

# Written Response : Layers of emphasis

## Where we find feminism matters; from whom we find feminism matters.

Feminism as a collective movement is made out of how we are moved to become feminists in dialogue with others. A movement requires us to be moved. I explore this requirement by revisiting the question of feminist consciousness in part I of this book. Let's think of why feminist movements are still necessary. I want to take here bell hooks's definition of feminism as "the movement to end sexism, sexual exploitation and sexual oppression" (2000, 33). From this definition, we learn so much. Feminism is necessary because of what has not ended: sexism, sexual exploitation, and sexual oppression. And for hooks, "sexism, sexual exploitation and sexual oppression" cannot be separated from racism, from how the present is shaped by colonial histories including slavery, as central to the exploitation of labor under capitalism. Intersectionality is a starting point, the point from which we must proceed if we are to offer an account of how power works. Feminism will be intersectional "or it will be bullshit," to borrow from the eloquence of Flavia Dzodan.<sup>3</sup> This is the kind of feminism I am referring to throughout this book (unless I indicate otherwise by referring specifically to white feminism).

A significant step for a feminist movement is to recognize what has not ended. And this step is a very hard step. It is a slow and painstaking step. We might think we have made that step only to realize we have to make it again. It might be you are up against a fantasy of equality: that women can now do it, even have it, or that they would have it if they just tried hard enough; that individual women can bring sexism and other barriers (we might describe these barriers as the glass ceiling or the brick wall) to an end through sheer effort or persistence or will. So much ends up being invested in our own bodies. We could call this a postfeminist fantasy: that an individual woman can bring what blocks her movement to an end; or that feminism has brought "sexism, sexual exploitation or sexual oppression" to an end as if feminism has been so successful that it has eliminated its own necessity (Gill 2007; McRobbie 2009); or that such phenomena are themselves a feminist fantasy, an attachment to something that was never or is no longer. We could also think of postrace as a fantasy through which racism operates: as if racism is behind us because we no longer believe in race, or as if racism would be behind us if we no longer believed in race. Those of us who come to embody diversity for organizations are assumed to bring whiteness to an end by virtue of our arrival (see chapter 6).

When you become a feminist, you find out very quickly: what you aim

to bring to an end some do not recognize as existing. This book follows this finding. So much feminist and antiracist work is the work of trying to convince others that sexism and racism have not ended; that sexism and racism are fundamental to the injustices of late capitalism; that they matter. Just to talk about sexism and racism here and now is to refuse displacement; it is to refuse to wrap your speech around postfeminism or postrace, which would require you to use the past tense (back then) or an elsewhere (over there).<sup>4</sup>

Even to describe something as sexist and racist here and now can get you into trouble. You point to structures; they say it is in your head. What you describe as material is dismissed as mental. I think we learn about materiality from such dismissals, as I will try to show in part II, on diversity work. And think also of what is required: the political labor necessary of having to insist that what we are describing is not just what we are feeling or thinking. A feminist movement depends on our ability to keep insisting on something: the ongoing existence of the very things we wish to bring to an end. The labor of that insistence is what I describe in this book. We learn from being feminists.

A feminist movement thus requires that we acquire feminist tendencies, a willingness to keep going despite or even because of what we come up against. We could think of this process as practicing feminism. If we tend toward the world in a feminist way, if we repeat that tending, again and again, we acquire feminist tendencies. Feminist hope is the failure to eliminate the potential for acquisition. And yet once you have become a feminist, it can feel that you were always a feminist. Is it possible to have always been that way? Is it possible to have been a feminist right from the beginning? Perhaps you feel you were always that way inclined. Maybe you tended that way, a feminist way, because you already tended to be a rebellious or even willful girl (see chapter 3), who would not accept the place she had been given. Or maybe feminism is a way of beginning again: so your story did in a certain way begin with feminism.

A feminist movement is built from many moments of beginning again. And this is one of my central concerns: how the acquisition of a feminist tendency to become that sort of girl or woman, the wrong sort, or bad sort, the one who speaks her mind, who writes her name, who raises her arm in protest, is necessary for a feminist movement. Individual struggle does matter; a collective movement depends upon it. But of course being the wrong sort does not make us right. Much injustice can be and has been committed by those who think of themselves as the wrong sort—whether the wrong sort of women or the wrong sort of feminists. There is no guarantee that in struggling for justice we ourselves will be just. We have to hesitate, to temper the strength of our

tendencies with doubt; to waver when we are sure, or even because we are sure. A feminist movement that proceeds with too much confidence has cost us too much already. I explore the necessity of wavering with our convictions in part III. If a feminist tendency is what we work for, that tendency does not give us a stable ground.

## Re-doing the layout - Artboard size : 1920x1080px ; Text box : 1800x850 px ; Font size : 20pt ; Kerning : 4 ; Leading : 28 .

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I wanted to look for emphasis in text, based on the context, we read with tones, 'emphasising' certain words more than others.

To map it out, I started with blocking out the text I would 'emphasise' the most with **red** boxes, followed with a second level/ layer of text which I would 'emphasise' lesser than the former words with **yellow** boxes.

So in degree of importance, **red** being or greater value than **yellow**.

Or



## Step 1 : Emphasis by red

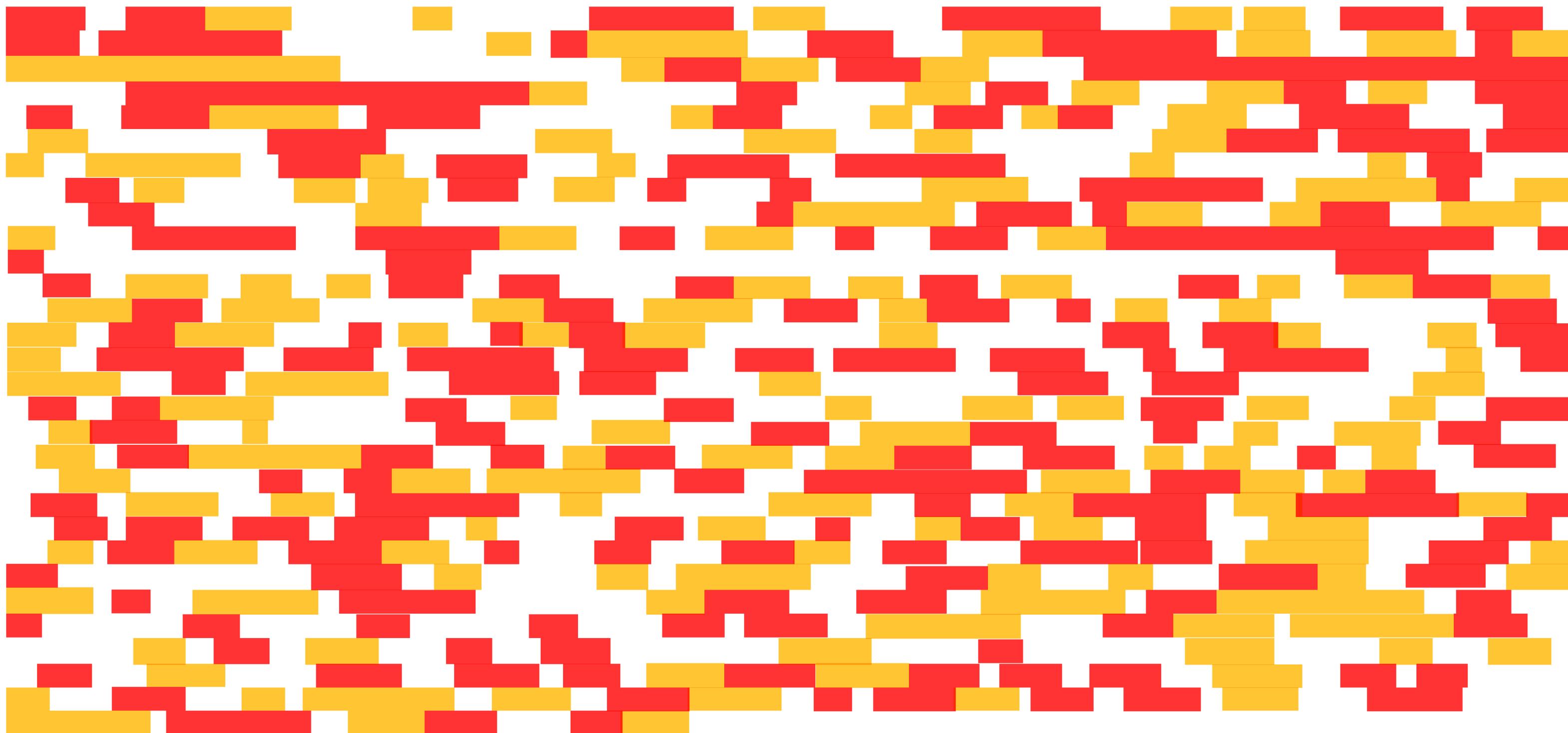
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## Step 2 : Emphasis by yellow

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Layers of emphasis / mapping



## Key Findings

1. My way of reading and comprehending the text changed as I went from step 1 to step 2, as I could give more importance to certain words that I previously missed, which made it easier to understand what the author is trying to say.
2. The visualisation of the important words made it easier to focus on the text that was of higher 'value' to get an understanding of the message, that helped in making the text more fun to read and the concept easier to grasp 'for me'.
3. This exercise can be extended further for all the words in the text in **multiple layers of emphasis.** (I could not do that due to time constraints)

# Written Response