

FEMINIST IDENTITY AND THE PERSONAL EPISTEMOLOGIES OF LATINA COLLEGE
STUDENTS

A Thesis

by

EMILY MUNOZ

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This thesis meets the standards for scope and quality of
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and is hereby approved.

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ABSTRACT

The current study examines the relationships between women's ways of knowing, ethnicity, and feminist identity, making use of Belenky et al's (1986) research paradigm published in *Women's Ways of Knowing (WWK)*. The focus of the WWK project was to understand women's beliefs about knowledge and how they made meaning of their educational experiences. Building on Belenky et al's work, we seek to investigate how Latinas' identification with feminism and their culture intersect to influence women's beliefs about knowledge.

The study employed a mixed-methods design, 101 students who self-identify as Latina and who are currently enrolled at a Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) were recruited from undergraduate courses to participate in an online survey. Participants were asked to complete a web-based survey, which included questions regarding their attitudes towards feminism and the women's movement, language praxis, media use, and their attitudes towards learning.

Participants were also asked to provide demographic, which included a question about whether or not they identified themselves as a feminist. In the interview portion of the study, 20 participants were asked questions about feminism, and were prompted to explain why they do or do not identify as a feminist. They were also asked about their beliefs about opinions, and how they distinguish between what is factually right and wrong.

Overall, the Latina woman surveyed held relatively favorable attitudes towards feminism, with 71% identifying themselves as feminists. The results of the study confirmed the initial hypothesis, which stated that feminist identity would be related to connected knowing, however, there were no significant differences between feminists and non-feminists on a measure of Hispanic and non-Hispanic acculturation. There was also no significant relationship between

acculturation and specific ways of knowing. Qualitative results demonstrate that Latina women emphasize family and morality when discussing both feminism and beliefs about knowledge.

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Feminist Identity and the Personal Epistemologies of Latina College Students

Epistemology is an area of philosophy that is concerned with the nature and production of knowledge. While the study of epistemology has been of interest to philosophers for centuries, personal epistemological development, or the beliefs individuals hold about knowledge, has recently become an area of focus for both psychologists and educators (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). This interest in intellectual development began with Piaget's (1950) work on what he termed *genetic epistemology* (as cited in Hofer & Pintrich). Many of the tenets of Piaget's theory regarding the "genesis" of knowledge have not been carried forward into subsequent models of epistemological development. However, his work was influential in that it challenged the dominant behaviorist views of the time, which had separated knowing from learning (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). Piaget is also credited with placing an emphasis on the changes that take place in the relationship between the individual and what is known, which is a central theme in more recent theories of epistemological development (Flavell, 1963).

The research tradition of investigating college students' personal epistemologies can be traced to William Perry (1970). In an attempt to understand how students interpreted and made meaning of their educational experiences, Perry conducted two longitudinal studies at Harvard University. Perry was particularly interested in how students responded to the pluralistic knowledge that they are exposed to in college, which forces them to grapple with the absence of universal truths. Perry (1970) developed an instrument called the Checklist of Educational Values (CLEV), that was based on the assumption that certain personality characteristics predisposed students to thrive in response to the relativism they were exposed to at Harvard (as cited in Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). Perry administered the CLEV to a sample of 313 first year students. From this sample, Perry selected 31 students to sit for an interview on an annual basis.

From these interviews, Perry arrived at the conclusion that the student's views on knowledge and their educational experiences were not merely a byproduct of personality, but rather the content of these interviews served as evidence for a cognitive developmental process.

Perry (1970) and his colleagues outlined a scheme of intellectual and ethical development, which included a sequence of nine positions in total, clustered into four sequential categories (as cited in Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). The first two positions belong to the category of *dualism*. *Dualism* is characterized by absolutist views, and the belief that all knowledge or actions are either "right" or "wrong." Individuals in this category believe that there is a universal truth that can be known, and it is the role of the teacher to convey this truth. This pattern of thinking is eventually modified into *multiplicity*, which is characterized by the realization that there is more than one way to view a specific problem or topic. Individuals in these positions gradually come to understand that conflicting views and opinions can be equally valid and they enter the stage of *relativism*. *Relativism* is characterized by an ability to view knowledge as embedded within a specific context. Individuals in these positions usually become more flexible in their thinking, and abandon the possibility of an absolute truth. Instead, they come to realize that their own beliefs are subjective, and that there are many defensible perspectives that they recognize as valid. The fourth, and final, category is *commitment within relativism*. This category is characterized by a commitment to values and beliefs. Individuals integrate opposing views to allow for a more satisfying perspective, that encompasses many facets of arguments that they feel are the most explanatory or valid. Adults who attain this position are capable of reconciling contradictions in information and actively seek out different perspectives in order to advance their own understanding of a phenomenon. According to Perry (1970), the positions that compose this category are not often found in college students.

In the late 1970's, concerns were raised regarding Perry's scheme, specifically its lack of applicability to the general population of college students (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). Perry's critics noted that he used a homogenous sample of all white men from an academically elite institution. In response to this critique, Belenky et al (1986) set about extending Perry's work by encompassing the perspectives of women in both higher education, as well as women in "invisible colleges." These "invisible colleges" were, in fact, three social service agencies serving rural communities. Belenky et al's (1986) findings from this study were published in their book, titled *Women's Ways of Knowing (WWK)*. The focus of the *WWK* project was to understand women's beliefs about knowledge and how they made meaning of their educational experiences. Using an economically diverse sample of women, the *WWK* researchers identified five epistemic positions from which women come to know and view their world. These positions include *silence, received knowing, subjective knowledge, procedural knowledge, and constructed knowledge*. As mentioned, the *WWK* project was conceptually grounded in the work of William Perry's (1970) longitudinal study of the intellectual development of Harvard men, which inspired Perry's Scheme of Intellectual and Ethical Development. Critics of Perry asserted that using such a homogeneous sample of white, highly educated, elite men was highly problematic in that it excluded the experiences of women, and individuals in different social classes (Belenky et al, 1986). This critique of Perry extends beyond his theory of development, and to the field of psychology as a whole. Individuals like Carole Gilligan (1982), and the researchers behind the *WWK* project, pointed out that generalizing from an all-male sample to the rest of population was problematic in that it led to a normative view of how college-aged individuals developed. This generation of researchers argued that when women's development is viewed from an androcentric lens, differences in development may look like deficits, and psychological theories

may run the risk of inadvertently justifying social inequalities between men and women (Gilligan, 1982; Belenky et al, 1986)

In addition to the exclusion of women in research on epistemology, the role of culture has not been a point of focus for many researchers (Hofer, 2012) Only a small portion of research on personal epistemology has focused on Latino communities, specifically Latina women. While gender inequality exists in all cultures, Latina women in American society are subjugated on the basis of both their gender, as well as their minority status. Latinas are underrepresented at every level of higher education (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013); therefore, it is important to investigate how their culture influences how they view themselves as owners and creators of knowledge.

Feminism also represents an area in Latina's lives that is a point of conflict, as there are cultural barriers to their social identification with the feminist movement. This includes the view that feminism is a movement for White middle-class women (Aronson, 2003; Myaskovsky & Wittig, 1997). An early study of college women's identification with feminism found that 19% of Latinas labeled themselves as feminists, however, 61% voiced support for the principles of feminism (Myaskovsky & Witting, 1997). Despite this finding, feminist identity development continues to be an area in which Latinas' experiences are not always included (Moradi et al, 2002). Researchers have called for studies examining the applicability of feminist identity development models to culturally diverse groups of women (Moradi et al, 2002; Moradi & Subich, 2002). The proposed study seeks to investigate how culture influences both identification with feminism, as well as Latina women's personal epistemology.

Theoretical Framework

The current study utilized a feminist epistemological framework in order to study the lived experiences of Latina women. Epistemology is concerned with issues surrounding how knowledge is created and disseminated, and it is ultimately the investigation of what distinguishes opinions from justified beliefs (Tuana, 2004). Central to a feminist epistemology is the notion that knowledge is situated within a social context. This framework recognizes that knowledge is bound to issues of power, therefore, feminist researchers have the obligation to privilege the lived experiences of marginalized groups in order to challenge the dominant androcentric modes of knowledge acquisition.

Feminism and Women's Lives

Women's Health Movement. The women's health movement of the 1970's and 1980's emerged from a dissatisfaction with the dominant practices in women's health care (Tuana, 2006). The women's health movement developed alongside the women's liberation movement, however, it focused on educating women about their own bodies and their health (Tuana, 2006). Another goal of the women's health movement was to push for the development of new knowledge regarding women's bodies. Leaders of this movement argued that society's understanding of women's bodies was configured by sexism and androcentrism. The movement maintained that traditional medicine needed to be reexamined in order to correct misunderstandings about women's bodies and eradicate the oppressive practices that emerged from these misunderstandings.

One of the key texts in the women's health movement, *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (1973), made knowledge available to women that had previously been inaccessible. Tuana (2006) asserted that this publication, and the actions of the women's health movement in general, were forms of "epistemological resistance." In this way, the issue of knowledge accessibility, that was

at the forefront of the women's health movement, was tied to larger issues of cognitive authority. Feminist philosophers argue that cognitive authority is determined by one's position within society, and this position is determined by gender, race, class and other social categories (Kittay & Alcoff, 2008). Sandra Harding (1986) asserted that what scientists know, and who they can work with in order to advance knowledge, depends on how they are situated in relation to those who are authorities in their field. In social arrangements where men make up the majority of authority figures in the sciences, topics of research and the pretheoretical assumptions guiding this research, will reflect only the perspectives that privilege men (Kittay & Alcoff, 2008). Feminists have also argued that in these stratified social arrangements, reliance on authority figures leaves oppressed groups of people vulnerable (Code, 2006; Kittay & Alcoff, 2008)

Women's health, particularly their reproductive health, remains a contentious topic on both a political and personal level. On a daily basis, women are exposed to information regarding birth control, abortion, cancer screenings, among many other topics. They have to evaluate this information and decide if it is valid and if the source of this information is reliable. The women's health movement represents, on a large scale, a form of epistemological resistance, however, the question still remains how women engage with knowledge on a day to day basis and how they see themselves as knowers and creators of this knowledge.

Women's Relationship with Feminism. Identification with feminism is defined as an awareness of institutionalized gender inequality, and involves a willingness to join with women in opposition to said inequality (Downing & Roush, 1985). Living in a "post-feminism" time period, the relevance of feminism is often questioned. Women continue to benefit from the efforts of the women's movement, which include equal access to jobs, the ability to obtain a

divorce, own property, and vote. Despite these victories, research has demonstrated that women are hesitant to identify themselves as feminists (Aronson, 2003; Swirsky & Angelone, 2014).

Rejection of the feminist label. A commonly cited reason for women's rejection of the feminist label includes negative stereotypes regarding feminism (Swirsky & Angelone, 2014). Studies have consistently shown that women associate feminists with being militant, unattractive, and man-hating, and overall, toxic (Roy, Weibust, & Miller, 2007; Swirsky & Angelone, 2014). Roy and colleagues (2007), discovered that women who are exposed to positive stereotypes about feminism are more likely to identify as feminists in a subsequent questionnaire than women who are exposed to negative stereotypes. Furthermore, these stereotypes lead to a view of feminism as being unreasonable and extreme (Edley & Wetherell, 2001). Studies have found that men, when asked about feminism, invoke these stereotypes in order to separate feminists into two groups: the unreasonable and monstrous feminists and the fair feminists (Edley & Wetherell, 2001). Moreover, women are cognizant of these stereotypes when deciding whether or not to label themselves as feminists, which may explain discrepancies in the number of women who support the goal of gender equality versus the number of women who actually identify themselves as a feminist (Zucker & Bay-Cheng, 2010)

In addition to this, many women hesitate to identify themselves as a feminist because they feel that feminism doesn't apply to them or is no longer relevant to the current generation of women (Swirsky & Angelone, 2014). Women who report this as a barrier to feminist identification are more apt to think that equality between the sexes has been, more or less, achieved (Swirsky & Angelone, 2014).

In terms of applicability, minority status is also associated with lower rates of feminist identification (Myaskovsky & Witting, 1997). Historically, mainstream feminism focuses on the

experience of white, middle class women, which could make minority women, feel excluded by the feminist movement (hooks, 2000). Researchers have suggested that women may feel more compelled to choose their racial identity in terms of addressing inequality because they feel that the feminist movement largely ignores issues of race (Swirsky & Angelone, 2013; Reid, 1984).

Another reason women provide for not labeling themselves as a feminist is a lack of knowledge about the movement. Many women are unsure whether they identify with feminism because they are not entirely sure what being a feminist entails (Swirsky & Angelone, 2014). This is especially true for African American and Asian American women, who have a tendency to incorrectly define the word “feminism” as being related to enacting femininity and exhibiting qualities that are considered feminine (Robnett & Anderson, 2017). Conversely, being introduced to feminism in an educational setting, such as a college course, contributes to the development of feminist identity (Bargad & Hyde, 1991).

A common reason that women give for not identifying as feminists is their preference for traditional gender roles, which they view as being at odds with feminist values (Robnett & Anderson, 2017). The construct of benevolent sexism may explain why women reject feminism in favor of traditional values. Benevolent sexism is a form of sexism that is presented as a positive attitude toward women, but undermines gender equality (Glick & Fiske, 1996). It incorporates the belief that women should be put on a pedestal and admired for their qualities. People who endorse benevolent sexism believe that women should be cherished and protected by men. According to Glick and Fiske (1996), benevolent sexism operates as a reward for women who adhere to gender norms. Therefore, women may reject feminism in order to continue benefiting from what they perceive as the positive components of benevolent sexism (Robnett & Anderson, 2017) .

Positive outcomes associated with identifying as a feminist. Commitment to feminist values has been identified as a major source of empowerment for women (Downing & Roush, 1984). Additional benefits related to holding a feminist identity include an increased sense of self-efficacy, or the belief that one can accomplish a goal or succeed in a certain task (Eisele & Stake, 2008). Research has found that feminist identity is related enhanced subjective well-being and a sense of satisfaction with their lives (Saunders & West, 2006; Yakushko, 2007) In terms of clinical outcomes, feminism has been shown to have an indirect impact on negative eating attitudes, depressive symptoms, and self-esteem. According to Hurt et al (2007), feminism is related to the rejection of feminine norms or thinness, physical appearance, and the importance of romantic relationships. The aforementioned variables are related to self-objectification and feelings of shame, which are both related to negative clinical outcomes. Feminist women are less likely to experience these outcomes because they are less likely to engage in self-objectification (Hurt et al, 2007)

Furthermore, women who identify themselves as feminists are more likely to confront sexism when they are exposed to it (Leaper & Arias, 2011). Feminist identity is also related to support seeking behaviors in instances of sexual harassment and assault (Leaper & Arias, 2011). Conversely, women who do not recognize that sexism is an institutionalized, and pervasive, problem may misattribute their experiences to personal failures when exposed to sexist events (Moradi & Subich, 2002)

Latina Women & Feminism. Early studies on feminist identity found that Latina women show a reluctance to identify themselves as feminists (Myaskovsky & Wittig, 1997). The majority of women in today's society must balance their career goals and their families, however, some researchers suggest that Latinas may experience this differently due to cultural

values (Hurtado, 2003). For example, gender roles are an organizing feature of Hispanic families, and the roles of males and females are clearly defined by the constructs of *marianismo* and *machismo* (Ginorio, Gutierrez, Cauce, & Acosta, 1995). *Marianismo* is an aspect of feminine identity in Hispanic culture, and acts a script for female behavior (Hurtado, 2003). *Marianismo* has its origins in Catholicism, and it emphasizes self-sacrificing, modesty, and humility. Other aspects of *marianismo* include sexual purity and passivity. As mentioned, the adherence to traditional gender roles is often related to a rejection of the feminist label (Swirsky & Angelone, 2013). Some researchers suggest that *marianismo* and other cultural values may deter Latinas from identifying with feminism because they might perceive their culture as conflicting with the values of feminism (Robnett, Anderson, & Hunter, 2012). Interestingly enough, as Latina women become more acculturated to the dominant culture, their conceptualization of the female role changes and they tend to hold more liberal attitudes toward women (Karana, Green, & Valencia-Weber, 1982).

As mentioned, Moradi (2005) argues that Latinas may be less likely to identify themselves as feminists because the feminist movement has often been associated with white women, and there has been little attention paid to the intersection of class, race, and gender. However, recent studies show that Latina adolescents are more aware of institutionalized inequalities due to their experiences with discrimination, therefore, they more readily support feminism's goal of eliminating these inequalities (Flores, Carrubba, & Good, 2006). Additional findings from Flores and colleagues' study suggest that Latina adolescents demonstrate stronger support for feminism than white adolescents.

Manago, Brown, and Leaper (2009), in a study focusing on Latina adolescents' understanding of feminism, found that 66% of their sample endorse a definition of feminism that

incorporated equality. Opposition to female superiority was a common reason for rejection of feminist values. Furthermore, the adolescents in this study expressed that they did not want to align themselves with feminism because it appears hateful and negative. In the qualitative portion of Manago et al's (2009) study, many of the girl's conceptions of feminism included an appreciation of feminine qualities. The researchers suggest that the adolescents' appreciation of femininity may be related to *marianismo*. While the concept of *marianismo* is often described as the idea that women should be subservient to men, *marianismo* also incorporates ideas about women's responsibilities to the family. These responsibilities include maintaining familial relationships, and being the "keeper" of family traditions, and protecting the integrity of the family (Gil & Vasquez, 1996; Ginorio et al, 1995).

Theories of Feminist Identity Development

Downing and Roush Model of Feminist Identity Development. In 1985, Downing and Roush put forward a five-stage model of feminist identity development, that illustrated the process by which women move from an acceptance of traditional gender roles and denial of sexism, and into an awareness of gender-related oppression and a commitment to help dissolve oppressive systems. The development of the model was heavily influenced by William Cross' (1971) model of African American Identity Development, and is based on the premise that women must acknowledge struggle and discrimination in order to achieve feminist identity (as cited in Downing & Roush, 1984). The first stage, *Passive Acceptance*, is characterized by a denial of sexism and an acceptance of male dominance and gender stereotypes. Women in this stage view gender roles as beneficial for women. The next stage, the *revelation stage*, begins with a series of catalytic events that result in self-reflection and an increased awareness of gender-related oppression. Women in this stage exhibit dualistic thinking, and perceive men

negatively. The third stage, *embeddedness-emanation*, is characterized by relativistic thinking and feelings of connectedness with other women. *Synthesis* stage is characterized by the development of a positive identity as a feminist. Women in this stage move beyond traditional gender roles and stereotypes, and accept that there are positive aspects of being a woman. The fifth, and final stage, is *Active Commitment*. In this stage, feminist identity is well-established, and women begin to take action to eradicate gender inequality. Women in this stage recognize that women are equal to, but distinctly different from, men.

Criticism of the Feminist Identity Development Model. Criticism of the feminist identity development model includes the proposed universality of the stages. Many researchers feel that the model does not consider differences in race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social class, nor does it account for how these differences influence women's development as feminists (Vandiver, 2002). In a review of the literature pertaining to feminist identity development, Moradi, Subich & Phillips (2002) noted that one of the major limitations of the empirical investigation of feminism is the overrepresentation of white, American, college students in their samples. This has prompted researchers, again, to question the model's applicability to women of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds (Moradi, 2005).

An additional criticism of the feminist identity development model, and the scales meant to assess development, is that feminism is treated as a unidimensional construct (Russo, 1998). While feminism does appear to be united by a belief that women's subordination in society is unjust and needs to be changed, Russo (1998) found that there is diversity in values held by feminists, and therefore, the feminist identity model may not account for all variations of feminism.

Multiracial Feminism

As mentioned, women's subordination to men is a universal phenomenon. However, in the context of a larger culture, women with minority status live their lives at the intersection of multiple subjugations. According to Baca Zinn and Dill (1996), traditional feminist theory has often disregarded the experiences of women whose lives are affected by these various systems of subordination. In response to a feminism that felt exclusionary and focused on the lives of white middle class women, a multiracial approach was proposed. The primary goal of multiracial feminism is to examine gender in the context of divisions such as race and social class. This approach to feminism is distinctive in its rejection of the false universalism that is embedded in mainstream feminist discourse. Multiracial feminism acknowledges that there is not a universal experience of being a woman. It attempts to encompass perspectives of women of color, whose analyses of gender-related issues are shaped by their position in society.

Baca Zinn & Dill (1996) argue that differences are used to organize social groups, therefore it is critical to attend to the power structures that result from social grouping. However, the authors caution against reducing differences to "pluralism," which is an acceptance of differences, but not an understanding of how these differences relate to power and inequality. In her work, bell hooks (1992) warned against the commodification of otherness, or the use of diversity as a marketing tool. In the commodification process, differences become exotic, and ethnicity becomes something for the dominant culture to consume.

Recent research has focused on the principles of multiracial feminism, including the idea that feminist identity, and the meaning of feminism, varies across different ethnic groups (Robnett & Anderson, 2017). Recent findings have been consistent with multiracial feminist theory and have found that ethnic differences exist in how individuals define feminism and their reasons for rejecting or accepting the feminist label. Eighty percent of women in an ethnically

diverse sample defined feminism in terms of equality and inclusivity. However, in this same sample, only 17% stated that they identified as feminist. Latina/o participants who did identify as feminists appeared to use feminist identity as a means of transcending gender roles. Researchers look to the cultural values of *marianismo* to explain why Latina/o participants attributed the development of their own feminist identity to the rejection of traditional gender roles (Robnett & Anderson, 2017). As mentioned, *marianismo* is associated with feminine strength and self-sacrifice for one's family. It also stresses the importance of obedience to men. For some, feminism may represent an attractive alternative to culturally dictated gender roles. In the same study, many Latina women suggested that feminism was not necessary. Women who adhere to the *marianismo* construct may view gender roles in their culture as being separate but equally valued, therefore, they may not perceive certain power differentials as being problematic (Robnett & Anderson, 2017).

Personal Epistemology

Women's Ways of Knowing. In 1917, G. Stanley Hall voiced his concern that higher education might be harmful to women's health. Hall worried that college might shrink women's wombs, leaving them "functionally castrated" and unable to bear children (as cited in Belenky et al, 1986). However, Belenky, Goldberger, Tarule, and Clinchy (1986) had other concerns about how higher education was affecting women. Rather than being concerned with how college would affect women's reproductive capacities, they were more concerned with the effects that being in a male-dominated institution would have on women's self-concept and, ultimately, their capacity to meet their full potential. To explore this issue of intellectual development, and to investigate the ways in which institutions themselves might be modified to serve the needs and interests of women, Belenky et al (1986) developed an extensive interview that they

administered to 135 women who ranged in age from 16-60 years old. These 135 women varied in ethnicity, educational history, socioeconomic backgrounds, and came from both rural and urban populations. At this point, the researchers were aware of the work of William G. Perry (1970), and their work was grounded in his theory of intellectual development. However, the researchers' intention with the *Women's Ways of Knowing* project was to meet some of the shortcomings of Perry's study, which dealt almost exclusively with male students at Harvard University. Through the blind coding of 135 interviews, Belenky et al (1986) identified five epistemic positions which described how women view the world of knowledge, truth, and authority in relation to themselves. The research questions driving the *WWK* project include: how do women conceive of themselves as knowers, and does their knowledge come from within or from outside of the self?

The epistemic position that Belenky et al (1986) identified as *silence* is characterized by women's voicelessness. Women in this position do not view themselves as capable of receiving knowledge and doubt their ability to understand and remember what authority figures say to them. Moreover, women in this position view authorities as "bellowing" entities that they must obey, rather than sources of knowledge. Women in this position feel incapable of expressing their thoughts and feelings to others. According to the authors, *silence* is not a "development," rather, it is an epistemological deficit that proliferates out of poverty and isolation. To Belenky et al (1986), this silence is imposed and maintained by a society that renders these women invisible.

A second epistemic position described by Belenky and colleagues (1986) is known as *received knowing*. The *received knowing* position is characterized by passive acceptance of an external truth that is dispensed by authority figures. Women in this epistemic position view the world in terms of absolutes and have a tendency to believe that every question has a single

correct answer. They have very little tolerance for ambiguity and see knowledge as something to be memorized and reproduced, but never questioned. The authors noted that *received knowing* were typically young undergraduates or older women who were very poor.

Belenky et al (1986) identified a third epistemic position, known as *subjective knowledge*. This epistemic position sit opposite to received knowledge, and emphasizes intuition, instinct, and anecdotal experiences as being the primary sources of knowledge. Unlike *received knowers*, who see knowledge as being external and completely objective, *subjective knowers* view knowledge as coming from within. Women in this epistemic stage exhibit a general distrust of information being disseminated by authorities, and experience truth as an intuitive response (Belenky et al, 1986).

In the epistemic position of *procedural knowledge*, women no longer view the acquisition of knowledge as a static process and rely less on their immediate apprehension to understand something. In this position, the process of knowing requires careful observations and analysis of information. At this stage, knowers recognize that there are multiple “right” answers, however, not all answers are equally logical. Knowing, then, requires the application of procedures in order to compare and contrast different interpretations of a given situation. *Procedural knowledge* can manifest in two different forms, which Belenky et al (1986) referred to as epistemic orientations. These orientations are described as *separate knowing* and *connected knowing*. *Separate knowing* is a detached and impersonal approach to knowledge acquisition. *Separate knowers* value objectivity, and the goal is to separate the knower from what is known in order to avoid bias. In this orientation, knowers become adversaries and actively critique existing perspectives in order to discern which is more valid. Conversely the *connected knowing* position is characterized by the use of empathy to understand. Rather than extricating themselves from

the process of knowing, women in this position view the self as being directly related to what it is they're trying to understand. Individuals in this position are capable of adopting the perspective of another, if only momentarily, to understand their experience. Unlike *separate knowers*, who view knowledge as being acquired through mastery of relevant information, *connected knowers* view knowledge as being acquired vicariously or through their own experiences.

The integration of objective and subjective approaches to knowledge is termed *constructed knowing*, and is the final position identified by Belenky et al (1986). Women in the *constructed knowledge* position have developed tolerance for ambiguity and are capable of negotiating their own internal inconsistencies. Furthermore, they view all knowledge, as well as reality, as being constructed and view themselves as active participants in this construction. Similar to individuals in Perry's (1970) stage of *relativism*, individuals in the *constructed knowing* position view knowledge as being contextual.

As mentioned, there are several similarities between Perry's (1970) Scheme of Intellectual and Ethical Development and Belenky et al's (1986) Ways of Knowing model. However, the primary distinction between the two is that the *WWK* project focused on investigating women's sources of knowledge, whereas, Perry's stages focus on describing the nature of knowledge and truth (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). Furthermore, the *WWK* model emphasizes the role of the self in relation to knowledge. Perry's (1970) work described a change in the individual's capacity to understand and synthesize contradictory information.

An additional difference between the two paradigms is that Belenky et al (1986) included a stage on *silence*, in which women felt that knowledge was inaccessible to them. This distinction is important in that it emphasizes the role of power and authority in the acquisition of

knowledge. The men in Perry's (1970) study did not exhibit a similar stage because the majority of the men in his sample socially and economically privileged, and therefore, they were more similar than not to authority figures, who during this time, were predominantly White, educated males.

Belenky et al (1986) discussed several applications of their paradigm in their writing, including its implications for teaching. The authors suggest that the role of the teacher should be analogous to a midwife, in that they help students produce, or "give birth to" knowledge, as opposed to giving it to them (Belenky et al, 1986). In this approach, teachers are co-constructors of knowledge, rather than the bestowers of it. Stanton (1996) reported that the most widely used principles of the *WWK* paradigm include encouraging the development of voice and emphasizing connection in teaching. This is done through trusting student's thinking and allowing them to collaborate through group discussion (Patton, Renn, Guido, & Quaye, 2016)

Epistemological Reflection Model

The publication of Belenky et al's (1986) *Women's Ways of Knowing* sparked an increased interest in research regarding personal epistemology, specifically an interest in the presupposed differences in the intellectual development of men and women. Marcia Baxter Magolda (1992) came across Perry's (1970) work and attempted to create a pencil-and-paper assessment of his epistemic categories. However, in doing so, she discovered that there were aspects of student's experiences that did not fit within Perry's (1970) scheme (Baxter Magolda, 1992; Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). It was also during this time period that Magolda became increasingly aware of the gaps in both Perry and the *WWK* models of intellectual development. She noted that participants in both studies viewed authority figures as a source of knowledge, however, women in the *WWK* study focused on receiving knowledge, while the men in Perry's

(1970) study were more concerned with the mastery of information and relevant methodology (Baxter Magolda, 2004). These discrepancies between men and women prompted Baxter Magolda to conduct a longitudinal study in order to investigate gender differences in personal epistemologies, and the effect these beliefs had on student's interpretation of their education. Based on her findings, Baxter Magolda developed the epistemological reflection model, which identified four ways of knowing. These include *absolute*, *transitional*, *independent*, and *contextual*. She ultimately concluded that women and men develop in a similar way, however, she noted some gender-related patterns. According to her findings, men typically take on more individualistic ways of knowing, while women take on a more inter-individualist way of knowing. In her writing, Baxter Magolda was clear that these patterns were only related to gender not necessarily predetermined by gender and advised future researcher to investigate the extent to which these ways of knowing were socialized. Magolda also stated that any differences that exist between men and women's ways of knowing in early stages of the sequence become obsolete once they reach the contextual stage.

Baxter Magolda's (1992) epistemological reflection model is very much aligned with both Perry's (1970) scheme, as well as the Belenky et al (1986) paradigm, specifically that there are gender-related patterns in knowing. However, Baxter Magolda was more focused on the nature of learning within a college setting and less concerned with assumptions about knowledge (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). She also emphasized the role of the individual's experiences and worldviews in the process of "meaning making." Critics of Baxter Magolda's work state that considering the historical context is an important aspect of interpreting her findings (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). Very little work has been done to determine if these gender-related patterns persist today, nor have there been any consecrated efforts to identify how these patterns develop.

Furthermore, the majority of individuals in Baxter Magolda's sample were white, middle class students from two-parent households, therefore the experiences of minority students were not represented in her work (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997).

Latinas and Personal Epistemology

As mentioned, it is generally assumed that people's beliefs about knowledge develop within a social context, and research has demonstrated that culture plays a significant role in the development of personal epistemology (Hofer, 2012). The personal epistemology of Latinas has not been a major point of focus for many researchers. Studies that have attempted to compare Mexican-American students and White students have demonstrated that there is very little difference in attitudes toward learning between these two groups (Marrs & Benton, 2009). However, Marrs and Benton (2009) speculated that acculturation may explain the finding that Mexican-American's beliefs about knowledge are very similar to those of White students. The acculturation model states that each successive generation of an ethnic group becomes more proficient in English and modifications in beliefs, values, norms and behaviors occur when exposed to U.S culture (Gordon 1964; Berry, 1997). Traditional Hispanic culture is more collectivist in nature, meaning that the success of the group is valued over the success of the individual (Marin & Triandis, 1985). Because cooperation and interdependence valued within Hispanic culture, Marrs and Benton (2009) surmised that individuals who are less acculturated may be more inclined to endorse an orientation to learning that emphasizes understanding another person's perspective - such as connected knowing.

Feminism and Epistemology. While no formal study has been conducted to examine the relationship between feminism and personal epistemology, some studies have demonstrated that identification with specific socio-political movements is related to certain worldviews. For

example, Unger, Draper and Pendergrass (1986) found that women who have taken women's studies courses, and self-identified as feminists, hold beliefs about reality that reflect a social constructionist viewpoint. Social constructionism is the view that people are the true constructors of reality, and what a social construct represents in one society may be meaningless in another. The results of this study indicate that the relationship between group membership and personal epistemology is a function of (or mediated by) whether or not the individual identifies as a member of the group.

Further evidence of the relationship between social group identification and personal epistemology can be seen in Ricketts' (1989) study of feminist psychologists. By surveying attendees of various conferences, Ricketts found that identifying as a feminist was related to more subjectivist worldviews, or the view that free will exists and people construct reality. Feminist psychologists also emphasized the importance of social determinants of human behavior and had a tendency to reject the logical positivist assumption that science is a value-neutral enterprise (Ricketts, 1989). Taken together, the findings of Ricketts (1989) and Unger et al (1986) support the notion that epistemologies and worldviews are shaped by identification with socio-political ideologies, such as feminism.

Rationale

Personal epistemology is defined as individual's personal beliefs about knowledge. In response to theories of personal epistemology that felt exclusionary of women's experiences, Belenky et al (1986) conducted extensive interviews with women from different socio-economic and educational background. Their work resulted in the identification of five "ways of knowing," which are essentially positions women take on how they know what they know to be true, who they view as authorities on specific subjects, and how they view reality. Socio-political views,

such as feminism, have been related to changes in worldviews (Unger et al, 1986; Ricketts, 1989). The proposed study seeks to contribute to this area of study by determining the relationship between culture and personal epistemology, as well as the relationship between culture and identification with socio-political ideologies, such as feminism. In today's society, where information is readily available through news outlets and social media sites, women must make decisions as to which sources of information is credible and which are not. In plain language, the goal of the study was and is to understand how culture and feminist identification influence how women evaluate this information, and how they view knowledge in general.

Method

The current study aims at assessing feminist identity among women within the context of a "Hispanic Serving Institution," as well as exploring how women's many identities (feminist and cultural) influence the development of personal epistemology. By analyzing the personal epistemologies of Latina women, the present study seeks to understand the relationship between culture, beliefs about knowledge production, and the development of feminist identity. In an attempt to understand these complicated constructs, the researcher utilized the following research question to guide the study:

1. How do Latinas identify with feminism, and does this impact their personal epistemologies and educational experiences?

Tentative hypotheses are as follows:

1. Level of acculturation will be related to feminist self-labeling (high acculturation - endorse feminism; low acculturation - reject feminism).
2. Acculturation will be related to different epistemic positions (low acculturation – connected; high acculturation – separate).

3. Feminist identification will be related to connected knowing.
4. Exposure to feminism in educational setting will be related to feminist self-labeling.

Mixed Methods Definition and Design

In order to answer the questions posed, the study made use of a mixed methods design, and attempted to integrate both quantitative and qualitative data. By using a mixed methods approach, we can retain the objectivity of quantitative research, while continuing to give privilege to the lived experiences of women. The study used an explanatory sequential design, in which both quantitative and qualitative data are collected during the same phase. Once the data has been collected, they were analyzed separately, and the results were integrated in order to draw appropriate conclusions about women's feminist identity and epistemic positions.

As mentioned, study used a feminist epistemological framework, and in doing so, focused on a specific group of women whose experiences have largely been ignored or overlooked. A mixed methods approach was theoretically justified in that it allowed the researcher to uncover subjugated knowledge that one method, if conducted alone, may have failed to uncover. An aim of the study was to not only determine if Latina women identify with feminism, but to understand how Latina women enact feminism in their daily lives. The scales used in the study helped determine whether or not Latina women identify with feminism, however, these scales fail to capture the nuances of women's lived experiences. Furthermore, previous studies have identified a tendency for women to voice support for gender equality, but fail to identify themselves as a feminist (Myaskovsky & Wittig, 1997). The quantitative portion will allow for the identification of similar trends within a Latina sample, while the qualitative data will allow for more extensive explanations for Latina women's rejection or acceptance of the feminist label. Intersectionality is assumed to be an important aspect of Latina women's

identification with feminism, therefore, the Feminist Perspective Scale (Henley et al, 1998) will be used to measure the diversity of feminist attitudes, including the level of importance women place on racial issues (womanist). However, the qualitative portion of the study allowed for a greater understanding of the role that ethnicity and culture plays in the development of feminist identity.

In regards to women's personal epistemology, the scales being used are not exhaustive in terms of what stages they measure. Galotti et al's (1999) Attitudes Towards Thinking and Learning Scale assesses the two approaches to learning that take place within the procedural knowing position. These approaches are Connected Knowing and Separate Knowing. Research has demonstrated that there are gender differences these approaches, with women endorsing more items related to Connected Knowing and men endorsing more items related to Separate Knowing (Galotti et al, 1999). Using a scale allows for an efficient way to determine if an all-female sample will endorse Connected Knowing. The interview questions will be used to assess the other epistemic stages that the scale does not.

From a methodological perspective, the use of a mixed-methods research design is appropriate because the interviews were used to corroborate the quantitative findings from the survey portion. This allowed for an increased understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Furthermore, some of the subjective/contextual information is lost when using a scale to assess personal epistemologies. Using an interview in conjunction with a scale allowed the researchers to rectify potential shortcomings of the quantitative measures being used.

Participants

The population of interest in this study is Latina women, who are seeking a bachelor's degree or higher. The study utilized data from 101 Latina women, who are currently attending

Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi and seeking undergraduate or graduate degrees. Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi is classified as a Hispanic Serving Institution, and approximately 30% of the students enrolled are Hispanic women (Student Headcount, 2016).

Data Collection

Materials and Instruments. Several instruments were used in the survey portion of the study to assess both women's feminist identity and epistemological position. For the quantitative component, participants were asked to respond to four different instrument, as well as a series of demographic questions. Instruments included in the study were the Attitudes Toward Feminism and the Women's Movement scale (Fassinger, 1994), the Feminist Perspectives Scale (Henley et al, 1998), the Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics (Marin et al, 1987) and the Attitudes Towards Thinking and Learning Scale (Galotti et al, 1999). For the qualitative component, semi-structured interviews will be used in order to capture women's lived experiences.

Attitudes Toward Feminism and the Women's Movement (FWM). As mentioned, attitudes and feelings towards a specific social group are often a component of social identity (Tajfel, 1982). To assess participants' feelings of favorability towards the women's movement and feminist ideology, the Attitudes Toward Feminism and the Women's Movement Scale (Fassinger, 1994) was administered. The FWM is a short, 10 item scale that consists of questions to be rated on a Likert scale, that ranges from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating strong disagreement and 7 indicating strong agreement. Sample items include: "More people would favor the women's movement if they knew more about it" and "Feminists are a menace to this nation and the world."

Feminist Perspective Scale (FPS). The Feminist Perspective Scale (Henley, Meng, O'Brien, McCarthy, & Sockloskie, 1998) was originally developed in response to the criticism

that feminist attitudinal measures were assessing a unidimensional conceptualization of feminism, and failing to take into account the full spectrum of feminist attitudes as well as the various theoretical perspectives of feminism. The FPS, then, is a broad attitudinal measure of feminist identity that assess participant's agreement with statements that reflect five different sociopolitical perspectives on feminism, which include liberal, radical, and socialist, cultural, womanist. The scale also assesses conservatism. The FPS (Henley et al, 1998) is a 60 item scale, with six subscales consisting of 10 items each. These subscales include Liberal Feminism (e.g., "People should define their marriage and family roles in ways that make them feel most comfortable"), Radical Feminism (e.g., "Pornography exploits female sexuality and degrades women), Cultural Feminism (e.g., "By not using sexist and violent language, we can encourage peaceful social change"), Womanism (e.g., "Racism and sexism make double the oppression for women of color in the work environment"), and Socialist Feminism (e.g., "It is the capitalist system which forces women to be responsible for child care"). As mentioned, the scale also assess Conservatism (e.g., "Women should not be direct participants in government because they are too emotional"). Responses will be measured on a 7 point Likert scale that ranges from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating strong disagreement and 7 indicating strong agreement.

Attitudes Towards Thinking and Learning Scale (ATTLS). In efforts to operationalize and quantify Belenky et al's (1986) five epistemic positions, Galotti et al (1999) developed the Attitudes Towards Thinking and Learning Scale. The ATTLS assess the "Procedural Knowledge" component of the original Women's Ways of Knowing paradigm, which includes both "Separate Knowing" and "Connected Knowing." The ATTLS consists of 20 items, 10 of which represent a connected way of knowing (e.g., "I am always interested in knowing why people say and believe the things that they do") and an additional 10 statements that tap into a

separate way of knowing (e.g., “It’s important for me to remain as objective as possible when I analyze something”). Responses will be measured on a 7-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 to 7, with 1 indicating strong disagreement and 7 indicating strong agreement.

Bidimensional Acculturation Scale (BAS). In order to determine the extent to which the participants have adopted the values, attitudes, and customs of American culture, the *Bidimensional Acculturation Scale (BAS)* was administered. The creators of the BAS noted that other scales had a tendency to treat acculturation as a unidimensional construct, and assumed that as individuals move from being Hispanic to increasingly less Hispanic. Marin et al (1996) note that this assumption implies that losses take place in one cultural domain as the individual moves through this acculturative process. The BAS attempted to address the shortcomings of other scales by assessing both cultural domains (Hispanic and non-Hispanic). The BAS consists of 24 items that measure behavioral factors that are associated with acculturation (Marin et al, 1996). Items include questions regarding language use, linguistic proficiency, and media use. Participants’ responses will be measured on a 4-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 to 4, with 1 indicating “almost never,” and 4 indicating “almost always.”

Semi-Structured Interviews. Following in the tradition of Belenky et al (1986), the study utilized semi-structured interviews. By formatting the interview in this way, all participants were asked the same set of questions, however this format allowed the interviewer to ask follow-up questions and prompt the participant for additional information.

Demographic Information. Demographic information collected from participants included age, sex, race and/or ethnicity, country of origin, language praxis, generation level (if known), education level, area of study (major), and information about parent’s education.

Included in the demographic information is a question regarding feminist self-labeling, that was coded as either Yes (1) or No (0).

Procedures. The study was conducted in two phases, a quantitative phase and a qualitative phase. In the first phase, the quantitative phase, participants were invited to participate through e-mail, as well as through the recommendation of professors in various departments at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi. Participants were provided with a web-link to the Qualtrics survey. Qualtrics is a web-based survey platform which allows participants to submit their responses to the survey anonymously and from their own computer. Once participants accessed the survey via the web-link, they were directed to an information sheet that described the purpose of the study and what participation entailed. Participants who selected to continue to the survey were prompted to respond to several questions, which included demographic questions, along with a series of measures. These measures included the *FWM*, the *FPS*, and the *ATTLS*, and the *BAS*.

Participants who elected to participate in the qualitative phase, the in-person interview, were provided with a link to the SONA systems web-page. Upon opening the link, the participants were instructed to select a time that they were available to participate in the interview. Participants were instructed to arrive at the computer lab designated by the researcher at the time of their appointment. Upon their arrival, the researcher explained the nature of the study and what the participant would be asked to do if they agreed to participate. Participants were given time to read the informed consent sheet and sign. Participants were then asked a series of questions and prompted to respond. The semi-structured interview consisted of questions adapted from Baxter Magolda's (1992) study, as well as questions developed by the primary investigator. Interview questions focused on participants experiences with feminism,

their culture, and their beliefs about knowledge. Following the conclusion of interview, participants were thanked for their participation and provided with a debriefing form. All interviews were audio-recorded using a digital recording device for coding and transcription purposes.

Results

Demographics

The survey was administered to 134 participants, with only 101 participants completing the survey in its entirety. Of the 101 participants whose responses were analyzed, 100 identified as female, with one individual identifying themselves as gender non-binary. Ninety percent of the participants were between the age of 18-24, 7% were between the ages of 25-34, and 3% were between the ages of 35-44.

In terms of the ethnicity and racial identity of the participants, 9 participants identified themselves as White, 4 as African-American, 2 as Alaskan/Native, and 1 as Asian. Ninety-four of the 101 participants identified as Hispanic/Latino in their ethnicity. Participants were also asked about their family's country of origin. The majority of participants, approximately 55%, indicated that their family's country of origin was the United States. Thirty-three percent indicated that their family originated from Mexico, 5% of participants indicated that their families were from Central America, 2% from South America, 1% from Puerto Rico, and 3% stated that their families were of European descent. The remaining 3% indicated that they did not know their family's country of origin.

Participants were also asked to indicate whether they themselves, or their family members, had immigrated the United States. Of the 101 participants surveyed, 32% indicated that no one in their family has immigrated to their knowledge. 20% indicated that their parents

had immigrated to the U.S., with 1% indicated that they themselves had immigrated to the U.S. 20% of participants indicated that their grandparents immigrated to the U.S., and finally 27% indicated that their great grandparents immigrated to the U.S.

To better understand the language praxis of the population, participants were also asked to indicate which language they spoke most often. 87% of the 101 individuals surveyed reported that they spoke English most of the time. 5% indicated that they spoke mostly Spanish, and 3% indicated that they speak both Spanish and English equally. 5% of participants chose not to report which language they spoke most frequently.

Descriptive Statistics

The participants were asked about their feminist identity at the beginning of the survey and at the end. Analysis revealed that at the beginning of the survey, 65% of 101 participants identified as feminists, and 35% identified themselves as non-feminists. At the end of the survey, 71% identified themselves as feminists and only 29% identified themselves as non-feminists. Overall, participants held relatively favorable attitudes towards feminism ($M = 49.5$, $SD = 8.32$) and less favorable attitudes towards conservative views ($M = 24.4$, $SD = 11.52$).

The participants were administered the bi-dimensional acculturation scale, which is meant to measure acculturation in the non-Hispanic and Hispanic domains. 95% of the participants in the sample were considered to be bi-cultural, meaning that they scored an average of 2.5 or above on both the Hispanic and non-Hispanic sub-scale.

ANOVA Analysis

Quantitative analyses focused on participants' scores on various instruments. The researchers hypothesized that the participant's level of acculturation would be related to feminist self-labeling. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that there was not a

significant difference between feminists ($M = 43.03$, $SD = 7.01$) and non-feminists ($M = 42.17$, $SD = 6.95$) in terms of their scores on a measure of Hispanic acculturation ($F(1,99) = .298$, $p = .587$). An additional one-way ANOVA revealed no significant differences between feminists ($M = 47.56$, $SD = 5.72$) and non-feminists ($M = 48.31$, $SD = 7.54$) in terms of their scores on a measure of non-Hispanic acculturation ($F(1,99) = .309$, $p = .579$).

It was also hypothesized that individuals who identified themselves as feminist would score higher on a measure of connected knowing. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that there was a significant difference between feminists ($M = 57.2$, $SD = 6.57$) and non-feminists ($M = 52.9$, $SD = 6.83$) in terms of their scores on a measure of connected knowing ($F(1,99) = 7.96$, $p = .006$). Overall, the results of the analysis do not indicate that acculturation is related to feminist identity. However, the results do support the hypothesis that individuals who identify themselves as feminists are more likely to endorse a connected way of knowing.

Correlational Analysis

To determine the relationship between acculturation and the different epistemic positions, a Pearson's correlation was conducted. Results of the analysis demonstrated that no significant relationship exists between acculturation and the different epistemic positions. This finding does not support the initial hypothesis, which stated that low acculturation to non-Hispanic culture would be related to connected knowing, while acculturation to non-Hispanic culture would be related to separate knowing.

Qualitative Data

In addition to completing the survey, participants were invited to participate in a short in-person interview. Interviews were conducted in order to substantiate the findings of the quantitative portion of the study and better understand how Latina women relate to feminism and

knowledge. Recordings from 20 interviews with Latina university students were transcribed by the researcher and coded then categorized for specific themes by both of the primary investigators.

Feminism. All participants were asked for their personal definition of feminism. While there was a range of responses to the question, 12 of the 20 women interviewed provided definitions that focused on equality. For example, one participant explained that feminism was working towards equality in different realms of society:

I define feminism as getting equality between men and women. Either socially, politically, economically

Other definitions provided by participants focused on supporting women, specifically through the empowerment of women. One participant, who identified themselves as a feminist, had a multifaceted definition that incorporated this idea of supporting women with equality. This participant stated that to her feminism was:

... supporting women and being like, on their side. So, for me, I like things to be equal ya know? So, I would say my definition of feminism ... is to support women, and yeah.

Participants were also asked about whether they identified themselves as a feminist. Of the 20 participants interviewed, 13 reported that they were feminists, one stated that they were not a feminist, and six women expressed ambivalence about identifying themselves as feminists.

Following this question, participants were asked why they are, or are not, a feminist.

Specifically, they were prompted to discuss experiences and events that had contributed to their decision to identify themselves as a feminist or non-feminist. While three of the 20 participants did report that their experiences in college were highly influential, the most common mechanism by which the Latina women in this sample reported that they became (or did not become)

feminists was largely related to culture and family. One woman described her feminist identity in terms of her family structure and the lessons learned from the women in her life:

Yes. Because I support, ya know, my kind of women. Ya know growing up without a mom, I only had my grandma and my older sister, so I view them as my mom and they taught me how to respect a woman for what they are and how they do things.

In response to the question regarding how they became a feminist, another interviewee indicated that she considered herself a feminist because she did not adhere to the traditional values of her upbringing:

I guess I would say yes because I don't follow traditional things. Like I come from a Hispanic household where you're serving your husband, you respect this person and this person. I just see myself as everybody else. Like I'm equal to you whether I'm a woman, whether I'm younger than you. We're human being so, I would say yes. Only because I know what I'm worth and I know what I'm capable of and I don't allow barrier to that. I suppose.

While this young woman identified her feminism as transgressing the traditions dictated by Hispanic culture, others cited their family as a deterrent for identifying themselves as a feminist. One woman, who expressed ambivalence towards feminism in general, gave responses that reflected both a desire to defy the strict gender roles that defined her upbringing, but also a reluctance to disobey her mother:

I guess... I want to say yes... but I know my culture just babys men. Especially like your siblings, your boyfriend, everything you do for men.... Well I do, because I grew up in a house of literally three men in that house. Everything my mom did, I had to do. She basically forced me, but then when I grew up I realized that's not what I want to do. Everyone needs to

wash their own dishes, everyone needs to wash their own clothes. I'm not going to be someone's maid. Especially my brother.

When asked why she was or was not a feminist, she stated:

Why... well first of all, my mom would be really ashamed... because that's not what, I guess, that's not what she wants me to do. She wants me to cater to men... it's just Hispanic...

The single participant who stated that she was not a feminist also identified her family as being influential in her rejection of feminism. This participant's responses identified her parents' attitudes towards gender as being influential in her not labeling herself as a feminist:

Growing up in like a Mexican household. My dad's definitely not like rude about it or anything but there's certain things that my dad would be like "I don't do that because I'm a man." And my mom, there's certain things that she's told me. Like "don't do that, that's not for girls... that's not lady-like

Further, women who expressed ambivalence regarding their own feminist identity also attributed their unwillingness to identify themselves as feminist to the view that feminism had a tendency to be extreme. One participant who stated that she believed in equality stated that she was concerned about female superiority:

....at the same time, no, in the aspect of the way that feminism has been kind of in social media in different things that you kind of see with like ((umm)) different, certain parades and certain like ((umm)) I don't want to say it's like ((umm)) it's a little bit more vicious than what I would assume and so I don't want to necessarily put myself in that category because I don't feel like women should be superior in the sense of like it about uplifting and not about ya know bringing certain men down.

Further, other women interviewed reflected on how their experience has minority women contributed to the development of their identity as feminists:

Well growing up as a minority woman, I've always wanted to obtain the same rights as any White male. So, I became a feminist by just daily events of my life and viewing opportunities that I missed out on because there was inequality

Again, growing up, I was always kind of hyper-aware. I grew up in that intersection of being hyper-aware that I was Mexican-American... But growing up in that intersection of poverty and being treated different because of that I kind of knew there was something different. We were being treated different, and it wasn't until again, I was older, and I got into college that I kind of wanted to ya know speak up for those who kind of grew up in that kind of situation that I grew up. Or to advocate for those who don't have anybody that advocates for them.

In general, it appears that for Latina women, the development of a feminist identity is related to their experiences within the family and the values that their parental figures share with them. Many described the role of their ethnic identity and how that impacted their own identity as feminists, and how the experience of multiple subjugations influenced their decision to label themselves as feminists

Ways of Knowing. The second part of the semi-structured interview focused on beliefs about knowledge, opinions, and the evaluation of information. The majority of participants answered the question regarding opinions by stating that opinions are subjective and that everyone is entitled to have their own opinion. Of the 20 participants, 13 agreed with the statement that where there are no right answers, anybody's opinion is as good as another's.

Six of the 20 participants disagreed with the statement and stated that opinions can be morally wrong. Many cited issues of equality when discussing issues of immoral opinions. For example, one participant described the oppression of minority groups when discussing opinions:

I mean, morally wrong. I guess in this context, being against feminism, kind of oppressing minorities, gender, culture ethnicities, social class and things like that. I think it's morally wrong...

Some participants mentioned morality when explaining their disagreement with the initial statement ("Where there are no right answers, anybody's opinion is as good as another's") and implying that opinions will vary due to differences in values. One participant's response to the question reflected how culture, values, and morality intersect to influence beliefs about opinions. She explained that an opinion that she thought was wrong was "the idea of having a border." She compared the current president's desire to have a wall at the U.S.-Mexican border to the Berlin wall and stated that because she was Hispanic, she did not agree with the "objective" of the border. Her response to the initial question is as follows:

I disagree. I think everyone has their own opinion. I think it just depends on how they're raised and what their morals are. It's hard for everyone to have the same opinion 'cause we're all... like I said, we have different morals.

As mentioned, many of the participants agreed with the statement, and eight stated that everyone should have their own personal opinion. Some participants drew on their experiences in school when talking about opinions:

I mean, everyone's subject to their own opinion. The only reason why I think this is because in... elementary school I had... our teachers like separate opinions and facts and you would have to say, like, this is opinion, or this is fact. And I think someone was like

“oh my favorite ice cream is chocolate” and the reason why it’s an opinion is because it’s favorite. Let’s say I don’t like chocolate, it’s not that I’m wrong but... so I mean everyone has their own opinion.

Interestingly enough, some who agreed that everyone is entitled to their own opinion, often gave examples of opinions that they think are wrong. For example, the participant who discussed her experience in elementary school stated that an opinion that is “completely wrong” is the opinion that “women deserve to be raped because of what they are wearing.”

Participants were also asked about their strategies for evaluating the veracity of the information they encounter in their daily lives, specifically how they knew if a piece of information is right or wrong. Five of the women interviewed stated that in order to determine if something is right or wrong, they gather more information on the subject. One interviewee described the difficulty in obtaining unbiased information, and the influence of politics on news stations:

That’s where it kinda gets kinda tricky because you see so many different things in social media and you go on the internet and same thing with like the news depending on which station you’re on, you’re gonna get like a Republican answer or a Democrat answer. I just try to look at both sides and if I’m not sure on something, I just research. Just keep on looking in and going deeper in and that’s how I kind of determine like is this credible is this not credible.

Five of the participants stated that they generally evaluate information using their own value system or morality. One participant stated that she felt “it’s like going back to being raised. How you’re raised and common sense. What’s right or wrong.” She used the example of president Donald Trump “mocking a mentally disabled person”:

Like you know that's wrong because you shouldn't be making fun of people that way, but

I felt like some people thought it was right

For some participants, information they viewed as being inconsistent with their morals was deemed wrong:

I just go based on like my own like morals or like feeling. Like if I think it's wrong, I just wouldn't agree with it.

I guess like my personal morals. I've grown up to know certain things are wrong, like laws. I know the laws are something you can't break. And all the like good things in the world like helping people out. I know those are right. It's just how I was grown up, that's how I evaluated what things are right and what things are wrong.

Other responses emphasized the use of instinct to determine if something is right or wrong. For example, one participant stated that she evaluated information in a really subjective manner and analyzed how it felt to her personally:

I think I evaluate like personally like, what I believe, like my gut feeling. ... I think it goes back to like if I think it's wrong. Like my instinct. Like if it just like if it's just telling me it's wrong for these reasons then I know that's wrong.

When asked about how they know if something is right or wrong, four of the participants stated that they evaluate the source of the information to determine its validity. For example, one participant stated that she evaluated information on whether or not it was being shared by a professor or someone else or if the content was from an open-edit web platform, such as Wikipedia. Another participant discussed the credibility of news outlets:

I research different news outlets and try to find more neutral ones and I found

Washington Post is generally a little more neutral.... I guess, you kind of just learn to

find who you think is credible or not... and that goes with different news outlets and different news anchors.

Overall, there were some patterns that emerged from the responses to the questions regarding personal epistemology and knowledge. The responses emphasized both morality, and the reliance on authority figures and news outlets to either confirm or refute specific pieces of information. The results of the qualitative portion of the study demonstrate the importance of personal values and morality in both the evaluation of knowledge and the decision to align yourself with socio-political movements. The interviewees discussed some of the issues that are at the forefront of current political discourse, including immigration policy, women's rights, and the need to distinguish between factual news and what is often referred to as "fake news." Their responses to the questions do support the initial hypotheses that culture is related to feminist identity and ways of knowing, as they often reference their ethnic identity and familial values when discussing both feminism and knowledge. However, their responses do not support the hypothesis that educational experiences would be related to feminist self-labeling, as only a small minority of participants identified education as a factor contributing to their decision to label themselves as a feminist.

Discussion

The current study initially aimed at understanding Latina women's relationship with feminism and their personal epistemologies. The findings suggest, however, that feminist identity, acculturation, and epistemic position may not be related to each other in the way that was initially hypothesized by the researcher. The population sampled were female students at a Hispanic serving institution, and the majority of participants sampled demonstrated competence in both the Hispanic ($M = 42.79$, $SD = 6.96$) and Non-Hispanic ($M = 47.77$; $SD = 6.27$) cultural domains.

One possible reason for the discrepancy in findings could be that the acculturation scale that was used focused primarily on language praxis (e.g. language of origin, linguistic proficiency and electronic media use). It is possible that the relationships between acculturation and feminist identity reside in the realm of social praxis, more widely (e.g. cultural values, lived experiences). Indeed, qualitative analysis suggests that social praxis plays a large role in the development of feminist identity, as the women interviewed reported that their upbringing and family structure influenced their decision to identify themselves as feminists. While previous research conducted with predominantly white/non-Latina samples has pointed to the importance of formal educational experiences in women's' feminist identity development, only 3 of the women interviewed in this study of Latinas spontaneously mentioned that learning about feminism in a university classroom setting contributed to their feminist identity. Additionally, though the women in the present study were not explicitly asked about their own adherence to traditional gender roles, they spoke about how gender dictated the behavior of the women in their families and the expectations their family members had of them. It may be useful to quantify the relationship between this culturally specific set of beliefs and feminist identity. Given the suggestions here that family values may be more salient for Latina feminist identity, future quantitative work on this topic could also consider the use of the Marianismo Beliefs Scale to assess the adherence to cultural values of femininity and how that relates to feminist identity (Castillo, Perez, Castillo & Ghosheh, 2010).

The findings of the present study are consistent with recent research on Latina women and feminist identity. Manago, Brown, and Leaper (2009), in a study focusing on Latina adolescents' understanding of feminism, found that 66% of their sample endorse a definition of feminism that incorporated equality. In the current study, 13 of the 20 women interviewed incorporated the concept of equality in their definitions of feminism as well. Further, Manago, Brown, and Leaper's

(2009) study found that opposition to female superiority was a common reason for the rejection of feminist values. In the current study, only one participant identified extremism as a reason she felt ambivalent about feminism. However, other interviewees explained what feminism was *not* when defining the term in their own words. This often included specifying that feminism was not about female superiority or “man-hating.”

In the quantitative portion of the study, approximately 70% of the current sample labeled themselves as feminists. It was previously thought that Latina women did not identify themselves as feminists because the values of the Hispanic/Latino culture were conflicting with the values of the feminist movement (Myaskovsky & Wittig, 1997). While the Latina women who were interviewed identified the ways in which Hispanic/Latino culture was in opposition to their own beliefs, it appears that they also made use of these experiences to form their identities as feminists. In the qualitative portion of the study, many of the participants explained that being a Latina or a Mexican-American woman made them aware of their limitations within society and described how this awareness inspired them to identify themselves as feminists.

Previous research conducted by Hurtado (2003) demonstrated that Latina adolescents often expressed beliefs about the importance of supporting other women when discussing the topic of feminism. Hurtado suspected that Latina girls may combine the appreciation of womanhood with the valuing of gender equality. A similar theme emerged in the present study, as many of the women who were interviewed expressed appreciation for the women in their lives and reflected on how the women who raised them instilled in them a sense empowerment. Overall, Latina women hold relatively favorable attitudes towards feminism, and their responses to interview questions suggest that the mode by which they become feminists is different when compared to non-Latino/Hispanic samples.

Studies that have attempted to compare Mexican-American students and White students have demonstrated that there are no significant differences between the two groups on a measure of their attitudes toward learning (Marrs & Benton, 2009). These studies did not include a measure of acculturation, and the researchers speculated that the fact that their sample was acculturated to non-Hispanic culture may explain the finding that Mexican-American's beliefs about knowledge were not different from their White/non-Hispanic peers. They speculated that the collectivist nature of Mexican-American culture, which emphasizes the importance of cooperation and interdependence, would mean that an individual who is acculturated to Hispanic culture may be more inclined to endorse an attitude towards learning that emphasizes understanding another person's perspective - such as connected knowing. In the current study, acculturation to either Hispanic or non-Hispanic culture was not shown to be related to a specific way of knowing, though this is largely because of the low variability in acculturation status across participants (i.e. most were high in both Hispanic and non-Hispanic acculturation). While the quantitative analysis did not yield any significant findings regarding ways of knowing in relation to acculturation, the qualitative portion of the study did reveal interesting insights into the way Latinas view the veracity of information. When asked about their method of determining whether information was right or wrong, morality and values were a central theme in their responses, as was an appeal to the authority of subjectivity.

Earlier studies have found that as Latina women become more acculturated to non-Hispanic culture, their attitudes towards traditional female gender roles change and they tend to hold more liberal attitudes toward women (Karana, Green, & Valencia-Weber, 1982). Due to the fact that the women who were surveyed for the current study were bi-culturally competent, acculturation was not a critical variable and there was no way to discern how Hispanic cultural

values or acculturation influenced their attitudes towards women and the feminism movement. Going forward, research in this area could consider administering an instrument that assesses biculturalism, or the extent to which an individual has integrated aspects of two cultures within their identity, behavior, and values (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). Further, individuals who are considered bi-cultural may engage in “cultural frame switching” or adapting their behavior in response to cultural cues (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2002). A potential avenue of study could be to determine if bicultural Latinas view feminism as a non-Hispanic cultural cue. Moradi (2005) argued that Latinas, and other ethnic groups, may be reluctant to identify themselves as feminists because the feminist movement has often focused on white, middle class women, with little attention being paid to how race and class interact to influence how people experience gender inequality. Perhaps for bicultural individuals, feminism is a context in which they switch cultural frames. However, to determine if this is the case, future studies would need to further examine how Latina women view feminism within the context of the Hispanic/Latino culture.

Additionally, the results do support the hypothesis that individuals who identify themselves as feminists are more likely to endorse a connected way of knowing. As mentioned, early research found that women who identified themselves as feminists were more likely to endorse a social constructionist worldview (Unger, Draper & Pendergrass, 1986). The participants who identified themselves as feminists did score higher on a measure of connected knowing on average. This offers some support for the idea that socio-political identities, such as feminism, shape the way people interact with knowledge and information about their world.

The responses provided by women in to the interview questions were reflective of the stages of knowing described by Belenky et al (1986) in the *Women's Ways of Knowing* text. In

their work, Belenky et al identified five epistemic positions. These include *silence*, *received knowing*, *subjective knowing*, *procedural knowing*, and *constructed knowing*. None of the women interviewed provided answers that would be categorized in the *silence* position. Several of the participants did discuss strategies for verifying information that were consistent with Belenky et al's description of subjective knowing. These answers usually mentioned using their "gut-feeling" to know if something is right or wrong, or their instincts. Others answered the question about verifying information by stating that they look to authority figures for answers, or sources they view as credible. This answer corresponds with Belenky et al's description of *received knowing*. This stage of knowing is characterized by dualistic thinking, in which arriving at a right or wrong answer is possible through acquiring more information from those who know better.

Finally, the *WWK* work included interviews from women from "invisible colleges," which were community centers where women could access various resources such as information about parenting. In future work, the researchers would like to consider expanding the scope of this project beyond women who are seeking degrees at universities. A limitation of the study includes the small size of the sample and the limited age range of participants. Due to the fact that the majority of participants were between the ages of 18 and 24 years old, the results of the study do not allow us to draw conclusions about Latina women as a group. This limitation could be remedied by using a more heterogeneous sample, in terms of age and education.

In regard to feminism, past research has demonstrated generational differences in attitudes towards feminism and the women's movement. Flores et al (2006) found that older Latinas express less favorable attitudes toward feminism than younger Latinas. Using a sample that includes women from different age groups could allow for a more comprehensive understanding of this population's attitudes towards feminism. Further, the interpretations reported here are based on

cross-sectional data. Questions regarding developmental trends in ways of knowing, and feminist identity development, would be better answered by a study that followed a cohort of Latina college students over the span of several years. This should also involve asking more specific questions about the family environment, family relationships, and the roles of women and men both inside and outside of the home. This would allow researchers to capture the influence of the family on Latina's perspectives of feminism.

Potential applications of these findings include increasing inclusivity within the feminist movement, or simply acknowledging how Latina women already participate in socio-political movements outside of traditional electoral politics. In educational settings, educators working with Latina women may consider developing techniques that are conducive to connected knowing. While educators' personal epistemological preferences likely shape the way information is presented, awareness of other ways of learning may increase the accessibility of information and aid in establishing classrooms that are culturally sensitive. The finding that Latina women use their own internal belief system (i.e. morals and values) to evaluate information is interesting, and merits further empirical investigation

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this investigation, it can be concluded that Latina women hold relatively favorable attitudes towards feminism. In this sample, feminist self-labeling was also related to a connected way of knowing. Connected knowing emphasizes the importance of empathy and trying to understand other people's opinions and ideas through shared experience. Results from the interview suggest that Latina women emphasize morality when discerning whether a piece of information is right or wrong, or when discussing the validity of someone else's opinion.

Acculturation was not related to either feminist identity or attitudes towards thinking and learning, as the majority of participants were considered bi-cultural. This indicates that Latina women at this Hispanic-serving institution are navigating both Hispanic and Non-Hispanic culture simultaneously. Qualitative analysis revealed the importance of family in the development of feminist identity. For the women interviewed, they were either inspired by the women in their family to become feminists or they became feminists as a way of transgressing the familial values that they do not necessarily agree with.

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Appendix A

Attitudes Towards Thinking and Learning Scale (Galotti et al, 1999)

1. I like playing devil's advocate--arguing the opposite of what someone is saying.
2. It's important for me to remain as objective as possible when I analyze something
3. When I encounter people whose opinions seem alien to me, I make a deliberate effort to "extend" myself into that person, to try to see how they could have those opinions.
4. I can obtain insight into opinions that differ from mine through empathy.
5. I tend to put myself in other people's shoes when discussing controversial issues, to see why they think the way they do.
6. In evaluating what someone says, I focus on the quality of their argument, not on the person who's presenting it.
7. I find that I can strengthen my own position through arguing with someone who disagrees with me.
8. I'm more likely to try to understand someone else's opinion than to try to evaluate it
9. I try to think with people instead of against them
10. I feel that the best way for me to achieve my own identity is to interact with a variety of other people.
11. One could call my way of analyzing things "putting them on trial," because of how careful I am to consider all of the evidence.
12. I often find myself arguing with the authors of books I read, trying to logically figure out why they're wrong.
13. I have certain criteria I use in evaluating arguments.
14. I always am interested in knowing why people say and believe the things they do.

15. I enjoy hearing the opinions of people who come from backgrounds different from mine-
it helps me understand how the same things can be seen in such different ways.
16. I try to point out weaknesses in other people's thinking to help them clarify their
arguments.
17. The most important part of my education has been learning to understand people who are
very different from me.
18. I like to understand where other people are "coming from," what experiences have led
them to feel the way they do.
19. I value the use of logic and reason over the incorporation of my own concerns when
solving problems.
20. I'll look for something in a literary interpretation that isn't argued well enough.

Appendix B

Feminist Perspective Scale (Henley et al, 1998)

Conservative Items

1. Given the way men are, women have a responsibility not to arouse them by their dress and actions.
4. Women should not be direct participants in government because they are too emotional.
13. A man's first responsibility is to obtain economic success, while his wife should care for the family's needs.
17. Homosexuals need to be rehabilitated into normal members of society.
23. The breakdown of the traditional family structure is responsible for the evils in our society.
36. It is a man's right and duty to maintain order in his family by whatever means necessary. 38. The world is a more attractive place because women smile and pay attention to their appearance.
47. Women should not be assertive like men because men are the natural leaders on earth.
53. Using "he" for "he or she" is convenient and harmless to men and women.
59. Heterosexuality is the only natural sexual preference.

Radical Feminist Items

2. Pornography exploits female sexuality and degrades all women.
8. Racism and sexism make double the oppression for women of color in the work environment.
15. Using "man" to mean both men and women is one of the many ways sexist language destroys women's existence.
16. Sex role stereotypes are only one symptom of the larger system of patriarchal power, which is the true source of women's subordination.

- 18. The workplace is organized around men's physical, economic, and sexual oppression of women.
- 19. Men's control over women forces women to be the primary caretakers of children.
- 29. Men use abortion law and reproductive technology to control women's lives.
- 34. Men prevent women from becoming political leaders through their control of economic and political institutions.
- 46. Marriage is a perfect example of men's physical, economic and sexual oppression of women.
- 48. Romantic love brainwashes women and forms the basis for their subordination.
- 55. Rape is ultimately a powerful tool that keeps women in their place, subservient to and terrorized by men.

Woman of Color Feminism Items

- 3. In education and legislation to stop rape, ethnicity and race must be treated sensitively to ensure that women of color are protected equally.
- 12. Women of color have less legal and social service protection from being battered than white women have.
- 21. Women of color are oppressed by White standards of beauty.
- 26. Being put on a pedestal, which White women have protested, is a luxury that women of color have not had.
- 40. Anti-gay and racist prejudice act together to make it more difficult for gay male and lesbian people of color to maintain relationships.
- 43. In rape programs and workshops, not enough attention has been given to the special needs of women of color.

49. Discrimination in the workplace is worse for women of color than for all men and White women.

51. Much of the talk about power for women overlooks the need to empower people of all races and colors first.

57. The tradition of African-American women who are strong family leaders has strengthened the African-American community as a whole.

Liberal Feminist Items

5. Whether one chooses a traditional or alternative family form should be a matter of personal choice.

6. People should define their marriage and family roles in ways that make them feel most comfortable.

7. The government is responsible for making sure that all women receive an equal chance at education and employment.

22. The availability of adequate childcare is central to a woman's right to work outside the home.

24. Homosexuality is not a moral issue, but rather a question of liberty and freedom of expression.

27. Social change for sexual equality will best come about by acting through federal, state, and local government.

33. Legislation is the best means to ensure a woman's choice of whether or not to have an abortion.

42. Women should try to influence legislation in order to gain the right to make their own decisions and choices.

52. Women should have the freedom to sell their sexual services.

60. Men need to be liberated from oppressive sex role stereotypes as much as women do.

Cultural Feminist Items

9. Prostitution grows out of the male culture of violence and male values of social control.

11. Replacing the word “God” with “Goddess” will remind people that the deity is not male. 14.

Men should follow women’s lead in religious matters, because women have a higher regard for love and peace than men do.

28. Putting women in positions of political power would bring about new systems of government that promote peace.

30. Traditional notions of romantic love should be replaced with ideas based on feminine values of kindness and concern for all people.

32. By not using sexist and violent language, we can encourage peaceful social change.

35. Beauty is feeling one’s womanhood through peace, caring, and nonviolence.

37. Women’s experience in life’s realities of cleaning, feeding people, caring for babies, etc., makes their vision of reality clearer than men’s.

44. Rape is best stopped by replacing the current male-oriented culture of violence with an alternative culture based on more gentle, womanly qualities.

50. Bringing more women into male-dominated professions would make the professional less cutthroat and competitive.

Socialist Feminist Items

10. Capitalism and sexism are primarily responsible for the increased divorce rate and general breakdown of families.

20. Making women economically dependent on men is capitalism’s subtle way of encouraging heterosexual relationships.

25. A socialist restructuring of businesses and institutions is necessary for women and people of color to assume equal leadership with White men.

31. Romantic love supports capitalism by influencing women to place men's emotional and economic needs first.

39. The way to eliminate prostitution is to make women economically equal to men.

41. Capitalism hinders a poor woman's chance to obtain adequate prenatal medical care or an abortion.

45. It is the capitalist system that forces women to be responsible for childcare.

54. All religion is like a drug to people and is used to pacify women and other oppressed groups.

56. Capitalism forces most women to wear feminine clothes to keep a job.

58. The personalities and behaviors of "women" and "men" in our society have developed to fit the needs of advanced capitalism.

Appendix C

Attitudes Towards Feminism and the Women's Movement (Fassinger, 1994)

1. The leaders of the women's movement may be extreme, but they have the right idea
2. There are better ways for women to fight for equality than through the women's movement
3. More people would favor the women's movement if they knew more about it
4. The women's movement has positively influenced relationships between men and women
5. The women's movement is too radical and extreme in its views
6. The women's movement has made important gains in equal rights and political power for women
7. Feminists are too visionary for a practical world
8. Feminist principles should be adopted everywhere
9. Feminists are a menace to this nation and the world
10. I am overjoyed that women's liberation is finally happening in this country

Appendix D

Bidimensional Acculturation Scale (Marin & Gamba, 1996)

1. How often do you speak English?
2. How often do you speak in English with your friends?
3. How often do you think in English?
4. How often do you speak Spanish?
5. How often do you speak in Spanish with your friends?
6. How often do you think in Spanish?
7. How well do you speak English?
8. How well do you read in English?
9. How well do you understand television programs in English?
10. How well do you understand radio programs in English?
11. How well do you write in English?
12. How well do you understand music in English?
13. How well do you speak Spanish?
14. How well do you read in Spanish?
15. How well do you understand television programs in Spanish?
16. How well do you understand radio programs in Spanish?
17. How well do you write in Spanish?
18. How well do you understand music in Spanish?
19. How often do you watch television programs in English?
20. How often do you listen to radio programs in English?
21. How often do you listen to music in English?

22. How often do you watch television programs in Spanish?

23. How often do you listen to radio programs in Spanish?

24. How often do you listen to music in Spanish?

Appendix E

Demographic Questions

1. What is your age?
2. How do you identify in your gender?
3. How do you identify in your race/ethnicity?
4. What is your country of origin? How many generations of your family have lived in the United States?
5. Language use:
6. Highest level of education completed
7. Please state your field of study/major
8. Highest level of education completed by a family member
9. Are you a feminist? Yes/No

Appendix F

Interview Questions

1. How do you define feminism?
2. Do you consider yourself a feminist?
 - a. If you are a feminist, how did you become one? What experiences or events led to you becoming a feminist?
 - b. If you are not a feminist, why not? What experiences or events have influenced this?
3. Do you agree with the statement that where there are no right answers anybody's opinion is as good as another's? Can you think of an opinion that you think is wrong?
4. How do you evaluate information you see on the internet or hear from others? How do you know if something is right or wrong?

Appendix G

Correlation Table

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.
1. Conservativism	1	-.287**	-.363**	.056	-.012	.138	-.285**	-.072	.121	-.279**	-.151	.089	.125	-.488**
2. Womanist	-.287**	1	.619**	.495**	.512**	.365**	.061	-.152	.213*	.276**	.227*	.045	.010	.444**
3. Liberal	-.363**	.619**	1	.334**	.540**	.490**	.113	-.096	.325**	.298**	.373**	.231*	.062	.511**
4. Radical	.056	.495**	.334**	1	.607**	.493**	.087	-.072	.324**	.028	.036	.046	.066	.362**
5. Socialist	-.012	.512**	.540**	.607**	1	.677**	.106	-.182	.459**	.147	.197*	.117	.120	.237*
6. Cultural	.138	.365**	.490**	.493**	.677**	1	.063	-.099	.399**	.122	.212*	.209*	.160	.172
7. Hispanic Acculturation	-.285**	.061	.113	.087	.106	.063	1	.247*	-.091	.017	.061	-.147	.191	.138
8. Non-Hispanic Acculturation	-.072	-.152	-.096	-.072	-.182	-.099	.247*	1	-.158	.044	-.147	.055	-.097	.048
9. Separate Knowing	.121	.213*	.325**	.324**	.459**	.399**	-.091	-.158	1	.332**	.476**	.252*	.023	-.007
10. Connected Knowing	-.279**	.276**	.298**	.028	.147	.122	.017	.044	.332**	1	.438**	.203*	-.086	.328**
11. Subjective Knowing	-.151	.227*	.373**	.036	.197*	.212*	.061	-.147	.476**	.438**	1	.215*	.091	.226*
12. Received Knowing	.089	.045	.231*	.046	.117	.209*	-.147	.055	.252*	.203*	.215*	1	.105	-.052
13. Silence	.125	.010	.062	.066	.120	.160	.191	-.097	.023	-.086	.091	.105	1	-.154
14. Attitudes Towards Feminism	-.488**	.444**	.511**	.362**	.237*	.172	.138	.048	-.007	.328**	.226*	-.052	-.154	1

Table 1: Correlation of variables

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level, ** Correlation is significant at the .01. level

Appendix H

Feminist and Non-Feminist Scores on Connected Knowing Subscale

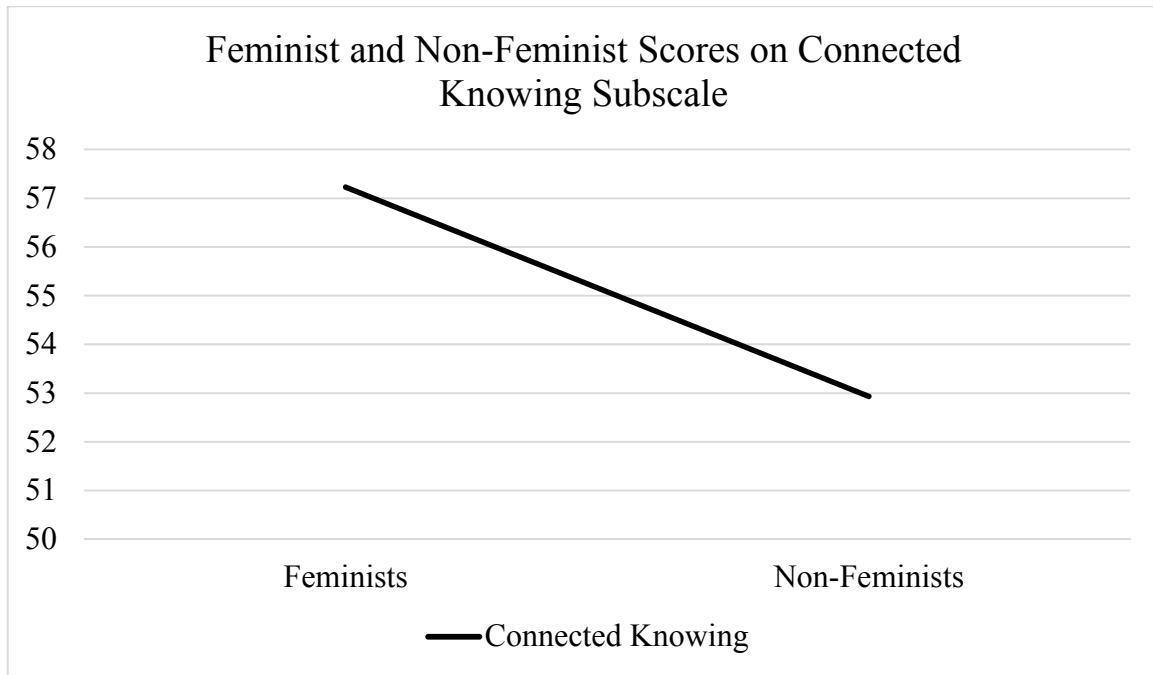


Figure 1: Line graph of mean scores of feminist and non-feminists on a measure of connected knowing

Appendix I

Feminist and Non-Feminist Scores on Acculturation Subscales

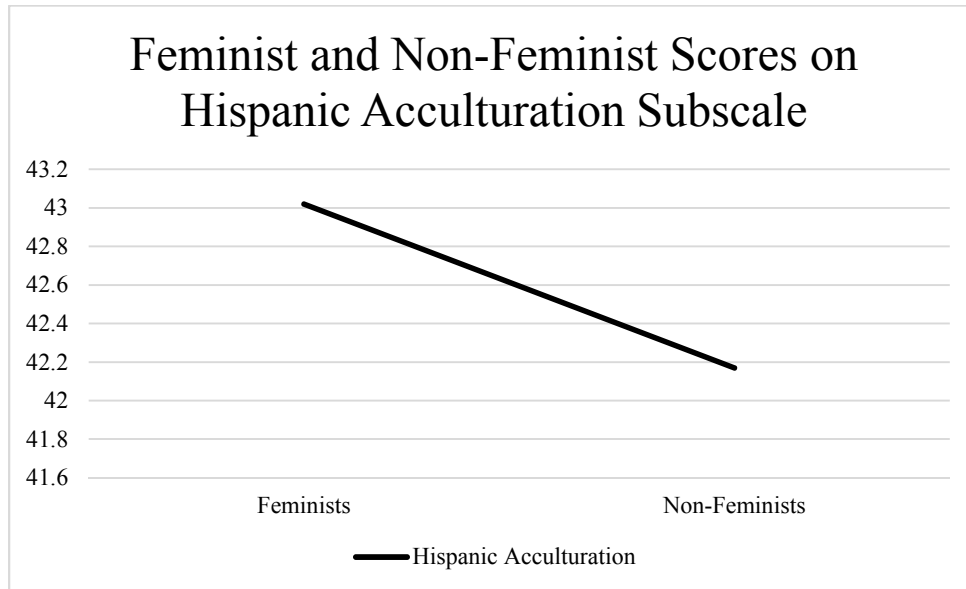


Figure 2: Line graph of mean scores of feminist and non-feminists on a measure of Hispanic acculturation

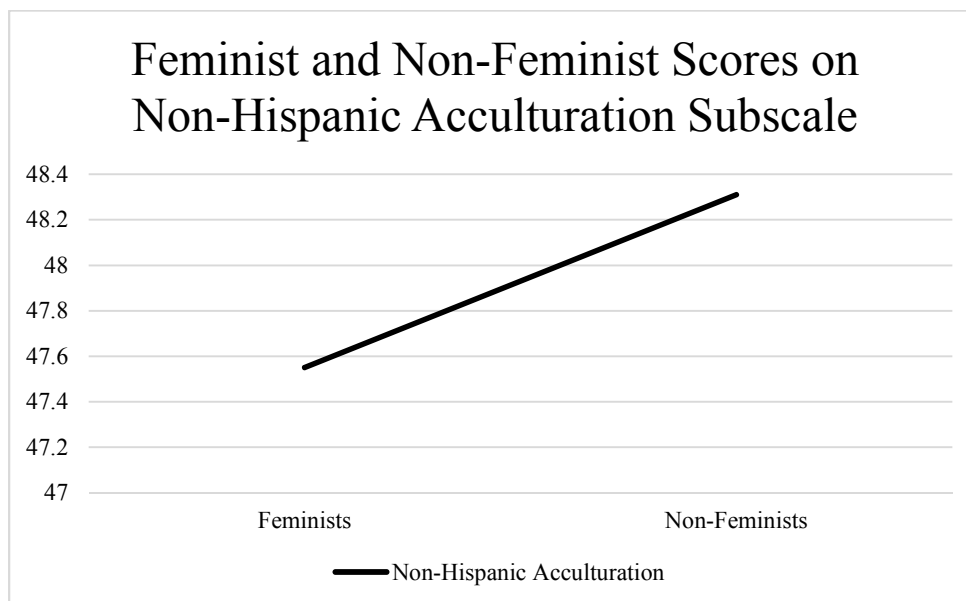


Figure 3: Line graph of mean scores of feminist and non-feminists on a measure of non-Hispanic acculturation

Appendix J

Qualitative Codes

Definition of Feminism	
Equal Rights ($n = 12$)	Equal rights, opportunities, pay
Gender roles ($n = 2$)	Women are capable of accomplishing the same things men are
Empowerment ($n = 2$)	Supporting women, being on women's "side"
Asserting own power ($n = 2$)	The power to choose what you want to do, being your own person
Realizing barriers to equality ($n = 2$)	Awareness of social issues and the oppression of women
Do you identify as a feminist?	
Yes ($n = 13$)	Labels themselves as a feminist
No ($n = 1$)	Does not label themselves as a feminist
Ambivalent ($n = 6$)	Hesitant to identify themselves as a feminist
Why are you (not) a feminist?	
Received knowledge ($n = 3$)	Learning about feminism in class or from someone they view as an authority
Extreme views ($n = 1$)	Women deserve more than men, putting men down, "man-hating"
Family/values or opposition to values ($n = 6$)	Appreciation for the women in their life, mothers taught feminist values OR their family is traditional (they either adhere to this or reject)
Own rationalization/realization ($n = 3$)	Slowly realizing that own belief system is consistent with feminism
Life experiences ($n = 5$)	Experienced discrimination, or unfair treatment due to belonging to a gender/ethnic minority group
Multiple reasons ($n = 2$)	Response incorporates elements of multiple themes listed above
Where there are no right answers anybody's opinion is as good as another's	
Yes ($n = 13$)	Agreed
No ($n = 7$)	Disagreed
Thoughts on opinions	
Opinions are subjective ($n = 8$)	Everyone is entitled to their own opinion
Everything is debatable ($n = 1$)	All ideas can be argued or debated
Opinions cannot be correct or incorrect ($n = 3$)	Opinions are different from fact; therefore, they cannot be right or wrong
Opinions based on incorrect information are wrong ($n = 2$)	If the central premise of an opinion is wrong, the opinion is also wrong

Opinions can be morally wrong ($n = 6$)	Opinions that violate one's personal ideas about morality are wrong
How do you know if something is right or wrong?	
Authority/credibility of the source ($n = 4$)	If the information is coming from a trusted source (i.e. professor, or a credible news outlet) it is likely correct
Morals/family values ($n = 5$)	Evaluate information based on how consistent it is with personal beliefs/morals
Instinct ($n = 4$)	Something is right or wrong based on how it "feels" (i.e. "gut feeling" or a "hunch")
Lived experience ($n = 2$)	Use personal experience with a given situation to evaluate if something is right or wrong
Get more information/evidence ($n = 5$)	Collect more information on the topic to determine if something is right or wrong

Table 2: Qualitative codes used to code interview transcriptions, and examples of each code