



THE DIFFERENCE IN THE SAME ACTION

The substantiality of black feminism versus white feminism, as illustrated by Beyoncé's appropriation of Pipilotti Rist's *Ever is Over All* (1997)

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Introduction:

Celebrities are increasingly using their platform to address particular social issues. Take the last two years alone: We have witnessed quarterback Colin Kaepernick taking a knee during the American national anthem in protest of police brutality.¹ Kim Kardashian wrote an essay on the sexual objectification of women's bodies.² Singer Frank Ocean questions gender stereotypes with album *Blonde* (2016).³ Kendrick Lamar released a sophisticated album *To Pimp A Butterfly* (2015) targeting the interrelations of cultural and institutional racism.⁴ There are many more examples but the much anticipated, recent visual album *Lemonade* (2016) by musician Beyoncé caused its own kind of stir.

The scene accompanying the song *Hold Up* is strikingly similar to a video-installation by Pipilotti Rist called *Ever is Over All* (1997). The connection between these two scenes has been made before, but both the connection and the meaning behind it have not been studied. Its research might prove relevant since Beyoncé is a representant of the gender politics of black feminism in media studies.

Ever is Over All is famous in its feminist symbolism and with *Lemonade* frequently been described as a 'love letter to black women',⁵ this research will therefore focus on feminist theory, specifically intersectional feminism. The term feminism will be approached with regard to the definition by Oxford Handbook Online which defines feminism as 'a rejection of the ideology of patriarchy',⁶ in all its forms: it recognizes injustices from legal- institutional sexism to the most subtle, microcultural forms of sexism which applies seamlessly to Beyoncé's case for its intersectionality. This essay will be researched by approaching it through discourse analysis of media studies theory on Rist and Beyoncé's feminist semiotics. The goal of this research is to shed new light on the meaning of Beyoncé's political shift in career and its position in the third-wave feminist branch of intersectionality. This will be attempted by studying *Lemonade* and offsetting it with *Ever is Over All* throughout the text. First, it will delve into feminist discourse contemporary to the release dates of the works. Hereafter, it will proceed to analyse and compare both works and proceed to research *Ever is Over All* as to lay groundwork on which to build Beyoncé's case as contrast.

¹ Wagoner, Nick. "Kaepernick Kneels to Continue Anthem Protest." ESPN.com. N.p., 2 Sept. 2016. Web. 15 Dec. 2016.

² West, Kim Kardashian. "Happy International Women's Day - Kim." *KimKardashianWest.com*. N.p., 08 Mar. 2016. Web. 15 Dec. 2016. Original source now requires access fee, full essay available at: <http://metro.co.uk/2016/03/09/everyone-should-read-kim-kardashians-essay-on-slut-shaming-5741455/>

³ Caramanica, Jon. "Frank Ocean Ends His Long Silence with a Variety of Works." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 22 Aug. 2016. Web. 15 Dec. 2016.

⁴ [...] *I'm trapped inside the ghetto and I ain't proud to admit it. Institutionalized; I could still kill me a nigga, so what? If I was the president, I'd pay my mama's rent. Free my homies and them. Bulletproof my Chevy doors. Lay in the White House and get high, Lord. Who ever thought? Master, take the chains off me! [...]. Lamar, Kendrick, Bilal, Anna Wise, and Snoop Dogg. By K. Duckworth, Kendrick Lamar, Sam Barsh, Columbus Smith, Frederik Halldin, and Itzik Bensoli. Institutionalized. Kendrick Lamar. Itzik Bensoli, 2015. MP3.*

⁵ 'Lemonade Beyoncé 'love Letter Black Women'' - Google Search. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Nov. 2016.

⁶ Chambers, Clare, and Michael Freedon. "Oxford Handbooks Online: Feminism." *Oxfordhandbooks.com*. Ed. Marc Stears. Oxford University Press, 13 Apr. 2015. Web. 24 Sept. 2016. p.1

Brief history of feminism:

Feminism is said to come in 'waves'. The wave-terminology when regarding to feminism was coined in the New York Times Magazine by Martha Lear in 1968.⁷ The emergence of female emancipation in the late 19th century and early 20th century regarded mainly women's legal inequalities to men, such as the right to vote (suffrage), this is referred to as the *first wave*. The *second wave*, as feminism in the years 1960's through 1980's is also described, broadened the discussion, which then additionally evolved to injustices around social inequalities, for example around the workplace, family, reproductive rights, etc. What is being called the *Third wave* of feminism is usually determined to start around 1990's.⁸ This branch of feminism differs from the other in several ways where feminism's 'second wave' endured a lot of criticism. It was claimed by many to be too one-sided; namely representing ideas applicable on mainly young, white, able-bodied upper-class women. The third wave made way for much more heterogeneous ideas on feminism, such as *intersectionality*.

The term intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, American civil rights advocate and leading scholar of critical race theory in 1989,⁹ but it took a while before it was included as part of the third-wave. Intersectionality is the idea that identities are made up of different interrelated aspects. Feminism is no longer a uniformity that only applies to one identity; race, sexuality, class, etc, are all facets that tie an identity together. This is studied so that injustices are to be understood and fought multidimensional level.

Comparative object analysis of *Ever is Over All* and *Hold Up* from *Lemonade*:

At first sight the similarities of *Ever is Over All* and the distinct scene *Lemonade* that joints with the song *Hold Up*, appear extremely clear. In the image placed on the title page of this text, both women can be seen smashing the passenger window of a car. Not only the act of smashing the window is similar. They are on the same side of the street, their stances match. The position of the cameras is the same: the camera positioned in front, while walking with/ahead of her. Still it doesn't stop there, even the method of filming is the same; both women are walking along the street in slow-motion, accompanied by music. They both seem to have a sense of glee while destroying their surroundings.

Dissimilarities are harder to find. Rist attacks vehicles with a giant flower as opposed to the baseball bat dubbed "Hot Sauce" Beyoncé uses. Another difference is that bystanders in Rist's video do not seem to care about the vandalism; a passing-by female police officer even greets Rist in friendly support. They seem to either not be aware of the act or choose to ignore it. Beyoncé's witnesses display a slightly more realistic reaction as they experience an exuberant kind of shock. Beyoncé herself has a wilder, angry kind of expression of exhilaration on her face whereas Rist is trying to keep it as light-hearted and giggly as possible.

⁷ Lear, Martha. "The Second Feminist Wave." *The New York Times Magazine*. 10 Mar. 1968: n. pag. Print.

⁸ Tong, Rosemarie. *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1998. Print. p. 284-285, 289.

⁹ Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *The University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140 (1989): 139-67. *PhilPapers.org*. PhilPapers, 01 Sept. 2013. Web. 16 Dec. 2016.

The soundtrack to the scenes are also inherently different. *Ever is Over All* features a slow, dazed humming of a woman's voice. *Lemonade* features an R&B song. Since Beyoncé's foremost occupation is considered to be musician and the album is available for purchasing a traditional CD with just the twelve songs, even if the film is considered inseparable in its significance, it is logical to deduct that *Lemonade* is indented for the music industry. *Ever is Over All* on the other hand, is intended as artwork. It therefore has a different target audience. Because of this difference in discipline, in *Ever is Over All's* case it might therefore be said that its soundtrack is in service of the video, whereas with *Lemonade* the soundtrack has at least the same, if not more weight than the film. Beyoncé choosing to repeat the same action or appropriating this work of Pipilotti Rist 19 years later is an intriguing one. However much the two scenes have in common, they both tell a completely different story. What has happened in feminist discourse in that 19 years and what is the message Beyoncé transmits by repeating this action? What do these women have to say with their actions? How do they relate or do they even relate?

Feminist discourse analysis of the work *Ever is Over All* by Pipilotti Rist:

Pipilotti Rist's work *Ever is Over All* features herself as protagonist. She is seen walking down the street, dressed in a flowy blue dress, holding a flower made of iron. With this flower she smashes windows of the cars parked along the pavement. In the version of the work purchased by MoMa, the projection dissolves into another projection on its right-hand side. It combines the images of the street with one of a field of flowers, similar to the one Rist holds in her hands.¹⁰ The video of Rist in streets seems to circulate on its own as well, without the video of the field of flowers. Whether this might be a later or earlier version of the work is not sure.¹¹

Pipilotti Rist began making video art in the 1980's, when post-punk era was at its prime. In *Ever is Over All*, Rist is breaking down or mocking this notion of hyper-femininity, sweet girls in pretty dresses holding flowers, and clashing it with violence.¹² Rist's weapon, the flower, an icon of femininity is transformed to a source of violence; a tool of power. Rist infuses femininity with the male, changing the meaning of the flower causing the female-male binary to break down.¹³

*'What's worse, lookin' jealous or crazy, jealous or crazy?
Or like being walked all over lately, walked all over lately I'd rather be crazy.
Hold up, they don't love you like I love you.
Can't you see there's no other man above you?
What a wicked way to treat the girl that loves you.'*
- Beyoncé, *Hold Up*¹⁴

¹⁰ "Pipilotti Rist. *Ever Is Over All*. 1997 " *The Museum of Modern Art - MoMa.org*. N.p., n.d. Web. 16 Dec. 2016.

¹¹ Kane, C. L. "The Synthetic Color Sense of Pipilotti Rist, Or, Deleuzian Color Theory for Electronic Media Art." *Visual Communication* 10.4 (2011): p. 476. Web. 25 Sept. 2016. p.476

¹² Kane, C. L. "The Synthetic Color Sense of Pipilotti Rist, Or, Deleuzian Color Theory for Electronic Media Art." *Visual Communication* 10.4 (2011): p. 477. Web. 25 Sept. 2016. p.477

¹³ Mangini, Elizabeth. "Pipilotti's Pickle: Making Meaning from the Feminine Position." *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 23.2 (2001): p.3. Web. 16 Oct. 2016. p.4

¹⁴ Beyoncé. By Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, Thomas Wesley Pentz, Ezra Koenig, Emile Haynie, Joshua Tillman, Uzoachi Emenike, Sean "Melo-X" Rhoden, Doc Pomus, Mort Shuman, DeAndre Way, Antonio Randolph, Kelvin McConnell,

Feminist discourse analysis of the work *Lemonade* by Beyoncé:

Lemonade is Beyoncé's sixth studio album and has been released with an accompanying 'visual album', a 65-minute film. It consists of twelve songs and the film provides a poetic narrative as transitions in between songs written by British-Somalian poet Warsan Shire. As mentioned before, the particular scene this research focusses on, accompanies the song *Hold Up*. Studying *Hold Up* and its scene as an autonomy is problematic considering it is one chapter of a story, and its meaning can therefore not be researched separately from the entire body of work that is *Lemonade*.

The album is inspired by Beyoncé's parents, grandmother Agn ez Der on and Jay Z's grandmother Bettie White. The title is derived from a speech given at White's 80th birthday: '*I had my ups and downs, but I always find the inner strength to pull myself up. I was served lemons, but I made lemonade*', which can be heard after the track 'Freedom'. As is known and is easily picked up from the lyrics, the album was written after Beyonc  became aware of her husband Jay Z's extramarital affairs.¹⁵ The songs are a manifestation of emotions set forth by this event and can be perceived as an adaptation to the 'five stages of grief'. *Hold Up* is preceded by the first song on the album *Pray You Catch Me*, where Beyonc  is not yet aware of the infidelity but has her suspicions. Between songs the word *Denial* visualises on screen, followed by Beyonc 's whisper: '*Are you cheating on me?*'. *Hold Up* commences, and ends with the visualizing word *Anger*, *Hold Up* can therefore be seen as in between denial and anger, the coming to terms, bargaining.

Still, *Lemonade* carries a much more complex message than merely the grief of her husband's infidelity. The violence depicted by both *Lemonade* and *Ever is Over All* indicates anger as well as liberation. Rist's forced light-heartedness reduces weight of the crime, while Beyonc 's mixes facial expressions of anger and happiness suggest a *don't-mess-with-me* attitude. Both *Lemonade* and *Ever is Over All* indicate a feeling of suffocation in whatever is expected of them, but only partly for the same reason. In context of the album in its entirety Beyonc  is not only struggling with female stereotypes, unlike Rist who is. Beyonc  is combatting expectations of being a woman, but also of being a wife, a mother, a person of colour and a businesswoman in a demanding career.

Ever since Destiny's Child, Beyonc  maintained a steady image of a toned-down, 'girl-power' type of feminism.¹⁶ Beyonc  identifies herself with feminism ever since the release of her self-titled album from 2013. In light of the release of this album she produced a series of videos called '*Self-Titled*' where she expresses the responsibility she feels and joy in change people's lives and her wish to use visual-album *Beyonc * to spread a positive message.¹⁷ On this record, and in her live-show during The Mrs Carter Show World Tour she employs the voice of writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie who can be heard saying: '*Feminist: the person who believes in the social political, and economic equality of the sexes.*'¹⁸

Brian Chase, Karen Orzolek, and Nick Zinner. *Hold Up Lemonade*. Beyonc . Beyonc  (also Exec.) Diplo, Ezra Koenig, 2016. CD. Parkwood Entertainment, Columbia Records

¹⁵ Perrott, Lisa, Holly Rogers, and Carol Vernallis. "Beyonc 's *Lemonade*: She Dreams in Both Worlds." Filmint.nu. Film International, 2 June 2016. Web. 1 Dec. 2016.

¹⁶ Weidhase, Nathalie. "'Beyonc  Feminism' and the Contestation of the Black Feminist Body." *Celebrity Studies*. 1st ed. Vol. 6. Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2015. 128-31. Print. p.1

¹⁷ Beyonc . "'Self-Titled": Part 5. Honesty." *YouTube*. YouTube, 03 Jan. 2014. Web. 17 Oct. 2016. 00:00:28

¹⁸ Beyonc , Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Chauncey Hollis, Rey Reel, and Rashad Muhammad. By Beyonc  Knowles-Carter and Nash. *Flawless*. Beyonc . Beyonc  (also Exec.), Boots, Hit-Boy, HazeBanga, Rey Reel, 2013. MP3. Parkwood Entertainment, Columbia Records

Among the many devoted to her, there are also many critics to Beyoncé's feminism. A prominent example is Annie Lennox calling Beyoncé's 'feminism lite'.¹⁹ In this interview Lennox uses the phrase 'sex always sells', implying that Beyoncé is objectifying her body for profit.

However, Annie Lennox plays right into the dangers often attributed as 'white-feminism' that Beyoncé laid out the year before with Adichie: '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'.²⁰ Lennox is the perfect example of women coercing each other into what a woman or (in Lennox's case) a feminist should behave like, but Beyoncé argues she refuses for anyone to put her in any kind of box.²¹ In the song *Partition* can be heard: 'Men think that feminists hate sex, but it's a very stimulating and natural activity that women love'.²² If Beyoncé finds empowerment through sexuality, her proprietary sexuality does not imply objectification. Beyoncé challenges the fact that being a feminist, being a mom, being a businesswoman means one can't be sexual.²³ Herewith, Beyoncé moves any objectification of the body to the perceiver of objectification, and places responsibility and agency of female objectification with 'passive' spectators, like Lennox.

There are sexual things that I do that aren't for a man
- Nicki Minaj²⁴

Yet, *Lemonade* shows us an additional story. Exactly the reason why it is problematic that white, older 'authoritative' feminist icons legitimize Beyoncé's feminism is why *Lemonade* extends beyond the realm of *Ever is Over All's* feminism. Only black people are featured in *Lemonade*, the majority of which are women. What we see in *Lemonade* is Beyoncé with cornrows, and naturally curly hair. A scene depicts Beyoncé and other black women dressed in clothing referring to colonial time sitting on the porch of an old New Orleans-style house. Lyrics, hair, make up, clothing, location, set dressing, it all refers to black culture.²⁵ In addition, institutional racism is condemned by showing scenes of mothers of police brutality victims, holding a portrait of their child. One of these women is the mother of Trayvon Martin, the 17-year old unarmed African-American that was shot and whose murderer was acquitted from any charges. *Lemonade* presents black celebrities, including tennis-icon Serena Williams to showcase the diversity and excellence of black female lives.

¹⁹ Annie Lennox. Azzopardi, C., 2014. Q&A: *Annie Lennox on her legacy, why Beyoncé is 'feminist lite'*. Pride Source. Available from: <http://www.pridesource.com/article.html?article=68228> [Accessed 11 Nov 2014].

²⁰ Beyoncé, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Chauncey Hollis, Rey Reel, and Rashad Muhammad. By Beyoncé Knowles-Carter and Nash. *Flawless*. Beyoncé. Beyoncé (also Exec.), Boots, Hit-Boy, HazeBanga, Rey Reel, 2013. MP3. Parkwood Entertainment, Columbia Records

²¹ Beyoncé. "SVA Directors Screening + Instagram Q&A." *YouTube*. 13 Jan. 2014. Web. 14 Dec. 2016. 00:01:26

²² Beyoncé, and Harmon. By Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, Terius Nash, Justin Timberlake, Dwane Weir, Mike Dean, and Mosly. *Partition*. Beyoncé. Beyoncé, Timbaland, J-Roc, Justin Timberlake, Mike Dean, Boots, 2013. MP3.

²³ Beyoncé. ""Self-Titled" Part 4. Liberation." *YouTube*. YouTube, 30 Dec. 2013. Web. 17 Oct. 2016.

²⁴ Frank, Alex. "Newly Single Nicki Minaj on Feminism, Meek Mill, and Rapping at 50." *Vogue*. N.p., 12 Feb. 2015. Web. 3 Nov. 2016.

²⁵ Beyoncé. "BTS: The Formation World Tour (Neal Farinah)." *YouTube*. 24 Oct. 2016. Web. 17 Dec. 2016. 00:00:11
Beyoncé. "BTS: The Formation World Tour (Sir John)." *YouTube*. 04 Oct. 2016. Web. 17 Dec. 2016. 00:00:31
Beyoncé. "BTS: The Formation World Tour (Fashion)." *YouTube*. 18 July 2016. Web. 17 Dec. 2016. 00:00:23

*'The most disrespected person in America is the black woman.
The most unprotected person in America is the black woman.
The most neglected person in America is the black woman.'*
- Malcolm X²⁶

Is Beyoncé the best flagship for black feminism?

If a black person wants to make sellable pop music in the US one is strongly encouraged to appeal to both a black and white audience.²⁷ White people like otherness,²⁸ they don't want to be a part of it but are fascinated with black culture, and Beyoncé music has been carefully commodified for white western culture.

Beyoncé was often accused of restraining her blackness. To subdue the residual stereotype that dates back to slavery, where the black female body was something with outrageous, unrestrainable sexuality,²⁹ forced Beyoncé to split her personality into an alter ego Sasha Fierce, that would do the sexier, racier moves.³⁰ In a Q&A from 2014 she announced she has now merged her personalities back together.³¹

There were periods where Beyoncé sparked much heated debates on accounts of 'whitewashing'³², for example, with her 2011 Grammy appearance.³³ After photoshoots her pictures were edited to look more 'white' (see figure 1). She avoided the topic of racism, to refrain herself from being a topic of discussion, comfortable and safe person.³⁴

*'I'm universal-[...] no one's paying attention to what race I am.
I've kind of proven myself. I'm past that.'*
- Beyoncé, 2009³⁵

²⁶ Malcolm X. "Malcolm X Speech in Los Angeles (May 5, 1962)." *YouTube*. N.p., 04 Dec. 2012. Web. 4 Dec. 2016. 00:24:35

²⁷ Cashmore, Ellis. "Buying Beyoncé." *Celebrity Studies* 1.2 (2010): 135-50. Web. 26 Oct. 2016. p.137

²⁸ Arzumanova, Inna. "The Culture Industry and Beyoncé's Proprietary Blackness." *Celebrity Studies* 7.3 (2016): 421-24. Web. 24 Sept. 2016. p.21

²⁹ Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism*. New York: Routledge, 2004. Print. p.56

³⁰ Durham, Aisha. "'Check On It'" *Feminist Media Studies* 12.1 (2012): 35-49. Web. 26 Oct. 2016. p.45

³¹ Beyoncé. "SVA Directors Screening + Instagram Q&A." *YouTube*. 13 Jan. 2014. Web. 14 Dec. 2016. 00:07:01

³² Unofficial term for minorities that adapt themselves to appear more white. Also used to describe institutional racism of white westerners appropriating minorities' accomplishments, for example ignoring historical milestones, or the film industry, where white actors play minority roles.

³³ "[...] it came as a surprise when Beyoncé appeared [...] looking almost as pale as Gwyneth Paltrow." Cashmore, Ellis. *Beyond Black: Celebrity and Race in Obama's America*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012. 85-96, 125-35, 136-46. Print.

³⁴ Cashmore, Ellis. "Buying Beyoncé." *Celebrity Studies* 1.2 (2010): 135-50. Web. 26 Oct. 2016. p.136

³⁵ Meter, Jonathan Van, and Mario Testino. "Beyoncé: Fierce Creature." *Vogue*. N.p., 01 Apr. 2009. Web. 17 Dec. 2016.

Ellis Cashmore recognizes the attitude as problematic: 'Like [Bill] Cosby and, in a more tacit way, other black celebrities of the early 1990s, [Shelby] Steele encouraged ethnic minority people to concentrate on their own development as individuals, rather than sink their energies into the collective effort to destroy a beast that had long since been tamed. Clearly Beyoncé was part of a generation which heeded the advice.³⁶ Beyoncé was regarded as a celebrity elite, not as from the black community'.³⁷ Her attitude constitutes the problem of racism by pretending to be part of the new world that had overcome it.

'Racism is easier to ignore or forget when one is presented
with tempting tableaux of distracting commodities.'

- Ellis Cashmore³⁸

Beyoncé was the face of many products and companies, built her own empire containing merchandise, a fragrance, clothing line, an entertainment company and many more. Beyoncé's lucrative acting career took off by playing roles that are, as Aisha Durham calls, a *blaxplotation caricature*³⁹, such as Foxy Cleopatra in *Austin Powers in Goldmember* (2002).

Still, despite all the exposure, Beyoncé remained a phenomenon, very closed-off and careful with her private life. She has been very carefully branded, strategically marketed and presented. This however, does not mean that *Lemonade*, which is perceived to be Beyoncé's personal political statements, is not just a new career move; Beyoncé is a brand and has been accused of turning feminism into a commodified spectacle.⁴⁰ Nonetheless, on whether the intentions behind it were profit-oriented or a personal socio-political necessity or both, Beyoncé has been steadily rebranding herself. She says in an interview she has worked so hard on her career for the last 15 years, that she has earned the right to express herself.⁴¹ This starts with visual-album *Beyoncé*, (precedent of *Lemonade*) where she slowly starts to show more sides of herself. With the album one gets to see her artistic vision and the interviews she talks about her family life, inspirations, principles. With *Lemonade* solidarity she seems to share with sister Solange on what is called the natural hair movement; where bleaching and straightening is halted and colours and textures of natural black hair is embraced.

Lemonade is a manifestation of black culture for the black community; specifically, black females. Career-wise it is a bold move to play favourite on black fans and benching the white audience but this is not about Beyoncé's white fans; *Lemonade* is made for black women.⁴² It demands a safe space for black culture, she creates a protecting and nurturing environment for the southern-states black woman which extends the invitation to other black females living in oppressive western environments.

³⁶ Cashmore, Ellis. "Buying Beyoncé." *Celebrity Studies* 1.2 (2010): 135-50. Web. 26 Oct. 2016. p.137

³⁷ Cashmore, Ellis. "Buying Beyoncé." *Celebrity Studies* 1.2 (2010): 135-50. Web. 26 Oct. 2016. p.136

³⁸ Cashmore, Ellis. "Buying Beyoncé." *Celebrity Studies* 1.2 (2010): 135-50. Web. 26 Oct. 2016. p.148

³⁹ Durham, Aisha. "'Check On It'" *Feminist Media Studies* 12.1 (2012): 35-49. Web. 26 Oct. 2016. p.36

⁴⁰ Arzumanova, Inna. "The Culture Industry and Beyoncé's Proprietary Blackness." *Celebrity Studies* 7.3 (2016): 421-24. Web. 24 Sept. 2016. p.422

⁴¹ Beyoncé. "'Self-Titled': Part 5. Honesty." *YouTube*. 03 Jan. 2014. Web. 17 Oct. 2016. 00:00:47

⁴² Arzumanova, Inna. "The Culture Industry and Beyoncé's Proprietary Blackness." *Celebrity Studies* 7.3 (2016): 421-24. Web. 24 Sept. 2016. p.421

However noble her intentions, much can be said about her choosing to appropriate a feminist act of a white woman (*Ever is Over All*) as opposed to black feminists she could've taken as inspiration. Is depending on a white woman for a black feminist statement the best way to promote black feminism? In addition, the fact that *Lemonade* portrays several black female artists but uses only guest vocals of males seems peculiar. Could one call it a black feminist statement to not immediately exclude all white staff and male guest vocals but to use them, permitting them work in the honour of a black woman's empire? Or rather, is Beyoncé merely branding herself with a façade of black feminism in a time where hyper-individualism is a profitable investment? At the very least, the moment Beyoncé appropriated *Ever is Over All*, a feminist statement by a white woman, the thought '*Lemonade is only for black women*' became questionable. The statement of the resilience of black culture weakens when one is making concessions to use semiotics of white culture. At the very least it means that by using iconic gestures, white people will recognise as a clear sign of protest and know to back-off. Beyoncé is commodifying black feminism for a black female mainstream audience that have been living in a white culture that they are exposed to, and deal with on a daily basis. All black women may not recognise themselves in an all-immersive black culture as such, when they have been taught they needed to be whiter in order to be beautiful. *Lemonade* can therefore be regarded as speaking to both black and white culture; it is a loving, nurturing statement to black women and defensive to white culture; *Lemonade's* appropriation of *Ever is Over All* is Beyoncé saying '*it's our time now*'. White women have made black women wait to be passed the feminist baton and Beyoncé took it.

Conclusion:

Ever is Over All is a perfect representation of 'second-wave' feminism, which has been criticized for only serving young, white able-bodied women. On account of the audience consisting mostly of middle-, upper-class, white people, there is less chance of friction by the lack of intersectionality. This is why Beyoncé's narrative is so relevant.

*All the women are white, all the blacks are men,
but some of us are brave*
- Gloria Hull ⁴³

Whereas *Lemonade* is a perfect representation of 'intersectionality' which is sensitive to a more diverse group of women. The knee-jerk critique to intersectionality is that it is counter-productive and it divides instead of unifies, usually affirmation of white supremacy. What is basically being said is 'shut up and act like me', and is diminishing people that are of different culture, history and therefore different problems than the standard straight white patriarchy. Instead of stepping over people recognising that there are differences which works truly unifying. Excluding Beyoncé's feminism by separating it from 'mainstream celebrity feminism' (which is white-oriented) and placing it into another construct like 'hip-hop feminism' or Lennox's '*feminism lite*' creates a marginalisation of black women.

⁴³ Hull, Gloria T., Patricia Bell-Scott, and Barbara Smith. *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies*. Old Westbury, NY: Feminist, 1982. Print.

Beyoncé appropriating Pipilotti Rist's work is a message that black women are starting to demand to cast off the Eurocentric straightjacket that needs them to be whiter in order to be beautiful or lovable. At the same time, Beyoncé challenges the sexual objectification of the black women's body by combining her sexuality on screen with immense depth of character by combining strength as well as vulnerability in her songs.⁴⁴

To write Beyoncé off on her 'commodified black feminism' is, as Arzumanova puts it, '*to ask[...] us to first disregard the power of pop and to then assume that protest music and a politics of radical liberation cannot live side by side, cannot dialogue*'. In the Formation World Tour alone Beyoncé serves bite-size chunks of black feminism to an average of 70.000 people per concert, three times a week that, according to Arzumanova, rearticulates and strengthens black futures.⁴⁵ Beyoncé effectively moves feminism beyond academia with practice-based feminism⁴⁶ with unapologetic blackness.

*[...] I like my baby hair with baby hair afros
I like my negro nose with Jackson Five nostrils
[...]
I dream it, I work hard, I grind 'til I own it
I twirl on them haters, albino alligators [...]'
- Beyoncé, Formation⁴⁷*

⁴⁴ Perrott, Lisa, Holly Rogers, and Carol Vernallis. "Beyoncé's Lemonade: She Dreams in Both Worlds." Filmint.nu. Film International, 2 June 2016. Web. 1 Dec. 2016.

⁴⁵ Arzumanova, Inna. "The Culture Industry and Beyoncé's Proprietary Blackness." *Celebrity Studies* 7.3 (2016): 421-24. Web. 24 Sept. 2016. p.422

⁴⁶ Weidhase, Nathalie. "'Beyoncé Feminism' and the Contestation of the Black Feminist Body." *Celebrity Studies*. 1st ed. Vol. 6. Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2015. 128-31. Print. P. 130

⁴⁷ Knowles-Carter, Beyoncé. By Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, Michael L. Williams II, Khalif Brown, and Asheton Hogan. *Formation*. Beyoncé. Beyoncé Knowles-Carter, Mike Will Made It, Pluss, n.d. MP3.

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(figure 1)