

little feminist zine

issue 1: pandemic edition

Stay home!

*keep our first
responders safe!*

Heroes have home lives, too.





Camilla Rosa
Madeleine Kum
Gabrielle Pereira

With Articles by

Isabelle Hochban; Sar; Melanie; Brooklyn; Cerebral Cereal; Jade M; Hiiragi; Diana Costa; Mads; Elaine Madrigal; Amanda Degner; Rose Lyster; and Kayleigh Dales.

This zine emerged as a class project in a Gender, Sexualities and Women's Studies class. We had planned to distribute it in "little libraries" around our New West campus and our homes. When COVID 19 social isolation measures were put in place the editorial team rapidly pivoted to bring this e-zine to you! We are extremely grateful not only

Little Feminist Zine: Pandemic Edition Issue #1

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to GSWS 1101 classmates who contributed to the issue but also to amazing friends and community members who contributed additional articles and art. Our contributors range in age from 3 (Audrey featured in the Children's pandemic story linked on the next page) to 43 (you'll have to guess which drawing on the back cover). This truly has been a community effort. We hope you learn something!

Feedback? Questions? Contributions to future issues? Reach out to us at:

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ALONE TOGETHER: A CHILDREN'S PANDEMIC STORY

By: Jill Fellows

Illustrations by Amy Skinner

Link to PDF, epub and kindle versions to share with your kiddo in quarantine:

<https://totynsplace.github.io/AloneTogether/>



Isabelle's Index of Intersectional Impacts and Resources

55% of COVID-19 cases in British Columbia are female
April 2020 • Source: CDC (BC)

Vancouver's Battered Women's Support Services has reported a 300 percent increase
in crisis calls during COVID-19
April 2020 • Source: Canadian Women's Foundation (Toronto, Ontario)

Pandemic related stressors can lead to increased violence against women and gender nonconforming youth
April 2020 • Source: Statistics Canada (Ottawa, Ontario)

1 in 10 women in Canada are concerned with violence within the home because of COVID-19 quarantine and
self isolation regulations
April 2020 • Source: Statistics Canada (Ottawa, Ontario)

The Canadian Government will dedicate \$50 million towards women's shelters and sexual assault centres
during COVID-19
March 2020 • Source: Justin Trudeau, pm.gc.ca (Ottawa, Ontario)

If you need help and are in immediate danger, call 911. To find assistance in your area,
visit sheltersafe.ca or endingviolencecanada.org.

The Government of Canada will be providing \$157.5 million in support of people experiencing homelessness
during the COVID-19 outbreak
April 2020 • Source: Department of Finance (Ottawa, Ontario)

Indigenous men and women represent 38% of the homeless population within British Columbia, a discrepancy that can be directly tied to the Indian Act and industrial extraction projects across the country.

December 2018 • Source: The Homelessness Services Association of BC (BC)

Resources from the BC Provincial Government for housing, childcare and other emergency services can be found here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>

Food Banks Canada is seeking \$150 million to support the current impacts of COVID-19

March 2020 • Source: Food Banks Canada (Mississauga, Ontario)

There were over 1.1 million visits to Canadian food banks in 2019

March 2020 • Source: Food Banks Canada (Mississauga, Ontario)

The government of Canada is giving \$50 million to support food banks during COVID-19

April 2020 • Source: Justin Trudeau, pm.gc.ca (Ottawa, Ontario)

Support food banks in your area: <https://www.foodbankscanada.ca/COVID-19.aspx>

The Canadian Government is offering temporary emergency child care for top tier essential workers (Health services, social services, law enforcement, emergency and first responders). They will be given priority in finding a placement for their child from a contracted Child Care Resource and Referral center

April 2020 • Source: Ministry of Children and Family Development (BC)

Women work an average of 35 hours a week whereas men work an average of 41 hours a week. This has to do with housework and childcare. In Canada, women spend an average of 27 hours per week performing unpaid work whereas men spend an average of 17 hours a week

March 2020 • Source: Dr. Melissa Moyser, University of Toronto (Toronto)

60% of Canadians living on low income are women

March 2020 • Source: Jessica Howard, Canadian Women's Foundation, (Toronto)

Women make up 58% of the minimum wage workers in Canada

March 2020 • Source: Dr. Melissa Moyser, University of Toronto (Toronto)

Unemployment jumped by 5.3% in March, 2020 with over 1,011,000 jobs lost to COVID-19. Canada has a current unemployment rate of 7.8%

April 2020 • Source: Statistics Canada (Ottawa, Ontario)

Women in Canada earn 0.87 cents for every dollar a man makes

March 2020 • Source: Dr. Melissa Moyser, University of Toronto (Toronto)

Racialized women working full-time, full-year earn an average of 33% less than non-racialized men, earning 67 cents to the dollar

April 2020 • Source: Canadian Women's Foundation (Toronto, Ontario)

Indigenous women working full-time, full year earn an average of 35% less than non-Indigenous men, earning 65 cents to the dollar

April 2020 • Source: Canadian Women's Foundation (Toronto, Ontario)

The gender pay gap is a symptom of broader gender-based discrimination and inequality-it is just one indicator that gender equality has not been achieved in Canada

April 2020 • Source: Canadian Women's Foundation (Toronto, Ontario)

Women comprise 82% of the health care and social assistance work sectors in Canada

March 2020 • Source: Dr. Melissa Moyser, University of Toronto (Toronto)

Women make up 59% of the caring, clerical, cleaning, cashiering and catering sectors in Canada

March 2020 • Source: Dr. Melissa Moyser, University of Toronto (Toronto)

Women make up 90% of the registered nurses within Canada

December 2019 • Source: BC Nurses Union Annual Report (BC)

The BC Nurses Union has set up a Health and Safety phone line for nurses to report unsafe working conditions here: <https://www.bcnu.org/a-safe-workplace/health-and-safety/coronavirus>

Percentage of unmet healthcare needs Indigenous women (16%) non-Indigenous women (13%).

March 2020 • Source: Dr. Melissa Moyser, University of Toronto (Toronto)

\$305 million will be given to the Indigenous Community Support Fund which will address the immediate needs of Inuit, Metis and First Nations communities impacted by COVID-19

March 2020 • Source: Department of Finance (Ottawa, Ontario)

The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres has gathered useful resources here:

<https://bcaafc.com/help/covid-19/>

6 correctional officers and 41 prison inmates have tested positive for COVID-19 at Mission Institution as of

April 14, 2020

April 2020 • Source: Correctional Service of Canada (BC)

Positive tests for COVID-19 across Canada's inmate population as of April 13, 2020: 82

April 2020 • Source: Correctional Service of Canada (BC)

For more resources about people deprived of their liberty globally during the pandemic: <https://canadaopcatproject.ca/covid-19-info-corner/>

Current COVID-19 vaccinations: 0

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HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY

Editor: Kassia Desouza

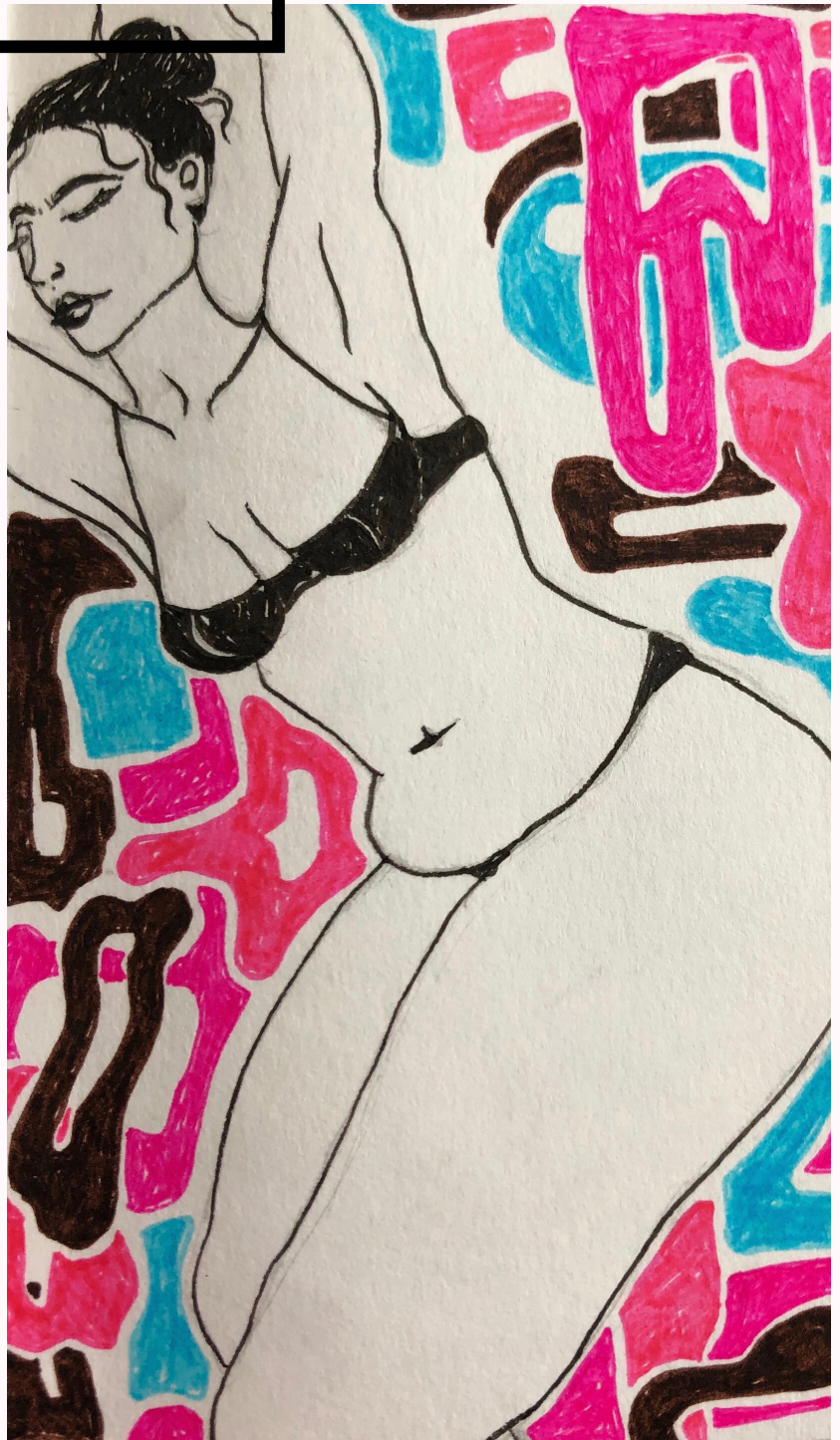
Images: Mieran Loria

Content: Amanda Degar,

Rose Lyster, & Kayleigh

Dales

Hegemonic Masculinity. What is it? Can you hold it? No, but you can see and feel it. It's the male-ego sating Instagram feed filled with subservient "t and a" offered up to the man who owns it all. Why? Because he's the man. His power and dominance left as self-evident. Women are there to look sexy and keep their mouths shut...or stuffed. I might have been a little dramatic in my example but I'm sure you all get the idea! Critical masculinity studies scholars Messerschmidt and Connell suggest that hegemonic masculinity takes many forms, but always serves to reinforce unequal gender relations, not just between women and men, but also between masculinity and femininity and dominant and subordinate masculinities. Now that you understand the basic idea behind this complex concept, would you be surprised to find out you have been exposed to it for years? This section will definitely have you re-thinking the way you watch the classics and the messed up messages about men and masculinity embedded within them!





BEAST VERUS (W O)MAN

MASCULINITY DEPICTED IN DISNEY'S BEAUTY AND THE BEAST



The award-winning family musical, Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, took little girls and women by storm. The protagonist is a smart, independent, and passionate woman; she is nothing like the damsel in distress, give-up-her-voice, or rely on a fairy godmother woman that Disney favoured before her: she has more than 18 minutes of screen time and she isn't asleep! Belle exudes confidence and refuses to conform to what the townspeople believe she should be. The movie left girls everywhere wondering: what's so strange about a girl who loves to read and isn't in a rush to get married?.

The character Gaston represents the toxic hypermasculinity that many men seek to embody even today. He is vile and vain and "positively prime evil". The whole goal of Gaston's character is to "win over" Belle, because she is the most beautiful (and thus the best) girl in town. He wants to own, manipulate and control her for his own needs. He states his opinions as the only truth and expresses that he thinks that "it's not right for a woman to read [because] she'll start getting ideas and thinking" (8:48). Gaston is a

controversial character and there truly is "no one like Gaston", or is there?

To me, the townspeople are just as bad as Gaston, not as upfront or prominent, but nonetheless still quite creepy. In multiple shots in the first scene of Belle walking around her little provincial town you can see male characters 'checking her out'. For example, when Belle exits the bookstore there are three men that turn away from the window after watching her while she was inside (5:26).



The film blatantly juxtaposes two types of women on screen: beautiful young women with large breasts and thin waists, and older, heavier women, often pictured with small children. Thanks Disney for reinforcing the hypersexualization of young women yet again!

Gaston isn't the only one to bluntly show qualities such as aggression, impatience, unwillingness to change, and the inability to control their temper. The Beast shows these behaviours after taking Belle prisoner and telling her she'll never see her father again. He demands Belle have dinner with him and threatens to let her starve if she refuses his request. Great first date Disney! He even goes to the extent of threatening to break down her door.

It requires an entire staff to help the Beast manage his emotions so that he can break the spell of his selfishness. His staff tell him that his reaction might not be the best way to "win the girls affection". When telling the Beast this information they say it in a way that is gentle and protective of the Beast's feelings. Similarly, Gaston's sidekick, LeFou, is also protective of Gaston's sensitive feelings, there is even a whole song about LeFou trying to make Gaston feel better after being humiliated and rejected. So how different are the Beast and Gaston, really?

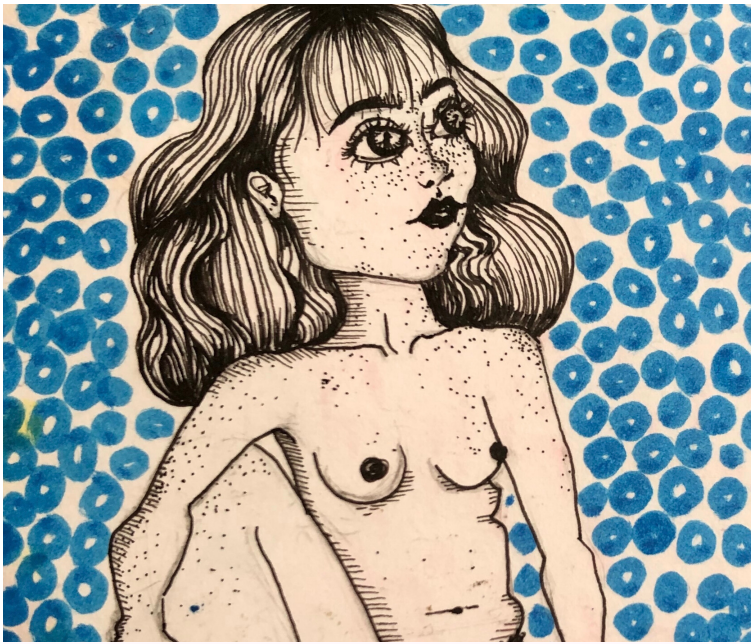
Beauty and the Beast can be thought of as encapsulating the roles hegemonic masculinity assigns to women. It presents the idea that it is a woman's duty to save troubled men, but she must be able to discern which ones are worth saving (hint! It's the rich ones!). Disney: do better. I for one would like to know more about what Belle was reading.

-Amanda Degner

**Enjoy the beautiful artwork
you've seen so far?**

**We were lucky enough to have
received it from young artist
Mieran Loria. If you want to see
more, feel free to go to
[@mieran_art](#) on instagram and
show her some love!**





THE SIMPSONS:

A ANALYSIS OF HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY IN THE MEDIA

The television show *The Simpsons* is a cartoon sitcom created by Matt Groening and is one of the longest running television shows in history. Often satirical and irreverent, the show nonetheless makes humour from stereotypical gender roles and relations. Here I will explore how this is done in three episodes:

1. Gender Script (S06E17)

In the episode *Homer vs. Patty and Selma* we see sexual and gendered scripts both challenged and reinforced. Competition, aggression and violence are coded as masculine traits, while softness, agility and vulnerability are coded as feminine when Bart is required to join ballet class. Bart claims that he is afraid that the girls will laugh at him and that the boys will beat him up if they see him perform. This shows that Bart is well aware of the gender script that casts ballet (and even all dance) as a feminine sport that is not socially acceptable for males. The episode does hold out the hope that mastery can overcome prejudice: during the performance Bart wears a mask and, in the audience, Jimbo Jones claims that "[Bart] is graceful yet masculine. So it is OK for me to like this." But when Bart reveals that he was

the masked dancer, the audience boos him and he is chased by the school bullies, Jimbo and Nelson, after Bart falls down and gets injured Nelson gives up the chase "well, as long as he is hurt." This validates that masculinity is proven through violence and aggression from the example that Bart is punished for stepping out of socially set gender roles.

2. Social Construction of Masculinity (S08E15)

In the season 8 episode "*Homer's Phobia*," we see the homophobia within hegemonic masculinity explored. When Homer finds out that a sales associate he met, John, is gay he panics that "[he] danced with a gay" and that house property values will go down in the neighbourhood if "gays" are allowed. He even goes so far as to make a rule that only straight people are allowed in the house. While satirical, the episode highlights that hegemonic masculinity marginalizes people who are gay and that parents are often heterosexist and bigoted: Homer is in distraught seeing his son Bart dressed up as a woman and fears that he is gay.

Hegemonic masculinity is very fragile, and words are adopted such as "queer" to marginalize those who do not fit within socially constructed roles of masculinity.

When John says that he's queer Homer retorts "I resent you people using that word, that's our word for making fun of you!" We are left to wonder if young kids watching the show are able to follow the satire.

3. Gender Stereotypes (S11E10)

Gender stereotypes are propped up by hegemonic masculinity. For instance, women are associated as housewives, being compliant, and emotionally available. In contrast, men are associated with "hard" (read wage-earning) labour, and are often dismissive, and aggressive towards the needs and desires of others. In the episode Little Big Mom, Marge is injured during a family skiing trip and is required to stay at the hospital to recover from her injuries. Marge highlights the pitfalls of a care and service oriented feminine socialization, the idea that she must constantly be taking care of others and denying her own needs, when she claims that she "can't be in the hospital. Tomorrow is laundry day!" The show highlights that men are allowed to be lazy, arrogant, and passive without any real consequences in the Simpson family: Homer and Bart do not participate in any chores and do not acknowledge Lisa when she provides them food and cleans up after them.

The Simpsons offers a platform to confront gender scripts through its satire of socially constructed gender roles. Although the Simpsons is providing comic relief it can influence the agreement people hold about sexual and gender stereotypes. The Simpsons is also intended for older audiences in which could raise the question how it could affect younger audiences and their internalization of gender stereotyping. I believe that hegemonic masculinity must be cut down in the media to get rid of socially constructed gender stereotypes and gender scripts.

Kayleigh Dales



Interested in spending more time thinking about themes and topics in Gender, Sexualities and Women's Studies?

Consider signing up for a course at Douglas College in Fall 2020!:

GSWS 1100 Introduction to Feminisms: Silences, Voices and Experiences

001 - Mondays 15:30-18:20

David Lam Campus

Instructor: Trish Matson

002 - Fridays 12:30-15:20

New Westminster Campus

Instructor: Ivanna Cikes

GSWS 1101-050 Contemporary Issues in Gender, Sexualities and Women's Studies

Wednesdays 18:30-21:20

New Westminster Campus

Instructor: Jaime Yard

GSWS 1102-001 Introduction to Sexuality Studies

Thursdays 9:30-12:20

New Westminster Campus

Instructor: Kira Tomsons

GSWS 2101-001 Reproductive Justice

Wednesdays 9:30-12:20

New Westminster Campus

Instructor: Sally Mennill

CINDERELLA STORY OR FEMALE DOMINATION BY 1990'S HEGEMONIC MALE



Pretty Woman, is perhaps the most iconic movie of the 1990's. Starring Richard Gere plays business tycoon Edward Lewis, a wealthy, successful corporate raider who takes over and disassembles businesses, selling off the parts for profit. He is also cast as the "hero" of the movie, saving Vivian, a "hooker with a heart of gold" played by Julia Roberts, from a life of prostitution. In their own contexts, Edward's cronies supported, condoned and perhaps even admired both his business acumen and decision to purchase rather than court, love. Likewise, Vivian's friend and roommate, Kit De Luca, celebrates Vivian's good fortune in having the opportunity to be used by Edward, in exchange for money and gifts. Many instances in the film amplify the idea that it is acceptable for men to purchase or even own female affection and sexual favours. How was this possible in the 90s? Despite the groundswell of support for the Women's Liberation Movement in the late 1960's and forward, the moral of *Pretty Woman* is to get a rich man and help him work through *his* emotional baggage.

Male dominance has long been normalized and legitimized through centuries of history and mass media representations. The "ideal" hegemonic masculine personality includes traits such as competitiveness, independence, and initiative as well as being an excellent provider. Taking a deeper look at Edward's character, you get the impression he has grown up with a toxic model of masculinity, one that emphasizes control and entitlement. He has learned to see women as sexual objects from an early age and to desire "non-relational sex". He also feels the need to prove his dominance over male peers through the conquest of women, violence and using his money for power in the business world and day-to-day life.

continued on next page...

Pretty Woman glorifies materialism throughout the movie. Edward gives Vivian generous access to his money so that she can purchase suitable clothes for the weekend's social engagements. Vivian, however, is snubbed by the sales associates, based on her current style, they assume she is lacking in taste and money and cannot afford their high-end fashion clothes. Once Edward is informed of this treatment, he intimidates the manager and staff informing them that he would be spending an "obscene amount of money," and that instantly gets their complete attention. Vivian is transformed by her makeover: discrimination on the basis of class or occupation is no longer relevant to the film. The challenges that Vivian faces are framed as interpersonal rather than structural.

Another example of this is found in the conflict between Vivian, Edward and Philip, Edward's lawyer and friend. There are a few memorable moments throughout the film when Philip mentions he does not believe that Vivian is worthy of anything. The first occasion is when he is having a conversation with Edward at the beginning of Edward's arrangement with Vivian. Phillip says, "You know, you're the only millionaire I ever heard of... who goes looking for a bargain basement streetwalker, you know?" Later in the film after Edward and Philip have an argument, Philip takes it even further, he goes over to the hotel penthouse with this idea of revenge after Edward turns down a multimillion-dollar contract. Vivian is alone waiting for Edward, when Phillip arrives and says to Vivian, "You're a hooker. Maybe you're a very good hooker, you know?...Maybe if I do you, then I wouldn't care about losing millions of

dollars. Because I have to be very honest with you right now, Vivian. Right now I really do care. I really do. And right now I am really pissed, you know?" He then proceeds to slap her across the face and continues taunting her about paying for her services until he is kicked out of the suite by Edward, who is appalled by his behaviour. Edward, despite displaying characteristics consistent with hegemonic masculinity, is considered the hero who rescues Vivian, the damsel in distress. But how different are Phillip and Edward really in their treatment of Vivian?

Vivian, despite her dubious beginnings, is assumed to be completely saved from her bad situation, thanks to Edward, to go forward and live a fairy tale life. One hopes that "Pretty Woman", if released today, would provoke more criticism. Gender based inequality, gender-based violence including, but not limited to, rape and domestic violence remain a significant problem in our society. In addition, there have not been big changes in terms of understanding and modifying the views and misconceptions that comes along with prostitution and protecting sex workers' health and safety.

-Rose Lyster



women who are shaping our fututre.

Feminist Icons

EDITED BY AKSHAYAA RAVINDRABABU



Michelle Obama

The Former First Lady's Contributions of Feminism

Michelle Obama has carved her own legacy, not only as the first African-American First Lady in U.S. history, but also with her intersectional political activism and outspoken support for women and education. Beyond just advocating for quality education for adolescent girls all over the world, Obama has been vocal about the need to support women all over the world. Her speech at the State Department Woman of Courage Awards encapsulates her power as an orator and feminist inspiration:

“The women we honor today teach us three very important lessons. One, that as women, we must stand up for ourselves. The second, as women, we must stand up for each other. And finally, as women, we must stand up for justice for all.”

The notion of “justice for all” highlighted in Obama’s speech indicated the complexity of feminist movements, which is not about women having power over men, but about dismantling patriarchy in a way that is beneficial for everyone, men and women alike.

Obama has set off a revolutionary wave in contemporary feminism that unites generations. Her autobiography *Becoming* has sold more than 10 million copies and was the best-selling book of 2018. Unlikely some other First ladies who seemed tepid in their political commitments, Obama has never shied away from previously taboo topics such as the rape culture that is so deeply embedded in our society. She was uncompromising and outspoken after sexual harassment allegations surfaced against President Donald Trump in the midst of his 2016 election campaign and has helped other women to find their voices to speak out about how women’s opportunities, ambitions and goals are too often thwarted by misogynist cultural norms.

Recently, the former First Lady has been a huge advocate for the #metoo movement that is changing how we address the sexual harassment and threat of assault that so many women face on a daily basis.



Obama has remarked that the #metoo movement has ignited the kinds of changes needed for “future generations of young women to create change and determine their own paths in life” (Vox 2018). Obama continues as an advocate post Whitehouse arguing that she has no choice but to engage; that she will engage as long as there is work to be done.

“Young women are tired of it. They’re tired of being undervalued, they’re tired of being disregarded, they’re tired of their voices not being invested in and heard.”

While we are still a long way from equality in so many areas, Obama has decidedly raised public consciousness about such vital issues as health disparities between white women and black, indigenous and women of colour. While Obama has insisted that she has no interest in running for office, her advocacy for “justice for all” will continue to inspire many women and girls for generations to come: to be brave and to take on the world headstrong!

AKSHAYAA RAVINDRABABU

THE "F" WORD

Feminism at its core, is about fighting for the liberation of all genders from oppressive system including patriarchy, colonialism and white supremacy. It's the theory that there should be political, economic and social equality of the sexes. Unfortunately, it is still a term that many shy away from due to misconceptions about what a feminist is and does. However, there are countless self-identified feminists who have been advocating for equal rights for decades and an emergent new generation of activists confronting injustices both new and deeply rooted in history. Many feminist leaders have devoted their entire lives to the plight of the marginalized, paving the way forward for people of all genders, races and sexual orientations to form stronger communities and mutual understanding.

In this section, our authors offer profiles of three inspirational women from very different eras and contexts. We hope that after reading about the accomplishments and tenacity of these women you will find yourself inspired to embrace or renew your commitment to feminist causes.



Camilla Rosa is a freelance illustrator and designer from Brazil who generously allowed us to use some of her images. Contact her at www.camilarosa.net and follow her on instagram: www.instagram.com/camixvx

Zora Neale Hurston

Rise of the Harlem Renaissance

Born on January 7th, 1891, in Notasulga, Alabama, author and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston defied social expectations of her time of what a Black Southern woman could be and do. Her experimental and influential literature and ethnography was popular-though- controversial in its day though by the 1960s her books were out of print and almost lost to the historical record entirely. Revived and vaulted to new fame by author and activist Alice Walker in the 1970s, Zora Neale Hurston now enjoys a canonical place in the history of American literature and anthropology. Known for her unflinching portrayals of everyday life and dialect in Black communities throughout the Southern United States and Caribbean, Hurston lived an extraordinary life affected but undaunted by the widespread racism of her day.

The groundwork for her uncompromising belief in her abilities was likely laid in her hometown of Eatonville, Florida, an all-Black settlement that established in the mind of young Zora that there was nothing extraordinary about Black authority and dignity in a time prior to the civil rights movement. It is extraordinary to think of the intergenerational change from the lives of her paternal grandparents who were enslaved people to her father, John Hurston, who served several terms as the mayor of Eatonville, to Hurston's own landmark achievements including being the first Black female graduate of Barnard College in 1928.

Hurston was notorious irreverent. She was uncompromising in her beliefs about truthful representations whether in her works of fiction or her cultural anthropological research. While she endured backlash from other Black scholars of her day who feared her unflinching representations of the everyday lives and speech of Black Americans, Haitians and Jamaicans, Hurston went so far as to refuse to remove dialect from her books to be more palatable to the mainstream American public and many members of elite Black intellectual circles who feared her works might reinforce stereotypes.

“ I am not tragically colored. There is no great sorrow dammed up in my soul, nor lurking behind my eyes. [...] Even in the helter-skelter skirmish that is my life, I have seen that the world is to the strong regardless of a little pigmentation more or less. No, I do not weep at the world —I am too busy sharpening my oyster knife. ”

— Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*

In an era when many women were constrained to the domestic sphere (both in their work and home life) Hurston not only published novels and ethnographies but pursued advanced graduate study under the tutelage of Franz Boas the founder of the American School of Cultural Anthropology. It is perhaps unlikely that Hurston would have thought of or represented herself as a feminist. Her autobiography details with her typical frankness her suffering for love. In her accounts of both her own life and those of the many people she interviewed she focused her attention on the details of everyday lives and narratives. Today, her works speak volumes about the structural racism and sexism that pervaded her era.

During her life Hurston supported herself through a variety of jobs including an assistant to novelist Fanny Hurst, wardrobe girl for the theatre and esthetician for politicians in Washington, DC.



In all of her jobs, no matter how big or small, she gleaned all that she could from those with more power around her to improve her own condition and that of those connected to her.

Hurston delighted in defying people's prejudiced expectations. Known broadly now for her contributions to understanding the persistence of African cultural forms in the Americas, Hurston's popularity continues to grow. In 1931 she finished a book she was unable to publish due to her insistence that it remain in dialect and not be translated to "standard" English, *Barracoon: The Story of the Last "Black Cargo"* was finally published in 2018. The book details the story of Kossula, also known as Cudjo Lewis, a survivor of the Clotilda, the last ship to bring enslaved people to the United States. Hurston is likely best known for her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), her folklore work including *Mules and Men* (1935) and her autobiography *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942). Hurston's contributions to Black feminism have made history. She is celebrated now as a major contributor to the artistic and literary movement the Harlem Renaissance. Hurston passed at the age of 69, on January 28th, 1960 in Fort Pierce, Florida. She rests in an unmarked grave. While she perhaps did not receive her due in her day, she is considered a founding and vital influence on the development of American Anthropology and American literature today.

ELAINE MADRIGAL

Yumi Ishikawa

founder of the #KuToo movement

Nowadays, “#metoo” is universally recognized as calling out sexual harassment in all its forms, especially in the workplace. A lot of women have demanded workplaces free of gendered discrimination. While the government of Japan, following Western countries, is trying to eliminate gender discrimination in the society, Japanese females are still facing rampant gendered inequality because of rules and common sense created by history and culture. For example, in Japan, some companies ban women from wearing high heels at their workplace, citing safety and company image as justifications, even as men in the same companies are free to do so. Many women have been forced to quit their jobs because they could not physically and mentally handle the gendered policies regarding self-presentation that the companies set. However, in 2019, one Japanese woman, Yumi Ishikawa, stood up to complain about gendered work clothing in Japan, founding the #kutoo campaign which aims to protect women's health and autonomy by prohibiting companies from forcing women to wear high heels at work.

Ishikawa is a Japanese actress, writer, gravure idol (model who appears in men's magazines), and was part-time funeral attendant in Japan. When she was working as a funeral parlor, she felt uncomfortable with the policy of her company that required women to wear high heels of 5-7cm in height that resulted in sore, and often bleeding, feet. Male workers at the same establishment wore flat shoes giving them a decided advantage in the job. She complained about the policy on her Twitter and the post went viral bringing many other women's stories out on social media.



The tweet has 29,000 retweets and 65,000 likes as of January 31st, 2020. Marked by #kutoo this campaign influenced her to continue her feminist activism in Japan. The name of movement, #kutoo, plays on three meanings in Japanese; shoes (kutsu), pain (kutsuu), and #metoo, referring to the anti-sexual harassment movement begun in North America. After Ishikawa founded the movement, she submitted a request form to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare to allow women to receive a Doctor's exemption from wearing high heels at work. Her petition had received 19,000 signatures by June 2019. Although the government did not embrace her request on the new principle of labor harassment, her activism has been covered in the media locally and internationally, and her action influences people and companies to rethink about gender equality at their companies.

“ Things could dramatically change if people at the top moved, but there's a general environment in Japan not to take the initiative. ”

However, while a lot of people agree with her activism, some use her celebrity as a gravure idol against her. Negative comments on social media and beyond target not only her movement, but also her as an individual. After her past nude pictures were posted on Twitter, abusive comments have been dramatically increased towards her. “You made profits by selling yourself in a sexual way. After you cannot make money from that job, you shout out gender discrimination.” (Takeshita, 2019). Ishikawa responded to these “slut-shaming” comments that these people presume women working in sexual businesses do not have their rights (Takeshita, 2019).

Ishikawa should be applauded for her twitter activism and #kutoo movement. She has raised the profile of feminism and other topics related to gender discrimination in Japanese society. As a result, the word #kutoo was nominated as “U-CAN INC, 10 Keywords of the Year in 2019”, additionally, Ishikawa was named as one of the “BBC 100 Most Influential Women of 2019”. As a Japanese student, I think her activism could break the frame of Japanese society which ignores the voices and suffering of women. She has shown a way to change labour policies to better serve workers and to create a more open space in society where everyone can speak their mind.

HIIRAGI

QUEER IN QUARANTINE!

A letter to gender diverse folx stuck in unaffirming isolation pods

I see you. I hear you. I feel you. I send love and support and wish you nothing but the best.

I am empathetic to your situation and I am here to give you some tips on how to make it through this quarantine while stuck with unsupportive people.

First, I would highly recommend turning to the Internet to find community in this period of social isolation. Even when we're not amidst a pandemic, the Internet, for me, has been a place of refuge, acceptance and validation.

Personally, I turn primarily to Facebook groups for gender diverse folx, and also dabble in queer Twitter, but there are a multitude of platforms through which one can create their community. In addition to using social platforms on the Internet, there is also a website where you can sign up to receive affirming text messages: The Validation Station. You simply sign up for

the service with your first name, your phone number and your pronouns, and the app sends you a daily message using your correct name and pronouns.

Further, there are online groups you can attend to connect, share, learn and discuss such as Qmunity's Transgathering and Mosaic's I Belong. Qmunity's Transgathering is a drop-in meeting that is currently happening on Zoom. Mosaic's I Belong support group is for 2SLGBTQ+ immigrants and refugees.

In addition to this, I would recommend looking into online counselling. Times can be tougher than usual right now and it is extremely important to maintain nourishment of your mental health and wellness. If you aren't already accessing these services, I can personally attest to the helpfulness of seeking external, professional help. I do understand the complexities of finding the help that works for you and have even fallen through the cracks of the system and been unable to access assistance, but I promise, it is worth the work to access the support you need.



Follow Ariana @ar1nk on instagram

Next, tying into this, I suggest ensuring you practice an act of self-care every day. This could be a bath, a face mask, brushing your teeth or hair, drinking water, having a cup of tea, practicing mindfulness, drawing, getting active or anything else that improves your day.

Personally, I practice journaling as a way to validate my positive thoughts and challenge negative thinking. I write manifestation affirmations such as "I am beautiful. I am handsome. I am ethereal." and set intentions such as "Live as my most authentic self. Be the healthiest, happiest me I can be." and find that these acts nourish my wellbeing.

Again, I see you. I hear you. I feel you. I send love and support and wish you nothing but the best. You are ethereal, amazing and valid. You are loved, loveable and important. You will get through this and you will flourish.

Sincerely,
Sar
(xe/xem/xyrs; they/them/theirs)

Links:

<https://www.validationstation.net/>

<https://qmunity.ca/social-groups/transgathering/>

<https://www.mosaicbc.org/services/settlement/lgbtq/>



Art by Mieran Loria

Body Projects

LETTERS TO THE BODY

EDITED BY MADELEINE KUM

FACE TO FACE WITH THE BODY

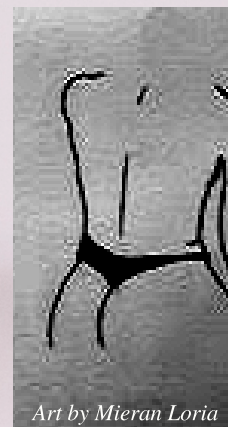
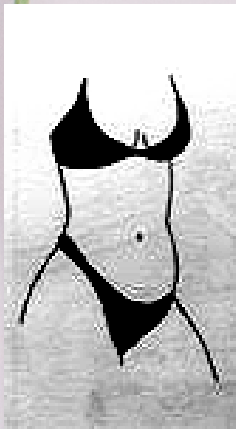
There are a wide range of complex emotions one experiences when confronting their insecurities. In the act of reflecting on ourselves and our insecurities it is easy to get bogged down in feelings of sadness, anger, shame, and rejection. Nonetheless, while these emotions are prominent in many people's journey towards selflove, they are not the only emotions experienced. Upon deeper analysis, notes of forgiveness and triumph also ring true among many of us who have struggled and continue to struggle with our self image.

In this section we have asked authors to write letters to parts of themselves that have caused insecurity. Authors were given total free range of writing style, content, and length of their pieces. We hope that each specific letter is read with compassion, and we also wish that our readers encounter a sense of self growth while engaging in this section.

Enjoy.

LETTERS

Dear Hips
Dear Mustache
Dear Stretch Marks
Dear Thick Thighs
Dear Skin
Dear Breast
Dear Fat



Art by Mieran Loria

"From the earliest childhood she has been taught and persuaded to survey herself continuously. And so she comes to consider the surveyor and the surveyed within her as the two constituent yet always distinct elements of her identity as a woman "

- John Berger

MY HIPS DON'T LIE

Dearest Hips,

Stop making me have second thoughts when it comes to trying on outfits in fitting rooms or how I plan my outfits the night before I work or go to school. This is not a competition between you, my thighs, my muffin top and my buttocks. Stop reminding me that I have gained all the weight back that I lost in high school.

When it comes to wearing skintight or body-hugging clothes, you make me frown. You make me opt for the baggy clothes that can help me hide you from the world. This game of peek a boo has got to end. Often, I cannot stand looking in the mirror. The endless poses I attempt to make myself look skinny for photos are tiring. Why can't I fathom that I need to stop looking at photos of women with fit bodies, hoping one day I could have the same.

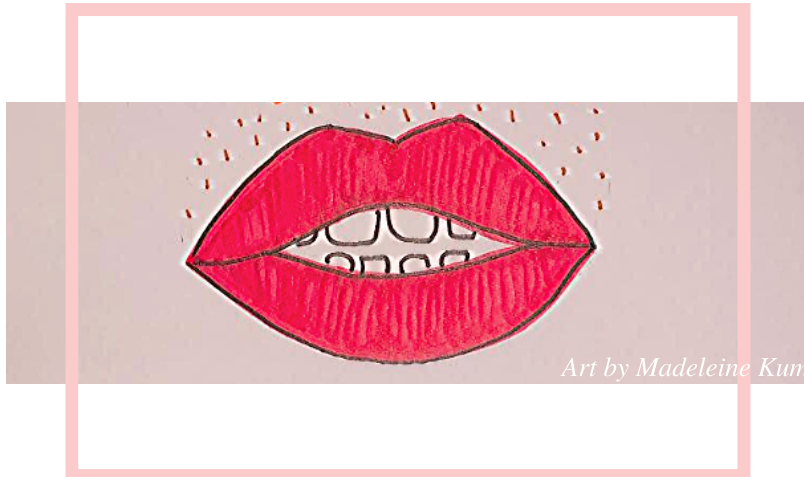
My parents, especially my mom, makes comments about you. 'You have gotten fatter', 'God, you inherited the family's hips for sure', and etcetera. I angrily reply, 'I don't care'. End of argument.



It is funny how relatives get to comment on things like this, even though it is extremely toxic behaviour and destroys our confidence. I can admit I do have a pretty face (thanks to the magic of makeup!) but my body is not how I want it to be.

At least my boyfriend has not said anything about — thank god, he only gives me encouragement to try to be healthier and exercise a few times a week. I have no motivation. My body will not be able to follow that unhealthy diet I did to lose so much weight in high school... Just to fit into my prom dress. For the time being, screw off and let me enjoy wearing my skintight clothes.

Kindest regards,
Melanie



MY HAIR, MY BUSINESS

Dear Mustache,

F*ck you. It's not my fault that I have a lot of body hair. I hate the fact that I have felt uncomfortable because of you for as long as I can remember. The boys in kindergarten would tease me telling me I was a boy and not a girl, it was a classic kindergarten diss. I used to come home and stare at the mirror loathing my fuzzy hair. To me you were not a big deal, but because of the way everyone teased me I was insecure about you. When I was 13, my mom told me you weren't that bad, "It's okay to have hair. Me and your sister have it too! You shouldn't let the kids get to you. Keep your head up" she says, like it's so easy.

To those boys that teased me throughout high school, at least I can grow a better mustache than you. Mustache, you have made me feel inadequate for a long time but now I must embrace you. My mustachio is my business. I'm Italian. I'm hairy. And I love it. My mustache doesn't make me a man. Having hair doesn't make me less of a woman. So, I guess I must thank you, Mustache. Yes, you suck and make me feel less confident, but you keep my lip warm and give it a friend. I have hated you because you made me feel like less of a woman, and that I was a man. But I am beautiful. I am confident and I must embrace you fuzzy.

Sincerely, your best friend,
Brooklyn

LIFE LINES

Dear Stretch Marks,

I'm sorry. You made me realize at the tender age of 10 that I was not like the other girls. Oh, how I fucking hated it when other kids would ask me what those red lines were across my thighs or point out that I had stripes going along all over my calves. I learned to stay quiet when other kids spat words so hateful that I would often leave home every day crying, on my way to school. For four years I didn't wear shorts or god forbid be seen in a bathing suit in fear that someone would see my stretch marks



Art by Madeleine Kurn

You've been in my life for as long as I can remember and for most of that time, I've despised you. I used to spend so much money on creams and oils in an attempt to get rid of you. I even thought that if I shed a few pounds you would magically go away. But, in the end nothing worked.

I thought that all of my problems would be solved if I didn't have these stretch marks but, that wasn't the case. So, I'm sorry Stretch Marks, that I've hated you for so long.

It wasn't your fault, but damn it has taken a long time for me to accept you. As of now, I don't even notice you but when I do, I think back to all those times I felt uncomfortable or self-conscious and just laugh it off. You taught me that appearance is only skin deep, and in all honesty, who really gives a fuck about some stupid stretch marks.

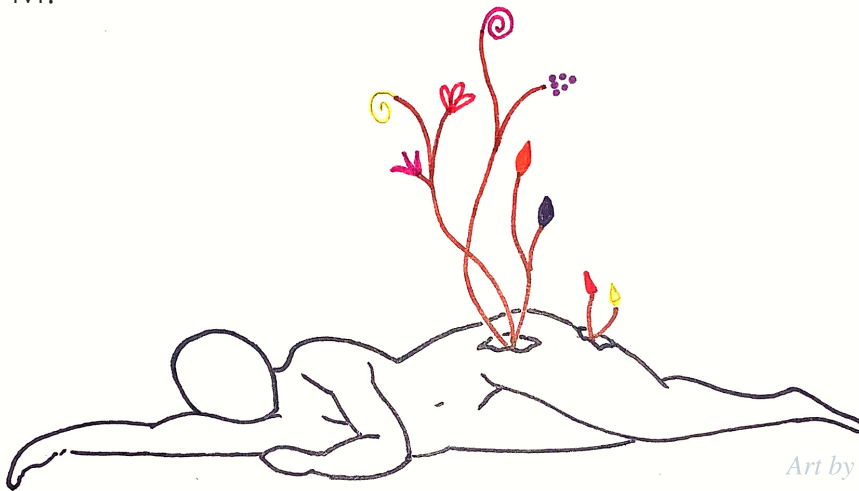
Sincerely,
Cerebral Cereal

SCARS DON'T DEFINE ME

Dear Thick Thighs,

Today you are celebrated but growing up you were shamed. "Thunder Thighs" to the boys in middle school because you were not the size of the "popular pretty girls". Constantly pointed out and laughed at almost daily for simply being the way you are. I'm sorry for believing those who called you horrible names and accepting that there was something wrong with you. I'm sorry I literally tried to cut you away from my body. The scars that remain remind me that you deserve to be uniquely you and that everyone, including you, has the same right to be on this earth. I love you today despite the hate that came before. This love came from my choice to believe that you are perfectly you; no matter of your size, dimples or scars... you are perfect for me. You hold me up, allow me to stand tall and am appreciated by all, but most importantly, me. Thank you for literally supporting me every day of my life and thank you for being a part of me

Love forever,
Jade. M.



Art by Madeleine Kum

WITHIN THE SKIN

Dear Skin,

You have stressed me out for almost five years. When I was 16, you gave me acne. My mother explained to me that she and my father also struggled with acne when they were teenagers. We concluded that our skin problems were genetic. My mom took me to my first dermatologist. They gave me some medicines to fix you... However, those medicines made you worse. You became extremely sensitive, and I started getting acne rosacea. In contrast to me, my friends in high school had clean and pale skin, so I compared you with theirs every day. I didn't want to talk to people, because they looked at you when we were talking.

I changed my dermatologist next year. Their treatment was ... awful. It was painful but I kept seeing the doctor every two weeks believing they could fix you. But nothing changed... After I entered my university, I started using makeup. It covered the acne, and also helped with my fear of talking to people. I couldn't go out without makeup. To prevent you from getting more pimples, I bought a lot of highly recommended skincare products and cosmetics, even though they were very expensive for a student working at part-time job.

After I turned 20, I finally found a good dermatologist. The doctors and nurses were nice, and they asked me about my acne history. While we were talking, they only focused on me and looked at MY EYES and not the stupid acne! I felt like I could trust them, but I couldn't afford a 6-month treatment by myself, so I ended up asking my mom to lend me some money for the treatment. Every time I went to see the doctor, you got better. They removed my fear, nerves, and bit by bit every insecurity I had about you. All the mental stress that came with acne, finally went away.

Now, I am taking a one-year break in Canada. However, being around people who have acne and do not treat it as something awful, has been the best medicine for me now. Dear Skin, you are much better now than you were in Japan. Until now, I had spent so much time, money, and efforts to "fix" you. Eventually I learned that the mindset "don't compare yourself to others" is the most effective and efficient way to handle you. I still have rosacea and stains, but I don't mind it. I hope you will not pop up forever, but if you want to come see me I will still be confident. Love,
Hiiragi

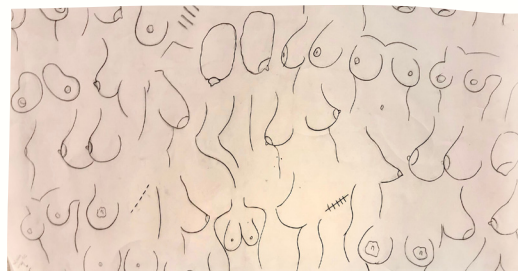
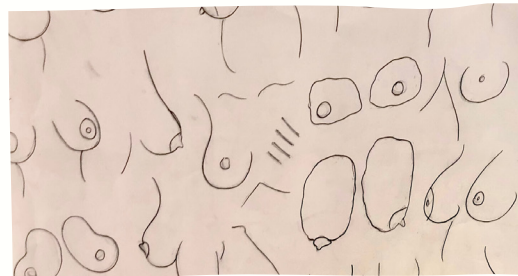
GROWING PAINS

Dear Breasts,

Why do you have to be so big and problematic? At the age when all the girls were having body changes you didn't want to grow. I prayed every night for you to grow, so I could have boobs like all the other girls. But then when I turned 13 you decided to grow, grow, grow to the point that everyone looked at me differently. You grew so much that instead of talking to my face people would talk and look at you. You are attention seeking and I really don't appreciate it.

Not only did you grow to the point of extra attention, you grew to the point of me getting back damage, constant pain and having to do the most painful surgery ever. The reduction was not just unpleasant, but it took weeks to finally do anything on my own, I had tubes in me to prevent infections, I had bandages and stitches. After a surgery this big, I am still not fully recovered and the doctors say I won't fully recover until I hit the 2-year mark. So, thank you for screwing up my body image. I've always hated you for your looks but now I hate you for your scars. Thank you for fucking up my self esteem. See you another time.

Sincerely,
Diana Costa



Art by Gabrielle Pereira

MS. FATTY

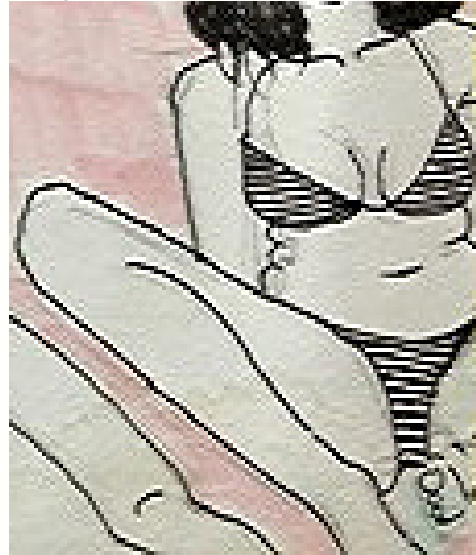
Dear Fat,

I hated you the most when I was a kid. You made me cry in changing rooms because none of the cute shirts, dresses or shorts seemed to “fit right”. There was always a little tummy roll or a little arm fat that didn’t seem to look like how the other girls did, and when who I wanted to look like did not align with what I saw in the mirror I cried.

As I grew up, I was still uncomfortable with how much of you was still left on my body, I hoped that one day I would “glow up” and magically my insecurities would go away. That didn’t happen but what did happen was our culture began to change the way they viewed you. “Thick” became hot and having body fat made you “a real woman”. Despite the now obvious body shamming of thin people, the thick wave helped me embrace my body.

However, this cultural phenomenon felt like a trap. I wanted to feel that I had gained my sense of confidence through self-love and dedication to not caring what others thought about my body, but the connection between thick becoming hot in the eyes of North American culture, and my boost in confidence could not be a coincidence.

Art by Mieran Loria



I fear that if our culture decides to deem fat bodies as ugly again, my confidence will be dismantled. Body fat, I no longer loathe you. The exact time and date and reason of why I stopped violently hating you I cannot be sure of. Perhaps it was true self love, or perhaps it was the change in our culture. Nonetheless, with all the progress made, I still feel compelled to hit the gym because I still have a reoccurring thought of “if I lost 15 pounds, I’d be so much hotter”. Fat, this letter is not to pity myself, praise myself or to tell you to fuck off, it is simply an analysis of how you’ve interacted with our culture.

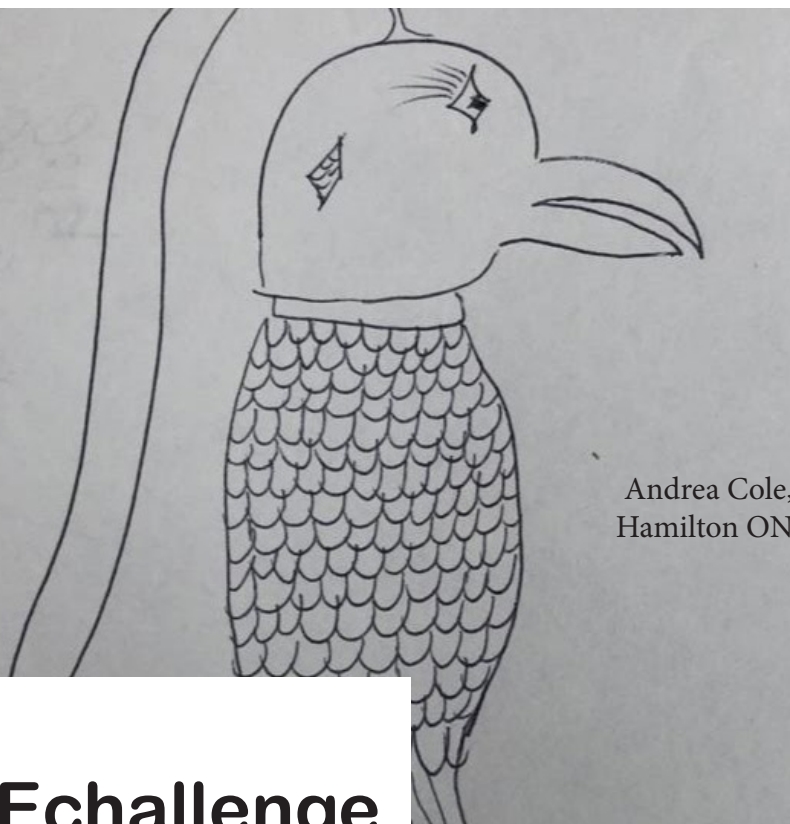
Cheers,
Mads

According to legend, the three-tailed Amabie Yokai originally appeared in Japan during the Edo Period. These mer-duck creatures are believed to have the power to ward off epidemics.

Due to COVID-19 they have been appearing all over the world:

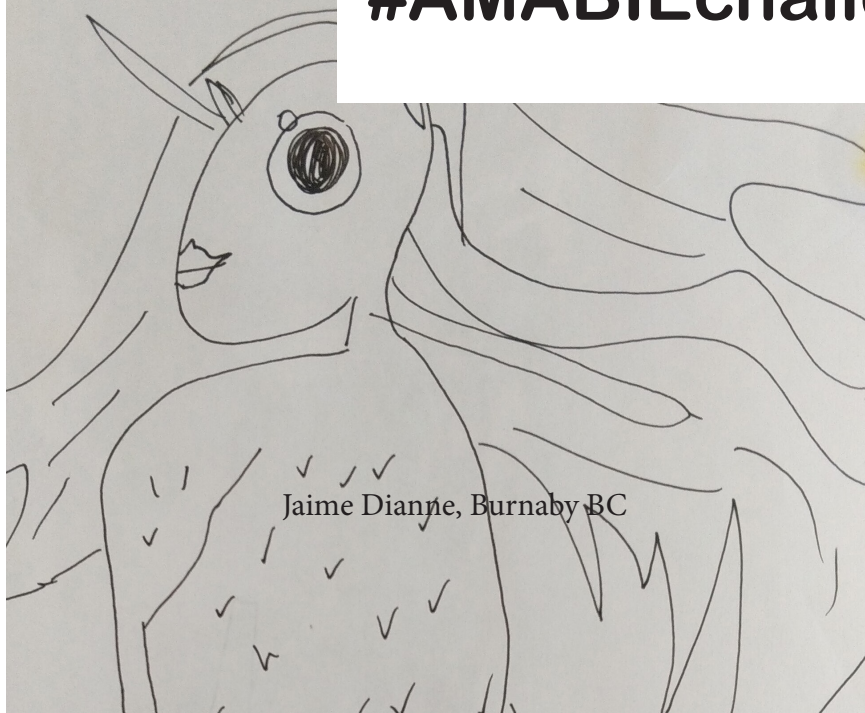


Nina Marie,
Birmingham UK



Andrea Cole,
Hamilton ON

#AMABIEchallenge



Jaime Dianne, Burnaby BC



Bri Mauro, Burnaby BC

Amabie Yokai