

5 Tenets of Black Feminism

Tenet 1: Interlocking Oppression

Uniquely disparaging images of Black women's sexuality reflects the combined effect of sexism and racism

"intersectional arguments claims that Black women's bodies are simultaneously marked by racial, gender, sexual, color, historical, class, and other stigmas; these stigmatized identities and the subsequent oppressions are not hierarchical or additive; they are intersectional."

Tenet 2: Standpoint Epistemology

Those who understand the phenomenon under exploration are in the best position to evaluate and make claims about the meaning of it.

"Objectivity is an impossible stance, given how knowledge reflects relationships of power and the entrenchment of stigma and stereotypical judgements in society.

...it suggests that those who claim authority (in the traditional sense of scholar, policymaker, lawyer, social worker) must yield expertise to the often-subordinated group of Black women who are victimized..."

Tenet 3: Everyday Knowledge

"Synthesized meaning-making from an ever-shifting collective consciousness e.g., Interpretation of collective wisdom drawn from shared experiences

"...privileging an attempt to locate authority or expertise with those who experience a circumstance rather than generating it from ...other outsiders who lack access to authentic understanding of events, relationships, behaviors, values, or historical antecedents to current phenomena"

Tenet 4: Dialectical Images in the U.S.

"...fluid image, almost always in conflict with dominant notions of hegemonic femininity that imagines women to be passive, nurturing, and relationship-oriented, and thus, 'innocent victims' when they experience male violence

strong (therefore not at risk of violence)

asexual or castrating (and therefore incapable of heteronormative intimacy)

hypersexual (therefore ill-suited for long-term relationships or parenting)

criminal (therefore unworthy of protection or support)

Tenet:5 Social Justice Praxis

Engaged scholarship, action, and social justice..."accomplished through challenging hierarchies of power, transforming academic institutions, advancing a new kind of organizational leadership, and reinvigorating grassroots mobilization efforts for social change."

Insistence "...that research on Black women be linked to efforts at changing conditions that subordinate them and their communities".