Feminism for Boys: The Gender Studies & Feminism Club at The Browning School

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AGENDA

1. Who we are
2. Ground rules for discussions
3. How we got started
4. What we have done
5. Challenges
6. Small group discussions
7. Conclusion
Weekly Meetings in the Library
DISCUSSION RULES

- This is an open club – every member of the Browning community is welcome.
- We encourage participants to enter this space to discuss the complexities of issues relating to gender and feminism.
- Listen respectfully, without interrupting, and without holding side conversations.
- Listen actively and with an ear to understanding others' views. (Don’t just think about what you are going to say while someone else is talking.)
- Criticize ideas, not individuals.
- Commit to learning, not debating. Comment in order to share information, not to persuade.
- Allow everyone the chance to speak.
- Avoid assumptions about any member of the group or generalizations about social groups.
BEGINNINGS

- Proposing a club
- Meeting before school on Wednesdays mornings
- Our first meeting in October 2015
- Growing and learning with students
- Internet, misogyny, videogames and anti-feminism
WHAT WE’VE DONE

- Including the faculty
- Weekly student-led discussions
- Sample topics that have been discussed:
  - Transgender students in single sex schools
  - Boy scouts
  - College “hook-up” culture
  - Can pornography be “feminist”?
  - The 2016 Presidential Election
  - Planned Parenthood
- Meeting with a girls’ school
- Learning about activism
Instead of a walkout, we conducted a Teach-in.
With Girl Up From the Dominican Academy
CHALLENGES

- Discussion rules
- Contrarians
- How to make connections with curriculum (attendees are self-selected)
- Expanding the impact of the club
- “Other viewpoint” (false equivalence)
- Superficial feminism that is not inclusive
- Political climate
- Convincing our colleagues of the value of this club/content
- Intersectionality
Introductions and why are you here
What is the conversation about gender and feminism like at your school?
How can you get started with this work at your school?
What are the potential barriers? How can they be overcome?
What are your takeaways today?

Ileana Jimenez is a leader in this field of teaching feminism in high school. Online she uses the moniker ‘Feminist Teacher’. You can find her on Twitter, Facebook, and her website. She and others have pioneered the use of the #HSFeminism hashtag to share their work. This post about ‘Teaching Boys Feminism’ is especially useful.