

Fall 2018

Feminism in Music & Film

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Feminism

in

music & film

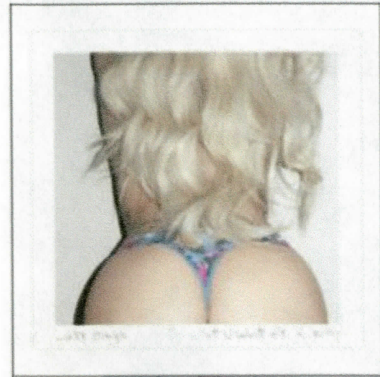
Alexandra Callaway

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Jili Chen "Gigi"

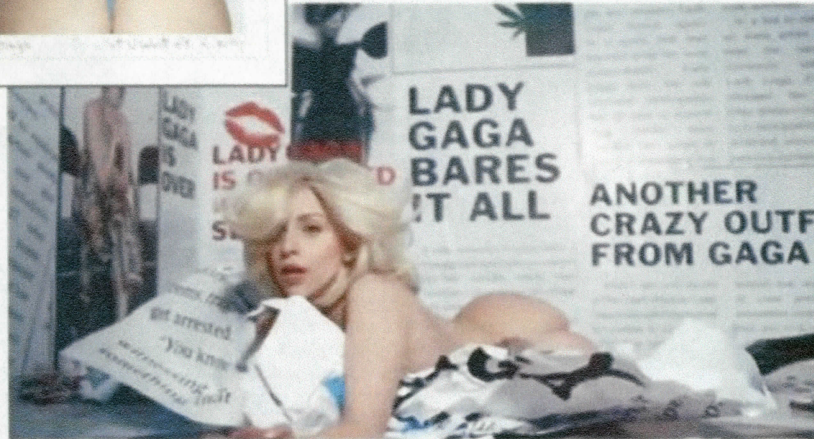
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DO WHAT U WANT LADY GAGA

a feminist perspective on the song & singer



Lady Gaga, singer and actress, released the single "Do What U Want" in October of 2013. Lyrically, this song is about the agency of the female body. Gaga's own physicality and appearance continues to be under major scrutiny from paparazzi outlets and in 2013, she decided it was time to address the criticism.

"I fall / I stand up and then I'm okay / But then you spread some shit that makes me want to scream" details her frustration with how the media continues to comment on her, whether it'd be her music, her appearance, or her character. Each time she thinks she gets over it, she finds herself succumbing to the unnecessary criticisms. "Do what you want with my body / Write what you want, say what you want about me / If you're wondering, no I'm not sorry" is the definitive statement of Gaga owning her sexuality and body, and this sexual metaphor overall serves as a reclamation of one owning themselves.

Gaga, a rape survivor and activist, used this song to promote femininity, sexuality, and the action of not only embracing those aspects of yourself, but owning it and knowing nobody can take those things away from you.

While this song received praise for its simple instrumental backing, Gaga's vocals, and the lyrics being an affirmation of body positivity and owning one's character, it should be noted that allowing R. Kelly on this track is rather reductive and harmful. R. Kelly, who has committed statutory rape and domestic abuse, is the type of person Gaga should be singing against since Kelly does not respect women.



Lesley Gore

Her song titled "You Don't Own Me" came out in 1964 and was an "anthem of independence with a feminist theme that was considerably advanced for early 1964"

-Richie Unterberger

You Don't Own Me

"You don't own me
I'm not just one of your many toys
You don't own me
Don't say I can't go with other boys
And don't tell me what to do
Don't tell me what to say
And please, when I go out with you
Don't put me on display 'cause
You don't own me
Don't try to change me in any way
You don't own me
Don't tie me down 'cause I'd never stay"

"We teach girls to shrink themselves
 To make themselves smaller
 We say to girls
 "You can have ambition
 But not too much
 You should aim to be successful
 But not too successful
 Otherwise you will threaten the man"
 Because I am female
 I am expected to aspire to marriage
 I am expected to make my life choices
 Always keeping in mind that
 Marriage is the most important
 Now marriage can be a source of
 Joy and love and mutual support.
 But why do we teach girls to
 aspire to marriage
 And we don't teach boys the
 same?
 We raise girls to each other as
 competitors
 Not for jobs or for
 accomplishments
 Which I think can be a good thing
 But for the attention of men
 We teach girls that they cannot
 be sexual beings
 In the way that boys are
 Feminist: the person who believes
 in the social
 Political, and economic equality
 of the sexes"

BEYONCÉ

" You wake up, flawless
 Post up, flawless
 Ride round in it, flawless
 Flossin on that, flawless
 This diamond, flawless
 My diamond, flawless
 This rock, flawless
 My rock, flawless
 I woke up like this
 I woke up like this
 We flawless, ladies tell 'em
 I woke up like this
 I woke up like this
 We flawless, ladies tell 'em
 Say I, look so good tonight
 God damn, God damn
 Say I, look so good tonight
 God damn, God damn"

***Flawless ft Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
 *****Flawless not only featured a clip from Adichie's TED Talk "We Should All Be Feminists" which touched on gender inequality, but also the importance of self-empowerment.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyuJWOrS9BY>

I buy my own things
I pay my own bills

Everything I got I bought it
Boys can't buy my love

I'm a motherfucking
woman baby alright

I don't need a man to
be holding me too tight

WOMAN

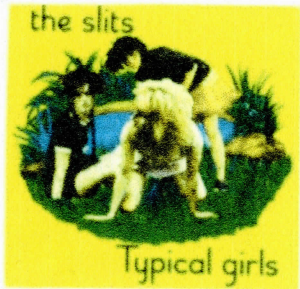
By Kesha

This is empowering song for all women since preaches the importance of embracing being a woman, and shamelessly having pride which is seen in Kesha's statement "I'm a motherfucking woman baby alright" and goes on to say "I don't need a man to be holding me too tight."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXyA4MXKIKo>

Jili Chen (Gigi)

Best feminist songs for your playlist



"Typical Girls" by the Slits

With its dub-infused 1979 album, *Cut*, the Slits laid the groundwork for riot grrrl and other feminist punk to come.

In this single, lead singer Ari Up makes efficacious use of incisive wit and irony to protest stereotypes of women as passive, frail and submissive: "Typical girls you can always tell / Typical girls don't rebel."

"You Don't Own Me" By Lesley Gore

Serving as an anthem for the second-wave feminist movement and beyond, the defiant song continues to make an impact.



It was covered Joan Jett, memorably belted in the 1996 flick *The First Wives Club*

Sources: Time Out

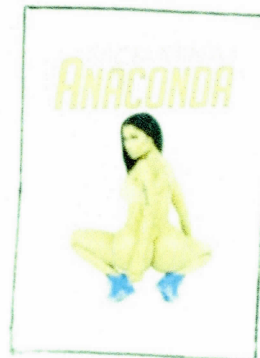
and most recently modernized by pop artist Grace. It's safe to say this is a song that withstands the test of time.



"Transgender Dysphoria Blues" by Against Me!

With her history of anarcho-leftist leanings, Against Me! frontwoman Laura Jane Grace has always deftly melded the political

and personal. In and of itself, there's nothing new to punk, but the narratives her album Transgender Dysphoria Blues introduced into the male-dominated punk mainstream — her explorations of coming-out as a trans woman — transformed the genre's patriarchal terrain.



"Anaconda" by Nicki Minaj

"Anaconda" might have raised the biggest hubbub with its infamous music video scene — Nicki flexes her lap-dance ability and leaves Drake head-in-hands — and despite what the misguided haters

attest, it's one of the most unforgettable statements of an era-defining career: co-opting a canonized hip-hop tune concerning the triumph of the male gaze and inverting it into a declaration of female supremacy.

- "Brave" as the Disney's most feminist princess
- She refused to conform to the princess stereotype. She preferred archery, horseback riding, and spending time in the woods.
- She didn't rely on any one other than herself to fix her mistakes. (In many movies, Disney and otherwise, women are left to just sit back and watch the action)
- Remained happily single (Many girls and women still view singleness as a flaw) She said "I may never be ready for this".



- "Frozen" challenges the idea of perfect Prince Charming
- At first, Hans seems like a perfect "Prince Charming" — polite, elegant, and handsome.
- When Hans betrays Anna and attempts to kill Elsa, Anna realizes her mistake and attempts to rectify the situation.
- Elsa, as the icon of LGBTQ+ who is lack of male interest, has the realistic idea of love, while Anna still believes in traditional Disney love.



Feminine Elements

IN DISNEY

- Princess stereotype
 - Searching for their true love and waiting to be saved by a prince charming.
 - Each of these Disney princesses are white, tall and thin, and of course have a small waist.
 - Well known for their beautiful singing voices.
 - Only two skills we see: singing and cleaning.
 - Unrealistic sense of beauty and love.

MEDIA

A young girl's journey into adulthood is very much constrained by the constructed ~~idea~~ ideals of femininity. The media implicitly or explicitly, promotes mental models of how a woman should look, speak, and interact with others. Hence, media that girls are exposed to at a tender age play a major role in shaping their gender ideologies.



Sources: BUSTLE &

GIRLS LIKE GIRLS

"STEALING KISSES FROM YOUR MRS. DOESN'T MAKE YOU FREAK OUT? GOT YOU FUSSIN', GOT YOU WORRIED SCARED TO LET YOUR GUARD DOWN"
-HAYLEY KIYOKO

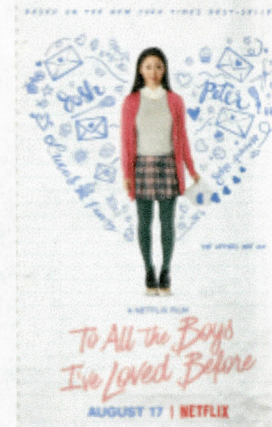
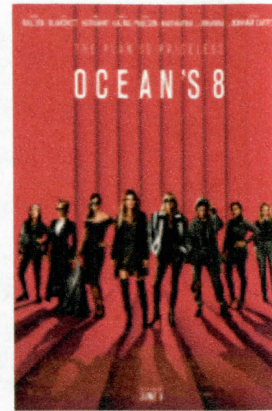
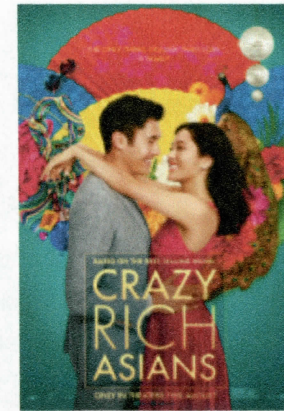
BY HAYLEY KIYOKO



Hayley Kiyoko's song *Girls Like Girls* is an intersectional track that pushes for lesbian representation. Hayley takes a powerful stance in this piece as she says she's not afraid of tearing down walls and crossing lines.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0MT8SwNa_U

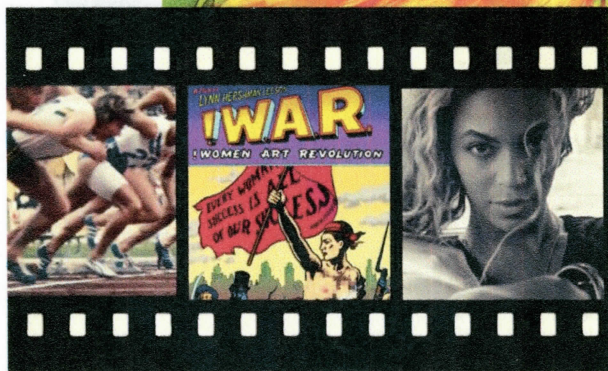
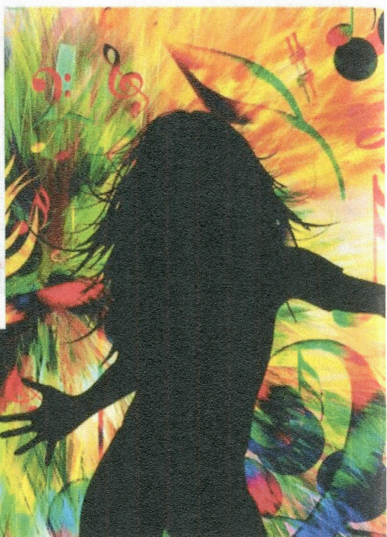
Female Led Films of 2018



- *A Wrinkle in Time*, directed by Ava DuVernay, starring Oprah Winfrey, Reese Witherspoon, Mindy Kaling, and Storm Reid.
- *Crazy Rich Asians*, directed by John M. Chu, starring Constance Wu, Henry Golding, Michelle Yeoh, and Gemma Chan.
- *Ocean's 8*, directed by Gary Ross, starring Sandra Bullock, Cate Blanchett, Anne Hathaway, Mindy Kaling, Rihanna, Awkwafina, Helena Bonham Carter, and Sarah Paulson.
- *The Hate U Give*, directed by George Tillman Jr., starring Amandla Stenberg.
- *To All The Boys I've Loved Before*, directed by Susan Johnson, starring Lana Condor and Noah Centineo.¹

¹ All images on this page are from imdb.com

² https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/thumb/e/e0/Lady_Gaga_-_Do_What_U_Want.png/220px-Lady_Gaga_-_Do_What



- *Wet Hot Summer*, starring Oprah Winfrey, Rome Watersport, Mindy Kaling, and Stern Reid.
- *Crazy Rich Asians*, directed by John M. Chu, starring Constance Wu, Henry Golding, Nicholas Yeoh, and Gemma Chan.
- *Diana*, a TV event, directed by Gary Ross, starring Sandra Bullock, Faye Dunaway, Anne Hathaway, Mindy Kaling, Rihanna, Ariana Grande, Felicity Huffman, and Sarah Paulson.
- *The Hate U Give*, directed by George C. Scott, Jr., starring AnnaSophia Robb.
- *20 Feet from Stardom*, directed by Morgan Neville, starring Janis Ian, Rufus Wainwright, and Nikki Giovanni.



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