• Flawless (video):
  o “We teach girls that you can have ambition but not too much”
  o “Feminism is a person who believes in the social, political equality of the sexes”

EXERCISE - Feminisms Legacies
Brainstorm a list of all the institutions and practices you can think of that exist because of feminist activism and thought

• M.A.A.D., women’s shelters, all female gyms, abortion clinics, university courses, legalization of contraceptives, rape crisis hotlines and centers, parenting and work, maternity leave, women in the workplace and equal pay, suffrage movement, education, women’s resource center, women professionals (doctors, legal, etc.), changing the legal system in relation to sexual violence.

EXERCISE - Beyonce’s Ambiguities
On your own, write down three ways in which Beyonce’s video is ambiguous (having multiple meanings at once) in relation to feminism, writing at least 2-3 sentences about each.

• She talks about how she was taught a completely different belief than she believes now and she acknowledges the feminine stereotypes but doesn’t stray completely away from them.
• She uses her music to teach a different view and to show that she was taught to believe the stereotypes about women but defied many of those stereotypes at the same time through her lyrics.
• “Bow down bitches”
  o Can be how women are expected to bow to men
  o Can be her asking people to bow down to her because she has power now
• She’s married but that’s not what defines her regardless of what she was taught.
• The use of makeup as demeaning or empowering
  o How do you conduct yourself, self-styling (top to bottom and back to front).
  o Modesty (not showing too much), vs. expressing her sexuality
• The behaviour in her video changes from seductive to aggressive.

Lecture 2 – The Complex Origins of Feminist Thought and Activism in the West - Sept 14th
Question of the day:
What’s wrong with “common sense”?

Outline
Liberalism and rights discourse
Anti-slavery activism (abolitionism) and women’s rights
Liberal feminism
Neutralization
Domination as cultural habit
Constrained consent versus “Free choice”
Rise of women’s rights movement
Suffragettes – video from the Museum of London
Construction of femininity as white and middle-class
Racism and segregation in the women’s movement
Politics of location shape ways of seeing/worldviews

- Location means body, “To say ‘the body’ lifts us away from what has given me a primary perspective. To say “my body” reduces the temptation to grandiose assertions”.
  - Her body carries the marks of her experiences and they are very specific
- (p. 216) “The body I was born into was not only female and white, but Jewish – enough for geographic location to have played, in those years, a determining part.”
  - Be clear about the things that have made you who you are
- (p.219) “It was in the writings but also in the actions and speeches and sermons of Black United States citizens that I began to experience the meaning of my whiteness as a point of location for which I needed to take responsibility.”

“Whiteness” as an identity category

- (p.215) “I was defined as white before I was defined as female"
- (p.215) “I was located by color and sex as surely as a Black child was located by color and sex—through the implications of white identity were mystified by the presumption that white people are the center of the universe.”
  - She is getting at the fact that white people are racialized as well and that whiteness is an invisible category.

Privilege (white, heterosexual, etc.)

- Invisible
  - Whiteness is an invisible category or race and it has the power to structure the world
  - Whiteness is difficult to name and talking about it is taboo
- Marked/unmarked bodies
  - People who fit a norm are considered to be unmarked by difference
    - Whiteness, maleness, heterosexuality
  - It is people that don’t fit the categories of unofficial norm that are marked into those categories
- Effects of privilege
  - (p.215-216) “It means recognizing this white skin, the places it has taken me, and the places it has not let me go.”
    - Migration, cross borders with ease
  - Louis C.K. video clip on white privilege
    - “I’m not saying white is better but being white is better”
  - Being asked by people to explain yourself
    - Not asked to people who are white
    - e.g. “when did you know you were gay”. You don’t ask someone who is seemingly straight, “When did you know that you were straight?”

Intersectionality

- (p.39) “Intersectional Feminist Frameworks (IFFs) aim to foster understanding of the many circumstances that combine with discriminatory social practices to produce and sustain inequality and exclusion.”
- Broadening scope of analysis
  - (p.40) “GBA use in immigration law captures most women’s reliance on male souses because of the way the Canadian immigration classification system is structured. In this gendered dilemma, immigrant and migrant women may face isolation without English language learning, etc.”
    - Second way of doing it (on page 40) is the Intersectionality approach
EXERCISE - Alternatives to “Equality”

Choose a concept that could be used as a viable alternative to ‘equality’ as an organizing principle or value/ (some examples include dignity, self-determination, or choose your own from the many possibilities!). Write on your own for a few minutes about the advantages this concept brings to struggles for social justice.

• I would choose understanding or compromise as an alternative to equality because I feel as though understanding is essential towards progress for any instance. For social justice you can’t devise a plan for improvement without fully understanding both sides of the argument in a deeper sense.
• I would choose compromise because within an argument, parties from either side believe that they are correct in their schools of thought, and in order to come to a harmonious agreement, compromises must be made.
• Equality doesn’t have to mean sameness, being equal is different than having the ability to be equal and having the freedom of choice to participate in certain practices if we so choose.

Lecture 6 – Making Modern Bodies - Sept 28th

Question of the day:
Why do we attribute meaning to certain bodily differences and not others?

Outline
The cultural production of difference
Historicizing gender and race
Unpacking biological determinism
Concepts of sex and gender as contested
Dichotomies (a.k.a. binary oppositions, dualisms)
Science as social knowledge
Science as social knowledge
Science as storytelling: importance of interpretation
Scientific shift from interest in “sameness” to “difference”
Body as essence/foundation of identity
Gendered stories in medical science

The cultural production of difference
• Differences have not always been seen in the same light
• "Knowledge about gender differences changes with time and place"
  o The same applied to racial and sexual difference as well
• How do we make sense of the differences we see?
• Why are some differences more important than others?
  o E.g., differences between males and females are very minor but we focus on them so much

Historicizing gender and race
• The way the characters are imagined in literature is often through gender or race

Unpacking biological determinism
• Biological determinism (important)
• (p.110) “Feminist biologists, like myself, were certain that biological determinism had to be rejected. We knew that nature does not determine what we mean when we use terms such as woman, body, and femininity. We
Community
- Characterized by recognitions and expectations
  - Other people
  - Anything other than the self towards networks of individuals (e.g., family, colleagues, coworkers, peers).
  - People negotiate questions and expectations from other people
  - “Who are you? Where are you from”
  - People ask each other in a range of ways who each other are
    - Ask about accents, tattoos
    - Things that mark them as different
    - Ask about their nationality (e.g., where do you really come from?)
      - Belonging
    - Asking questions of people based on what they look like
      - Could affect their perceptions and treatment of us
  - People try to understand what boxes you fit into
  - A level at which people attempt to categorize people and determine their relationships towards those people
    - Not necessarily bad but a way of understanding the world
    - Often face expectations of us following these questions based on responses

Macro/structural
- Structural inequality
  - The level where we classify and label human beings and assign status and privilege
  - Subordination and domination are easily identified
    - Still exists at other levels but oppression is easiest to see in this level

Intelligibility
- Readable/unreadable
- Anxiety is often a response to being unintelligible
- (p.168) “Finally, Joe and Peggy’s parents decided to call an emergency meeting of the school’s parents’ association, to discuss “The X Problem”. They sent a report to the principal stating that X was a disruptive influence. They demanded immediate action”.

Multiple masculinities, multiple femininities
- (p.176) “Taken together, these various examples indicate clearly the work many parents are doing to accomplish gender with and for their sons in a manner that distances those sons from any association with femininity. This work was not evident among all parents of sons. But for most parents, across racial, class, and sexual orientation categories, it was indeed evident”.
- Traits that are associated with femininity are not highly valued in this society
- (p.171) “Historians and anthropologists have shown that there is no one pattern of masculinity that is found everywhere. Different cultures and different periods of history construct masculinity differently. Equally important, more than one kind of masculinity can be found within a given cultural setting.”

“Doing gender”
- (p.171) “Active construction of masculinities: masculinities do not exist prior to social behaviour, either as bodily states or fixed personalities. Rather, masculinities come into existence as people act. They are accomplished in everyday conduct or organizational life, as patterns of social practice. In other words, we “do gender” in everyday life.”
- Men “do” gender by working out, taking up space, going to the gym, watching sports, etc.,
Some people want to identify with those labels because they've previously been told that they don't belong and now they fit somewhere!

Finding your people, and belonging

**Reclaiming language**
- Dyke or queer
- Around 1990 people began to claim words proudly (not everyone)

**The case of “queer”**
- Initially claimed around 1990
- Started by academics and activists
- Was used to celebrate deviance and non-normative actions
- Can be seen as an umbrella term
- (P.3 Nicholson) “From my own experience many lesbian nights have become mixed queer events, where all gender are welcome. At their best, they can feel like joyful coming together of misfits, of all different types of stereotypes”
- (P.3 Nicholson) “Queer” encompasses a broad spectrum of desires, and is inclusive of those people who might reject the gender, binary too.

**Colonialism and sexual identities**
- (p.220) “The word “sodomite” derives from the Old Testament. Its common use to describe lesbians (or any strong independent woman) is peculiar to Jamaica—a culture historically and strongly grounded in the Bible, [...]
This book has been so powerful that it continues to bind our lives with its racism and misogyny. Thus, the importance of the Bible plays in Afro-Caribbean culture must be recognized in order to understand the historical and political context for the invisibility of lesbians. The wrath of God rained down burning sulphur on Sodom and Gomorrah. How could a Caribbean woman claim the name?”

**Religion and respectability**
- (p.224) “Sex was an area in which to articulate one’s humanity, but, because badges of status. To be male was to be the stud, the procreator; to be female was to be fecund, and one’s femininity was measured by the ability to attract and hold a man, and to bear children. In this way, slavery and the post-emancipated colonial order defined the structures of patriarchy and heterosexuality as necessary for social mobility and acceptance.”
- (p.221) “I began to see how commonplace the act of loving women really was in working-class communities. I realized, too, just how heavily shame and silence weighed down this act.”

**Heterosexism as a response to racism and colonialism**
- (p.225) “I live with a legacy of continued racism and prejudice. We confront this daily, both as individuals and as organized political groups. Yet for those of us who are lesbians, there is another struggle: the struggle for acceptance and positive self-definition within our own communities.”
- (p.225) “The one privilege within our group is heterosexual. We have all suffered at the hands of this racist system at one time or another and to many heterosexual Black women it is inconceivable, almost frightening, that one could turn her back on credibility in our community and the society at large by being lesbian.”
“Similarly, if Native women were portrayed as poor parents, it was then excusable for the state to remove Native children and place them in residential schools and foster homes”

- Foster homes, putting children up for adoption
- Measureable effects for the way the Canadian government deals with indigenous families
- Rate of sexual violence in this country
- The stereotype that indigenous women are more sexual or more easy
- Acts as a justification for sexual violence in general

“In my conversation with Gertie Beaucage (Ojibway), she pointed out that Osbourne was killed because she was expected to be “easy”, and yet she resisted the sexual assault of the white men who attacked her.”

Internalization

- Suicide, could be internalized in risky sexual behaviour, trying to split yourself off from that group
- You don’t want to be associated with terrible things and you try to distance yourself from the heritage
  - The impulse to split yourself off from the group that is being negatively stereotypes
  - Align yourself with "us" by denying your relationships to your culture
- (p.273) “I learned to passively accept and internalize the easy squaw, Indian-whore, dirty Indian, and drunken Indian stereotypes that subsequently imprisoned me, and all indigenous peoples, regardless of our historic, economic, cultural, spiritual, political, and geogaphical differences… I shamefully turned away from my history and cultural roots, becoming, to a certain extent, what was encouraged by the ideological collusiveness of textbooks, and the ignorant comments and peer pressure from non-Indigenous students.”
- Many accounts on how other native women have fostered these negative attitudes from their heritage
- Take away the actual lived experiences of stereotyping on people

**EXERCISE - Effects of Stereotypes on Dominant Groups**

Discuss the following: Do stereotypes hurt only the most vulnerable? What about the effects of stereotypes of powerful groups, like able-bodied white men?

- The positive and negative qualities associated with stereotypes
- Can sometimes be comfortable for some people because they are given the right to conform to certain stereotypes
In order to create a French speaking (colonizing) population, marriage between French men and indigenous women was encouraged.

- Women would be turned into and assimilated into French culture

Indigenous women's skills as central to colonization

- Our young men will marry your young daughters and we will become one people
  - The goal was to create a mixed blood population that was culturally French, but used the knowledge, cultural heritage, and skills of indigenous women

(p.286) “This flies in the face of the actual origins of many white settlements in Canada—which frequently began with displaced and often marginal white men, whose success with the fur trade or settlement, and often their very survival, depended on their ability to insinuate themselves into Indigenous societies through intermarriage. The early days of European-Native contact frequently involved negotiated alliances with local Indigenous communities, often cemented through marriage”.

- Women who lived here were central to the recognition of the colony

Policies shaped by economic interests

- Reliance on indigenous women's knowledge was motivated by economic interest
- Interested in how gendered people could benefit from the project of colonization
  - Contribute practically and economically to this project

(p.285) “The nation building process in Canada began to accelerate between 1781 and 1830, in what is now Southern Ontario, when the British began to realize the necessity of bringing in settlers on the lands where previously they had engaged in the fur trade, to secure the territory they threatened against the threat of American expansion”.
  - Treaty negotiation to establish these places in a more secure fashion
  - The treaty negotiations of this land, take place only with men (indigenous men)
  - This is a problem because the women were actively involved with the caretaking land (moved the women into the back)
  - Imposed a different structure of governance that ignored the women's relationship with the land
  - Matrilineal heritage (passed through mothers), women are acknowledge as primary guardians of land"
  - “(p.286) "Even in societies where men made the decisions about which lands to hunt on each year, clans organized along the female line frequently controlled land inheritance. To bypass older women in traditional societies effectively removed from the treaty process the people centrally responsible for regulating land access"
  - (p.286) "Especially in Haudenosaunee society, female-led clans held the collective land base for all of the nations of the confederacy. Removing women, then, was the key to privatizing the land base. For all of these reasons, a central aspect of the colonization process in Canada would be to break the power of Indigenous women within their nations"
    - Attempt to change gender roles in indigenous communities in ways which were alien to those communities

Regulating of families based on gender and sexual stereotyping

- Manipulation of family structures – based on stereotypes
- At best, indigenous women were seen as a pity towards the economy (associated with derogatory terms)
- Representing indigenous women like this presented a rationale of breaking up families and taking land away from them, to allow for state intervention
  - Picturing indigenous women in particular ways allowed the government to interfere with indigenous families in particular ways
Discomfort (as productive)

- Genders, races, and ethnicities can be made uncomfortable
- Discomfort is productive and it is important for learning, rather than preserving people from feeling uncomfortable
- Discomfort pushes our boundaries and forces us to take action

Love as critical emotion

- (Yancy) “Dear White America, I have a weighty request. As you read this letter, I want you to listen with love, a sort of love that demands that you look at parts of yourself that might cause pain and terror, as James Baldwin I would say. Did you hear that? You may have missed it. Repeat it. I want you to listen with love, well, at least try.”

A Theory of listening

- (Yancy) “In this letter, I ask you to look deep, to look into your souls with silence, to quiet that voice that will speak to you of your white “innocence”
- (Yancy) “There are times when you must quiet your own voice to hear from or about those who suffer the ways you do not”

Intentionality as inadequate

- (Yancy) “It means that despite my best intentions, I perpetuate sexism every day of my life. Please don't take this as a confession for which I’m seeking forgiveness. Confessions can be easy, especially when we know that forgiveness is immediately forthcoming. “
  - His intention to not be sexist, does not make him not a sexist but he’s making a move away from oppression as an individual, rather than relational.
  - (Yancy, p.2) “So, as you read this letter, take a deep breath. Make a space for my voice in the deepest part of your psyche. Try to listen, to practice being silent. There are times when you must quiet your own voice to hear from or about those who suffer in ways you do not.”
- (Yancy) “Just because I fight against sexism does not give me clean hands, as it were, at the end of the day; I continue to fail, and I continue to progress, and even though the ways in which I oppress women is unintentional, this does not free me of being responsible […] If you are white, and you are reading this letter, I ask that you don’t run to seek shelter from your own racism. Don't hide from your responsibility. Rather, begin, right now, to practice being vulnerable.”

Oppression as systemic and relationship, not individual

- (Yancy) “You may have never used the N word in your life, you may hate the K.K.K., but that does not mean that you don't harbor racism and benefit from racism. After all, you are part of a system that allows you to walk into stores where you are not followed, where you get to go for a bank loan and your skin does not count against you, where you don't need to engage in “the talk” that black people and people of color must tell their children when they are confronted by white police officers. As you reap comfort from being white, we suffer for being black and people of color. But your comfort is linked to our pain and suffering. Just as my comfort in being male is linked to the suffering of women, which makes me sexist, so, too, you are racist. That is the gift that I want you to accept, to embrace. It is a form of knowledge that is taboo. Imagine the impact that the acceptance of this gift might have on you and the world.”

Guilt as Inertia

- Guilt stops action from happening, guilt will not do anything in the world, Yancy wants action
- (Yancy, p.3) “White America, are you prepared to be at war with yourself, your white identity, your white power, your white privilege? Are you prepared to show me a white self that love has unmasked?”
  - Not self-hatred but the institution that has given you privilege to such hate
  - Action includes deep radical self-reflection and that requires making the self vulnerable
The importance of vulnerability
• Allows people to critically reflect on the impact of their decisions
• Action is a key transformation of self and consciousness
• (Yancy, p.3) “But I refuse to hide behind that mirror that lies to me about my “nonsexist nobility.” Baldwin says, “Love takes off the masks that we fear we cannot live without and know we cannot live within.”

Video in Class - “People, Systems, and the Game of Monopoly”
• Monopoly has a physical aspect to it, it’s a social system
• When we engage in it, we engage in a social system that brings out human possibilities (negative) not instincts
• Game only ends when everyone is bankrupt but you
• Greedy game because you try to take everything from everyone
• We behave in greedy ways because we are greedy
  o Violence is done by violent people
  o Racism is done by racists people

Exam info
• 2 essay questions
  o Asking you to draw on 3 readings from the course to answer a broad question (deliberately broad) similar to the online violence assignment but to a concept we talk about in the course
• There will be a list of all the readings and the theme for that day and the date it was assigned and the authors (no memorization needed)
• Sample questions will be posted on connect
• To show how well you understand the fundamental concepts
  o Apply what I’ve learned to real life situations.
  o Asking you to stretch and think laterally
  o Use 3 in one question, can overlap one reading
  o No citations in the exam
  o Just reference it by title and author

EXERCISE - Discomfort
Write about a time you have felt uncomfortable but have also learned something useful. What did that feel like?
What was uncomfortable about it? What was the learning like? Think of an instance related to this course if possible.

In courses that challenge your belief systems or different schools of thought that teach you different things. It makes you question the validity and reliability of what you’re learning and it has really taught me to take everything with a grain of salt. In psychology we learn about “Ways of Knowing” and how often, authoritative figures have a big influence on our beliefs. This is engrained in you since you were young, that your parents are always right and that police officers and teachers are always right. While this is the case for many many circumstances in the world, a lot of the times we really need to credit our own opinions and our beliefs rather than the beliefs that are imposed on us. I find that it makes me feel uncomfortable because it feels like I am doing something wrong by believing in myself when really, I have every right to contradict certain opinions if I truly believe in it. Discomfort pushes our boundaries and conditions you to seek the uncomfortable. It creates action rather than passiveness.
Narrow spectrum of images
- We often see a critique of images of women – suggest women are too often pictured in a narrow way – no spectrum of representation of minoritized people
- Women are no picture in media unless in relation to a man
- Always seeing images of relationship but not self realizing

- Bechdel test
  - Are there two or more women with names? Do they talk to each other? Do they talk to each other about something rather than a man?
  - Women are seen by reducing their complexity
  - There are many version that looks at race online

Stereotyping in mass media and pop culture

*ANTM* as ambiguous - multiple meanings of any media text
- (Pozner, pg 347)
  - “Hilariously narcissistic, as well as compassionate;
  - wracked with internalized racism and sexism, while renouncing the concept of discrimination;
  - and concerned with girls' self-esteem, while profiting from a show that reinforces unhealthy body standards and racial stereotypes?”
- Racialized and sexualized women of colour on that show
- Tyra banks said she is interested on diversity but she reinforces racist stereotypes
- Both confirms and resisting stereotypes in the show – pop culture text can do that
- Media images are rich and complex – more than we think
- Absence of women of colour but when they do appear they are very stereotyped
- Show intersects with white supremacist beauty stereotypes
- Very powerful tool intervene with racism and sexism – have many meetings

Modes of resistance to pop culture: production skills, critical literacy
- (Jhally piece) - people must have to be taught skills to speak back and dominate
  - This is what he defines as media literacy
- (Jhally, pg 333) "The other set of concerns are connected to issues of literacy in an image-saturated society. […]While we can read the images quite adequately (for the purposes of their creators) we do not know how to produce them. Such skills, or knowledge of the process, must be a prerequisite for functional literacy in the contemporary world."
  - This terrain has already changed – tools exist everywhere to make interventions and the problematic images

Video: Rape - it’s your fault
- Why it works? It is ridiculous – pushing to level of absurd makes it – mode of resistance
love now, just as I was. So I’ll be fat on my wedding day. Because being fat and happy and in love in public is still a radical act.”

- **Interpersonal relationships**
  - The “isms”, racism, sexism, homophobia, sizeism, etc.
  - There are difficulties to calling people out, it demands something of people, and can casts individuals themselves, interrupts the flow of daily structure
  - Making people unhappy and interrupting their happiness

- **Informal public awareness-raising**
  - “The ‘100-mile walk’ organized to protest the Indian Act provision
  - (Shirley, p.309) “In July 1979, the women who had occupied the Tobique band offices saw that the situation was not getting any better, so they decided to organize a 100-mile walk from Oka, Quebec (outskirts of Montreal), to Ottawa. This walk by women and children attracted national attention. […] The number of walkers grew from 50 to more than 200 by the time they reached parliament Hill in Ottawa. Publicity from the walk precipitated the meeting with Prime Minister Joe Clark, his wife Maureen McTeer, and a number of Cabinet ministers.” […]
    - Attention and leverage for an act
    - Organizing tactics and exploitation
  - Critical media literacy
    - (Posner p.350) “You don’t need to divorce yourselves from the real housewives, shoot down the pick-up artist, or cancel your cable. Over the long haul, it’s far more important to learn how to watch: that is, how to resist the lure of passive viewership and turn your critical filters on high.”
      - Is fun and can be used like a game (silly)

- **Formal education**
  - (p.375) “We want sexuality education that has a holistic view of sexuality and sexual health, including positive body image, self-esteem, gender identity, sexual orientation, and communication and decision-making in relationships, and for sexuality to be seen as a part of life. We want sexuality education that goes beyond a deficit based disease and pregnancy prevention framework to recognize and celebrate sexuality as a natural part of human development. We want attention, commitment, and resources that focus on promoting overall sexual health of all people, including marginalized communities”

- **Civil disobedience**
  - Act of refusal to obey certain laws or demands in the moment, commands that come from authority
    - Sitting down in the street when police ask you to move.
  - (Bear p.308) –“In early September the women were served with an injunction from the chief and council ordering them out of the band office, but they disregarded it. In mid-September the band administration moved all of their equipment and files out of the band office, but the women remained”
    - Another way of taking up space
  - A belief that the law has been corrupt or that the law is supporting a corrupt system
  - Civil disobedience has broken down the spirit of justice
  - Disregarding the law is a comment on injustice of a system (usually done with strategic forethought)
  - Critical analysis of a structural framework
  - Contributed historically to changes on this continent (won through civil disobedience).
  - Difficulties and limitations of this approach
    - You can get arrested