

everyday feminism

WORK THROUGH ISSUES. STAND UP FOR YOURSELF. LIVE YOUR TRUTH.

Today's video is called "An Open Letter to Feminist Trolls." But to be honest, this video isn't really for the trolls. It's for everyone who's attacked by the trolls and maybe wants to feel a little bit of solidarity. And also because the English language was my love before feminism and sexuality, and the idea of combining those things into one video makes me unnaturally enthusiastic.

So today, I want to take three words that anti-feminists often use against feminists in an attempt to silence them, and talk a little bit about why they're the most ineffective words to use against someone who believes in gender equality.

And those three words are: "slut," "bitch," and "cunt."

It's time to get a little more creative.

One time I received a message on YouTube regarding a video that I did regarding why a woman's sexuality is inconsequential. He repeatedly told me that I was a slut. I guess he missed the entire point of the video.

Because let me explain something to you. The word "slut," and ones like it including "whore," has already been deconstructed in feminist circles. We have already come to the conclusion that all it is is an archaic word used to describe, well, nothing in particular. Because the word "slut" can be plastered on to anyone who has sex outside of what the person using the word deems appropriate or acceptable.

So basically when you call someone a slut, all you're really saying is, "I don't like the way you have sex." Which is interesting, because most likely, if you're using that word against me, you don't know anything about the reality of my sex life. So what you're really saying is "I don't like the way I assume you're having sex."

Oh, yeah, good insult.

Really what you're insulting is the idea that you subscribe to a construct that other people behave outside of. And that's really not my problem. And since feminists don't believe in this construct anyway, it's hard for us to feel bad about ourselves when you use this word against us.

The message that I receive when you call me a "slut" is this: there are people out there that actually still believe that a woman's worth is directly tied to how much sex she has. You have a lot more work to do.

To which I respond: “You’re right.”

Which is why I need to stop reading this message and get the word out.

Funny how I’m only a “bitch” when I’m not behaving. Like when street harassers go from calling me “Baby” to “Bitch” when I step out of line by, you know, practicing autonomy.

Because when you say “Bitch,” what I hear is “Strong.” What I hear is “opinionated,” “outspoken,” “daring,” “confident.”

Because that’s actually what you mean. What you mean is that I’m performing womanhood in a way that goes against the status quo, that calls into question your conformity to hegemonic masculinity, that criticizes your entitlement complex. When you call me a “bitch,” what you’re really hoping is that I’ll shut up, sit down, be seen and not heard. Because that’s what womanhood looks like to you. That’s what femininity is – submission, subservience.

But the real effect that this has on me is that it makes me want to stand taller, speak louder. Because the entire point of my work is to break down this construct. And you’re never going to shut that down. Especially not with an insult as contrived and ill-conceived, and not to mention over used, as “bitch.”

When you call me a “cunt,” you’re literally calling me a vagina. And news flash – genitals don’t offend me. In fact, I just so happen to have a vagina. I carry one with me all the time. I see a vagina, or at least a vulva, every single day. It’s grown with me. It’s been there with me through some tough times. It’s the source of the greatest carnal pleasure on earth. My vagina doesn’t bother me. In fact, I actually love my vagina. So calling me a “cunt” is basically a compliment.

The thing is, when you call someone a “vagina”, or, you know, a “cunt,” in an attempt to disrespect someone, what you’re really saying is that you disrespect the vagina. That there’s something inherently wrong with vaginas.

And you know what, society tells me all day that vaginas are gross and dirty and scary. Just take a look at any tampon commercial. It sends the same message you do when you call me a “cunt.” You are just one more voice drowning in a sea of voices telling me to be ashamed and embarrassed by my vagina.

And you know what? I’m bored with the idea that vaginas are problematic. I’m over it. But here’s the thing – I am not a vagina. I have a vagina. And reducing me to my vagina, yes even in this non sexual way, just validates what I’m doing.

I need to be a feminist because “vagina” is an insult. So thank you for reminding me why I need to keep fighting. Because that’s what’s really funny about your silencing tactics – they don’t work. Worse, they do the opposite of what you’re hoping they’re going to do. You’re not

silencing us, you're not scaring us. You're not even offending us. You're just providing us with more and more reasons to fight back.

So what I mean to say is, "Thanks." While I'm out here busting my ass to make a difference in the world, you're sitting behind a computer screen hurling uncreative "insults" at me, not making a dent in dismantling feminism. And, if anything, fueling my fire. And before you suggest I go back to the kitchen – because that's where I belong, right? – I want you to know that I actually enjoy cooking. Baking is like self care to me.

So what you're really telling me is, "Take care of yourself, darling. Rest up. You have a whole lot of patriarchy to smash."

And you're right, I do. So, until next time!