

“Feminism is For Everybody”: An Introduction to Feminist Theory

By Elizabeth O’Brien

Feminism is for Everybody by bell hooks

hooks, b. (2002). *Feminism is for everybody*. New York, NY: South End Press.

bell hooks is well-renowned and respected thinker in feminist theory, and *Feminism is for Everybody* is a great introduction to intersectional feminism, appropriate for readers of all ages and levels of knowledge. Many topics such as education and consciousness-raising, bodies and beauty, class, work, and global struggles are highlighted, which allows readers to see how feminism can impact multiple facets of their everyday lives, as well as relate to struggles they might never experience.

We Should All Be Feminists by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Adichie, C.N. (2014). *We should all be feminists*. New York, NY: Random House.

We Should All Be Feminists is an adaptation of Adichie’s very successful TEDx Talk of the same name, excerpts of which you might recognise from Beyoncé’s “Flawless.” The award-winning novelist describes her experiences with sexism in her native Nigeria and in the US and argues with humour why we should cast away the negative stereotypes of feminism and all identify as feminists. It is easy to connect with her discussion of the harmful ways in which the patriarchy affects both women and men and is an accessible introduction to feminist ideas such as gender roles, sexuality, marriage, and education. Heads up for cissexism and a strict adherence to the gender binary (the idea that there are no other gender identities besides/outside of male and female) but we acknowledge the imperfections of most sources and value Adichie’s book because of its decentering of white European feminism.

Not Your Mother’s Meatloaf: A Sex Education Comic Book by Saiya Miller and Liza Bley

Miller, S. & Bley, L. (2013). *Not your mother’s meatloaf: A sex education comic book*. Berkeley, CA: Soft Skull Press.

This comic book reads like a perzine (a personal zine). Authors penned comic strips about their varied experiences with all things relating to sex and the book is a collaboration of those stories. Chapters include Beginnings, Bodies, Health, Identity, Age, Endings, and Personal Best. This is a sometimes funny, sometimes sad, sex-positive book that will engage teens as it explores topics not covered in conventional sex education classes. *Not Your Mother’s Meatloaf* doesn’t skirt around any issues and features comics on queer desire, being fat, being genderqueer, consent, sexual assault, and abusive relationships, among many, many others. It will appeal to teens exploring their sexuality as well as adults looking for stories that they can relate to.

Lessons from the Fat-o-Sphere by Kate Harding and Marianne Kirby

Harding, K., & Kirby, M. (2009). *Lessons from the fat-o-sphere: Quit dieting and declare a truce with your body*. New York, NY: Perigree Books.

Kate Harding and Marianne Kirby, both prolific fat activist bloggers, published *Lessons from the Fat-o-Sphere* to connect with readers outside of the online fat-acceptance movement. Nearly all women experience body shame/anxiety/hatred in various forms, but one of the most powerful, violent, and harmful ways is through fatphobia at the hands of our thin-obsessed culture. This can be particularly evident among young girls and women, as studies have shown that girls as young as nine engage in disordered eating and body hatred. Harding and Kirby challenge the idea that you need to diet and be thin in order to have a good relationship with your body and a fulfilling life. A great introduction to fat, body, and size acceptance that disrupts the idea that diets work and will make you thin and happy. 🍷

