



## Here We Are: Feminism for the Real World

*Kelly Jensen (Editor) , Kody Keplinger , Anne Thériault , Shveta Thakrar , Kayla Whaley , Sarah McCarry , Malinda Lo , Ashley Hope Pérez , more... Nova Ren Suma , Daniel José Older , Wendy Davis , Matt Nathanson , Courtney Summers , Mia DePrince , Alida Nugent , Constance Zaber , Brandy Colbert , Siobhan Vivian , Rafe Posey , Jessica Luther , Michaela DePrince , Amandla Stenberg , Suzannah Weiss , Erika T. Wurth , Zariya Allen , Risa Rodil , Brenna Clarke Gray , Mikki Kendall , Angie Manfredi , Lily Myers , Becca Sexton , Allison Peyton Steger ...less*

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**LET'S GET THE FEMINIST PARTY STARTED!**

**Have you ever wanted to be a superheroine? Join a fandom? Create the perfect empowering playlist? Understand exactly what it means to be a feminist in the twenty-first century? You've come to the right place.**

Forty-four writers, dancers, actors, and artists contribute essays, lists, poems, comics, and illustrations about everything from body positivity to romance to gender identity to intersectionality to the greatest girl friendships in fiction. Together, they share diverse perspectives on and insights into what feminism means and what it looks like. Come on in, turn the pages, and be inspired to find your own path to feminism by the awesome individuals in *Here We Are*.

**Welcome to one of the most life-changing parties around!**

## Here We Are: Feminism for the Real World Details

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Author : Kelly Jensen (Editor) , Kody Keplinger , Anne Thériault , Shveta Thakrar , Kayla Whaley , Sarah McCarry , Malinda Lo , Ashley Hope Pérez , more... Nova Ren Suma , Daniel José Older , Wendy Davis , Matt Nathanson , Courtney Summers , Mia DePrince , Alida Nugent , Constance Zaber , Brandy Colbert , Siobhan Vivian , Rafe Posey , Jessica Luther , Michaela DePrince , Amandla Stenberg , Suzannah Weiss , Erika T. Wurth , Zariya Allen , Risa Rodil , Brenna Clarke Gray , Mikki Kendall , Angie Manfredi , Lily Myers , Becca Sexton , Allison Peyton Steger ...less

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# From Reader Review Here We Are: Feminism for the Real World for online ebook

## Emily May says

**This collection is EXTRAORDINARY.** I am 100% going to get my hands on a finished copy so I can dive back into this book whenever I need it (which is probably a lot).

It is perhaps never possible to adequately collect enough perspectives to present all aspects of feminism in its entirety, **but this book comes damn close.** Here We Are: Feminism for the Real World covers a wide range of intersectional feminist topics, featuring authors of all colours, races and religions, gay and trans authors, authors of all shapes and sizes, those with physical and mental disabilities, as well as the able-bodied. It is a truly fantastic work that deserves to be read and celebrated by all.

When reviewing collections, I tend to either post a short review for each piece - if the book has only a small number of authors (which this doesn't) - or highlight the standout pieces - if the book has a long list of authors (which this does). But I just can't do that here. Who do I single out in a collection about the importance of a vast array of voices? So I'm going to briefly mention them all. Bear with me.

I feel quite emotional thinking back over all the wonders this book has to offer. From Malinda Lo's opening piece about her youth and feminist influences, which sets the tone for the rest of the work with this rousing speech:

*Feminism is about recognizing power and fighting to distribute it equally, regardless of race or class or ability or gender. Feminism is not static, and it never has been. In fact, feminism demands change.*

Followed by Suzannah Weiss' informative history of the word "Feminism", Kody Keplinger's feminist playlist, a powerful excerpt from Roxane Gay's Bad Feminist (which is incredible and should be read in full), and musings on different types of privilege from a "straight white man"- Matt Nathanson. This concludes the first and introductory section.

The second section is "Body & Mind", featuring Anne Theriault's moving (and, for me, relatable) story about her mental illness; then Anfie Manfredi's proud reclaiming of her own body and the word "fat", Alida Nugent's thought-provoking discussion of white beauty standards and growing up with Puerto Rican features, Liz Prince's (author of Tomboy) graphic story about overcoming her own internalized misogyny, and Lily Myers' thoughts on her obsession with food and dieting. This section ends with Constance Augusta Zaber's wonderful piece about female image as a trans woman.

"Sex & Sexuality" opens with Courtney Summers talking about the demand for females and female characters to be "likable", not mixed-up, damaged human beings.

*What are we saying to girls when we cannot accept difficult, hurting female characters as being worthy of love because they are difficult and hurting?*

Kayla Whaley's letter to her younger self comes next - a painful, beautiful, uplifting addition about her

physical disability. Then Rafe Posey discusses being a trans man and a feminist, considering how allowing someone to define their own gender identity is a key component of feminism:

*When you deny a person his or her or hir name, or when you say, "You are not the kind of woman I recognize as a woman," you are also saying, "Hey, you there - who you know yourself to be is less important than who I need you to be."*

Then there is Amandla Stenberg's instagram post about how female black lives also matter, Tricia Romano's interview with Laverne Cox (the first trans person to appear on the cover of TIME, Sophia from *Orange is the New Black*, and just an all-round incredible person), and Mia & Michaela DePrince's shared piece about women in Sierra Leone and other poor regions - Michaela focuses specifically on FGM, and Mia talks about the use of rape as a weapon.

In "Pop Culture", Zariya Allen opens with an extremely powerful poem called "Somewhere in America", about the lessons being taught to American kids about race, class, and sexual assault. Brenna Clarke Gray discusses fandom and fanfiction, particularly slash and queer representation. Mikki Kendall talks about the different facets of feminism that make up intersectionality and the need for marginalized representation in pop culture. Brandy Colbert lists real life friendships between black women. Amandla Stenberg makes another appearance with a video transcript where she addresses cultural appropriation. Then Kelly Jensen interviews Laurie Halse Anderson and Courtney Summers about sexual violence and speaking up.

"Relationships" sees Sarah McCarry talk about girlhood, growing up and her own hatred of girls - McCarry also lists great girl friendships in fiction, followed by Wendy Xu's graphic story on the fetishization of Asian women by white men. Then Siobhan Vivian's deeply personal and moving letter to her teen self about losing her virginity, and Kaye Mirza adds her unapologetic Muslim feminist perspective to the mix, challenging assumptions made about wearing the hijab.

*The narrative of who I was and what my faith was based upon, what I believed in and preached, and ultimately where I stood as a woman, was not in my hands.*

Brandy Colbert returns to talk about "sisterhood" - the importance of black female friendships, and Jessica Luther discusses what it means to have a heterosexual feminist relationship.

In "Confidence & Ambition", Ashley Hope Perez talks "breaking the nice girl commandments", Lily Myers' returns with a free verse poem - "Shrinking Women" - about the ways women make space for men (and shouldn't), Erika Y. Wurth offers her perspective on growing up as a Native American girl by writing a letter to her teen self, and Shveta Thakrar writes an evocative piece about self-harm and anxiety. Former Texas senator, Wendy Davis, tells us to fight for our dreams but also own our failures and don't let them define us.

And, finally, "Go Your Own Way". In this section, Daniel José Older opens with a lyrical musing about the many journeys to feminism, the many stories being told, the many different forms of oppression and privilege. Nova Ren Suma follows with a personal story that was equal parts enraging and inspiring (her experiences with an all-male syllabus and sexist teacher made my blood boil). Brenna Clarke Grey offers a list of comics by women, about women. Kody Keplinger talks personal choices and deciding not to have kids. Allison Peyton Steger & Rebecca Sexton add a humourous illustrated guide to becoming a superheroine. Mindy Kaling urges us not to worry if we're not popular and having crazy, exciting times in high school - the quiet, studious individuals have all the good times to look forward to after.

Kelly Jensen closes this collection with a thoughtful essay about embracing her own "quiet feminism". Not all of us are the banner-waving, shouting type of feminists; not all of us have that kind of personality, but that doesn't mean our own quiet forms of feminist expression are any less important.

Also a special mention to the art contributors:

"Bad Hair Day" by Stasia Burrington

"Judgements" by Pomona Lake

"Drawing for Inspiration" by Michelle Hiraishi

"Opportunity" by Risa Rodil

"That's What She Became" by Jen Talley

"Intersectional Rosie the Riveter" by Tyler Feder

In the end, this is just a really really great book. It's **thought-provoking, informative, inclusive, and FUN**. With graphic stories, illustrations, playlists and reading lists, this book is both important AND an absolute pleasure to read.

**Bravo to all the wonderful feminists who made this book possible. Every single one of you rocks.**

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### **Ms. Yingling says**

ARC from Baker and Taylor

Thanks to this book, I know I need to identify myself as an old school or second wave feminist. (Not having been around prior to 1920!) Third or fourth wave feminism strays from what my mother and I saw as essential feminist sociopolitical concerns and includes issues such as sexual identity, sexual orientation, mental illness, etc. For me, these are side issues that dilute the power of the movement, but for younger feminists, this intersectionality is key to their involvement. The book has a lot of interesting essays and writings from a variety of people. Clearly, there was a lot of work put into this book (which is more appropriate for high school students than middle school ones), and it's nicely formatted. It is a lot of information for younger readers who might not have a good understanding of the basics of feminism.

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### **Kelly says**

This book now belongs to every person who needs it & who deserves it. Keep fighting the good fight.

Have you read and enjoyed **HERE WE ARE?** Between now and the end of July, pop a short review on Amazon to be entered for a chance to win \$30 to the bookstore of your choice. Details about the promotion, as well as where to drop your information, is here. Totally okay to copy/paste a review from Goodreads over there!: <http://stackedbooks.org/2017/07/givea...>

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## **Jacquelyn says**

This was a really great collection of stories/writing pieces that was extremely inspiring, eye-opening, and vital to this day in society. I thought that the different pieces and authors were all so interesting and educational. I learned a lot about feminism in general but also about intersectional feminism and what it does and does not mean to call yourself a feminist. There were a lot of diverse authors and topics discussed in this book and I loved seeing feminism discussed by people of all different religions, ethnicities, races, genders, etc. I'd really recommend this book; it's very creative and relative to today's societal issues and discussions.

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## **Eilonwy says**

Usually I'm a bit tongue-tied (finger-tied?) when it comes to reviewing non-fiction books.

But not this one.

I wasn't sure what to expect from a collection of feminist essays aimed at YA readers (although I've followed Kelly Jensen around online for years, so I trusted her to make something terrific). This book lived up to all my hopes for it, and more. It's feminist and also highly intersectional, with contributions from white women, white men, POC women, POC men, transwomen and one transman, able women and disabled women. Which makes it look possibly preachy as I type this, but it's not at all. Each of the essays is deeply personal, addressing one person's experiences in the world. Some of them are solemn in tone while others go for humor. Some of them are just plain fun ("A Guide to Being a Teenage Superheroine.")

They all speak to how much better a world we can make if we allow people to be themselves; if we view everyone as a worthy individual rather than as "a woman," "a man," "a black person," "an Asian kid," "a fat chick," or "that girl in a wheelchair," etc.; if we encourage everyone's potential instead of trying to put people in boxes; if we offer everyone we encounter the respect and privilege we'd like to be offered ourselves. (Why is this so hard? And why is there so much resistance to something so seemingly simple? Sigh.)

I'd recommend this book to **everyone**, regardless of whether you think of yourself as a "feminist" or not; whether you identify as female, or not; and whether you're a teen, or not. It's full of interesting people and interesting thoughts, and will expand the way you look at and understand other people, and maybe yourself, too.

I got this from the library, but I'll probably buy a copy. And that's high praise from me! :D

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## **Courtney says**

I am so very excited to have an essay (!) in this anthology and am honored to be in the company of so many amazing contributors. I can't wait to share more about it closer to pub, and in the mean time, if it sounds like your thing, I hope you'll add it to your To-Read list! :D

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## **Edith says**

White Feminism at its finest. The editor does not care about any woman who is unlike herself, and so this collection is a massive fail at intersectionality. The failure ranges from fake allyship at best to outright hatred, erasure, and exclusion at worst.

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## **Kelley Cantrell says**

tl;dr Save for very brief parts where trans women wrote, this whole book was full of cis-centric feminism and treated the trans/nonbinary/genderqueer community as an afterthought, or just didn't mention us at all. It's like the brief mentions of us were just to say "look, we included people who aren't cisgender! We've succeeded at intersectional feminism! Give us brownie points!"

Tl;dr Feminism that's cis-centric is not intersectional.

Note: I'm only going to address the issues that pertain to me/my lane. I'm not going to delve deeper into issues with identities that aren't mine. That's for other people to address. I'll link their critiques as I find them.

I'm always wary of cis white feminists who use the label of intersectionality. That's why when I saw that the editor of this book was in fact a cis white feminist, I already had my hesitations. After all, her recent thread of exclusionary tweets directed at the ace and aro communities (<https://twitter.com/KidLitPSA/status/...>) was enough to make me believe otherwise about her "intersectional feminism."

The book is a collection of essays from women (mostly cis) and a couple of men that was seeking to, but failed, to fully address the wide variety of feminist experiences. Yes, nothing will ever be perfect, but when you fail to include the transgender/nonbinary/genderqueer community save for a token voice or two? It's a glaring error that shows you're only including us for the brownie points.

The book prioritized the voices of cis women over anyone else. And yes, while including the experiences of cis women is important, so is including (prioritizing, even) the voices of trans women. You're not representing the full range of womanhood if you're only including cis women. For a better, more inclusive and detailed analysis of this, read a nonbinary trans woman's perspective here:  
<https://twitter.com/faulknerpainter/s...>

There were a couple of essays and other sections of the book I wanted to analyze specifically. Let's start with the beginning of Chapter 2.

Chapter 2: "Sometimes they perform the female identity and sometimes they perform the male identity; still other times, feminists choose not to identify as any particular gender at all."

Okay. Some other trans and genderqueer/fluid/nonbinary people may not have any issue with this wording. I fully accept that this will vary from person to person, and I respect that. But for me, personally? As a genderfluid masculine person, it bugs the hell out of me. Here's why.

People do not choose their sexualities. Ever have someone ask you or another person "but why can't you just

be straight?!”? That’s the same problem I’m finding here. The wording reminds me of the wording bigots use to describe the orientations of gay and lesbian people. Gender identity has nothing to do with sexuality, but it’s still an identity. One does not simply choose to be cisgender, transgender, or nonbinary and so forth. It’s simply who they are. Painting gender identity as a choice is insensitive to the plight of transgender and gender nonconforming people everywhere who have lost their families, jobs, housing, and even their lives simply for being who they are.

Okay. Let’s move on.

Lily Myers’ essay I Have Always Eaten The Bread tackles the issue of eating disorders, but fails in one area: She focuses entirely on the issue of cis women who have eating disorders, failing to be inclusive and mention the struggles of other marginalized gender identities who suffer from this. She even goes on to say, and I quote, page 44: “Yes, men can feel insecurity about their bodies, too. But the same level of importance is not attached to body image for men.”

Okay, first of all, I’m gonna assume she means cis men because y’know, trans people are either an afterthought or just flat-out nonexistent in the majority of this book. But, assuming she meant cis and trans, her aforementioned statement was full of erasure. Like, look at me. I’m the living antithesis. It’s complicated, but bear with me here.

In the world that I move around in every day, I’m read as a cis woman. Many other masculine genderfluid people and trans men struggle in this way too. Therefore, we’re still subject to the same bullshit that society pushes for cis women: Be skinny, be femme, be conventionally attractive, be pleasing to the male gaze and so forth. Even asides from that, for those who are AFAB and can pass as their masculine gender, there’s still a bunch of bullshit pushed at cis men that they have to endure: Be lean/fit, have the right amount of facial hair, have a certain dick size or you’re not a “real man”, etc.

I hesitate to criticize essays in general like this, because I don’t want to take away from what good they have done. I don’t want it to seem like I think they don’t have a good message at all. There are things that can do good, but simultaneously do harm. Messages like these benefit cis women, but exclude and harm marginalized cis and trans men who are struggling with body image issues. It’s exclusionary af to claim that men don’t suffer from body image issues and just brush them off. You’re ignoring our intersections of oppression and privilege.

Let’s move on to Chapter 3. On the introductory page, it lists a few different gender pronouns and identities: “He. She. Ze. They. Hir. Queer. Trans. A.”

A lonely “A.” sitting all by itself. What do they mean by this? Asexual? Aromantic? Agender? WHO KNOWS?! Apparently, neither of those three groups exist to the writer because they won’t say the damn words.

Later on page 64, again, gender identity is portrayed as a “choice.” “ ‘Gender’ refers to the identity an individual chooses to take...the only person who chooses their gender identity...is the individual.” Ughhhh. This reeks of the “cis people are their gender! Anyone else just chooses it!” attitude that I despise.

Somewhere along the line, Amandla is misgendered.

Way later in the book, on page 173, the writer tackles the issue of sexism. “...men do not experience prejudice and discrimination in our society.”

Whoa whoa whoa. Hold the fuck right up.

Not even tackling the issue of cis men who experience fatphobia, ableism, and other -isms in society, what about us trans men and masculine genderqueer/nonbinary/fluid people?

I'm going to pull a page from my own personal experiences here to illustrate my point: If any of you were following me on Twitter during my pregnancy last year, you saw how much harassment I got from trolls (by the hundreds!) because I stated that I was a boy and I was pregnant. "You're a woman!" and a bunch of other exclusionary bullshit clogged my mentions for awhile. My boyhood was erased simply for my ability to support life within me.

So look me in the eye and tell me again that men don't ever experience discrimination ever when I was harassed multiple times last year and misgendered simply for being a pregnant boy.

Basically, to sum this all up, I was really disappointed in this book. Not only was some of it basic 101 stuff, it was exclusionary as fuck and treated those of us who are transgender, gender non-conforming and so forth as an afterthought. As if we were only included so the writers could say "look, we included people who aren't cisgender! We've succeeded at intersectional feminism! Give us brownie points!"

No. You have failed greatly at intersectional feminism when you treat marginalized communities like a fucking afterthought just for fucking goddamn brownie points.

\*all the middle finger emojis\*

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### **Lala BooksandLala says**

Fantastic. Diverse. Thoughtful.

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### **Laina SpareTime says**

Editor is incredibly aphobic and dismissed and tone-policed the ace/aro community over concern over a book blurb <https://twitter.com/lainaspacetime/st...>

The book itself seems to be super cissexist <https://twitter.com/aulknerpainter/s...>

And from what I've seen of the editing, it's sloppy and allows outdated ideas and misinformation to stand.

For example, "He. She. Ze. They. Hir. Queer. Trans. A."

WHAT IS THIS A? What does this even mean????

Will not read.

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## **Jessica says**

In place of a review, just picture a million heart-eye emojis.

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## **laura (bookies & cookies) says**

[Edit: April 14, 2017] I changed my 5 star rating to a 2 star rating because of the recent worrying aphobic, biphobic, and panphobic statements and messages from Kelly Jensen, the editor, on Twitter and BookRiot articles.

While this book was illuminating and included a wide array of voices, the lack of asexual representation and an incorrect definition of bisexuality is troubling and not something I wish to support with a higher starred rating.

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## **April (Aprilius Maximus) says**

Review coming soon!

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## **Ben Babcock says**

I suppose I should start with one of those disclaimers about how I received a free electronic copy of this from NetGalley and Algonquin Young Readers. However, I also preordered *two* hard copies with my own money (OK, someone else's money in gift card form) even before that request was approved. But why wait a whole three weeks when I could read it earlier than that? *That's* how excited I am for *Here We Are: 44 Voices Write, Draw, and Speak About Feminism for the Real World*. It turns out that this book is everything I wanted, and more.

I really like this trend of telling me how many contributors there are in the title of the work, because it saves me from having to count. Suffice it to say, I'm not going to review each piece individually. I *will* point out that Kelly Jensen has clearly made the effort to be as inclusive and intersectional as possible in this book. *Here We are* features pieces from white women, Black women, Indigenous women, trans men and trans women, straight women, gay women, and even that rarest of breeds, yes, the straight white male. The contributors are of various ages, professions, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Indeed, pretty much the only thing that unites all of them is that they are in this book, and they identify as feminist.

Readers won't see themselves in every contributor and every piece in *Here We Are*. And that's kind of the point. The essays and other pieces in this collection seek to give advice, sure. Beyond this, though, they simply **provide perspectives**. Readers won't see themselves in every contributor, but they will hopefully identify with *some* of the contributors. And they will get a chance to hear from voices whose experiences are very different from their own. For example, Constance Augusta Zaber's "Dragging Myself into Self-Love" would surely resonate with many boys:

Looking back, I can recognize how hard puberty must have been for them, but at the time, I envied those girls. I envied their pierced ears, their lip gloss, their long hair, their shoes that weren't boring old sneakers. **I was envious that they were allowed to make choices with clothes and makeup that were off limits to me.** By the eighth grade, I'd been exposed to the idea that gender roles were created by humans and were more arbitrary than natural (thank you, Internet!), but that sort of abstract information is useless in the face of classmates who would mock a boy for having a purple backpack.

(Emphasis mine.) Although I perform gender in a fairly standard, masculine way, I definitely understand where Zaber is coming from and can identify with chafing at some of the restrictions placed upon people who perform gender as male. For boys who are considering that they might be trans or nonbinary or agender or simply prefer more fashion choices, this is an essay that tells them they are not alone. For the girls who are the primary target audience of *Here We Are*, it's a glimpse into how feminist thought and action benefits all people, regardless of gender.

*Here We Are* is unequivocal in its inclusiveness:

Feminists can identify as female, male, transgender, gender queer, or any other way they wish to. They can choose to choose no identity at all or choose one identity today and a different one next week. What physical parts individuals have or do not have has no bearing on their feminism nor on their right to be part of the feminism party. All that matters is that they believe in equality for every individual.

Whether you identify as a trans man, move fluidly among genders, enjoy having sex freely, or prefer not to have sex at all, you belong here and you matter.

(Yeah, a little asexual representation there. Not a whole lot, unfortunately, but a little. I wish Jensen had included an asexual contributor to discuss how a lack of attraction is normal and OK, and maybe even someone who is aromantic or whose romantic orientation differs from their sexual orientation. Also, in case you're reading this and wondering: yes, there really are feminism parties. They are every second Thursday, and like the dark side, we have cookies, although we don't have imperialist oppression of entire planetary systems.)

Mikki Kendall also puts it very well in her essay, "Facets of Feminism", when she says, "A feminism that is exclusionary, that makes objects out of some women and saviors out of others, is implicitly harmful.... An inclusive feminism is a more effective feminism." And earlier in this chapter, the book reminds us that liking problematic media doesn't disqualify you as a feminist either, that "it's from these problematic representations that great feminist dialogue emerges", and then cites one of my favourite problematic shows, *Supernatural*. This is a salient point to remember in an age that bombards us with media representation that is often simultaneously problematic and entertaining, and I appreciate that *Here We Are* takes the time to counter the myth that feminism means hating men, hating yourself, or indeed, hating everything—it does not.

The word *feminist* is certainly more in the popular mind than it was when I was a teenager in the early noughties. My adolescence straddled the divide between pre- and post-social media, as well as pre- and post-smartphone; in Grade 8 it was all about the LiveJournal and the GeoCities, and by the time I was graduating

high school Facebook had thrown open its doors to the general public and the iPhone had just heralded the beginning of the smartphone era. In this environment, feminism was something we didn't really discuss too much as teenagers. I ran with a pretty smart group of kids (after my first high school closed in Grade 10, I took to eating lunch in the band wing with the "band geeks", despite my lack of musical talent, because lots of them were from my old school and it seemed preferable to the noisy cafeteria). We were reasonably enlightened, I'd like to say, and we talked about these kinds of issues. But textbooks and theories and that kind of academic rigour were not yet on the horizon, so we didn't always have the *language* required to grapple with them.

This book is much more accessible. It covers pretty much everything and anything related to feminism to one degree or another. I appreciate that it has separate chapters on *sex* and *relationships*, since these are very different but often conflated concepts. I like that it has a combination of personal essays, reprinted essays, interviews, comics and drawings, and lists. The "scrapbook style" book is not a form I want to read all the time, but I acknowledge its appeal. As an adult and a professional and (gasp) an intellectual, I can read all the academic theory books about feminism that I want. I can't really put those into the hands of teenagers, however, and expect them to have the same eye-opening experiences that I do. Instead, *Here We Are* is a book with ideas, stories, and advice they can take an act on immediately.

Even as feminism becomes more popular, it also becomes a commodity. Corporations are happy to co-opt feminist slogans and terminology if it means they can *sell* feminism. "Buy this thing to make you more feminist!" "Buy this thing to support our feminist initiatives!" Buy, buy, buy. "Buy this to learn the ultimate secret to feminism..." Except there is no secret. There is no one, right way to be feminist. There is no feminist checklist that, if followed, will make you the perfect, unprivileged, unbiased, feminist person.

OK, I lied. There is a secret. Do you want to know what it is?

Most young people *are already* feminists.

They might not know it, and if they know it, they might not readily admit to it (because that can come with a social cost they are unwilling to pay). But young people, by and large, believe in their own empowerment. They believe in equality for all genders. They don't understand what the fuss is about if you love someone of the same gender—or if you don't fall in love at all. The stories we see in the news about proms being shut down because a girl wants to bring another girl, or wear a tuxedo, or wears a dress that is too short—it's not other teens shutting down these events, creating this fuss. It's the adults who are unwilling to open their minds and change their views. I can't remember who said this, but young people are always on the winning side of history.

*Here We Are* embraces this youth power and energy rather than talking down to it. It sees the feminist, good and bad and hidden and out, in everyone and speaks to them. It's a little bit Oprah, I guess: "You can be feminist! And you can be feminist! And *you* can be feminist!", but I don't see this as a bad thing. The worst thing we, adult progressives and feminists and allies, can do at this point is to ignore, condescend, or silence young people trying to speak up, learn about, and claim a feminist identity. *Here We Are* is a book for youth that is proudly, loudly feminist and tells young people that they can shout about (or not, as they choose) being feminist too. I think that's pretty cool.

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## **Abby Johnson says**

What an impressive and necessary book.

For teen readers who are hearing about feminism (good or bad opinions about it) and want to know more and learn about how different people express feminism, this is a MUST. For teen readers who identify as feminist and want to get different perspectives on it, this is a MUST. For teen readers who have never once thought about feminism in their lives, this is a MUST.

Kelly Jensen has pooled together a really impressive line up of writers and artists talking about what feminism means to them, the different shades of feminism, what made them think about feminism for the first time. I really appreciate all the diverse voices included, both popular authors and some that will be new to readers.

Get this. Get this for your library shelves, your high school classroom shelves, and/or any teen in your life that you care about enough to help their feminist education.

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