

Riot Grrrls and Beyond: A Feminist Playlist

By Elizabeth O'Brien

“Feeling Myself” by Nicki Minaj and Beyoncé

Hit-Boy, Knowles, B., Minaj, N., & SZA. (2014). Feeling myself [Recorded by Nicki Minaj and Beyoncé]. On *Pink print* [CD]. New Orleans, LA: Young Money Entertainment.

Nicki and Beyoncé are the queens of self-love, encouraging listeners to know their worth, have agency, and have fun. “Feeling Myself” is an anthem for people of all genders and all ages to harness their worth and their power.

“I stopped the world
Male or female, it make no difference
I stop the world, world stop....”

“Hot Topic” by Le Tigre

Benning, S., Fateman, J., & Hanna, K. (1999). Hot topic [Recorded by Le Tigre]. On *Le tigre* [CD]. San Francisco, CA: Mr. Lady Records.

Royalty of the Riot Grrrl movement of the 90s, Le Tigre are unabashedly feminist and fun pop-punk. “Hot Topic” is an ode to feminists who have shaped the band and introduces listeners to many women they should know. The chorus is a call to order, an acknowledgement that we fight together, and an anthem to chant along to:

“So many roads and so much opinion
So much shit to give in, give in to
So many rules and so much opinion
So much bullshit but we won't give in
Stop, we won't stop
Don't you stop
I can't live if you stop”

“You Don't Own Me” by Lesley Gore

Madara, J., & White, D. (1963). You don't own me [Recorded by Lesley Gore]. On *Leslie Gore sings of mixed-up hearts* [CD]. US: Mercury Records.

We lost Leslie Gore in February 2015, but her legacy of bold feminist anthems will continue to be sung for a long time. “You Don't Own Me” is basically a feminist mantra:

“I'm young and I love to be young
I'm free and I love to be free
To live my life the way I want
To say and do whatever I please”



Images

Nicki Minaj: <http://images.fashiontimes.com/data/images/full/17380/nicki-minaj.png?w=600>

Feminism banner: <http://bellacole.com/bella/cole.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Feminism-Banner-1024x1024.jpg>

“None of Your Business” by Salt-N-Pepa

Azor, H. (1993). None of your business [Recorded by Salt-N-Pepa]. On *Very necessary* [CD]. New York, NY: Next Plateau Entertainment.

“None of Your Business” features Salt-N-Pepa exerting their agency and calling out people who are concerned with how they run their lives. A great shout-along song when you want to get people off your back:

“If I wanna take a guy home with me tonight
It's none of your business
And she wanna be a freak and sell it on the weekend
It's none of your business
Now you shouldn't even get into who I'm givin' skins to
It's none of your business
So don't try to change my mind, I'll tell you one more time
It's none of your business”

“Standing in the Way of Control” by Gossip (2006)

Blillie, H., Ditto, B., & Paine, B. (2006). Standing in the way of control [Record by Gossip]. On *Standing in the way of control* [CD]. Portland, OR: Kill Rock Stars.

Queer punk band Gossip put out great feminist-infused music. Lead singer Beth Ditto, an outspoken fat, poor, rural queer turned to music to save her from her tough Bible-belt upbringing. “Standing in the Way of Control” is about living your life and not backing down when faced with oppression and adversity:

“It's part not giving in
And part trusting your friends
You do it all again, you don't stop trying...
Because we're standing in the way of control
And we'll live our lives”

