This is the second of our three preliminary, pre-writing exercises for the progressive essay. The two exercises you will be doing around midterms deal with two fundamental aspects of the emergence of a feminist consciousness, specifically, (a) your awareness of issues of unequal power relations in society and (b) your cultivation of a claim to that knowledge. It is with (a) that we are primarily concerned for this pre-writing exercise. We will deal with (b) in April’s exercise.

First, some working provisos:
1. Not all of you in our initial statements stated a commitment to feminism, *per se*, but all of you seemed to recognize to a greater or lesser degree the existence of unequal power relations in our society and/or around the world. Let us take that recognition, specifically in terms of male/female relations, to be the source of the consciousness we are speaking of, regardless of whether we call it feminist or not.

2. Let us assume, at least for the time being, that one can speak of having a feminist consciousness even if one does not identify as a feminist.

Second, the task at hand:
Think about the theories of power and the examples of power relationships oppressive to women that we’ve been discussing so far. Give as detailed an account as possible of a situation of unequal power relations between women and men which exists in your life or the life of a woman close to you. How do these theories and analyses that we’ve been reading account for or not account for that situation? Relate this back to the first stirrings of feminist convictions in your life, as it's applicable.

And finally, the mechanics:
There is no minimum page limit for this exercise, however, I’d imagine it will take several pages to go into depth and detail. I do ask that you contain yourselves to 5 pages as a maximum. Normal caveats regarding proofreading and so on apply.

This pre-writing exercise will be the basis for our *in-class* discussion on March 18, so please bring them with you to class. I might also note that you will receive the midterm questions during the class session on the 16th, so don’t put this pre-writing exercise off!