

# Why are women (not) angry: Misunderstanding my own feminism

by STEPHANIE VAN BATUM

*For a long time I misunderstood feminism. I denounced the label 'feminist' because of my presumptions about what it meant. Whenever I heard 'feminist' I imagined a humorless woman who was very angry, mostly at men, who perhaps had a strong presence of armpit air and was burning bras – a stereotype for many that is hard to get rid of. Personally, I felt excluded from the 'feminist club' as I saw myself as someone who got along well with men who enjoyed rap music and liked wearing makeup and high heels. It felt like other feminists would judge me for it. As if I was 'doing feminism wrong'. It took me a lot of time, conversations, research and eventually making a performance to start changing my opinions and to (re) define feminism for myself.*

*In 2016, I started to create a lecture performance called "Don't Worry Be Yoncé".*

*Inspired by the Singer and pop-icon Beyoncé Knowles who is described as a diva, queen, sex bomb, mother, business woman, wife, feminist – #FLAWLESS. I said to my colleagues as a joke: "If she is and has it all we should just become Beyoncé!" In an ironic way the concept was to make a step-by-step tutorial on how everyone could become Beyoncé.*

*During research, I discovered a lot I did not know about feminism. When I first decided*

*to make a feminist piece I expected it to be somewhat negative: on how hard being a woman is and how we can never live up to expectations with role models like Beyoncé. However, the opposite happened! The piece became a positive message about embracing and celebrating womanhood. I learned standing up for myself and that supporting other women is important. I understood one can be sexy and feminist at the same time and the way we look or dress does not devalue your political views. Feminism should be inclusive and not polarize by saying who is doing feminism right or wrong.*

*"We should all be feminists" wrote Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's. Feminism [is]: the social, political and economic equality of the sexes." With this definition I started to see myself and feminism very differently. Even though men and women are equal by law, we still have a long way to go in our fighting for womxn's rights.*

*\*womxn is a term used in intersectional feminism to be inclusive of trans and nonbinary women.*



Die deutsche Übersetzung finden Sie auf [theaterchur.ch/aktuell/misunderstanding-feminism](http://theaterchur.ch/aktuell/misunderstanding-feminism)

STEPHANIE VAN BATUM, geb. 1988 in Leeuwarden (NL), studierte Theaterwissenschaften an der Universität Amsterdam sowie Regie an der Otto-Falckenberg-Schule in München. Bereits während ihres Studiums erarbeitete sie verschiedene Inszenierungen und Performances. So auch die Lecture-Performance «Dont' Worry Be Yoncé» (2017), die sie gemeinsam mit der Schauspielerin Stacyan Jackson, geb. 1989 in Rotterdam (NL), entwickelt hat.

Don't Worry Be Yoncé:  
24. März