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Feminist identification, actions, beliefs and commitments at CSB/ SJU

Allison A. Fischbach

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University

Anna M. Hueg

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University

Allison M. (Allie) Rudnickas

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University

Atarah V. Pinder

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University

Hannah A. Salto

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Allison A. Fischbach, Anna M. Hueg, Allison M. (Allie) Rudnickas, Atarah V. Pinder, Hannah A. Salto, Ha H. Pham, Hanna M. Pioske, Hannah O. Kangas, Hope P. Mueller, Kenea M. Andrews, Laura L. Rhude, Madeline A. (Maddie) Rainey, Marina I. Campbell-Vargas, Megan J. Myers, Molly K. Heller, and Sarah J. Berry

**Feminist
Identification,
Actions, Beliefs &
Commitments at
CSB/SJU**

2014-2015 Hynes Scholars

Institute for Women's Leadership

Kenea Andrews

Sarah Berry

Marina Campbell-Vargas

Allison Fischbach

Molly Heller

Anna Hueg

Hannah Kangas

Hope Mueller

Megan Myers

Ha Pham

Atarah Pinder

Hanna Pioske

Maddie Rainey

Laura Rhude

Allie Rudnickas

Hannah Salto

What is the
Hynes Scholars
Mission?

A competitively selected cohort of sophomore women interested in engaging in dialogue and scholarship about gender and leadership, social justice, self-awareness, and the challenges facing women today.

Research Question

Does self-identification as a feminist, non-feminist, or non-labeler, affect actions, beliefs, and commitments regarding feminist ideals?

1. Research/Background

- Skeleton of background information
- Previous similar research
- How is our research different/important?
- Why is our research important for CSB/SJU?

Why This Study?

- Interested in feminist beliefs – unique campuses
- Separate campuses – exposed to feminist topics differently
 - Bennie/Johnnie Day, IWL/MDI have different events for men and women

Why This Study?

- Is there any dissonance between identifying with feminist beliefs and identifying with the feminist label?
- Will our data give us insight into education about feminist ideas at CSB/SJU?
- Is the “feminist” label stigmatized on our campuses?

Studies Like Ours

Smith College

- Surveyed Baby Boomers & Generation Xers
- Identified themselves as: feminists, non-feminists and non-labelers
- More individuals from Generation X identified as non-feminists and non-labelers, more Baby Boomers identified as feminists
- Is there a new wave of feminism occurring with our own generation, Generation Y/Millennials?

Studies Like Ours

Fischer et al.

- Used different feminist identity scales to determine validity of each scale
- Using this, our survey was based on the Feminist Identity Composite found in Fischer et al's scholarly article

Purdue University

- “*Women's* movement” or “*feminist* movement”
- Studied students' reaction to the label of feminism in the college setting
- Is the feminist label stigmatized at CSB/SJU?

How Is Our Study Different?

- Previous studies have surveyed women, our study surveys both men and women
- Our study is surveying mostly first year college students
- Unique campus environment may show different results than previous research

2. Study Design and Data Collection

- Determine method for data collection
- Write up methodology and procedure
- Submit IRB approval form
- Create survey questions and survey form design
- Responses converted into Excel and SPSS formats

Methods/Participants

- Introductory Psychology Students
 - First years and sophomores
- 79 females and 39 males, total 118 people surveyed
- Demographic at end of survey
- Questions reworded to be gender neutral
- Goal: Determine who identifies as feminists, non-feminists and non-labelers, and differences between their data
- 3 categories of questions:
 - Actions
 - Personal Beliefs
 - Commitments

4. Data Analysis

- Conduct statistical analysis of collected data
- Discover and analyze trends according to three categories and larger research question
- Does self-identification as a feminist, non-feminist, or non-labeler, affect actions, beliefs, and commitments regarding feminist ideals?

Bennies n=79

26.6% Identify as Feminist

11.4% Identify as Non-Feminist

62% Identify as Non-Labeler

Johnnies n=39

5.1% Identify as Feminist

46.2% Identify as Non-Feminist

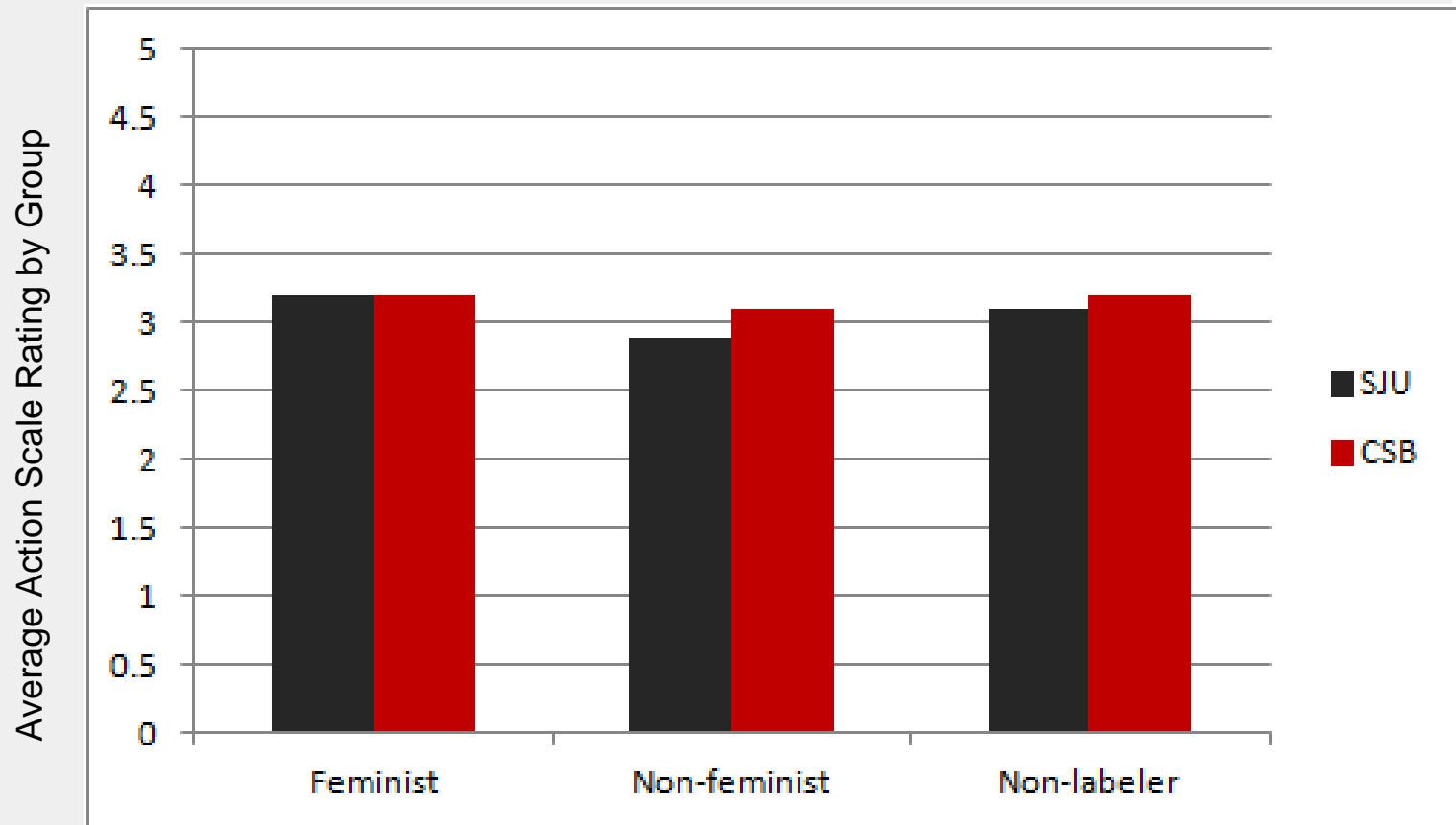
48.7% Identify as Non-Labeler

Examples

Action Questions

1. If I were married and my spouse was offered a job in another state, it would be my obligation to move in support of his/her career.
1. I regularly attend women's sporting events on campus.
1. I often post about women's issues on social media.

Action Scale



Interpretation of Action Scale

- No difference in scores by school or feminist identity
- All self-identifications either act in a non-feminist manner or in a feminist manner

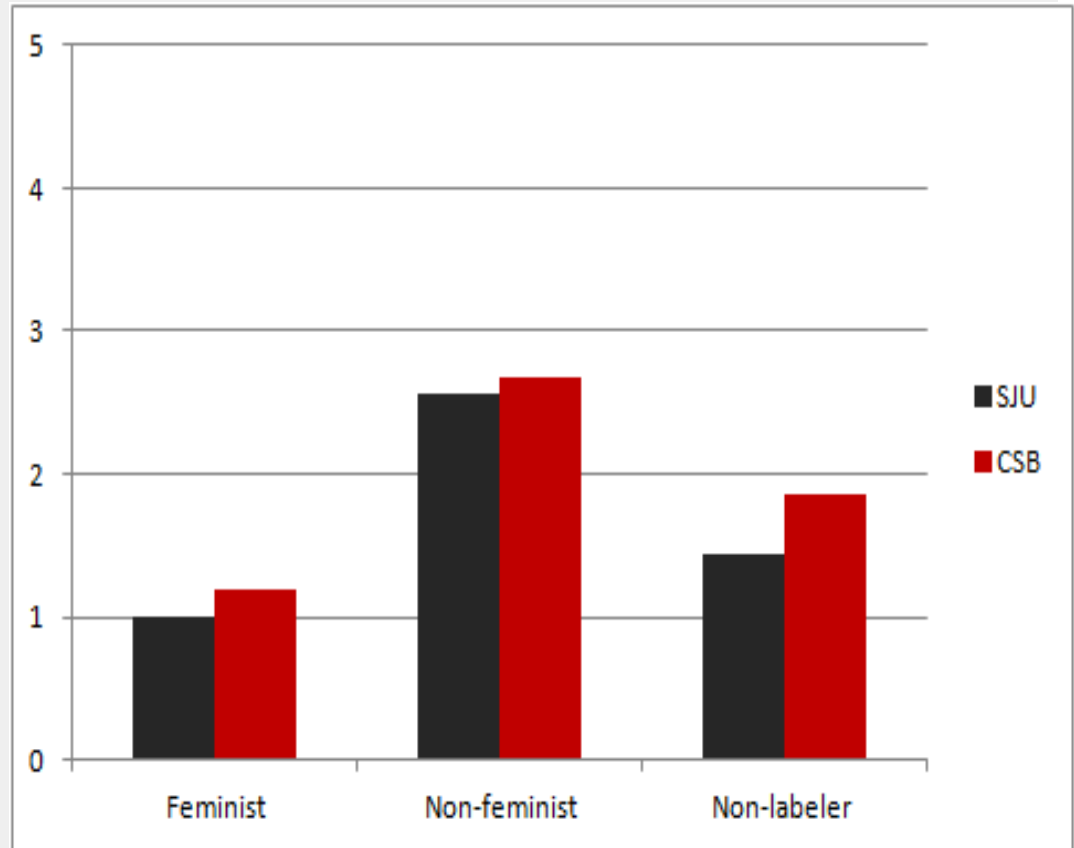
Examples

Belief Questions

1. I believe things are fine the way they are. I do not want women to have equal status as men.
1. I think that men and women had it better in the 1950s when married women were housewives and their husbands supported them.
1. I don't see the point of questioning the general expectation that men should be masculine and women should be feminine.

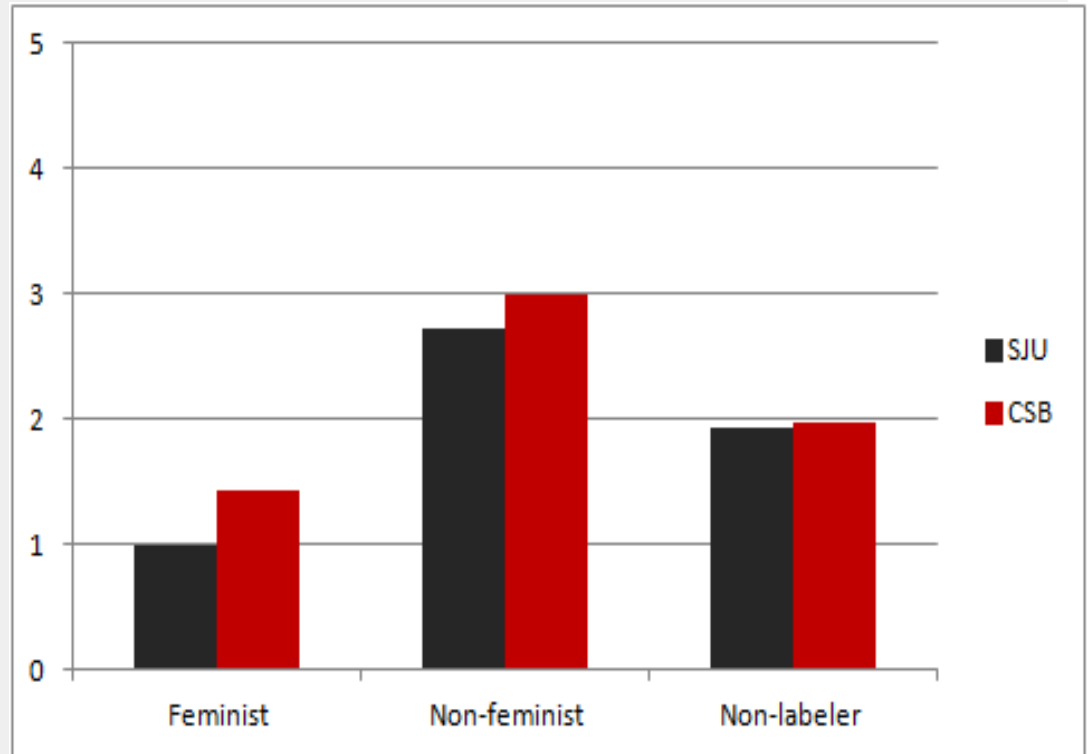
Belief Scale 1

I believe things are fine the way they are. I do not want women to have equal status as men.



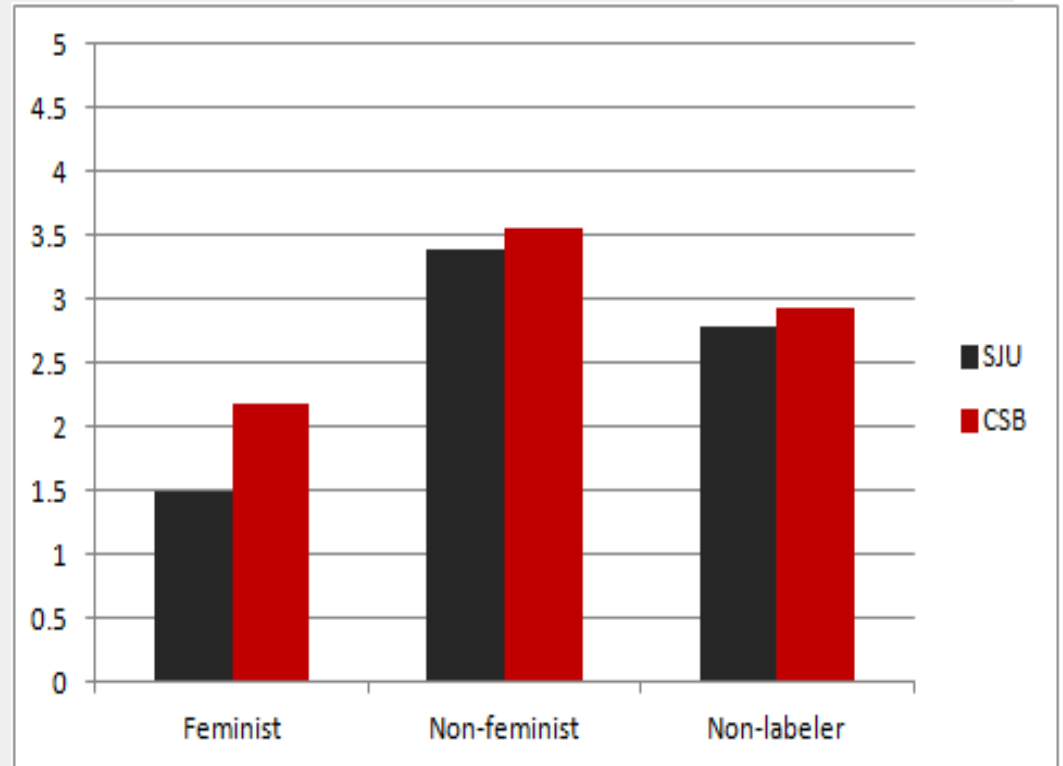
Belief Scale 2

I think that men and women had it better in the 1950s when married women were housewives and their husbands supported them.



Belief Scale 3

I don't see the point of questioning the general expectation that men should be masculine and women should be feminine.



Interpretation of Belief Scale: Bennies

- Non-feminists were most likely to agree with “traditional” views/statements, followed by non-labelers, then lastly feminists
- Feminists were more likely to hold less traditional beliefs

Interpretation of Belief Scale: Johnnies

- Same pattern as Bennies
- Non-feminists were most likely to agree with “traditional” views/statements, followed by non-labelers, then lastly feminists
- Feminists were more likely to hold less traditional beliefs

Overall Interpretation of Beliefs

- *Bennies* were more likely than *Johnnies* to agree with the beliefs that the traditional system in place should remain the same
- These traditional beliefs were felt most strongly by non-feminists, followed by non-labelers, and the least by feminists (Non-Feminist had more traditional views, Feminists had less traditional views, and non-labelers fell in between)

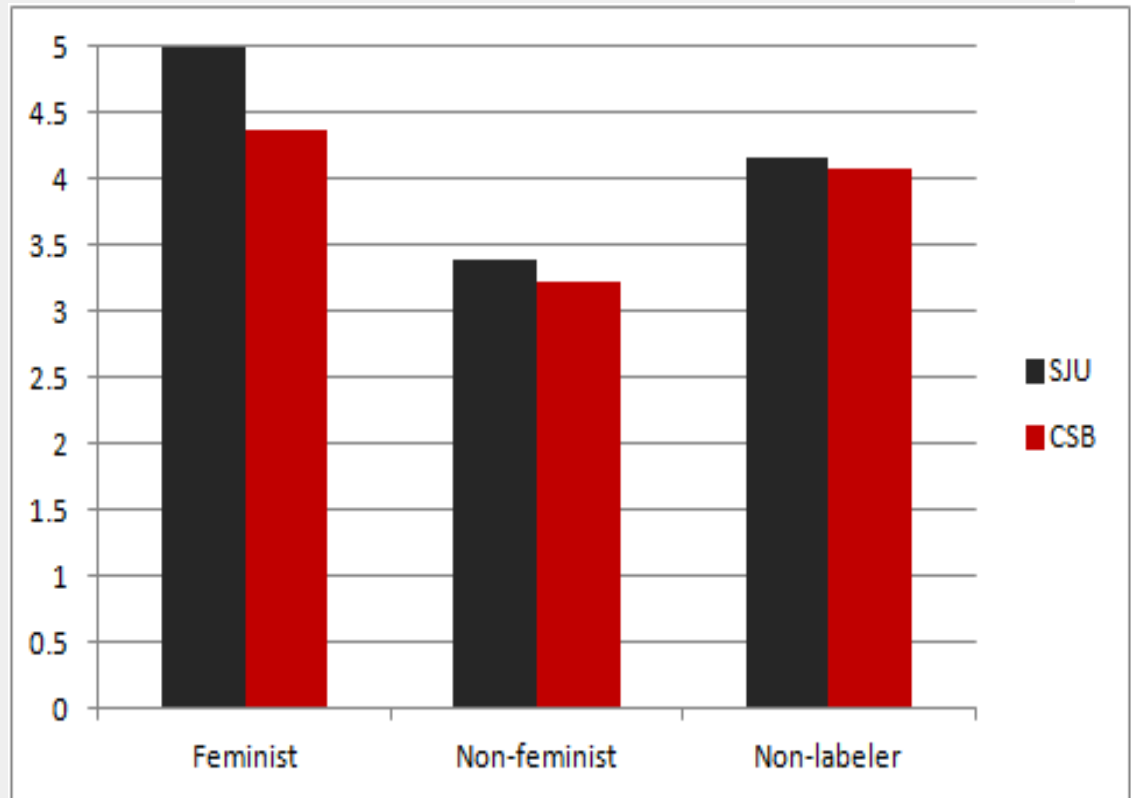
Examples

Commitment Questions

1. I owe it to all people to work for greater equality for all.
1. I want to improve women's status.
1. I am committed to working for a fair and just world for all.

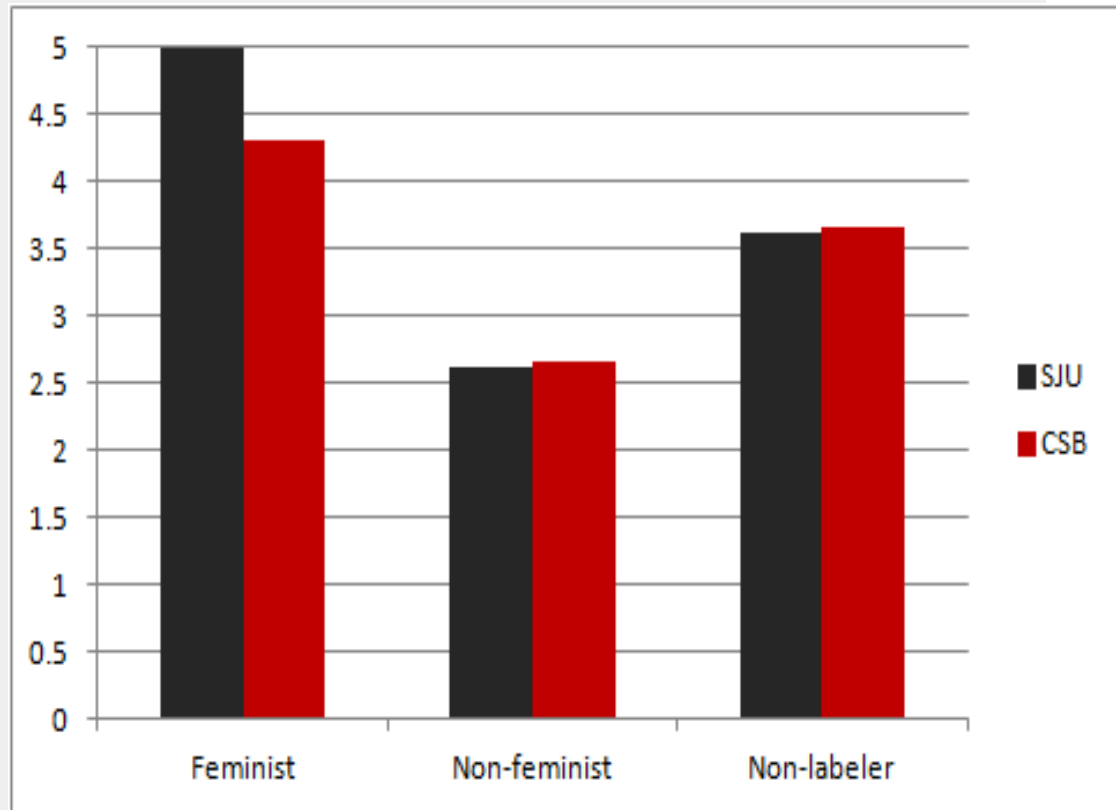
Commitment Scale 1

I owe it to all people to work for greater equality for all.



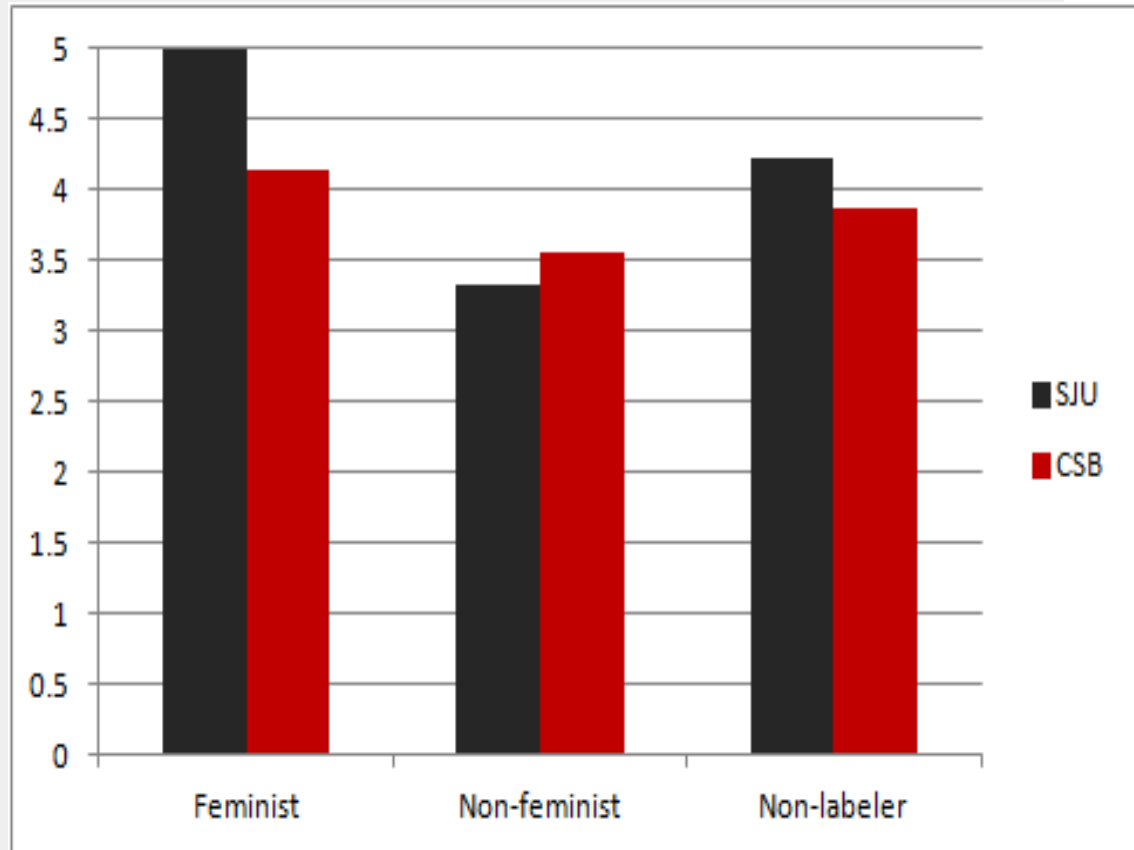
Commitment Scale 2

I want to improve women's status.



Commitment Scale 3

I am committed
to working for a
fair and just world
for all.



Interpretation of Commitment: Bennies

- Overall feminists had the higher score on the Commitment Scale followed by non-labelers, and lastly non-feminist, which means that feminists were most highly committed to equality and justice for all

Interpretation of Commitments: Johnnies

- Overall feminists had the higher score on the Commitment Scale followed by non-labelers, and lastly non-feminist, which means that feminists were most highly committed to equality and justice for all
- Johnnies had slightly higher scores on Commitment Scale than Bennies
- *Again, SJU Feminist labelers, n=2*

Overall Interpretation of Commitments

- Feminists are more committed to world changes towards equality, followed by non-labelers, and lastly non-feminists

Influence of Identification

- Identification did not strongly affect their actions
- Identification correlated to the type of beliefs held by the individual
- Identification correlated an individual's level of commitment to equality

Trends

Actions

No difference in scores by institution or feminist identity.

Beliefs

Significant differences by both institution and feminist identity.

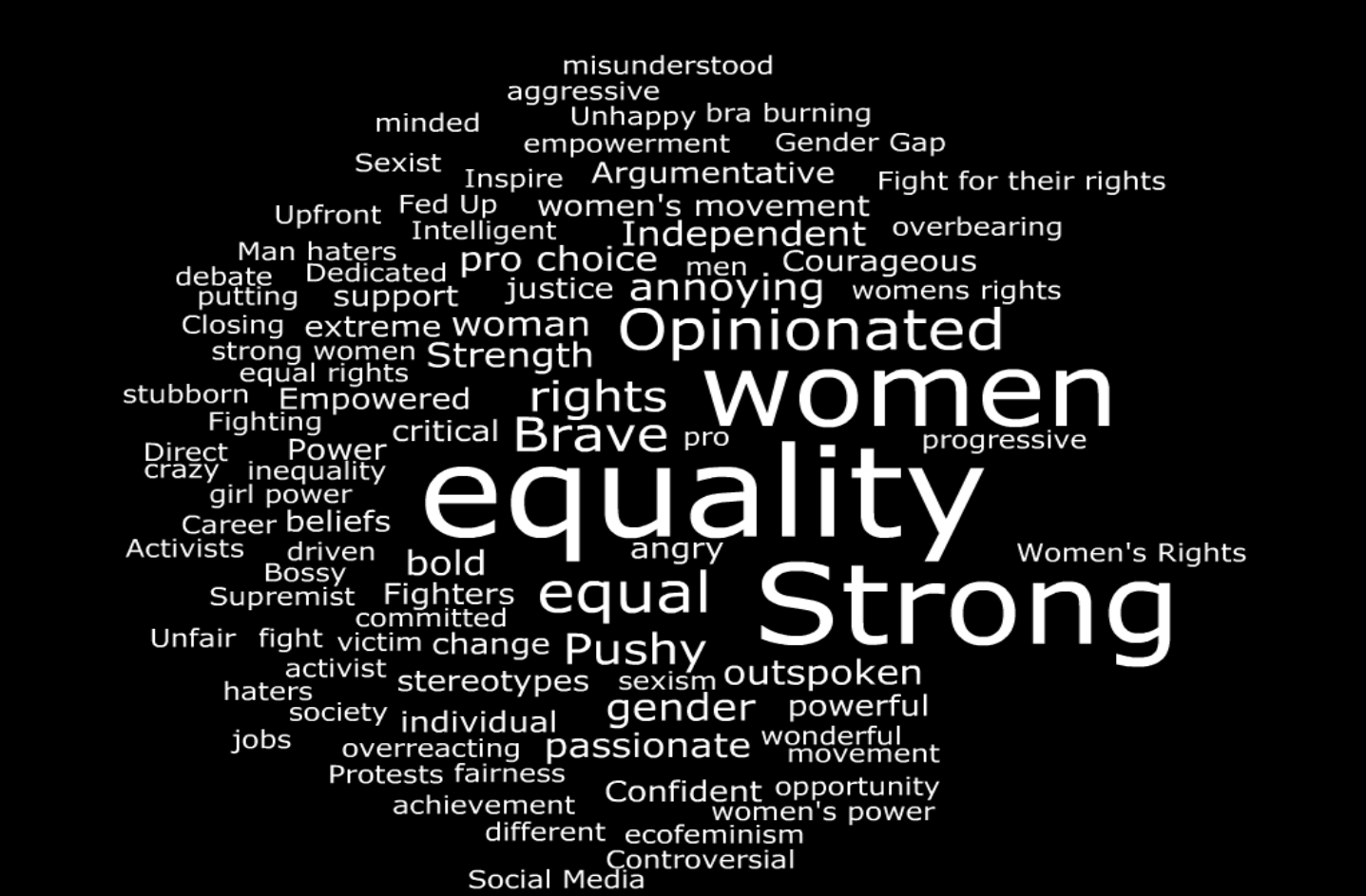
Commitment

Significant differences by both institutions and feminist identity.

5. Presentation/Further Analysis

- Compile data, graphics and organization of all materials
- Prepare presentation format and distribution of responsibilities
- Discuss implications of studies and suggest further analysis and action

What words come to mind when you think of feminism?



independent
Girl Scouts Intimidating
hypocrite Extreme
gender obnoxious outspoken
Empower Persistent Strong Willed
Vocal Proactive women's rights
Rebel uptight unequal Pay Sexism
meninist cult Pay necessary
Strength Hurt Wages Strong
revenge
Fighter
misogyny
proud
men
Women
Sensitive period
Stubborn psycho rights
suffrage engaged mean
crabby crazy
Discrimination Equal
Oppressed
aggressive sexist passionate
one sided movement
Favor Women
human right

where do we go from here?

- Educate first year students about roots, origins and meanings of feminism
- Encourage first year students to attend gender related campus events
- Promote an open dialogue about gender related issues between both institutions

Recommendations for Future Studies

- Conduct similar study with upper class students, paying particular attention to seniors
- Compare our results with first year students with the results from senior student data
- Analyze how perceptions of feminism change through the college experience and how our institutions can better educate about gender related issues

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Thank You!
Any Questions?

