

# **Feminism in Latin Cultures**

**by Valeria Aguilar, Brittany Bouchard, Shoshana  
Gomez, and Frank Jimenez**

## Feminism in Latin Cultures

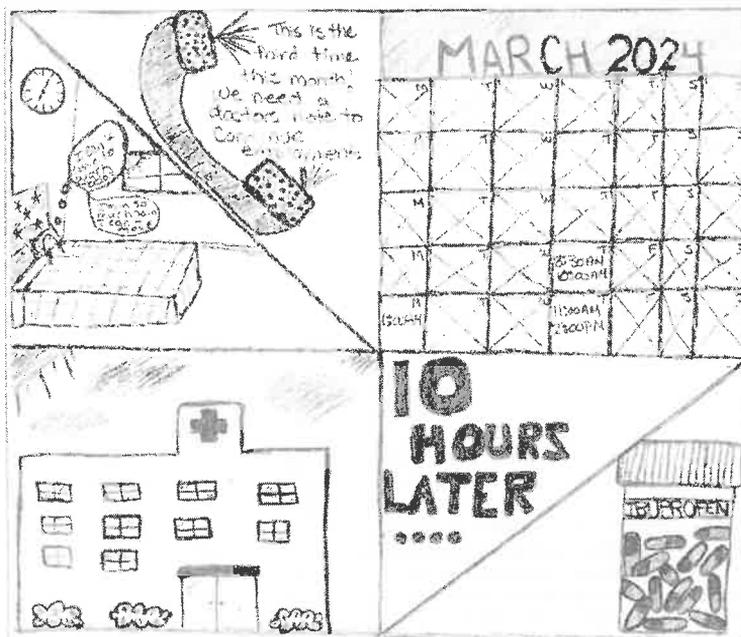


This image explains how catholics believe that birth control is only for sexually active people rather than seeing that birth control can be for many other reasons than just sex. Growing up my education from k-12 has always been through the catholic perspective and what was

deemed as appropriate for catholics. Birth control from the catholic perspective has always been seen as a sin because catholics believe sex before marriage is wrong and couples who are married shouldnt be using types of birth control. Being stuck in the cycle of being told what was wrong and right through the catholics perspective has made me naive. From my own personal experience of birth control I was able to be one of the people who were on birth control because of another reason other than sex. Birth control was an option for me because it helped my skin and it helped me be more confident with my skin. There are probably more women out there who have had the same experience as me. This topic stood out to me because of my own personal experience and how I believe we as people should be able to have a say to our bodies without judgment or feeling it is a sin. Even though there was a lot of judgment from my peers at the time because society has only really seen birth control for sexually active people my peers were able to see and understand why I made the decision I did.

-Shoshana Gomez

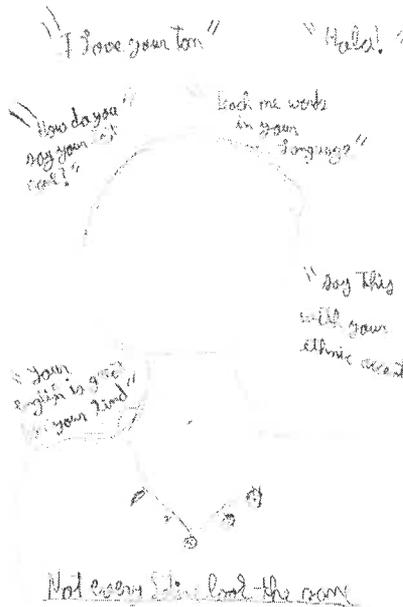
# Social Determinants of Health



The social determinants of health include economic stability, social and community context, neighborhood and environment, healthcare and education. These factors intersect with one another in how a person will be treated and the quality of care they will receive. Gender, discrimination, racism, historical trauma, and women with disabilities are all important determinants that are often ignored.

- Brittany Bouchard

# Microaggressions against the Latine community



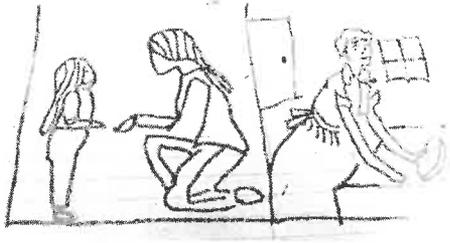
This page of the Zine represents an underrepresented act of racism that many people of colour and members of the Latine culture/heritage experience all the time. Oxford Languages define microaggression as "a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalised group such as a racial or ethnic minority," and as a popular example of this is asking people how to pronounce their last name in their "ethnic accent" or asking someone to translate a word in their language just because they are the only person who speaks that language in the vicinity. The idea of this is not to shame anyone who does these things but as a learning experience as people of colour who experience these things can be harmful or demeaning to their identity.

-Frank Jimenez

## Societal Role of Latin and Indigenous women

The image on the left is representing indigenous women and how they are seen in society because of their gender. Indigenous perspectives on women can vary from many different things. A lot of indigenous societies have a great deal of respect for women because unlike the latin american culture it is acknowledged that they are caregivers, leaders, and keepers of tradition and culture. Indigenous women are not only recognized for being great mothers or housewives but all the other things they can contribute to. That is the difference of the two perspectives of women from each culture

The image on the right is supposed to be a representation of how women are viewed in latin culture. The latin perspective of women is to be either a mother or housewife it is very uncommon to see otherwise. This stereotype of women in this culture has become a social norm for women in this culture. It is what is expected of women. Growing up in a latin environment I

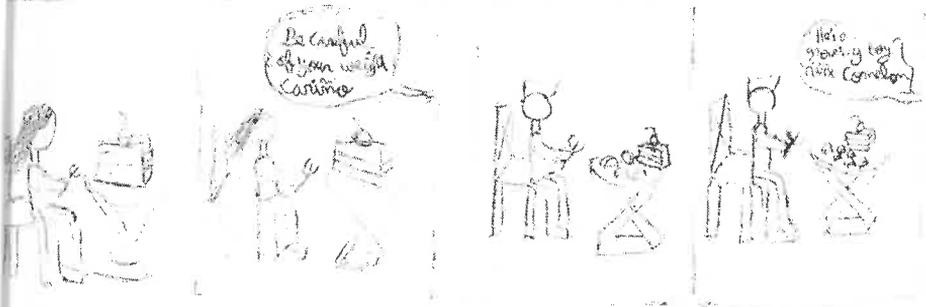


was able to watch this gender stereotype play out. Because I was born a woman I was expected to follow the same norms. But I am the complete opposite of this gender expectation. I don't like cooking. I do like cleaning but that doesn't mean that is my job in life. My family was able to adapt to the fact that I was different from this stereotype which most women in this culture don't have. This is much

different for how indigenous women are seen in their culture which is why I wanted to share perspectives from both of my cultures.

- Shoshana Gomez

## Gender Roles placed on Children



My group's zine is centred around Latine Culture and its relation with feminism. In my cartoon drawing it depicts a boy and a girl both eating large amounts of food. As much as eating a meal and food in general is a crucial part of my culture, it's important to look at the connection of the enforcement of gender norms. Boys are allowed to eat more and the popular phrase "boys will be boys" comes into play. The idea of a "growing boy" is okay to eat plenty of food and no one makes a comment. But on the other side of the spectrum girls/women who eat a lot are commented on their body weight and for her to make sure to "watch what she's eating". Women everywhere tend to get critiqued on their body size and are forced to keep up with European beauty expectations, which are a thin body and small waist. The biggest unrealistic expectation is that when boys are growing and they eat a lot, they assume it's going to go straight into muscle but when girls are eating, societal views assume it's going to go straight into fat. The point of this is to try to dismantle internalised ideas that would hurt people's body image and to support body positivity as all bodies are different and to lump them all together to a certain ideal to men and women is unfair and all it does is hurt people.

- Frank Jimenez

## Femicides in Latin America



Picture from Atlantic Council, 2020.

(Picture that inspired my poem and artwork).

Femicide is the intentional killing of women due to the hatred a lot of men have for women. It is incredibly common in Latin America due to its rampant misogyny and gender violence issues. In a lot of these countries, such as Mexico (where I'm from), as many as 1 in 100,00 women are victims of this phenomenon.

I was incredibly moved by a particular photograph taken at a protest in February of 2020 in Mexico, and it inspired this poem and artwork. The photo was of a group of women, standing in unison, their hands stained in red paint and raised up high. My piece attempts to convey the power and hope I felt looking at that picture.

-Valeria Aguilar

My tears are of hope  
They swell in my eyes  
For women who fight  
For the women who've  
died  
United with hurt  
United with rage  
United with hope  
A war we will wage

My tears are of rage  
A fire in my gut  
A woman who's hated  
A woman who's cut  
Her blood red like roses  
Her body goes limp  
Another voice silenced  
Another one pimped

My tears are of hurt  
A lump in my throat  
A pit in my stomach  
Her body, it floats  
She's tossed in the river  
She's beaten and raped  
This violence and hatred  
It can't be escaped

## Forced Sterilization of Indigenous Women



Coercive sterilization of indigenous women in Canada took place in the early 1900's. Eugenicists believed that they "could improve" race through planned breeding by eliminating what they thought were undesirable persons with social ills (NHGRI 1). Eugenics was a popular theory in the rise of industrialization and countries becoming capitalist nations. Undesirable traits included poverty, both physical and mental illnesses, social problems, and being indigenous. Indigenous women were often described as savages, depraved, or of loose moral character and their sexuality was highly policed. The women that were seen as a sexual threat or didn't abide were sterilized.

- Brittany Bouchard

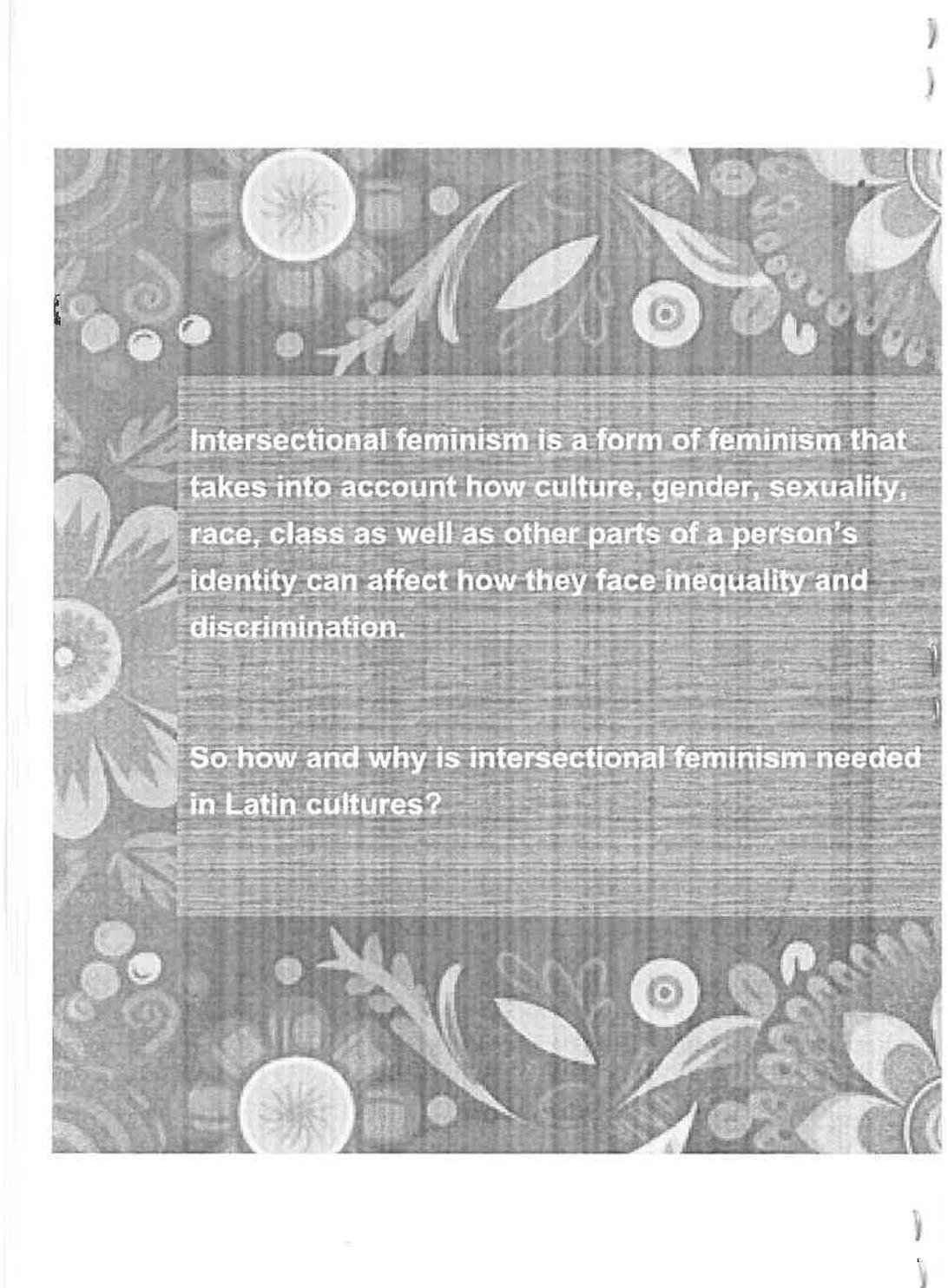
## The Male Gaze in Latin Culture



In my town in Mexico, I grew up watching girls my age get shamed for dressing in revealing clothing, all the while we were obligated to wear a short skirt and tucked in shirt in school. This made it abundantly clear to me that the problem wasn't what we wore, but where and when we wore it. Tight fitting and revealing clothing was more than acceptable in an environment where we were forced to wear it. The moment it became our choice, it became unacceptable. I later learned that this was due to the male gaze.

Mexico, as well as many Latin American countries have this culture of over sexualizing young girls, all the while shaming them for having sex, dressing in revealing clothing, or being teen moms. This culture wrongfully teaches us from a young age that we don't have a say in how we dress or present ourselves, and that if we dare go against the "norm" and get hurt, it's our fault.

-Valeria Aguilar



**Intersectional feminism is a form of feminism that takes into account how culture, gender, sexuality, race, class as well as other parts of a person's identity can affect how they face inequality and discrimination.**

**So how and why is intersectional feminism needed in Latin cultures?**