

Becca Anglesey

BIS 368

HW6: Lessons Learned

December 3, 2017

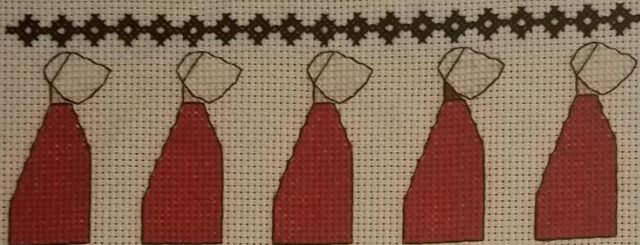
This project is dedicated to all women who want, need, or use any method of birth control. Having access to it has changed my life and I feel that women should be allowed to make their own decisions about their own bodies.

For this project I chose to make a cross-stitch. I did this for a few reasons: 1) I enjoy doing it because I find it to be fun and relaxing, and 2) it is a uniquely feminine art form. Needle craft has been traditionally dominated by women throughout the ages, although it is interesting to not that it was my father who taught me how to do it. I also thought it would be slightly ironic to make something that is usually delicate and dainty basically say “f\*\*\* the patriarchy.” It seemed appropriate in a tongue and cheek kind of way. The design is based off the book/show *The Handmaids Tale*. It shows handmaids walking in lines similar to the way they did in the show. In the center is featured a quote from Season 1 Episode 4: “Nolite te bastardes carborundorum bitches.” Roughly translated the Latin term means ‘don’t let the bastards get you down.’ I very purposefully chose a more masculine script for the Latin, to symbolize the constraints women must live in in a patriarchal world. I chose to emphasize the word “bitches” for a few reasons. First, it is a type of shock value, but also nicely works with the Latin term “bastardes.” Second, it is a type of reclamation of harmful language; the usage here is a type of call to arms for women to not let men keep them down. Third, the color and font are meant to represent a breaking free of societal rules regarding how women see themselves and how they decide to use their own

bodies. I designed the pattern myself using an online cross-stitch patterning tool. The design took me about four hours, while the actual production of the piece took between 25-30 hours.

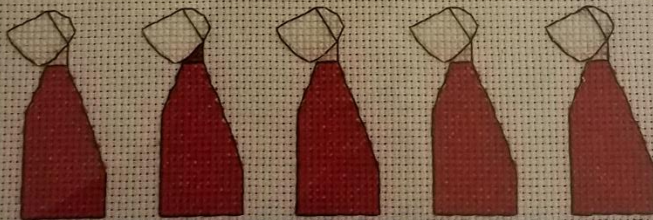
I chose to make this particular statement based off the course topics of reproductive justice, women's bodies for production, and women's bodies for consumption. In the last year, the television adaptation of Margaret Atwood's novel The Handmaids Tale became an enormous success largely due to the themes of women's reproductive rights (or in the case of the show the lack of rights). Many women feel that, though the show is set in a dystopian near-future, it is more of a cautionary tale of where over-legislation of women's reproductive rights is leading us as a society. It is interesting to note that the book was written in the 1980s, but we have seemed to move closer toward the future laid out in the book than farther away from it in the last 30 years. I feel that women should be able to make the choices they feel to be right for their bodies, even if I don't personally agree with the choice they make. Not my body, not my business. I feel that the idea of reproductive justice goes hand in hand with the idea of women's bodies for production. Once a woman hits puberty and starts menstruating, she is then viewed as a vessel for creating more people and less of a person in her own right. In the book/show, the handmaids are the only fertile women in society and are stripped of all of their human rights in order to produce children for wealthy white men. They are no longer people, but a means to an end. Similar to that, the theme of women's bodies for consumption introduced me to objectification theory. Objectification theory states that women's bodies are evaluated and judged based on their usefulness to others. The handmaids are viewed as very valuable objects because they are the only women who are able to have children. Indeed, they are treated almost as a dog used for breeding (bitches, anyone?)

This project relates very well to the UWB school of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences learning objectives. The assignment challenged me to be creative with my thinking and to be very critical and careful of what I was presenting and how I wanted to present it. I had to analyze the source material (The Handmaids Tale) and also my chosen medium (cross-stitch) to make sure it all worked successfully together, which I think it did. This also ties into the learning objective Interdisciplinary Research and Inquiry. I chose to draw my inspiration from multiple modes (book/tv/art), and I feel that I presented the information in a thoughtful, yet intriguing way that was appropriate for both the assignment and the source material. I feel that by using a more creative art driven method I improved my own modes of communication as well. There is even another learning objective that has been added to the school of IAS that is not listed in the syllabus: Diversity and Equity. This project helped me to consider points of view that are different from my own and to recognize them as valid none the less. And I think it makes a fairly strong argument for itself about equity. It is a call to women to not let anyone put them down, tell them they are less than, or to believe anyone that may try to do so.



Nolite te  
bastardes  
carborundorum

*Bitches*



RRR 12/3/17