialogues with other people outside of my peer group.

Secondly, my artifact creation intentionally sought to challenge people's perceptions of the term feminist by acting as tools to spark discussion, my objective was to

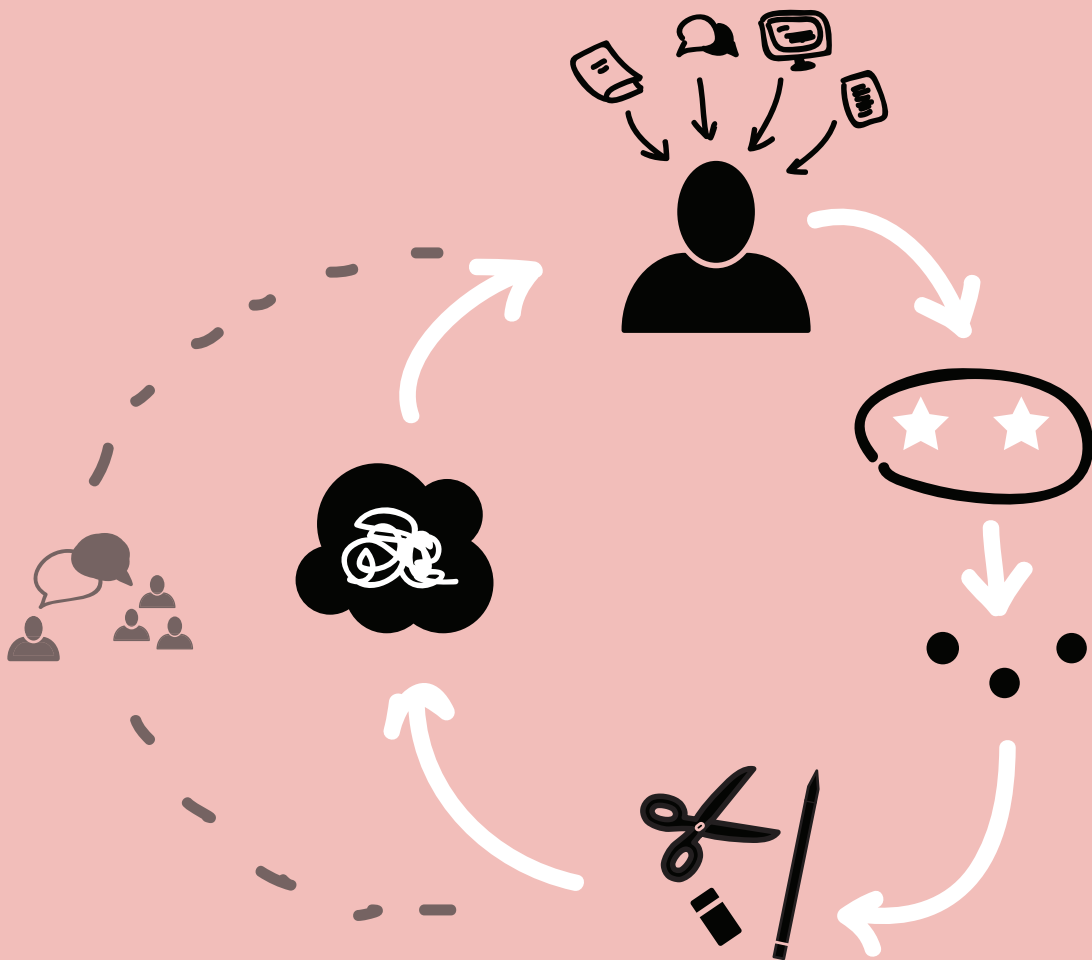
provide viewers with "a counterpoint to the world around them" through the satirical visualization of stereotypes as well as aesthetic explorations (Dunne & Raby, 2013). I repeatedly applied satire and irony to my made -reappropriated artifacts. I used them strategically - to engage the audience in a constructive way - to appeal to people's imagination as well as their intellect (Dunne & Raby, 2013). I intentionally drew upon viewers' previous interpretations, relations, and understandings of existing forms. By applying satire and irony to these and by reappropriating them, I created sites for critique and questioning of existing stereotypes, 'feminist' contexts and agendas.

### Reflecting (re-evaluation):

Upon the completion of each artifact I took time to reflect on the outcome and the process. At this time I also invited my peers to critique and aid in my own reflection. Reflecting allowed me to identify new generative nodes of inquiry and new questions to explore in relation to both feminism and my role and intentions as a designer.

## Repeating:

Each artifact I created was generated through this process of incubate, identify, react, and reflect. Each artifact was created based on previous made inquiries. I repeated this process until I was ready to move beyond responding solely, to secondary information and my own making, towards facilitating conversations with participants and having people enter my making space.



# 1B. PANTSUIT EXPLORATION & DECONSTRUCTION

Early on in my work I identified the pantsuit as a worn artifact with which to explore the feminist movement. As an iconic form that is both a positive and negative denotative (Supple, 2014) the pantsuit seemed a lucrative site to explore women's history and to identify the multiple layers of encoded meaning.

The pantsuit has served as icon - one used as an identifier by both the current North American feminist movement and the media at large (Supple, 2014). Over the decades, worn acts by influential women and alterations made by fashion designers have allowed this garment to demonstrate and take ownership of cultural, social and political status. According to Wright, the pantsuit "is an apparatus of the public sphere. It is about hierarchy and status, and a garment for which the perceived message is more important than the details of style" (Lee Wright, 153), indicating the garment's significance as an icon in and of itself. Many prominent feminist icons wear or have worn the pantsuit and because of this it has become a garment that represents women who are fighting towards women's rights, as well as a tool for parodies of feminism (Supple, 2014). Wearers and participants of the fourth wave of feminism acknowledge

**Pantsuit:** a woman's suit consisting of a jacket and pants that are often made of the same material; coordinate (Merriam-Webster Online).



figure 5: Two pages from the Pantsuit Timeline Booklet



# THE FEMINIST PANTSUIT

*visual essay*

Thesis Exploration

-

**CHRISTINA WHITE**

-

MDES 2014



this, and have actively fostered a subculture that re-appropriates the pantsuit in order to mock negative stereotypes and parodies. An example of this is Chanel's 2015 Spring/Summer collection, where models donned hyper feminine versions of the 1920s suit and re-enacted the types of feminist riots that took place during the second wave of feminism (King, 2014)

The pantsuit functioned as a stepping-stone that led to deeper discussions pertaining to feminism in my own making. Exploring the pantsuit's form and pattern allowed me to consider it's encoded cultural, historical, theoretical, and political significations. It was through this exploration I was able to react, and critique current reformist feminist ideologies.

### Form:

I chose a 1996 McCall's pattern, whose men's wear-inspired cut referenced both the 1980s power suit and the 1930s androgynous suit. I then selected a creamy white poly/rayon suiting fabric with a ridged nature that would provide structure for the blazer and pants. The coupling of the men's wear-inspired pattern and the traditional suit fabric allowed me to draw on and reference historical and current associations with traditional women's



figure 7: The McCall 1996 pattern used to make the pantsuit

pantsuit forms. I was conscious that my act of making was a way to reconsider the 'feminization' of the pantsuit that has been prevalent since the early 1990s and that relies primarily on soft fabrics and prints ("Giorgio



figure 8: The fabric being silk screened



figure 9: The pattern being pinned to the fabric

Armani”, 2004). Ideally, I hoped to facilitate a site for discussion that challenged present gender binaries found in clothing.

## Pattern:

The use of a tessellated repeat motif was my initial attempt to twist the pantsuit and create a satirical piece that poked fun at the idea of a ‘feminist pantsuit’ or ‘feminist power suit’. I chose a script font that would juxtapose notions of femininity onto my conventionally ‘masculine’ garment (the pant suit). The repetitive graphic allowed me to explore the visual shift of the term ‘feminist’ from legible to abstract, in attempt to exhibit and question the confusion within the feminist discourse, as well as question the media’s branding like approach towards defining feminism.

## Form + Pattern:

The combination of the suit and repeat pattern opened up questions around the categorization of genders, the use of clothing as a signifier of status or belief systems, and the commodification of the term ‘feminist’.

**Tessellated repeat:** a pattern arranged in or having the appearance of a mosaic, where the graphic element interlocks in such a way that there are no overlays or uneven whitespace ([Dictionary.com](http://Dictionary.com)).





## Reflection:

Through conversations with other graduate-level designers as well as design faculty it became clear that the misalignments in the pattern + form process did successfully cause the term “feminist” to become an abstract graphical pattern which suggested the notion of the artifact as a commodity. As a designer, this artifact was a means for me to explore the notion of authoring and creating a pantsuit that was a commodity. Utilizing Marx’s philosophy of commodity fetishism (1990), the aim was to illustrate how current society as well as the fourth wave feminist movement fetishes the pantsuit in such a way that it prevents critical dialogues around gender and feminism to occur. Despite these accomplishments I felt the critique I was facilitating amongst my peers was limited and surface level at best. I wondered if my mode of communication was too abstract for viewers – if I was asking too much – if the generation of self-critique and inner dialogues reliant on existing and partial understandings of pantsuits and feminism, limited the potential for uninformed individuals to participate. I decided that I needed to further explore the pantsuit’s connotations in other forms of visual commodification, such as packaging,

posters, illustrations and products. The idea of exploring the pantsuit in a specific context relative to modern day feminist stereotypes became a driving force for my second artifact as well as the desire to explore the pantsuit as a hypothetical allegorical garment form.

**My first artifact and its construction lead to the following generative nodes and points that were used to fuel further explorations:**

- It became clear that it is critical to identify prominent wearers of the pantsuit or events in which it was relevant, such that the contemporary social understanding of the suit can be contextualized.
- Attention should be placed on the unique ability of a designer to create and explore the potential of creating objects that illustrate commodity fetishism within social movements.
- How are the contexts in which ‘feminist pantsuits’ are worn important to the social movement, as well as to outsiders’ perception of that movement? Who is the audience for the pantsuit – fellow feminists or the “other”?
- Can the pantsuit serve as an allegorical piece of clothing? What is the role of allegories within feminism?

◀ *figure 10(previous page):  
The final pantsuit artifact*

**Allegory:** a symbolic representation that stands for ideas about human life or for a political or historical situation (*Merriam-Webster Online*).

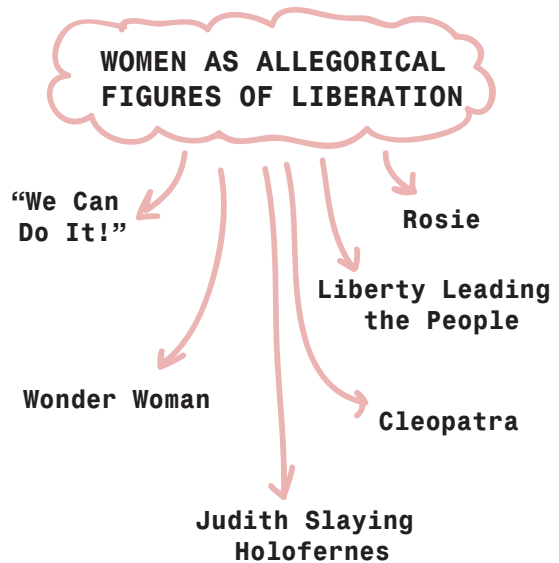
**Commodity fetishism:** transforms the subjective, abstract aspects of economic value into objective, real things that people believe have intrinsic value. (Felluga, 2011)

## 1C. FEMINIST LEADING THE PEOPLE

After reflecting upon the commoditised pantsuit that I had created, I began to look to further connotations connected to the pantsuit form in both visual history and everyday life. I identified the notion of the pantsuit as a uniform for activist women and decided to use this as the site for my next investigation for my second designed artifact.

I began this phase by collecting images of activist women in various art forms across history (see *figure 11*). My aim was to gain a better understanding of the role of garments in the activist context, both in terms of propaganda and revolutionary art. My process of searching, sorting and pattern finding lead me towards Eugène Delacroix's painting *Liberty Leading the People*. Marianne in this painting is the personification of liberation – the promise of social and political freedom to the citizens of France. She is depicted as a white female who is meant to represent both an allegorical goddess and as a powerful young woman of the people (Dorbani).

Taking the painting's content and messaging as the main drivers, I chose to deconstruct and reconstruct the artifact in a digital format and a contemporary context. I chose to use it as a means to explore dystopian future narratives of feminism, in such a



*figure 11: brainstorming allegorical figures*

way that critiqued the current usage and understanding of privilege within feminist discourses. My repositioning of the iconic Marianne as a stereotypical white feminist was done as a means of asking viewers to consider the contemporary North American tendency to see Caucasians as providers, a role that extends toward the current liberation of women of color, less privileged women, and queer women (Hooks, 2000). It also has significance via links to the idea of white privilege in feminism, as discussed by feminist theorists such as Bell Hooks (2000) who explains how women of color





*figure 12:*  
*painting work-in-progress*

experience a greater level of oppression than white women and Jane Gaines (1986) who describes how feminist theory tends to utilize the white middle-class values in its analysis of women's oppression. White privilege theory in feminist discourse deals with the notion that certain voices are discredited based on their race (Hooks, 2000). I placed the pantsuit

and other stereotypical white feminist visual attributes on Delacroix's figure of Marianne, creating the new allegorical woman that is shown in *figure 21 - 23*. The woman is a white female with a 'masculine' haircut who is wearing a pantsuit and holding a bra and a feminist flag. The women's short hair was intended to represent the stereotypical notion that feminist are unfeminine (Kim, 2012). The bra was chosen to signify the second wave of feminism and the iconic bra burning events that occurred in 1968 (Lee, 2014).

Additional props also played a role. The revised flag that Marianne holds outstretched alludes to 'sisterhood' within feminism (Hooks, 2000). It depicts a Venus symbol that is bleeding. The Venus symbol is used frequently by individuals who identify with the feminist movement in the form of merchandise and artifacts from protests (Etsy, 2015). My bleeding version was an intentional call out against the aggressive nature and visuals being created online within the current feminist movement that appearing on Reddit's r/feminism forum (Reddit, 2015) and Tumblr accounts such as 'feministcurrent' (tumblr, 2015) and 'the-glitter-clit' (tumblr, 2015).

**White privilege:** deals with the notion that certain voices are discredited based on their race, while Caucasian voices are credited (Hooks, 2000).

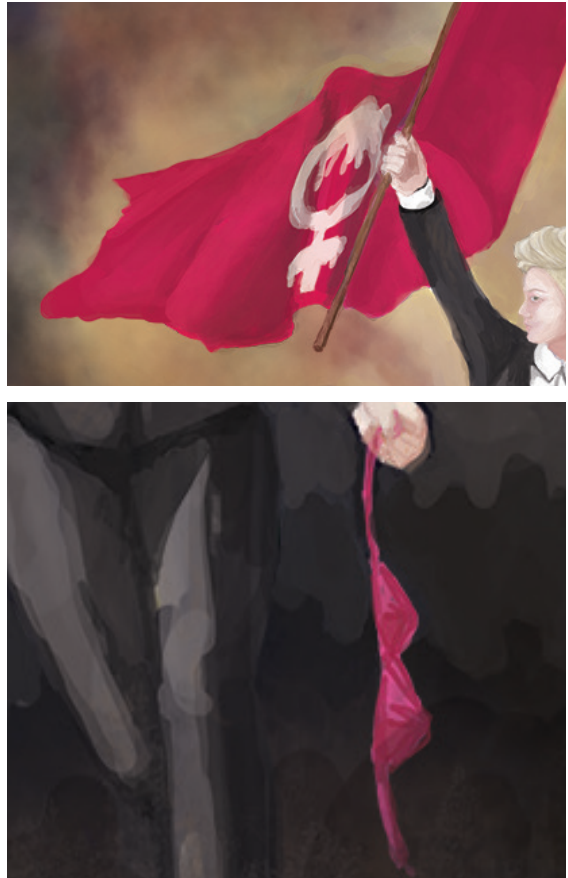
*figure 13 (next page):*  
*final painting artifact* ►



## Reflection:

This artifact allowed me to explore the role we have as designers in terms of authoring and illustrating potential dystopian futures within current feminist discourse. Through my manipulation of Delacroix's painting I was able to consider and probe notions of radical feminism. Utilizing illustration as my medium, I was able to draw upon Delacroix's depiction of the battle between aristocracy and democracy in order to depict the potentially violent future of a feminist paradigm shift towards 'matriarchy'. My depiction of this feminist battle allowed me to exhibit the pantsuit as a rejection of traditional patriarchal gender roles and male subjectivity. By amplifying existing ideologies and forms I created a painting that questions the viewer's connotations of freedom, white privilege, women's liberation and oppression.

It was through this amplification of existing ideologies that I was able to explore the use of allegory within feminism and to consider how allegory might be used as a tool to critique current visual culture and modes of representation connected to this social movement. Allegories are currently being used within feminism, my survey of work in this domain over the past year has noted



*figure 14: close up shots of  
Feminist Leading the People*

a consistent use of visual representation of a stereotypical trope or image – that can be positive or negative depending on the context. I believe as visual creators we have an opportunity to reroute this tendency that it is possible to provide design artifacts and visuals that critique feminist stereotypes and open up

**Patriarchy:** a system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.  
(Dictionary.com)

a more holistic discussion of the multifaceted feminism of the fourth wave.

Acknowledging this has made me realize that the contexts that I had been working were outdated. The idea of considering more current contexts and thinking of the potential future consumers of feminism came to the fore. This became the driving force behind the creation of my third artifact.

**My second artifact and its construction lead to the following generative nodes and points that were used to fuel further explorations:**

- It became evident that contemporary contexts of how viewers consume visual culture need to be explored, rather than solely focusing in on historical paintings.
- Designers should pay closer attention to the utilization of allegorical figures as a means to critique complex social theories within feminism.
- How can 'feminism' be used satirically as a brand to critique how we currently consume current gender and sexist filled visuals? What role does race play with these 'feminist' artifacts?



# 1D. FEMINIST BARBIE AND KEN DOLLS

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Considering the future of feminism and people who might take up the feminist challenge invariably led me to children and the people that guide and influence them - their parents. This in turn led notions of self (identity) and socialization. "Mass-produced objects like dolls can tell us as much about the creation and significance of self-image in context of group identities. Stereotypical definitions of gender are particularly well reflected in the design of adult dolls" (Attfield, 1996). With this in mind I sought to explore the potential of creating a product that expressed current stereotypes of feminist ideals in a form that is for children. Mattel's line of iconic Barbie and Ken dolls immediately came to mind as a suitable site for challenging parents', adults understandings of feminism.

Aimed at young girls, Barbie's creator Ruth Handler claimed, "producing this type of doll would allow young girls to explore roles and professions" (Cokely, 2008). Since its inception in 1959, the doll has developed to include a range of stereotypical personas and potential futures for young girls, adapting to shifting gender roles in society (Cokely, 2008). The depicted professions include fashion model, doctor, pilot, athlete, veterinarian, entrepreneur, teacher, fast-food

worker, pageant queen, a beach goer, marine biologist, mother, babysitter, and a princess.

Barbie has been under consistent scrutiny by the media for the dolls' fully mature body (Attfield, 1995), disproportionate figure (Cokely, 2008), poor representations of minorities (DuCille, 1996), out-dated viewpoints on motherhood (Klassen, 2012), and the limited potential careers and occupations of women (Rehel, 2014). Nevertheless, Barbie remains a popular child's toy and is seen as a cultural icon and staple in American culture, which she transforms to reflect (Cokely, 2008).

Ken, the male counterpart to Barbie, was introduced in 1961 as the fictional boyfriend of the Barbie doll. Since his introduction Ken has been represented as at least forty occupations (Peason & Mullins, 1999). Similarly to the Barbie, Ken also has been under scrutiny for his poor representation of men, but still remains an icon within North American toy culture.

Arguably, the everyday consumer does not deconstruct Barbie and Ken as societal constructs; they see them as toys and do not think of the potential subconscious connotations that the dolls project onto



*figure 15: Feminist Barbie pantsuit work-in-progress*

children. It is through the Barbie and Ken form and packaging that I set out to illustrate Attfield's idea that "toys [can] become the vehicles for play through which different aspects of the world can be encountered" (1995). I also sought to apply satire - to the creation of a Feminist Barbie and Ken set - to a potential toy for a child that depicts stereotypical notions of feminism. My objective was to facilitate a situation where parents might feel uncomfortable - be triggered to challenge the gender stereotypes and feminist stereotypes that the media broadcasts to their children. Thereby re-routing the potentially problematic future the current understanding of feminism could cause.



*figure 16 : Feminist Barbie painted gold*

**Satire:** is a tool that can be used within critical design as a way of using humour to critique the everyday (Dunne & Raby, 2013).





*figure 17: Feminist Ken painting gold*

## Preparing the Barbies:

In order to create the artifacts, I decided to modify existing Barbie and Ken dolls and packaging. The dolls themselves were stripped of their original clothes and subsequently painted gold. The gold paint was used to transform both dolls so that they moved from being mere pieces of plastic to trophy-like allegories of stereotypical feminism. This 'skin' colour change also allowed me to attempt to remove the element of race from the dolls – to steer the conversation and critique toward sold misrepresentations and stereotypes of mainstream feminism while drawing attention to Barbie's poor representations of people-of-color. Once the dolls were painted, I redressed them into miniature pantsuits that mimicked the larger suit I had created earlier, utilizing the same fabric as the original artifact. The idea was to reapply



*figure 18 : Feminist Ken pantsuit  
work-in-progress*

the connotations of the satirical pantsuit and explore the notion of play in toys, the goal of which was to exhibit the problem of widespread stereotypes of feminism.

## The Dieline: Visual information

For the packaging, red and gold were used to draw upon the dolls' colour palette, while gradients and other icons were pulled from the existing boxes' visuals. The graphics were informed by current contemporary iconography used in feminist online spaces. The Venus symbol with a fist through it refers to the American wartime propaganda image "We Can Do It!" created by J. Howard Miller in 1943 (Gassner, 2012). It is often used in online feminist forums where it serves as a means of empowerment and a nod towards the fight against systems of patriarchy. It can be found on sites such as Tumblr blogs such as 'the-daily-feminist', websites such as 'EverydayFeminism', Reddit's r/feminist forum, BuzzFeed's feminist tag, and other social media sites.

## The Dieline: Added Text

The text on the packaging serves three purposes: it exhibits branded elements, contains cautionary toy box safety standards,



figure 19 : Feminist Barbie package

and provides a narrative text that depicts a story about the doll. The fictional narratives in my packaging depict two characters, Barbie, the archetypal feminist stereotype, and Ken, the stereotypical subordinate male feminist.

## Writing on the female doll's box:

The new Feminist Barbie comes with her

signature pantsuit and mean, bitchy attitude! Her pantsuit is fitted, but don't let that fool you... it's a strong power suit, and this girl means business! She's here to fight the patriarchy and crush any man in her way\*. This Barbie has a huge ego complex and won't not stop telling you how oppressed she is. She's probably a lesbian or a bitch, or both! She's not wearing heels because she's a feminist, heels are oppressing, and men create them so that women could be objectified. You go girl! \*Male tears sold separately.

### **Writing on the male doll's box:**

The new Male Feminist Ken comes with the same pantsuit as Feminist Barbie, his companion in fighting female oppression! He's wearing a fitted pantsuit in a women's cut, is a supporter of women's rights, and is a total sap. He'll constantly mention that he 'isn't like most men', and that he understands the oppression felt by women. Male Feminist Ken will stand by Feminist Barbie and aid in her fight against misogyny and the patriarchy, helping her tear down any men who get in their way!

The text on the boxes is meant to be satirical, as it utilizes exaggerated feminist stereotypes in order to construct a humorous narrative.

The goal was to create a body of text that resembled the articles of satirical news site The Onion (2010).

### **Reflect:**

As a designer, this artifact allowed me to explore and expose the potential of authoring propaganda toys and incite questions around the role Barbie dolls currently play in the shaping of current society. By creating and authoring a commoditised artifact with clear and direct ties to an iconic brand, I was able to effectively satirize feminist stereotypes through juxtaposition and appealing to viewers via humour. The dolls allowed me to look at toys in "the dynamic context of mass consumption" (Attfield, 1995), and explore the potential of objects of play within a material space, historical time and cultural phenomenal.

Upon the creation of the Barbie and Ken boxes I realized that I had achieved my intended goal of creating a satirical toy that questioned the current state of mainstream feminism, though it did not touch upon showcasing the intersectionality of the movement that I had originally intended. Neither of the dolls managed to showcase the muddiness or noise of the movement. This

*The Onion* (2010), is an online news provider which generally provides tongue-in-cheek commentary on current societal issues by blowing certain elements out of proportion.

became the topic of exploration within the next artifact.

**My third artifact and its construction lead to the following generative nodes and points that were used to fuel further explorations:**

- Attention should be place on the ability to use branding as a satirical tool in critiquing a designed artifact's ability to create a fetishized object of the feminist movement – an object that could be seen as a trophy, or allegorical object of the movement.
- Designers should explore the manipulation of existing forms to create effective and relatable social commentary on movements such as feminism.
- It became evident through making that identifying the future participants of the feminist movement is a critical element - one that is needed in order to facilitate discussion about future contexts.
- What role does a male viewpoint play in this thesis? Have male voices been explored effectively? How can work be depicted so it is apparent that different voices have been considered? How can intersectionality be explored in such a way that it illustrates those different voices?





# 1E. INTERSECTIONAL FABRIC

After the creation of the Barbie and Ken dolls, I sought to explore the notion of intersectionality and illustrate the lack of cohesion in the current feminist movement. Kimberlé Crenshaw introduced the theory of intersectionality in 1989, which examines how biological, social, and cultural categories such as: gender, class, race, ability, location, culture, sexual orientation, religion, and other axes of identity interact on different levels and contribute to both social inequality and injustice (Crenshaw, 1993). Since then, the theory “has become the predominant way of conceptualizing the relation between systems of oppression which construct our multiple identities and our social locations in hierarchies of power and privilege” (Carastathis, 2014).

It is because of the current intersectional nature of the feminist movement that it has broken down into sub-movements. These sub-movements allow for more inclusive feminism that affords and expects different voices and identities. While this inclusive form of feminism is allowing for a larger group of supporters of feminist thought, there is some resistance in both the academic world and the everyday environment. The notion of intersectionality within feminism is constantly questioned, as the thought



figure 21: Stamping the fabric

of “including race, class, sexuality, and other identity markers in feminist analysis, [cause] some [to] say, [that] intersectional feminists are spreading the movement thin and undermining its unity” (Uwujaren & Utt, 2015).

With the fourth artifact I sought to visually depict the intersectionality of feminism by utilizing the text graphic that I had created for the pantsuit project. Through the use of graphic tools such as color, repetition, and overlapping form I wanted to visualize the

◀ figure 20 (previous page):  
Feminist Barbie and Ken doll

**Intersectionality:** examines how biological, social, and cultural categories such as: gender, class, race, ability, location, culture, sexual orientation, religion, and other axes of identity interact on different levels and contribute to both social inequality and injustice (Carastathis, 2014).



volume of voices and lack of cohesion that intersectional feminism is creating. I made a stamp that could be used to easily reproduce the original 'feminist' text block and used it to create a series of randomized, repeated graphic patterns. This allowed me to quickly cycle through colours, which further enabled me to intuitively use various colors and impromptu patterns as a means of visually representing the different voices within feminism.

### Reflection:

Once the piece of cloth was stamped, I began to notice that I had been approaching authoring the visual representation in a very literal way. Upon reflection, it became evident that stamping was not representative of the abrasive nature of contemporary feminism in the digital space, nor was it representing Uvujaaren and Utt's (2015) notion that intersectionality is wearing the movement thin. As per my own reflection I began to question the role of the designer in authoring and creating commoditised objects within feminist discourse. I wondered if there was a way to experiment and explore more abstract methods of making and intersectionality that did not create products that could be fetishized.

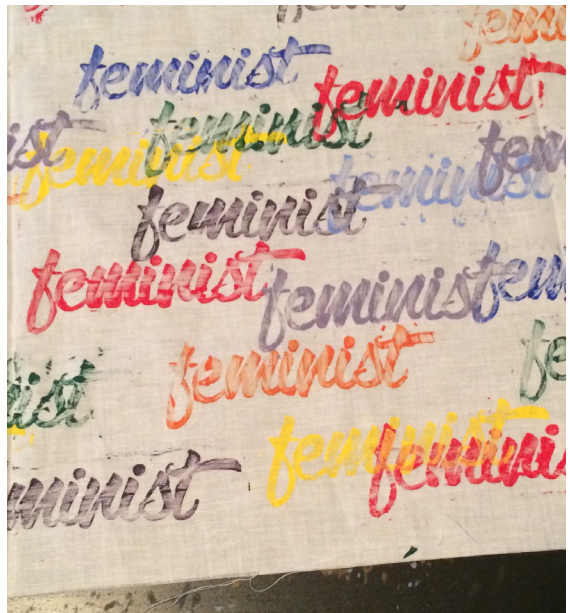


figure 22: Fabric work-in-progress

My fourth artifact and its construction lead to the following generative nodes and points that were used to fuel further explorations:

- It became evident that to work in a less literal matter I had to explore more abrasive ways of working, like glitching, data bending, and other abstract methods of making.
- Can working abstractly aid in the visualization of the notion of 'wearing thin' that is occurring within the current feminist movement?





figure 23 : Intersectional fabric final 4



# 1F. GLITCHES - ABRASIVE EXPLORATION

Drawing upon my desire to work abstractly and affect a more subtle tone within my work, I decided to draw upon more abrasive methods of making. I sought to explore the potential usage of ‘data bending’ as a means to abstractly show the notion that intersectionality is “wearing the movement thin” (Uwujaren & Utt, 2015). Data bending, in the case of images, is a process of manipulating information (code) from a created image using software designed to edit files of another format, such as a text editor (Geere, 2010). As a designer, data bending was a means to depict the abrasive nature of the current feminist movement by abstractly modifying an original image I had created.



figure 24 : 'feminist' in different fonts

## Rethinking typefaces:

Based on my prior explorations and reflections, I concluded that I needed to explore different typefaces in order to more clearly portray the variety and volume of voices within the feminist movement. After choosing several typefaces and laying them out in close proximity, I again created a graphic pattern from the myriad representations of the term ‘feminist’.

## Data bending:

My newly created graphic image (see figure 24) was ready to be manipulated through data bending. I duplicated the file and opened the duplicate in a text editor. This allowed me to alter the code of the image. I left the top third of the code alone to ensure that I did not corrupt the file, and began to inject the term ‘feminist’ into the latter sections of the code. I then exported the code, subsequently transforming the image into ‘glitch art’ (Geere, 2010). This process was repeated six times to create six separate images, which allowed for a progression to be shown. (see figure 25)

As a designer, the repetitive process of altering the image was a way of depicting the

**Glitch art:** A type of art that uses software to intentionally disrupt the information contained within a visual file to create a different looking visual file (Geere, 2012).

constant change that is occurring within the current North American feminist movement. The more that I injected the term 'feminist' into the previous images' code, the more the words of the image were visually distorted and rendered unclear. Further, my lack of direct control over the visual outcome was a way for me to visualize and consider the lack of cohesion or centralization within the movement and the overall inability of members and society to define or contextualize notions of feminism in contemporary culture.

### Reflection:

Once finished, I began to realize that this exploration was not successful. While I had intended to design an abstract visualization of my research on feminism, the final outcomes were too abstract and extremely difficult for viewers to understand without additional context. I do think that utilizing data-bending as a make technique was interesting. My work, once contextualized did succeed in facilitating a dialogue around the potential future notions of feminism, which is the goal of this thesis research. As an abstract visual form however the insight remained hidden. In terms being a designer as author, this artifact allowed me

to explore abstract methods of illustrating complex social problems. It provided me with potential tools and methods of abstract making that could be used within future artifacts outside of this thesis, but overall, I felt this exploration went too far from the commoditized artifacts that were authored prior. It is with this realization that I began to rethink the level of abstraction needed to create an artifact that fetishized feminism. I began to consider ways that I could critique the viewer's understanding of what was being satirically presented to them.

**My fifth artifact and its construction lead to the following generative nodes and points that were used to fuel further explorations:**

- It became clear that to move forward it was critical to explore and evaluate the level of abstraction needed to communicate the complexity of intersectionality within an artifact while still making sure it is accessible to a broad audience.
- How can the utilization of juxtaposing voices create a visual debate? What role does utilizing editorial graphic skills play in this juxtaposition? How can I use those skills to still maintain the notion of 'wearing thin'?

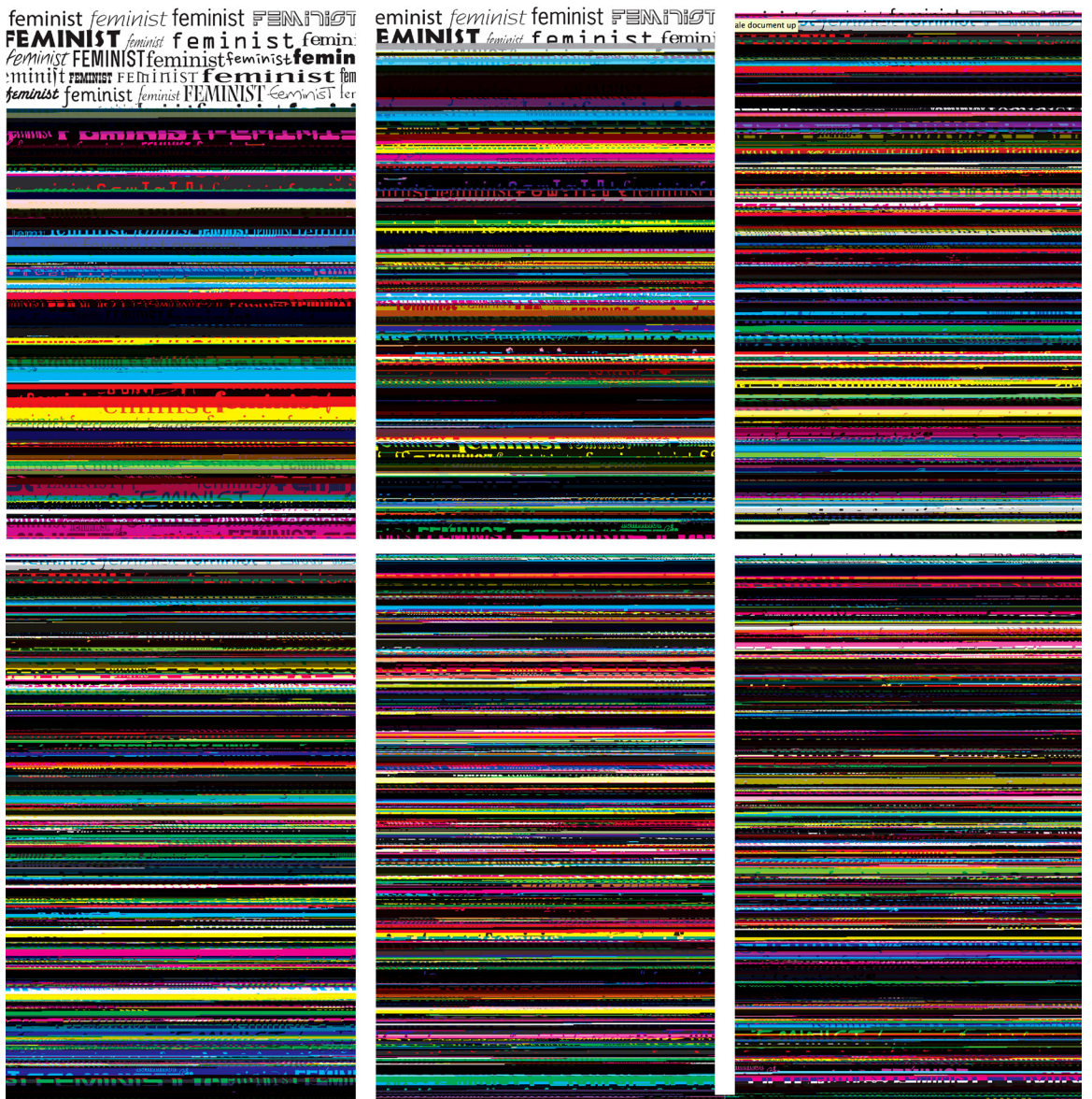


figure 25 : Glitches - abrasive exploration

# 1G. JUXTAPOSING VOICES THROUGH POSTERS

After the data bending exploration that occurred in section 4f, I decided to move back towards using a more literal approach in my work. I sought to do this by drawing on the notion of intersectionality and the differing of voices within the current feminist discourse in both pop culture and academia. An example of this binary is Hook's viewpoint on the media and pop culture icons, particularly how such figures are fuelling "the tropes of the existing, imperialist, white supremacist, patriarchal capitalist structure of female sexuality" (Hooks, 2014). This perspective stands in contrast to Brodsky's assertion that pop culture icons are allowing young women to experience accurate portrayals of feminism outside of the classroom (Brodsky, 2014). With this in mind I sought to create an artifact that could illustrate opposing viewpoints and the current debate within the movement. My work knowingly pointed to a contemporary feminist schism - the academic and pop culture definitions of 'feminist' do not always align.

In order to showcase Brodsky and Hooks' opposing views, I chose to juxtapose topical quotes and visual representations of eight individuals as posters, including four media icons and four academics. Half of the

individuals and their selected quotes support Brodsky's assertion, while the other half support Hooks' views.

**Media icons that were chosen and why they are significant:**

1. Lorde (musician/ performer): Lorde calls attention to other pop culture icons that reject feminism, or who partake in anti-feminist ideologies.
2. Beyoncé (musician/ performer): Beyoncé is a spokesperson for women's rights, sexual liberation of females, and a supporter of female empowerment.
3. Pat Robertson (media mogul / author): Pat Robertson is a media figure that partakes in anti-feminist discourse and consistently calls negative attention to feminists.
4. Miley Cyrus (musician/ performer): Miley is a current advocate for females to take ownership of their sexuality.

**Academic feminists that were chosen and why they are significant:**

1. Dr. Alexandra Apolloni (PhD in Musicology, editor-in-chief of Echo): Alexandra Apolloni argues that Miley Cyrus' projected interpretation of



feminism is a valid form for modern feminism, and wants it to be taken seriously.

2. Dr. Bell Hooks (PhD in English, author, social activist): Bell Hooks is an advocate for women of colour in feminism, intersectional activism, and radical or reformist feminist thought.
3. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (MA in Creative Writing, MA in African Studies, author, public speaker): Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a public speaker that talks about how feminism needs to be inclusive.
4. Robin Morgan (political theorist, lecturer, poet, activist): Robin Morgan is an activist for women's rights, a strong believer in 'sisterhood' and in fighting against supposed male oppressors.

### Poster Creation:

Each of the four posters was to depict one media icon and one academic (see *figures 27 - 30*). I formed the backgrounds by manipulating and abstracting images of the eight individuals and turning them into images of TV static (see *figure 26*). I was seeking to metaphorically represent the amount of 'buzz' and 'noise' around the exhibited viewpoints within the poster itself.

Once I had chosen a quote from each individual I began to couple them in such a way that, when placed on a poster, it could visually exhibit a debate. For each poster, one quote was red while the other was black, as these two colours have similar visual contrast values against the chosen background, which allowed me to draw equal emphasis to both. This facilitated a visual exploration of current dichotomies within the feminist movement, while also very clearly depicting varying definitions of feminism.

### Reflection:

Overall the posters were a means for me to revert and explore the amount of authoring a designer needs to take on in order achieve and illustrate a debate. Through this artifact, like the first four (the pantsuit, painting, Feminist Barbie boxes, and fabric), I explored the potential of authoring and creating commoditised artifacts that present fetishized notions within current feminist discourse. The intention of the posters was to allow viewers a representation of the un-united discourse within feminism, such that they could reflect and potentially ask questions about the dichotomy and constant redefinition that is occurring within the movement. This afforded viewers the



ability to question the validity of the current discourse of feminism when presented with examples of debate between feminists.

Upon reflection I began to notice that the posters (and the other artifacts that I had created so far) did not have multiple entry points of engagement, and were not always understandable to those unfamiliar with the topic. While the posters successfully illustrated the un-unified front within feminism I was conscious that they were merely visual representations of a conversation and did not necessarily facilitate discussion.

My sixth artifact and its construction lead to the following generative nodes and points that were used to fuel further explorations:

- At this stage it became apparent that as a designer I had to switch from creating visuals that could spark conversation to actually facilitating conversations with other creative. It was this desire to involve other people that it was critical to also explore different levels of engagement such as co-creation and gaming.
- What happens when the designer steps down from being author and becomes facilitator? What happens when the

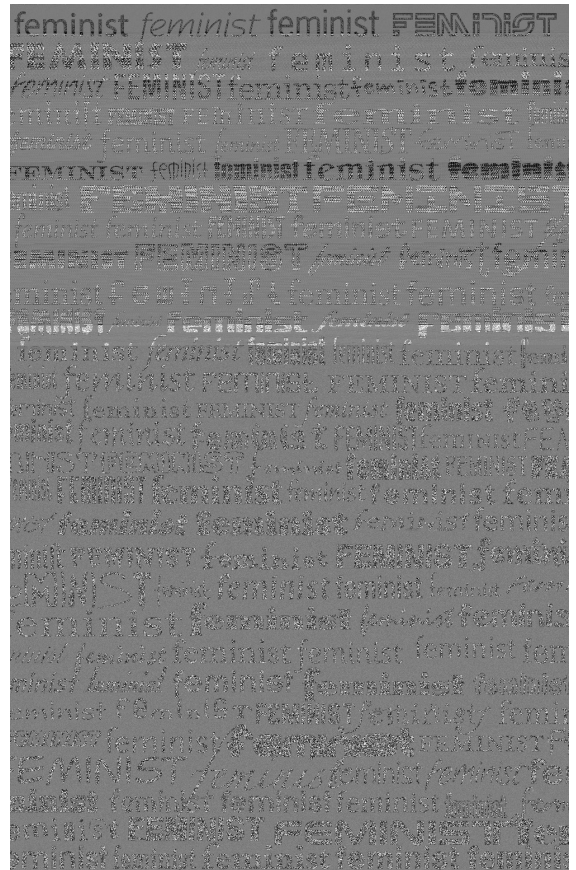


figure 26: Glitches - background static

participant is asked to become speculator or imaginer?



**We need to reshape**

**I see a part of Beyoncé that is in fact anti-feminist —**

**our own perception**

**that is a terrorist, especially in terms of the impact**

**of how we view**

**on young girls. I actually feel like the major of**

**ourselves.**

**assault on feminism in our society has come from**

**We have to step up**

**visual media, and from television, and videos.**

**as women and take**

**the lead.**

**-beyonce bell hooks-**

figure 27 :

Poster 01: Beyoncé vs. Bell Hooks



**I think women who say,**  
**Why the word feminist? Why not just say you**  
**'No, I'm not a feminist —**  
**are a believer in human rights, or something**  
**I love men,' I think that is just...**  
**like that?" Because that would be dishonest.**  
**You don't know what it means.**  
**Feminism is, of course, part of human rights**  
**You think it means that,**  
**in general—but to choose to use the vague**  
**'I don't shave under my arms,**  
**expression human rights is to deny the**  
**I burn my bras. F-k men!'**  
**specific and particular problem of gender.**  
**How could you be so**  
**It would be a way of pretending that it was**  
**uneducated, and so unwilling**  
**not women who have, for centuries,**  
**to learn about something which**  
**been excluded. It would be a way of denying**  
**is so important to you?**  
**that the problem of gender targets women.**  
**- lorde chimamanda ngozi adichie -**

figure 28 :  
Poster 02: Lorde vs. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie



**I feel that 'man-hating'**  
**[Feminism is] a socialist, anti-family,**  
**is an honorable and**  
**political movement that encourages women**  
**viable political act,**  
**to leave their husbands, kill their children,**  
**that the oppressed**  
**practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism**  
**have a right to**  
**and become lesbians.**  
**class-hatred against**  
**the class that is**  
**oppressing them.**

- robin morgan **pat robertson-**

figure 29:

Poster 03: Robin Morgan vs. Pat Robertson



Miley feminism is about fearlessness:

**I feel like I'm one**

about being unafraid to make choices,

**of the biggest**

to be yourself, to self-express. It's about

**feminists in the**

appropriating a masculine-coded kind of

**world because**

individual freedom: the freedom to not

**I tell women to not**

care, to show your titties on the beach,

**be scared of**

to party without consequences, to live

**anything.**

the "can't stop won't stop" dream

that Cyrus sang about in "We Can't Stop."

- miley cyrus alexandra apolloni -

figure 30:

Poster 04: Miley Cyrus vs. Alexandra Apolloni



# 1H. PHASE 1 - CONCLUSION

---

## Understanding through making:

My aim in phase one was to better understand the current state of feminist discourse by exploring feminist initiatives from a historical and cultural perspective. My work concentrated on researching literature on social theory in close conjunction with my own making, which I used as a means for exploring context. By applying a generative approach that intentionally pulled on previous written and visual work to kick-start the creation of my own artifact responses I gained access to a more nuanced understanding of the past decade of feminism.

This approach allowed me to visually explore intersectionality and privilege, two key areas that I had identified within feminism while reaffirming their importance. The artifacts created in phase one and the acts of making connected to them served as a significant means for my growing understanding of the social domain I had chosen to address. As time passed I began to reassess the significance of these to my own practice as a designer. Through them I was forced to consider and examine the role of artifacts as sites of exhibition and as receptacles and conveyors of satire and irony. My own

creative output served to challenge both my own and others' (people who viewed the work) understanding of complex social theories connected to the feminist movement.

Initially I projected that the outcomes from this phase of work would make up my main body of work. I was intent on taking on the role of designer as instigator and author of content. However, my role understanding of authoring changed over time. I began to be aware that I was working within a bubble that limited others' ability to join in a true conversation with me. I realized that I would need other people and their opinions to permeate my work if my objective was to incite and facilitate conversations. I began to understand that instigating modes of collaboration would be key to formulating these conversations. I began to develop a participatory creation exercise to help provide further insights on the way in which people associate clothing and fictions with the future of feminist discourse and allow me to facilitate a collaborative dialogue with others. My intent was to facilitate making and thinking opportunities for others - to find a way to externalize (both for myself and others) the internal dialogues that I underwent during my own process of making.

## The role of authoring as a Designer as Instigator:

As a designer the acts of authoring that I undertook in phase one were significant. Through transforming and expressing content through graphic devices I was able to take on and explore my own design activist voice (P.-A. Hillgren et al. , 2011). I was also able to consider the designer's responsibility in relation to changing and potentially altering the heavily laden cultural content within feminism. I considered personal voice and the task of interpretation in this context.

Through the authoring of designed artifacts intended to critique and explored a set of issues within feminism I was able to gain a nuanced understanding of intersectionality and privilege in relation to radical and reformist feminist ideals. Creating these artifacts allowed me to explore and reveal the opportunities, raise questions, highlight controversies within current feminist discourse (P.-A. Hillgren et al. , 2011).

I remoulded the 'raw' material that I had collected through researching both academic and pop feminist culture literature then re-contextualized it visually, by making it legible to a new audience and concurrently

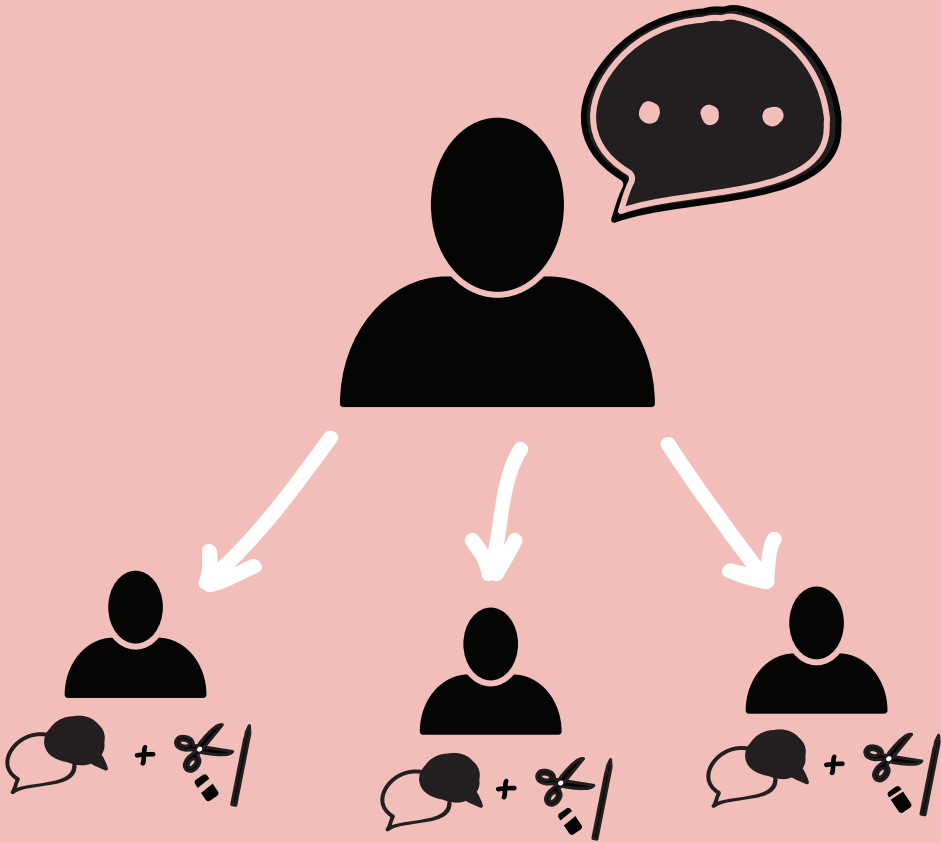
critiquing the existing discourse within and around feminism.

As important as authoring was in allowing my growth of understanding of the feminist space it presented a surface level critique that did not take into consideration an important element of the feminist discourse today – the voice of others. It did not enable me to produce artifacts that created the dynamic conversations needed in this space. I began to see that due to it's reactive nature authoring was merely a means of repackaging existing stereotypes. While it drew people to take notice and poked fun at the current understanding of feminism it did not allow for a much-needed deeper level of engagement from the viewers. Noticing this shortcoming I realized that insight from methodologies used in the domain of design for social innovation might be useful. Placing the participant in the center of the design process would allow me to collect different voices within feminist discourse (Burns et al., 2006). By inviting other creative individuals into the design space I afforded myself the means to shift from working solo as author to working with others as a facilitator, which opened up the conversation space.

# 2

## PHASE 2: Participant as Imaginer

prototyping;  
co-creation;  
participatory;  
opening the conversation  
space through making;  
speculating.



## 2A. METHODOLOGY

Following the insights and shortcomings of phase one, I began to plan a participatory generative design activity for the second phase of my research. The aim of this study was to facilitate a collaborative dialogue with others through making, similar to the internal dialogues that I underwent during my own process of making. The intention was to allow participants to use the provided tools to reveal and explore the deconstruction and reconstruction that occurs with the current usage of the term ‘feminist’, as well as to incite discussions around the political, social, and historical significance of clothing in relation to feminism. The participatory generative activity was formulated based on Sanders & Stappers’s ‘make and say’ techniques (2012). Below is a breakdown of the reasoning for and explanation of the implementation of these techniques.

### Make :

Participants were asked to work alone on the generative activity, in which they were instructed to use tools to re-imagine one of several gendered garments that had been placed on a table. The tools that were provided allowed participants to cut up, sew, disassemble, recreate, and mark up the garment regardless of their sewing or

making abilities. Tools that were provided were: scissors, staplers, tapes, markers, inks, water, paints, fabric swatches, paper, foam paper, and the ‘feminist’ stamp that had been designed for phase 1, section E. The range in tools and open method of assembly allowed participants to work quickly and experimentally. It enabled them to disregard rules of fashion and social expectation - to speculate on what could be instead of basing their creative decisions on what currently exists.

This activity allowed the participant to perform the creative act of deconstruction and reconstruction while thinking about notions of gender in garments, and the social implications therein. ‘Re-imagine’ was used as a trigger word because it was abstract and ambiguous enough to allow for multiple meanings and executions. The distinctive ‘feminist’ stamp also incited participants to speculate about possibilities pertaining to the future of feminism, and the social space occupied by the reconstructed garments.

### Say :

After each participant re-imagining his or her chosen garment, I conducted an interview with him or her. Participants were asked

**Gendered garments:** pieces of clothing that are socially and culturally connected and enforce the gender binary (Paoletti, 2012).



twelve questions, which are listed below alongside the rationale for each:

**1. Why did you choose the garment you did?**

This was to get participants to start thinking about what made them select their garment.

**2. Is it significant to you in any way?**

This was to get participants to elaborate upon their answer in question one, and see if there were any other factors that drew them towards the garment.

**3. Do you know the social, political or historical significance of this garment?**

This was intended as a means to get participants to begin to make connections between women's clothing and social, historical, and political theory.

**4. Do you agree or disagree that the garment you took apart is gendered?**

This was to begin to get participants to think about gender and potentially reconsider their answer from question three.

**5. How does that effect the way you interact with it?**

This was to encourage participants to consider whether notions of femininity had influenced their making, altered the way in

which they interacted with the garment, or if it made them want to challenge the garment's gender.

**6. What were you thinking about when you took apart the garment?**

This question was to allow participants to start to describe their thought process and begin to consolidate their thoughts from the previous questions.

**7. What tools did you use? Why did you choose those?**

This was to allow participants the ability to elaborate on their make process, and to allow me to evaluate which tools worked and which didn't.

**8. Describe your make process.**

This question was to encourage participants to walk me through their process so I could gain a better understanding of what they did.

**9. What are your intentions with the new garment?**

This was to allow participants to begin to explain what their motives were while making, and to determine what they thought "re-imagine" meant.

**10. In what context would someone wear the**

new piece you created?

This question was to allow participants to speculate the potential wearer of the garment, and where she/he/it would wear it.

**11. Is the new garment you created more or less gendered?**

This question was to encourage participants to begin to reflect on whether or not their new garment had broken the connotations of the original garment.

**12. Did this exercise make you think more about the social implications and potential implications of clothing? Yes or no, and why?**

This question encouraged participants to reflect upon the study and if they felt that being put in the role of imaginer/ speculator made them question clothing more.



*figure 31: Participants working on garments*



*figure 32: The table set up for the study*

## 2B. MAKE ACTIVITY FINDINGS

### General findings:

Participants sifted through the pile of clothes that they were to choose from until deciding upon a garment to 're-imagine'. After they had made their decision they would lay their garment on the table, put it on the dress form provided, or try the article of clothing on before deconstructing it. Once they had decided upon a potential way to start they would scan the tools on the table, which usually lead to them reaching for the scissors. Participants overlapped, pinned, tied, turned inside out, turned around, stapled, taped, stickered, stamped, added, and subtracted the garment while making. Tools that were chosen allowed participants to work quickly and experimentally and enabled them to disregard rules of fashion. The re-imaged garments were either hyper-feminine or largely unisex, challenging the pre-existing gender conventions and social implications of the original clothing.

### Irregular findings:

Three participants added elements of functionality to their created garments by adding pockets, removing shoulder pads, and opening existing pockets. Additionally, four participants removed elements of



*figure 33: Participant planning out their garment*

functionality by turning their chosen garments into accessories, cutting holes that revealed skin, or removing sleeves. Two participants removed the labels from their initial garment and placed them on the fronts of their newly created pieces of clothing in order to brand their creations while ridiculing the garments' original brand identities. Another participant took the 'feminist' stamp and applied it on the left chest portion of the garment to resemble a nametag, further bolstering notions of gender in the garment and implying that its hypothetical wearers are aligned with the feminist movement. Several participants took fairly simple garments and added intricate elements to it such as braided ropes, shapes cut out of other pieces of fabric, and stickers that created patterns.





*figure 34 :*  
Participant 1's 're-imagined' garment



*figure 35 :*  
Participant 2's 're-imagined' garment



*figure 36 :*  
Participant 3's 're-imagined' garment



*figure 37 :*  
Participant 4's 're-imagined' garment





*figure 38 :  
Participant 5's 're-imagined' garment*



*figure 39 :  
Participant 6's 're-imagined' garment*



*figure 40:*  
Participant 7's 're-imagined' garment



*figure 41 :*  
Participant 8's 're-imagined' garment





figure 42:  
Participant 9's 're-imagined' garment



figure 43 :  
Participant 10's 're-imagined' garment

## 2B. SAY ACTIVITY FINDINGS

---

### General findings:

Participants generally indicated that they were drawn to articles of clothing that they were either visually attracted to or could fit into. When asked about why the garment they chose was significant to them, they would say that it reminded them of a moment in their life, or that it was similar to something they would wear. Most participants did not know the social, political, or historical implications of the garment they had chosen to deconstruct, though they could identify whether or not the garment was conventionally gendered. Participants did explain that the gendered nature of their chosen garment influenced the way the ‘re-imagined’ it.

When describing their process, participants broke down how they made their final piece and what they were thinking during it. All participants touched upon the fact that their process was playful and allowed them to be experimental due to the openness of the make activity. Participants were divided in making the garment more and less gendered.

When asked if the make study made them think more or less about the social implications and potential implications of

clothing, participants all replied ‘yes’, and indicated that having a play space to explore the potential allowed them to more easily ‘re-imagine’ the garments.

### Irregular findings:

Several participants explained that they saw the initial garment as gendered based on the cut, style, fit, color, and pattern. One participant in particular mentioned that the pattern was the defining attribute from the garment, which lead her to think of the type of person that would wear it. A few participants who chose garments opposite their gender explained that they sought to make the garments unisex, and in doing so made the initial garment less gendered. Other participants explained that they wanted to create something that pushed the boundaries of femininity and moved more towards performance pieces or hyper sexualized pieces of clothing.

The most interesting irregular finding from the study was how, when asked to provide a context in which his or her new garment was worn, each participant described a fictional character or context. Below are the ten characters and contexts that came from the say activity.

1. Participant one imagined a fictional queer military woman with multiple badges.
2. Participant two imagined fictional model at an experimental fashion show or an event where clothing is talked about.
3. Participant three imagined a fictional character that could wear the garment to a work or office environment.
4. Participant four imagined a fictional feminist activist that would go utilize the provided stamp to stamp the word 'feminist' everywhere.
5. Participant five imagined a fictional character that was an experimental fashion wearer and enthusiast.
6. Participant six imagined a fictional female alien that would be the first extraterrestrial to contact the people of Earth.
7. Participant seven imagined a garment that he could wear, was unisex, and could fit into modern styles of dress.
8. Participant eight imagined a fictional character that would wear her garment like a costume, similar to cosplayers.



*figure 44 :  
Participant 8 wearing her garment during the Say activity*

9. Participant nine imagined a fictional character that wore a feminist work jumpsuit and was interested in politics and culture.
10. Participant ten imagined a fictional character that wanted to over-sexualize their graduation as a means to critique professional ceremonies and socially approved ways of dressing.

**Cosplayer:** a person who partakes in the art or practice of wearing costumes to portray characters from fiction (such as cartoons, comics, science fiction, movies, animes, mangas, television shows) (*Dictionary.com*).



## 2C. PHASE 2 CONCLUSION

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### Reflection:

Overall, phase two was successful. I was able to facilitate a space where participants could 're-imagine' garments in such a way that allowed them to experiment and play with pre-existing gender norms and social conventions. Going into the planned participatory generative design activity, I sought to incite conversations around the political, social and historical significance of clothing in relation to feminism; however, it quickly became evident that participants rarely thought about these three notions when conversing or thinking about the clothing. Instead, they were more interested in explaining more radical notions of dress and femininity. The resulting artifacts reminded me of my attempts to visualize radical feminist ideas and the idea of challenging current visual and social implications of the gender binary.

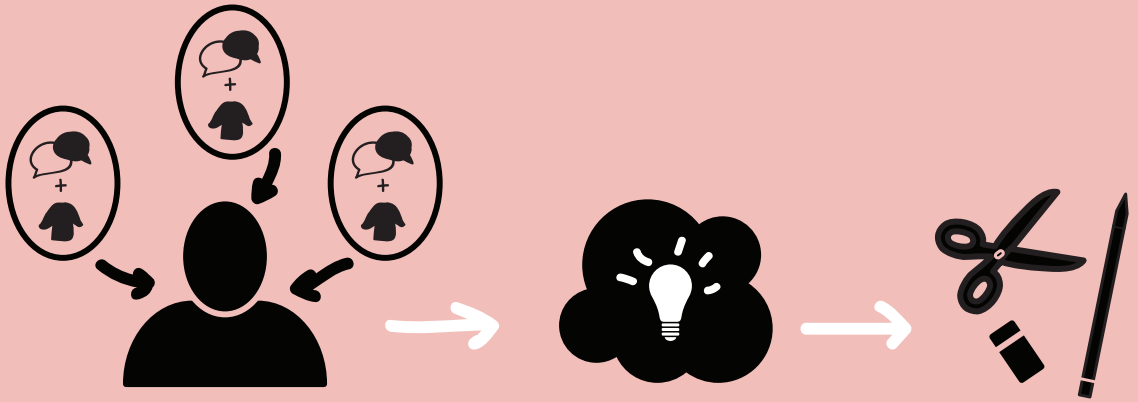
It was interesting that participants did not speak about their newly created pieces as garments that could be worn in 'real life', but spoke about them in such a way that allowed me to imagine a hypothetical future where they could work in. Participants were speculating a potential future of feminist clothing, and it became evident to me during

the say activity that the garments they had created were becoming props of sorts to hypothetical futures, futures that I was internally creating and thinking of during the interviews. I became intrigued in this idea of the participant creating a narrative framework that a designer could illustrate and elaborate upon later - as a means to collaboratively speculate possible futures while incorporating multiple individuals' viewpoints. Taking the narratives and 'props' that had been created I moved onto phase three, where I sought to design and elaborate upon these radical feminist futures.

# 3

## PHASE 2: Designer as Reactive Speculator

prototyping;  
critical play;  
speculating;  
role-playing.



## 3A. FEMINIST GUIDES - METHODOLOGY

---

The data collected from phase two informed my own making. I broke down the artifacts that participants had created into two categories: those that were performative versus those that were functional.

The garments that fit into the 'performative' category were pieces that participants considered as accessories, or were made as intentional critiques of hyper-sexualized forms of femininity. The garments in this category explored notions of feminist activism and the potential for clothing to be a conversation starter about societal paradigm shifts. They relate to the activist approach of radical feminism. Conversely, the garments that fit into the 'functional' category were pieces that participants added pockets to, removed sleeves some, made elements less sheer, added opened un-functional pockets, or transformed in such a way that daily tasks were easier to complete. The artifacts in this category explored notions of fixing existing problems within garments and women's modes of dress and the implications therein. They relate to the inclusive and intersectional approach of reformist feminism. I applied these findings to the same methodological cycle that I had used during phase 1 (see figure 4). I used them as a means to assess whether collecting participatory data in any

way altered the process I had previously established for myself. In doing so, I sought to determine whether participatory data lead to more successful outcomes, and to investigate if the data affected the satirical tone of the created artifacts. Two artifacts were created based on the performative and functional categories identified above.

## 3A. FEMINIST GUIDES - PROCESS

---

### Thinking about cult-like hierarchal structures

I began to explore hypothetical hierarchal structures that might use the ‘performative’ and ‘functional’ approaches identified from phase two. I was interested in linking these to representations of radical and reformist feminist agendas. After researching and surveying existing hierarchal structures for women, I decided to create a satirical representation of radical and reformist feminism using visual cues from the Girl Guides of Canada. Girl Guides of Canada is an organization that enables girls to be confident, resourceful and courageous, and to make a difference in the world and within their communities (*Girl Guides*, 2012). They achieve this by supporting girls to achieve and succeed through earning merit badges based on the completion of adventures, challenges, and international experiences (*Girl Guides*, 2012).

I was interested in the potential of transforming several of the stereotypes revealed during phase one such as the idea that: feminists are un-feminine, feminists are aggressive, feminists wear pantsuits, and feminists victimize women (Kim, 2012). I sought to create tasks that members of

these hypothetical radical and reformist organizations might have to complete in order to receive badges of merit and subsequently advance in their respective movements. The purpose of the exercise was to draw attention to social structures that enforce dogmatic adherence to particular interpretations of feminism, and to also criticize the stereotypes associated with these tactics of cohesion.

I created fictional radical feminist organization that used badges, sashes, and guidebooks. By using the information collected from the ‘performative’ category artifacts such as: the utilization of costumes and accessories to critique the socio-cultural understanding of gender, the activist-like characters that came from the say activity, and the intentional critiques created of the hyper-sexualization within femininity.

Members within this fictional ‘Feminist Guide’ structure are referred to as ‘sisters’, as a means to satirically allude to Hooks’ notion of sisterhood within feminism (2000). Members can earn badges by completing tasks that are depicted in their guidebook, and upon achieving a badge members are encouraged to pin the badges to their sash. Badges explored: hyper-sexualization of



women; sisterhood; 'no-shave' culture within feminism; the stereotypically combative nature within radical feminism; and several other stereotypes depicted in phase one. An example of the types of badges and their corresponding achievement is pictured in *figure 48*.

I created a parallel fictional reformist feminist hierarchal structure that also employs badges, sashes, and guidebooks. Using information collected within the 'functional' category such as: the exploration of fixing existing problems within garments and women's modes of dress and the implications therein by adding pockets, opening up areas, removing shoulder pads and de-gendering existing pieces of clothing.

Unlike the radical structure, however, members of this 'Feminist Guide' are referred to as 'supporters' to satirically represent the inclusionary and relatively passive nature of reformist feminism. Just like the radical 'Feminist Guide' organization, members can earn badges to pin to their sashes by completing the tasks in their guidebook. Badges within the reformist structure explore feminist education, intersectionality, the inclusion of male feminists, and other stereotypes of the reformist feminist movement.



*figure 45 : The badges within two fictional Feminist Guides*

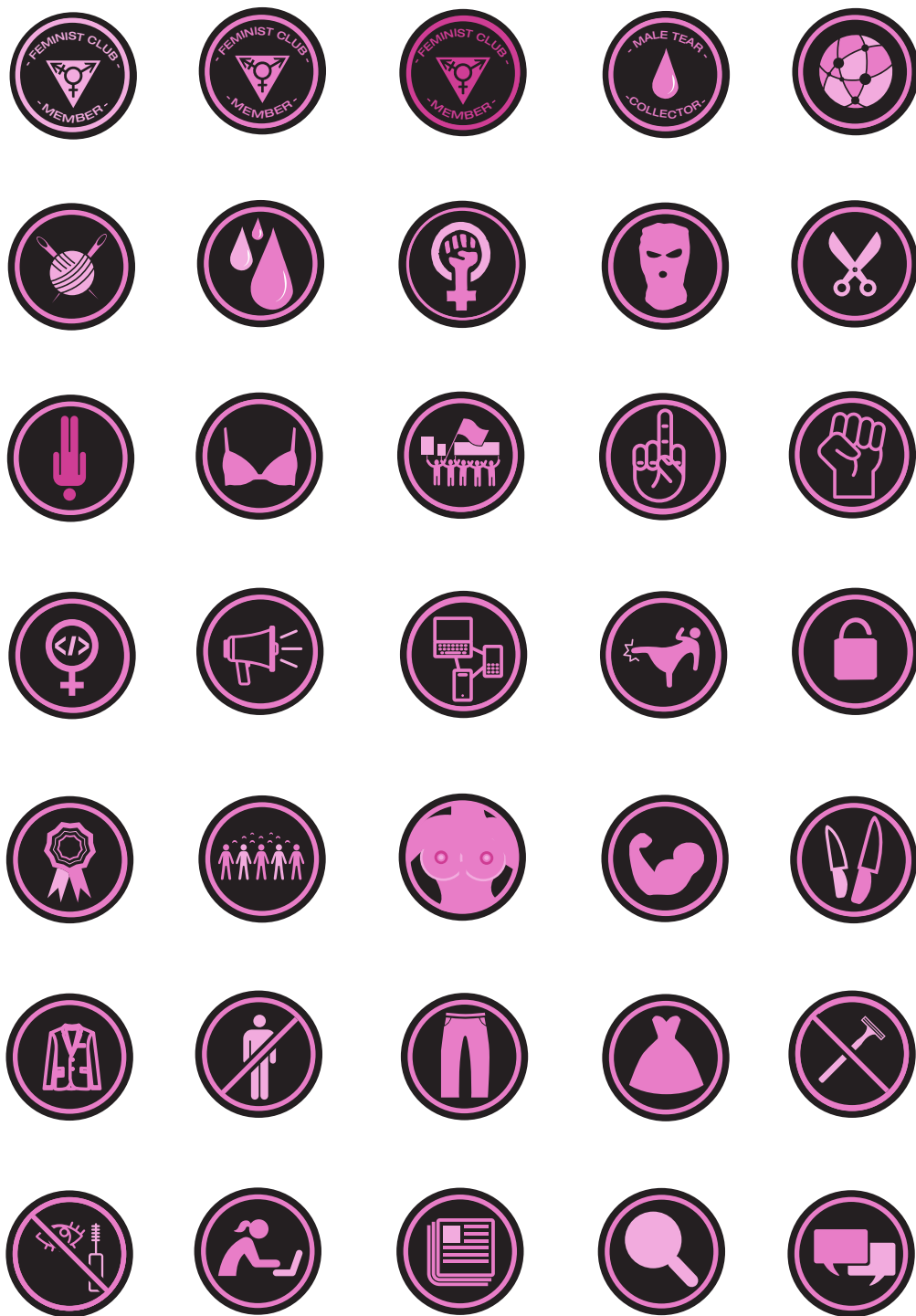


figure 46 :  
The badges within two fictional Feminist Guides

## FEMINIST GUIDE RULES:

Feminist Guide is the only club for feminists to network, come together, and to defeat the patriarchy while achieving similar goals.

### Current standing Feminist Guide rules are:

1. All members must attend weekly online meetings and monthly meet ups in their cities.
2. Members are to report to the head Feminist Leader of their club when they have completed a task that results in a badge.
3. Members are allowed to take badges away if a member does not live up to these rules or does something undesirable.
4. Members are to channel their anger into achieving goals faster.
5. Members who getters will be compensated and move up faster.
6. Members are given bonus points and privileges if they wear appropriate attire when attending meetings (e.g. anti-Feminist Guide t-shirts and badges).
7. Members of the Feminist Guide riot.
8. Members report any concerns to the head Feminist Guide.
9. Members are to channel their anger into achieving goals faster.
10. Members are given bonus points and privileges if they wear appropriate attire when attending meetings (e.g. anti-Feminist Guide t-shirts and badges).
11. Members of the Feminist Guide riot.
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99. Members of the Feminist Guide riot.
100. Members report any concerns to the head Feminist Guide.

## BADGE RULES:

To achieve these badges fellow sisters must complete the task that goes along with the badge. Badges are given out by the head Feminist Guide Leader. Badges are given out at the end of each city's meetings. If a member collected a badge they are allowed to apply for a leadership position. The board will then decide on their promotion.

03

# FEMINIST GUIDE

## BADGE BO

figure 47 :  
The two fictional Feminist Guides booklets



### LITTLE SISTER

Light pink badges are given to new sisters within their first year.



### BIG SISTER

Medium pink badges are given to sisters who have been Feminist Guides for over 2 years.



### LEADER

Feminist Guide Leaders will be given a dark pink badge.

## MEMBER BADGES:

Member badges are given to all sisters of the Feminist Guide upon joining. Each color represents a different ranking within the Feminist Guide.

04



### KICK BACK SISTER

Given to sisters who physically engage in battle against anti-feminists.



### CALL OUT

Given to sisters who make an effort to speak up for fellow sisters.



### ANGRY SISTER

Given to sisters who showcase extreme levels of anger towards anti-feminist groups.

## ACTIVIST BADGES: vol 1.

Activist badges are given to sisters who complete the activist task that go with each badge. Volume One badges are given to sisters with extreme levels of anger.

05



### UNITED SISTER

Given to sisters who show outstanding support in sister to sister relations.



### POWER TO THE SISTER

Given to sisters who support their local Feminist Guide riot subclubs.



### RALLY PARTICIPANT

Given to sisters who participate in Feminist Guide rallies.

## ACTIVIST BADGES: vol 2.

Activist volume two badges are given to sisters who support rallies and activist movements within their Feminist Guides communities.

06



### NIPPLE FREE-ER

Given to sisters who actively participate in the notion of "freeing the nipple".



### FUZZY FIGHTER

Given to sisters who refuse to shave and partake in societal body hair norms.



### MAKE-DOWN

Given to sisters who reject societal beauty norms of wearing make-up.

## ACTIVIST BADGES: vol 3.

Activist volume three badges are given to sisters who reject societal beauty norms, and show excellence in Feminist Guide ideologies around beauty.

07



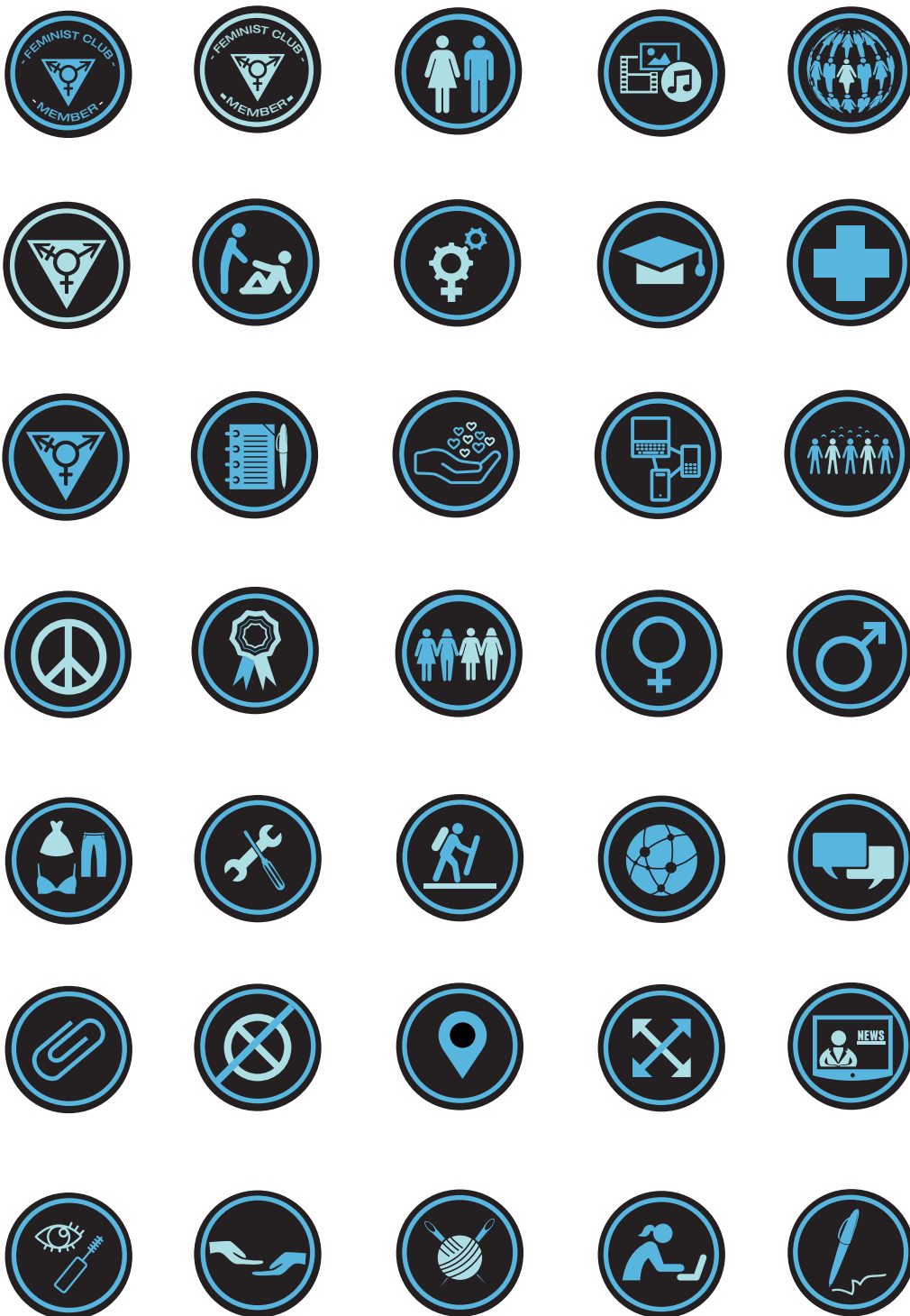


figure 49 : The badges from the blue  
Feminist Guides

**ADGE RULES:**  
To achieve these badges fellow members will be given to complete the task that goes along with each badge. Guide Leader: Badges are given out at city meetings. If a member collects all the badges, they are allowed to apply for a leadership position on the board. The board will then decide on their promotion.

03



67



#### PARTICIPANT

Light blue badges are given to new supporters within their first year.



#### ASSISTANT

Medium blue badges are given to supporters who have been Feminist Guides for over 2 years.



#### MANAGER

Feminist Guide Managers will be given a dark blue badge.

### MEMBER BADGES:

Member badges are given to all supporters of the Feminist Guide upon joining. Each color represents a different ranking within the Feminist Guide.

04



#### HELPING HAND

Given to supporters who help others.



#### NURSE STATUS

Given to supporters who provide medical assistance to someone in need.



#### LENDING HAND

Given to supporters who showcase extreme levels of sharing.

### HELPING BADGES: vol 1.

Helping badges are given to supporters who complete the helping task that go with each badge. Volume One badges are given to supporters who exhibit extreme helping qualities.

05



#### UNITED SUPPORTER

Given to supports who show outstanding support in member to member relations.



#### LOVING HAND

Given to supporters who support their local Feminist Guide.



#### ONE LOVE

Given to supporters who aid in Feminist Guides globally.

### HELPING BADGES: vol 2.

Helping volume two badges are given to supporters who support others within their Feminist Guides communities.

06



#### CONNECT(ECH)ED

Given to supporters who actively participate in online discourse positively.



#### ONLINE SUPPORT

Given to supporters who provide comfort to other supporters online.



#### UN-OFFICAL ANCHOR

Given to supporters who provide pressing news to others about current issues.

### HELPING BADGES: vol 3.

Helping volume three badges are given to supporters who provide information and navigator online platforms with Feminist Guide ideologies in mind.

07

## 3A. FEMINIST GUIDES - REFLECTION

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The creation of the fictional Feminist Guides was a means for me to explore the use of participatory data and its effect on the satirical outcome of my make process. The participant data from phase two effectively informed and augmented my designed artifacts in this latter stage. The range of understandings and contexts that were derived from the say activity in phase two facilitated the creation of nuanced fictional hierarchal structures for this project that represented both reformist and radical feminist agendas. A more sophisticated degree of satire (than found in phase one) was achieved as a result.

The two artifacts described above successfully used existing hierarchal structures and stereotypes and presented them as satirical futures of the feminist movement. Despite this success, I still felt I was missing an opportunity to explore the participants' garments and characters derived through the participant making process of phase two. I decided to explore the potential of the participants' characters to contextualize potential fictional futures of feminism.

My seventh artifact and its construction lead to the following generative nodes and

points, which were used to fuel further explorations:

- By using the participant's viewpoints and artifacts I was able to generate a much deeper and meaningful artifact that illustrated a satirical commentary on current feminism.
- The artifacts from phase two brought to the fore the desire to explore the created garments as instigators to spark conversation around the future of feminism and to flush out the character personas that participants described during the say activity.
- After creating the Feminist Guides it became apparent that a more critical method of participant engagement should and could be explored such as role-playing.

**Role-playing:** To assume deliberately the part or role of another person or character; to act out (*Dictionary.com*)



# 3B. FUTURE FEMINISM ROLE-PLAY GAME

## - METHODOLOGY

### Role-playing:

Role-playing is defined within design as the practice where a group of individuals deliberately assume a character role in a constructed scene with, or without, props (Simsarian, 2003). Within a design for social innovation context role-playing can be seen as “a vehicle that allows for the exploration of actions that depart from the norms” (Boess, 2006). This act is also seen in popular table talk RPGs (role-play games) such as Dungeons and Dragons, Pathfinder, and Savage Worlds (Grigsby, 2012). Within this realm of play players determine their actions of their characters based on their characterization, and personality derived from their character cards. Roleplaying within this context allows for:

- The ability to explore possibilities that may not be easily achievable in the world
- Building a deeper understanding of feminism grounded within a new radical context that is presented in the game
- The ability to explore different view points on feminism that may be different than the player's
- Have players identify with one of the feminist categories each character card based off of the props from phase two.

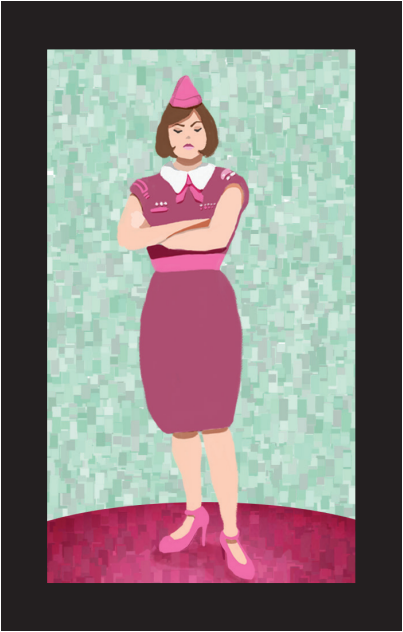
The designer within this role-play scenario can take on the role of the Game Master or director where they prompt participants to answer questions as the character based on the issues within feminism that are depicted in phase one. By asking questions based around the complex problems within feminism the designer is facilitating and helping the player act through the problem space by thinking of it through the lens of the character they chose.

### The character cards:

Drawing from the content and fictional characters from phase two's interviews I began to speculate and design a fictional world inhabited by the persona my participants had described to me. Each character was given a name, a role within their fictional world, and a hypothetical environment to live in. This information was then used to aid in illustrating each character so that a playing card could be made of each. The aim was to illustrate the diverse futures of feminism that were derived from phase two and create personas that players could act as through role-playing, as a means to explore a different value systems.

*Table-talk role-play game: a form of role-playing in which participants describe their characters' actions through speech. Participants base those actions on their characters' personality traits (Kim, 2008).*

## Character Cards



CAROL

**BACKGROUND**  
Full Title: Sister Carol Denver  
Age: 28 years  
Occupation: District 49 Feminist Guide Leader  
Origin: Vancouver Area

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**  
Agressive Independent Rule follower  
Activist Leaderly Political  
Assertive Strong Strict  
Disciplined Opinionated Authoritarian

**SYNOPSIS**  
Carol has been a Feminist Guides Sister for the past twenty years. She has moved up the rankings in her area and is now the leader of her district. She is extremely opinionated and in your face. She is a strong believer in the sisterhood and supporter of her fellow sister. Carol tells it like it is and doesn't sugar coat it.

figure 53:  
Carol card



ASHLEY

**BACKGROUND**  
Full Title: Commissioner Ashley Nenano  
Age: 30 years  
Occupation: Central North America Fem[e]nist Guide Commissioner  
Origin: Minnesota

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**  
Passive Genuine Sociable  
Loyal Many-sided Paternal  
Caring Reliable Neutral  
Ethical Sensitive Progressive

**SYNOPSIS**  
Ashley was appointed Commissioner of the Central North America's Fem[e]nist Guides earlier this year. He is understanding and soft spoken amongst the members. He understands intersectionalism and the importance of inclusion within the Fem[e]nist Guides. Ashley goes out of his way to make sure everyone in his area feels comfortable and safe.

figure 54:  
Ashley card



TARA

**BACKGROUND**  
Full Title: Tara McNeals  
Age: 22 years  
Occupation: Stanford University's LGBTQIA Club Recruiter  
Origin: Stanford

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**  
Loud Courageous Freethinking  
Agressive Confident Herioc  
Persuasive Educated Protective  
Cynical Decisive Political

**SYNOPSIS**  
Tara is the LGBTQIA recruiter at Stanford University. She runs the club's vegan Wednesday meals and the poster making sessions. Tara is loud and in your face, she is the leading figure in all LGBTQIA events, riots, and sit-ins. Tara is not afraid to stand up for what she believes in, even if it gets her into trouble as she's already been arrested six times for protesting!

figure 55:  
Tara card



JAIDEN

**BACKGROUND**

Full Title: Jaiden Knowles  
Age: 20 years  
Occupation: Runway model  
Origin: New York City

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Creative	Experimental	Spontaneous
Imaginative	Innovative	Excitable
Lyrical	Spontaneous	Flamboyant
Passionate	Critical	Political

**SYNOPSIS**

Jaiden is a runway model in NYC. [S]he is currently the face of Vivienne Westwood's 2025 experimental clothing line that challenges notions of feminine within North American society. Jaiden is creative and opinionated, she considers herself to be androgenous and rejects hyperfemininity.

figure 56:  
Jaiden card



DAKOTA

**BACKGROUND**

Full Title: Dakota Milar  
Age: 35 years  
Occupation: Project lead  
Origin: Toronto

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Assertive	Political	Liberal
Aggressive	Independent	Do it yourself
Creative	Blunt	Outrageous
Activist	Opinionated	Self-sufficient

**SYNOPSIS**

Casey is a DIY activist living in NYC. She partakes in the yearly slut walk and is a street artist that stamps her 'feminist' tag around the streets of Brooklyn. She is the leader of her local Feminist Girl Gang and proud supporter of the Cis-ters Against Cat Calls group.

figure 57:  
Dakota card



CASEY

**BACKGROUND**

Full Title: Casey Day  
Age: 19 years  
Occupation: Student  
Origin: New York City

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Assertive	Political	Liberal
Aggressive	Independent	Do it yourself
Creative	Blunt	Outrageous
Activist	Opinionated	Self-sufficient

**SYNOPSIS**

Casey is a DIY activist living in NYC. She partakes in the yearly slut walk and is a street artist that stamps her 'feminist' tag around the streets of Brooklyn. She is the leader of her local Feminist Girl Gang and proud supporter of the Cis-ters Against Cat Calls group.

figure 58:  
Casey card





# KAI

**BACKGROUND**

**Full Title:** Kai  
**Age:** 20 years  
**Occupation:** Singer  
**Origin:** Los Angeles

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Creative	Glamorous	Experimental
Activist	Independent	Strong-willed
Liberal	Outspoken	Charismatic
Colorful	Flamboyant	Original

**SYNOPSIS**

Kai is a singer in LA who is well known for her over the top costumes and outspoken nature around women's rights. She does not believe in labels and makes all of her own clothes as she refuses to conform to trends. Kai uses her clothing as a means to express and perform her desired gender.

figure 59:  
Kai card

# XA3\*ZA

**BACKGROUND**

**Full Title:** Xa3\*za  
**Age:** unknown  
**Occupation:** President  
**Origin:** Ouaxon 3

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Aristocratic	Assertive	Patriotic
Noble	Independent	Strong-willed
Charismatic	Leaderly	Personable
Considerate	Orderly	Responsible

**SYNOPSIS**

Xa3\*za is the president from the planet Ouaxon 3. She is in charge of travelling to new planets to educate people about Ouaxon 3, a planet only populated by women. Xa3\*za is the liaison between her home planet and earth, as she empathizes with the human race.

figure 60:  
Xa3\*za card

# ALLAN

**BACKGROUND**

**Full Title:** Allan McGregor  
**Age:** 22 years  
**Occupation:** Student  
**Origin:** Scotland, living in Chicago

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Kind	Artful	Clear-headed
Charismatic	Educated	Practical
Caring	Dependent	Personable
Courageous	Liberal	Responsible

**SYNOPSIS**

Allan is a university student studying architecture in Chicago. He is rational, clear-headed, and very liberal. Allan is kind, understanding, and usually tries to empathize before picking sides on controversial topics.

figure 61:  
Allan card



**MADDIE**

**BACKGROUND**

Full Title: Maddie Wong  
Age: 21 years  
Occupation: Student / Professional cosplayer  
Origin: San Diego

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Creative	Artful	Experimental
Optimistic	Imaginative	Fun-loving
Caring	Confident	Personable
Courageous	Curious	Genuine

**SYNOPSIS**

Maddie is a student and professional cosplayer. She is also in charge of the Geek Girls club that meets at every Comic Con to promote and protest against the sexualization and mistreatment of women in costumes. She is against slut shaming of any kind, especially women in costumes! Maddie is confident and creative and uses her fashion skills to make her ideas come to life, and to pretend to be other people.

figure 62:  
Maddie card



**MACKENZIE**

**BACKGROUND**

Full Title: Mackenzie Sighn  
Age: 24 years  
Occupation: Street Artist  
Origin: Montreal

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Adventurous	Artful	Abrasive
Creative	Sneaky	Blunt
Rebellious	Confident	Cynical
Outspoken	Political	Demanding

**SYNOPSIS**

Mackenzie is a street artist living in Montreal. The subject matter of her work is illustrating the injustices Canadian women have to deal with on a daily basis. She also secretly at night goes out with her crew and tags 'feminist' on major corporations that are deemed sexist.

figure 63:  
Mackenzie card



**RAILEIGH**

**BACKGROUND**

Full Title: Raileigh Pogue  
Age: 25 years  
Occupation: graduate student  
Origin: New York City

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Loud	Blunt	Independent
Creative	Provocative	Outrageous
Rebellious	Confident	Flamboyant
Outspoken	Quirky	Spontaneous

**SYNOPSIS**

Raileigh is a 24 year old graduate student at Parsons studying performance art. She is graduating this year and is planning to act out against the fact she is being forced to wear a gown and dress to her graduation. Raileigh rejects notions of the feminine in her everyday dressing, but in her performances she uses feminine tropes to satirically mock gender in society.

figure 63:  
Raileigh card

## Game Play

Upon the completion of the cards I began prepping for the table-talk game by creating a series of scenario questions based on current content found in online feminist discourse. The questions focused on issues such as: current call-out culture, intersectionality, privilege, and the utilization of stereotypes. Below are the scenarios questions that were created.

1. You just left the bar from a fun night out with your friends. You're a bit drunk, and decide to walk home because of the weather. You walk about ten blocks before making a right hand turn; the bar is no longer in your sight, and its oddly quiet for this time of the year. You continue walking and suddenly begin to hear a car slowing down behind you. Slowly the window is lowered and you hear the words "hey slut" being shouted at you, as if the driver was trying to pick you up... What do you do? How do you react? Are you mad? Why? What is your next course of actions? How will you execute them? Do you get others involved or do this solo? If you do nothing, why?

2. A rape incident happens at the local university in the city you are living in. The

university refuses to press charges, and the police dismiss it because of what the victim was wearing. You hear that a rally is happening on campus to fight for the girl it happened to. Do you attend? If so what do you bring? Why didn't you attend? What will you do instead? Are you outspoken at the event? Are you passive? Do you try to break it up? Why?

3. You attempt to apply for a job, but you are told to sign a contract that says you will be making 15% less because of your skin color and an extra 5% less because of your gender. What do you do? What are you thinking? Do you say anything? Do you storm out? If not why? If you do nothing there, do you do anything later when you get home?

4. You wake up to a threatening note taped to your door. It says 'Continue your disgusting feminist acts and anonymous will kill you. We are everywhere. We will find you. We know all'. What do you do next? Do you tell the police? Do you continue what you're doing? Do you ignore it? Do you use this as fuel to spark more rebellion?

5. You come across x (another player in the game) as you both are partaking in the same feminist march when something terrible

happens. You see x (a different character) has fallen, as have many other marchers. You look around and see an anonymous terrorist group of anti-feminists shooting tear gas into the crowd. What do you as a group decide to do, and why?

6. As a group you are at a convention about women's rights and out of nowhere you hear someone outside scream 'help, rape'. The entire room goes silent, and you hear it again, this time with much more worry in the person's voice. "Help.... rape." You look around, half of the convention hall is still sitting, the other up on their feet. You begin to notice people running towards to door, where the sound is coming from... what do you do?

Once I had formulated the scenario questions that the players were to answer in character, the game was ready to be played. By asking my fellow peers I was able to assemble a group of four players. Players were initially informed that they were to choose a character card from those provided and read it over, after which they would answer questions from the perspective of their chosen character. The players were asked the six questions clockwise, starting with the player sitting closest to me, and were allowed

to come up with their answers either alone or in a group setting. Players mostly acted out their answers alone, but when groups of players felt that individuals were acting out of character they would attempt to correct the situation, often by proposing alternate ways in which the character in question could respond.

Halfway through gameplay, the players asked me if they could each choose an additional character card to play with. This was to test if it was possible for the players to quickly envision and take on the role of a new character, regardless of their initial choices. Gameplay continued and lasted for about an hour after the switch. Once gameplay was completed players were asked to relay their overall thoughts about the game and how it affected their opinions on the scenarios depicted to them.





## 3b. FUTURE FEMINISM ROLE-PLAY GAME

### - REFLECTION

Overall, I found the role-play game and character cards to be the strongest artifacts from this thesis, as they successfully incited users to act and think through a problem space from points of view other than their own. It was interesting to see how players would correct each other if they felt as though the other player was not maintaining character while responding, further encouraging them to empathize with a variety of possible outlooks. This exercise led to the group gaining greater understandings of multiple new perspectives pertaining to current issues within feminist discourse.

After completing the game the players noted that acting like a character that was different from themselves allowed them to think about what they would actually do within a similar real-life scenario, and what that scenario meant and entailed in a socio-cultural context. They also observed that the characters they were able to choose from were exaggerated depictions of current societal tropes, that enabled them to more easily identify how the character might be portrayed. While the characters that had been created based on previous participant output in phase two worked well, they also felt too similar - too or homogenous from my



figure 65:  
Future Feminism Role-play Game cards

perspective. The players corroborated this, noting later that a diverse set of characters to choose from would have allowed for a more dynamic experience, one where characters could potentially dispute amongst

themselves, and in which multiple separate narratives could be brought into play. Further reflection leads me to posit that the game could facilitate more discussions about potential futures through the use of scenarios that shift away from the current model that focuses primarily on contemporary everyday experience, and concentrates on encouraging players to critique existing socio-cultural paradigms pertaining to feminist discourse.

My eighth artifact and its construction lead to the following generative nodes and points that were used to fuel further explorations:

- After game play testing it became evident that role-playing could be used as a means to act through the feminist ‘problem space’ as a different person in attempt to get them to see the space from a different viewpoint.
- It became clear through testing and from the literature that critical play we used as a tool to allow designers and participants to envision and speculate the future of feminism.
- It became noticeable that more diverse characters had to be created so that players could choose from a spectrum of liberal or conservative characters.



figure 66 :  
Close ups of the back of a Future Feminism  
Role-play Game card

# CONCLUSION

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## Project Assessment

This thesis sought to explore the potential of textiles and worn or product based artifacts as means to illicit discussion and reflection on the frequent redefining and recontextualizing of the term ‘feminism’ in North American society. To that end I aimed to create a framework with which to create design based artifacts and sites for dialogue. I began by collecting information on the current social-political lenses that are used within feminism.

The first phase of my work explored the notion of designer as instigator, a method that allowed me to react to social theory and research through making. The insights that I collected in the initial stage of my work subsequently led me to develop and facilitate new means of creating and connecting others in conversation. I designed a speculative co-creative activity and was able to incite participants to engage in the creative re-assembly of clothing. This process and the participants’ self-driven creation and dressing of fictional characters provided the genesis for a new body of work. My role shifted from that of design facilitator to one of reactive speculator. I began to contribute and add to my participants’ creation and imaginings. I created a subsequent series of conceptual

futures that participants could interact with and act out through the use of characters. From a design perspective the aim of this entire body of work has been to explore the capacity of the designer as reactive speculator and to consider the role of the designed artifact as an intermediary of existing content that is inherently conversational in nature. The designer and the artifact are not disassociated entities in this framework rather they have a causal relationship and a capacity to work in tandem to create further sites of discussion.

Framed within the context of feminism the artifacts that I produced exhibited (to varying degrees of success) the capacity of textiles and consumer, product-based artifacts to spark conversations around an important contemporary social issue. Additionally, it illustrated the potential of using artifacts to facilitate and inform designers’ understanding of stereotypes within movements such as feminism. The creation of artifacts enabled myself as a designer to break down contemporary feminist discourse, to create conceptual models (*see figures 1-4*), and to gain a nuanced understanding of the polarizing theories within the movement.



By placing participants in the center of the design process both in phase two, and again in phase three I opened up conversations around semiotic relations pertaining to reformist and radical feminist issues and sites.

### Limitations:

While this thesis explores both radical and reformist approaches to feminism, the created artifacts within phase one are still situated primarily within reformist feminism, as they involve reappropriation of existing forms and everyday contexts. Additionally, the focus on satirical use of textile forms that identify with feminist stereotypes may be misunderstood as a desire to create feminist ‘uniforms’, which is counter to the inclusive nature of modern feminism, and furthermore an unnecessary (and unwelcome) stable identity marker for its members.

Being that feminism is an expansive and complex topic for a designer to approach within the span of a Masters’ thesis, it is evident to me that a major limitation of my work is its scope. While I developed a model for exploring complex social movements from a design perspective, both individually and collaboratively, further application and refinement of this model would validate its

usage for future design work of this genre. Additionally, given that my model was developed based on feminist concerns, it may not be immediately applicable to other social movements without preliminary adaptations or accommodations.

### Long-term Directions:

Moving forward, intend to further explore the limitations of this thesis - to utilize and refine the methodological approach, detailed above, through an ongoing investigation of intersectionality and privilege within feminism. Expanding upon this work through the creation of further fictional futures, role-playing opportunities and refinement of the existing game structure will allow me to create critiques that expose new alternatives and a potential future of humanity unaccompanied by sexism.

**This thesis lead to the following generative nodes and points that were used to fuel further explorations:**

- Further exploration based on the garments from phase two is needed in order to facilitate the creation of a satirical and hypothetical garment that is appropriate for the current feminist

movement. My interest in this derives from the clothing labels that were re-appropriated by participants (see phase two). Such a garment that could be used to spark deeper discussions on the subject of feminist identity, unity, and inclusivity – three topical issues within current feminist discourse that were revealed during phase one.

- As roleplaying often involves physical performance, the application of garments created in from phase two as costumes for future game play is a fertile area of further exploration. This new area of inquiry could provide further means of critique and new forums for discussion. It could also apotentially allow players to engage more closely with their chosen character(s).
- Actively using clothing as a medium for both participants and designers to explore speculative and inclusive futures could be a means to project futures that effectively remove gender exclusivity - (a key goal of radical feminism).

The approach I've developed is intended to allow designers to draw insight and to facilitate further conversations regarding the future of feminist discourse. This has been done through the use of a generative

three-phase methodology. My hope is that other designers will be able to apply the phased approached used in this thesis to tackle similar complex social content or as case study to facilitate conversations that encourage the everyday public to consider how design can help feminist discourse to remain resilient and critical. I strongly believe that with the assistance and curation of designers, the current feminist discourse could be fostered in such a way that moves towards a potential future where sexism is no longer an issue.

# ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Allegory (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster online*. Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/allegory>

This definition was used in this thesis to understand the meaning of the term ‘allegory’.

Attfield, J. (1996). Barbie and Action Man: adult toys for girls and boys. In P. Kirkham (Eds.), *The Gendered Object* (81-89). Manchester: Manchester University Press.

This paper discusses and analyses the gendering of Barbie and Action Man dolls in relation feminist discourse. As a resource this paper allowed me to research and understand Barbie dolls through the lens of feminism.

Bell et. Al (2012). Making by Making Strange: Defamiliarization and the Design of Domestic Technologies. *ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction*, 12(2), 149 – 173.

This paper explains how making things strange can be a way to raise questions and critique everyday life. This thesis utilizes this explanation to illustrate how prototypes can challenge our understanding of societal problems.

Billingsley, A. (2013). Laughing against Patriarchy: Humor, Silence, and Feminist Resistance. *University of Oregon*

*Philosophy Department: Philosophy Matters*. Retrieved from [http://pages.uoregon.edu/uophil/files/Philosophy\\_Matters\\_Submission\\_Marvin\\_Billingsley.pdf](http://pages.uoregon.edu/uophil/files/Philosophy_Matters_Submission_Marvin_Billingsley.pdf)

This paper described the use of humor within the current feminist movement and explains how it is both successful and unsuccessful. Billingsley’s explanation of humor and satire within feminism allowed me to explore a critical design approach in my making.

Boess, S. (2006). Rationales for role playing in design. *Design Research Society - IADE*. [http://www.iade.pt/drs2006/wonderground/proceedings/fullpapers/drs2006\\_0204.pdf](http://www.iade.pt/drs2006/wonderground/proceedings/fullpapers/drs2006_0204.pdf)

Boess’s explains role play as a vehicle to explore actions and ideas from outside the norm. This thesis used Boess’s explanation to explore the use of table talk role-play games to explore potential futures of feminism that are outside of the norm.

Boesveld, S. (2014, July 25). Not all feminists: How modern feminism has become complicated, messy and sometimes alienating. *National Post*. Retrieved from <http://news.nationalpost.com/2014/07/25/not-all-feminists-how-modern-feminism-has-become-complicated-messy-personal-and-sometimes-alienating/>

This newspaper article discussed and depicted the

messiness within the current feminist movement due to stereotypes, and pro- and anti-feminist online movements. Boesveld's explanation of the messiness and stereotypes was used as primary research, which incited my making.

Bosch, T. (2012, March 22). Sci-Fi Writer Bruce Sterling Explains the Intriguing New Concept of Design Fiction. *Slate: future tense*. Retrieved from [http://www.slate.com/blogs/future\\_tense/2012/03/02/bruce\\_sterling\\_on\\_design\\_fictions\\_.html](http://www.slate.com/blogs/future_tense/2012/03/02/bruce_sterling_on_design_fictions_.html)

This article illustrates and explains the use of props within speculative design, and the role of speculative design in critiquing the everyday. This explanation and citation of Sterling's work was used to explain the created props in phase two.

Bridgeman, J. (2011). Wise women in community: building on everyday radical feminism for social change. *Interface*. 3(2), 288-293

This journal entry provides new questions to existing problems on how women look at power, society, and feminist resources while seeking social change. Bridgeman's explanation of current feminism in relation to social change was used to contextualize modern feminism in Social Innovation discourse.

Brodsky, R. (2014, December 14). Feminism in 2014: More

Than a Trend. *Spin Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.spin.com/articles/feminism-music-trend-2014-beyonce/>

This article describes the use of the term feminist and feminist ideologies within pop culture.

Brodsky's explanation of feminism and the use in pop culture was used as information that inspired making.

Burns et. Al. (2006). Red Paper 02: Transformational Design. *Design Council*, 1 – 33. [http://www.cihm.leeds.ac.uk/document\\_downloads/REDPAPER02TransformationDesign.pdf](http://www.cihm.leeds.ac.uk/document_downloads/REDPAPER02TransformationDesign.pdf)

This report outlines the utilization of participants and prototypes within Social Innovation. This thesis uses this explanation while explaining how Social Innovation techniques can be drawn upon while exploring and researching potential feminist futures.

Carastathis, A. (2014). The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory. *Philosophy Compass*. 9(5), 304-314

This paper explores the current intersectional nature of contemporary feminism. Carastathis's explanation of intersectionality was used to solidify Hook's work (2000) within the current decade.

Cokely, C. L. (2008). Barbie. In J. O'Brien (Eds.). *Encyclopedia*



of *Gender and Society* Vol. 1 (53-55). California: SAGE Publications, Inc.

This encyclopedia entry explains the history of Barbie dolls and their significance within society. Cokely's explanations of the dolls were used to frame the Feminist Barbies created within this thesis.

Cosplayer (n.d). In *Dictionary Reference online*. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/cosplay>

This definition was used in this thesis to define what cosplay and cosplayers are.

Crenshaw, K. (1993). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43, 1241-1299.

This paper provided me an in depth understanding of intersectionality and what it means in terms of one's identity and the identity of women of color. This paper is used within this thesis to frame the meaning of intersectionality within feminist discourse.

Dorbani, M. B. (n.d.) July 28: Liberty Leading the people. *Louvre online database*. Retrieved from <http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/july-28-liberty-leading-people>

The Louvre site describes the Delacroix painting

in such a way that describes its historical, social, and political significance within the French revolution. It was from this description I was able to reappropriate and create a digital painting that mocked and juxtaposed feminist ideals onto it.

DuCille, A. (1996). *Skin Trade*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

This book describes notions of white privilege and misrepresentations within feminism and Barbies. DuCille's explanation of misrepresentations of women of color in Barbies was used within this thesis.

Dunne, A. & Raby, F. (2013). *Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming*. London: The MIT Press.

Dunne & Raby's book describes and explains the field of critical design and the use of fictions and artifacts within fictions in relation to social change. This book aided in the formation of this thesis's methodologies.

Egalitarian [Def. 1] (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster Online*. Retrieved February 20, 2015, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/egalitarianism>

This definition describes what the term means in today's society. It was used in this document as a

social movement that encompasses both sexes.

[theory/marxism/modules/marxfetishism.html](http://theory.marxism/modules/marxfetishism.html)

Etsy Inc. (2015). *Modern Girl Blitz*. Retrieved from [https://www.etsy.com/ca/shop/ModernGirlBlitz?ref=related-shop-4&ga\\_search\\_query=feminism&ga\\_search\\_type=all&ga\\_view\\_type=gallery](https://www.etsy.com/ca/shop/ModernGirlBlitz?ref=related-shop-4&ga_search_query=feminism&ga_search_type=all&ga_view_type=gallery)

This shop sells feminist merchandise that draws icons from prior feminist waves and protests. This thesis uses this shop as an example for the types of feminist artifacts that are being sold.

Facebook (2015). *EverydayFeminism*. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/everydayfeminism>

This facebook group is one of the social media groups for the online magazine of the similar name. This thesis uses this group as an example of one of the online spaces people can converse.

Faq. (2010). In *The Onion's Frequently Asked Questions: Editorial*. Retrieved from: <http://www.theonion.com/faq/>

This source was used to solidify and validate the Onion's use of satire as a means to critique society. This explanation was used to cite the site within this thesis.

Felluga, Dino. (2011). Modules on Marx: IV: on commodity fetishism. *Introductory Guide to Critical Theory*. Retrieved from <https://www.cla.purdue.edu/english/>

Felluga's explanation of Marx's commodity fetishism outlines how society adds value to objects while looking at monetary value and narrative value. This concise explanation was used to talk about commodity fetishism within this thesis.

Felski, R. (1989). *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics: Feminist Literature and Social Change*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

This book explains and explores aesthetics within feminism, stereotypes and defining visual factors within the movement. I used this as a means to explore aesthetics within the feminist movement.

Feminist. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster Online*. Retrieved February 20, 2015, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/feminist>

This definition describes what the term means within today's society. This definition was used as the main thesis.

Gaines, G. (1986). White Privilege and Looking Relations: Race and Gender in Feminist Film Theory. *Cultural Critique*, 4, 59 – 79.

This paper explores white privilege within film

theory, and explains privilege within feminist succinctly. This definition was used to formulate my greater understanding of the issue.

Gassner, D. (2012). We Can Do It! A Semiotic Approach to J. Howard Miller's Rosie the Riveter Poster and the Morale of World War II Era American Women. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven – Faulteit Letteren, 1-17

This paper explains the Iconic Rosie the Riveter Poster as a iconic feminist artifact. This explanation was used to explain the utilization of the first through the Venus symbol within the feminist movement.

Geere, D. (2010, August 17). Glitch art created by 'databending'. *Wired.co.uk*. Retrieved from <http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2010-08/17/glitch-art-databending>

This article provided a succinct definition of glitch art and databending. These two definitions were used within this thesis to explain both terms.

"Giorgio Armani". (2004). *Encyclopedia of World Biography*. Retrieved from <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3404700269.html>

This encyclopedia entry explains Armani's suits throughout the decades, and specifically the

choices he made in the 1990s when it came to women's pantsuits. This was used to explore the gendering of pantsuits throughout history and what that meant for women.

Grigsby, J. (2012, February 15). Top 10 Current Tabletop Role-playing Games. *ListVerse*. Retrieved from <http://listverse.com/2012/02/15/top-10-current-tabletop-role-playing-games/>

Grigsby explains the top ten tabletop role-play games within this article. This thesis uses this list to explain the current popular role-play games.

Guerrilla. (1995). *Confessions of the Guerrilla Girls*. Michigan: HarperPerennial.

This book explains the process of the activist group Guerrilla Girls. This explanation was used to explain how the group is a successful creative group that utilizes humor to spark social change.

Ham, E. (2014). *Varieties of Feminism*. *Earl Ham Sociology Pages*. Retrieved from <http://www.earlhamsociologypages.co.uk/Varieties%20of%20feminism.html>

This article provided context in which I was able to contextualize the fact that modern feminism utilizes notions of radical feminism.

Hillgren et al. (2011). Prototyping and Infrastructuring in design for social innovation. *CoDesign: International Journal of CoCreation in Design and the Arts*, 7:3-4, 169-183.

This paper outlines the usage of prototyping as a means to drive innovation. This thesis uses this explanation of prototyping in all three phases, to illustrate the utilization of prototyping as a means for Social Innovation within feminist discourse.

History. (2012). In *Girl Guides of Canada*. Retrieved from Girl Guides of Canada – Who We Are – History. [https://www.girlguides.ca/GGC/Parents/Who\\_We\\_Are/History/GGC/Parents/Who\\_We\\_Are/History.aspx?hkey=114c5cc2-4baa-431e-9e6f-6012efd68b8c](https://www.girlguides.ca/GGC/Parents/Who_We_Are/History/GGC/Parents/Who_We_Are/History.aspx?hkey=114c5cc2-4baa-431e-9e6f-6012efd68b8c)

This resource explains the history and meaning behind Girl Guides. This explanation was used and explored as a potential context to make with.

Hooks, B (2000). *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*. Massachusetts: South End Press.

This book was one of the most significant books within this thesis as it provided outlooks on almost all of the current issues within feminism.

Instagram (2015). *Feministprobs*. Retrieved from <https://instagram.com/feministprobs/>

This account posts images and sparks discussion

around current feminist discourse within society. This instagram was used in this thesis to illustrate the online discourse.

Instagram (2015). *Rookiemag*. Retrieved from <https://instagram.com/rookiemag>

This account posts images and sparks discussion among teenage girls around a variety of issues, including feminism. It is founded by a prominent online feminist.

Irony (n.d.) In *Merriam-Webster online*. Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/irony>

This definition was used to explain the meaning of the term ‘irony’ within this thesis.

Kahn, K. F. & Goldenberg, E. N. (1991). The Media: Obstacle or Ally of Feminists?. *AAPSS: American Feminism: New Issues for a Mature Movement*, 515, 104 – 113.

This paper explores the positive and negative effect of the media within feminism. This thesis draws upon this paper to explain both sides within feminism.

Kim, J. (2008). “Narrative” of “Tabletop” RPGs. *Darkshire*. Retrieved from <http://www.darkshire.net/~jhkim/rpg/whatis/tabletop.html>

Kim’s explanation of table talk games provides a



concise definition of how games like Dungeons and Dragons work. This explanation was used to make the game in phase three as well as provide context for the current definition of table talk games.

Kim, S. (2012, July 24). How most things you know about feminism are vicious conservative lies. *Everyday Feminism Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://everydayfeminism.com/2012/07/feminist-myths/>

This article depicts stereotypes within the current movement. Kim's list of stereotypes are used within this thesis.

King, J. (2014, September 30). Chanel Taps Gisele and Kendall For Feminist Protests on the Runway. *Harpers Bazaar*. Retrieved from <http://www.harpersbazaar.com/fashion/fashion-week/a3773/chanel-spring-2015/>

This article explains the Chanel runway show that occurred that payed homage to the second wave feminist movement. This article is cited to explain the runway show within this thesis.

Klassen, A. (2012, January 21). Mattel's New Bald Barbie Doll, and More Controversial Barbies: Pregnant Barbie. *The Daily Beast*. Retrieved from [http://www.thedailybeast.com/galleries/2012/01/21/the-most-controversial-barbies-ever-made-photos.html#slide\\_8](http://www.thedailybeast.com/galleries/2012/01/21/the-most-controversial-barbies-ever-made-photos.html#slide_8)

This article explains the stereotypes within the past decade about Barbie dolls. Utilizing these examples I was able to illustrate the controversies around the dolls.

Lee, J. (2014). Feminism Has a Bra-Burning Myth Problem. *Time Magazine online*. Retrieved from <http://time.com/2853184/feminism-has-a-bra-burning-myth-problem/>

Lee's article explains the ongoing myth within society of what occurred during the 1968 Miss America. This thesis looks at Lee's point of view pertaining to the importance of the issues within women's rights over the artifacts.

Marx, K. (1990). *Capital*. London: Penguin Classics.

This book provided me with an understanding of commodity fetishism that allowed me to understand the role of the designer in creating consumer goods. Marx explores and explains the meaning of capital, consumer goods, commodity fetishism, and their role in our day-to-day lives.

Munro, E. (2013). Feminism: A fourth wave?. *The Political Studies Association (PSA)*. Retrieved from <http://www.psa.ac.uk/insight-plus/feminism-fourth-wave>

This paper explore and explains the fourth wave and validates its inception. This paper is used to

validate the fourth wave's existence.

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/patriarchy>

O'Neil, L (2014, July 28). 'Confused Cats Against Feminism' Lampoon online anit-feminist movements. *CBC News – Community*. Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/newsblogs/yourcommunity/2014/07/confused-cats-against-feminism-lampoon-online-anti-feminist-movement.html>

This news article explains the satirical websites and hastags being used to poke fun and mock the feminist movement. This thesis uses this article as a means of exhibiting the use of satire within the feminist movement.

Pantsuit. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster online*. Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pantsuit>

This definition is used in this thesis to explain what the North American understanding of the term pantsuit is.

Paoletti, J. (2012). *Pink and Blue: Telling the Boys from the Girls in America*. Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Paoletti in this book defines what gendered clothing is within North America. This thesis uses his definition to define gendered garments.

Patriarchy. (n.d.) In *Dictionary.reference*. Retrieved from

This definition was used to define the patriarchy within this thesis.

Pearson, M. & Mullins, P. R. (1999) Domesticating Barbie: An Archaeology of Barbie Material Culture and Domestic Ideology. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, 3(4), 225-259

This paper explains the controversies that have arose since the creation of the Barbie. This thesis uses these controversies to contextualize the importance of exploring the Barbie form as an prevocational artifact.

Reddit Inc.(2015). *r/feminism*. Retrieved from <https://www.reddit.com/r/feminism>

This subreddit hosts a online forum in which people can converse about feminism. This cite was used to illustrate the online discussions that are currently happening.

Redfern, C, & Aune K. (2010). *Reclaiming the F Word: The new Feminist Movement*. London, & New York: Zed Books, & Room 400.

This book explains what is occurring within the fourth movement, and how in current society the term 'feminist' is seen as a pejorative term. This was used in this thesis as a means of validating the

fact the term is now pejorative.

Rehel, J. (2014, March 5). Barbie bashing: Playing with iconic doll may lead girls to limit career choices, U.S. study says. *National Post online*. Retrieved from <http://news.nationalpost.com/2014/03/05/barbie-bashing-playing-with-iconic-doll-may-lead-girls-to-limit-career-choices-u-s-study-says/>

This article explains what the limiting amount of career options shown in Barbies has lead and can lead to within young girls. This thesis uses this to cite the idea of Barbie's exhibiting limited career choices for women.

Rock, M. (2013). Designer as Author. *Multiple Signatures: On Designers, Authors, Readers and Users* . Retrieved from <http://2x4.org/ideas/22/designer-as-author/>

Rock outlines what authoring means in relation to graphic design practice while explaining it through multiple lenses and schools of thought. His explanation of authorship was used in this thesis to explore authoring within design research in relation to opening up feminist discourse.

Sanchez-Hucles, J., et Al. (2012). The Multiple Identities of Feminist Women of Colour: Creating a New Feminism?. In R. Josselson & M. Iarway (Eds.), *Navigating Multiple Identities: Race, Gender, Culture, Nationality, and Roles*. (91-112). New York: SAGE

Publishing.

This paper explores the notion of white privilege, and women of color within feminism. This thesis uses this exploration as generative nodes in the make process.

Role-play (n.d.). In *Dictionary. Reference online*. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/roleplay?s=t>

This definition was used in this thesis to explain what roleplaying means.

Sanders, E. B. N, & Stappers, P. J. (2012). *Convivial ToolBox: Generative Research for the Front End of Design*. The Netherlands: BIS Publishers.

This book explores and explains the tools used within generative participatory research. This thesis uses this books explanation of co-creation as a tool to engage participants in making.

Shifman, L. & Lemish, D. (2011) "Mars and Venus" in Virtual Space: Post-feminist Humor and the Internet. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 28(3), 253-273

This paper explores the use of humor within the current feminist movement online. This thesis utilizes this exploration to spark making as well as validate the use of humor within feminism.

Simsarian, K. (2003). Take it to the Next Stage: The Roles of Role Playing in the Design Process. *CHI: New Horizons*, 1012 – 1013. <http://hasso.stanford.edu/readings/p1012-simsarian.pdf>

Simsarian explains how role-play can be used to speculate the future and flush out the things that are outside of everyday life. This explanation was used to illustrate how design currently uses role-playing as a research tool.

Steinmetz, Katy (2014, November 12). Which Word Should Be Banned in 2015? *TIME Magazine – Society*. Retrieved from <http://time.com/3576870/worst-words-poll-2014/>

This article illustrates TIME Magazine's submission of the term 'feminist' into their 'Words that Should be Banned' poll in 2014. This article is used in this thesis to showcase how the media can dictate how we see the term feminist.

Supple, E. (2014, November 5). What's Up With Hilary Clinton and the Media's Obsession With Her Pantsuits?. *Fembot Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://fembotmag.com/2014/11/05/whats-up-with-hilary-clinton-and-the-medias-obsession-with-her-pantsuits/>

This article explains and illustrates the fourth wave's connections with Hilary Clinton and the pantsuit, and how the media has taken this. This

thesis utilizes this as a source of inspiration in the make process.

Tessellated (n.d.). In *Dictionary Reference online*. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/tessellated?&o=100074&s=t>

This definition was used in this thesis to explain what a tessellated repeat was in relation to this thesis.

Tumblr (2015). *Feministcurrent*. Retrieved from <http://feministcurrent.tumblr.com/>

This blog is one of the biggest online feminist blogs on Tumblr and has one of the biggest followings. This blog was used in this thesis to illustrate the conversations on Tumblr around current feminist discourse.

Tumblr (2015). *the-glitter-clit*. Retrieved from <http://the-glitter-clit.tumblr.com/>

This tumblr illustrates the types of voices and language being used on Tumblr pertaining to feminist discourse. This thesis uses this blog as an example to show the type of language being used online by feminists.

Twine, F. W. (2013). *Geographies of Privilege*. NYC, New York: Routledge



This book provided context on the complex topic of privilege. It allowed me to gain a nuanced understanding of the issue and be able to link it back to feminist discourse.

Twitter (2015). FeministaJones. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/feministajones>

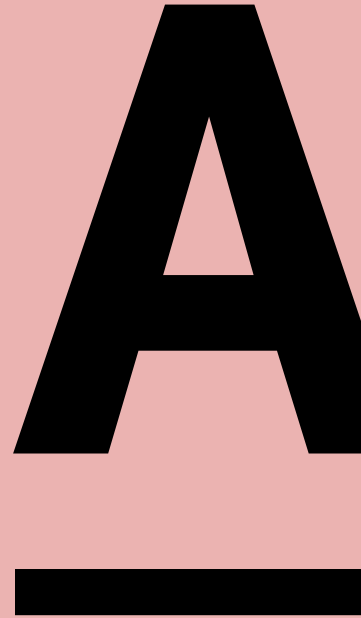
This Twitter account is the personal account of the writer and founder for the blog of the similar title. This thesis uses this Twitter account as an example of the other accounts found on the platform.

Uwujaren, J. & Utt, J. (2015). Why Our Feminism Must Be Intersectional (And 3 Ways to Practice It). *Everydayfeminism*. Retrieved from <http://everydayfeminism.com/2015/01/why-our-feminism-must-be-intersectional/>

This article explains what intersectionality is in succinct terms and explains why it is important to modern feminism. This thesis utilizes this explanation to explain the importance and definition of intersectionality.

Wright, L. (1989). Objectifying Gender: The Stiletto Heel. In J. Attfield & P. Kirkham (Eds.), *A View from the Interior: Feminism, Women, and Design*. (7-19). London: The Women's Press Limited.

This paper explains the gendering of clothing within society, and the understandings and misconceptions with the stiletto heel. This thesis uses theories from this paper to support the potential of clothing within feminism.



## Appendixes

photo citations;  
grad show exhibition space  
photos;

# A. GRAD EXHIBITION PHOTOS





**CALLING ALL HUMANS** is a role-play game that allows players to explore and act through scenarios based on current issues within feminism. It is one of the many artifacts from Christina White's thesis titled: *Designing Futures for Feminism: Exploring the Role of the Participant and the Designer in Social Movements*.

You are welcome to play the game by picking a character card on the table and following the instructions that are on the iPad below.







