

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS



The front of each card offers a concept from media literacy or feminist theory. The back provides a potential way to engage with the concept on the front.

### Suits

The cards are organized by suits. Each big idea about feminism is a suit with its own colour and graphic. The suit for big ideas about critical media are on yellow cards. Suits allow for teachers to imagine using the various cards to analyze media through card sorts or other ideas.

## CULTURE OF CLASSROOM



Before starting any media analysis and/or discussion, it is important to set up group norms. This can be a living document that continues to grow throughout the process. Some examples of norms to get your group started:

- Listen to understand
- Share speaking time
- Ensure consent and confidentiality
- Respect through language and address
- Use "I" statements

## AUTHORS & AUDIENCE



These cards have been created for high school, post-secondary, and/or teacher professional learning environments.

These cards have been created by a teacher research collective: Jennifer Watt, Shannon D.M. Moore, Lauryn Handoga, and Brooke Jackson. The cards were designed by Lauryn Handoga. All graphics were created by Alyssa Brown.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



Popular media is a powerful educational force that is often ignored in formal educational settings. However, popular media is *already* teaching societal perceptions and beliefs. For this reason, critical media literacy about popular culture is urgently needed in our classrooms.



## OBJECTIVES



These cards use popular media to:

- 1) stimulate critical feminist discussions;
- 2) explore gender, consent, gender based sexual violence;
- 3) examine the role of media in forming societal perceptions.:
- 4) intentionally create space for conversations to notice and call attention to the role of media in upholding harmful ideas and actions.

## CREDITS



These cards have been influenced by the scholarship of critical media scholars Jeff Share & Douglas Kellner (2019) and feminist scholar and activist Sarah Ahmed (2017).

For more information, please visit our *We Interrupt This Programming* website:



## CREDITS LEGEND



Kellner & Share, 2019.



All other cards are by Ahmed, 2017.

## FEMINIST SENSATIONALISM



Feminism can begin when people start to realize the unfair obstacles they face. This can make them feel intense emotions (e.g. curiosity, interest, excitement, rage or shame), which are held in the body.

## FEMINIST SENSATIONALISM



**Produce:** With your group members, create a series of tableaux. This series of tableaux should demonstrate a situation in which someone is not treated fairly because of their gender, taking into consideration how everyone in the scene feels. Instead of tableaux, groups can take a series of photos.

Share tableaux or photos to generate discussion.

## GENDER FATALISM



People assume that “boys” and “girls” should act and do different things in their lives because of their gender. This can limit what they think they can achieve in life. The way society is set up can make them feel like they have no choice but to follow these expectations.

## GENDER FATALISM



### Reflect :

Create a list of the “supposed to be’s” for boys and the “supposed to be’s” for girls. Share your lists with your neighbours. Are they similar? Do you fit into the “supposed to be’s” on one side only? Is one list more positive than the other? How does popular culture reinforce these “supposed to be’s”?

## FEMINIST KILLJOY



Some people believe that feminists ruin their own and/or other people’s happiness because they talk about issues related to genders and sexualities, other forms of oppression, and violence. This belief leads to blaming the feminist who points out the problem as being the real problem

## FEMINIST KILLJOY



**Media Artifact:** Emma Watson, “Speech on Gender Equality” YouTube video.

**Reflect:** Feminism is often called the “F” word. How is feminism vilified in popular culture? Consider specific examples.

## BRICK WALLS



A metaphor that described the difficulties some people face when attempting to raise concerns within institutions. The “brick walls” keep the institutions from making changes or admitting that they’re hurting someone. Some people face more “brick walls” than others due to their race, gender, sexual identity, and/or identities.

## FEMINIST SNAP



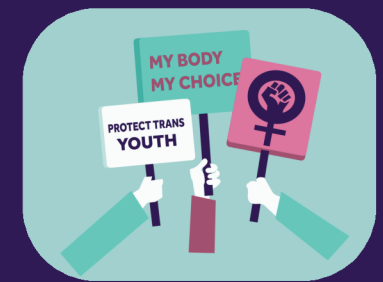
A “snap” refers to when someone reaches a breaking point or crisis, and it usually happens after a great deal of pressure has been placed on them. The snap is the moment when someone will no longer stay silent or put up with an injustice, but often there have been many moments leading up to it. Feminists also frame the snap as an opening or possibility for doing something in a new way.

## INTERSECTIONALITY



Understanding that everyone experiences different systems of inequality that include class, race, sexuality, gender expression, age, (dis)ability, etc. Intersectionality is the awareness that different combinations of these systems influence how much (or how little) access, power, and privilege is available to someone in specific contexts. Intersectional feminists believe that feminism should be for everyone - not only straight, white, cis-gender women.

## WILFULNESS



A belief that strong women, girls, and femme people who stick to their beliefs, state their opinions, or do not conform to usual gender-based expectations are too determined, strong-minded, or difficult. On the other hand, feminists frame wilfulness as needed to fight everyday oppressions and violence.

## BRICK WALLS



**Produce:** Create a visual (photo, film, or art installation) that demonstrates the barriers to enacting change in your school community, province or country.

## FEMINIST SNAP



**Media Artifact:** Visit artist Jaime Black's The REDress project at [jaimeblackartist.com](http://jaimeblackartist.com) or search the Smithsonian video about the project.

**Analyze:** How is Jaime Black's Red Dress project an example of a feminist snap? How does this snap draw attention to the violence against Indigenous women and girls in Canada?

## INTERSECTIONALITY



**Media Artifact:** Kimberlé Crenshaw, “The urgency of intersectionality” Ted Talk.

**Reflect:** How does Kimberlé Crenshaw's Ted Talk help you understand intersectionality? What issues of intersectionality do you think exist in the women's movement?

## WILFULNESS



**Media Artifact:** Emma Watson, “I’m willing to...” speech YouTube video (7:00 - 8:57).

**Produce:** Create a poster, collage, poem, etc. where you share your list of 5-10 “I’m willing to...” statements about how you will respond to discrimination such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, etc.



## AUDIENCE/POSITIONALITY



Individuals and groups understand media messages similarly and/or differently depending on multiple contextual factors

## SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM



All information is co-constructed by individuals and/or groups of people who make choices within social contexts.

## POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION



Media messages and the medium through which they travel always have a bias and support and/or challenge dominant hierarchies of power, privilege, and pleasure.

## PRODUCTION/INSTITUTIONS



All media texts have a purpose (often commercial or governmental) that is shaped by the creators and/or systems within which they operate.

## AUDIENCE/ POSITIONALITY



### Reflect:

How could this text be understood differently?

How can this text be understood through the "I Spy with my Feminist Eye" lens?

What must you consider/look for when looking at a text through a feminist lens?

## SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM



**Reflect:** Who are all the possible people who made choices that helped create this text? How many women were involved in the production of this text? How many people of colour were involved in the production of this text? How might missing voices impact the message being sent by the text?

**Analyze:** Find a text and determine whether it passes the Bechdel Test. (Bechdel Test – Asks whether a text features at least two femme characters who have a conversation about something other than a man.) Does your chosen text pass the Bechdel Test? Is the Bechdel Test sufficient in determining if a text is Feminist?

## POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION



### Reflect:

What values, points of view, ideologies are represented or missing from this text or influenced by the medium?

Does the text represent you? Why or why not?

## PRODUCTION/ INSTITUTIONS



### Reflect:

Why was this text created and/or shared?

What do you think the producer wanted you to take from this text?



## SOCIAL/ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



Media culture is a terrain of struggle that perpetuates or challenges positive and/or negative ideas about people, groups, and issues; it is never neutral.

## LANGUAGE/SEMIOTICS



Each medium has its own language with specific grammar and semantics.

## SYMBOL LEGEND



### REFLECT

Consider how media impacts individuals, groups, or society



### PRODUCE

Create media, paying attention to how the medium communicates (eg. using film language, camera angles, lighting, costume, background)



### ANALYZE

Use a particular lens (personal) or framework (feminist) to interpret media



### MEDIA ARTIFACT

An exemplar for reflection or analysis. Scan QR Code or search to access Media Artifact.

## SOCIAL/ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE



**Reflect:** Choose a media texts and ask:

Whom does this text advantage and or disadvantage?

How does this text portray female/femme characters

How does this text portray the natural environment?

## LANGUAGE/SEMIOTICS



**Produce:** Choose a film scene, replace the original sound with 3-5 different pieces of background audio to determine how the feeling of the scene is transformed.

**Media Artifact:** Sam Levinson, "Euphoria Dance Scene." How are camera angles, lighting, and costumes used in this scene? Do you notice where the camera pans or zooms in to the scene?

## PRIVACY AND CONSENT



Please remember to let students know ahead of time who their audience will be (whether sharing with a bigger audience, small group, or just with the teacher). Also ensure all filming, use of images, and sharing of final productions has received prior consent.

## UNEASE HELD IN THE BODY



When characters recognize an injustice or feel discomfort in a situation, they may show it in how they hold their body or in their facial expressions.

## CLOSING SELF AWAY FROM OTHERS



Characters start to stay away from other people and/or things they used to like.

## COPING BY NUMBING



Characters try to avoid their feelings by doing things like drinking, taking other substances, or spending too much time on their phone.

## INTENTIONAL SILENCE



Characters seem to choose not to speak and/or give their opinion.

## UNEASE HELD IN THE BODY



**Produce:** Edit a photo (original or found) to demonstrate the feeling of unease held in the body.

Photo editing can include: tone and lighting, saturation, filters, mark-up, cropping, highlighting, background, sharpness.

## CLOSING SELF AWAY FROM OTHERS



**Produce:** Film a scene that demonstrates a character withdrawing and closing themselves away from others due to their realizations about sexism and patriarchy.

Create an instant replay of that scene in which the character closing off feels supported, or in which the scene played out differently.

## COPING BY NUMBING



**Produce:** Take a series of 5 photos that demonstrate how people cope from feelings of oppression by numbing.

Consider photo literacies: camera angle, shots, lighting, composition, rule of thirds, background, and photo editing options.

## INTENTIONAL SILENCE



**Reflect:** Can silence say something?

What are the reasons someone might choose silence in the face of sexist speech or actions?

Is silence a powerful response?

When is it important to speak up?

## EXPECTATION THAT VIOLENCE IS INEVITABLE



Based on what the characters say or do, it seems like they think that someone might hurt them, and violence is going to happen to them, no matter what they do.

## EXPECTATION THAT VIOLENCE IS INEVITABLE



**Produce:** Create a piece of media (poster, PSA, social media post) that challenges violence in our culture and does not blame the victim.

## BOYS WILL BE BOYS



Characters may explicitly say “boys will be boys” or imply that what a character says or does is acceptable because they are a boy, even if it harms someone else. It may include how a male character acts, what they say/joke about, and/or choices they make.



## BOYS WILL BE BOYS



**Media Artifact:** Taylor Swift, Tennis Freakout scene from “The Man” music video. (2:27-2:43).

**Analyze:** How does this scene draw attention to stereotypes about males/athletes? How would this scene be read differently if the athlete was female? How is Swift using this scene to challenge gender norms?

## ACCEPT ADVANCES OR CHANGE BEHAVIOUR



Femme characters are expected to receive advances from masculine characters. They may even feel pressured to change their own behaviour, like avoiding eye contact or dressing differently, to try to stop these advances.



## ACCEPT ADVANCES OR CHANGE BEHAVIOUR



**Media Artifact:** Rob Bliss, “10 Hours of Walking in NYC as a Woman” YouTube video.

**Reflect:** How did you feel watching this clip? How do you think the woman in the video feels? What statement does this video make about gender and society? Why do you think the creator made this video?

## BLAMED FOR THE VIOLENCE



When something bad happens to femme characters, other characters blame the femme character, indicating that the femme character is responsible for what happened to them (e.g., because of what they were wearing, when they were out, where they went, who they were with, or previous actions, including drinking alcohol or providing consent before).

## BLAMED FOR THE VIOLENCE



**Media Artifact:** Rosea Lake, “Judgements” Art piece.

**Analyze:** How does this art piece demonstrate how women are blamed for the way they dress? How did Rosea Lake use media production as a form of activism.



## RESTRICTING BODY SIZE TO MAKE SPACE FOR BOYS/MEN



Femme characters try to limit the amount of space their bodies take up and/or others encourage them to take up less space. In more extreme cases, femme characters may limit how much food they eat and/or others may encourage them to do so.

## POSING A PROBLEM BECOMES A PROBLEM



When a character points out a problem with racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, etc. other people see the character raising the issue as a problem.

## WOUND UP, EMOTIONAL, AND THE CAUSE OF THE ARGUMENT



People might say that characters who speak up are too emotional or causing an argument.

## EYE ROLLING AND DISMISSAL



When characters make a complaint, the complaints, as well as the person making them, are dismissed through words or body language (e.g., eye rolling, shared looks of frustration/disbelief, head shaking).

## RESTRICTING BODY SIZE TO MAKE SPACE FOR BOYS/MEN



**Media Artifact:** Taylor Swift, Train scene from “The Man” music video (0:30-0:49).

**Analyze:** Who is taking up the most space in this clip? Do you notice anything about the expression and/or body language of each of the characters?

## POSING A PROBLEM BECOMES A PROBLEM



**Media Artifact:** Classroom scene from *Moxie*. (5:50-9:40)

**Analyze:** In this scene, who raised questions or problems? What happened when they raised questions? How did they become the problem for asking questions?

**Reflect:** Have you ever experienced or witnessed a similar situation?

## WOUND UP, EMOTIONAL, AND THE CAUSE OF THE ARGUMENT



**Reflect:** What emotions are associated with men?

What emotions are associated with women?

Do you think there are gendered rules around emotions?

Why are women often labelled ‘emotional’? How is this label harmful to both men and women?

## EYE ROLLING AND DISMISSAL



**Media Artifact:** Julia Gillard, “Misogyny Speech” YouTube video (1:25-2:35).

**Analyze:** What do you notice about the body language of the people listening to this speech? What about what they are saying? What message does this send to Julia Gillard and other women while being shamed by these political leaders?

## EXHAUSTION AND FRAGILITY



When characters speak out about something and no one listens to them or does anything to help, the characters show signs of being exhausted or overwhelmed.

## CONNECTION WITH OTHER KILLJOYS



Characters connect with others who are willing to take action about injustices.

## UNWILLING TO LAUGH



Characters refuse to laugh at offensive “jokes”.

## NAME CALLING



Female characters are bullied when they stand up for themselves or others (e.g. called wilful, stubborn, rebellious, hormonal, “bitchy”, or mad/crazy).



## EXHAUSTION AND FRAGILITY



**Media Artifact:** Greta Gerwig, *Barbie*, (1:12:48-1:13:43).

**Reflect:** How does your appearance influence how you feel about yourself? What expectations do you feel people have about “smart enough”, “pretty enough”, “strong enough”, “funny enough,” etc.? How can these pressures become exhausting?

## CONNECTION WITH OTHER KILLJOYS



### Analyze:

Search the #MeToo Movement.

What do you learn about the origin of this movement? In what ways were people who would be considered “killjoys” connected through the #MeToo movement and social media? How did the public react to the movement?

## UNWILLING TO LAUGH



**Produce:** Create a few possible scenarios where Person A tells Person B they were hurt by a comment and Person B responds with, “It’s just a joke.”

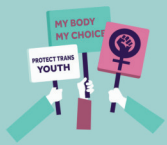
Other people in your group can be part of the scene and may take the role of “bystanders”. Possible variation is to switch roles as you move from scene to scene.

## NAME CALLING



**Reflect:** What insults are most commonly said to girls? What about boys? How do these insults both reveal and “police” notions of gender? How do you see people react to this name calling? Are there ways to stand up to the name calling for yourself or others?

## JUSTIFICATION OF VIOLENCE



Emotional, physical, or sexual violence against a character is justified because she was wilful, spoke out, or stood up for herself.

## WRITING WILFULNESS



Characters use writing or other modes of protest (photographs, protest, signs, social media posts, etc.) to state their will and show opposition.

## INHERITED/ACQUIRED WILFULNESS



Wilful characters have strong individuals in their lives who serve as mentors (e.g., mother, aunt, older sibling, teacher, friend, coach, etc.)

## PRAISED FOR BEING WILLING TO BEAR MORE



Characters are rewarded for being “good team players” asked to hold out hope that things will eventually get better or are praised for their resilience and ability to bear more pressure without complaint or demands for change.

## JUSTIFICATION OF VIOLENCE



**Reflect:** In the online comment sections, have you seen threats of emotional, physical, or sexual violence used against activists and feminists specifically? In what ways are these threats an example of “justification of violence”?



## WRITING WILFULNESS



**Analyze:** Search for a photograph, protest sign or social media post that states the person’s opposition to an oppressive structure in society.

What message is the artist sending?

How is the artist conveying this message?

**Produce:** Create your own piece of feminist art.

## INHERITED/ACQUIRED WILFULNESS



**Produce:** Create a collage of wilful individuals that have influenced you. This can include people from media and popular culture as well as people from your personal life. When possible, choose images that demonstrate their wilfulness.

## PRAISED FOR BEING WILLING TO BEAR MORE



**Analyze:** “Stop calling me resilient... Because every time you say ‘Oh, they’re resilient,’ that means you can do something else to me. I am not resilient.” (Tracy L. Jackson, Louisiana Justice Institute)

How does Jackson’s quote challenge the expectation of resilience. What are the problems with praising resilience?



## FACING INSTITUTIONAL DISCIPLINE



Someone in a position of power (e.g., teacher, principal, guidance counsellor, coach, team captain, popular/powerful students, etc.) gives out disciplinary actions, consequences, or punishments to characters who act wilful. This might look like a detention, suspension, removal from a sport or activity, isolation, or shaming from peers, etc.

## ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE COMPLAINT



Characters find it difficult or are prevented from making a complaint. Complaints are met with indifference and seem to be unheard.

## DEFEND THE INSTITUTION



When a character complains, the organization puts up barriers to protect itself instead of listening to and taking care of the person making the complaint.

## INCREASING COSTS FOR DEMANDING EQUITY



It becomes more difficult for characters to fight against something because institutions make it easier to accept the status quo instead of struggling against it.

## FACING INSTITUTIONAL DISCIPLINE



### Reflect:

Can you think of a time in your life when you or someone you know has been disciplined by a person in a position of authority for challenging injustice within an institution (school, work, government, church)?

## ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE COMPLAINT



**Media Artifact:** Amy Poehler, “Moxie” Principal Scene (13:40-16:21).

**Analyze:** How is the student in this scene prevented from making a complaint? What tactics does the principal use?

## DEFEND THE INSTITUTION



**Reflect:** How do institutions (sport, military, schools, corporations) often prioritize their reputations instead of calling attention to harms done within those spaces.

**Produce:** Watch the scene from the “Almost Impossible To Make Complaint” card. Re-write/act out the scene in a way where the principal is not worried about her own or the school’s reputation and instead listens to the complaint and takes it seriously.

## INCREASING COSTS FOR DEMANDING EQUITY



### Reflect:

What are the consequences people might face for standing up against oppression and injustice?

In what ways do these consequences deter/stop people from speaking up?

## DAINGEROUS BODIES



Certain bodies are posed as “dangerous” because of race, size, sexuality, gender expression, etc.. so are less likely to have their complaints heard or are heard as threatening if they complain.

## CHARACTER SNAPS



Characters snap - indicating so with anger, harsh words, actions that show they will not take more pressure.

## BLAMED FOR THE SNAP



The characters who snap are treated like they began the violence or caused upset for others. Reacting to the actions of the snap become the focus, rather than responding to the pressures that caused the snap.

## RELEASE AND RELIEF



Characters describe or demonstrate a sense of relief and release when they snap a negative relationship or bond. It may seem empowering for the character to act with agency in this way.



## DAINGEROUS BODIES



**Analyze:** How are protestors presented in the mainstream media? How are environmental protestors presented? How are Black Lives Matter protestors presented? How are feminist protestors presented?

**Produce:** Create a gallery of images, descriptive words, and headlines to reveal how protestors are presented in the news media.



## CHARACTER SNAPS



**Media Artifact:** America Ferrera’s monologue in Greta Gerwig, *Barbie*. (1:13:44-1:16:05 )

**Reflect:** In what ways does this speech show examples of what contributes to a feminist snap? What are some of the obstacles she highlights?

## BLAMED FOR THE SNAP



**Produce:** Humour, in particular parody or satire, can be an excellent way to expose societal issues.

Pick a medium of your choice (film, print ads, newspaper headlines, photographs, memes, etc.). Use humour to expose or trouble the ways that people focus on individuals who snap under oppression and injustice, rather than concentrating on the oppression and injustice that caused them to snap in the first place.

## RELEASE AND RELIEF



**Reflect:** Why might someone feel better or relieved after a snap? Can you think of a time in your life when you had to get something off your chest? How did you feel afterwards?

## LAUGHTER AND HILARITY



Characters may laugh or joke about how a situation or person is hilarious because it is so unfair. Laughter can be another version of a “snap” because sometimes the barriers and biases faced by femme characters are so ridiculous they laugh.

## IMPATIENCE



Characters demonstrate that they no longer want to wait for positive changes or bear pressure any longer.

## COLLECTIVE POLITICAL ACTION



Characters plan and participate in collective and/or political action (e.g. protests, social media campaigns, demanding meeting with institutional leaders).

## LOOKING FOR ALL INEQUALITIES



Characters speak up or refuse to ignore the violence of racism, ableism, heteronormativity, homophobia, transphobia, etc. The focus is not just sexism and misogyny.

## LAUGHTER AND HILARITY



**Reflect:** How does Taylor Swift use humour to express her frustration with the unfairness between men and women in this video? Is this video only about the unfairness in the music industry?

**Analyze:** Find content that uses humour to address societal inequalities. Why do you find it funny? Does humour work to draw attention to the issue?

## IMPATIENCE



**Media Artifact:** Search for the “Canadian Women’s Foundation” website. On the website, read through “The Facts” section. <https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/>

**Analyze:** Discuss the statistics and examples of gender inequality in Canada. How have feminist activists demonstrated their impatience about these statistics? For example, Women’s Marches, Take Back the Night, and feminist social media activism.

## COLLECTIVE POLITICAL ACTION



**Analyze:** Research existing or historical collective political action campaigns (e.g. climate change, civil rights, global conflict, etc.).

How did they gain momentum or excitement? What challenges did/do these movements face? Did social media have an impact on the action? In what ways?

**Produce:** Based on your research, make a list of 5 tips for effective collective political action and/or social media campaigns.

## LOOKING FOR ALL INEQUALITIES



**Reflect:** Can we address sexism and misogyny without addressing racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, etc.? Can sexism and misogyny be separated from other forms of discrimination?



## FACING BRICK WALLS WITHIN FEMINIST SPACES



Characters facing the intersections of racism, ableism, homophobia, or transphobia are situated as “the problem” or not acknowledged for the multiple forms of oppression facing them even within what appears to be a feminist space.

## ALL IDENTITIES ALL OF THE TIME



Characters demonstrate or state how all their identified are all lived at every moment (e.g. drawing attention to the fact that being queer, a person of colour, AND a feminist happens all at the same time).

## DIFFERENT RISKS AND BARRIERS



Examples of how characters with intersection identities of race, size, sexuality, gender expression, etc. face different risks and barriers than white, straight, cis-gender women.

## FACING BRICK WALLS WITHIN FEMINIST SPACES

**Media Artifact:** Huffpost Video, “White Feminism”, Watch up to 2:03 (language warning after 2:03) YouTube video.

**Reflect:** What are your understandings of white feminism? How can popular media contribute to more inclusive and intersectional representations of feminism?

## ALL IDENTITIES ALL OF THE TIME



**Media Artifact:** “Embracing Queer Indigenous Identities—My Experience” by Riley Yesno YouTube video.

**Analyze:**  
How have Riley's identities shaped her life experiences?

## DIFFERENT RISKS AND BARRIERS



**Analyze:** *Their Voices Will Guide Us* (Bearhead, [www.mmiwg-ffada.ca](http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca), p. 23). Examine how cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls are reported in the news media.

How are the women and girls identified or described?

In what ways do media representations contribute to the increased risks and barriers that Indigenous women and girls face?