INTERSECTIONALITY & INCLUSIVITY:
Supplemental Reading Guide for Feminist Fight Club at CSU

This supplemental guide is provided to encourage a critical reading and intersectional application of the strategies proposed in Feminist Fight Club, by Jessica Bennett.

Copies of the book are available at the CSU Bookstore.
PURPOSE OF THE FEMINIST FIGHT CLUB AT CSU

On behalf of Colorado State University, the Women & Gender Collaborative has collaborated with Feminist Fight Club to provide our campus community with shared language and shared resources to challenge subtle sexism on our campus.

The Feminist Fight Club at Colorado State University provides an inclusive space for community, growth, learning, and support for all members. We seek to develop our skills in identifying and addressing problematic behaviors that disadvantage women and other marginalized groups in the workplace by building upon the research and strategies presented in the book, Feminist Fight Club. We also focus on holding ourselves accountable to one another as we model and practice behaviors that foster a campus culture and climate that supports the success of all students and employees. To this end, we commit to support one another through honest reflection, courageous dialogue, and collective action.

What Does This Look Like?

- Share your strategies - If you’ve faced challenging situations, chances are someone else has (or will) too. Don’t dominate the conversation; invite others to share their strategies and collaborate
- Ask, “What do you need? How can I support you?” Affirm the experiences of others
- Listen to other perspectives, experiences, understandings, especially if they are not the same as your own
- Don’t suffer in silence - Identify what you need and how others can support you, then ask for it
- Be conscious of the people around you (who are they and how do you connect?) - Build reciprocal relationships with people who are different from you to learn from and about each other’s experiences
- Ask for direct feedback – This helps if others are hesitant to speak up and share something on their own
- Call each other “in” – Give feedback, provide additional resources, start a conversation on areas for improvement
- Call each other “out” – Ask for clarification, help others understand the impacts of their actions, name when you hear or see something that could be done better
- If you start getting uncomfortable or defensive, check in about why you might be feeling that way - Take a few deep breaths. Is there a chance you might be missing something? Are you willing to learn how you can do better? What are things you could learn more about?
- Follow up – if the moment passes, follow up with a phone call, email, or ask to set up a time to talk
- Make an effort to build a mutually supportive network of friends, mentors, and peers - Ask questions like, “Why are you interested in reading FFC?” “What are you hoping to get out of this workshop?” “What are you bringing to this group?”
Making the Feminist Fight Club at CSU Intersectional

The book, *Feminist Fight Club*, by Jessica Bennett, offers useful suggestions and strategies for interrupting and responding to problematic behaviors that show up in everyday interactions. The FFC at CSU recognizes that these resources are even more effective when understood and applied through a lens of intersectionality.

“*Intersectionality* is a theory that considers that various human aspects, such as race, sexual orientation and gender, do not exist isolated and separated from each other, but have complex, influential and interwoven relationships, and those relationships are essential to understanding of the human condition. When systems of justice or other entities attempt to separate and isolate each aspect, then misconceptions may occur and essential understandings may be lost.[1][2] The theory proposes that individuals think of each element or trait of a person as inextricably linked with all of the other elements in order to fully understand one's identity.[3] The term was coined by the American feminist legal scholar, critical race theorist, and civil rights advocate Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw.

Intersectionality proposes that all aspects of one's identity need to be examined as simultaneously interacting with each other and affecting one's privilege and perception in society, and that these facets of identity cannot simply be observed separately.[4] As such, intersectionality is not simply a view of personal identity, but rather an overarching analysis of power hierarchies present within identities.[5] The framework of intersectionality also provides an insight into how multiple systems of oppression interrelate and are interactive.[6]

(Source: Wikipedia - 12/13/17)

The Feminist Fight Club at CSU has expanded our understanding of the material in the book to make it more intersectional, inclusive and applicable to our entire campus community through modifying fight moves, creating new fight moves, and incorporating these moves into our everyday lives. For example, we edited the rules to guide how we show up in the FFC.

**Rules of the Feminist Fight Club at CSU**

Rule No. 1: You must talk about the Feminist Fight Club at CSU.
Rule No. 2: You MUST talk about the Feminist Fight Club at CSU.
Rule No. 3: We fight PATRIARCHY (and all forms of harassment, bullying, inequity, discrimination, -isms, and -phobias), not each other.
Rule No. 4: Membership to the FFC means you've taken an oath to help and support women – ALL women – and those from historically marginalized groups.
Rule No. 5: The FFC is inclusive and non-hierarchical. Everyone's an equal fighter.
Rule No. 6: The fight is not over until we have achieved gender equity for all people.
Rule No. 7: No wallflowers. Everyone must fight!
How to Be More Intersectional While Reading Feminist Fight Club

Gender-based oppression is differently experienced (and often differently perpetuated) based on our multiple identities and the various systems we navigate. Everyone has a combination of privileged and subordinated identities that significantly inform how we move through different systems (and which systems we encounter). Race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, culture, religion, family structure, relationship status, and even one’s professional position within our institution can influence how (and if) certain “fight moves” are really useful for creating an inclusive culture that supports everyone in our community.

A Few Questions to Keep in Mind

To encourage more intersectional practices and inclusive support for others, the Feminist Fight Club at CSU asks you to keep a few questions in mind as you read the book.

When Considering Problematic Behaviors

1. How might an example of problematic behavior differently affect people based on other identities? To whom is this most often directed? For whom might this show up in other ways?
2. Are there specific conditions within your unit that make it uniquely difficult to identify and address these behaviors? Who might be especially vulnerable? What else is at stake?
3. Are there intersecting systems, practices, or policies in place that hinder effective intervention or protect perpetrators of bad behaviors?

When Considering Fight Moves

1. Does considering other identities (in addition to gender) shift how this fight move might be put into practice? Can this fight move be effective for everyone? Consider what might make this less appropriate for others to employ or use to support someone else.
2. Is there anything about this fight move that is exclusionary, alienating, or not supportive of other subordinated identities? How could you make it more inclusive and supportive?
3. Are there intersecting systems, practices, or policies in place that make it difficult to access available resources, opportunities, and support by those who need them?
Consider the Complexity of Multiple Identities to be More Inclusive

Below is a sample list of identity categories that everyone has, although some may be more salient to our experiences than others. The identities we hold in these categories position us differently in terms of privilege or disadvantage, especially as we navigate different types of systems. How they intersect informs our experiences and how we might show up in various types of spaces.

- Ability/Disability
- Access to Resources
- Age
- Citizenship
- Education
- Ethnicity/Culture
- Family/Parental Status
- Gender Expression
- Gender Identity
- Geographic Region
- Immigration Status
- Language of Proficiency/Use of English
- Nationality
- Position/Hierarchical Level
- Race
- Relationship/Marital Status
- Religion/Spirituality/Faith Tradition
- Sex Assigned at Birth
- Sexual Orientation
- Skin Color
- Size/Appearance/Athleticism
- Socio-Economic Class
- Veteran Status
- Years of Experience

To learn more about gender and intersectionality, visit the Educate Yourself page on the Women & Gender Collaborative website. You can filter results to show articles related to topics such as, “Gender in the Workplace,” “Unpacking Privilege,” and “Why Intersectionality Matters.”

For information on the Feminist Fight Club at CSU and how to join, contact Dr. Cori Wong at cori.wong@colostate.edu