

The Badass Feminists

Selected by the participants of:
Young Feminist Weekend 2020

Maggie Nelson

Ik vind haar badass omdat dat ze in haar boek *The Argonauts* (een van de allerbeste dingen die ik de afgelopen jaren gelezen heb) een manier heeft gevonden om te schrijven zonder dingen te versimpelen, vast te pinnen. In haar boek zijn liefde, identiteit, gender, ideologie, moederschap, vrouw of man zijn of alles daartussen altijd veranderlijk en nooit gedefinieerd, maar zonder nietszeggend of vaag te worden. Integendeel. Ze schrijft ontzettend fris en met een kritische blik, maar ik pak haar boek juist altijd op wanneer ik even een warme, *forgiving* stem nodig heb. Ook geeft het, mijns inziens, een mooie blauwdruk voor hoe te leven: met een nieuwsgierige blik, altijd open voor verandering, maar wel met sterke banden met onze geliefden en communities.



Margaret Atwood

Margaret Atwood (1939) is de schrijfster van o.a. *The Handmaid's Tale* and *The Testaments*. En ze gaf dit jaar de Belle van Zuylenlezing vanwege haar maatschappelijke impact. *The Handmaid's Tale* werd in 2017 omgetoverd tot een serie. De symbolen in de serie en het boek zijn zo krachtig dat ze regelmatig gebruikt worden bij protesten rondom vrouwenonderdrukking en feminisme. Het verhaal schetst heel scherp wat voor consequenties het inleveren van

verworven vrijheden zou kunnen betekenen. Ik vind Atwood een 'badass feminist' omdat ze op hoge leeftijd nog artistieke producten maakt die veel impact hebben op de werkelijkheid.

Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986)

“One is not born a woman, but becomes one”

Simone de Beauvoir was born in Paris on the 9th of January 1908. When she was younger she was sent to a girls-only boarding school. Later Simone said, in her own words, that she had a crisis of faith and became an atheist when she was fourteen. She had trouble with the rigid attitude of the French bourgeois towards females.

When she was older she studied philosophy and French literature in Paris. It is there that she met her future partner, Jean-Paul Sartre. After her studies she worked as a philosophy teacher, however during the German occupation she was not allowed to exercise her profession. That is when she started to focus on writing.

Simone called herself an existentialist, who believe that persons should give meaning to life through their own activities and choices. With the freedom that a person has comes

responsibilities. One is responsible to oneself to make something of his life and act positively.

De Beauvoir therefore sees man as a being who freely longs for creativity and activities. However, she notes that this role is mainly reserved for men and that women only play the role of "the Other". The man is free and active, while the woman comes second; she is the "second sex".

In her main work, *Le Deuxième Sexe* (The Second Sex, 1949), she analyzes the position of women. She articulated what has now come to be known as the sex-gender distinction. She examines the facts and myths about "women" and finds that women are encouraged to adopt a passive life form.

Simone strove for solidarity and equality for men and women, and took part in demonstrations for equal rights for women. A feminist of the 20th century.



Nikita Gill

It's so hard to pick only one Badass Feminist, since there are so many great womxn doing amazing things in the past and present. I've picked Nikita Gill, an amazing British-Indian storyteller and instapoet. She's known for books as *Fierce Fairytales* and *Great Goddesses*, where she rewrites fairytales and myths, getting rid of the patriarchal elements of these stories. In one of her books she says: *this is the version of the tale they do not want you to know. After all, what is more powerful than women who know all about the blessed fires inside them that grow.*



For me her poems are inspiring and healing to read. For example, she wrote about the two steph sisters of Cinderella, and how they've become the persons they are because people keep calling them ugly and shaming them. She also writes about a female god of the sea, which people forgot about and replaced her with Poseidon. She gives a different perspective on monsters and bad people in stories, questioning why we think and behave in the patterns we do. It's nice to reflect on life and important issues through the lens of her stories. I hope by mentioning her, that more people can get to know her and enjoy her art.

Here's one of her great poems to end with:

THE FOREST

One day when you wake up,
you will find that you've become a forest.

You've grown roots and found strength in them
that no one thought you had.

You have become stronger and more beautiful,
full of life giving qualities.

You have learned to take all the negativity around you
and turn it into oxygen for easy breathing.

A host of wild creatures live inside you
and you call them stories.

A variety of beautiful birds nest inside your mind
and you call them memories.

You have become an incredible
self sustaining thing of epic proportions.

And you should be so proud of yourself,
of how far you have come from the seeds of who you used to be.

Nikita Gill

Brené Brown

By embracing vulnerability, Brené Brown steers discussions about leadership and power in a new direction. The movement #MeToo is a great example in which vulnerability is re-defined and put into the context of courage rather than shame. As a researcher, she is eager to prove that being brave always comes with being afraid. Brené is encouraging women to see empathy and sensitivity as a tool of power rather than something that holds them back. I think that messages like these are crucial to break the existing white male power structures.



Corry Tendeloo



Nancy Sophie Cornélie (Corry) Tendeloo (Tebing Tinggi (Sumatra), 3 september 1897 – Wassenaar, 18 oktober 1956) was een Nederlands politicus namens de Vrijzinnig Democratische Bond, daarna de Partij van de Arbeid, feministe, advocate en lerares. Ze was lid van de Tweede Kamer van 1945 tot haar dood en zette zich daar dikwijls in voor de gelijkheid tussen man en vrouw. De motie-Tendeloo van 1955 had tot doel het ontslag van gehuwde vrouwen uit overheidsdienst af te schaffen, hetgeen een jaar later lukte.

Tot de wetswijziging in 1956 was een gehuwde vrouw in Nederland niet *handelingsbekwaam*. Dat betekende dat gehuwde vrouwen niet zelfstandig een overeenkomst konden afsluiten. Alleen met medewerking van de man/echtgenoot kon een vrouw rechtshandelingen verrichten. Als zij – minder juridisch uitgelegd – eigen inkomsten had uit een arbeidsovereenkomst, moest ze ontslag nemen bij haar werkgever, zodra ze huwde.

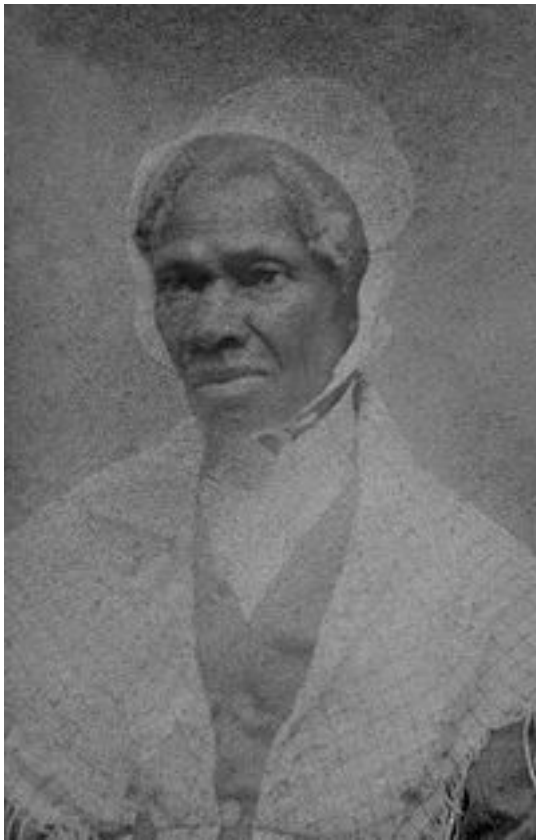
De motie Tendeloo heeft veel betekent voor de emancipatie van vrouwen in Nederland.

Carol Kaye (1935)

The only regular female member of “The Wrecking Crew”, a group of studio musicians in Los Angeles. She provided bass for numerous big artists like, Frank Sinatra, Simon and Garfunkel, Stevie Wonder, The Beach Boys and so on. You can hear her bass lines on many big hits such as, Good vibrations, River deep mountain High or These boots are made for walkin. In a time with almost no female musicians let alone instrumentalist, Carol Kaye is a true icon in music and without her even knowing or her intention, paved the way for female musicians till this day.



Sojourner Truth



Sojourner Truth was gedurende de 19e eeuw in de VS strijder voor vrouwenrechten en de afschaffing van slavernij. In 1851 hield ze een beroemde toespraak op the Women's Convention, waarin ze de onderdrukking van de zwarte vrouw aan de kaak stelde. Tot dan toe was het feminisme eigenlijk alleen op witte vrouwen gericht. Haar toespraak werd later bekend onder de titel 'Ain't I a Woman?'.

Sojourner Truth's toespraak was in zekere zin het begin van het intersectioneel feminisme. Daarmee is er ruimte gekomen voor erkenning van de complexe gelaagdheid van identiteiten, en daarmee voor de verschillende vormen waarin mensen met onderdrukking te maken krijgen.

Via het boek Ain't I a woman van bell hooks maakte ik kennis met Sojourner Truth. Een vrouw die in gevangenschap werd geboren, als slaaf, in Rifton, New York in 1797. Na haar 'vrijlating' werd ze burgerrechtactiviste en maakte ze zich hard voor vrouwenrechten. Haar bekendste toespraak is Ain't I a woman, die ze gaf in 1851,

op de Women Rights Convention, Ohio.

Een stukje uit de toespraak:

"I have ploughed, and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And a'n't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear de lash as well! And a'n't, I a woman? I have borne thirteen chilern, and seen 'em mos' all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And a'n't I a woman?"

"Den dey talks 'bout dis ting in de head; what dis dey call it?" ("Intellect," whispered some one near.)
"Dat's it, honey. What's dat got to do wid womin's rights or nigger's rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint, and yourn holds a quart, wouldn't ye be mean not to let me have my little half-measure full?"

Ik heb dit stukje gekozen omdat het voor mij niet 'realer' wordt dan dit. Niks geen academische kennis, maar wijsheid uit de waardigheid die Truth onder de onmenselijke omstandigheid van slavernij wist te behouden voor zichzelf en haar medemens.



Dr Denis Mukwege A.K.A. Dr Miracle



Congolese gynaecologist Denis Mukwege, who has been active since 1983, is known as "Doctor Miracle" for his ability to repair through reconstructive surgery the horrific damage inflicted on women who have been raped. Together with his team he operates on thousands of women and girls annually and also gives them physiological help. He won the Nobel peace prize in 2018

Must see documentary by Thierry Michel and Colette Braeckman
2015: *The Man Who Mends Women: The Wrath of Hippocrates*

Kimberlé Crenshaw

Crenshaw is an American lawyer, civil right advocate and philosopher. She is a leading scholar of critical race theory and introduced the theory of intersectionality. Hence, her work is extremely important for the development of inclusive feminism.

