MEDIATED IDENTITY PROBLEM:

DISCURSIVE UNITY AND IDENTITY

FRAGMENTATION IN ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

SOURCES OF FEMINIST POLITICS

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Abstract

This thesis explores the way in which political identities can be mediated through alternative media forms. Drawing on the body of literature that exists on alternative media, in addition to theories of discourse and narrative, this thesis develops a framework through which to analyse political identities in alternative media sources. Central to this is Barthes' (2012) theory of myth and Haraway's (1991) theory of situated knowledges. 10 alternative media sources of feminist politics - five international, and five from Aotearoa-New Zealand – were chosen in order to conduct this analysis. By using theories of discourse and narrative, in relation to Barthes' (2012) theory of myth and Haraway's (1991) theory of situated knowledges, an analysis of how the alternative media sources of feminist politics situate their identity in relation to mythic modes of knowledge was performed. In theory, the alternative media sources of feminist politics should challenge Barthesian (2012) myths of gender as they attempt to develop a feminist identity.

This thesis argues that the political identity developed across the alternative media sources of feminist politics is fragmented and without a discursive unity or a fixed identity. The 10 sources analysed here all practiced discourse and narrative in differing ways in relation to how they situated knowledge and challenged Barthesian (2012) myths. The purpose of this argument is not to say that feminist politics is without purpose or meaning, far from it, rather that at present there are multiple discourses of feminist politics creating contestation around a feminist identity.

This research provides a framework through which to explore the identity building function of alternative media. This framework could be extended to explore the identities of different political movements as mediated through alternative media, or the

identities of alternative media developed around popular culture. Through this, a framework that can better understand the nature of these groups can be developed. The current project, however, focuses on the competing articulations of feminist discourse in order to critically assess the instability of meaning regarding the constitution of feminist identity and political practice

Introduction

Alternative media can function as a space that mediates ideas that may not otherwise be mediated. It is through alternative media that various political organisations or social movements could develop a political platform that can facilitate identification with the politics of the organisation or movement developing the source text. However, how and to what extent alternative media functions to facilitate identity is unknown. There is little in the way of research that explores the relationship between political identities and alternative media. Literature on alternative media (Atton 2002; Harcup 2003; Rauch 2007; Carpentier 2009; Fuchs 2010; Sandoval & Fuchs 2010), counterpublics (Bailey & Iveson 2000; Downey & Fenton 2003; Milioni 2009; Eckert & Chadha 2013; Leung & Lee 2014), and the nature of identities (Polletta 1998; Van Leeuwen & Wodak 1999; Miller 2000; Stapleton 2001; Tusting 2005; Juris 2008) largely fail to intersect. Henry Jenkins (1992) presents research on popular culture fandoms and the media consumption and identity creation that surrounds them, but substantive research exploring *political identities and alternative media* has not yet been undertaken. This research will fill a gap that is currently present in the literature surrounding political movements and the way that they mediate identities.

Research exploring the political identity function of alternative media is important in a contemporary 21st century setting. In Western economies, material conditions have given rise to circumstances where media production has become far more accessible. It is these circumstances that have given rise to over a billion websites existing on the internet (Internetlivestats.com 2016). Furthermore, the internet has given a means for political identities to be mediated internationally far more easily than in the past. This has provided the conditions that make it possible for

alternative media to be accessed globally. It is because of the increased internationalism of alternative media that this research is meaningful. Through an increased access to alternative media forms, political movements can now mediate their politics globally; one such example of a political movement that can use alternative media in such forms is feminism. What this thesis will do is explore the relationship between alternative media and political movements, and most importantly, the identity facilitation function of alternative media produced by political movements using alternative media sources identifying as feminist as case studies.

This thesis develops a framework for exploring the nature of identity within alternative media texts of a political nature. Concepts relating to knowledge are used to explain how political identity can be mediated through alternative media. The concepts used here that explain how a political identity might be mediated via alternative media are Roland Barthes' (2012) conceptualisation of myths and revolutionary language, theories of discourse and narrative, counterpublic space, and alternative media. Through this framework it is possible to explore the manner in which identity could be facilitated through alternative media texts.

The different frameworks of myth, discourse and narrative, counterpublic space, and alternative media can be employed in order to make sense of the way in which alternative media spaces could facilitate a political identity. In Roland Barthes' conceptualisation of myth, he views myth as a form of knowledge that "transform[s] history into nature" (Barthes 2012, p.240). He then posits that the alternative to mythic knowledge is "revolutionary language" (p.258) that endeavours to make history a site of social contestation. An example of myth that has been discussed in literature are rape myths (Burt 1980; Lonsway & Fitzgerald 1994; Chapleau & Oswald 2009; Hayes, Lorenz & Bell

2013; Vonderhaar & Carmody 2015). Rape myths are myths that explicitly relate to gender and serve to naturalise sexual attacks. A revolutionary language that challenges rape myths will attempt to decouple rape from a natural order. In theory, a feminist revolutionary language should attempt to discuss and produce knowledge around sexual assault that positions it as a social action, and thus, positioning the rape myths within a site of social contestation. Revolutionary language that challenges mythic knowledge claims should hypothetically be developed across alternative media texts that attempt to facilitate a political identity. Therefore, the narratives and discourses developed within the alternative media sources would be expected to practice a revolutionary language in order to challenge mythic modes of knowledge. In this context, discourse is used to represent reality, while narrative is used to make sense of it. An aspect of this analysis will also include exploring how the knowledge produced by the sources is situated; to do this, this thesis will draw from the work of Donna Haraway (1991) on 'situated knowledge'. Through the discourses and narratives developed by an alternative media source, a counterpublic identity could be developed that challenges the mythic modes of knowledge.

In order to examine the manner that alternative media sources facilitate a political identity, this thesis analyses alternative media sources identifying as feminist. Through analysing the alternative media sources of feminist politics, the manner that discourses and narratives produce revolutionary language that challenges mythic modes of knowledge can be assessed. Central to this analysis is the assessment of the extent to which a counterpublic identity is developed within and across the various alternative media sources of feminist politics. Furthermore, this allows for an analysis of whether a meta-narrative exists across the alternative media sources of feminist politics. Effectively, through an analysis of

these sources, the degree to which myths are challenged and language facilitating a political identity developed, was analysed. Ten alternative media sources that claim a feminist politics – five international sources and five sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand - were analysed in order to conduct this research. From the analysis of the 10 sources, this thesis will argue that the political identity developed across the alternative media sources of feminist politics is fragmented and without a discursive unity or a fixed identity. In developing this argument, this thesis will be divided into four chapters.

In the first chapter, *Myths, Discourse and Narrative: A Method for Analysing Identity in Alternative Media*, the theoretical framework for this analysis is outlined. In this chapter, the key concepts of myths, discourse, narrative, alternative media, and counterpublics are defined. Due to this thesis being concerned with identity facilitation in alternative media texts, the conceptualisation of a discursive identity will be outlined. Following this, the method this analysis used will be defined, in addition to the ten primary sources of analysis. This includes a justification of why, and the process of how, the sources were chosen. Of the ten sources selected, five were international sources while the other five were domestic sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand. This selection allowed for a comparison of the discourses and narratives across the international and the local. The method that will be outlined is a discursive and narrative analysis with a comparative component. This chapter also explains why these modes of analysis are appropriate, given the discursive nature of identity, which this thesis explores. Through looking at discourses developed by the various alternative media sources, the manner that the sources position a discursive identity can be observed.

In the second chapter, *Alternative Media Sources of International Feminism: Identity across Two Discourses*, the international

sources are analysed and discussed. This chapter consists of four parts. The first of these explores the manner in which the discourse produced by the various international sources could facilitate a personal feminist identity. In this part, the manner that the discourse developed within the various sources facilitates a personal identification with the sources themselves is discussed. This is done through exploring the narratives and discourses of the sources, and how they relate to everyday experience. Following this, the manner in which the international sources engage with myths relating to gender is explored. In this section, the way that the sources attempt to challenge mythic modes of knowledge is assessed. Essentially, an analysis of the modes of language that challenge myth is performed in relation to Barthes' (2012) concept of "revolutionary language" (p.258). The third part of this chapter discusses the different nuances in the identities developed by the discourses and narratives of the various alternative media sources for international feminism. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how the five international sources situate a feminist identity and whether or not there is a unified feminist identity developed across them.

In the third chapter of this thesis, *Alternative Media Sources of Feminism from Aotearoa-New Zealand: Identity across Multiple Discourses*, the five alternative media sources for feminism from Aotearoa-New Zealand are analysed. This chapter consists of five sections. The first of these explores how the discourses and narratives of the sources facilitate a personal feminist identification. Following this, a section exploring the way that specialised language is used to signify and facilitate certain modes of identity is developed. In this section, there is a focus on how the different modes of language deployed by the sources create certain barriers to accessing and formulating a sense of identity. The third section in this chapter explores the narratives and discourses used

across the domestic alternative media sources of feminist politics for Aotearoa-New Zealand. This section explores the manner that language is used to challenge mythic modes of knowing surrounding gender. The fourth section discusses the different nuances in feminist identity developed through the narratives and specialised language deployed by the sources under analysis. The concluding section discusses how the various nuances, discourses, and narratives across the five sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand create different kinds of discursive identities.

The final chapter of this thesis, *A Clash of Identities: Discursive Contestation over Feminist Politics,* discusses the outcomes of the analysis of the ten alternative media sources. This chapter consists of five sections. The first of these sections explores the narrative contestation that exists across the ten alternative media sources for feminist politics analysed here. This section discusses the manner in which there is a lack of discursive unity across the various sources, and that the term 'feminism' is in and of itself under contestation. The second section of this chapter compares the international and domestic sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand. Differences in the manner in which the international and domestic sources facilitate identity through the discourses and narratives produced are explored in this section. The third section of this chapter discusses how counterpublic identities are developed. The counterpublic identities of the individual sources are analysed in order to assess whether there is a feminist counterpublic developed across the ten sources analysed here. Following this, a section exploring the limitations and barriers to developing a political identity is discussed in relation to the various identities developed across the different sources. In this section, different conceptualisations of identity are analysed. In the final section, an alternative mode of feminist politics is outlined. This differing conceptualisation of feminist politics is

drawn from the observations made throughout this thesis and outlines a more discursively unified feminist political position.

Chapter One:

Myths, Discourse and Narrative: A Method for Analysing Identity in Alternative Media.

Myths

Myths are the ideas that define the way an individual understands the social world. As stated in the introduction, myths function to "transform history into nature" (Barthes 2012, p.240). Effectively, myth serves to maintain the hegemonic understandings of social reality by naturalising hegemonic norms. Myth then can be viewed as "the unitary construction of the thought" that defines the social reality for a particular society (Debord 1983, para.127). Myths maintain the order of a society through simplifying reality; they serve to reduce the complexity of experience in order to help individuals understand reality. In simplifying reality, myths constitute a reality that is easily understood, and therefore, easily reproduced in the actions of daily life. Myths accomplish this through a societal expression that makes sense of the taken for granted reality as it is presented to a human society (Levi-Strauss 2004). Myths therefore, define and maintain hegemonic societies and with it, societal injustices; it makes societal injustices part of a natural order. In the process of making societal injustices natural, myth will define attempts to address these societal injustices as unnatural. Myths therefore have the power to reproduce the dominant ideas and prejudices that exist within a society.

Due to myth defining and maintaining social relations as they exist within a society, myths can also define what is, and what is

not acceptable knowledge. Myths accomplish this by creating a means of understanding social reality that are constituted within "a shared interpretive frame which" prescribes what "'facts' individuals consider and those which should be ignored" (Brown 1994, p.873). This means that there will be a particular set of 'facts' that are understood as appropriate 'facts' that produce and reproduce certain modes of knowledge. In this, myths maintain the social reality that is defined by the appropriate knowledge created by the myths themselves.

It is through these 'facts', which are given legitimacy by myths, that social reality is defined and history is maintained as a natural progression. Myths naturalise the social institutions that exist, making history appear as a natural progression, and not a social progression (Barthes 2012). It would then follow that in order to challenge the mythic social reality, myths need to be highlighted as social constructs, making history a social progression, and therefore, making history a site of contestation.

The use of language that challenges the Barthesian mythic understandings of reality is defined by Barthes (2012) as "revolutionary language" (p.258). The purpose of revolutionary language is "to transform reality and no longer preserve it as an image" (Barthes 2012, p.258). This means the goal of revolutionary language is to challenge the taken for granted assumptions that underpin social reality. However, myths cannot be challenged successfully by facts alone as a myth is "not [a] scientific hypothesis, but rather the expression of a determination to act" (Bottici & Challand 2006, p.316). Due to this, revolutionary language needs to challenge myth through the creation of counter-discourses and counter-narratives. Although facts may be an important part of the discourses and narratives that are produced, the narratives produced to challenge hegemonic myths will "resonate through a combination of familiarity, pleasurable

surprise, and emotional identification" (Polletta 1998, p.425). Effectively, revolutionary language is the language that is used to usurp the order that mythic knowledge maintains. In theory, myth makes history natural while revolutionary language makes history social, and in the process of making history social, it turns it into a site of contestation. It is through the use of revolutionary language that allow counterpublics to develop discourses and narratives that serve both an identity function and a counter-hegemonic function.

It is worth stating that a myth is not a narrative, and that myths and narratives function in different ways. Bottici & Challand (2006) appear to conflate myths and narratives as they claim that a narrative can function as a "political myth" (p.319). Narratives can function to create myths, but a narrative is not a myth on its own. Narratives are used in order to "make sense of our experience" (O'Shaughnessy 1999, p.106), while myths define the social reality in which an experience occurs. This distinction is important to make in order to understand how myths are created and maintained. A narrative can be used to both maintain and challenge myths; however, a narrative is not a myth in and of itself. This relationship between narratives and social reality will be explored in greater detail below.

The Function of Myths and Myths of Gender

Due to the present research focusing on alternative media of feminist politics, the myths that are expected be engaged with are myths of gender. Given the nature of myths, it is difficult to find literature that challenges the mythic assumptions of reality in a formal academic sense. However, the body of research using post-structuralist ideas as a theoretical framework provides a substantial enough body of literature to develop a framework to theorise how the social reality of gender is understood through

mythic assumptions.

Gender myths are the myths that maintain and naturalise the inequalities that exist between women and men. These are myths that naturalise violence towards women and understand the differences between the genders as biological in nature. One of the myths that naturalise sexual violence is the myth of the relationship between power and sexual acts. The idea that sex and power are related ideas contributes to the creation of rape myths. Rape myths can be understood as "beliefs about rape and sexual assault that blame the victim, justify the perpetrator's actions, and discount the violence of rape" (Chapleau & Oswald 2009, p.68). Furthermore, rape myths are generally false and widely accepted (Lonsway & Fitzgerald 1994; Vonderhaar & Carmody 2015). The violence of rape that is discounted can be attributed to the way in which sex and power are intrinsically linked by rape myths. This is evident in research conducted by Chapleau & Oswald (2009) as they found among their participants that rape myth acceptance was associated with understandings of sex involving power. The association of power and sexual activity could facilitate rape myth acceptance, which could lead to misunderstandings surrounding the nature of consent and sexual assault (Hayes, Lorenz & Bell 2013). These results are consistent with research that was conducted in 1980, indicating that little has changed in regards to the way that rape myths are accepted in society (Burt 1980). Rape myths make power, sex, and rape all connected ideas that contribute to the prevalence of continued sexual assault within society. They accomplish this by naturalising rape (to the point of denial) through viewing sex as an act of one person practicing power over another; this conforms to and maintains the historical assumptions of sexuality that men are the dominant, active gender while women are the submissive, passive gender (Foucault 1990a). In this sense, rape myths serve to maintain the hegemonic ideas of

hetero-masculinity through creating an environment that is apologetic of sexual aggression.

Rape myth acceptance may be maintained by just world beliefs. A just world belief is the belief that maintains that the world is a just place where people 'get what they deserve' (Hayes, Lorenz & Bell 2013; Vonderhaar & Carmody 2015). The myth of a just world can then lead to blaming the victim for any sexual assaults that occur. Just world beliefs may blame victims for their attack in order to preserve the idea that the world is just in order to avoid cognitive dissonance (Hayes, Lorenz & Bell 2013) as the idea of an "[i]nnocent victim presumably threaten the belief in a just world" (Hafer 2000, p.171). Research conducted exploring the relationship between just world beliefs and rape myth acceptance has found that people who hold just world beliefs are more likely to accept rape myths (Lonsway & Fitzgerald 1994; Hayes, Lorenz & Bell 2013; Vonderhaar & Carmody 2015). This indicates that there are supportive belief systems related to the acceptance of rape myths (Burt 1980). It is through rape myths and the supportive belief systems – such as just world beliefs – that allow for the continued prevalence of rape myths defining sexual relations within society.

In addition to rape myths and just world beliefs, biological myths of gender maintain the idea of women as the weaker gender within society. Biological myths of gender reinforce the idea that men are naturally the dominant gender. Although biology does matter in relation to the makeup of an individual's anatomy, a biological understanding of gender does not account for the social aspects of gender. These biological myths of gender are reinforced by historical traditions and rituals. Such biological myths may be maintained by the idea that testosterone is the male hormone, while estrogen is the female hormone despite evidence suggesting a more complicated relationship in the biological make up of sexuality (Matthews 2014). These traditions and rituals include the

way that men are given different positions within a marriage (Foucault 1990b) or how men and women were historically treated as different objects of health, and thusly afforded differing health regimes (Foucault 1990c). The myths of biological differences in women's and men's sexuality serve to reproduce the ideas about how gender is supposed to function. In sexual terms, men are seen as the more dominant gender, and therefore, practice power over women when engaging in sexual and physical acts (Matthews 2014). The biological myths of gender that place women as inferior to men can also be traced back to the Christian myth of creation as "Eve was made out of Adam's rib" (Arthurs 2004, p.88). Ultimately, myths of gender are "reflective of the greater attempted control of female sexuality compared with male sexuality" (Wiederman 2001, p.469). In the case of the myths of gender, they serve to maintain the patriarchal order and naturalise the inequalities that exist between men, women and, genderqueer people. It can be seen that the myths of gender serve to maintain the understood social reality through simplifying reality and determining what 'facts' are legitimate and those that are not.

Gender myths serve to regulate the social construction of bodies. The regulation of the human body is a function of the disciplinary tactics used to govern a society (Foucault 1975). Judith Butler (1999, 2004) viewed the regulation of gender as the means by which the appropriate traits are placed onto the appropriate body in order to produce and reproduce the appropriate social condition for the body concerned. To Butler (2004), "[g]ender is the apparatus by which production and normalization of masculine and feminine take place along with the interstitial forms of hormonal, chromosomal, psychic, and performative that gender assumes" (p.42). Because of this, Butler views gender as a "regulatory norm" (2004, p.53) that is used to regulate bodies within a society as it designates "the very

apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established" (Butler 1999 p.11). The regulation of the gendered body is maintained through "numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies" that have been applied to the human body throughout history (Foucault 1990a, p.140). Effectively gender – and the regulation of gender – is a means of controlling the subjugation of bodies. The purpose of this regulation of gender could serve as a means to maintain society in its image through various techniques; these techniques could include marriage, healthcare, and education that have been applied to gender and sexuality historically (Foucault 1990a, 1990b, 1990c). The regulation of gendered bodies is continuing through various media representations of gender in contemporary culture (Francombe 2010; Milestone & Meyer 2012: Jackson, Vares & Gill 2013). It is through a regulatory apparatus designated for defining and maintaining appropriately gendered bodies that the mythic understandings of gender function.

Myths of gender serve to inform the regulatory apparatus that defines gender norms. Through this process, the social construction of gender appears to be based in the natural world; therefore the myths of gender define the inequalities that exist in society as naturally occurring and not as social problems. By defining gender as a natural occurrence, these myths preserve the social reality of gender in its present form.

Language: Narrative and Discourse

Discourses and narratives can be used to build myths as well as challenge them. Although discourses and narratives do not constitute myth themselves, they are parts of the construction of both mythic, and revolutionary language. Because of this, understanding the way that discourses and narratives create and inform knowledges is important in understanding myths.

Discourses work to make sense of social reality. By doing this they create a regime of truth (Foucault 2005). There can be multiple regimes of truth within a single society that are held by different groups; some of these may maintain, while others will challenge, the mythic understandings of reality. A regime of truth refers to the way in which knowledge is ordered within a particular social group, and how that ordering of knowledge defines reality for the group concerned. The group orders knowledge through "means of signs" that constitute "all empirical forms of knowledge as knowledge based upon identity and difference" (Foucault 2005, p.64). Knowledge in this case becomes based upon notions of identity, with different identities understanding and relating to the world in different ways. Ultimately, language is used to represent reality, and therefore, a true objective idea of reality that exists outside language is unattainable (Hansen & Machin 2013, p.115; Herschinger 2012; Foucault 2005; Miller 2000; Van Leeuwen & Wodak 1999; Fairclough 1995; de Saussure 1988). Therefore, language can only *refer* "to a fragment of objective reality" (Baudrillard 1981, p.150) as a distinction between a discursive realm and that of material reality cannot be made without the use of discourse (Shepherd 2008). Thus, discourse defines the social understandings of material reality; in this sense, discourses refer to a practice of both material and symbolic reality. Because of this, groups use language in order to constitute reality in a certain way. Effectively, "[d]iscourses appertain broadly to knowledge and knowledge construction" (Fairclough 1995, p.56) and the groups involved will order knowledge to create a regime of truth, and in the process, constitute reality in a certain way.

Discourse and Power

Although all groups in society are capable of creating discourses, not all discourses are equal. Those who are in positions to develop discourses are those who have power over

knowledge construction (Foucault 2005) and this power extends to knowledge of "personal conduct" (Moore 1997, p.153). Effectively, those who have power over the knowledge that constitutes social reality have power over knowledge; this is how the mythic discourse is developed. The mythic discourses that are developed practice "micro-power" that regulates daily practices such as "sexuality, criminality and mental equilibrium" (Moore 1997, p.151). This regulation over daily practices maintained by mythic discourses can be seen in the function of the gendered myths discussed above. The mythic discourse practices power over the everyday life of an individual. Through the practice of power over the everyday, discourse creates "more truths in twenty-four hours of an individual's life than in all the philosophies" (Vaneigem 2012, p.6). The power of a discourse is based on the way that it is incorporated into the everyday lives of individuals; discourse defines the social reality of the everyday and this relates to material reality inasmuch as the symbolic reality. Therefore, those who have power over dominant discourse, have the power of knowledge formation.

Discursive power is fluid power and is present in every interaction of daily life. Foucault (1990a) viewed power as being present in everyone's lives at all time as "[p]ower is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (p.93). Furthermore, "[p]ower produces conditions of meaning, instances of meaning, webs of meaning that are both" local and present within the whole social body (Shepherd 2008, p.23). Therefore, power is practiced discursively over the everyday actions of individuals within a society. Because of this, discourse is a practice, and the power that discourse holds is maintained through the practice of discourse (Foucault 2010; Shepherd 2008). Because discourse pertains to power and practice of the everyday, "every decision, every representation, every aspect of the social

world [is] political" (Shepherd 2008, p.22). The everyday practice of power through discourse creates a social situation in which 'meaning' is constituted through "the process of engaging in living" (Tusting 2005, p.37). The power that discourse produces over daily life is maintained through the practice of living and acting out the discourse. The practice of discourse is where discursive power functions; the practice of discourse reproduces the power of discourse.

Discourses that are dominant in a society are discourses that are practiced by the society at large. In regards to gender, this can be seen through the way that the myths of gender function daily to create and recreate meaning. Mythic discourses are the dominant discourses that revolutionary language challenges. Despite mythic discourses – that function to make history natural – occupying a privileged position, they can still be challenged by other discourses. Although "[d]iscourse transmits and produces power" it "also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it" (Foucault 1990a p.101). This means that although discourse can be used to maintain power, discourse can also be used to challenge it. Given that myths cannot be displaced by facts alone, discourse becomes an important vehicle through which myths can be challenged. Discourse can be used as a tool through which the mythical assumptions about a natural history can be transformed into a social history. Due to this, discourse is a vehicle through which a revolutionary language can be used in order to challenge the assumptions that define everyday existence.

Narrative and Discourse

Narratives create meaning differently from discourses. In general terms, discourses "are the building blocks of narratives" (Hansen & Machin 2013, p.161). In this sense, where discourse is used to make language meaningful, narratives are used to "make sense of

our experience" (O'Shaughnessy 1999, p.106). Therefore, it could be understood that discourse constitutes knowledge creation, while narrative constitutes the knowledge produced by discourse in a way that makes sense to an individual. Narratives differ from discourse as they tell a story. For a narrative story to be meaningful, it has to have collection of ideas called a "fabula" (Bal 1985). The fabula is everything that exists within the narrative to give it meaning. This includes "events, actors, time, and location" as they combine to constitute the material of the fabula (Bal 1985, p.7). The fabula in this sense is everything that is present within the narrative. Because of this, what the fabula includes or excludes has an effect on the way in which a narrative is constructed and how a particular narrative makes sense of the knowledge that is produced by discourse. The same set of rules that an individual applies to their social reality could also be applied to how they would read a narrative text (Bal 1985). This assumes that there is some level of understanding of how the narrative is to be read, and assumes that there is a sense of identity associated with the narrative itself.

It is important to remember that both discourse and narrative exist in a single text, and that they function in different ways in order to make a text meaningful. Units need to exist within a narrative and it is through the interaction of these units that a narrative is formed (Barthes 1975). The units could contain meaning in themselves, which would constitute them as discourses, but, it is this combination of units that constitute a narrative. Narratives "expose the boundaries, exclusions, and hierarchies built into 'objective' social science and law, that is, the particularity of the experiences that are masked by the authorial voice" (Polletta 1998, p.425). Like discourse, narrative can be used to both maintain and challenge the mythic assumptions that regulate social reality. This is because they do not simply rely on

fact and knowledge to convey meaning; they constitute knowledge – which is produced by discourse – in a manner that makes sense to an individual.

Discourse, Narrative, and Identity

It is through a combination of discourse and narrative that meaning is created within a community. In the case of discourse and identity, meaning in the world is constructed through a discourse that is specific to a certain community of practice (Stapleton 2001; Tusting 2005). The way meaning is communicated within the community will develop a narrative. Through the combined processes of discourse and narrative, an understanding of reality that is specific to that community is constituted. Effectively, identity is based in social reality, with various methods of social practices defining identity (Van Leeuwen & Wodak 1999). In theory, certain cultural groups will constitute reality in different ways depending on the specific discourse that they develop within the group (Miller 2000). Maddox's (2012) research into LGBT movements and the Supreme Court in the United States of America found that the LGBT groups used discourse in order to develop a collective sense of identity. Maddox's (2012) research indicates that discourse is an important aspect of identity formation for groups as narrative is "employed strategically to strengthen a collective identity" in addition to developing "a coherent community" (Polletta 1998, p.422). However, Juris (2008) argues that it is through "collective praxis, rather than discursive unity, that political alliances are forged" (p.65). Although collective praxis is paramount to social change occurring, there is little to suggest that it is more important than "discursive unity" in creating "political alliances".

Discursive unity is required in order for political activity to occur (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). This is due to the use of discourse being

important for meaning creation within a group. The process of meaning making can be seen in the way that anti-poverty groups in Canada used alternative media in order to "engage in alternative meaning-making processes through self-representation, defining reality and producing meanings in their own collective voice" (Jeppesen 2009, p.501-2). Through this, these groups are able to create a collective understanding of issues that can lead to political action occurring. The development of collective meaning is important as groups and individuals are shaped "by discursive forces" (Evans 2002, p.313) and these discursive forces inform identity-making process as "identities of objects and subjects are formed through a system of practices embodied by discourse" (Herschinger 2012 p.71). The practices that these groups perform enable discursive identity to emerge.

This point is made evident in research that involved women who maintained a sense of identification of belonging to the feminist movement. Whitter (2009) found that the women she interviewed continued to "identify with the term 'feminist'" (p.106) even after their involvement within the movement had diminished. This indicates that a sense of collective identity "is about seeing oneself as part of a group" (p.109) and that the type of language used is a "marker of the boundary between feminist and nonfeminist" (p.110). Because of this, a continued discursive unity was seen as important for those maintaining a sense of a feminist identity even after their radical involvement within the movement had lessened. Although identification in and of itself does not lead to social change, it is an important aspect in the forming of a political identity. The above points and the research conducted by Whitter (2009) appear to indicate that political identification can be facilitated through discursive means.

Discursive identity is evident in the way that political identity is practiced in an everyday setting. Everyday performance of certain

practices "encompasses both routine repetition of past behaviour as well as creative actions that help change what is regarded as commonplace" (May 2011, p.367). The discursive unity that is developed within groups leads to a political belonging, as an individual acts out a practice of everyday life that pertains to the discursive unity of a group (May 2011). The manner in which language is formulated is important in the "negotiation of meaning" within groups (Tusting 2005, p.40). The idea that "[p]olitical identities are public identities" (Berezin 2001 p.83) discounts the emotions that are involved with political identification and social change (Goodwin, Jasper & Polletta 2001). Emotive identification with a group is important in developing a politics of everyday life that serves to challenge the myths that maintain the inequalities within society. Furthermore, maintaining a politics of everyday life is important as discursive power practices power over the personal. It would follow that the personal has to be political in order to challenge the hegemonic myths that maintain social reality through their continued practice.

Discourse and narrative have to be viewed as playing an important part in developing a political identity. It is through the knowledge developed through discourse, and the stories that are used to make sense of experience through narrative, that sense is made of the political world. These narratives and discourses will then come to define the group, and inform the language that can be used to challenge Barthesian myths (Barthes 2012). Due to this, it is important to consider how discourse is practiced on a daily basis by those who identify as part of the group. It is through everyday practice that political identity is formed and maintained, and mythic ideas of society are challenged.

Counterpublics

The collective narrative that is created through the discursive identity that challenges the mythic social reality can be referred to as a counterpublic. In general terms, a counterpublic is a public sphere that exists in parallel to the hegemonic public sphere (Bailey & Iveson 2000; Downey & Fenton 2003; Milioni 2009; Eckert & Chadha 2013; Leung & Lee 2014). Counterpublics can be founded around "political or religious beliefs, ethnic, class or gender background, or other constructed identities" (Leung & Lee 2014, p.343). The idea of a "constructed identity" is important in understanding a counterpublic. An identity can be constructed within a counterpublic through discursive practice. Discursive practice within the counterpublic is important as political practice is a discursive practice (Laclau & Mouffe 1985). It is within counterpublics, or at least ideas representing a counterpublic, that a discourse that challenges mythic ideas of society will be practiced. It is this practice of discourse that defines the sense of identity within a counterpublic sphere.

Counterpublics will be understood here as the social movement – feminism - that is being analysed. Social movements will be expected to act as counterpublics of ideas as they will practice discourse in a manner that creates a specific meaning. Furthermore, it is through identifying themselves as part of a particular social movement that the social movements identify themselves as counterpublics; from the moment they define themselves as opposed to the myths of the hegemonic public sphere the social movements define themselves as counterpublic. Understanding the nature of counterpublics is important for this research as it identifies a place in which Barthesian (2012) revolutionary language can be practiced. Due to counterpublics being the place in which identity that is 'counter' to the hegemonic public sphere is practiced, it in theory could be a place where

revolutionary language occurs.

Cultural Artefacts and Alternative Media

Counterpublics that develop ideas and identities that are in opposition to the hegemonic public sphere will do so through the development of cultural artefacts. Cultural artefacts are going to have a specific meaning for the group that produces them. An individual belonging to a certain cultural group understands the cultural codes and meaning of certain cultural artefacts pertaining to that group (Sammut, Daanen & Sartawi 2010). Using the word feminism, it can be assumed that those who associate themselves with the term and work to define the meaning of the term understand the proper function of the term. It would then follow that other associations of the term feminism are mythic, as they are not within the counterpublic discourses and serve to maintain the idea of history as being natural. The cultural artefacts created by social movements will function as vehicles through which revolutionary language - that challenges the idea of history being natural - can be communicated. However, the meaning produced by the cultural artefacts is the sum of its collective whole (Houkes & Meijers 2006), meaning that the purpose of a cultural artefact and the language that makes up a cultural artefact has to be understood within the wider context of the social movement as a whole. It is through this wider context within the social movement itself that the artefact becomes meaningful for the group.

Cultural artefacts have symbolic value for the group they represent. A symbol is "any thing, event or phenomenon to which meaning is attributed by members" of a certain group (Brown 1994, p.862). Meaning is attributed to language within social movements. Continuing with the feminist example, a sense of

political identity and purpose is established for the groups adopting the term feminist as an identity indicator. Furthermore, the meaning that is attributed to cultural artefacts is going to be understood through distinctions of taste. Henry Jenkins (1992) saw taste distinctions within cultural groups determining "not only desirable and undesirable forms of culture, but also desirable and undesirable ways of relating to cultural objects" (p.16). Jenkins' work was inspired by the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1984) who viewed taste as a distinguishing factor of social class. The distinctions of social class manifest in the manner in which value is placed onto various social objects, giving the objects a form of social capital, thus, making them meaningful for a particular social class (Bourdieu 1984). Although Jenkins and Bourdieu were concerned with how individuals engage with objects of popular culture, this same idea can be applied to social movements' engagements with their cultural artefacts. Groups facilitate a sense of identity by the way they engage with certain cultural objects; this also includes the manner in which they engage with texts. From this it can be seen that the symbolic value that groups assign to certain cultural artefacts has an identity building function upon which both social and political identity can be premised.

The present research is concerned with the way that counter-hegemonic identities are developed, and because of this, alternative media is a focus point. Some theories of what constitutes alternative media include the idea of participatory media (Carpentier 2009) and alternative media as critical media (Fuchs 2010; Sandoval & Fuchs 2010). However, these definitions are unsatisfactory. Using the participatory model, anything that involves citizen involvement could be defined as alternative. Through this model, an individual using social networking websites, such as Facebook, could be defined as participating in

alternative media production. However, Facebook is a corporately controlled space in which the content that the user posts may be controlled by the Facebook website; this could ultimately lead to that user's Facebook page being terminated (Facebook 2016). In regards to alternative media as critical media, this model claims that corporate media should be considered alternative if it has a critical message (Fuchs 2010; Sandoval & Fuchs 2010). The problem with this model is that it underestimates the value of the production process involved in the development of alternative media. The value of an alternative media product can come from the production process, giving the individuals involved in production, power over the product (Atton 2002, p.23-4). The content in this case ceases to be the important facet. What becomes the important aspect is the agency of the individuals involved in the production process. Ultimately, both the participatory and critical media models of alternative media do not adequately define alternative media practices.

A better conceptualisation of what alternative media is needs to pay attention to the identity building function of alternative media. Alternative media functions as a site where counterpublics can develop a counter-hegemonic understanding of social reality; alternative media can be used as a vehicle in order to challenge Barthesian (2012) myths. This aspect of alternative media can be seen in Harcup's (2003) analysis of the media coverage of the Leed's riots in 1981. Harcup found that the alternative press created a counter discourse that challenged the official "law and order" (p.363) discourse of the mainstream press. Harcup's analysis highlights the way that alternative media can be used in order to challenge discourses and narratives that are hegemonic. Furthermore, alternative media serve both an "instrumental" and "ritual" role in "activist communication" (Rauch 2007, p.1002). The ritualistic nature of alternative media relates back to a sense of

identification with the text itself. Because of this, alternative media creation and consumption can be understood as a ritualistic aspect of a counterpublic's identity (Rauch 2007). Therefore, alternative media has an important role in the way that social movements attempt to foster a sense of engagement with the movement itself.

The understanding of alternative media that is developed here defines alternative media as counter-hegemonic and pertaining to a sense of identity facilitation. Because of this definition, small media that has a capitalist agenda is not considered alternative. Small media that has a profit incentive should be understood as independent media. Independent media cannot be viewed as alternative because it does not act in a subversive manner; independent media does not present an alternative conceptualisation of reality, but merely maintains it through its practice. A knowledge site that reinscribes the same myths and understandings that maintain hegemonic social reality cannot be viewed as alternative. *Alternative* media therefore should present an *alternative* conceptualisation of social reality. Because of this, in order for media to be alternative, it needs to be culturally subversive; this can be accomplished through the mode of production and content. Therefore, alternative media is defined as media that is culturally subversive, challenges hegemonic understandings that define social reality, and works to facilitate a sense of identity. Alternative media is the type of media that is developed by social movements in order to attempt to create a site of historical contestation.

Method

In order to conduct this research, a series of sources representing feminism were selected. An analysis of the individual sources was conducted, and then a comparative analysis across

the sites was performed in order to determine if there were any underlying narratives and discourses that function to define feminism's identity. For this, a discourse analysis and a narrative analysis was conducted on each text, followed by a comparative analysis to see if a meta-narrative existed across the movement. This method of analysis was done in order to determine whether there was an identity developed within and across the sample sources. In order to understand the nature of identity within the sample sources, the way that the language is used, the way that the discourse positions certain idea with prominence, and the way that the narrative creates meaning were analysed. By doing this it was possible to outline certain taste regimes (Bourdieu 1984) that could define the identities of the various sources, and the greater identity of feminism as a whole. Central to this is also an analysis of the way that certain Barthesian (2012) myths are challenged or repeated. Effectively, this research is concerned with how a social movement uses language in order to challenge the taken for granted social reality. The manner in which this was done will now be outlined.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse pertains to the way in which language is used to create knowledge. As outlined above, language is used to represent social reality as it is not possible for a social reality to exist outside of language; this ordering of language into knowledge is what creates a regime of truth. In everyday use language is not neutral as the way that it is used is loaded with meaning (Hansen & Machin 2013, p.116). The purpose of a discourse analysis is to decode the way in which language is used within the texts to create a specific meaning. This research is concerned with the counter-discourses that are being developed within the sources that represent feminism. Due to the counter-hegemonic nature of the discourses that were analysed, it was important to relate the

"texts to their conditions of production and consumption" (Widdowson 2004, p.367). Because of this, when conducting a discourse analysis, it is important to pay attention to the socio-economic power that surrounds a text's creation; this point may even be more important given the nature of this research. Paying attention to both the social context of a cultural artefact and the language used within the artefact, it becomes possible to understand the discourses of the text itself. In the case of this research, the discourses of the texts were expected to be in opposition to a hegemonic discourse, therefore, the use of language was expected to be counter-mythic.

The mode of discourse analysis used within this research is based primarily on the writing of Michel Foucault (1975; 1980; 1990a; 1990b; 1990c; 2005; 2010). This differs from other forms of discourse analysis as the focus will be on the "discursive relations" (2010 p.46) between the source of the text and the identity of the text itself. In this sense a "discursive relation" is the relation that "characterize[s] not the language used by discourse, nor the circumstances in which it is deployed, but discourse itself as a practice" (Foucault 2010 p.46). The practice of the discourse itself in this present research is concerned with the identity facilitation of the source of the respective discourse. This differs from other forms of discourse analysis due to an emphasis on practice rather than simply focusing on how language creates meaning (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999; Fairclough 1995; van Dijk 1985). For the purpose of this research, and the goal of analysing identity, a focus on the practice of language is important. Through focusing on the "discursive relation" (Foucault 2010, p.46) between a source text and practice, this analysis will be able to explore how the feminist sources of alternative media practice discourse in order to facilitate a political identity.

The purpose of the present research is to analyse the way that

discourse is practiced in the texts produced by alternative media of feminist politics. The assumption is that discourse will be practiced in a manner that produces power that challenges the myths that maintain regulatory control over society. As has been discussed above, the theory of power used here is based on the dynamic theory of power theorized by Michel Foucault (1990a). The manner that discourse is practiced should produce a narrative within the alternative media sources. This analysis will address the way individual texts produce narratives, and attempt to find a meta-narrative that is produced across the sources. In this case, a narrative is different from a 'counterclaim'. A narrative can be understood as a form of political strategy that is understood, and widely acknowledged within the community of practice, while a counterclaim is not widely acknowledge and may not reflect the views of the community (Neack & Knudson 1999). In order to develop an understanding of how discourse is practiced, this research will focus on the way that language is used within the texts; the manner that discourse was practiced to produce a narrative, the way that the language that was produced through discourse had an identifying purpose, and the way in which the language used within the texts can be understood as revolutionary in Barthesian (2012) terms. For this research, discourse will be understood as a practice that involves power as was discussed above. Discourse then means more than just language use, but also relates to the way that identity, and politics are practiced.

Language use within the sources was analysed through paying attention to the context in which language is used. This does not involve a content analysis as it is the manner in which language is used rather than the amount it is used that is important for this research. The focus for this aspect of the analysis is how language is used to produce a discourse that practices power in a manner that challenges mythic assumptions about reality. The manner in

which this is done can be seen in research by Oerton & Phoenix (2001) who found that the sex workers they interviewed in their research practiced discourse in a manner that distanced their work from sexual activity, and instead viewed themselves as businesswomen. This research indicates that there are specific ways that a particular community of practice uses language to practice a discourse that constitutes their social reality in a certain manner. Because of this, the nature of language use, and the context of how the language is used, is important as to how reality is constituted within a text.

Central to this analysis was the concept of situated knowledge (Haraway 1991). In Donna Haraway's (1991) theory, knowledge that challenges the "unmarked position of Man" (p.188) is important in developing a distinctive feminist form of situated knowledge. This theory was used as part of the analysis of the discourses and narratives produced by the alternative media sources of feminist politics. This theory allows for an examination of how feminist sources create feminist modes of knowledge that challenge Barthesian (2012) myths. In theory, if knowledge is situated as being gendered, it could challenge the "unmarked position of Man" (Haraway 1991, p.188) and, form a mode of knowledge that challenges mythic concepts of social reality.

The manner that discourse is practiced to produce a narrative was analysed through the way language is used to make sense of lived experience. This builds from the focus of the above paragraphs, but then attempts to place the language within a discursive practice that produces narrative. This part of the analysis was done by exploring the way that the discursive practice of the texts positions the subjects of the texts into particular roles; this process relates back to the development of the fabula as was discussed above. The narratives that are produced within the texts could serve an educational function for

those engaging with the sources. This practice can be seen in scientific communities as they communicate ideas through narratives produced, and these narratives can teach other individuals within the same community ideas that they have no direct experience (Collins 2011). The present analysis focused on the way that the narratives produced within and across the sources were made meaningful within the community of practice. In theory, the practice of discourse within the community will be used in a manner that creates counter-narratives that challenge the narratives that maintain Barthesian myths.

Central to the purpose of this research is the idea of identity. Because of this, the analysis focused on the way that language was used in an identifying manner. The way that the language serves an identity function could indicate the counterpublic nature of the sources themselves. This relates to research by Whitter (2009) as she found that self-identification as a feminist involved a specific type of discursive practice. The sources that are the subject of the analysis should involve discursive practices of "signifying identit[y]" (Van Leeuwan 2009, p.218) as they become a site of "emotional identification" (Polletta 1998, p.425) for those who engage with the sources; and more specifically in this case, the politics of the sources. Because of this, the analysis focused on the manner that language used within the source acts in an identifying manner; this was expected if the texts were going to function as cultural artefacts for the groups concerned. The focus is thus on language that fosters an emotive engagement, in addition to a group identity, for the community of practice concerned. The language that creates a sense of identity with the text was analysed in relation to the manner in which discourse is practiced, and the way that the practice of discourse produces a narrative. Narrative and discourse are important aspects in understanding the identity building function of a text; this is

because different communities of practice have different discourses and narratives. Because of this, the analysis explored the way that the sources functioned to build identity around discursive practices.

The way that the sources use language that could be defined as revolutionary under a Barthesian (2012) framework is central to this research. If myths serve to "transform history into nature" (Barthes 2012, p.240), revolutionary language can best be understood as the language that attempts to make history social, and therefore, a site of contestation. In order to challenge the myths that naturalise social reality, the feminist sources should, in theory, use language that challenges the myths of gender that maintain gender inequality. The sources should challenge the myths in order to challenge the manner that they maintain inequalities within a society. For feminist sources, rape myths (Burt 1980; Chapleau & Oswald 2009; Hayes, Lorenz &Bell 2013; Lonsway & Fitzgerald 1994; Vonderhaar & Carmody 2014), just world beliefs (Hafer 2000; Hayes, Lorenz &Bell 2013; Vonderhaar & Carmody 2014), and biological myths that define men as the dominant sex (Chapleau & Oswald 2009; Matthews 2014; Wiederman 2001) should be challenged in order to challenge the regulatory norms pertaining to gender. Because of this, the analysis focused on the way that language was used to challenge the hegemonic myths in Western society.

By paying attention to the four dimensions of discourse, narrative, identity, and Bartheisan myths and revolutionary language within the texts produced by the feminist sources, the way that discourse is practiced in order to produce a way of knowing can be established. The sources produce meaning as they function as cultural sites for feminism. Because of this, the sources became spaces that practice discourse; therefore, they are appropriate spaces of analysis for the purpose of this research.

Through acting as cultural sites that represent feminist politics, the sources constitute reality in a manner that is in accordance with a particular understanding of social reality. Therefore, by analysing the sources for the manner that discourse is practiced in order to produce a narrative, the way that the language produced through discourse has an identifying purpose, the way that the language used within the sources can be understood as revolutionary in Barthesian (2012) terms, and the way that reality was constituted for the groups concerned can be identified. By identifying the constituted reality as presented within the sources, it is possible to determine whether the sources challenge hegemonic myths that define social reality, foster identity within the group, or use language in a manner that attempts to make history a site contestation.

Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis was conducted in order to determine whether there is a consistent narrative across the various feminist sources. This was done to determine whether there was a consistent discourse and narrative across the sources representing feminist politics. An important aspect in this case is analysing the use of language across the sources (Edwards 2012; Wu 2013). If the development of discourse and narrative relates to the identity of the groups involved, the language used across the text should be similar. In this case, the proper use functions of a particular word should be understood across the sources representing feminism regardless of what source it is mentioned in. For example, words like feminism should have the same connotations across the various cultural sites that identify themselves as feminist. It is important to note that it was expected that there would be differences in the types of feminism, however, underlying goals, and the meanings of words that described the movements should generally remain the same. The differences in language use

and agendas developed by the various sites, will be discussed in order to attempt to develop an understanding as to why a discursive difference exist. This could be the result of different conceptualisations of what feminism means. The purpose of comparing the discourse and narratives of the texts is to reveal if feminism has a collective identity based in the use of language, and the way it creates social meaning for the group through the cultural artefacts they develop as a movement.

Feminist conceptualisations of social reality have deliberately not been defined in this literature review. Instead, the research looks at the sources that self-identify as being part of the feminist movement in an attempt to see if there is a discursive unity across the sources. In doing this, it is possible to understand the general aims, goals, and processes used by the feminist movement. This also makes it possible to have a discussion that defines the ideas of the sources representing feminist politics. In sum, projecting a feminist politics onto the sources was avoided.

Subject of Analysis

For the purpose of this research, one social movement was explored; the social movement was the feminist movement. This social movement was selected for three reasons. The first is due to its increasing visibility, which made resources of this movement easy to find. Second, this social movement has found a renewed relevance in the cultural climate of the early 21st century as is evident through its increasing visibility. Third, only this social movement was selected due to time and space constraints. If more time and space were available, other social movements would have been included in this research. Other social movements that could have been part of this study include the various anti-capitalist, environmental, and healthcare movements, among others. This model of analysis would work the same for these other movements

as it does for feminism here through exploring the language used and attempting to outline what discursive unity, if any, exists within and across the various social movements. This could then potentially be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the various social movements in discursively constituting social reality on the social movement's terms. Although only one social movement was explored in the present research, it still provides a platform for the way language is used to define social reality and how a counter-discourse that challenges the material reality could be created. Furthermore, the present research may provide a platform for future research using a larger sample size and multiple social movements as case studies.

In order to develop a sense of the local and the international, five international sources and five sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand were selected for analysis. The local sources were chosen on the basis that they were representing feminism and produced within Aotearoa-New Zealand. Given that Aotearoa-New Zealand is a small country with a modest domestic population, sources on the subject were scarce. From the sources that were found, the five most relevant sources were selected. This was done on the basis of scanning the sources, and reading the 'about' sections in order to determine if the texts were sufficient for the purpose of this research. For the feminist texts, the texts needed to explicitly state that there was a feminist goal to the publication itself. This self-identifying factor was important given that the identity building function of texts was being tested. Through this process, the five most relevant texts for feminism in Aotearoa-New Zealand consisted of three zines, and two website. The five cultural texts were:

1.   *What She Said,* a zine produced by the University of Canterbury Intersectional Feminist Society.

2. *Kate Magazine*, a magazine produced by the University of Auckland Women's Rights Officers with assistance from the Auckland University Campus Feminist Collective.

3. *Mellow Yellow,* a blog produced by diasporic Asian feminists in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

4. *Cute Bruiser*, an independent feminist zine produced in Wellington.

5. *The Hand Mirror,* a feminist blog produced by people based in Aotearoa-New Zealand, or identifying Aotearoa-New Zealand as home.

The above resources were analysed in the method outlined above. They were also compared in order to investigate whether there are any connecting discourses and narratives that intersect across the local feminist sources.

The international sources were selected based on their popularity. This was done by developing a list of websites representing the social movements from outside Aotearoa-New Zealand. In total, 30 international feminist websites were listed (See Appendix A). Websites were excluded from the list if there was no open identification of having feminist politics. The websites were then ranked using the service provided by the website www.alexa.com. Alexa is a website that allows the user to find out the popularity of a particular website. It provides a global rank of the website with '1' being the most popular. Using Alexa, the websites were ranked in order of their popularity as of the 2 June, 2015 (See Appendix A). After the websites were ranked in order of popularity, every fifth website was selected for analysis. This was done as opposed to selecting the top five websites due to the assumption that there may be narrative differences in the nature

of the various websites, with the assumption being that the more popular a website is, the more 'mainstream' or commercial its content may be. If this assumption is correct, *Jezebel* – the number one ranked feminist website – is going to have a more conservative approach to feminism than *Black Girl Dangerous* – the 9th ranked feminist website from the sample. Thus, the more popular sources are assumed to be more moderate in their approaches within the present sample, while the less popular sources may be more radical. In theory, by including less popular websites, a more diverse range of opinions are included as the websites of more diverse groups are being analysed; this will test the theory surrounding identity and language within the social movement more than a selection of five potentially similar websites would. Once this process was complete, the five international feminist websites that were selected for analysis were:

1. www.jezebel.com - Global Rank: 1,173; Rank Within Sample: 1

2. http://bust.com/ - Global Rank: 47,547; Rank Within Sample: 5

3. http://www.feministe.us/blog/ - Global Rank: 257,869; Rank Within Sample: 10

4. http://therepresentationproject.org/ - Global Rank: 420,413; Rank Within Sample: 15

5. http://www.feministezine.com - Global Rank: 683,316; Rank Within Sample: 20

The international resources were analysed for narrative and discourse, then the discourses and narratives of each texts were compared with each other, and then the international texts were compared with the local sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand.

Comparing the texts across the social movement and location was done in order to find out if there is a meta-narrative that defined identity within the social movement as a whole.

Of the websites listed above, the ten latest articles as of the 2nd of June, 2015 were selected for analysis. For the zines listed above, the two previous editions of the zine from the 2nd of June, 2015 were selected for analysis. This was done to produce a manageable amount of material for analysis. The sample consisted of 70 internet articles from seven websites and six separate zines from three sources, for analysis.

Analysing the discourses and narratives of texts produced by social movements should determine whether there is an identity building function based around the meaning developed across the alternative media sources. Furthermore, by analysing the sources, the way that discourse and narrative is used to challenge mythic assumptions about reality can be observed. If this is the case, it could be argued that the language used by the social movement – in this case feminism - serves to make history social, and therefore, a site of contestation. It is this contesting of history that would develop social meaning for the groups involved, define the way the groups understand reality, and facilitate a sense of identity for the group itself.

Chapter Two:

Alternative Media Sources of International Feminism: Identity across Two Discourses

Personal Feminist Identity

The five sources in the sample for international feminism produced narratives that could facilitate a feminist identity to differing extents. Of the five sources, *The Fbomb* and *Feminste* were the sources that used narrative to produce a feminist identity the most. This is prevalent in the source *The Fbomb* as eight of the ten posts positioned the author within the text. The eight articles were: 'Love For A Season' (29/05/2015), an article outlining the author's personal development as a person and a feminist; 'What Happens When Women Publicly Stand Up For Themselves' (27/05/2015), an article about a woman Lebanese journalist who retaliated to a sexist action by a scholar; 'These Ten Tumblr Posts Were My Feminist Education' (26/05/2015), an article in which the author outlines the ten Tumblr posts she claims were her feminist education; 'The Major Problems With How We Discuss Men and Sexual Assault' (22/05/2015), an article discussing the problematic nature of how sexual assault on men is discussed and how this can derail issues pertaining to sexual assault; 'Why Sexist Dress Codes Have Got To Go' (20/05/2015), an article in which the author discusses her experience with dress code regulation and the effects that had on her; 'Breaking Down Gender Stereotypes About Mental Illness' (18/05/2015), an article in which the author highlights and challenges assumptions about mental health in relation to her own experience of having a friend commit suicide; 'The Problem With 'Strong is the New Skinny''

(13/05/2015), an article where the author describes exercise regimes designed to produce a particular aesthetic and how this conforms to regulatory notions of the body; and 'The Conversation All Rising College Freshwomen Need to Have' (11/05/2015), an article in which the author discusses financial issues in relation to women at university and relates it back to her personal experiences. *The Fbomb,* creates a discursive space in which personal engagement with the text can occur between the content and the reader through the positioning of the author within the text in eight of the 10 posts on the source. This is accomplished by having the author visible, and therefore, an object of identification within the text itself. This opens up a space in which the text can be identified with and emotive identification with what the source represents can occur.

Through placing the author within the text, it situates the knowledge produced by the text as being feminine, and challenges the "unmarked position of Man" (Haraway 1991, p.188). By the authors positioning themselves within the text, it genders the text as feminine, which discursively creates an association with those who identify with femininity. Ultimately, this serves an identity building function as the texts are identified within a particular discursive framework that constructs a narrative that identifies the political aspects of daily life and how the personal politics of daily life are gendered. This process of using narrative to explain a daily experience can also be seen in Stephenson-Abetz's (2012) research on how feminist daughters made sense of the world. In the research, Stephenson-Abetz (2012) found that her participants explained daily events through a narrative that invoked feminist ideas. By using narrative in such a way, the politics of daily life can be explained. Therefore, through discursive practices that situate the knowledge produced within the source, a distinctively feminist mode of knowledge could be produced.

This personal engagement with the text can be witnessed through the narratives of self-discovery produced by the articles on *The Fbomb*. The personal narratives highlight the political nature of daily life. An article on *The Fbomb* highlights this through the narrative of the author finding her identity as "an out queer woman, a journalist, a feminist and future New Yorker" (*The Fbomb*, 29/5/2015). Furthermore, by placing the author within the text it also conveys emotions in relation to women's issues. In the article titled 'What Happens When Women Publically Stand Up For Themselves' (*The Fbomb*, 27/5/2015), the author expresses anger at men mistreating women by stating that she is "shocked" by a male academic refusing to be interviewed by a woman. A personal display of emotions is also present in the article 'Why Sexist Dress Codes Have Got to Go', through the statement "[s]top policing my body" (*The Fbomb,* 20/5/2015). *The Fbomb* produces a narrative that involves a personal engagement with the issues relating to women by positioning the author within the text. This gives potential for the reader of the source to have an emotive engagement with the text, and therefore, develop identification with the author. This occurs through the way personal narratives developed by *The Fbomb* allow their readers to establish a personal understanding of how the personal actions of the authors are political, thus, highlighting the personal aspects of political performance.

Feministe produces an emotive identification with the text in a similar manner to *The Fbomb.* Through writing the author into the text in relation to women's issues, *Feministe* highlights the personal nature of the content it produces. The political nature of personal events is highlighted by the article 'Apologies, Explanations, and Temporary Sign-Off' (*Feministe*, 17/5/2015), which uses the personal narrative of the author's own struggles with pregnancy to highlight how important access to appropriate

birthing procedures are for women. The discourse of the text highlights this by referring to the author being in a "good position vis-à-vis insurance" and how it is a "sick and barbaric feature" of the health care system that "anybody should have to think about [insurance] during an emergency" (*Feministe,* 17/5/2015). The narrative produced by this text highlights how extremely personal events – such as childbirth – can become political in nature. Highlighting the need for health insurance as "sick and barbaric" codes a privatised healthcare system as archaic; this is accomplished through the use of the signifier "barbaric" to relate to a time before civilisation, and relating this idea to the market dictating who does, and does not, receive healthcare. Furthermore, the article 'In Which Caperton Indulges in a Moment of Feminism-Adjacent (if that) Nerd Rage', highlights personal taste preferences of the author herself. Although the author herself states the article has "very little, if anything, to do with feminism" (*Feministe,* 13/5/2015), it is positioned alongside articles on the website that deal with issues relating to women's unpaid labour (*Feministe,* 10/5/2015), gay rights (*Feministe,* 8/5/2015;6/5/2015), bodily regulation (*Feminste,* 1/5/2015), rape culture (*Feminste,* 23/5/2015; 20/5/2015), and racism (*Feminste,* 28/4/2015; 21/4/2015) highlighting the personal nature of the politics in the blog itself. The same feature can be witnessed in texts produced by *The Fbomb,* as the author is present within the text in articles dealing with issues relating to discovering feminism (The Fbomb, 26/5/2015), sexual assault (The Fbomb, 22/5/2015), bodily regulation (The Fbomb, 20/5/2015; 13/5/2015), and mental illness (The Fbomb, 18/5/2015). Due to the sources, *The Fbomb* and *Feministe,* producing a personal discourse in relation to the issues raised by the authors of the articles, *The Fbomb* and *Feministe* both produce a narrative that defines these issues as personal issues and therefore, relating to daily experience.

The Fbomb and *Feministe* both encourage emotive identification with the sources by defining personal issues as political. With both of these sources referring directly to feminism within the texts produced and the names of the sources themselves referring to feminism, this could lead to an emotive identification with a feminist identity through the sources. In this case, the texts produce discourse in a manner that demonstrates that personal identities are political. Because of this, life becomes an inherently political subject as "[t]he desire to live is a political decision" (Veneigem 2012, p.4). This point becomes salient in the article from *Feministe* that discusses the author's experiences with childbirth. Although childbirth is a deeply personal event pertaining to the life of the individual concerned, the political nature of it relates to the forces that dictate the nature of how the childbirth is to occur. This is covered in not just statements that refer to marketised health care as "sick and barbaric" (*Feministe*, 17/05/2015), but also in the article 'Guest Post: Mother's Day, Unpaid and Unrecognized Care Work, and Penalizing Motherhood' (*Feminste,* 10/05/2015). The article produces a narrative that highlights how women are not recognized for the unpaid labour that they produce. The text does this by citing statistics that unpaid labour in the USA was "valued at $3.2 trillion" and highlights the importance of this unpaid labour by stating that without it "the global economy would grind to a halt" (*Feministe, 10/05/2015).* The argument produced in this article is supported by the statistics produced by the United Nations' 2010 report on the world's women (United Nations 2010). The discourse of this article produces a narrative that highlights the political nature of personal work; this is done by defining the value of this personal work in economic terms. Furthermore, this text adds to the greater narrative of the source, *Feminste,* of highlighting the political aspects of personal events and practices such as childbirth and child raising.

The Representation Project uses a discourse of togetherness in order to facilitate involvement with the website. This discourse is developed throughout the source by the use of language that encourages involvement, or is praising the involvement of those reading the source. This can be seen in the articles through language use like "[y]ou made your voices heard" (28/04/2015), "your support" (21/04/2015), "join us" (14/04/2015; 17/02/2015), and continued use of the term "together" (08/04/2015; 26/03/2014; 19/03/2015; 02/03/2015). Through the source developing a discourse of togetherness, it creates a narrative that encourages involvement from those reading the source. However, unlike *The Fbomb* and *Feministe, The Representation Project* does not situate the knowledge produced by the source through positioning the author within the articles. Due to there being no personal narrative developed within the source, *The Representation Project* does not engage with the idea of the personal being political in the same way that *The Fbomb* and *Feminste* do. By not situating knowledge within the text, and therefore, making "unlocatable... knowledge claims" (Haraway 1991, p.191), *The Representation Project* discursively creates distance between the person using the source, and the source itself. This occurs due to the source not positioning the knowledge and experiences produced through the discourses and narratives as locatable within the text, instead, the source positions knowledge as unlocatable as the author is removed from the articles produced by the source. By not positioning the knowledge in the source as locatable, *The Representation Project* does not encourage a personal engagement with the source in spite of the development of a 'togetherness' discourse.

The Representation Project instead reinforces the idea that "[p]olitical identities are public identities" (Berezin 2001 p.83), and does not engage with a discourse of everyday life. *The*

Representation Project instead focuses on public campaigns and the use of twitter hashtags. Articles from the source like '#Buildconfidence In Time For Mother's Day' (06/05/2015), do this by focusing on the hashtag '#buildconfidence' as opposed to the personal-political issues surrounding childcare; this discursive positioning differs from that of the narratives produced by *Feministe* mentioned above. Furthermore, articles like 'Budlight Apologizes for Tagline After 2 Hours of #Notbuyingit Tweets' (28/4/2015), 'Some of our Favourite Celebs are Ready for #Equalpayday' (14/04/2015), and 'For the 87th Oscars, Let's #Askhermore' (17/02/2015), all focus on public events and twitter hashtags rather than the personal-political aspects of daily life. Because of this, the source does not facilitate a feminist identity that is based on the daily practice of politics. Even though the *The Representation Project* creates a discourse of togetherness, it does so through a narrative that distances the user of the source from the source itself.

Although indivividual use of hastags could be understood as personal, the nature of Twitter is counter-intuitive to developing a counterpublic identity. Drawing on the definition of alternative media outlined in chapter one, Twitter cannot be seen to function as an alternative media space due to its position in the marketplace. As of January 2016, Twitter Inc was worth $13.65 billion USD, with individually shares being sold at $19.65 a piece (MarketWatch 2016). Furthermore, Twitter Inc CEO, Jack Dorsey was individual valued at $1.28 billion as of January 2016 (Forbes 2016). In this sense, Twitter can be viewed as for profit media that is ideologically positioned in relation to the marketplace. *The Representation Project* positions a feminist identity through the mediation of Twitter; this creates discursive distance. Furthermore, by identifying politics through Twitter, an identity facilitation that might occur, will occur with Twitter, and not the

feminist politics represented by *The Representation Project.* In sum, the use of hashtags as a vehicle through which to facilitate a feminist identification could lead to an identification with the hashtag and consequently Twitter, rather than facilitating an identity with the politics of the *The Representation Project.* Furthermore, groups developed on social media websites are often based around public events or what is current at the time (Morozov 2011). This is apparent in the examples from *The Representation Project,* as they each focus on a public event or public persons; Mother's Day (06/05/2015*),* a Budlight advertising campaign (28/4/2015), celebrities (14/04/2015), and the 87th Oscars (17/02/2015). Because of this, the identities that could be developed through the use of Twitter hashtags are circumstantial. This means that an identity that is formulated around Twitter hashtags are linked to the public event that the hashtags are associated with. Due to this, *The Representation Project* creates a discursive distance from the personal aspects of politics by using hashtags. Moreover, the nature of Twitter is a semi-public space; a privately owned space that is permitted to be used as a public space. In this sense, Twitter itself is not inherently political; it is a networking communication device that can be used in a political manner. Although an identity could be developed through the use of hashtags as a vehicle to facilitate an identity, the identity that will be developed will not facilitate an alternative counterpublic space.

Bust Magazine identifies itself as a feminist source, but does so in a manner that creates discursive distance. *Bust Magazine* uses the term "feminism" or "feminist" multiple times throughout the sample (02/06/2015a; 02/06/2015c; 02/6/2015d) and claims that "we are all feminists. Or at least we should be" (2/6/2015f). *Bust Magazine* also invokes ideas related to feminism like "rape culture" (01/06/2015a), body shaming (02/06/2015c), and the

gender pay gap (02/06/2015a). However, in spite of the source self-identifying itself as feminist through the use of the signifying term 'feminism' and related concepts, the narrative produced by the source creates discursive distance. This happens in two ways. First, only one of the 10 posts from the sample situated the author within the text. This meant that the source was largely dominated by "unlocatable… knowledge claims" (Haraway 1991, p.191) similar to the way narrative was practiced in *The Representation Project.* Secondly, in *Bust Magazine,* feminist ideas were positioned in relation to celebrities. In *Bust Magazine,* five of the 10 posts in the sample made reference to celebrity. The five articles were: 'Her Name is Caitlyn Jenner and She is Absolutely Stunning' (*Bust Magazine* 01/06/2015b), a post discussing the transformation of Caitlyn Jenner; 'These Gals Were the Fashion Goddesses of Afropunk Paris' (01/06/2015d), a post discussing the celebrities and fashions at the Afropunk Paris event; 'Model Ashley Graham on Why We Should do Away with "Plus-Size"' (02/06/2015b), a post discussing model Ashley Graham's experience within the modelling industry; ''Mad Max' Wouldn't Have Been Possible Without This Badass Woman' (02/06/2015c); a post discussing stunt woman Dayna Grant's role in the film *Mad Max: Fury Road*; and 'Laverne Cox Shares Her Thoughts on Caitlyn Jenner's Vanity Fair Cover'(02/06/2015e), a post discussing actress Lavern Cox's views on Vanity Fair's cover shoot of Caitlyn Jenner. By positioning feminism in relation to celebrity the source creates distance between the user of the source, and source itself.

Celebrities function within a public space. Although there are instances of persons having an "imagined intimacy" with celebrities (Greenwood & Long 2011), these relationships exist outside of a personal identity-facilitating framework. This is due in part to celebrities functioning as "nonthreatening, accessible, idealized surrogate attachment figures" (Greenwood & Long 2011,

p.280), which are discursively constructed in order to represent a desirable aspect to the concerned individual (Markham 2015); individuals will project what they desire in a friend or partner onto the celebrity in question. This effectively turns the celebrity subject into a commodity that can be fetishised. Furthermore, celebrities exist outside the ordinary and "reproduce the contemporary secular moral orders of status, fame, and reputation in every day life" (Ferris 2004, p.259). Effectively, celebrities become secular royalty. In this sense, there is a public-private divide that exists within the imagined intimacy of celebrity. Perceived intimacy felt with a celebrity is the result of a public relationship; this is not saying that these imagined relationships do not exist, simply that they are situated in relation to a celebrity's public identity. In the case the feminist ideas represented here, this will create discursive distance from the ideas developed by the source, as the ideas are situated in a celebrity other, who represents a public commodity. In this sense, the use of celebrity as a vehicle through which to communicate a feminist subjectivity will position ideas relating to a feminist identity within a public space, not a personal-private space. This means that a feminist political identity is being positioned within a public space, and removed from the personal, everyday aspects of daily life; feminist politics is effectively being turned into a media spectacle through positioning it vis-à-vis a celebrity subject. Instead, the political nature of feminist politics should be situated simultaneously in the private and the public. *Bust Magazine,* in this instance, discursively erase the private aspects of feminist politics through situating the politics via a celebrity subject.

By using celebrities as elite persons, the articles invoke an idea of newsworthiness. This is done through invoking the idea of "elite people", that is considered a news value within Western media (Phillips 2015, p.22). By placing elite people at the center of the

articles, the articles frame the content as being important within a particular cultural framework. This makes the issues raised within the articles meaningful due to their relationship with elite people. For example, in the article 'For the 87th Oscars, Let's #Askhermore', (17/02/2015) posted on *The Representation Project,* the article uses a scheduled celebrity event in order to create a discourse that challenges bodily surveillance by organising a twitter hashtag that encourages the "red carpet reporters" to ask more than just questions about women's dresses. Furthermore, the article on the model Ashley Graham that was discussed above also attempts to challenge ideas of bodily regulation. The article talks about how the term "plus-sized" made Ashley Graham feel like "an outsider" within the modelling industry, and because of this, the term should be done away with (*Bust Magazine* 02/06/2015b). Although Ashley Graham's position is within an industry that disciplines the body (Mears 2008), through challenging the idea of plus sized models, she challenges certain ideas about how the body should appear; at least within the "institutional beauty myth" that modeling reinforces (Mears 2008 p.453). Through the way that these articles position celebrities in relation to feminist ideas, it makes the issues appear more news worthy, and therefore, it gives them increased potential to be seen.

Although celebrities can facilitate interest in a topic, they develop a discursive distance with the reader of the source through their position within popular culture. The use of celebrity to construct a narrative is in itself a discursive tool as "[c]elebrities exist to act out various styles of living" (Debord 1983, para.60) as they pass "into the spectacle as a model for identification" (Debord 1983, para.61). Moreover, research exploring celebrity advocacy in relation to social issues claims it does not work well (Thrall et al. 2008) with a potential reason being that celebrities function as "floating signifiers" (Markham 2015, p.476) in which pre-conceived

ideas that an individual holds about the celebrity will determine their reaction to what they are advocating; in this sense, the reader could be relating the fabula produced by the text to their own personal fabula that makes sense of their personal experience. In this case, readers will not identify themselves with the celebrities, but with the narratives that surround the celebrities. Furthermore, by *Bust Magazine* positioning feminism in relation to celebrity, it discursively erases issues relating to "working conditions that better accommodate[d] familial responsibilities, better day-care options, or an equitable distribution of domestic responsibilities" (Lachover 2013, p.136). This is accomplished by crafting a narrative that identifies feminist ideas through celebrities – people who are wealthy – and therefore, do not have problems in relation to the economic system of exchange. Because of this, the discourse of feminism produced by *Bust Magazine* does not encourage identification with certain discourses of feminism; it encourages identification with celebrities as they become "a model for identification" (Debord 1983, para.61). This has the effect of discursively removing the everyday struggles that women face from the narrative of the text in spite of the text invoking feminist concepts. Because of this, any feminist identification that occurs within *Bust Magazine* is discursively distanced from the reader of the source's experiences of the everyday.

Jezebel also uses celebrity as a vehicle through which to communicate a feminist narrative. Of the ten texts selected for this analysis from *Jezebel*, six of them focused on celebrity. The six articles that focused on celebrity were, 'Jessica Lange Will Gladly take Your Caitlyn Jenner Comparisons' (01/06/2015a); an article discussing Jessica Lange's reaction to being compared to Caitlyn Jenner, '*Vanity Fair* Pulled a Beyonce to Keep Caitlyn Jenner's Cover Under Wraps' (01/06/2015c); an article discussing *Vanity*

Fair's, Caitlyn Jenner cover, 'Want to Get Paid $250,000 to Wear a Dress? Become an A-list Celebrity' (01/06/2015d); a post talking about celebrities getting paid to wear and endorse clothes, 'Gather Round and Let's Discuss the *Outlander* Season Finale' (01/06/2015e); an article discussing television series *Outlander,* 'Oh No! Sofia Coppola Dropped Out of the Live Action Little Mermaid' (02/06/2015a); an article discussing film maker, Sofia Coppola's decision to withdraw from the live action *Little Mermaid* film, and 'Keeping up With the Kontinuity Errors: How Long has Kim Been Pregnant' (02/06/2015e); a post discussing the television series, *Keeping up with The Kardashians* and Kim Kardashian's pregnancy. This has the effect of discursively creating distance between the feminist ideas invoked in the source, and the reader of the source. In this case, *Jezebel*'s positioning of feminism is similar to *Bust Magazine.* By using celebrity as a vehicle through which to talk about feminism, the sources discursively remove other voices that might highlight issues women have. Celebrities do not have issues in relation to access to health care or access to safe birthing environments due to their proximity to wealth. Therefore, by positioning feminism in relation to celebrities, *Bust Magazine* and *Jezebel* discursively remove issues that non-celebrities – working class women for example – may experience, thus, issues such as safe birthing environments are removed from a narrative that represents itself as feminist; this is particularly true of *Bust Magazine* as the text uses the signifier 'feminist' multiple times. Through positioning feminism in relation to celebrity, the sources create discursive distance between feminism as a signifier and feminist issues that affect many women's daily life.

The five sources of international feminism selected for this research vary in the manner and the extent to which they produce identity. *The Fbomb* and *Feministe* produce a narrative that

facilitates identification with the source. This is done by situating knowledge within the text and producing a narrative that highlights the political aspects of personal life. *The Representation Project* created a discourse of togetherness, however, this discourse was undermined by the narrative that created distance between the user of the source and the source itself. Furthermore, *The Representation Project* focused on public, rather than private events, further distancing itself from the realm of daily life. *Bust Magazine* and *Jezebel* invoked feminist ideas through celebrity. This created discursive distance as it removes certain women's issues from a narrative that identifies as feminist. However, given that *Jezebel* and *Bust Magazine* were the two most popular sources included in the sample – first and fifth in ranking respectively – the discursive distance from feminist identification, and fixation on celebrity, could be explained through the need to be competitive within a marketplace. For-profit feminist organizations are subject to extra-media forces. This may affect the content produced by such sources as they have to pander to a larger audience within a marketplace (D'Enbeau & Buzzanell 2013); this could dilute the feminist message within the source itself. Ultimately, only two of the five sites produce a narrative that could actively facilitate a personal identification with the source.

International Feminist Sources and Gendered Myths

All five of the sources challenge mythic ideas relating to gender to differing extents. The most noticeable idea challenged is that of the regulatory systems ascribed to the woman's body. In *The Fbomb,* issues relating to body regulation can be seen explicitly in the articles 'Why Sexist Dress Codes Have Got to Go' (*The Fbomb,* 20/5/2015), and 'The Problem With 'Strong is the New Skinny' (13/5/2015). In the first of these articles, the author states "[s]top policing my body", and then creates a personal narrative in which her experience with bodily regulation is explored. The narrative

produced by the text includes instances of the author "being taken aside one day" to "have [her] skirt measured with a ruler", and how learning to "police [her] body" had "become a detrimental habit" (*The Fbomb*, 20/5/2015). In the second article, the author highlights issues of bodily regulation in terms of changing perceptions of feminine attractiveness. She produces a narrative that explains the way beauty ideals have changed from "the Italian Renaissance" to the modern "shift in standards of beauty" and argues that that "beauty" has "always been determined in relation to patriarchal standards" (The Fbomb, 13/5/2015). The narrative produced across both these texts highlights the historical nature of western societies to produce various "regimen[s] for the body" that define how the body should be maintained (Foucault 1990c, p.133). Through producing a discourse that highlights how women's bodies are regulated, the narrative produced by *The Fbomb* challenges the myths surrounding the woman's body. As was discussed in the first chapter, gender myths serve to regulate the social construction of bodies. Through challenging the social construction of the gendered body, the narrative produced by *The Fbomb* challenges the "regulatory norm" (Butler 2004, p.53) of gender. By producing a narrative that challenges the "regulatory norm" of gender, coupled with the personal narratives produced by the source, *The Fbomb* facilitates a feminist identification that not only challenges the myths of gender, but attempts to make their history social, and therefore, a site of contestation. Effectively, *The Fbomb* creates a narrative and a discourse in which Barthesian (2012) myths can be contested.

Issues relating to bodily regulation are challenged in the other four sources through the use of celebrity as a discursive vehicle. Within the sample of ten texts, *Feministe* highlights issues relating to bodily regulation once; this is done through the experience of the celebrity Scarlett Johansson. The article 'The Pressing

Question of Scarlett Johansson's Underwear' (01/05/2015), talks about an interview in which Scarlett Johansson was asked if she wears any underwear under her outfit for her role as Black Widow in *The Avengers* films. Although in this article there is a focus on the experience of Scarlett Johansson, the narrative produced by the article does leave discursive space for the reader. The article does this through the rhetorical question that asks "who among us hasn't encountered the guy who" thinks it is appropriate "to ask us about your underpants in a professional setting?" (*Feministe* 01/05/2015). Through asking this question the source attempts to relate the experiences of Scarlett Johansson to the readers of the source. However, given the extra-ordinary position of celebrities within popular culture, an identification with the source itself may not occur. Instead, as was discussed above, Johansson's position as a celebrity could create discursive distance between this event and everyday events. In this instance, Scarlett Johansson acts out "a model for identification" (Debord 1983, para.61) that is discursively removed from the everyday experiences of most people. This effectively means that there are discursive elements at play in the article on Johansson that limit how the article challenges Barthesian (2012) myths.

The Representation Project, like *Feministe,* also uses celebrity as a vehicle through which to discuss body regulation. The article '"Frozen" Star's Powerful Message About Body Image', quotes *Frozen's* voice actress, Kirsten Bell, as saying "'I'm not a woman whose self-worth comes from her dress size'" (19/03/2015). The article then develops the ideas of the quote by saying "body ideals have profound effects on our self-perception" and expands this further to highlight the need of developing "media literacy from a young age" (19/03/2015). In this case, the article produces a discourse that relates the idea of a body ideal to media literacy. By doing this, the text highlights the social aspects of body ideals;

however neither this article, nor the article from *Feministe* explore the history of regulatory regimes in the same way as the article from *The Fbomb* discussed above. Both of the articles from *Feministe* and *The Representation Project*, through the use of the celebrity as a signifier, reinforce certain body regimes discursively. This is because celebrities themselves act as a reference point in regards to the body. Celebrities, through their proximity to fashion and celebrity culture, create an "aesthetic economy" in which they serve to act out the "aesthetic commodity" (Entwistle 2002, p.337). In this sense the celebrities become the very aesthetic economy that the articles attempt to challenge. In the case of the Scarlet Johansson article in *Feministe*, and the Kirsten Bell article in *The Representation Project*, the media ideals that regulate bodies are being challenged by bodies that represent the media ideal of the body, which discursively privileges the body that represents the media ideal; this is done as the narrative gives a voice to, or shows identification with, bodies that represent the media ideal. This could serve to explain why women believed that they would be happier if their body conformed to media ideals (Engeln-Maddox 2006). Therefore, a narrative that privileges the media ideal body discursively reinforces ideas about the ideal body; this is apparent in the case of the Scarlet Johansson article (*Feministe* 01/05/2015), and the Kirsten Bell article as it attempts to communicate that "body ideals have profound effects on our self-perception" (*The Representation Project,* 19/03/2015) by using a body that represents that very ideal.

Jezebel and *Bust Magazine* both discuss issues relating to body regulation. In the *Jezebel* sample, two articles raised issues relating to bodily regulation; the two articles were 'Musician Arca Banned Because Instagram Can't Handle Anatomical Vaginas" (01/06/2015b), and 'Catholic School Withholds Diploma Over Girl's Footwear Choice' (02/06/2015b). In the first of these two

articles, the discourse of the texts highlights issues of the way that Instagram regulates bodies. This discourse is highlighted as the text states that it is "well documented that Instagram's nudie policy is often deployed in the service of censoring women's bodies and, more specifically, a certain type" (*Jezebel* 01/06/2015b). The text then uses the experience of photographer Petra Collins, who was banned for sharing an image of herself in a bikini with an unshaven bikini line. The second of these articles creates a narrative that highlights the regulatory nature of dress codes; in this sense, it discusses the same issues that were discussed in *The Fbomb* post, 'Why Sexist Dress Codes Have got to Go' (20/5/2015) above. The narrative in this article tells how "Rachel" was denied the right to graduate because she wore "black sneakers to graduation" as she "opted not to wear high heels". In both of these articles from *Jezebel,* the nature of bodily regulation is discussed, however, they do not challenge the social position of bodily regulation, or explore the emotional consequences that it may entail, or the history of bodily regulation and body ideals. In this sense, the discourses produced within these two articles do not substantively challenge the myths that maintain bodily regulation within a society.

Bust Magazine also engages with the idea of bodily regulation. This is present in the articles '#FirstHarrassed Is Gathering The Stories of Catcalls Around the Globe' (01/06/2015a), and 'This Mom's Facebook Letter to the Man Who Shamed Her For Breastfeeding is Right On' (01/02/2015c). The first of these authors discusses the twitter hashtag exploring when women first encountered street harassment. It uses tweets that utilise the hashtag to develop a narrative that highlights the prevalence of street harassment. The article even states that "[r]ape culture begins early" and that from "a babysitter's house to a junior high paper route, anywhere can be a site where girls and women fall

privy to unwanted sexual attention" (01/06/2015a). By invoking the idea of rape culture, the article does engage with myths about gender and sexuality. Furthermore, by stating that it "begins early" it challenges assumptions that aggressive masculine sexuality is natural. By doing this, the article does challenge certain Barthesian myths (2012) about gender. The second article also challenges ideas about natural sexuality that are imposed onto the woman's body. This is accomplished by quoting a woman who was publically shamed for breastfeeding when she states "[i]t is society that sexualizes [breasts]. Children do no sexualize breasts until they are taught to do so" (*Bust Magazine* 01/06/2015c). By including this quote in the narrative, the article challenges assumptions about sexuality that are imposed onto breasts, instead, it highlights the social nature of sexuality by stating that children are "taught" to sexualise breasts; this also serves to challenge the practice of masculinity that positions masculine sexuality through a woman's body (Quinn 2002). By challenging the way the woman's body is positioned vis-à-vis masculine sexuality, this article challenges ideas about the bodily regulation applied to the woman's body. Through doing this, *Bust Magazine* engages with discourses that attempt to discursively make history a site of contestation.

Although both *Jezebel,* and *Bust Magazine* engage with ideas pertaining to bodily regulation, they create a contradictory narrative that reinforces bodily regulation through the use of celebrities. Of the ten articles selected from the source *Jezebel,* six of them are focused on either celebrity or fashion. These six articles are: 'Jessica Lange Will Gladly Take Your Caitlyn Jenner Comparisons' (01/06/2015a), 'Musician Arca Banned Because Instagram Can't Handle Anatomical Vaginas' (01/06/2015b), '*Vanity Fair* Pulled a Beyoncé to Keep Caitlyn Jenner's Cover Under Wraps' (01/06/2015c), 'Want to Get Paid $250,000 to Wear a

Dress? Become an A-List Celebrity' (01/06/2015d), 'Oh No! Sofia Coppola Dropped Out of the Live Action Little Mermaid' (02/06/2015a), and 'Keeping Up With the Kontinuity Errors: How Long Has Kim Been Pregnant' (02/06/2015e). Meanwhile, six of the ten articles from *Bust Magazine* invoke ideas relating to celebrity and fashion. These six articles are: 'Her Name Is Caitlyn Jenner and She is Absolutely Stunning' (01/06/2015b), 'These Gals Were the Fashion Goddesses of Afropunk Paris' (01/06/2015d), 'Model Ashley Graham on Why We Should do Away With "Plus Size"' (02/06/2015b), ''Mad Max' Wouldn't Have Been Possible Without This Badass Woman' (02/06/2015c), 'Laverne Cox Shares Her Thoughts on Caitlyn Jenner's Vanity Fair Cover' (02/06/2015e), and 'How Mark Ruffalo Became A Feminist Internet Phenomenon Even if He Says He's Not' (02/06/2015f). What is consistent across these articles is the positioning of celebrity, or fashion within them. Furthermore, unlike the example from *Feministe* mentioned above, the framing of these articles does not leave discursive space for the reader. Instead, *Jezebel* and *Bust Magazine* create a frame that develops discursive distance through not positioning the author within the text; this creates a discourse that highlights these issues as public, rather than personal. In addition to what was discussed above, by doing this the sources practice discourse in a manner that reinforces certain forms bodily regulation.

The narratives produced by *Jezebel* and *Bust Magazine* reinforce bodily regulation through their positioning of celebrity and fashion. Celebrity culture serves as a regulatory device for young women (Jackson & Vares 2015). In this case, the feminist celebrity becomes the regulated feminist subject. By creating a regulated feminist subject, the sources discursively practice a form of bodily regulation in and of themselves. By using celebrity and fashion as vehicles through which to invoke a feminist subjectivity, the

sources invoke "an institutionalized beauty myth that enforces women's subordinate status by rendering their value as objects to be used for visual pleasure" (Mears 2008, p.453). This point can be demonstrated through the way in which the sources discuss Caitlyn Jenner's recent transformation. In the *Jezebel* article 'Jessica Lange Will Gladly Take Your Caitlyn Jenner Comparisons' (01/06/2015a), the focus on beauty myths can be seen through language use like "[s]tunners are as stunners do". Similar language is also present in *Bust Magazine.* In the article 'Her Name Is Caitlyn Jenner and She is Absolutely Stunning' (01/06/2015b), the language used within the article highlights Jenner's appearance. The article makes statements like "the stunning Caitlyn Jenner", "[n]ot only does she look phenomenal", and "Caitlyn Jenner is absolutely beautiful, inside and out" along with the title of the article referring to Caitlyn Jenner as "absolutely stunning". Through Jenner's position as a celebrity, her being positioned in relation to feminist issues, and the way the articles make reference to her appearance, the sources reinforce bodily regulation through a regulated feminist subject. Furthermore, the positioning of celebrities as a regulated feminist subject removes issues that are not regulated within the represented subject. For example, persons with fluid sexuality and gender identities are more likely to experience a high suicidality and mental health problems throughout their lives (Everett 2015). Issues of privilege are mentioned briefly when the article 'Laverne Cox Shares Her Thoughts on Caitlyn Jenner's *Vanity Fair* Cover' (*Bust Magazine* 02/06/2015e) quotes Laverne Cox saying, "'[m]ost trans folk don't have the privileges Caitlyn and I now have'". Although this highlights issues of discrepancies between Jenner and Cox, and others who identify as transgender, the article does not explore what these issues are, and how these issues impact upon the lives of transgender people. By not engaging with these issues, while highlighting issues of privilege, it regulates the feminist

subjectivity in relation to transgender rights by what it includes and excludes within the narrative of the text. Ultimately, this regulates what issues relate back to a feminist identity through positioning the regulated feminist subject in relation to certain issues, and not other issues.

This regulation of the feminist subject limits the scope of the discourses and narratives that can be developed. Through the use of the regulated feminist subject that is developed by the discourse produced by both *Bust Magazine* and *Jezebel,* structural issues of "affordable housing, real living wages, and access to quality child and medical care" (Lott & Bullock 2007, p.94) are removed from a feminist sensibility. Furthermore, *The Representation Project* and *Feministe* also use celebrity in a manner that limits the scope of the discourse that the sources can develop in regards to bodily regulation. Through using celebrity women, who are positioned within Western culture as defining and establishing beauty norms within an aesthetic economy, these texts may discursively reinforce a "cultural practice [that] constructs women as objects for" viewing pleasure (Moor 2010, p.116). This is particularly true in cases that reference ideas relating to fashion and modeling. *Bust Magazine* makes reference to fashion in the article 'These Gals Were the Fashion Goddesses of Afropunk Paris' (01/06/2015d), and modeling in the article 'Model Ashley Graham on why we Should do Away With "Plus-Size"' (02/06/2015). As was argued above, fashion plays a role in creating an aesthetic economy (Entwistle 2002), and the aesthetic economy produced regulates ideas pertaining to the body. Furthermore, 'plus-sized' models work within a discipline that has "an active role in molding cultural constructions of fatness" (Czernaiwski 2012, p.147). So through Ashley Graham's role as a 'plus-sized' model within the fashion industry, she still functions in a manner that regulates the body; this is further apparent as 'plus-size' is also "predominantly

white or light skinned" (Czernaiwski 2012, p.148). The regulation of bodies is a fundamental aspect of modeling as it reproduces "an institutionalized beauty myth" that positions women "as objects to be used for visual pleasure" (Mears 2008, p.453). Through reinforcing an institutionalised beauty myth while also attempting to adopt a feminist subjectivity, these sources position feminism in a manner that makes it reflect dominant ideas of femininity. By doing this "the window of opportunity for shaping alternatives to the dominant emphasized femininity may" become restrained (Williams 2002, p.47). Therefore, the texts regulate the feminist subject in a manner that reinforces a particular identity; in the case of these articles that focus on celebrity, this identity is generally a white middle class identity.

Nuanced Feminist Discourses and Narratives

Although the use of celebrity and fashion regulates a feminist subjectivity, it still has an effect of publicising feminist ideas. However, by using celebrities within these articles, the sources privilege certain people while they exclude others. The sources' narratives do this by including ideas that pertain largely to white middle class women, while ideas that effect black and working class women are discursively erased. This could be due to ideological forces that define the way in which a large-scale publication has to function within a marketplace. In order to ensure that the publication remains profitable, a certain ideological position needs to be adhered to in order to ensure that the publication is popular (D'Enbeau & Buzzanell 2013). Furthermore, history has been told in relation to elite persons (Khan 2012), therefore, positioning feminist ideas in relation to elite persons does not challenge historical narratives. Celebrities cannot facilitate revolutionary language that attempts to make history into a social site of contestation due to their role as elite persons and their privileged position in relation to history;

celebrities discursively reinforce historical norms by representing the elite person through which history has been told through. By doing this, the sources that use celebrities as a vehicle through which to construct a feminist subjectivity do so in a manner that privileges dominant groups within a society.

The discourse of feminism that is presented by the sources that engage with celebrity-feminist subjects could be broadly defined as 'liberal feminism'. Although the discourse presented by these sources might benefit women in positions of relative privilege, it does not benefit women who are in disadvantaged positions in society. This happens because "Liberal feminism supports a political agenda" that identifies the "formal equality between the sexes" as being "sufficient to eliminate the male-female inequality without the resort to any intervening or affirmative action or policies" (Chegew 2014, p.68). Liberal feminism then, does not address issues of inequality that are the result of race or class within a capitalist system (Mohanty 2003). This is due to popularised feminism traditionally being linked to women who are "well off, well educated, and white" representing someone who is "well positioned vis-à-vis the liberal order" (Sa'ar 2005, p.686). This can be seen within the three sources that employ celebrities as a vehicle through which to communicate feminist ideas. Within the sample for *The Representation Project, Bust Magazines,* and, *Jezebel* the terms 'sexism' or 'sexist' are never used within the articles. This could be due to the term 'sexism' not having legitimacy within the dominant liberal paradigm in which these sources operate within (Sa'ar 2005, p.690). This, as was argued above, creates a regulated feminist subjectivity that is placed within a liberal framework that is historically associated within a "well off, well educated, and white" (Sa'ar 2005, p.686) positioning in relation to identity. Although this position of feminist identity may benefit those who occupy this liberal position, it does not

necessarily help those who fall outside of a liberal identity.

Furthermore, groups that fall outside of this liberal position may participate in what Sa'ar (2005) refers to as the "liberal bargain" (p.681). The liberal bargain occurs when individuals who exist outside of the dominant liberal culture adopt the dominant culture at the expense of their identity as "the liberal bargain reduces the power of" non-hegemonic identities to create a "critical social consciousness" (p.689-90). This is problematic as "[d]istancing oneself from... socially devalued groups" impacts upon "identity and self-concept" as well as limiting "political mobilization" (Lott & Bullock 2007, p.84). The liberal bargain can be seen in the articles focused on Caitlyn Jenner (*Jezebel* 01/06/2015a; 01/06/2015b, *Bust Magazine* 01/06/2015) and Laverne Cox (*Bust Magazine* 02/06/2015). In this case, these two transgender celebrities have taken on the liberal bargain, and in the process, created discursive distance from themselves and the transgender community. This is apparent in the way that none of the articles that make reference to either Jenner or Cox mention the greater communities in which they are a part of. Instead, they are placed within the narratives produced by the articles as individuals. Jenner and Cox in this case are part of a narrative that reinforces "an individualized politics of selfhood" (Budgeon 2015, p.307) that conforms to a liberal feminist position through the omissions of the transgender community they are seen to represent. Through this process, the sources construct a liberal feminist discourse through the way that the narratives are positioned in relation to transgender celebrities.

By positioning liberal feminism through the celebrity subject, *The Representation Project, Bust Magazine,* and *Jezebel* discursively erase ideas relating to intersectional feminism from the narrative produced. Intersectional feminism is a discourse of feminism that attempts to place women's oppression within a

wider framework that includes other modes of oppression (Carbin & Edenheim 2013; Walby, Armstrong & Strid 2012). This discourse of feminism is more visible in *Feministe* and *The Fbomb*. In *Feministe,* the articles 'Links: In, Around, and About Baltimore' (28/04/2015); an article on the protests in Baltimore following the death of a black man at the hands of police, and 'Cop Who Killed Rekia Boyd Acquitted of all Charges' (21/04/2015); an article about how the police officer that killed Rekia Boyd was found "not guilty of involuntary manslaughter", created discourses on racism within the narrative of the source; this is further exemplified as the source posted these articles under a "racism" tag. In *The Fbomb,* intersectional issues are discussed in the articles 'What You Need to Know About the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act' (01/06/2015), and 'Breaking Down Gender Stereotypes About Mental Illness' (18/05/2015). In the first of these two articles, when discussing issues relating to human trafficking, the author highlights the issues of "economic stability" in human trafficking victims and that it "is imperative that funds are available to victims" to help them "recover from past trauma". The discourse used within the article highlights issues of poverty that play a role in human trafficking. Although human trafficking can be viewed as a gendered issue as 70% of all trafficking victims are women or under-aged girls (UNODC 2014, p.29) while 62% of suspected traffickers are men (p.27), those who were the victims of human trafficking identified "everyday experiences of poverty" as a factor that "forced them to migrate" (Russell 2014, p.543). By including issues of "economic stability" in a narrative about human trafficking, the article creates a discourse that highlights issue of poverty in relation to human trafficking. By including issues of poverty, the article creates a discourse that is intersectional as it includes issues that relate to class in a narrative on gendered issues.

The second of the articles listed above from *The Fbomb on* stereotypes and mental illness (18/05/2015) creates an intersectional discourse through relating gendered issues with mental health issues. The article does this by creating a discourse that highlights the stereotypes that surround mental illness and gender. It does this by using language that encourages readers to "challenge false assumptions about depression" and "fight the stigma" of mental illness. These issues, although not specifically gendered, are important as "[d]iscrimination, abuse and incarceration of the mentally ill" still occurs in some form in most parts of the world (World Health Organization 2013, p.9). Furthermore, mental health issues make up 10% of the total burden of disease worldwide, and are expected to account for the loss of $16 trillion USD over the next 20 years (World Health Organization 2013, p.7). By including issues relating to mental health in the narrative, the article creates a discourse that is intersectional in nature. Coupled with the article on human trafficking, *The Fbomb* can be understood as facilitating a narrative that creates an intersectional discourse.

International Feminism's Splintered Identity

The five sources of international feminism that were selected for analysis in this research can be seen to be practicing discourse in different ways. The different discourses of feminism are subtle in their variation as they attempt to create a narrative that makes sense of experience. In general terms, the two discourses that are developed within these texts could be broadly defined as liberal and intersectional feminisms. The two different modes of feminism identifiable here practice discourse in different ways. The liberal discourse of feminism can be seen in the sources *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, and The Representation Project* while the intersectional discourse of feminism is identifiable in the sources *The Fbomb and Feministe.* Interestingly, according the to the *Alexa* rankings,

Jezebel, Bust Magazine, and *The Representation Project* were ranked 1st, 5th, and 15th in the sample respectively at the time they were ranked. It appears that – at least with *Jezebel* and *Bust Magazine* - that their position within the marketplace may have an effect on their content. Two reasons could account for this. Their popularity could be due to them either reinforcing dominant ideological liberal ideas surrounding politics and feminism, or having to conform to liberal ideas surrounding politics and feminism to maintain an audience. According to Herman & Chomsky (1994), media content is subject to issues of ownership and profit incentive. In the case of *Jezebel,* their parent company *Gawker Media* (*Jezebel* 11/08/2014) had a US$45 million net revenue in 2014 (Sterne 2015). Furthermore, *Bust Magazine* sells advertising space within its magazine (*Bust Magazine* n.d.). This profit incentive that the two sources have could explain why greater issues relating to race and class are not mentioned, and instead they participate in the "liberal bargain" (Sa'ar 2005, p 681). By accepting the 'liberal bargain' the sources remove oppositional narratives, and maintain a very liberal-white-middle class position in their discourse of feminism.

In *The Fbomb,* and *Feministe,* content could be less affected by commercial interests. *Feminste* and *The Fbomb* ranked 10th and 20th in the *Alexa* rankings respectively; in this case, they ranked lower than both *Jezebel* and *Bust Magazine*. There is no evidence of attempts to sell advertising and no information available on the corporate interests of the blogs. This means that the sources have less pressure placed on their content by a profit incentive. This occurs because the sources are not attempting to attract advertisers in order to gain a profit. In this sense, *The Fbomb* and *Feminste* are "situated much more clearly in opposition to" more mainstream forms of media (Gibbs 2003, p.602). Because of being more clearly situated in opposition to profit driven media, *The*

Fbomb and *Feminste* are situated in a discursive position that would allow for the facilitation of a counterpublic outside of market influence. Of the five international feminist sources chosen for analysis, *The Fbomb* and *Feministe* are the ones that practice discourse in a manner that is most likely to invoke a revolutionary language and challenge Barthesian (2012) myths. Furthermore, by there not being financial incentives in the sources, they are in a position where the content will not be affected by profit motives, and therefore, are in a better position to create discursive unity within their narratives. This can be seen as the sources both appear to adhere to a discourse that could be described as "intersectional" as they engage with issues relating to gender. This could be due to the sources' not having financial pressures that may affect their content.

The five sources analysed in the sample appear not to have discursive unity across them. Instead, the way in which discourse is practiced across the sources is nuanced, with some using a liberal feminist discourse, and others using a discourse that could be described as intersectional. Part of the reason for this could be the financial issues discussed above. Alternatively, this could indicate an ideological splinter in relation to feminist discourses. These discursive differences within the feminist texts appear to indicate that identity is practiced differently across different feminist positionings. Although the sources can be seen engaging with the Barthesian (2012) myths that underpin cultural understandings of gender, there is little in the way of language that challenges these myths. One area where there appears to be consistency across the five sources is challenging the ideas of bodily regulation. However, the five sources challenge the ideas of bodily regulation through different discursive practices. Ultimately, the five sources could be understood as practicing discourse in different ways.

Through the sources practicing discourse in different ways, the discursive unity required in order to produce a community of practice may not occur. Due to the discursive competition in defining ideas relating to feminism, there is no sense of discursive unity between the sources. The feminist sources discussed here fail to produce a single shared understanding of social reality that creates a sense of identity, leading to discursive unity, and ultimately, a community of practice (Stapleton 2001; Tusting 2005). Due to these sources not having a discursive unity, the social reality explained by the sources will differ, meaning that a greater meta-feminist identity is not existent across the sources. Instead, the sources use different methods for explaining social reality such as relating feminism to capitalism or using celebrity as a means to communicate a feminist subjectivity. This could ultimately lead to different social practices defining reality (Van Leeuwen & Wodak 1999) across the sources, creating a space in which multiple feminist discourses and identities compete for power within a feminist space. This may represent a plurality of ideas in relation to feminism, having the effect of causing conflict around the very meaning of the term 'feminism' itself. Through having a lack of discursive unity, and nuanced associations with the term feminism, it turns the term feminism into a site of contestation. This could mean that a single discursive practice that would identify a community of practice may not be present.

Instead of a single community of practice being developed through the use of the signifier feminist, two generalised counterpublics are being developed within the present sample. Within these two counterpublics, that both claim the term feminist, different ideas are used in order to associate with different aspects of reality. The sources that could be described as being intersectional in their feminism relate issues of gendered oppression to issues of racism and class (*Feminste* and *The*

Fbomb), while liberal ideas of feminism relate only to issues of womanhood and appear to celebrate wealth (*The Representation Project, Jezebel* and*, Bust Magazine).* It is worth noting that this does not mean that there is no crossover of ideas, but that the general narratives produced by the sources reinforce specific discursive positions. This appears to indicate that there is a splinter within feminist subjectivities that make it difficult to create a single discursive practice. Through there not being a single discursive practice, there is not an identifiable regime of truth (Foucault 2005) present across the five international sources of feminism analysed here. Although there may be language that challenges certain myths within the sources, there is not a single unified discursive practice. Because of this, the sources of international feminism analysed here do not develop a single feminist identity, but instead, can be seen as belonging to different nuanced feminist understandings and social constructions of social reality.

Chapter Three:

Alternative Media Sources of Feminism from Aotearoa-New Zealand: Identity across Multiple Discourses

Personal Feminist Identity

The five sources from the sample for local feminism based in Aotearoa-New Zealand all produced personal narratives articulating a feminist identity. However, the personal accounts articulating feminism differed in the nature of the discourses and narratives used to describe social reality. Personal accounts claiming identity with and experiences of feminism are present in *What She Said*; the zine produced by The University of Canterbury Intersectional Feminist Society (FemSoc). In the two zines analysed for the purpose of this thesis, there is a section that appears once in '#My UC: Bigotry Free?' edition (*What She Said* 2014b) and three times in the 'Parliamentary Blues and Political Activism' edition (*What She Said* 2014a) titled 'What Feminism Means to Me'. In these sections, members of FemSoc describe their relationship with feminism. Three of the four 'What Feminism Means to Me' sections position the author within the text creating a personal relationship and situating the knowledge within a specific location (Haraway 1991). These sections function to create a personal narrative surrounding feminism. This can be seen through use of language that relates feminism back to a personal identity and understandings of reality. This is evident in the '#My UC Bigotry Free' edition when the author states that feminism is "important to me" and that feminism is "more than an idea – it is a way of taking part in the world in a way that endeavours to improve it" (*What She Said* 2014b, p.21). Personal engagement and identification is

also present in the 'Parliamentary Blues and Political Activism' edition. This can be seen through the way the author creates a narrative that describes her internalisation of societal expectations through her formative years until she was twenty and discovered that "life was more than just the expectations created by out of date and binding gender roles" (*What She Said* 2014a, p.7). This personal engagement is also present in this edition when another author states that feminism is, for her, "a way of life" (*What She Said* 2014a, p.13). Although the fourth of the 'What Does Feminism Mean to You' (*What She Said* 2014a, p.5) sections does not place the author within the text, it still produces a discourse that highlights a feminist identity through using the words "feminist" and "feminism", thus, making an identification with what these words represent. Furthermore, the fourth of these sections discusses everyday aspects of oppression "in the workplace, domestic life, or personal life" (*What She Said* 2014a, p.5), facilitating a discursive connection between the discussion on feminism and everyday activities. The section of the *What She Said* zine titled 'What Feminism Means to You' can be seen to create a narrative that positions feminism as a personal experience that is fundamentally part of the author's identity.

Narrative that constitutes a personal identification with feminism can be seen throughout *What She Said*. A narrative highlighting the political nature of daily life is apparent in the article 'Feminism Today: 120th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in Aotearoa/New Zealand' (*What She Said* 2014b, p.10-15). In this article, the author argues that they value the "personal over the political" and that feminism "articulated something for" her "about being heard" (*What She Said* 2014b, p.11). The author then states that feminism for her "is largely about stories, and articulating personal experience" (*What She Said* 2014b, p.11). The discourse practiced in this article articulates the personal nature of politics,

highlighting this through the author valuing personal experience and stories over politics. This emphasis on the personal can be seen in the article 'For Those Who Come After Us' (*What She Said* 2014a, p.10), when the author claims that she fights "for reproductive rights because [she] has needed them" and because she shares "a history of tragedy when they are denied" (*What She Said* 2014a, p.10). Not only does this highlight issues of reproductive rights as a feminist issue (hooks 2002), it also creates a personal narrative surrounding the need for such rights. This personal narrative highlights the very real, everyday lived experience that highlights the need for a politics of daily life. Furthermore, it facilitates an identity with this politics of everyday life by positioning the "history of tragedy" (*What She Said* 2014a, p10) in relation to the author who is positioned within the text. Through the discourse that highlights personal experiences, a narrative that facilitates identification with the text is developed.

The personal narratives in *What She Said* are positioned in relation to a feminist identity within the text. Positioning the personal narratives in relation to a feminist identity politicises the personal aspects of the source. Furthermore, some of the discourses produced by the source invoke ideas of community development. In the article 'Feminism in 2014: A Personal Year in Review', discourses of community and identity can be seen in a narrative that invokes ideas of the personal. The ideas of community can be seen through the author stating that "having a support network is essential" and that there "are so many more feminists than I thought there were" (*What She Said* 2014b p.8). The narrative produced in this article highlights the need for creating a feminist community that develops the importance of everyday, personal existence. These ideas surrounding community building are important as community development provides space for shared ideas, education, and trust to develop (Emejulu 2011;

Robson & Spence 2011). In relation to this, the article 'That's What She Said: Intersectional Feminist Day Conference' in *What She Said,* discusses a feminist day conference that had occurred stating the intention was "to provide a platform for feminist thought and discussion" (*What She Said* 2014b, p.3). Furthermore, in the 'Parliamentary Blues and Political Activism' edition of *What She Said,* there is a calendar outlining upcoming events being hosted by FemSoc (*What She Said* 2014a, p.13-14). The narratives created in *What She Said,* highlight ideas like "having a support network" (*What She Said* 2014b, p.8), providing a "platform for feminist thought and discussion" (*What She Said* 2014b, p.3), and the inclusivity and encouraged participation demonstrated by the calendar, indicate a discursive admission to the importance of community building. In this case, the narratives that are being produced in *What She Said* appear to invoke personal narratives in order to attempt to facilitate community ideas. Furthermore, there appears to be an attempt to facilitate a feminist mode of knowledge (Comack 1999). Through these community ideas, a feminist identity is present in the narrative of *What She Said.* Through the use of personal narratives and community discourses, a feminist identity situated within the personal is discursively developed through the source *What She Said.*

Personal narratives producing a feminist identity are less frequent in *Kate Magazine,* than they were in *What She Said. Kate Magazine* makes more "unlocatable… knowledge claims" (Haraway 1991, p.191) than *What She Said* as the author is positioned outside of the text regularly. Seven of the 22 features in the 2014 edition of *Kate Magazine,* place the author within the text while six of the 21 features in the 2013 edition feature the author within the text. This means that of the 43 features across the two editions of *Kate Magazine,* there were 13 features that placed the author within the text. In this case, *Kate Magazine* appears to be

representing the majority of the knowledge it produces through the "unmarked position of Man" (Haraway 1991, p.188). This could be damaging to the development of a feminist identity, as the knowledge produced is not marked as "feminist knowledge" and does not develop the idea that "women's lives [are] a political enterprise" (Comack 1999, p.291). Furthermore, by not developing a shared set of knowledge that is identifiable within the source, *Kate Magazine* may not create a discursive identity based in feminist ideas, meaning that the development of a feminist community may not be facilitated by this type of knowledge. However, with this said, the 13 features across the two magazines do create personal narratives that highlight everyday experiences.

The 13 features that position the author within the text in the sample from *Kate Magazine* create personal narratives about everyday life. The use of language in the 13 features creates a discourse around the lived experience of the author. This type of personal experience can be seen in the feature titled 'Born This Way?' (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.11). The article explores the experiences of the author in their realisation of their non-binary gender identity. The author outlines how they "identified with the term genderqueer" and how they went through "stages of fluidity" in regards to how they identified with gender (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.11). The understanding of gender that is developed in this feature is in accordance with the ideas developed by Judith Butler (1999; 2004) as the author is exploring the social conditions of gender, rather than using biological myths surrounding gender. In this case, use of personal narrative in the feature 'Born This Way?' challenges myths surrounding the ideas relating to gender regulation. The author defines and challenges these myths in their everyday practice in relation to their personal experience.

The use of personal narratives that highlight the nature of bodily regulation can also be seen in the feature 'Body of Dance'

(*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.24). In this feature the author talks about how her experiences as a dancer have taught her "to constantly critique [her] physical flaws" and that her "issues with body image from being a dancer have negatively affected" her "self-confidence and self-worth" (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.24-25). The narrative produced by this feature appears to mirror research conducted by Cosh *et al* (2011) surrounding the way in which athletes' bodies are regulated. The similarity between Cosh *et al*'s research and the author from *Kate Magazine* is the way that certain institutions have bodily regimens that determine appropriate body types; in the case of the author of 'Body of Dance', the institution is the dancing institution she was part of. Furthermore, the feature 'Unladylike' (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.21) also explores gendered disciplining through the use of personal experience. In this feature, the author explores her experiences as a child of being disciplined for engaging in behaviour that was "unladylike" (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.21). In both of these cases, the two separate authors are highlighting aspects of gender regulation through the use of their personal narratives. This creates a discourse that explores the political nature of the everyday regulation of the body.

The use of personal narratives in *Kate Magazine* creates identification with the text itself, however, this identification may be limited. In this case, the personal narratives present in *Kate Magazine,* develop an identity in a way that is similar to *What She Said.* However, *What She Said* positions the author within the text more frequently as 17 of the 26 features from the two copies of *What She Said,* analysed for the present study placed the author within the text; this is compared to the 13 of the 43 features of *Kate Magazine.* This indicates that the narratives produced by *Kate Magazine* are going to be less personal then those produced by *What She Said,* as the greater proportion of features produced by *What She Said* place the individual within the text, thus,

creating a personal identification through a discursive proximity positioning the reader closer to the authors; *Kate Magazine* creates greater discursive distance through frequently positioning the author as removed from the text. Removing the author from the text has the effect of discursively removing the ideas developed by the text from individual experience. In this case, although *Kate Magazine* does create personal narratives, for the most part, it positions feminist knowledge as removed from personal experience. This creates discursive distance from feminist politics, and the everyday lived experiences of people engaging with the source. Due to this distance, identification with *Kate Magazine,* may not be facilitated to a great extent. In the case of *Kate Magazine,* identity, personal experience, and feminist politics are discursively distanced from each other.

    Kate Magazine discursively distances identity, personal experience, and feminist politics from each other through the manner in which it produces knowledge. Through the use of "unlocatable... knowledge claims" (Haraway 1991, p.191), *Kate Magazine* positions some knowledge within an "unmarked position of Man" (Haraway 1991, p.188), while other knowledge is positioned within a personal space. The "unmarked position of Man" represents knowledge based within a public understanding of politics. Through uncritically adopting an unmarked knowledge position, *Kate Magazine* does not identify the gendered power dynamics of the public sphere (Sanli 2011). This creates a discursive divide as some of the knowledge claims within *Kate Magazine* are marked within the text, while others are unmarked. This creates discursive contestation within *Kate Magazine,* as knowledge becomes positioned in multiple locations vis-à-vis the location of the knowledge claims made by the text. Furthermore, through the internal framing of the personal narratives around unmarked knowledge claims – with approximately 70% of the

features in *Kate Magazine* positioned as unmarked – a distinctly feminist knowledge may not occur. This is due to the unmarked knowledge position being fixed within masculinity, which in turn is fixed within a public space. Although *Kate Magazine* may produce narratives surrounding a feminist politics, it is positioned within a masculine location due to the discursive mechanisms of the text. This produced discursive distance as feminism is being positioned within a historical masculine location through the "unmarked position of Man" (Haraway 1991, p.188). Thus, *Kate Magazine* creates discursive distance through positioning a feminist identity within an unmarked knowledge claim associated with a masculine public.

Personal narratives exploring the politics of everyday life are present in *The Hand Mirror. The Hand Mirror* positions the author in the text in seven of the ten blog posts. Of the sample selected for this analysis, the seven posts that position the author in the text are: 'Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones, But Verbal Banter Haunts Me' (28/05/2015), a post exploring the author's experiences with homophobia in women's sport; 'Wanted: Health Minister Who Reads Their Own Research' (25/05/2015), a post discussing the failings of the present government of Aotearoa-New Zealand in regards to transgendered issues; 'Fourth of Three' (17/05/2015), a post exploring the author's experience with pregnancy. 'Michfest Cuts Right Through to you Heart' (29/04/2015), a post discussing transphobic issues surrounding "Michigan Womyn's Music Festival", 'Power and ponytails' (28/04/2015), a post discussing the incident in which Aotearoa-New Zealand's Prime Minister (at the time of writing) John Key repeatedly pulled on a waitress' hair; 'Amanda Bailey is a Legend, or Victim Blaming, Protector of the Powerful' (23/04/2015), a post in which victim blaming is discussed in relation to Amanda Bailey – the waitress whose hair John Key repeatedly pulled; and 'Sexual

Harassment and the Nats' (22/04/2015), a post that discusses acts of sexual harassment committed by members of the National Government (at the time of writing). The posts cited above reference issues relating to the politics of *The Hand Mirror,* while positioning the author in the text. This could create a personal engagement with the politics of the source through the discursive proximity created through placing the author alongside the ideas developed in the texts, opening up a space in which the reader could identify with the text.

Narratives used in *The Hand Mirror* create a discourse that highlights the everyday political nature of the issues developed on the source. Aside from placing the authors within the text, the narrative develops ideas relating to everyday experiences in order to create a political discourse. The post 'Fourth of Three' (*The Hand Mirror* 17/05/2015), creates a discourse around the author's personal experience with childbirth. Although the narrative is not overtly political, the author does relate it back to her political work. This is apparent when the author talks about how she struggles with talking about her pregnancies "not because [she] had an abortion" as the readers may think "given [her] activity on that issue, but because [she] had an early miscarriage" (*The Hand Mirror* 17/05/2015). Although the author does not have a personal experience with abortion *per se,* her own experiences relating to reproductive issues inform her politics. In this case, the personal experiences on reproductive rights produced in this post create a similar narrative to the author of the article 'For Those That Come after Us' in *What She Said* (2014a p.10-11) discussed above. In both cases, personal narratives are used to create a personal identification with the text, and the political ideas represented within them; discourses surrounding reproductive rights. The narratives produced in this case function to highlight the political aspects of personal experience.

Narratives relating to the personal are present elsewhere in *The Hand Mirror*. In the post 'Sticks and Stones May Break my Bones, but Verbal Banter Haunts Me' (*The Hand Mirror* 28/05/2015), the author discussing homophobia within sport culture does so because they state that "it's my story too". This is also present in the post 'Mitchfest Cuts Right Through Your Heart' (*The Hand Mirror* 29/04/2015) as the author states that she "went to Michfest in the early 1990s" and draws on her personal experiences when discussing the issues surrounding transgender persons and the event. Although these stories may not necessarily relate the author's personal experience to the feminist ideas being developed in the source, it positions them alongside it, relating to these themes in a personal way. Through this personal engagement with the source, a personal identification with the text could be established, leading to a sense of identity with the source for the reader. This sense of identity with the source could create a personal discourse relating to the political ideas developed by the source, and ultimately create an identity relating to the politics of *The Hand Mirror*. Through the narratives of the personal that are produced in *The Hand Mirror,* identification with the source could be facilitated.

Mellow Yellow positions the author in the text similarly to *The Hand Mirror*. In the sample selected for *Mellow Yellow,* eight of the ten posts feature the author within the text. The eight posts that position the author in the text are: 'My Relationship with Poetry' (19/01/2015), a post exploring the author's relationship with poetry in relation to their politics; 'Sticks and Stones are Much Quicker Than Words' (14/10/2014), a post about the author's experience with domestic abuse; '#UptheAnti: Social Movements and Strategies for Smashing Oppression' (22/09/2014), a post that discusses the need to strategise new forms of political activism with an emphasis away from parliamentary politics; 'I Am

an Indigenous Person but I will Never Call Myself Palestinian'
(26/08/2014), a post discussing the events at a solidarity for
Palestine rally in which the author took part; 'Disbanding Melting
Pot Massacre: Some Reflections on Being in an Asian Feminist
Punk Band' (27/12/2013), a post on the author's experience
playing in a band and her thoughts on her experiences; 'Tau Iwi
People of Colour Supporting Tino Rangitiratanga' (08/02/2013), a
post that explores non-Maori people of colour and their position
within Aotearoa-New Zealand in relation to Maori rights;
'Conflicting Loyalties: Challenging White Orientalism and
Homophobia in Diasporic Communities' (04/05/2013), a post
discussing the double bind of dealing with racist ideas of
traditional Asian communities while dealing with the homophobia
that can exist within them; and 'Conversation on Colour Shame
(as an Asian Femme)' (23/04/2013), a post exploring whiteness as
the default construction of beauty, and the author's experience in
reconciling her Vietnamese ethnicity with these expectations. The
posts cited above relate the lived experience of the authors to the
politics that the source represents. Through this, they create a
personal narrative relating to the issues highlighted.

In addition to the author being situated within the texts, *Mellow
Yellow* produces narratives that could facilitate identification with
the source. This can be seen through the way *Mellow Yellow*
creates discourses that position the author in relation to the
political ideas developed within the source. This can be seen in the
posts 'My Relationship with Poetry' (19/01/2015), where the
author talks about their "choice of living in activism" in relation to
their personal life and how they navigate "through activist,
feminist and Muslim spaces"; 'I Am an Indigenous Person but I will
Never Call Myself Palestinian' (26/07-2015), where the author
talks about being "an activist that cares about both human and
non-human animal rights"; and 'Conversation on Colour Shame

(As an Asian Femme)' (23/04/2013), where the author identifies the effects of body disciplining through stating that she "was ashamed to be Asian, and [she] tried to hide it in many ways" and how she is "attempting to reclaim [her] self". The discourses produced in these examples relate the experiences of the authors to the politics that the source represents. This is evident in the first two examples as the authors are announcing their identities as activists while being positioned in the text. This could create identification with the activism that these authors represent through their position in the text and the narratives that they produce. The third of the above examples highlights individual experiences with bodily surveillance. It relates the negative impacts of bodily surveillance and how they can lead to self-surveillance and body dissatisfaction (Fitzsimmons-Craft et al 2015; Mercurio & Rima 2001), and more specifically, body shame in non-white, ethnically diverse women (Claudat, Warren & Durette 2012). This post appears to practice a similar discourse surrounding bodily regulation to the feature 'Body of Dance' in *Kate Magazine* (2014, p.24). In this case, both the example from *Kate Magazine,* and *Mellow Yellow* create personal narratives relating to regulatory systems of the body. In the case of *Mellow Yellow,* the narrative produced highlights the political nature of personal experience. This occurs through the source positioning its politics in relation to the personal narratives developed by the authors. It is through these personal narratives that *Mellow Yellow* could facilitate a political identity.

Unlike the sources discussed above, the use of personal narratives in *Cute Bruiser* are inconsistent. In the 2013 edition of the zine, four of the five features position the author within the text, while in the 2014 edition two of the six features position the author within the text. This indicates that the 2013 edition is more likely to produce narratives that highlight the political aspects of

everyday issues than the 2014 edition inferring to changes or inconsistencies with the way that narratives are produced within the text. These changes or inconsistencies could be problematic as they do not allow for a narrative to emerge across the source. In this case, it may be difficult for *Cute Bruiser* to develop a discourse that is specific to a certain community of practice (Stapleton 2001; Tusting 2005) due to the narrative differences across the source; the deployment of narrative may not facilitate "collective identity" or the development of "a coherent community" (Polletta 1998, p.422). Effectively, the inconsistent use of narratives in *Cute Bruiser* may affect the facilitation of identification with its politics.

In addition to inconsistencies in positioning the author in the text, the way that personal narratives are used in *Cute Bruiser* produce inconsistent discourses. The inconsistent discourses produced by the source may limit identification with the source itself. This can be seen in the feature 'Why Men Shouldn't Be Feminists' (*Cute Bruiser* 2014, p.26-31) when the author states that "[f]eminism was my word and my movement and when I saw him wearing that shirt, saying that he was a feminist, I felt like he was taking it away from me" (*Cute Bruiser* 2014, p.27). The discourse developed in this example does not encourage identity facilitation with the text. Although the author is situated within the text, and identifies with feminism, she does so in a manner that is exclusionary. Exclusionary discourses such as this can limit participation. In research exploring the generational divide in feminist activism, Schuster (2013) found that there was very little cross-generational activism. A reason she gave for this was the exclusionary methods that each generation used, which were not accessible for the other. Although Schuster's research does not look at discourse in its analysis, it is still useful in highlighting how exclusionary ideas may lead to limited involvement with a community. Another example of how discourse is used in an

inconsistent manner is in the feature 'Feminism is Basically an Ocean: An Essay in Two Parts' (*Cute Bruiser* 2013, p.12-24) where the author states that "[w]e're too afraid to recognise that the personal is political" (p.24). The idea that the "personal is political" runs through the very core of feminist ideas (Hanisch 1969), and to declare that 'we' are afraid to recognise this, indicates a reluctance to identify with feminist ideas. This could have the effect of creating discursive distance between the author, the reader, and feminist politics. The discursive distance created by *Cute Bruiser*'s use of discourse could mean that the source is unlikely to facilitate identification with the text itself. In the case of *Cute Bruiser,* the narratives produced through inconsistent discourses may limit the text's ability to facilitate a shared set of beliefs, and therefore, a community.

Specialised Language and Identity

In addition to discourses and narratives relating to daily life and personal experience, discourses highlighting the political nature of the sources are also present. In the source *What She Said,* the politics of the source can be seen through the way that certain technical language is used. This type of language can be seen in the 'About UC Femsoc' section where it states that there is an "emphasis on the concept of intersectionality" within the group (*What She Said* 2014b, p.2). This is also present in the feature titled 'That's What She Said: Intersectional Feminist Day Conference 2014' as the term "intersectional" is again used; intersectional in this case refers to an understanding of feminist politics that positions women's oppression within a broader framework that includes issues related to class and ethnicity (Carbin & Edenheim 2013; Walby, Armstrong & Strid 2012). Furthermore, terms like "positive consent" (*What She Said* 2014b, p.6); which refers to positive sexual engagement as opposed to coerced sex or unwanted consensual sex, "LGBQT+" (What She

Said 2014b, p.3); an acronym referring to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and trans community, "neo-liberal agendas" (*What She Said* 2014b, p.12); a term that refers to an economic system based in the deregulation of the market under the idea that the market operates in a "self-regulating manner" (Scott 1997, p.187), "bio-determinist principles" (*What She Said* 2014a, p.16); a term referring to the idea that gender is biologically positioned and that "gender-linked dispositions and capacities are embedded in the structures and fabric of human genes and brains" (Green 2004, p.431), and "[i]nstitutionalised racism" and "institutionalised sexism" (*What She Said* 2014a, p.19); terms used to describe the way that certain modes of oppression have become naturalised within the ideology of established institutions, all assume prior knowledge or understanding. Terms like the ones outlined here create a barrier to access for those engaging with the source; they assume prior knowledge or a prior understanding of what is being discussed. In this case, the source may function as a cultural artefact as there is a barrier to understanding the meaning of the content (Houkes 2006). Although the use of technical language may create barriers to access, the technical language does convey a sense of identity. In this case, the technical language used could reinforce a sense of identity to those who are already knowledgeable of what the terms mean.

Technical language that creates a barrier to understanding can also be seen in *Kate Magazine*. This is apparent in the title of the feature 'Miley Cyrus: Twerking, Slut-Shaming and Double Standards?" through the use of the term of "slut-shaming" (*Kate Magazine* 2013, p.5); a term used to describe the disciplining of women into appropriate gendered behaviour through "maligning women for presumed sexual activity" (Armstrong *et al* 2014, p.100). The term features in the title of the piece, however, it does not feature within the main body of writing itself. This appears to

frame the feature, and it assumes that readers are going to understand the content through the use of the term "slut-shaming"; in this instance, the term presupposes prior knowledge of its meaning. This is also present in an image on page six of the 2013 edition of *Kate Magazine* in a photo of a woman holding a sign that states: "I need feminism because I want to smash the Kyriarchy". Kyriarchy in this case refers to a conceptualisation of multiple axes of oppression that "may include race, ethnicity, religion, class, sexuality, gender, gender identity/expression/conformity, relationship status, ability, body type/size, age, colonial status, national identity and more" (Osborne 2015, p136-7). Other technical terms are present in *Kate Magazine* through the use of the terms "intersectional feminism" (2014, p.7), "postfeminism" (2014, p.8); a discourse that invokes feminism in a way that assumes equality between genders has been achieved, and ultimately creates a discursive repudiation of feminist politics (McRobbie 2007), "neoliberal" (2014, p.8), "genderqueer" (2014, p.11); a term referring to those who do not identify within the biological framework used to define gender, "glass ceiling" (2014, p.14); a term used to signify the way in which women in a career can only succeed to a certain point (Ezzedeen, Budworth & Baker 2015), "benevolent sexism" and "ambivalent sexism" (2014, p.16); forms of sexism that accepts women who perform traditional gendered behaviour correctly, but is unforgiving of non-traditional gendered behaviour (Koepke, Eyssel & Bohner 2014; Harris, Palazzolo & Savage 2012), and "neo-colonial" (2014, p.18); a term that is used to describe the economic colonialism that happens in a post-colonial environment. Similarly to the language used in *What She Said,* the language used in *Kate Magazine* creates barriers to access in regards to certain concepts developed throughout the source.

Technical terms are also present within *The Hand Mirror*.

However, they appear less frequently than in both *What She Said* and *Kate Magazine.* The first instance of technical language in *The Hand Mirror* can be seen through the statement: "It's increasingly obvious that transphobia, transmisogyny, gender policing and the institutionalised discrimination and stigma that people from marginalised genders experience kills" (*The Hand Mirror* 25/05/2015). In this statement, technical language that requires prior knowledge in order to understand can be seen through the terms "transphobia" and "transmisogyny"; terms that describe acts of prejudice against transgender persons, "gender policing"; a term that relates to the way in which society disciplines gender and, "institutionalised discrimination". The use of technical language can also be seen through the use of terms like "Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminism"; a form of feminism that excludes transgendered persons, and "cissexism"; a form a sexism against transgender persons, in the post 'Michfest Cuts Right Through Your Heart' (*The Hand Mirror* 29/04/2015). These two examples highlight how technical language is used within *The Hand Mirror,* however, the frequency in which it appears is less than in both *What She Said* and *The Hand Mirror.*

Technical language is also used in the blog *Mellow Yellow.* The use of technical language in *Mellow Yellow* is present in the post 'Conversations on Colour Shame (as an Asian Femme)' when the author states: "Darkness of skintone still plays into preconceived notions of savagery, primitivism, animalistic tendencies, and other exoticisms" (*Mellow Yellow* 23/04/2015). The use of terms like "savagery", "primitivism", "animalistic tendencies", and "exoticisms" are used here to communicate modes of racist discourse, however, they presuppose a level of knowledge as to what the terms represent. This kind of language is also present through the terms "white supremacist capitalist settler colonial heteropatriarchy" (*Mellow Yellow* 22/09/2014) and

"white supremacist Christian heteropatriarchy" (*Mellow Yellow* 14/10/2015) being used on two different occasions. This is a very specific use of language that is coded in a particular way, and relates to a particular form of oppression. Given that *Mellow Yellow* is produced by diasporic Asians living in Aotearoa-New Zealand, the use of language referenced above relates to their personal experiences of oppression. Technical terms like "non-human rights" *(Mellow Yellow 26/07/2014*) and "cultural hegemony" (*Mellow Yellow* 23/04/2013) are also terms that presuppose knowledge. Similarly to the three sources discussed above, *Mellow Yellow* uses technical terms that could limit engagement with the source by those who do not understand the meaning of the terms used, but, also can reproduce identity through the use of signifying language.

Language that could be described as technical appears only twice within *Cute Bruiser.* The two terms used across the two editions of *Cute Bruiser* are "Western capitalist culture" (2014, p.13) and "intersectionality" (2013, p.15). By rarely using technical terms that create a barrier to understanding, *Cute Bruiser* could more easily be understood by those who do not understand the specific terminology. However, the lack of technical language could also indicate that there is a lack of community understanding surrounding the source, leading to the language that is embedded with meanings particular to a feminist politics being absent. The absence of technical language could potentially infer a lack of community understanding due to language's role in defining community understandings (Berman 2013, p.39). In this case, *Cute Bruiser* is not developing the discursive repertoire that is indicative of a community identity. In the case of *Cute Bruiser*, it could either function as an entry level text, bridging the gap between the sources that rely on technical language and those who have not engaged with the ideas previously, or, it functions outside

of the language community, meaning that it does not create a community of knowledge that has specific modes of understanding. The lack of technical language in *Cute Bruiser* could mean that it is not internally discursively constituted in the same manner as the other sources discussed.

The differences in the way that technical language is used could be attributed to the different contexts in which the sources are produced. In the case of both *What She Said,* and *Kate Magazine,* the use of technical language could be attributed to the sources being positioned within a university context. With *What She Said* being produced by The University of Canterbury Intersectional Feminist Society, and *Kate Magazine* being produced by the University of Auckland Women's Rights Officers, both sources are positioned within a university environment. Knowledge and ideas that are produced within academic spaces are constituted through specific forms of language. Knowledge is constituted through the ordering of materials into ideas, which communicate meaning through the form of language (Foucault 2002). Due to the nature of academic language, there will be a barrier to understanding. This use of specialist language pertaining to a university setting could create a class distinction between the ideas developed in these two texts and the other texts analysed here. In this case, class refers to Bourdieu's (1984) conceptualisation of cultural class. The use of the specialist language indicates a requirement of certain cultural capital in order to understand the terms. The cultural capital in this case could be generated in university spaces where certain kinds of specialist language and tools for engaging with such language are taught to students throughout their studies. This would result in the sources developed within this space applying this cultural capital to the texts produced. Due to the university context in which both *What She Said,* and *Kate Magazine* are produced, this could result in certain cultural capital

being used that could create a barrier to understanding and engagement for readers unfamiliar with the specialist discourses of the sources.

Yet the use of specialist language in *What She Said,* and *Kate Magazine* may also create an internal sense of community. This is due to the specialist language giving meaning to the texts within a specific context; this specific context relates to the community that is going to engage with the source. Within the correct context, the use of specialist language in university spaces could facilitate a sense of identity. In this case, the specialist language used within the university context represents an artefact of the ideas that are developed in that space. Through the use of these terms, cultural capital is practised in a manner that could correspond with identity. The language that is used within the university context is meaningful for that community, and therefore, through the use of the specialised language, a sense of community identity is constituted (Berman 2013). This constituted identity will then define reality through the language used. Ultimately, identity will begin to be defined in terms of a person's access to certain aspects of cultural capital, and those who do not possess the appropriate cultural capital could be discursively constituted outside of the identity represented by the sources (Jenkins 1992). The sense of community in this case will be internally positioned in relation to those who have cultural capital at the expense of those who do not.

The manner in which specialist language is used in *The Hand Mirror* could be due to its position as a blog. In this sense, it is not positioned within a certain location, nor is it placed within the cultural capital of university spaces. The use of specialist language in *The Hand Mirror* could be seen to function in a manner that highlights a feminist identity. Moreover, the specialist terms used within *The Hand Mirror* tend to focus on political ideas more so

than academic ideas. The terms "transphobia" and "transmisogyny", "gender policing", "institutionalised discrimination" (*The Hand Mirror* 25/05/2015), "Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminism", and "cissexism" (*The Hand Mirror* 29/04/2015) contrast with the more academic terms present in both *What She Said,* and *Kate Magazine.* In the case of *The Hand Mirror,* specialised language is used in a manner that is based in a political form of writing relating to political experience; therefore, the cultural capital required in order to engage with the text is based in understanding the political context of the terms used.

The specialised language used in *Mellow Yellow* is unique among the sample. The manner in which specialised language is used within *Mellow Yellow* is reflective of the raced identity of the authors as Asians living in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Due to the intersection of the ethnicity and gender of the authors writing in *Mellow Yellow,* they need terms that explain their experiences. This different mode of language used explains the different everyday experiences that are experienced as Asian feminists living in Aotearoa-New Zealand. The terms "savagery", "primitivism", "animal tendencies", and "exoticism" (*Mellow Yellow* 23/04/2015) all communicate discourses surrounding race and culture. "Savagery" is a discourse positioned in the ideas of European superiority over non-European cultures (Buchan & Heath 2006), "primitivism" relates to the ideas of linear progressions of civilisation, and placing non-European cultures as less developed than their European counterparts (Jordan 1995), "animal tendencies" relates to the way that biological ideas are used to discursively position non-Europeans as being closer to the natural world, and therefore, less human, and "exoticism" is a discourse that exoticises Eastern culture and traditions for the Western gaze (Said 1979; Shay & Sellers-Young 2003). These ideas all represent issues that are particular to the demographic of *Mellow Yellow.*

Furthermore, the terms "white supremacist capitalist settler colonial heteropatriarchy" (*Mellow Yellow* 22/09/2014) and "white supremacist Christian heteropatriarchy" (*Mellow Yellow* 14/10/2015) are descriptive of the hegemonic cultures within colonial states, such as Aotearoa-New Zealand. The context in which these terms are made meaningful is when considering the way that "internalised dominance" is key to how oppression is experienced by marginalised groups (Berman & Paradies 2010, p.217). This mode of internalised dominance refers to the way in which oppressive structures are internalised. In the case of the terms mentioned above, "white supremacist capitalist settler colonial heteropatriarchy" (*Mellow Yellow* 22/09/2014) refers to a systemically racist society with a capitalist mode of exchange, based around European values as a result of colonisation. Furthermore, the term "white supremacist Christian heteropatriarchy" (*Mellow Yellow* 14/10/2015) highlights the way in which the knowledge produced within European states reflects that of a Christian *episteme;* in this case, *episteme* refers to the limits of what is considered acceptable knowledge (Foucault 2002), and the term used here positions this within a European Christian framework. These terms, used by the Asian feminists producing *Mellow Yellow,* seek to explain and name the means in which domination is internalised. However, they relate to a specific set of experiences that are unique to non-white persons, therefore, they require a certain level of knowledge in order to be understood. In this case, the specialised language used relates to the community that *Mellow Yellow* envisions. The specialised language used in *Mellow Yellow* is unique due to it relating to the raced reality that the authors and their demographic experience.

The lack of specialised language used in *Cute Bruiser* could be the result of it being produced outside of any noticeable context. *Cute Bruiser* does position itself within the context of Wellington;

New Zealand, by claiming that it is "Wellington city's No. 1 most prime Feminist Zine" (*Cute Bruiser* 2014, p.1), however, the source does not appear to engage in the development of language related to that community. The two specialist terms identified in *Cute Bruiser,* "Western capitalist culture" (2014, p.13) and "intersectionality" (2013, p.15), are terms that highlight ideas related to the politics of the source, and may contribute to a sense of feminist identity, but, do not locate the source within a particular community. Furthermore, due to specialist language only appearing twice across the two zines in this sample, *Cute Bruiser* does not position itself within a certain community through the language used. However, the lack of specialised language also means that the level of knowledge required to understand *Cute Bruiser* is lower than the sources discussed above. This could potentially have two effects. First, due to the lack of specialised language, the source may fail to facilitate a sense of identity. Specialist language can be used in order to facilitate understanding within certain modes of knowledge (Woodward-Kron 2008). The use of such specialist terms would then identify the knowledge developed within a particular context, or knowledge community. Due to the lack of specialist knowledge throughout *Cute Bruiser,* the zine's discourse is not positioned with a particular knowledge community, and therefore, may not facilitate a sense of identity related to feminist politics. Second, the zine could potentially function as an entry-level resource for those new to the topic. This could be due to *Cute Bruiser's* lack of specialist language lowering the barrier of entry to those wanting to learn, making access easier. A consequence of this could be that the discourse does not position *Cute Bruiser* within a greater feminist context, meaning that any connection to a community of practice may not be strongly developed. This could mean that, although the barrier to access is low, there is no clear indication that the knowledge produced by the source is related to knowledge

produced by other feminist sources, and therefore, identity facilitation may not occur. In the case of *Cute Bruiser,* the lack of specialised language used throughout the source could discursively distance it from a specific community of practice.

On the Narratives and Discourses of Politics and Daily Life

The sources also create narratives and discourses about the daily practices of politics, how daily events are political, and that political events effect the personal. These kinds of discourses and narratives can be seen to differing extents across the five sources analysed here.

Discourses and narratives outlining the political nature of daily life can be seen emerging in the publication *What She Said.* In the article titled "The Election Has All but Ignored Young Women", the author states: "[d]omestic violence, low-paid and precarious employment, every-day and institutional sexism, and access to health care and maternity support have been given almost no attention" (*What She Said* 2014a, p.6). This highlights the nature of very personal things – such as health care and interpersonal relationships – becoming political when placed within a marketised context. This makes access to resources such as "food, housing, education, health care, fair and sustainable wages, and child care" political issues (Lott & Bullock 2007, p.47). Furthermore, the reference to "low paid and precarious employment" (*What She Said* 2014a, p.6) highlights the political nature of work, and women's role within the workforce. Women generally occupy positions of low paid and precarious work in society, including public sector roles, therefore, the nature of this kind of work is gendered (Elomaki 2015). Furthermore, in an article titled 'What Does Our Parliament Say About Us', the author argues that it is important to have women in parliament to speak on women's issues "such as

abortion, prostitution, maternal health, the gender pay disparity, paid paternal leave" (*What She Said* 2014a, p.9). Through highlighting the political nature of personal events, *What She Said* begins to develop a discourse on the political nature of the everyday.

Although the discourse produced here highlights personal issues, it does so through positioning a parliamentary context at the center of the discourse. This discursively reinforces the idea of institutional power, creating a narrative that removes the power that individuals have. Although women in parliament are likely to have experience on gender related issues due to their position as women in a society (Marshall 2002), this argument ignores the special privileges that elected members of parliament (MPs) receive. For instance, the lowest pay for a MP in Aotearoa-New Zealand in 2015 was $156,136 with an allowance of $16,663, going up to the Prime Minister's salary and allowance of $448,569 and $22,140 respectively[1] (New Zealand Government 2016). Although this may not be obscene amounts of money in the grand scheme of things, it still indicates towards the relative privilege that MPs have vis-à-vis the economic order. Moreover, a discursive focus on a public, parliamentary setting could create an exclusionary discourse as oppressed groups may sit outside traditional notions of the public (Renninger 2015). However, this is not to say that politics are exclusively private, far from it, the point of this paragraph is to outline the specific nature of parliamentary politics that is not present in the discourses of the articles in *What She Said* (2014). By privileging a parliamentary setting in the discourse developed in the 2014 edition of *What She Said,* issues pertaining to politics that exist outside of a parliamentary setting are discursively erased; this also has the effect of setting the discursive limits of politics also.

Discourses and narratives surrounding daily life are also

present in *Kate Magazine*. This can be seen in the article "The Gendered Nature of Respect" (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.16-7), where the author discusses "everyday sexism" in how they are "often (surprisingly) reminded of [their] identity as a woman" (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.16). Moreover, in the feature "The Problem With White Knights" (*Kate Magazine* 2013, p.20), the author defines 'White Knighting' as "an attempt at being a feminist ally that assumes that men are better feminists than women are" (*Kate Magazine* 2013, p.20). Both of these examples produce narratives that relate to the concept of ambivalent sexism. Ambivalent sexism is the general acceptance of traditional gender roles in which a discourse of sexism only develops when these roles are transcended (Harris, Palazzolo & Savage 2012; Koepke, Eyssel & Bohner 2014). This can occur through focusing on individual deviance and ignoring structural factors (Harris, Palazzolo & Savage 2012). In the example from 'The Gendered Nature of Respect' (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.16-7), the discourse that produces knowledge surrounding ambivalent sexism is how the author states that she is reminded of her womanhood daily. The author also explains how this makes her think about the way she is treated on a daily basis, and how this relates to her gender. In this sense, she explains how she may be treated differently based on her gender, and that this is linked to assumptions surrounding appropriate gendered behaviour; thus discursively exploring ambivalent sexism in practice. The second example from 'The Problem With White Knights' (*Kate Magazine* 2013, p.20), explores ambivalent sexism by highlighting the feminist ally who assumes themselves to be more knowledgeable surrounding feminist struggles than women are themselves. This reproduces gendered division in power and knowledge, and discursively, the theoretical ally is positioning their ideas or knowledge as superior than the ideas and knowledge produced by women. In this narrative, the feminist ally who is a man – although well intentioned – undercuts

feminist ideals by practicing an ambivalent sexism that positions his knowledge as superior to that of women's. These narratives created by *Kate Magazine* discursively highlight a particular form of sexism that is positioned in everyday encounters.

Discourses exploring political issues of daily life are also present in *The Hand Mirror*. This can be seen in the post 'Power and Ponytails' (*The Hand Mirror* 28/04/2015), where issues surrounding how power is practiced are discussed. The post explores the topic of John Key - the Prime Minister of Aotearoa-New Zealand - pulling on a waitress' hair in a cafe. The post quotes John Key saying that the event was "really the opposite" (Key quoted in *The Hand Mirror* 28/04/2015) of a misuse of power. The article then goes on to say that to "be Prime Minister of a country and so unaware of the cloak of power and privilege you wear… seems disingenuous at best" (*The Hand Mirror* 28/04/2015). In this case, the power of the Prime Minister is still in place despite the seemingly informal situation of the cafe. In this instance, power can be seen acting fluidly through the relationship between the Prime Minister and the waitress. The Prime Minister practices power over the waitress through the discursive exchange – in this case, represented by the hair pulling and unwanted contact – that reinforces aspects of the Prime Minister's power. Power practiced as "the materiality of power operating on the very bodies of individuals" (Foucault 1980, p.55) is apparent in the exchange between the Prime Minister and the waitress. This is exemplified as the power of the Prime Minister is seen through the way he practices power over the body of the waitress in this scenario. In this case, *The Hand Mirror* is highlighting the everyday nature of power and through the exchange between the Prime Minister and the waitress, power can be understood as existing in daily interactions. This point is evident through the statement that "there is still significant power imbalances between customer and

staff" in relation to the incident (*The Hand Mirror* 28/04/2015). This quote highlights that power relationships would still have been evident had the customer not been the Prime Minister. *The Hand Mirror* explores the way power can be practiced daily through creating a discourse that highlights the everyday aspect of power, which discursively implies that engaging with power is a daily occurrence.

The political nature of daily events is also present in the post 'Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones, but Verbal Banter Haunts Me' on *The Hand Mirror* (28/07/2015). The author of the article states that "78% of New Zealand athletes had witnessed or experienced homophobia in sport", and then continues to say that "[s]port is almost the final frontier – it's okay to be racist, sexist and homophobic there in ways that are legally challengeable if they happen in other places" (*The Hand Mirror* 28/05/2015). In this post, the author highlights the way that homophobia is an everyday aspect of sport in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Sport in Aotearoa-New Zealand is linked to hegemonic modes of masculinity (Tagg 2008), furthermore, sport can be a domain in which appropriate gender behaviours are reinforced; this is apparent through phrases like 'you throw like a girl' and the risk of stereotype threat (Hively & El-Alayli 2014). In this post by *The Hand Mirror,* the discourse on the "racist, sexist and homophobic" (*The Hand Mirror* 28/05/2015) aspects of sporting culture in Aotearoa-New Zealand highlights the way that these ideas can manifest in places that are not considered political; in this case, sport. The discourse produced in this post by *The Hand Mirror* contributes to a narrative that highlights the manner in which everyday activities can be political.

Discourses and narratives highlighting everyday aspects of the political are also present in *Mellow Yellow*. However, given the nature of *Mellow Yellow*'s authors and imagined reader base, the

narratives produced by the blog are focused around issues of race and gender, and not just gender. In the post 'Disbanding Melting Pot Massacre: Some Reflections on Being in an Asian Feminist Punk Band' (*Mellow Yellow* 27/12/2013), the narratives around the author's experience within the music scene highlights the daily nature of the political. The author recounts her experience in attempting to make a band, and how she was dismissed in regards to her gender and race in what she calls her "first experience of sexism/racism/ageism in almost being in a punk band" (*Mellow Yellow* 27/12/2013). The author continues to say that she would "fucking love to see more feminists of colour pick up a guitar and start a band" and that "music is so personal/political" (*Mellow Yellow* 27/12/2013). The narrative produced by the post creates a discourse that highlights the political nature of music; this is explicit through the statement by the author claiming that music is "personal/political" (*Mellow Yellow* 27/12/2013). A narrative highlighting how daily experiences are political can also be seen in the post 'Conversation on Colour Shame (As an Asian Femme)' (*Mellow Yellow* 23/04/2013). In this article, the author discusses hegemonic understandings of beauty and how this has led to there being "heavily marketed whitening creams, lotions and operations" in Asia. The author then highlights how this impacted her emotionally by stating she "was ashamed to be Asian, and [she] tried to hide it in many ways" (*Mellow Yellow* 23/04/2013). In this article, the author highlights the way in which the disciplinary regimens that regulate the appropriate body standard have an impact upon everyday life. Furthermore, the narrative produced highlights the raced nature of beauty regimes and the placing of whiteness as a feature of hegemonic beauty (Figueroa 2013); this highlights the unique positions *Mellow Yellow* places itself within due to the nature of those who produce the blog. In these two posts, *Mellow Yellow* uses a narrative that creates a discourse that highlights the political nature of daily events. This is apparent in

the way the author discusses her experience with punk music in the first post, and the manner of how the second author explores her experiences with internalising beauty norms in the second post mentioned here. The discourses that the two posts from *Mellow Yellow* discussed here highlight the political nature of daily experiences.

The nature of the discourses and narratives produced by *Mellow Yellow* reflect the ethnicity of those creating the site. The ethnicity of the authors is going to impact upon their daily experiences, leading them to have a different social reality. Because of their ethnicity, the Asian feminists are going to have different daily experiences than European persons. This can be seen through the author linking her experience in the punk music scene to her race, and through the raced nature of the beauty industry and the impact that it had on the author. In the case of *Mellow Yellow,* its unique position within the sample could account for the nature of the discourses and narratives produced by the source.

The discourses and narratives produced by *Cute Bruiser* highlight the political nature of personal events. This can be seen in the feature 'Chicks Can't Rock' (*Cute Bruiser* 2013, p.28-35), in which the author explores her experience with sexism in the music scene. She highlights these experiences through stating that the men in a band "couldn't bring themselves to let a woman into the band because... 'Chicks can't rock'" (*Cute Bruiser* 2013, p.30). In this case, the discourse produced by the author appears to be similar to the one explored by the author in the *Mellow Yellow* post ''Disbanding Melting Pot Massacre: Some Reflections on Being in an Asian Feminist Punk Band' (*Mellow Yellow* 27/12/2013). Furthermore, in the feature 'How to be a Hairy, Angry Man-Hating Feminist' from *Cute Bruiser* (2014, p.4-11), the author explores the everyday way in which acts of sexism can reproduce themselves. This discourse can be seen through the statement "[e]ven 'good

men' laugh at rape jokes, call women names like chick and babe, maybe cunt and slut when they step out of line" (*Cute Bruiser* 2014, p.10-11). In this case, the article highlights the way that everyday micro-aggressions can be used in order to reinforce sexist norms. Micro-aggressions in this case can be understood as the way in which language is used to discipline persons into an appropriate gender role. Here, micro-aggressions function as a form of panopticism (Foucault 1975) through which language is used to reinforce and impose limits upon those whom the words are spoken about regarding what is considered appropriate behaviour. In the case of gender, micro-aggressions can be understood as part of the "diverse techniques for achieving subjugation of bodies" (Foucault 1990a, p.11) and the "apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established" (Butler 1999, p.11). Through the narratives created by focusing on the everyday sexism present within the music scene, and the way that micro-aggressions can be used to reinforce everyday sexism, the two examples cited create a discourse that explores the everyday aspect of the political.

The discourses and narratives used in *Cute Bruiser* are inconsistent. Although there are discourses in *Cute Bruiser* that highlight the everyday aspects of the political, the narratives produced across the source appear contradictory. A point where this is apparent is in conversations surrounding men's role within feminism. In the feature 'A Message To Men: The Patriarchy is the Lesser of two Eagles', the author, who is a man, discusses why feminism is important to men, and why men should be feminist. The nature of the article can be seen as the author states "even if you're the manliest man around and find the patriarchy quite suitable, you should still be a feminist" (*Cute Bruiser* 2013, p.9). This contradicts with the discourse produced by the feature 'Why Men Shouldn't be Feminists', in the 2014 edition of the zine (p.26-

31). Aside from the title of this feature creating a contradictory discourse, the narrative created can be seen through the statement "[i]f a man insists on being called a feminist... we have to question his motives" (*Cute Bruiser* 2014, p.29). These two features from two different editions of *Cute Bruiser* create contradictory discourses surrounding men's position in relation to feminism as two different positions were taken in the two features from the same source. Furthermore, in the interview titled 'Conversations With a (Kind of) 2nd Waver' (*Cute Bruiser* p.36-52), while having a conversation about the interviewee's bicycle, the respondent goes on to say that she "can ride a $2000 bike. And I'm not apologetic for that, it is what it is, everybody has their story" (*Cute Bruiser* 2013, p.44). By including this quote, it creates a discourse that celebrates wealth and dismisses the idea of class. Furthermore, class is never mentioned throughout the entirety of the two copies of *Cute Bruiser* analysed here. Although this does not create a discursive contradiction, it does discursively erase entire issues surrounding wealth and access to certain things. This is further reinforced through the way *Cute Bruiser* does not raise issues surrounding access to health care or reproductive rights. Through the way that *Cute Bruiser* produces a narrative, it creates inconsistent discourses. This is most notable through the conversations on men's role in feminist movements, but, also through the omission of key issues surrounding class and access to resources.

The five sources analysed here all produce discourses and narratives surrounding the political aspect of the everyday in different ways. The narratives exploring the nature of the political in *What She Said* emphasise the way political decisions are made in a parliamentary setting. This can be seen through the narratives of the features emphasising the way that potentially personal issues surrounding women are decided upon in a public domain;

this can be seen through the features "The Election Has All but Ignored Young Women" (*What She Said* 2014a, p.6-7), and 'What Does Our Parliament Say About Us' (*What She Said* 2014a, p.8-9). This could create a public-private divide that may limit the ability to understand the political nature of daily practice as politics is being positioned vis-à-vis a parliamentary framework, effectively positioning power over the private in the public sphere. The narratives produced by *Kate Magazine* highlight a more private aspect of everyday politics. In the features discussed here, there is a focus on the way that certain ideas are reproduced through daily encounters; this could be seen through the features "The Gendered Nature of Respect" (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.16-7), and 'The Problem With White Knights' (*Kate Magazine* 2013, p.20). *The Hand Mirror* creates narratives that explore the ever present nature of power, and the political nature of sport culture in Aotearoa-New Zealand; this can be seen through the posts 'Power and Ponytails' *(The Hand Mirror 28/05/2015),* and 'Sticks and Stones May Break my Bones, but Verbal Banter Haunts Me' *(The Hand Mirror 28/06/2015*) respectively. Both of these posts create narratives that discursively position the political in seemingly non-political events. *Mellow Yellow* produces a narrative that highlights the lived political experiences of daily life from the perspective of the Asian authors. This unique position that *Mellow Yellow* has within the sample, can be seen through the discourses producing a narrative centered around the raced nature of certain modes of oppression; this is apparent through the posts 'Disbanding Melting Pot Massacre: Some Reflections on Being in an Asian Feminist Punk Band' (*Mellow Yellow* 27/12/2013), and 'Conversation on Colour Shame (As an Asian Femme)' (*Mellow Yellow* 23/04/2013). Finally*, Cute Bruiser* developed narratives and discourses in a manner that were inconsistent and contradictory. This can be seen through the contradiction created through the discussions on men's position in the feminist movement between the posts 'A

Message to Men: The Patriarchy is the Lesser of two Eagles' (*Cute Bruiser* 2013, p.4-11), and 'Why Men Shouldn't be Feminists' (*Cute Bruiser* 2014, p.26-31). Further, by not including discourses on issues surrounding access to healthcare, reproductive rights, and economic issues, the narrative discursively eliminates these issues from a feminist subjectivity; this is made even more explicit through the discursive celebration of wealth seen in the interview titled 'Conversation with a (kind of) Second Waver' (*Cute Bruiser* 2013, p.36-52). Through this, the discourse produced by *Cute Bruiser* regulates the political discourse in order to regulate feminist subjectivity, limiting the scope for the creation of a feminist identity. The five sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand all produce narratives and discourses relating to daily experiences in differing ways.

Nuanced Feminist Identities

Through the way the five sources develop a personal feminist identity, use specialised language, and create narratives and discourses surrounding the politics of daily life, different nuances in feminist discourse are apparent. The political identity developed by the sources *What She Said,* and *The Hand Mirror* are focused on more than issues relating to women's lives; issues around race are raised also. This can be seen through the features 'Maps' (*What She Said* 2014a, p.18-21); where the author is discussing the intersections of racism and sexism, and claims that she "cannot separate race from feminism" (p.18) and the societal expectations attached to these ideas, and 'Red-Faced by Blackface' (*What She Said* 2014a, p.3-5); where the author outlines the need to "challenge racism" (p.3) in response to a blackface incident that occurred on campus at the University of Canterbury in *What She Said,* and the post 'Brown Lives Matter'; which discusses the bias and "institutionally racist" (*The Hand Mirror* 05/06/2015) justice system in Aotearoa-New Zealand in *The Hand Mirror*. In these

cases, the two sources can be seen as creating a narrative that extends beyond a concern with the oppression of women. This idea can be seen in the work of Audre Lorde (1990) when she states that "[s]ome problems we share as women, some we do not" (p.284) in her discussion on race and gender. This point is reflected here as *What She Said,* and *The Hand Mirror* explore issues surrounding race.

Both *What She Said* and *The Hand Mirror* also discursively include issues relating to class and the marketplace. Although there are not direct references to class, the sources make reference to issues that could be considered class issues. This can be seen in the features 'Feminism Today: 120th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in Aotearoa/New Zealand' (*What She Said* 2014b, p.10-13); through the author stating that "women like us all need a living wage" (p.13) when discussing issues surrounding precarious employment and childcare, 'Herstory' (*What She Said* 2014a, p.25); when the author discusses the nature of precarious employment and how "the traditional roles women have upheld are often undervalued and underpaid" (p.25), and 'The Election has all but Ignored Young Women' (*What She Said* 2014a, p.6-7); through the author discussing issues of "low-paid and precarious employment" (p.6) in *What She Said.* In *The Hand Mirror,* a discourse highlighting issues around class can be seen in the post 'Guest Post: Saving Incentives' (*The Hand Mirror* 24/06/2015) with the author stating that "inequality is growing within our current system" and that "income based retirement schemes [...] tend to perpetuate inequality" (*The Hand Mirror* 24/06/2015). By including ideas of class and the market, the sources create a discourse exploring the classed nature of gender. Gender and the market are linked through the type of work performed, or the way in which the market impacts upon women's lives (Braunstein 2008; Kantola & Squires 2012). Furthermore, precarious work and

welfare are inherently gendered issues (Elomaki 2015) as it is women who require the most from social services and may be unable to work full-time due to unpaid labour responsibilities such as childcare (United Nations 2015a). However, when women have full time employment, the "jobs considered appropriate for women are consistently of lower pay and status than those for males" (O'Donnell 1984, p.159). Because of these issues referenced above, the development of a discourse that includes issues that relate to class is an important aspect of the politics of both *What She Said,* and *The Hand Mirror.* Through the discourses surrounding these issues, the two sources produce a narrative and a political identity that is based in what could be referred to as a more intersectional feminism. The development of an intersectional feminism is based around the inclusion of race and class issues, and the way they interact with gender (Carbin & Edenheim 2013; Walby, Armstrong & Strid 2012). In the case of both *The Hand Mirror,* and *What She Said,* the political identity developed could be understood as pertaining to an intersectional conceptualisation of feminism.

The political identity that is produced through the discourses developed by *Kate Magazine* appears contradictory. By this, it is meant that the narratives used communicate differing political identities. On the one hand, *Kate Magazine* produces discourses that explore the relationship between race and gender. These kinds of discourses can be seen in the features 'Inadvertent Colonisation? The Relationship Between Mana Wahine and Pakeha Feminism' (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.18) and 'Cover-Girl' (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.28). The former of these two features creates a narrative that explores the raced nature of oppression, and the way in which well intending Pakeha – non-indigenous - feminism could be damaging to Maori – indigenous – women. The discourse that the feature develops can be seen through the statements arguing that Pakeha women speaking on behalf of Maori women

"could be viewed as a neo-colonial action" (p.18). Instead of this, the feature emphasises the importance of Maori women speaking in relation to their own issues. The latter of these two features is written by a Muslim woman discussing her decision to wear a hijab while living in secular Aotearoa-New Zealand. She creates a discourse highlighting her choice and asks "[i]s oppression in the garment, or the fact that its wearer has no choice in wearing it?" (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.28) to highlight how the hijab, in and of itself, is not oppressive. The discourses present in these two features create a narrative that highlights the importance of aspects of race in relation to a feminist politics. In the case of the two features discussed here, *Kate Magazine* appears to facilitate an identity that includes ideas pertaining to race.

Contrary to the narratives produced surrounding race, *Kate Magazine* also produces a discourse that could be described as liberal feminism. In this case, the narratives produced by the zine highlight issues surrounding women in positions of power. Discourses highlighting the success of women in positions of power can explicitly be seen in the features 'Wendy Davis Stands Tall' (Kate Magazine 2013, p.4); a feature discussing the efforts of American politician Wendy Davis, and 'Looking Forward; Two Generations of New Zealand Political Women' *(Kate Magazine* 2013, p.24)*; a feature focusing on women who have been involved in parliamentary politics. In addition to these two features, both the 2013 and 2014 editions of *Kate Magazine* include interviews with women in Aotearoa-New Zealand's parliament. Furthermore, discourses highlighting a liberal politics can be seen in other features also. In the feature 'Nudity as a Feminist Tactic' (*Kate Magazine* 2013, p.12-3) where the author states "[i]f we can get more women in influential positions in society, such as in large corporations or politics, greater change in social attitudes may result" (*Kate Magazine* 2013, p.13). The discourses produced by

these features highlights the importance of women in positions of power; it effectively frames politics as a public event. The discourse developed here conforms with ideas relating to a liberal feminism; the idea that formal equality between genders is sufficient to ending inequality (Chegew 2014), that class, race, and forms of inequality that result from the marketplace are not an important aspect of analysis (Mohanty 2003), and a general reflection of the issues of "well off, well educated, and white" women (Sa'ar 2005, p.686). Ultimately, these discourses developed here "render the poorest and most marginalised sectors of the population silent" (Darder 2011, p.422) by discursively erasing them. By focusing these narratives around women in positions of power, *Kate Magazine* could regulate feminist politics within a public domain. Although some of the issues highlighted by the source may involve political-personal issues, the solutions the zine offers work within the existing "liberal order" (Sa'ar 2005, p.686). This creates a contradictory narrative within *Kate Magazine* as political-personal issues – such as race – are placed within a public setting and discursively removed from an everyday setting.

The contradictions in *Kate Magazine* could be the result of the institutional setting that it finds itself in. Unlike the other university-produced publication in this sample – *What She Said* – *Kate Magazine* is produced by the student union, not independently from it. This tie to an institutional setting could serve to explain the politics of the zine. The focus on women in positions of power and on public discourses could be the result of *Kate Magazine* being produced by the Auckland University Student Association Women's Right Officers (*Kate Magazine* 2013, p.2; *Kate Magazine* 2014, p.2). Therefore, the source is produced by women who are in a position of power relative to the student body that the zine is produced for. This institutional positioning of those who produced the zine could influence what content is included, or,

how much faith is placed in institutions; it is not incompresnsible that those who have faith in institutional positions, are going to be more supportive of those in them and work within them. In this case, contradictions occur when *Kate Magazine* attempts to facilitate a more intersectional feminism from an institutional position that attempts to legitimise itself. Because of this, the political identity developed by *Kate Magazine* appears to lack discursive unity.

The political identity developed in *Mellow Yellow* is positioned in the ethnicity of those who produce the blog. This is evident through the way that the narratives and discourses that the blog produces, along with the specialist language of the source, generally focusing on issues surrounding race or colonialism. These ideas relate to the lived experience of Asian women in Aotearoa-New Zealand. In research interviewing 2nd generation Asian-American women, Pyke & Johnson (2003) noted that the women interviewed internalised an ideal white womanhood as superior. Although this research was done in the United States of America, a similar dynamic could occur among Asian-New Zealanders also; this relates back to issues of "internalised dominance" in minority groups (Berman & Paradies 2010, p.217). Due to the issue of race being unique to *Mellow Yellow* in this sample, it makes sense that the political identity relates to issues of race; this is apparent in how race is directly mentioned in nine out of 10 of the posts in the sample, and in the remaining one, race is inferred through the statement "white supremacist capitalist settler colonial heteropatriarchy" (*Mellow Yellow* 22/09/2014). Through this, it can be seen that race is a part of the political identity that is developed by the source *Mellow Yellow.*

In relation to these discourses on race, issues surrounding class is mentioned once in *Mellow Yellow.* This reference to class is in the post 'Tau Iwi People of Colour Supporting Tino Rangatiratanga'

(*Mellow Yellow* 08/08/2013) when the author states there are "internal inequalities based on class, religion, gender and ethnicity" (08/08/2013) among non-Maori groups in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Here the author creates a discourse that explores the heterogeneous make up of non-indigenous persons in Aotearoa-New Zealand, and this reference to class highlights class as an issue. However, given that this is the only reference to class throughout the sample of the source here, the source does not establish a strong class identity. When compared to *The Hand Mirror,* and *What She Said,* class appears as less of an issue for the identity developed within *Mellow Yellow.* In the case of *Mellow Yellow,* a political identity concerned with the intersection of race and gender is evident from the discourse and narrative developed by the blog.

The feminist identity developed in *Cute Bruiser* appears to discursively erase issues surrounding class and race. *Cute Bruiser* does not include any conversations, discourses, or narratives that explore issues surrounding either race or class. Through the failure to mention these issues, *Cute Bruiser* develops a narrative that discursively erases these issues; not mentioning these issues in the narrative creates a discourse that erases class and race (Stern 2012). In this case, *Cute Bruiser* almost develops a discourse of denial relating to how it engages with feminist politics. Discourses of denial can relate to race (Augoustinos & Every 2007), class (Nenga 2011), and gender (Pleasants 2011). *Cute Bruiser* creates a "discursive deracialisation" (Augoustinos & Every 2007, p.125) and a discourse that is "evading class" (Nenga 2011, p.264). *Cute Bruiser* creates this discursive deracialisation through never mentioning race throughout the two editions being discussed here. Furthermore, *Cute Bruiser* never makes any reference to class, which creates a discourse that evades class (*Cute Bruiser* 2013, 2014). The one reference to class or wealth is

through the statement when discussing a bicycle the women being interviewed owned as she states: "I can ride a $2000 bike. And I'm not even apologetic for that" (*Cute Bruiser* 2014, p.44). By including this, it further entrenches the identity developed by the source as separated from a class identity; it does this by celebrating wealth and then not being apologetic for it. *Cute Bruiser* ultimately creates a feminist political identity that erases issues surrounding class and race, and how they may impact upon persons' lived experience of gender. In this sense, *Cute Bruiser* will regulate a feminist politics that is largely white and middle class. This will ultimately create a feminist identity where issues of race and class are unimportant for a feminist politics.

Splintered Feminist Identities

From the five different feminist media sources being discussed here, four different types of feminist identity can be identified. In *What She Said,* and *The Hand Mirror* there is a more intersectional feminist identity being mediated. These two sources do this through creating discourses and narratives that highlight issues surrounding race and class. Furthermore, both of these sources highlight the personal aspects of the politics being discussed by explicitly positioning the author in the text. *Kate Magazine* produces an identity through a discourse of what will be called liberal feminism. This discourse is apparent in the manner that the narratives produced by *Kate Magazine* focus on traditionally successful women in positions of power. Although *Kate Magazine* did include some discourses around race and class, these were largely secondary to the discourses surrounding successful women in the public sphere. Furthermore, the author was generally located outside the text in *Kate Magazine,* creating a discourse that further adds to the idea that politics is a public experience that can impact upon private experience; this ultimately creates a narrative that positions private life as affected by political life and

not as a political life. The mediated feminist identity that is discursively constituted in *Mellow Yellow* is concerned about race. This is apparent through the way that the source's narratives focus almost exclusively on racial issues relating to gender. In this sense the source creates a raced feminist identity. This raced feminist identity is further apparent through the specialist language used through the source; in the case of *Mellow Yellow,* the specialist language related to race. Finally, the political identity developed by the discourses in *Cute Bruisers* is inconsistent. This is evident through the discursive inconsistencies of the source itself. Furthermore, *Cute Bruiser*'s political identity does not include issues of class or race; this is evident through the discursive erasing of these issues from the narratives produced by the source. Due to this, *Cute Bruiser* could be considered to represent a form of white middle class feminism. Ultimately, in the five sources analysed, four different mediated political identities are apparent.

In the case of the five feminist sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand, there is not a single unified discourse that could identify a coherent mediated community of practice. Instead, different sources created different mediated identities with different politics. In the case of Aotearoa-New Zealand, this indicates that the term 'feminist' is a contested term with the meaning of the term divided through different conceptualisations. This could mean that identity facilitation is difficult, as a single unified discursive identity around the term feminism is unattainable. This point is further exaggerated when Aotearoa-New Zealand's modest domestic population is taken into consideration; there are multiple discourses on feminist identities in a small landscape. This is going to lead to divides around conceptual understanding of key problems and what needs to be done to address these issues. In the case of the texts analysed for Aotearoa-New Zealand, the term

feminism is a site of contestation that does not function as a unified political identity marker.

Chapter Four:

A Clash of Identities: Discursive Contestation over Feminist Politics

Discourse and Narrative Contestation

The sources analysed for the purpose of this thesis use language that challenges hegemonic myths in differing ways and to differing extents. In this sense, there does not appear to be a single feminist meta-narrative that makes sense of social reality in feminist terms. The only constant covered across the sources for both international feminism and feminist sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand was a women centric perspective. Ideas relating to certain gender myths did appear across the sources, however, there were none that were constant. The ideas that emerged that related to myths were: issues surrounding rape culture present in the narratives of *The Fbomb, Feministe, Bust Magazine, and The Hand Mirror;* and bodily regulation, to differing extents, in the narratives of *The Representation Project, Bust Magazine, The Fbomb, Feminste, Kate Magazine, Mellow Yellow, and What She Said*. In this case, only three of the 10 sources discuss issues relating to rape culture and rape myths, while eight out of the 10 discuss issues relating to bodily regulation. Furthermore, other ideas that were included in the narratives of the sources were: ideas relating to race and culture in *Feministe, Kate Magazine, Mellow Yellow, The Hand Mirror,* and *What She Said*; issues relating to class or the marketplace in *Feministe, The Fbomb,*and *The Hand Mirror,* as well as *Kate Magazine* and *What She Said* to a lesser extent, issues relating to homophobia in *Mellow Yellow,* and *The Hand Mirror;* and the use of celebrities as a vehicle through which to communicate feminist ideas in *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The*

Representation Project, and *Feministe.* It is apparent from looking at the way the sources practice discourse that produces knowledge that there is not a metafeminist identity outside of womanhood. This opens the term feminism to discursive contestation in defining the term.

This discursive contestation in defining and laying claim to the term feminism is apparent in the way the different sources produce different forms of feminist knowledge. As was discussed in the preceding chapters, the feminist forms of knowledge that are being produced across the sources are nuanced, producing a splintered feminist identity. Differences in the feminist narratives produced by the different sources could be due to the identities that the particular source represents. In this sense, there needs to be a conceptualisation that highlights the importance of understanding how identities are related to modes of oppression (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall 2013) and that factors beyond gender influence the acceptance of certain myths; such as rape myths (Suarez & Gadalla 2010, p.2024). Factors relating to different modes of oppression and issues beyond gender could account for the different narratives produced by the various feminist sources. Furthermore, the ideological positioning of the sources may impact upon the narratives and discourses produced by a particular source. The nuanced narratives of feminism that are developed by the different sources could reflect the identities of those creating the spaces. This could lead to the constitution of different forms of feminist knowledge.

The sources' ideological positions could account for the differences in their conceptualisation of feminist politics. To understand this point, two different understandings of ideology need to be applied. There needs to be a conceptual demarcation between intellectual ideology and lived ideology. In this case, intellectual ideology refers to a "formalized philosophy" (Billig et al

1988, p.28); these are the intellectual ideas that inform the way an individual or group understands or explains the world or an event. Lived ideology refers to the everyday practices that a society engages itself with; in this sense, lived ideology is akin to culture (Billig et al 1988). In the case of the feminist texts discussed here, the intellectual ideology that feminism represents is in relation to women's issues and achieving gender equality; this is apparent in the sources analysed here as the only constant issues was in relation to women's issues. However, it is through the lived experiences of those identities represented by the sources that account for the differences in narratives across the feminist sources. Issues relating to class and race for example, relate to a specific lived experience that not all people creating these sources would have; the way in which individuals engage with structures of daily life are going to differ depending on their status within a society. This ideological difference in understanding lived experience is apparent when comparing a website like *Jezebel* with a website like *Mellow Yellow,* where the former discursively removes issues relating to race and latter is discursively centered on race. This creates a narrative situated in a different understanding of lived ideology. *Jezebel* is situated within a white middle class identity, while *Mellow Yellow* is situated within an Asian identity. Furthermore, femininity is classed in different ways (Woods 2012), with class issues relating to the way an individual can create a gendered identity. Again, this difference in understanding lived ideology is apparent in the sources analysed as five of the ten sources mentioned issues surrounding class and the marketplace to differing extents. Different understandings of a lived ideology could account for the differences in narratives produced by the sources on other issues also. It is because of these different experiences of lived ideology that different feminist identities develop. It is these different identities that lead to a discursive contestation of understanding the meaning of the term

feminism.

The discourses and narratives of the sources are varied in the way that they ideologically position their conceptualisations of feminist politics. Websites like *Jezebel, Bust Magazine,* and to a lesser extent, *The Representation Project,* and the zines *Kate Magazine,* and *Cute Bruiser,* are ideologically positioned within a liberal feminism, that positions women's rights in relation to the economy (Kantola & Squires 2012). This positioning of feminism in relation to the marketplace emphasises the individual who attempts to self-brand her or himself as having a feminist identity (Murray 2015). This form of political identity reflects the way that "[t]he neoliberal mantra of personal freedom and growth through market deregulation became the default ideology of our time" (Bennett 2012, p.26). The individualised marketised discourses developed in these sources reflect Bennett's (2003) argument that politics has become more individualised in the period of late modernity. These neo-liberal discourses on feminism discursively reduce the importance of issues relating to class and race as they situate feminism as an individual concern or choice. This discursive conceptualisation of feminism does not take into account the different experiences of gender that depend on women's "positions in structures of power inflected by racialized and class differences" (Weber 2015, p.25). The individualised discourses are ideologically positioned within a neo-liberal framework that limits the manner in which the narrative can be constructed. This positioning of a feminist identity vis-à-vis an ideological framework limits the scope of the politics that could emerge.

The different narratives and discourses that are present across the feminist sources fracture any discursive unity that may exist. The different ideological positions of the sources create different identity positions. Because of this, the knowledge that the different

discursively constituted identities produce is going to vary. As was mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, knowledge is based upon notions of social identity. Knowledge is mediated via language, and language is used to understand social reality. Therefore, a true objective description of social reality outside of language is unattainable (Hansen & Machin 2013, p.115; Herschinger 2012; Foucault 2005; Miller 2000; Van Leeuwen & Wodak 1999; Fairclough 1995; de Saussure 1988). Due to the different understandings of a feminist identity that the sources utilise, a discursively unified feminist identity is not present. Instead, the various sources attempt to claim the term 'feminism' and discursively constitute it with meaning. The identity signifier 'feminism' becomes a site of contestation. It is this contestation that leads to the nuances and fractures within the feminist discourse represented by the sources analysed for this research.

The identity signifier feminism has become a floating signifier through the contestation that surrounds its definition. A floating signifier refers to a word or sign that has no fixed meaning and is "constantly negotiable" (Mascha 2010, p.129). In this case, the term feminism is being constantly negotiated by the sources analysed here through the attempts to discursively constitute it with meaning. In the case of the 10 sources analysed here, the contestation surrounding the meaning of feminism occurs outside of each source. The meaning of feminism is anchored within each source, while a unified meaning across the sources is not present. For example, the manner in which feminism is discursively constituted within *Mellow Yellow* specifically relates to a raced, Asian identity and is anchored around this conceptualisation. However, none of the other nine sources conceptualise their feminist politics in this manner, indicating contestation in regards to the meaning of a feminist politics. Therefore, the use of the term feminism and an identity associated with the term is floating, with

no fixed discourse or narrative present across the sources analysed.

Due to the idea of discursive unity that was discussed in the first chapter not existing across the sources, the feminist political identity is lacking discursive power. Drawing on the definition of power outlined in the first chapter, Michel Foucault (1990a) states that "[d]iscourse transmits and produces power" it "also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it" (p.101). By lacking discursive unity, the feminist sources here fail to develop a coherent feminist discourse; therefore, the term feminism lacks any real discursive power. Through the lack of unified discourse, they fail to develop a unified feminist identity. This makes the collective discourse developed by the sources politically weak when compared with hegemonic myths. In this sense, the feminist discourses failed to develop power over knowledge of "personal conduct" (Moore 1997, p.153) within feminist ideas, let alone in relation to societal norms. The lack of discursive unity across the feminist sources effectively makes the discourses the sources produce impotent at developing a feminist meta-narrative that is inclusive and transnational. As was stated above, there is contestation in defining a feminist mode of knowledge. This contestation surrounding the discourse of feminism limits the discursive power that the sources can produce. Ultimately, due to the lack of shared understanding across the feminist sources, there is a lack of power being developed by the sources. This lack of discursive unity limits the manner in which a feminist knowledge can be produced and therefore, limits their ability to produce discursive power.

Local-Global Divide

There are differences between the way that the international sources and the domestic sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand

practice discourse and create narratives. As was discussed in the last chapter, the sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand situate themselves within their domestic context. This differs from the international sources that focus on the international and cannot be identified as belonging to a locality through their discourse alone. This means that the knowledge produced by the local sources is going to be situated within their domestic location. Furthermore, this also means that the identity mediated by the sources will be situated in the same domestic location. What this indicates is that there are different discourses of feminism present across a local-global divide. There could be two reasons for this. The first is that due to being positioned within a local setting, the local sources facilitate an identity relating to that setting. With the identities being discursively located, the sources recreate a feminist identity that is situated within a location. Due to the small size of the websites and the limited nature of zines, the sources need to facilitate interest among a local population to remain relevant. The local sources emphasise an identity around a 'spatial self' as there is documentation of physical location throughout the discourses developed (Schwartz & Haleguoa 2015). This emphasises the spatial element of the identity developed by the local sources. Furthermore, issues occurring internationally are more than likely covered elsewhere with greater detail than is available for the local sources, meaning that their coverage of such an issue could be drowned out by the bigger, international sources. Second, it could be due to certain market forces that the local and international sources have differing discourses. As was discussed in the chapter on the international sources, the websites *Jezebel,* and *Bust Magazine* had visible financial incentives[2]. Because of this, there could be an incentive for the websites to stay relevant to a large an audience as possible, therefore, not discursively situating themselves in a location. Although there were no visible financial incentives in the other three international

websites, pressure to get a high readership and compete with the financial websites could be a factor in them not situating the discourse produced within a certain location. This point is relevant as "organizational and editorial factors" are closely linked to media content (Humprecht & Buchel 2013); these organisational and editorial factors could include the marketplace and the need to maintain a readership. The reasoning behind the narrative and discursive differences of the sources could be due to a mix of the reasons discussed here. It could be because of these differences in audiences and positioning in relation to the marketplace that there is a narrative and discursive difference between the local and international sources.

The manner in which the sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand are discursively situated within a domestic location indicates that their politics are positioned locally. This appears to go against the argument that politics is becoming more globalised and less situated within a locality (Bennett 2003; Taylor 2010). Instead, in the sample analysed here, the domestically based texts practice an identity that is located within an Aotearoa-New Zealand context. It is in this local context that these sources exhibit and practice an identity. This appears to indicate that ideas surrounding "de-territorialization" (Taylor 2010, p.95-7) that claim identity, politics, and culture are no longer situated to location may be overstated. This point is highlighted by the website *Mellow Yellow* from Aotearoa-New Zealand. Although written by diasporic Asians, the website is discursively situated within an Aotearoa-New Zealand context. It does this through the source discursively locating itself within events taking place in Aotearoa-New Zealand and including Maori language – Te Reo – in the narrative of the site. Although this is only one example, the way in which *Mellow Yellow,* discursively constitutes identity appears to indicate a *re-territorialisation;* a re-location of the spatial self within a new fixed

location. This local emphasis of the politics of the sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand situates the discursive identity of the sources within the domestic locality.

Counterpublic Identity

The sources analysed in this sample appear to create many little counterpublic identities as opposed to a single unified feminist identity. As outlined in the first chapter, a counterpublic is a public sphere that exists in parallel to the hegemonic public sphere (Bailey & Iveson 2000; Downey & Fenton 2003; Milioni 2009; Eckert & Chadha 2013; Leung & Lee 2014). Due to the lack of discursive unity present across the sources, no single feminist counterpublic could be identified. No unified feminist counterpublic could be identified due to the sources not making unified "claims on behalf of alternative values" nor "the formation of these alternative values" (Bailey & Iveson 2000, p.530). Instead, there were multiple claims across the sources relating to alternative values or attempts to facilitate the formation of those values. This can be seen through the different ideas that were present in the narrative of the various sources. The differing ideas relating to class, race, celebrity, and other modes of oppression, that are present throughout the various sources exemplify this lack of discursive unity in relation to forming a counterpublic. Instead, the various zines and websites used to mediate a feminist identity communicate ideas relating to various counterpublics. In this sense, the sources represent the ideas of a counterpublic that they represent, as opposed to a greater metafeminist counterpublic.

As was mentioned above, the only common factor across the sources is a central focus on women. It could be argued that a feminist counterpublic is situated around gender; however, identity is not inherently political in and of itself. A focus around

gender does not, by itself, challenge hegemonic myths that serve to naturalise the social order. In this sense, there is not a feminist revolutionary language developed across the various sources. As was outlined in the literature review, a collective narrative is required in order to develop a counterpublic identity that challenges hegemonic myths. In this sense, gender is not a narrative, and therefore, does not represent the development of a counterpublic identity. Although the websites and zines analysed here highlight the experiences of women, they do not do so in a manner that creates a greater metafeminist counterpublic due to the lack of reoccurring revolutionary language that challenges mythic modes of knowledge.

Theoretical and Realised Political Identity

A key issue that can be established through this analysis is the demarcation of difference between a theoretical political identity and a realised political identity. In this case, I am drawing from the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1998). In his book *Practical Reason,* Bourdieu adds to his work relating to identity and class outlined in his work *Distinction* (1984). In regards to this, he adds to his ideas relating to class outlined in *Distinction,* by defining the differences between the "theoretical class" and, the "realized" or "mobilized class" (1998, p.11). In this case, Bourdieu (1998) argued that "[t]he "real" class, if it has ever "really" existed, is nothing but the realized class, that is, the mobilized class" (p.11). In this sense, the "realized class" is the class that has realised their position as a class. Bourdieu (1998) continues to say that the realised class is the "result of the *struggle of classifications*, which is a properly symbolic (and political) struggle to impose a vision of the social world, or, better, a way to construct that world" (p.11). The struggle of classifications that Bourdieu refers to is the creation of the class itself; the realization of the class which is both a symbolic and political struggle. In effect, Bourdieu (1998) distinguishes

between the theoretical class as expected behaviour, and a realised class as actual behaviour. Drawing on these ideas developed by Bourdieu, a theory of political identity could be developed. In this case, a theoretical identity is an identity that could theoretically exist, while a realised identity is the identity that has been politically realised.

The sources analysed for the present research represent identity in different ways. The manner that the sources represent a certain identity creates a certain theoretical identity. The identity function of alternative media sources was demonstrated in research that argued alternative media forms become a ritual that relates to an activist identity (Rauch 2007). Therefore, the various zines and websites that represent various feminist identities create different forms of theoretical identity. The various sources constitute a theoretical identity due to them representing an expected behaviour as opposed to a realised behaviour. A realised behaviour would require that the ideas developed in the various zines and websites be manifested into a discourse present outside of the sources. In this sense, the realised identity is the identity that is created through material conditions rather than the purely symbolic conditions mediated through the alternative media sources. Although the various feminist discourses and narratives could facilitate a theoretical identity, this does not necessarily translate into a realised identity in and of itself.

The move from a theoretical identity to a realised identity pertains to access to certain modes of capital. In order for an identity to be realised, access to forms of capital associated with that identity is necessary; these forms of capital can be both symbolic and material. Effectively, "the maintenance and development of identity is always also a material process" that is "symbolically mediated" (Lemke 2008, p.26). Furthermore, identity relates to "the persistence of material bodies, both our own and

those of the landscapes and artefacts of our world" (Lemke 2008, p.26). What this means, is that certain groups within a society have access to certain forms of capital that other groups do not; this access to certain forms of capital is going to impact upon their identity. For example, a man has access to certain forms of cultural capital that women do not in Western societies; women experience interpersonal discrimination in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematical (STEM) subjects that men do no (Robnett 2015), women experience prejudice in leadership positions that men do not (Hoyt & Burnette 2013), and women may experience stereotype threat when engaged in athletic performance that men do not (Hively & El-Alayli 2014). Furthermore, the limitations that these forms of cultural capital place on women may impact upon their access to material capital. This could occur through limiting their ability to achieve in STEM subjects, limiting their ability to get into leadership positions, or limit their ability to achieve athletically, respectively. It is this relationship between the symbolic capital and material capital that can influence identity facilitation. In the case of comparing the symbolic capital available to men and women, men can more easily develop identities within STEM subjects, leadership positions, or athletics. Therefore, access to certain types of capital is an important thing to consider when discussing theoretical and realised identities.

In relation to the feminist media sources discussed here, certain forms of capital are going to impact upon on the identity building function of the identities mediated by the feminist sources. For example, given that seven of the ten sources are websites, and that the three zines in the sample could be found online, access to, and knowledge of the internet are capital forms that are necessary for engagement in this case. The internet, although a good communication tool, can be exclusionary to certain groups

(Schuster 2013). These groups that the internet can exclude could be those who do not have access to the internet, nor the knowledge of how to use the internet. Effectively, "[m]edia competence is a life skill that is necessary for full participation in society" (Fornas & Xinaris 2013, p.13). Furthermore, media competency is an important aspect to "identity formation" as it "relates to how people understand and define themselves as well as each other" (Fornas & Xinaris 2013, p.13). Due to all the sources analysed here being positioned on the internet, the access to and knowledge of the internet become forms of capital that create a barrier to the identities that the sources could facilitate. Internet access is a form of capital that effects all the sources analysed here due to their positioning on the internet. The internet is just one example as other forms of capital can also affect the various sources in differing ways.

Economic Capital and Market Feminism

Different forms of capital appear to be related to the different forms of feminist identity developed across the sources to differing extents. The different issues relating to class, race, and economic security are factors occurring across the sources that could limit a realised identity being facilitated with some of the theoretical identities developed across the sample sources. In this research, websites *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project,* and the zine *Cute Bruiser* all position their feminist identities in relation to issues pertaining to aspects of wealth. As discussed above, these four sources discursively constitute feminist identity around issues such as; celebrity in *Bust Magazine, Jezebel,* and *The Representation Project*; fashion in *Bust Magazine,* and *Jezebel;* and direct mentions of wealth or economic capital in *Jezebel,* and *Cute Bruiser.* Furthermore, the narratives of the four sources never mentioned issues relating to class, race or reproductive rights, and transgender issues are only spoken about in relation to celebrities,

Caitlyn Jenner and Laverne Cox in *Jezebel,* and *Bust Magazine.* The forms of capital that are present across the sources *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project,* and *Cute Bruiser,* mediates an affluent, predominantly white, and liberal theoretical identity. In this case, the certain forms of capital required to access the feminist identity mediated by these sources is going to be limited.

The use of celebrity, fashion and wealth as a vehicle through which to communicate a feminist identity creates a barrier of access to the identity of a source. In this sense, celebrity is a form of capital; both symbolically and materially. Symbolically, celebrities could be seen as the embodiment of capitalist wealth as celebrities are often "perceived as both products of capitalism and as embodiments or vehicles of its ideology" (Drissens 2013, p.547). Furthermore, in general terms, "[c]elebrities are developed to make money" (Turner 2007, p.193). By this it is meant that celebrities exist within a marketplace and develop a public persona as a commercial asset; in this sense, the celebrity is a commodity (Turner 2007). Moreover, celebrity is a commodity that is highly mediated by third parties in order to appear the way they appear (Drissens 2013; Turner 2007). Celebrity capital is a highly mediated form of capital that symbolically serves as a vehicle for the ideology of capitalism. In this case, in order to realise the feminist identity mediated through celebrity vehicles, an individual would require access to forms of capital that are unattainable for most people.

Celebrity is also associated with material capital. It is at this point issues surrounding class and access to material capital become meaningful. By *Jezebel, Bust Magazine,* and *The Representation Project* positioning feminism in relation to celebrity, celebrity capital becomes a barrier to the theoretical identities developed. Furthermore, celebrity activism can only ever be a

liberal form of activism as it does not occur within a framework outlined by grassroots movements (Meyer & Gamson 1995). This is due to the top-down nature of celebrity activism; those who have access to capital are dominating the discourse. This frames and limits the discursive identities developed by the websites to certain types of capital that may not be readily available to others. In this sense, the discourse of feminism developed by the sources is regulated through the representation of certain types of capital. This happens in *Cute Bruiser,* also when a woman self-identifying as a feminist states that she is "not apologetic" for riding "a $2000 bike" (*Cute Bruiser* 2013, p.44). Here, the narrative frames a feminist identity in relation to material capital, discursively positioning the feminist identity developed by the text in relation to said capital. In the cases of *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project,* and *Cute Bruiser,* the feminist identity is regulated in relation to certain forms of material capital.

The discursive regulation of a political feminist identity relates to Foucauldian concepts of regulation. This process of regulation is the function of the internalisation of ideas and concepts that ultimately lead to self-regulation. In this case, the ideas and concepts that are discursively constituted through the narratives of the four liberal sources function in a manner that creates a panoptic gaze (Foucault 1975). The discourses and narratives produced serve a regulatory function in the development of a feminist identity. This creates a regulated feminist subject that is positioned within a certain ideological space[3]. This regulated feminist subjectivity, therefore, creates a regime of truth pertaining to a feminist politics. In the case of *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project,* and *Cute Bruiser,* this ideological space is that of the capitalist marketplace.

Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project, and *Cute Bruiser* reinforce certain myths surrounding capitalist modes of

exchange. By not exploring the nature of the marketplace while discursively positioning a feminist politics within certain modes of economic capital, the narratives produced by these sources reinforces myths of a capitalist marketplace. Most prominently, the sources reinforce the myth of a natural marketplace. In a general sense, the myth of a naturally occurring marketplace can be indentified through language associating capitalism with nature (Cannice & Bell 2010); this myth is further reinforced by the myth of market equilibrium, which claims the marketplace will naturally return to an undetermined starting point if something were to change (Fursich 2002; Lichtman 2009). Furthermore, the narrative of the marketplace developing in order to resolve problems inherent to a barter system is not supported by any historical evidence[4] (Graeber 2011). Although the mythic narrative devices are not explicit within *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project,* or *Cute Bruiser,* they do reproduce these myths by representing the marketplace in an uncritical manner; this has the effect of naturalising capitalist modes of exchange by making them the default ideological setting. Through discursively naturalising capitalist modes of exchange *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project,* and *Cute Bruiser,* tacitly through their discourses, define the market as a "naturally functioning system" that is free from human "intervention" (Massey, Sanchez & Behrman 2006, p.14) and turn capitalism into an "organic ideology" (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, p.176) thus, reproducing myths of the marketplace. Through the uncritical acceptance of the marketplace, the four sources mentioned here reproduce myths of the capitalist marketplace.

The use of celebrities and other forms of material capital to advocate for social movements is always going to be problematic. In this case, issues surrounding philanthropy become important. Philanthropy is an important mechanism in naturalising

marketplace inequalities and reproducing capitalist myths. Philanthropy associates capitalism "with charity and benevolence" as it "distances capitalism from its role in producing poverty" (Wells 2007, p.199). This effectively means that material capital can be used to create symbolic capital that obfuscates capitalism and the inequalities it produces. Moreover, celebrities will dilute social movements "to make it conform to the needs of the celebrity persona" (Tufekci 2013, p.857); the same could be said of persons occupying other forms of economic capital also. In the case of *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project,* and *Cute Bruiser,* the feminist politics of the source discursively remove issues of class and race, situating the identity of the sources in a white, upper-middle class, liberal space.

The politics of this liberal feminism is essentially a nationalist feminism. The political feminist identity developed by *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project,* and *Cute Bruiser,* does not include international concerns. The four sources mentioned here represent a "feminist analysis that [does] not take into account historical and structural conditions that underscore the North/South balance of power and social configuration" (Zine, Taylor & Davis 2007, p.272). By discursively removing historical and structural conditions from their feminist identity, while engaging with symbolic representations of economic capital, the sources create a feminist identity situated with a minority of women; in particular, white, upper middle class women living in the West.

An issue with this constitution of identity is that it erases the historical circumstances that lead to the development of Western wealth. The wealth of the West, and the success of Western capitalism, is largely built upon the exploitation of women from the developing world. Women do a disproportionate amount of unpaid labour; including one to three hours more housework a day than

men, and two to 10 times the amount of care work including childcare, care for the elderly and care for the sick in general (United Nations 2015b). Furthermore, "women in developing countries work more than men, with less time for education, leisure, political participation and self-care" (United Nations 2015b). Moreover, women are disproportionately the victims of wars. The most noteworthy example is the civil war in the Congo; a war that is being fought for – among other reasons – the country's rich coltan deposits, a resource used within consumer electronics in the West (Lewis 2012). As a result of this conflict, there have been "an estimated 200,000 victims of sexual violence, including bayonet rape and other modes of sexual torture" (Lewis 2012, p.155). The war in the Congo serves as an example of gendered violence being perpetuated in the interests of a capitalist market system as consumer electronics are central to the maintenance of the economy in late capitalism. The development of Western wealth is partially built upon the gendered exploitation of women in the developing world.

The economic system discursively centered through *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project,* and *Cute Bruiser,* is supported by gendered violence that is exported to the developing world. Through positioning a feminist identity through a liberal-capitalist framework, the four sources here discursively produce a nationalist feminism positioned in the success and rights of women in the developed West, while discursively erasing other women, effectively leaving the majority of women "silent and passive in the face of their own historical and contemporary suffering" (Darder 2011, p.422). This creates a feminist identity that is situated around some women, while discursively removing others. This produces a political identity that is centered around the developed world, and successful women within it.

The theoretical feminist identity developed by the sources

Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project, and *Cute Bruiser,* is discursively situated around a white, upper-middle class identity. This is evident through the types of capital that they mediate their theoretical identities in relation to. There is a requirement of access to both economic and symbolic modes of capital in order to realise the feminist identity outlined within the sources. The sources mentioned here discursively constitute material capital by mediating wealth, or celebrity personas that represent wealth. This in turn creates symbolic capital, as wealth becomes symbolised through itself. This creates barriers as different forms of femininity are classed (Mohanty 2003; Roth & Horan 2001; *Woods 2012)* and raced (Mohanty 2003; Roth & Horan 2001) denying certain individuals and groups access to the required capital in order to realise the theoretical identity facilitated by the four sources. Furthermore, although the sources do challenge some myths surrounding gender[5], they reproduce myths of the marketplace. Through discursively erasing issues of class and race, while also reproducing myths of the marketplace, the four sources created a regulated feminist subjectivity that is positioned in the mythic understanding of the marketplace. Although this challenges some ideas relating to gender, it erases the connection between gendered oppression and the marketplace, discursively reinforcing certain myths; therefore, not practicing a revolutionary language in Barthesian (2012) terms. Ultimately, *Jezebel, Bust Magazine, The Representation Project,* and *Cute Bruiser,* facilitate a regulated feminist identity based on access to economic and symbolic capital, and is positioned within a marketplace ideology.

Intersects of Race, Class, and Gender

Other sources from the sample included in their narratives issues relating to race and class. The international websites, *Feministe,* and *The Fbomb,* both engage with ideas of race and

class; and class respectively. The domestic websites, *Mellow Yellow, The Hand Mirror,* and the domestic zine, *What She Said,* all engage with issues of race and class to differing extents. This creates a theoretical identity that is based around differing concepts and ideas. In the case of these sources, the relationship between the theoretical identity developed by the source, and the potential realised identity is more complex. This is due to there being multiple issues and intersections in the identities developed by the sources. Furthermore, the multiple intersects across race and class could mean that the forms of capital required to move the theoretical identity of the sources into a realised identity are less defined. The issues of race and class raised by the sources here require a more negotiated understanding of certain forms of capital.

Through the inclusion of issues surrounding class in the narrative of the sources mentioned above, the theoretical identity developed is based more in a working class sensibility. By engaging with issues of class, the sources create a theoretical identity that does not position material capital as being necessary for identification with the identity developed by the sources. This occurs through the narrative being inclusive of economic inequalities and issues that may be created due to them. Although class, in this case, "does not define the autonomous commitments of an individual" it does however "determine controls and constraints that determine one's ability to commit" (Dean 2016, p.1075). In the case of the sources being discussed here, although there is not a barrier of economic capital that limits facilitation of a theoretical identity with the various sources, economic capital may limit the ability for an identity to be politically realised. The issue in this case, as outlined in the quote above, is that people with lower economic class do not have the same access to capital to realise an identity in the same manner as those of a higher

economic class. Looking globally, as of 2016 only 46.1% of the world's population had access to internet, this accounted for over four billion people who were without internet (InternetLiveStats 2016). This, in and of itself, highlights the potentially exclusionary nature of the internet. Moreover, it demonstrates how a lack of access to certain modes of capital may limit a person's ability to realise certain theoretical identity positions. Although the sources facilitate the emergence of a classed identity, the very nature of this classed identity may limit the realisation of a political identity.

All but one of the sources mentioned in this section include issues of race in addition to class. However, only *Mellow Yellow* develops an explicitly raced identity. In contrast to this, *Feministe, The Hand Mirror,* and *What She Said,* appear to position race in regards to an educated multicultural, antiracist position. In regards to *Mellow Yellow,* the theoretical identity developed by the website is centered around an Aotearoa-New Zealand, Asian identity. This is apparent through the way the discourse and narrative of the website is focused on the racial experience of Asian and, in particular, Asian New Zealanders; this is apparent as eight of the ten articles chosen for this sample highlight an Asian identity within an Aotearoa-New Zealand context. Because of this, *Mellow Yellow* has an identity based in a particular kind of symbolic capital: a symbolic capital based on ethnicity (Moran 2016). The symbolic ethnic capital of *Mellow Yellow,* makes an Asian identity necessary in order to realise the political identity represented by the website. Furthermore, the geographical positioning of *Mellow Yellow* further positions this identity around an Aotearoa-New Zealand, Asian context. In the case of *Mellow Yellow,* the political identity of the source is based within a raced identity requiring certain symbolic capital in order to be realised.

Feministe, The Hand Mirror, and *What She Said* create discourses surrounding race that are positioned in an educated,

multicultural frame. This is explicit in *The Hand Mirror,* and *What She Said,* as they use specialist language to convey meaning[6]. Because of this, the theoretical identities developed by these three sources are situated around educational access. In this sense, education can be understood as a form of symbolic capital (Olneck 2000; Igarashi & Saito 2014). More specifically in the cases of *Feministe, The Hand Mirror,* and *What She Said,* it is a form of symbolic capital that relates to issues of society (Olneck 2000) or multicultural sensibilities (Igarashi & Saito 2014). Due to this, the theoretical identities of the three sources mentioned in this paragraph require access to education as a form of symbolic capital in order to be realised. There are specialised forms of knowledge required in order to realise the theoretical identities developed by *Feministe, The Hand Mirror,* and *What She Said.*

The five sources of *The Fbomb, Feministe, Mellow Yellow, The Hand Mirror,* and *What She Said,* create theoretical feminist identities based on understandings of class and race to differing extents. Although there are discursive nuances to the theoretical identities of the sources, they do realise that, to differing extents, women occupy precarious positions vis-à-vis a capitalist economy based on "caste/class, race, and economic status" (Mohanty 2003, p.525). Furthermore, women disproportionately do unpaid labour when compared to men; reproductive labour in particular (Jarrett 2014). By doing this, the five sources mentioned here create theoretical identities that rest on access to certain forms of symbolic capital more so than economic capital. This is evidenced through the manner in which the sources do not create economic barriers to participation, but are situated in racial or educational barriers. Therefore, the theoretical feminist identity based on class and race creates barriers of symbolic capital for the theoretical identity to be politically realised.

The Curious Incidence of Kate Magazine

Kate Magazine, produces contradictory discourses. In practice, there is no coherently theoretical identity developed by *Kate Magazine. Kate Magazine's* discursive contradictions are apparent through the zine positioning issues surrounding race and class within a framework that includes liberal ideas of elevating women into CEO positions. Furthermore, given that *Kate Magazine* is produced at Auckland University, this also raises issues of educational access. Nowhere is this discursive contradiction more apparent than in the 2014 edition of *Kate Magazine.* Here, ideas around the sexualisation of women sports persons are discussed, with one author stating that "[a]s a female sports star, I would want people watching me for my skill and ability, not my looks" while the other author claims, "[s]exualised pictures of sports stars challenge ideals of attractive yet passive females" (*Kate Magazine* 2014, p.9). Although framed as a debate, this passage highlights the nature of *Kate Magazine.* Here, a liberal plurality of ideas are present, rather than ideas pertaining to political identity realisation. Through the practices of discourse, and the narratives developed, *Kate Magazine* does not explicitly develop a political identity other than 'feminist' in the broadest terms. Instead, *Kate Magazine* reads like a collection of ideas that the reader has to make meaning out of themselves.

Discourse, Narrative and Theoretical Identities

There is no unified theoretical identity developed across the ten sources analysed for this thesis. Instead, the various sources create multiple theoretical identities pertaining to different forms of capital, and access to them. This reflects the various taste regimes of the different groups concerned (Bourdieu 1984; Jenkins 1992); taste regimes, in this instance, refers to the different political regimes of the sources. Due to the differences in political

regimes, different understandings of feminist politics are developed. This in turn creates differences in modes of feminist identities, effectively making understandings of feminist politics a site of discursive contestation. Feminist politics, and identities, are not discursively fixed. Instead, contemporary feminism can best be understood as a floating signifier (Mascha 2010). This is going to impact upon the potential for a "revolutionary language" (Barthes 2012 p.258) being produced that can redefine societal myths as social. Feminist politics has become discursively fragmented, leading to a weakened political agency of the movement, with instead a focus on defining the term feminism with meaning in a contemporary setting.

The feminist ideas, and feminist identities do remain meaningful however. In the words of Alain Badiou, (2015) "[w]e have to convince ourselves that there is nothing ridiculous or criminal about having a great idea" (p.50). Therefore having an idea is important, and for women's rights, feminism is an important idea. The problems identified in this research appear to indicate that this idea is discursively fragmented with no definitive point to rally around; in effect, there is no concrete end goal like the right to vote, or equal standing in regards to the law. This lack of a concrete end goal may lead to a discursive fragmentation, as feminist politics and identities are placed within different positions. These different positions could relate to class, race, or the marketplace, to name a few that were prevalent here. Feminist political identities and ideas have become discursively fragmented, and regulated in relation to the environment in which they function. This makes it difficult to develop a coherent feminist identity and a feminist knowledge. Although these ideas remain important, their importance at present is being overshadowed by the contestation of meaning.

Transnational Imaginary

In order for feminist politics to remain a relevant idea, it needs to develop a mode of thinking that exists outside of institutional narratives and discourses. In this sense, feminist politics needs to develop a form of transnational imaginary as to how it engages with social reality. This will still center women as the primary target for emancipation, however, it must engage more critically with global issues of class, race and other forms of oppression and discrimination that people experience. However, I use the term imaginary with hesitation as it in and of itself does not necessitate a realised political identity. The conceptualisation of a transnational imaginary in an international system built around nation-states is complicated. Nation-states create difficulties as "group interest" is developed both by the nation and by the "innumerable 'groupings' which generate advantage for the individual" (Lewis 2012, p.166). By this it is meant that the grouping and sense of identity developed around the nation of the nation-state develops advantage for those individuals privileged as part of that grouping. In this sense, the barriers of nation-states become barriers to a transnational imaginary. These national barriers are much more easily overcome if an individual has access to certain forms of capital; be it symbolic capital in the form of skills and education, or material capital. Because of this, there are distinct capital barriers in developing a transnational identity.

This makes the key barrier in relation to the development of a meaningful transnational imaginary an issue of class and access to certain modes of capital. In agreement with Grant (2014), I do not accept that language alone can develop a collective political identity. Instead, a discourse is required – remembering that discourse pertains to action as well as language. In this sense, a transnational imaginary must exist outside of present institutional discourses to maintain its radical position. Within this however,

there is an assumption that persons will have access to certain forms of capital in order to produce a transnational imaginary. Unfortunately, this is an unavoidable aspect of identity development. Certain forms of capital that may be required include things like certain forms of education and access to certain modes of knowledge. Ultimately, however, a radical transnational imaginary must position itself outside of dominant modes of understanding; in this sense, a radical transnational imaginary must be anti-racist, anti-capitalist, and most importantly to feminist politics, anti-sexist. The reason for this is due to reproduction and recreation of Barthesian myths (2012). In this sense, if certain racial or capitalist myths are reinforced, certain aspects of a reactionary history are also reinforced. If any aspects of a mythic reactionary history are reinforced, the idea that history is a natural progression is also reinforced. If myths are used in order to describe social reality, "revolutionary language" that challenges the mythic understanding of history in the Barthesian sense (2012, p.258) is not being developed; thus, creating a political identity based in mythic assumptions. Because of this, a radical feminist transnational imaginary needs to be positioned outside of dominant modes of thinking in order to challenge the mythic assumptions that underpin societal understandings of social reality.

If the knowledge produced by a radical feminist transnational imaginary is positioned outside of dominant modes of knowing, then it will be better positioned to challenge dominant ideas. By being positioned outside a discourse of global capitalism, a transnational imaginary could discursively challenge capitalist exploitation of women. By being positioned outside a racist discourse of Western superiority, a transnational imaginary could challenge racist myths that justify or attempt to explain the exploitation and sexualisation of women from Africa, the Middle

East, and Asia. Effectively, in order for the ideas and ideals promised by a feminist political project to manifest in a meaningful and global manner, they need to be positioned with a radical subjectivity that challenges the dominant mode of thinking in contemporary societies, as opposed to regulating political subjectivity.

A radical feminist transnational imaginary should understand gender, race and class as interlinked modes of oppression. In relation to race, a radical transnational imaginary needs to develop a "politics that can engage with the material truth" (Darder 2011, p.82) as opposed to repeating the myths of multiculturalism that pay lip-service to difference, without addressing material and cultural realities (Darder 2011). The social reality that is experienced through limited access to material or symbolic capital needs to be taken into account. As was discussed above, social and material reality experienced in places like the Congo are different from in the West. This difference needs to be recognised in order to highlight how things that might benefit women in one region may actually have negative effects on women in another.

Sexism also manifests itself differently in different cultural locations. Effectively, "[p]atriarchy is crosscultural" and is "actualized differently in different societies via institutionalizing of sexual hierarchy" (Eisenstein 1979, p.24). Patriarchal modes of oppression are race and culture specific. Because of this, it is important to be aware of the differences in social reality that are the result of barriers to specific cultural or material capital. The manner in which sexist modes of oppression materialise differ between cultural structures.

Issues of class and the marketplace also relate to both gendered and raced modes of oppression. First, women experience patriarchy differently based on their racial position within society

(Lorde 1990). Second, global capitalism is raced, in the sense that people of colour generally occupy disadvantaged positions within the global economy. The exploitation of margainlised persons is fundamental to the global economy, as these persons are required to do low paid and precarious work (Darder 2011, p.96). Furthermore, unpaid reproductive labour – the labour that is required to reproduce labour power – is disproportionately done by women globally (Federici 2012; Jarrett 2014; Weeks 2011). Moreover, user-pays education is inherently gendered because women possess less capital within global society than men (Federici 2012); this is also true of working class people. What this highlights is a system of oppression that is linked across race, gender and class lines. Gender needs to be understood as part of a system of oppression in which race and class are also a part.

What is required is a feminist politics of material discourse. Within this politics of material discourse, a radical transnational subjectivity must also be present. This politics of material discourse will relate to ways of knowing through a framework that understands social reality as resulting from cultural and material forms of capital. It will pay attention to the social realities that create difference between persons. Because of this, it should seek to define "feminist autonomy as autonomy not just from men but from capital and the state" (Federici 2012, p.11) and seek to confront divisions in relation to "race, gender, and geographical location" (Federici 2012, p.12). A feminist politics of material discourse will differ from intersectionality due to its political nature. Where intersectionality appears an academic understanding of social reality, a politics of material discourse needs to be a political understanding of social reality; it needs to be a political understanding of gender, race and class that is discursively fixed in order to define political reality.

The discursively fixed nature of a feminist politics of material

discourse is important. This point is highlighted due to the lack of discursive unity present in the 10 sample sources analysed in this research. This idea of discursive unity is important in order to develop a feminist understanding of social reality that is based in gender, race, and class. By situating a politics of material discourse around gender, race, and class, discursive unity could potentially emerge and create a feminist politics that understands the three concepts as linked modes of oppression.

Conclusion:

During the course of this thesis, ideas relating to the discursive practice of political identity have been discussed. It has been argued that the various sources of feminist knowledge and identity have developed discursively situated political identities; the political identities developed across the alternative media sources of feminist politics are fragmented and without a discursive unity or a fixed identity. However, the political identities developed by the various sources of knowledge are subject to certain theoretical limitations. The limitations of the theoretical identities developed by the various sources can be identified through the manner in which various concepts and ideas are positioned within the discourses and narratives produced by the various sources. The differentiations between various conceptualisations of feminist politics are through the different manner in which hegemonic myths were challenged across the various discourses and narratives developed by the sources analysed. Effectively, the different conceptualisations of a feminist politics are the result of producing a "revolutionary language" that attempts "to transform reality and no longer preserve it as an image" (Barthes 2012, p.258) in differing ways and extents; and on some occasions, if at all. Through these different conceptualisations of feminist politics, different models of political identity could also emerge. These different models could create a regulated political subjectivity. A regulated political subjectivity could then limit the discursive identity developed by the feminist sources. Basically, the discourse and narratives of the sources can create a discursive limit to acceptable feminist political practice. This will then inform the nature of the theoretical identities created by the sources, and how this may facilitate or limit the facilitation of a Barthesian (2012, p.258) "revolutionary language".

In the first chapter of this thesis, *Myths, Discourse and Narrative: A Method for Analysing Identity in Alternative Media*, a theoretical framework and conceptual understandings of the key ideas used across this thesis were outlined. Firstly, the function of myths, and how myths function to inform reality was discussed. Here, a conceptualisation of Barthes' (2012) theory of myth was outlined and developed so it could be applied to the textual analysis that followed. Myths were argued to "transform history into nature" (Barthes 2012, p.240) as they functioned to make history appear as a natural progression rather than a site of social contestation. Furthermore, the manner that myths serve to naturalise societal injustices was also outlined. Given the nature of this research, the specific myths that I was concerned with were myths of gender. Gendered myths serve to naturalise hegemonic notions of gender. By doing this, they also serve to reduce all gendered inequalities to reflections of a natural order. In relation to gender, there are certain myths that function to create meaning. These include rape myths, biological myths of gender and the regulation of gendered bodies, and just world beliefs. In the case of gender, rape myths, biological myths, and just world beliefs, function to naturalise gendered inequalities and thus, make the lived inequalities a subject of nature, rather than that of a social history.

Following the discussion of myths, the manner in which discourse and narrative create meaning was outlined. What this was concerned with was developing a theory as to how discourse and narrative could constitute identity and effectively function as a counterpublic. In the case of meaning creation for a group, this meaning making could relate to a sense of identity. A sense of identity for a group could be developed through a shared discourse that is specific to a certain community of practice (Stapleton 2001; Tusting 2005). Therefore, it was theorised that certain discursive

practices of revolutionary language could be seen in attempts to facilitate a group identity around a political project. To test this theory, multiple sources representing themselves as feminist were selected for analysis. The analysis was conducted, using theories of discourse and narrative, in order to determine whether the sources representing themselves as feminist had a discursive unity in the manner in which they conceptualised social reality. Furthermore, the manner in which the sources used Barthes' (2012, p.258) conceptualisation of "revolutionary language" in order to challenge hegemonic myths was also assessed. Through an analysis of discourse and narrative, it was possible to discern the manner in which the 10 sources analysed here positioned their feminist politics and identity.

Of the 10 sources of feminist knowledge analysed here, five were international sources with international reach, while the other five were sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand. In the second chapter of this thesis, *Alternative Media Sources of International Feminism: Identity across Two Discourses*, the international sources were analysed. In the analysis of the discourses and narratives of the international sources, it could be concluded that there was a splintered identity in the various conceptualisations of feminist politics. The different international feminist sources had different nuances to their feminist politics. These nuances could be broadly defined as an intersectional model of feminism and a more liberal model of feminism. The former of these two broadly defined modes of feminism is concerned with the inclusion of issues surround race, class, and other modes of oppression, while the latter is largely positioned within a marketised context. The two sources that used intersectional models – *Feministe* and *The Fbomb* – positioned a discourse and narrative around issues that included ideas like racism, access to healthcare and the marketised nature of healthcare in neo-liberal economies, and issues surrounding

LGBT+ rights. The issues raised here represent ideas that intersect across gender, thus the two sources – *Feministe* and *The Fbomb* – highlight an intersectional model of feminist politics which relates gendered oppression to other modes of oppression. Contrary to this, the three sources that were described as a liberal feminism – *Jezebel, Bust Magazine,* and *The Representation Project* – positioned their feminist politics in relation to a marketised context. They did this by positioning the feminist politics of the website in relation to references of wealth, celebrity, and fashion. Reference to wealth is an explicit centering of the politics of the sources within capitalism, whereas references to celebrity and fashion discursively position the politics within a marketised context. This is due to celebrities and fashion positioning the feminist politics of the source in relation to women who are well off in relation to the economic order. Furthermore, the three sources labeled as liberal feminism never positioned their politics in an overtly classed location, further reinforcing the marketised discourse of the sources. What could be seen from the analysis is that there are multiple conceptualisations of feminist politics that create a fragmented political identity across the international sources.

In the third chapter of this thesis, *Alternative Media Sources of Feminism from Aotearoa-New Zealand: Identity across Multiple Discourses*, the five sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand were analysed. The five sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand developed discourses and narratives, and challenged Barthesian myths in a more varied way than the five sources of international feminism. Two of the sources for Aotearoa-New Zealand – *What She Said,* and *The Hand Mirror* – could be described as positioning their feminist politics in an intersectional manner. These two sources included issues relating to class, inequalities in the marketplace, and race in the discourses and narratives they develop. The blog *Mellow*

Yellow, conceptualised a feminist politics that was centered around the Asian identity of those who created the blog. Within this, ideas relating to class and sexuality were also included in the discourse. However, issues of class and sexuality, throughout the discourse of *Mellow Yellow,* are positioned in their relation to the raced identity that the blog mediates. In the case of *Mellow Yellow,* the form of feminist politics developed is based on an Asian identity, effectively creating a raced feminist identity. The zine *Cute Bruiser* discursively erases issues pertaining to race and class as the discursive identity developed by the source is positioned in an unraced and unclassed location. Finally, the discursive identity developed by *Kate Magazine* is inconsistent, and produces contradictory narratives. Across the five sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand, multiple different conceptualisations of feminist politics can be identified.

In addition to the different conceptualisations of feminist political identity across the five sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand, there are specific specialised modes of language that create discursive barriers and serve to position the sources within a particular context. The manner that specialised language is used within *What She Said,* and *Kate Magazine* is academic in nature. The use of specialised language is frequent and engages with theoretical concepts that presuppose a minimum level of understanding in order to engage with the discourse produced. The use of specialised language in this manner is consistent with the sources being placed within a university context as *What She Said* was produced at The University of Canterbury, while *Kate Magazine* was produced at Auckland University. *The Hand Mirror* uses less specialised language than both *What She Said,* and *Kate Magazine.* However, on the occasions that it is used, it presupposes a minimum understanding in order to engage the discourse. The less frequent use of specialised language by *The*

Hand Mirror could be due to it being a blog without a fixed academic position. *Mellow Yellow* uses specialised language that is related to a raced identity and modes of racism. This positions the discursive identity of *Mellow Yellow* as a form of raced feminism. *Cute Bruiser* used almost no specialised language. This indicates a unique position, which could either be outside of feminist modes of knowledge, or be attempting to develop feminist knowledge that is accessible through not creating a barrier to understanding. The use of specialised language discursively constituted the various politics of the sources in different ways, further indicating a splintered feminist identity across the five sources from Aotearoa-New Zealand.

In the final chapter of the thesis, *A Clash of Identities: Discursive Contestation over Feminist Politics*, it was argued that the signifier 'feminist' functioned as a floating signifier across the 10 sources analysed for this thesis. The meaning of the term, feminism, was being discursively contested across the 10 sources. However, this discursive contestation happened across the sources and not within them as each source had its own conceptualisation of feminist politics. What this meant is that the meaning of the signifier, feminism, was being discursively contested as the various sources defined the term in differing ways. Due to this discursive contestation, there was not an identifiable feminist meta-narrative outside of an emphasis on women. This effectively means that there is not a single feminist counterpublic that defines social reality as a site of historical contestation, but multiple small, discursively diverse counterpublics attempting to define social reality. A lack of discursive unity in the case of the 10 sources analysed here could indicate a lack of discursive power within feminism. What this effectively means is that without a unified conceptualisation of feminist politics within the various sources identifying as feminist, multiple conceptualisations of feminism

compete for recognition across the various sources, and therefore, diminish the discursive power of feminism in and of itself.

The counterpublics developed by each source were based around a theoretical identity developed through the discourses and narratives of the source. It was argued that the different modes of discursive identity developed across the sources were based on theoretical identities. What is important here is understanding the difference between the theoretical identities of the sources and the potential realised identities that they could develop. The conceptual distinction between theoretical and realised identity draws on Bourdieu's (1984; 1998) understanding of class and capital. Here, the concern is outlining various forms of theoretical identity, however, in order for these identities to become realised, access to different forms of capital is required. The different theoretical identities mediated by the various sources would require different forms of capital in order to be realised. In the case of the 10 sources analysed here, the different discursive identities developed across the various sources are going to require access to certain forms of capital in order to be potentially realised. This means that in order for an individual or group to realise a certain feminist identity – as mediated by the sources analysed here – access to modes of capital will be required. However, this creates barriers that may limit a person or group's ability to realise a political identity. The theoretical counterpublic identities developed by the various sources create barriers of access to realising a counterpublic identity.

Due to the problems of no discursive unity across the sources – impacting on the sources' ability to construct a feminist meta-narrative that collectively challenges Barthesian (2012) myths – and the barriers of access to realising the theoretical identities developed by the various sources, a differing conceptualisation of how a feminist political identity could manifest itself was briefly

outlined. What was outlined was a transnational imaginary that develops a feminist politics of material discourse. The outline for this political form attempted to create a transnational model for engagement with, while also accepting material reality as an aspect of, gendered oppression. What this means is that a transnational feminist politics that accepts and understands that certain modes of capital can function to create a barrier between a theoretical identity and a realised identity is required. This proposed mode of political understanding was outlined in an attempt to provide a conceptualisation of feminist politics that has a discursive unity, and therefore, can be consistently practiced.

This thesis has attempted a critical analysis of the way that identity was discursively positioned across the various feminist sources. The sources constituted a feminist political identity in different ways, resulting in a fractured feminist identity. The purpose of this thesis is not to critique feminism as politics without direction, but rather to highlight areas of weakness it has as a political project. This thesis has outlined the way that feminist political sources constitute knowledge in differing ways, indicating a lack of discursive unity, and therefore, a lack of discursive political practice. In order to maintain itself, feminist politics needs to reconcile itself and develop a clear unitary direction. By developing a unitary direction, feminist politics will be more able to create the power necessary to force social change. Differing conceptualisations of social reality aside, the goal of political movements should be to change social and political systems, not simply deliberate upon them.

Notes

1.   These figures are in New Zealand dollars as it is an act of government from Aotearoa-New Zealand being cited.

2.   The financial incentives of these websites were discussed in an earlier chapter. See Chapter Two*: Alternative Media Sources of International Feminism: Identity across Two Discourses.*

3.   For an earlier discussion on the regulated feminist subject see Chapter Two*: Alternative Media Sources of International Feminism: Identity across Two Discourses.*

4.   This account of the history of the marketplace originates in 1776 with Adam Smith (Graeber, 2011). In Smith's account, currency was invented in order to resolve the issues of the "double coincidence of wants" (Smith, cited in Graeber, 2011: 22) trading one resources directly for another produces. However, the problem with Smith's account on the history of currency originating from barter is that "there's no evidence that it ever happened, and an enormous amount of evidence suggesting that it did not" (Graeber, 2011: 28). Historical evidence has been found suggesting that currency "was actually created by bureaucrats in order to keep track of resources and move things back and forth between departments" (Graeber, 2011: 39). In this sense, the historical evidence positions institutional forces in the rise of currency rather than the natural outcome of the failings in a barter system. For further reading see: Graeber, D. 2011, *Debt: The First 5,000 Years,* Melville House Printing, New York.

5.   The manner and the extent to which the various sources discussed here challenged mythic understands of reality was discussed in previous chapters. See Chapter Two: *Alternative Media Sources of International Feminism: Identity across Two Discourses,* for an analysis of the sources from the international sample, and Chapter Three: *Alternative Media Sources of Feminism from Aotearoa-New Zealand: Identity across Multiple Discourses,* for an analysis of the various sources from Aotearoa New Zealand.

6.   For a discussion on the nature of specialised language and how it serves to function discursively see Chapter Three: *Alternative Media Sources of Feminism from Aotearoa-New Zealand: Identity across Multiple Discourses.*

Appendix A

Global rankings recorded by www.alexa.com on the 2nd June, 2015.

International sources' URLs listed on the left, global popularity rank with '1' being the most visited website on the internet in the center, and the rank within the sample with '1' being the most popular on the right.

Source	Global Rank	Rank Within Sample
www.jezebel.com	1,173	1
http://everydayfeminism.com	13,723	2
www.rookiemag.com	42,558	3
http://feministing.com/	45,050	4
http://bust.com	47,547	5
http://bitchmagazine.org	60,354	6
www.msmagazine.com	90,882	7
http://skepchick.org/	110,339	8
http://www.blackgirldangerous.org/	249,408	9
http://www.feministe.us/blog/	257,869	10
http://thefeministwire.com	268,440	11
www.mookychick.co.uk	287,531	12
http://www.feministfrequency.com/	290,968	13
http://www.ihollaback.org/	388,934	14
http://therepresentationproject.com	420,419	15
www.thefword.org.uk	441,798	16
http://www.gradientlair.com/	448,858	17
http://vagendamagazine.com	533,921	18
http://www.crunkfeministcollective.com/	589,260	19
http://thefbomb.org/	917,997	20
http://lipmag.com	1,002,178	21
http://bluestockingsmag.com	1,145,143	22

http://feministajones.com/blog/	1,176,763	23
http://shamelessmag.com	1,179,726	24
http://gutsmagazine.ca	1,261,325	25
http://tigerbeatdown.com/	1,332,160	26
www.feministtimes.com	1,795,884	27
http://arewomenhuman.me/	3,875,110	28
http://makeshiftmag.com	6,321,433	29
http://www.offourbacks.org	9,310,850	30

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