

wave

A Fem Rag

ANY



CAN

BEA

FEM |

NIST



Meet The Team!



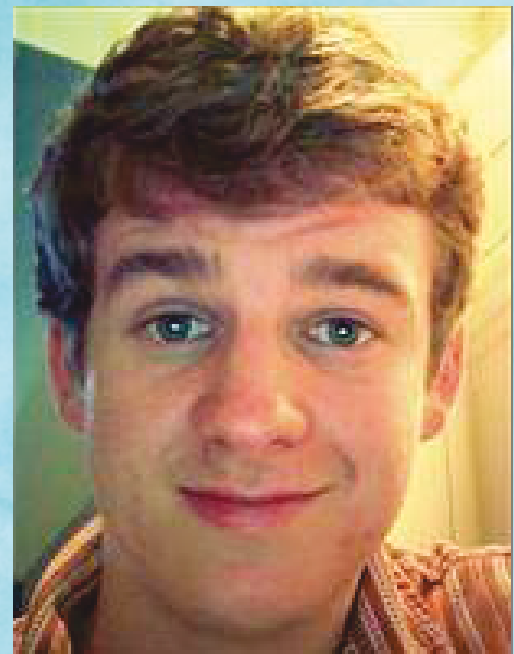
Nitika Reddy:
Assistant Editor



Laura Cutlip:
Graphic Designer



Kali Place:
Journalist



Sam Stallings:
Journalist

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR	Pg 3
DOES SIZE REALLY MATTER?	Pg 5
SLUT SHAME	Pg 11
Riot Grrrr! Playlist	Pg 18
INTERVIEW WITH A BODY POSITIVE DANCER	Pg 19
MEN IN FEMINISM.	Pg 25



Wave is a feminist rag that outfits Third Wave Feminist ideology. Here at *Wave* we try to make sure that we are as all-encompassing as possible because we believe that inclusivity as well as diversity are two very important issues when it comes to Third Wave Feminism. In our very first edition of *Wave* we have decided to take on topics including body positivity, sex positivity, along with the looming question of "Should men be included in feminism?" We understand that there is much more to Third Wave feminism than just the topics discussed in this edition, but we also understand that it is impossible to cover all topics pertaining to Third Wave Feminism in just one issue. As Rebecca Walker states in "Becoming the Third Wave", "As the misconception of equality between the sexes become more ubiquitous so does the attempt to restrict the boundaries of women's personal and political power"(458-459). Our plan is to shed light on feminist topics in way that is empowering and productive in our advancement for the equal opportunity of Women.

Why Third Wave Feminism? Because, as Krista Jacob states, "Third Wave Feminism provides a forum for illuminating the multifaceted experiences of young women- a group that is constantly misrepresented by older generation, the mainstream media, and other avenues" (feministezine.com) Here at *Wave*, we do not aim to discriminate. Instead we aim to illuminate issues that need to be discussed, but are

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Kadesha Caradine

rarely given the attention or the space that they deserve. Our staff at *Wave* all believe that if we, as young Third Wave Feminists, don't take the initiative to discuss these topics, then it is quite possible that the issues we find important will never be brought to light. We try our best to support those that support Third Wave feminism, which we hope is reflected throughout our selections.

Featured in our very first edition of *Wave* is an interview with the amazing feminist and Professor Dr. Takiyah Nur Amin. She speaks about body positivity and how she includes that as a part of her role as a professor of World Dance at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte. We also have journalist Sam Stallings posing the 'for and against' arguments for a question so commonly asked, should men be included in feminism? We have plenty more from journalist Kali Place and her article "Size Doesn't Matter" along with original art pieces from our graphic designer Laura Cutlip.

Our Staff here at *Wave* hope that you enjoy our very first edition of our feminist rag magazine just as much as we enjoyed putting it together. As Joan Kelly-Gadol states, "regardless of class, and regardless of ownership (although these modify the situation in interesting ways), women have generally functioned as the property of men in the procreative and socializing aspect of productive work in their society." Our goal as Third Wave Feminists is to defy all confining roles of womanhood and highlight aspects of womanhood often suppressed by patriarchal and heteronormative power (11).



Stockphoto

Love,

Kadesha O. Caradine

Kadesha O. Caradine
Editor



Stockphoto

Does Size Really Matter?

Constructions of Sexuality and Enticing Alternatives

By Kali Place

My mother has given me two sex talks in my entire life. Both occurred shortly before leaving for college. The first was her warning of the risks of having sex at all. Then, after some time passed, she accepted the possibility that I was sexually active. She decided that it was her motherly duty to educate me on the importance of penis size. "Now, Kali," she began, "there has been some talk around town that the *size* of the penis does not matter. But I've found that it does. In choosing a partner, I think it's really important that you have someone who is *medium* or *large*." She truly thought that a large penis was key to female pleasure in

heterosexual intercourse. Over time, and with examination of feminist scholarship, I realized how flawed my mother's advice was.

As third wave feminists, we can be quick to criticize older generations' views on sex. Feminists like Catherine MacKinnon warned us of the dangers of heterosexual sex, claiming that sexuality is imbedded in patriarchal structures. Therefore, we eroticize men's domination of women (415). Women learn to take pleasure in their own oppression, therefore reinforcing the patriarchal structures that marginalize them.

It is not constructive, however, to discourage women from engaging in consensual sexual intercourse with men. A defining feature of third-wave feminism is the emphasis on sex-positivity. Good sex can be a source of empowerment for women. In "Third Wave Manifesta" Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards state two key goals of third-wave feminism: "to support the idea that sex can be – and usually is- for pleasure, not procreation," as well as to "liberate adolescents from slut-bashing" (514). We want to change social constructions of sex as immoral and unfeminine. This sex-positive view, however, is not unique to third-wave philosophy. Several second-wavers have claimed that while we need to encourage women to embrace their sexuality, certain changes in sexual behavior and discourse are necessary for women to have safe, healthy, fulfilling sex lives. A key element of this argument is that we need to move away from phallogentric understandings of sexuality, taking a holistic approach to women's sexual experiences. In this article, I will provide sexy alternatives to penetration-focused intercourse that will improve your sex life!

Our focus on male genitalia does not improve women's sex lives, but rather privileges men's sexual experiences. In "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm," Anne Koedt explains that "women have...been defined sexually in terms of what pleases men; our own biology has not been properly analyzed" (198). Koedt supports her claim

with an analysis of the pathologization of female sexuality within psychoanalysis. According to Freud, clitoral orgasms were inferior to vaginal orgasms. Women who could not have vaginal orgasms had failed "to mentally adjust to her 'natural' role as a woman" (196). In reality, the vagina is not a highly sensitive area. Vaginal stimulation alone will not result in orgasm (Koedt 198). Nonetheless, the myth of the vaginal orgasm framed penetration as the default of sexual behavior. This essentially eliminated possibilities for women's sexual pleasure, while ensuring that men would orgasm. Similarly, Marcotte writes that while men are encouraged to fantasize about how they would like to *act* upon women's bodies, women learn to focus on appeasing men's desires. Our constructions of sexuality dictate that men's needs are met first and foremost.

Constructions of femininity prevent women from pursuing their personal pleasure. Because femininity is characterized with passivity, helplessness, and a lack of sexual desire, it can be a challenge for women to discuss their sexual desires and experiences with their partners (Vance 336). Koedt claims that the myth of the vaginal orgasm has been pervasive because "sexually, a woman was not seen as an individual wanting to share equally in a sexual act...it was easy to make up what was convenient about women". Thus, men could ignore that women typically experience sexual pleasure due to clitoral stimulation. This allowed them to focus on their own pleasure. As a result, women's pleasure has

been marginalized. This is problematic, as “when pleasure occupies a smaller and smaller space...individuals do not become empowered; they are merely cut off from their own strength and energy” (337). Women’s sexual identity is an untapped reservoir of potential power that we must access.

The focus on male sexuality can negatively affect women’s mental health. The supposed supremacy of the vaginal orgasm was internalized to the extent that women “either suffered silently with self-blame or flocked to the psychiatrists looking desperately for the hidden and terrible repression that kept them from their vaginal destiny” (Koedt 197). Women also resorted to faking vaginal orgasms so that their partner would remain interested in them. Thus, women who were completely sexually healthy were convinced that they were not (Koedt 198). Overall, women have developed negative relationships with their sexual selves.

The ignorance in regards to female sexuality can have dangerous implications for women. In “How Men Have (A) Sex,” Stoltenberg claims that masculinity and femininity are social constructs that must be confirmed through one’s actions. Sexual behavior is a key avenue for men to perform their gender: “the act of fucking... [presents] the correlation between *doing* a specific act in a specific way” and “sensing...the sexual identity to which one aspires” (257). Moreover, we equate masculinity with the subjugation of women (258). This

understanding of sexuality may cause men to dehumanize their female partners: “Men believe [that]...women are mindless fuck tubes” in contrast to the penis, which is perceived as “completely real and alive” (260). Therefore, men may resort to sexual violence in order to affirm their masculine identity (256). Constructions of gender define men as superior to women and women as weak and sexually passive (Crawley et al. 90). These constructions allow men to disregard women’s sexual experiences, using their bodies for their self-affirmation. It is necessary that men and women reshape dominant discourses on sexuality, including the importance of penis size, so that women can have more fulfilling lives both in and out of the bedroom.

It is essential to change your attitudes towards penis size. The widespread consumption of pornography in the United States has created the myth of the “average” penis. Joannides explains that this has influenced women’s perceptions of their partner’s penises (1056). Studies show that men suffer from misconceptions of “average” as well. In one study, 414 men complained of having small penises. In reality, 99% of subjects had penises of normal size. And while only 55% of men reported being satisfied with their own penis size, 84% of women were satisfied with their partner’s penis size (Veale et al. 89). To clarify, the average penis is three-and-a-half inches while limp, and the average erect penis is about five inches long (Joannides, 1057). Men who doubt their ability to please their partners due to a

“smaller-than-average” penis often have to reconsider their standards.

Seeing the penis as the center of pleasure is an intense oversimplification of everything within the realm of possibility for sex. There is a multiplicity of other ways that you and your partner can experience pleasure.

In *Guide to Getting It On*, Joannides writes that it is imperative that we move away from goal-oriented sex and towards pleasure-oriented sex. Often, individuals see orgasm as only the purpose of intercourse. For those who do not come easily, the pressure to orgasm can eliminate any potential pleasure and make the “goal” of intercourse impossible. Focusing on pleasure will allow you to enjoy the entire experience. One simple way to promote sexual pleasure is to integrate massage into your love life. Joannides claims that “nothing beats a good back rub” (165). Massages can be excellent both for foreplay and during sex (166).

Some women’s nipples are a major pleasure center for them. Men often enjoy nipple play as well! Interest in nipple play as well as different techniques differ from person to person. Those who menstruate may have different preferences throughout their cycle (233). You can even integrate your or your partner’s penis into nipple play by pulling the foreskin of the penis around the nipple, or caressing the nipple with the head of the penis (233). Make sure that you



Stockphoto

communicate with your partner which techniques you prefer.

A similar collaborative approach is necessary for oral sex. Partners should discuss what their sexual preferences are. But there are also some go-to techniques. Individuals should not watch porn to learn how to perform cunnilingus (or any other sex act, for that matter). Joannides explains that “cunnilingus in porn is called ‘fence painting’ because the person who is giving the oral sex sticks his or her tongue out as far as...possible and makes liking stabs” at the woman’s vulva (277). Instead, one should encompass the vulva with their lips. In addition, those performing oral sex should be assured that the woman is completely aroused. Partners can experiment using both a soft and hard tongue, as long as it is completely coated with saliva.

Finger-fucking is also an excellent option.

One should not take this term literally, however. A lot of the focus should be on the

vulva. One useful technique is to massage the mons, which is the fleshy mound at the top of the vulva (Joannides 217). One can also massage the inner and outer lips. As Koedt stated, the clitoris an extremely sensitive area, and women often enjoy clitoral stimulation. If the woman likes to have her partner's fingers inside her vagina, one should slowly slide their fingers into her vagina. Lube can be a useful tool as well.

It is key to remember that a woman's sexual pleasure is completely dependent on her mental state. According to Koedt, sexual fantasies can be powerful enough to cause a woman to orgasm (198). Therefore, rehearsing sexual fantasies can improve sexual experiences. Because fantasies can be embarrassing, they can be difficult to share. Therefore it is key to respect your partner's fantasies (but do not feel pressured to engage in anything that you're not comfortable with).

Our phallogentric understanding of sexuality inhibits us from discovering diverse modes of pleasure. It also privileges the male sexual experience, which can have damaging effects on women. The list of alternatives to heterosexual vaginal intercourse is enormous. Partners can also use these methods to complement vaginal intercourse. As a third-wave feminist, I believe that women should be able to embrace their own sexuality. We must move toward a more egalitarian model of sexuality so that women can access this untapped reservoir of power.



Stockphoto

Love Yourself



Stockphoto

Slut Shame

/slət SHām/

verb derogatory

By: Sam Stallings

Slut shaming is a phenomenon where men (or other women) assume control over a woman's sexuality by insulting her for non-traditional or frequent sexual practices. Women are slut shamed for a variety of reasons, including dressing in certain ways, using birth control, having casual or non-traditional sex, and, in some cultures, being raped. Males are not the sole perpetrators of slut shaming; even females shame other females for acting against what they deem inappropriate. It is one of the dominant forces in which society controls women's behavior. Knowing or unknowingly people contribute to the oppression of women through Slut shaming, which makes the act absolutely sexist. It draws a distinct societal line for women by telling them they have behave in a certain way. In addition to it's sexual double standard, which must be stopped to improve the lives of women everywhere.

Some criticize the concept of feminist "waves" as arbitrary limitations on theory. However, this metaphorical labeling remains critical to US feminism because it helps categorize the dominant theories in a historical period. Third-wave feminism, specifically, applies to the diverse strains of thought, which emerged in the 1990s. The



waves of feminism became increasingly specialized, as the earlier waves focused more on obtaining the most basic rights for women. Once those rights, such as suffrage, were obtained, women were free to examine more complex and specific issues. For example, one of the most important aspects of the third wave is abolishing and examining gender role expectations and stereotypes. Thus, slut shaming is decidedly third wave, since it is more a specific problem with a woman's sexuality, and not one with her most basic rights.

According to Hartmann's "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union," marriage and sexuality are the primary means by which a man controls a woman's agency. Through



woman feels self-conscious or suffers serious social consequences for being more sexuality active she isn't as likely to expand her own sexuality. This dynamic is clearly an example a way of how men control the actions of women.

This idea of controlling women's sexuality is explored further in Koedt's "the Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm". The trouble began with Freud, who helped propagate the idea that a vaginal orgasm was somehow more "mature" than a clitoral one (196). The problem was that Freud based his theory upon his own psychological ideas, and not on any facts about a woman's anatomy. The truth of the matter is that, for most women, a vaginal orgasm is impossible. Men maintained this myth, however, because for them, penetration is enjoyable. Men often value their penises and their perceived masculinity more than the enjoyment of their partner. Thus, unequal sexual relationships are extremely common. This ties directly in to the concept of slut shaming because women who seek out their own sexual enjoyment are often feared or insulted. These women are a threat to the value of a man's penis, and thus his masculinity. Slut shaming keeps women's sexuality limited, and a man's penis safe.

Many women are aware of the damaging effects of slut shaming, and they actively rebel against it in various ways. One prominent and somewhat contentious method is the concept of a slut walk. The slut walk began when a police officer at a Canadian university stated "women should avoid dressing like sluts in order to not be

heterosexual marriage, a man can isolate his wife into the domestic sphere. In that sphere, he controls her resources and labor, and in doing so constantly reinforces her inferior status. Marriage can be an efficient and convenient form of oppression, and men everywhere value its usefulness and power. If one examines this dynamic, the concept of slut shaming begins to make a lot of sense. When a woman appears to be sexually independent and bold it threatens this oppressive institution. If a woman embraces or experiments with her sexuality, then she rejects society's guidelines for her and also rejects the control men have on her. Thus men can easily feel threatened, and therefore men challenge a woman's agency by "slut shaming" her and to preserve their sense of dominance. When a

victimized". This is obviously an egregious and backwards example of victim blaming, and feminists both in this university community and elsewhere were outraged. In response, feminists from the university organized a slut walk, where women from the local region would perform a march and protest in various states of undress (or not) to proclaim their anger over these comments. Since this instance, the slutwalk has spread to different areas, and has become a valuable tool for women to express their displeasure.

Feminist reaction to the slutwalk has been mixed. Those against it proclaim that the word "slut" is drenched in so much negativity (and patriarchal connotations) that attempting to reclaim it, or embrace, is a waste of time and energy. Other people believe that the fallback of women taking off their clothes for attention is dated and immature. However, proponents of the movement argue that the fervor and involvement in these walks is unparalleled for the last 30 years. Women of all walks of life, financial background, race, and age all come together in shared support for this cause. At these walks, gender and sexuality become a source of power, not shame. This by itself is a success for anti slut shaming efforts, and is cause to be celebrated.

Slut shaming does more than just cause emotional turmoil: it can be fuel for violence (or excusing it). The comment from the police officer, which started the slut walk, is actually a sentiment shared by many: those women who are dressed in a provocative way is somehow "asking for it."





Stockphoto

This is an incredibly dangerous way of thinking. Firstly, it places arbitrary and unnecessary boundaries on women's sexuality. Women should be able to dress and express their sexuality in any way they choose. Labeling rape victims as seductresses, or implying any kind of responsibility on their part, are excusing an atrocious act of violent, which should be solely attributed to the person who committed it.

An example of victim blaming and slut shaming gone completely awry is the situation involving rape in India. This issue exploded in its popularity after an incident involving a man and his girlfriend on a bus became widespread. These people were young students who were simply looking for a ride home. On the bus, 5 men brutally beat them with metal rods, and repeatedly raped the woman. After this happened, many disturbing figures about the rape culture in India began to surface. Three fourths of all rape perpetrators are never identified, and the conviction rate for rape cases is an astonishingly low 26%. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of rapes in India go unreported due to the social stigma surrounding it. which penalizes the victims. Victim blaming is utterly rampant, and justifications for being raped range from the clothes a woman wears to the fact that she was drinking alcohol with men. Marital rape, which accounts for a significant portion of all rape, is not considered a crime. However, perhaps the most shocking aspect of all of this is the grotesque procedures law enforcement use to determine if a rape occurred. This includes a finger test, where

officers insert their fingers into a woman's vagina to gauge its "laxity". If these officers don't think they have evidence of a struggle, they will simply declare the victim as loose and immoral. These are the drastic consequences when slut shaming and victim blaming are allowed to reach extreme levels.

Men play a critical role in decreasing – or eliminating – slut shaming. In Baumgartner and Richard's "Third Wave Manifesta", the two explore the concept of "autokeonomy", which is the obligation every member of a community has towards activism. Men have an autokeonomic role in society to not slut shame, and to actively reject anyone who is partaking in slut shaming. If men took this this concept to heart, slut shaming (and its negative effects) would not exist.

Slut shaming, at its core, is simply another one of the methods men use to oppress women. It is not based on any real logic; rather, only an arbitrary oppressiveness which limits women's freedom and agency. Furthermore, it is possibly one of the most widespread and universally experienced forms of female discrimination: every girl, everywhere has to balance the fine line between maintaining attractiveness, and being a slut. Men and women alike need to strive to eliminate this practice, so that people can enjoy their lives and expand their boundaries.



Stockphoto

PLAIN WHITE T-SHIRT

FOR MEN OR WOMEN!

COVER YOURSELF
COMPLETELY,
OR CUT UP THE SHIRT
AND BE AS REVEALING
AS YOU WANT!



IT'S YOUR CHOICE!

Stockphoto



Re-**Join** Nature. The Movement. **cofeminism**

Stockphoto

Confidence-Kini



© GabiFresh For Swimsuits For All

Feel Great in Your Skin



Stockphoto

OUR RIOT GRRRL PLAYLIST

- Voodoo Queens.....Supermodel-Superficial
- Pussy Whipped.....Rebel Girl
- Bricks Are HeavyPretend We're Dead
- Pottymouth.....Cool Schmool
- Bikini Kill.....Double Dare Ya
- Bikini Kill.....Suck My Left One
- Girls Get Busy.....What's Wrong With You?
- Fontanelle.....Bruise Violet
- Le Tigre.....FYR
- Dig Me Out.....The Drama You've Been Craving
- Reject All American.....Bloody Ice Cream
- Adickdid.....She's Dangerous
- Cold Cold Hearts.....Sorry Yer Band Band Sux
- Dickless.....Saddle Tramp
- Emily's Sassy Lime.....Pineapple Boys Need Not Apply
- Free Kitten.....Sex Boy
- Lunachicks.....Bad Ass Bitch
- The Third Sex.....Crazy Glue

AN INTERVIEW WITH A BODY

POSITIVE DANCER

By: Kali Place

In contemporary Western culture, women are pressured to fulfill increasingly extreme beauty ideals. Definitions of “proper” femininity are centered on appearance. In contrast to men, who “can make up for bodily imperfections in other ways” such as intelligence, athleticism, or leadership, women’s values are “almost completely understood to be the beauty of her body” (Crawley et al. 92). Hartley explains that “women are expected to be beautiful, and beautiful equals thin...we are constantly bombarded by media images of women with little or no breast tissue and slim, boyish hips” (qtd. in Weitz, 248). While some may claim that these images are harmless, they can have detrimental effects on women’s health. According to Hartley, women are learning that “their bodies are fundamentally flawed” at increasingly younger ages (246). Overweight women are marginalized. Not only are these women scrutinized for their appearance, but are also understood to possess negative internal qualities inherent to plus-sized female bodies, including carelessness, laziness, self-indulgence, hostility, and aggressiveness (Hartley qtd. in Weitz 248-249). Most do not critically examine these stereotypes. Furthermore, because a woman’s appearance determines her social value, her identity in part depends on her physical form. Goffman claims that women’s bodies “essential to identity



LC Original Art

formation” (qtd. in Frost, 66-7). Even if a woman willingly challenges bodily ideals, this process is still imperative to her identity formation. This explains why the body is a critical factor in a woman’s self-image.

identity formation. This explains why the body is a critical factor in a woman’s self-image.

Foucault’s *Micropolitics of Power* rejects the notion that Western beauty ideals are “normal” or “natural”. In reality, forces of power perpetuate these values. Power is intangible, not coming from a single source. Therefore, there is no visible locus of control responsible for inculcating cultural ideals. Rather, individuals learn societal values and “become their own jailers,” policing any of

their own deviance from cultural norms. Crawley et al. explain that “we get so used to being ...judged for our own behavior that we begin to preemptively judge our own behavior and monitor ourselves” (89). Furthermore, cultural expectations are strongly gendered, defining what it means to be “good” men and women” (91). Nonetheless, these values are often perceived as inevitable and biologically determined.

Behaviors of young women indicate that they have indeed internalized our beauty ideals. Hartley writes that “in survey after survey, being fat is listed as a primary fear”



LC Original Art

(qtd. in Weitz 248). Girls and women are doing more and more to approach the impossible ideal of “woman”: “girls are making strenuous attempts to be thinner, which may have an impact on their well-being (British Youth Council, 1999; Hill et al., 1992)”. In addition, “looks-related activity is increasing” (McRobbie, 1991). Because our bodily ideals are so extreme, very few can actually achieve them. This explains why many girls and women experience self-hatred due to negative body image (Frost 64). Bordo explains that “disciplines of diet, makeup, and dress- central organizing principles in the day of women- [render us] less socially oriented and more centripetally focused on self-modification” (461). Women may neglect other aspirations in order to pursue an “ideal” body.

Individuals are given plenty of incentive to seek cultural ideals. Not only do women police their own conforming to cultural norms, but they are policed by others as well. In regards to size, people often think that they have the right to make comments about deviant bodies: “strangers often feel no compunction about stepping forward to criticize a woman’s size with statements such as ‘Should you really be eating that?’ ‘You have such a pretty face, if you’d just lose some weight...’” (Hartman qtd. in Weitz 249). This can cause individuals to experience shame. In addition, those who are lucky enough to resemble beauty ideals are socially rewarded. Garland-Thomson explains that “privileged designations [such] as beautiful, healthy, normal, fit...provide cultural capital to those who can claim such statuses” (517). Those who resemble the

ideals are respected and idolized, while others are ostracized and punished.

Takiyah Amin Ph.D. teaches dance history and theory at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. As a plus-sized Black woman, Amin does not reflect Western perceptions of the “ideal” femininity. In my email interview with Amin, she discussed her outlook on dance, identity and body image.

Kali Place: When did you start dancing?

Takiyah Amin: I can’t remember an age when I wasn’t dancing at home. But I took my first classes in creative movement when I was 3 years old.

KP: What motivated you to become a dance professor?

TA: Dance is the thing I love the most other than God and family. I wanted to share the love I have for movement as a fundamental part of the human experience with others. For me it’s not just about performance – dance is a humanities discipline (not just a performing art) that reveals the human experience if we pay attention to it.

KP: What challenges have you faced in your dance career?

TA: Hmmmmm. I’ve had a lot of challenges from the financial and the physical to the social and political. I’d say one of the biggest challenges for me was being in spaces where dance was reduced to entertainment or seen as something frivolous or useless. That kind of thinking is pervasive and it makes me very angry. I

can’t work under those conditions.

KP: How does your identity influence your work?

TA: I write about dance and truthfully, my identity as a Black woman has facilitated my interests in thinking seriously about race and representation via embodied performance. I write to upend foundational ideas in my discipline, most of which are grounded in a racist, white-identified rhetoric that erases the lived experience and knowledge of people who look like me. I don’t know that this would be such an ardent concern if I were not a Black woman.

KP: What do you think about our culture’s emphasis on the “ideal” body?

TA: I think its bullshit. There is no such thing as an ideal body. Every person’s body has its own abilities, quirks and beauty. I think notions of an ideal body are used to divide folks and make us focus on things that don’t really matter. There is especially no such thing as a “dancing body” – if your body is dancing it’s a dancing body!

KP: Does the concept of body image, or your own perceptions of your body impact your dance? If so, how?

TA: Yes – but only to the extent that I believe all bodies have value. For me, the beauty of dance is that embraces where I am right now. I don’t have to be different to derive pleasure, healing, power or sustenance from my own dancing body. I don’t have to change or become something else and I don’t demand that from others if I am dancing with them.

KP: Is there a message that you would like to convey to dancers who do not have the “ideal look”?



TA: The amazing American choreographer Alvin Ailey once said that the most important thing we could share with an audience is ourselves. If we can find a way to share the uniqueness of who we are with viewers, then we've accomplished something really special. When you dance, dance to share the truth of who you are with others. Don't hold back or hold off because of some notion of an "ideal body" that is flawed and foolish to begin with. Dance if you want to. Dance because you want to. Dance because you have no other choice. Dance because it makes you human.

For some, descriptions of Amin's body would imply that she is limited due to her physical form. After all, studies suggest that most women worry about their body image, even if they are at a healthy weight or *underweight*. Amin's responses, however, defy expectations. When asked about the

main challenges that she has faced in her career, she acknowledges financial, social and political conflicts. And although she mentions "physical" challenges as well, she does not specify these challenges. It is likely that she refers to physical injury or illness. Amin has not allowed her occupation of a "deviant" body to prevent her from pursuing her passion.

Amin's career as a dance professor rejects the confining prescriptions of feminine ideals in a number of ways. As previously mentioned, "proper" women are not valued for anything other than their physical body. As a college professor of dance, Amin has pursued "male" avenues for success: academics, athleticism, wealth, and social success. In addition, she challenges the notion of the small, passive female body. She claims that anyone can dance: "There is especially no such thing as a "dancing body"

– if your body is dancing it’s a dancing body!” As an educator, Amin uses her influence to alter the stereotypes of plus-sized bodies, and challenge the image of the “dancing body”.

Butler writes that “I view our bodies as a site of struggle, where we must work to keep our daily practices in the service of resistance to gender domination, not in the service of docility and gender normalization. This work requires...a determinedly skeptical attitude toward the routes of seeming liberation and pleasure in our culture” (466). Amin is able to defy cultural norms because she does not simply hold a “skeptical attitude” towards the “ideal body” from which women are supposed to derive pleasure and happiness. Instead, she completely dismisses bodily ideals as “bullshit,” and values each body for its individuality. She writes that “Every person’s body has its own abilities, quirks and beauty”. For Amin, bodily ideals are irrelevant.

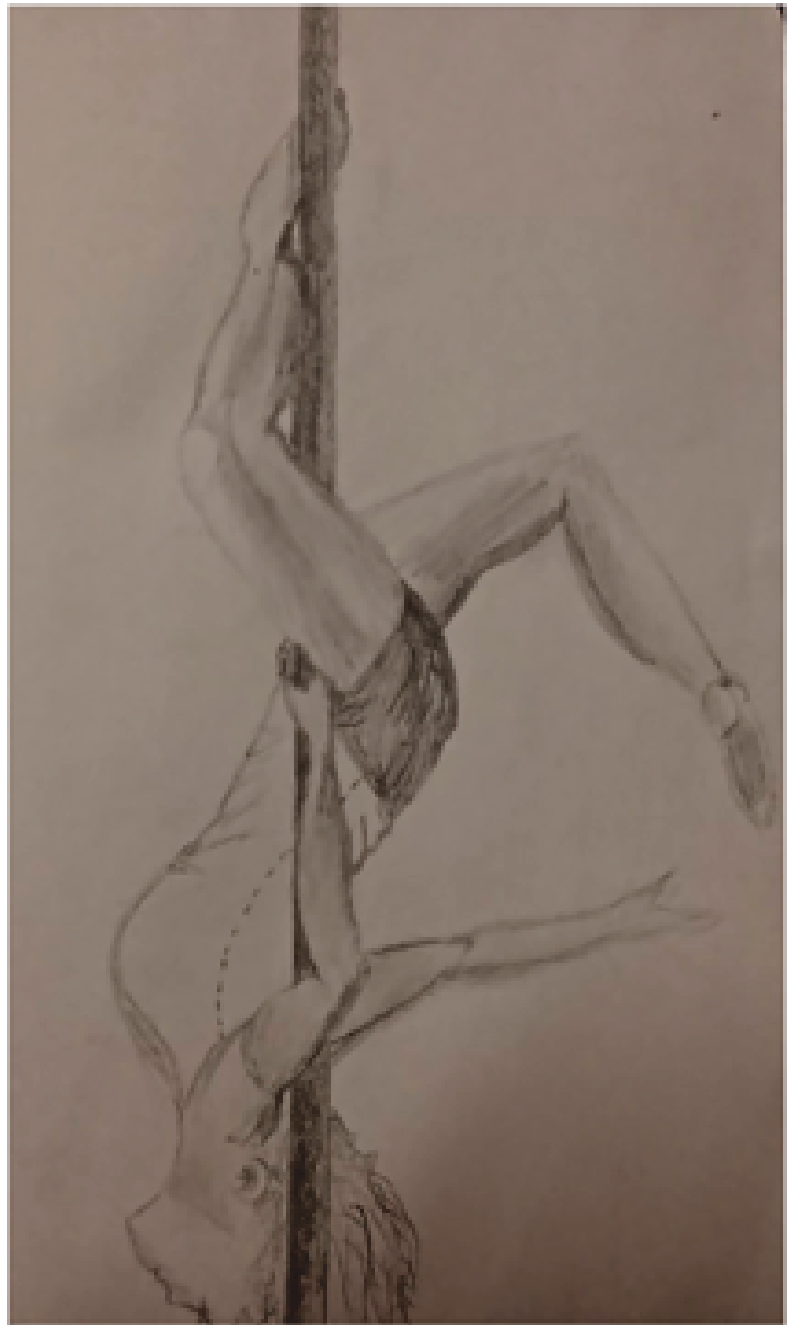
Amin is able to reject cultural body ideals by deeming them irrelevant. On the other hand, her identity is still connected with her physical form. Supporting Goffman’s claim that body and identity are inextricably linked, Amin explains that her work is inspired by her experience as a Black woman. She writes: “my identity as a Black woman has facilitated my interests in thinking seriously about race and representation via embodied performance... I don’t know that this would be such an ardent concern if I were not a Black

woman.” Amin’s perspective indicates that in some cases, it is possible to use the master’s tools to deconstruct the master’s house. By being conscious of her physical form, she was able channel this inspiration to pursue her dance career, simultaneously undermining culturally prescribed feminine ideals. Amin struck the delicate balance between bodily awareness and self-acceptance that promoted her success.

As women, we can feel overwhelmed by the prevalence of images of the “ideal body”. Due to the nature of power, it is a challenge to understand that gender ideals are culturally determined. Many of us succumb to methods to make our bodies more attractive to others, neglecting our other goals in the process. Takiyah Amin presents an inspiring alternative for all of us. She reinforced the body as a predictor of identity by harnessing her experiences as a Black woman to promote her career. Her success was also dependent on her disregard for bodily ideals, embracing her own individuality. One must keep in mind that the world is our stage, and that “the most important thing we could share with an audience is ourselves.”



Stockphoto



LC Original Art

**BOTH OF THESE WOMEN ARE
FEMINISTS.**

**WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU
THINK DIFFERENTLY?**

CALL 1-800-DONTJUDGE IF YOU FEEL YOURSELF JUDGING LIFESTYLES FOR NO REASON AT ALL.

Men in Feminism, or Nah?

By: Sam Stallings

One of the ironies of Feminism is that, whether women like it or not, men are inextricably linked to its ideas, policies, and modes of action. Men are responsible for the patriarchal nature of our society, and can either be facilitators for dismantling this structure, or barriers keeping it intact. One of the most basic facts about men and feminism is that men make up half the world's population: their roles and views must be reconciled somehow. Whether it is through the thoughts of de Beauvoir, who believed that men couldn't be feminists, or Mill, who thought male identification as a feminist was important for the cause, the man problem must be addressed.

One of the important early figures of men's feminism was John Stuart Mill. Mill was a brilliant politician, writer, and philosopher who often collaborated with his wife, whom he credits often in his work. Through this collaboration, he saw the true value of women's intellectual firepower, and was inspired to write his treatise on "the Subjection of Women". In it, Mill illuminates the unjust institution of marriage, showing how men skew it in order to strip rights from women. According to British law, women cannot perform any act, own any property, or alter her position in any way without

permission from her husband. This paralysis of women through marriage is undeniably a violation of women's rights. Mill urges men to change these unjust laws, stating that these moralities are "fitted to a relation of command and obedience" (95). Women do not need to be obedient towards men. What instead, Mill suggests, is that people need "a school of sympathy in equality, of living together in love, without power on one side or obedience on the other" (95). In other words, Men need to cast off their privilege, and actively seek out a system of equality. He believes it is the reasonability of men to recognize this unfair dichotomy of power, and eliminate it. According to him, collaboration between men and women is the answer to success; thus, men play an important role in feminism.



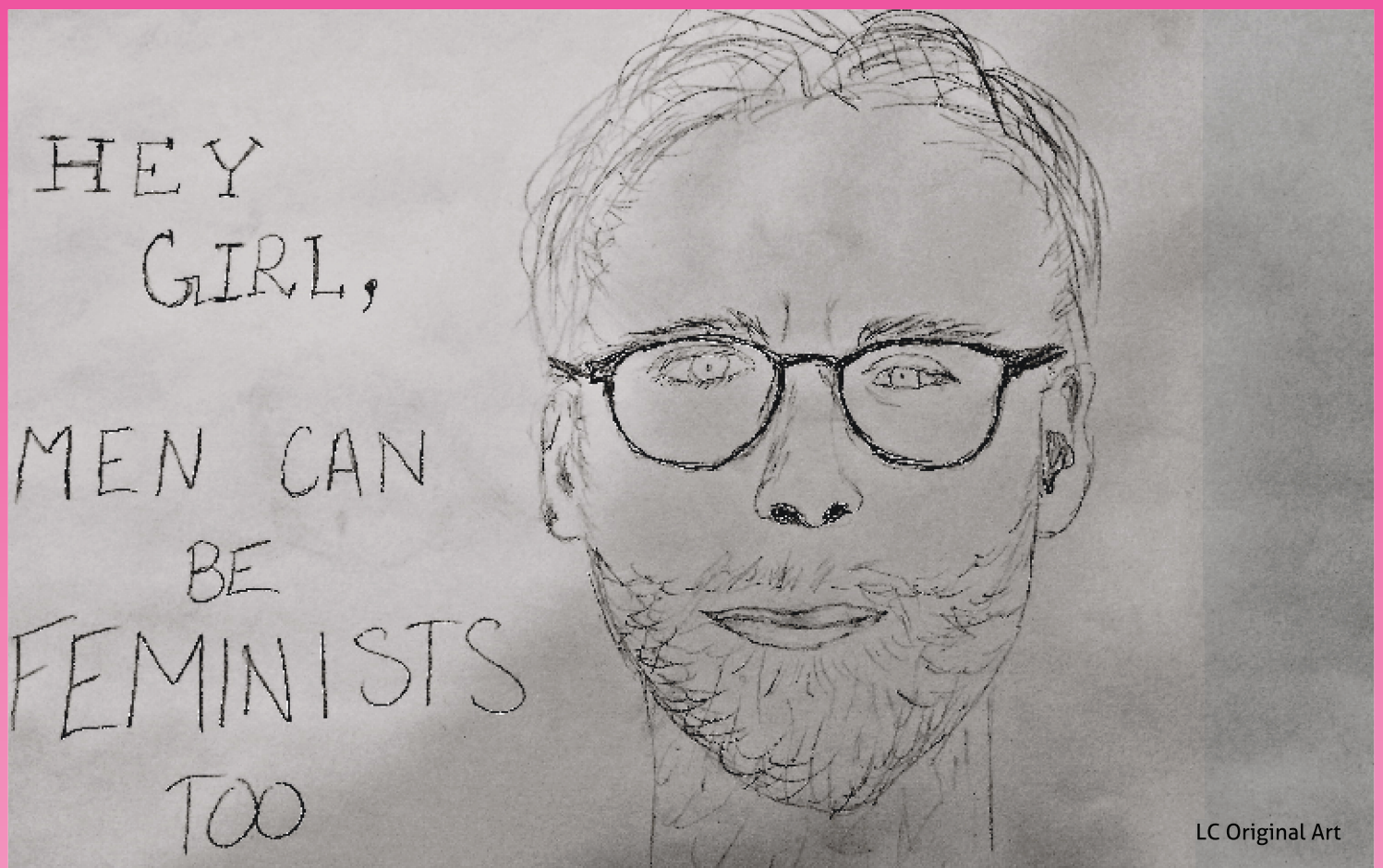
Stockphoto

Although Frederick Douglass makes a series of unfair generalizations in his “Why I became a Civil Rights Man”, his sentiment that men should recognize women for their unique ability is a positive one. Douglass argues that for far too long “war, slavery, injustice, and oppression” has been the direct result of man’s worship of physical force (105). Man, he argues, is inherently dangerous and destructive. Thus, he urges that collaboration between men and women is necessary for society to function safely and coherently. Without women, society is lacking one half of the moral and intellectual power needed to govern well. Douglass applies a series of qualities women possess which make them critical to good governing: “her heart and her conscience have supplied in large degree its motive and mainspring. Her skill, industry, patience, and perseverance have been wonderfully manifest in every trail hour” (105). Whether or not this is true, his message is clear: men need to recognize the talent of women, and incorporate those skills in order to form a better world. From this, one could deduce that Douglass believes that in order for feminism to really succeed, man’s support, as well as some universalism, is needed.

In theory, collaborative efforts between men and women would be the swiftest and least messy answer to women’s problems. However, the problem with this is that people in positions of power or privilege rarely, if ever, forfeit those positions voluntarily. In these cases, men become the

enemies of feminism. Radical feminists such as Valerie Solanas address this issue. She doesn’t want to play by the rules established by men: a woman can’t win at their game. She instead wants to tear down the whole system, and institute her own anti-men regime. In her “Scum Manifesto”, Solanas presents her main argument for overthrowing the patriarchy: “fucking-up” (189). She argues that women should drop out of the work force, destroy property, refuse to cooperate in any way, and even murder all men who don’t serve SCUM’s purposes. Now, it is hard to support murder of men as a positive outlet for feminist actions, but Solanas’ ideas do serve a very important purpose. The radical nature of her writings leave people wondering, is this really what it would take to dismantle the patriarchy? Will men ever actually listen to reasonable discourse about equality, or will a violent revolution of some sort be necessary to create change? If this is truly the case, men have no place in feminism. They don’t have the experience necessary to partake: they are only obstacles to be overcome. These are important questions women – and men – need to be asking themselves.

Simone de Beauvoir also believes that men don’t have a place in Feminism, but with less radical reasoning. She believes that not only do men and women have different experiences during upbringing, but also that these experiences shape intrinsic differences between the two sexes. For example, a young boy “looks forward to an open future” as a child (168). He is told



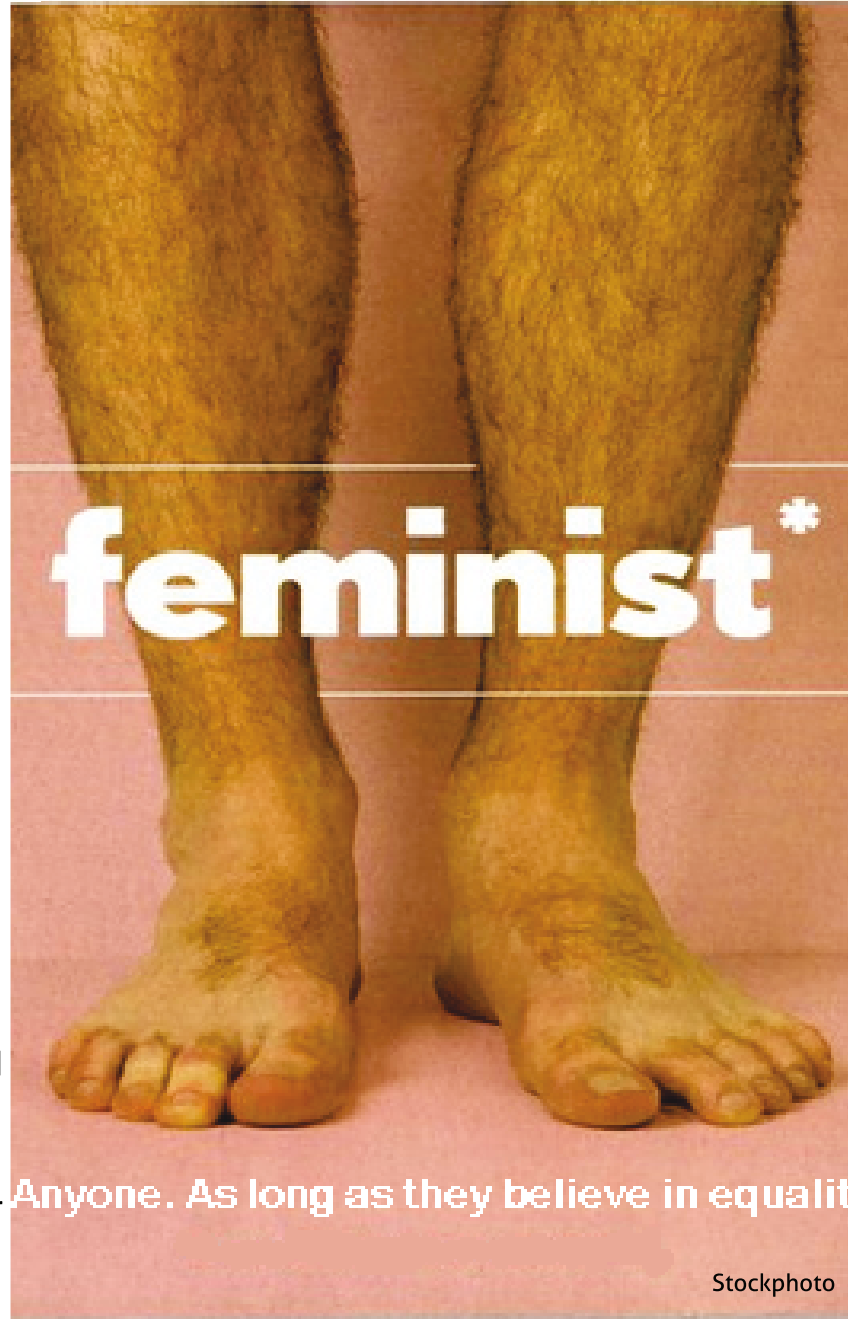
(implicitly or explicitly) that anything is possible, his body is an extension of the natural world, and he is free to pursue his own potentials. A young girl, on the other hand, has a drastically different outlook early in life. Her future, in many ways, is predestined. Beauvoir states that "the young girl will be a wife, mother, grandmother; she will keep house just as her mother did, she will give her children the same care she received herself when she was young – she is twelve years old and already her story is written into the heavens" (168). For Beauvoir, these differences emphasize the need for certain groups to have their own spaces and forums based upon shared experience. Feminism is one of them. Men, due to the nature of their upbringing, simply do not understand the issues women face. They didn't experience

the oppression, and thus cannot comment. Leave feminism to women who have lived through these problems, and are thus better equipped to write and reason about them.

An irony of feminism is that, although mostly women study it, the problems primarily center on men. When a lot of people hear the word "gender", or "gender studies", they automatically assume it is about women. Why is that? It is because the dominant group in any oppressive system is never examined. One of the hallmarks of power and privilege is to operate unexamined. For example, if a woman is battered, the questions are all about her. The situation becomes victim blaming. People ask, "what was she wearing/doing". What they should be asking is, why did that man beat her? Why is domestic violence

still a problem, and how can we fix it? The questions need to shift to men. In order for this to happen, men must actively take part in dismantling their own privilege. Bold men are needed to stand beside women, and be vocal about feminist issues. Leadership roles need to be established so that feminist problems can reach younger boys. Fathers have a responsibility to teach them to their sons. In order for real change to occur, men must shift the conversation to themselves and their own actions, rather than those of women.

It appears obvious that some middle-ground must be reached between the polite and reasonable ideas of the pro-men writers, and the radical – yet – apt ones of those opposed to them. It seems unjust that a man's desire to be a feminist should be denied to him: what harm could come from a more informed, socially sensitive person? But, in many ways, men are impeding the progress of women everyday, and change is slow. It seems to me the role of men in feminism is to be facilitators of the ideas women themselves come up with. It is not a man's role to decide what women need; rather, he should help them accomplish their desire. If men can't do that, or simply refuse to, perhaps radical measures are what are necessary for change. Either way, I view educating men on feminism is a positive step towards positive thinking, more equality, and less boundaries between men and women.



Stockphoto

Works Cited

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

- Jacob, Krista. "Engendering Change: What's Up with Third Wave Feminism?" *feministezine.com*. n.d. Web. 8 March 2015.
- Kelly-Gadol, Kelly. "The Social Relation of the Sexes: Methodological Implications of Women's History." *Feminist Methodologies: An Interdisciplinary Feminist Reader*. Ed. Alison M Jagger. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2008. 6-13. Print.
- Walker, Rebecca. "Becoming the Third Wave." *Feminist Theory: A Reader*. 4th Ed. Wendy K. Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013. 458-460. Print.

SIZE DOESN'T MATTER

- Joannides, Paul. *Guide To Getting It On*. Saline: McNaughton & Gunn, 2013. Print.
- Koedt, Ann. "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm." *Feminist Theory: A Reader*. 4th Ed. Wendy K. Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013. 196-199. Print.
- MacKinnon, Catharine. "Sexuality." *Feminist Theory: A Reader*. 4th Ed. Wendy K. Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013. 415-427. Print
- Marcotte, Amanda. "Why so Many Women Don't Enjoy Sex as Much as They Could." *Salon*. 27 Feb. 2015. Web. 10 Mar. 2015.
- Stoltenberg, John. "How Men Have (a) Sex" *Oppression, Privilege, and Resistance: Theoretical Perspectives on Racism, Sexism, and Heterosexism*. Lisa Heldke and Peg O'Connor. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 349-358. Print.
- Vance, Carol. "Pleasure and Danger: Toward a Politics of Sexuality." *Feminist Theory: A Reader*. 4th Ed. Wendy K. Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013. 335-340. Print.
- Veale, David. "Beliefs about Penis Size: Validation of a Scale for Men Ashamed about Their Penis Size." *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* 11.1 (2014): 84-92. Web. Wiley Online Library. 10 March 2015.

SLUT SHAME

- Orr, Catherine Margaret., Ann Braithwaite, and Diane Marilyn. Lichtenstein. *Rethinking Women's and Gender Studies*. New York: Routledge, 2012. Print.
- Kolmar, Wendy K., and Frances Bartkowski. "Feminist Theory: A Reader." McGraw Hill, n.d. Web. 10 Mar. 2015.

SLUT SHAME CONT.

Peer, Basharat. "After a Rape and Murder, Fury in Delhi." *The New Yorker*. N.p., 2 Jan. 2013. Web. 10 Mar. 2015.

'Reilly, Andrea. "Slut Pride: A Tribute to SlutWalk Toronto." *Feminist Studies*. Vol. 38, No. 1 (Spring 2012), Feminist Studies, Inc. pp. 245-250. Print.

INTERVIEW WITH A BODY POSITIVE DANCER

Bordo, Susan. "The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity." *Feminist Theory: A Reader*. 4th Ed.. Wendy K. Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013. 460-466. Print.

Butler, Judith. "Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity." *Feminist Theory: A Reader*. 4th Ed. Wendy K. Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013. 436-444. Print.

Frost, Liz. "Theorizing the Young Woman in the Body." *Body and Society* 11.1 (2005): 63-85. Web. Sage Journals. 10 March 2015.

Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie. "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory." *Feminist Theory: A Reader*. 4th Ed. Wendy K. Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013. 515-525. Print.

Hartley, Cecilia. "Letting Ourselves Go: Making Room for the Fat Body in Feminist Scholarship." *The Politics of Women's Bodies: Sexuality, Appearance, and Behavior*. 3rd Ed. Rose Weitz. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. 245-255. Print.

Sara, Crawley, Lara Foley, and Constance Shehan. *Gendering Bodies (Gender Lens Series)*. Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008. Print.

MEN IN FEMINISM, OR NAH?

Kolmar, Wendy K., and Frances Bartkowski. "Feminist Theory: A Reader." McGraw Hill, n.d. Web. 10 Mar. 2015.

Eisenberg, Rebecca. "A TED Talk That Might Turn Every Man Who Watches It Into A Feminist? It's Pretty Fantastic." *Upworthy.com*. Cloud Tiger Media, n.d. Web. 09 Mar. 2015.

Lorber, Judith. "Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics Paperback – December 14, 2011." *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics: Judith Lorber: 9780199859085: Amazon.com: Books*. Oxford University Press, n.d. Web. 10 Mar. 2015.

Kinser, Amber E. Negotiating Spaces For/ Through Third-Wave Feminism. *NWSA Journal* .

Vol. 16, No. 3 (Autumn, 2004) , pp. 124-153 Published by: The Johns Hopkins University Press
Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4317084>

CONDOM COMEBACKS

EXCUSE

COMEBACK

It doesn't feel good

- ➡ Neither does sleeping alone.
- ➡ Maybe you should try the next size down.
- ➡ If your'e uncomfortable using condoms then let's try something other than intercourse.

It spoils the mood

- ➡ The mood will come back.
- ➡ So does your attitude.

It takes too long

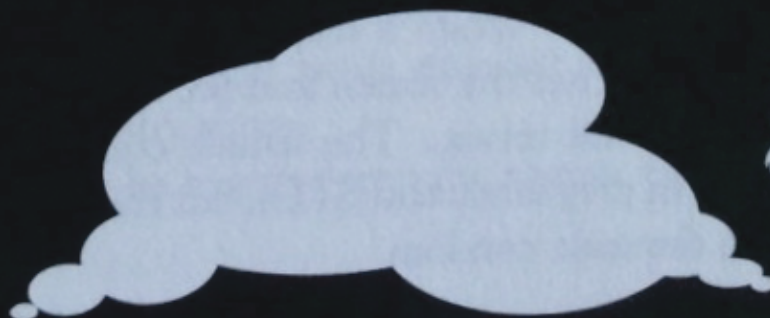
- ➡ Then you need practice and there's no time like the present.
- ➡ Let me help you put it on.
- ➡ A condom can make sex last longer.
- ➡ We have all night. What's the rush?
- ➡ It's worth the wait.

You won't catch anything from me

- ➡ I know I won't, because either we use a condom or we're not having sex.
- ➡ Yes, but you might catch something from me.

Just this once it won't matter

- ➡ Then just this once I'll have to say "No".
- ➡ It only takes once.



Stockphoto