

## That Flawless Formation / Intersectional Feminism in Modern Culture

Saturday, April 30, 2016  
Friend Hall, Room 108

Instructor: David Guirgis

McNair Academic High School '16, Northwestern University '20

*F-Bomb at the Women's Media Center*

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### I. Purpose

The purpose of this course is to encourage discussion of often-uncomfortable topics analyzing some of the most controversial events in news and pop culture, in relation to the feminist movement, the second-wave racial equality movement, and the fight for LGBT+ rights, specifically in the trans- community. By analyzing the intersections between these movements, students will be able to gain a better understanding of the open-mindedness needed to become a better activist and humanitarian in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and to reinforce the ideas of inclusivity between multiple activist movements.

### II. Course Overview

“That Flawless Formation” is a multifaceted lecture and discussion examining the complicated intersections of race, gender, sexual orientation, and inequality through the lens of today’s popular culture and points of conversation. This course aims to explore the meaning of intersectionality in regards to feminism and equality as a whole, with respect to current events.

This includes:

- An-depth analysis of Beyoncé’s “Formation” and a resultant discussion of its success in tackling the problems of African-American women, as posited by Tamora Winfrey Harris in *The Sisters Are All Right*
- A discussion of the initial controversies surrounding the release of Beyoncé’s 2013 single “Flawless” and the parallels surrounding the release of “Formation”
  - Within this, we’ll be analyzing Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *We Should All Be Feminists* and what her speech contributed to the concept of intersectional feminism
- A discussion of intersectional feminism and an analysis of the roles this concept has played in the following:
  - The 2016 Presidential Election
  - The death of Sandra Bland
  - Caitlyn Jenner and the rights of transgender women
  - Socioeconomic equality in the following concentrations:
    - Women in STEM fields, including pursuing STEM in college
    - Equal pay for equal work
    - Societal views of minority women, and norms within the cultures of minority women

### III. Texts, readings, and materials

Several excerpts of fiction and nonfiction works, including books, essays, speeches, and articles, will be provided by the instructor. These include (but are not limited to):

- *The Sisters Are All Right* (Harris)
- *We Should All Be Feminists* (Adichie)
- *The House on Mango Street* (Cisneros)
- Contemporary articles from various sources, including news sites and blogs

Several multimedia materials will also be played in class as a precursor to each discussion. These include videos and other multimedia pieces from the following sources and people:

- Fox News
- Bill Maher
- Saturday Night Live
- Beyoncé
  - “Formation”
  - “Flawless”

### IV. Additional Info

- While students are not required to bring any note-taking materials, it is **strongly encouraged** for both this course and any course offered within Princeton Splash, in order to broaden students’ understanding of whatever is being taught.
- It is **strongly encouraged** that all students participate in the discussion and debate. This is a safe space; however, please note that **any comment made with malicious intent** will (of course) not be tolerated under any circumstances.