

University of Richmond

UR Scholarship Repository

Intervention Event Description

Feminist Flash Mob Intervention

3-2020

Feminist Flash Mob Intervention - Description

Patricia Herrera

University of Richmond, pherrera@richmond.edu

Mariela Méndez

University of Richmond, mmendezd@richmond.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.richmond.edu/feministflashmobintervention-projectdescription>



Part of the [Gender and Sexuality Commons](#), and the [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Herrera, Patricia and Méndez, Mariela, "Feminist Flash Mob Intervention - Description" (2020). *Intervention Event Description*. 1.

<https://scholarship.richmond.edu/feministflashmobintervention-projectdescription/1>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Feminist Flash Mob Intervention at UR Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Intervention Event Description by an authorized administrator of UR Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact scholarshiprepository@richmond.edu.

Feminist Flash Mob Intervention Description

To launch Women's History Month, a series of feminist flash mob interventions took place at the University of Richmond on Wednesday, March 4, 2020 organized by professors Patricia Herrera and Mariela Méndez who team-taught the bilingual course "Gender, Race, and Performance Across the Americas." These flash mobs were inspired by "Un violador en tu camino," a performance-based protest against gender violence created by the Chilean feminist collective Lastesis. "A Rapist in Your Path" was first staged in Valparaíso, Chile, in, 2019. Soon after, it went viral, and has been performed by women all over the world.

Students from six different classes were in charge of adapting the lyrics and selecting locations that spoke to their experiences and the incidents of racism and sexism at the University of Richmond.

The interventions occurred at three different times throughout the day. The first Flash Mob occurred by the parking lot near New Fraternity Row. On their way to the second location at the E. Claiborne Robins Statue, students spontaneously decided to perform the intervention at the Football Stadium. Participants walked through the International Center Courtyard chanting the lyrics until arriving at the E. Claiborne Robins Statue. After finishing the second intervention, participants walked through Tyler Haynes Commons chanting the lyrics until arriving at the Gottwald Center for the Sciences, where the latest case of sexual assault had occurred. Many students were shaken by this since it was the first time a sexual assault was reported at Gottwald, a space once considered to be safe to study at any time of the day.

There were four key movements throughout the Flash Mob:

1. A lunge with crossed arms in front of their face expressed both defense and resistance;
2. Hands covering ears and mouths signaled the administration's complicit silence;
3. Finger pointing directly at all members of the community made visible how we all need to be held accountable;
4. An elated, joyful improvised dance, also present in the original Flash Mob, becomes a true moment of liberation and defiance.

Spectators were provided with a handout including the lyrics, some context, and an invitation to participate by clapping, drumming, singing and holding up signs. PSMA's (Peer Sexual Misconduct Advisors) were available for support and a table with resources was set up at The Forum.

This was the last time we saw each other in person because of COVID, yet we could carry the collective energy forward into our Zoom meetings. The pandemic has taught us how to be a stronger and more resilient community. As a class, we understood how the current situation has also magnified inequities. Now more than ever we all need to center difference and practice equity in our everyday life. In that spirit, the video created shows how we need each other and our collective resistance to fight for a better UR and a more equitable world. We hope this Feminist Flash Mob Intervention inspires you, your own communities, and beyond.

Flash Mob Participants:

The following classes participated in the Flash Mob:

“Gender, Race, and Performance Across the Americas”

A bilingual class co-taught by Patricia Herrera y Mariela Méndez;

“Feminist Theories” taught by Erika Damer;

“WILL Colloquium” co-taught by Holly Blake and Melissa Ooten;

“Collaborative Arts Laboratory: Dance, Humanities and Technology” co-taught by Alicia Díaz and Patricia Herrera;

“Queer Theories” taught by Del McWhorter

“Gender and Sustainable Development in Guatemala” co-taught by Holly Blake and Mariela Méndez

Special Thanks To:

Kaylin Tingle, Sexual Misconduct Prevention Educator

Peer Sexual Misconduct Advisors

Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program

American Studies Program

Department of Theatre and Dance

Dean Mia Reinosa Genoni

Westhampton College Dean’s Office

Department of Latin American, Latino, and Iberian Studies

Office of International Education

Jannette Amaral-Rodriguez

Aurora Hermida-Ruiz

Dorothy Holland

Amy Howard

Elizabeth Kissling

Nicole Maurantonio

Lucretia McCulley

Martha Merritt

Jenny Pribble

Rafael de Sa

Patrick Schweiger

Kathleen Skerett

Joey Tran