Emma Watson: Being a feminist doesn't make me 'man-hating'
Hannah Furness – The Telegraph 21 September 2014

Emma Watson, the actress, has disclosed she became a feminist after being told she was too "bossy" for wanting to direct a play at the age of eight.

Watson, who starred as Hermione in the Harry Potter series, said she had been "confused" at being insulted for wanting to take charge, while boys were allowed to direct without question.

Saying being a "feminist" had initially seemed "uncomplicated" to her, she argued it is now considered "aggressive" and "anti-men" by too many people.

Watson, who has recently become the UN Women Goodwill Ambassador, has now called on women and men alike to reclaim "feminism" for the benefit of all.
In her first major speech, made at the UN headquarters in New York, the actress launched the "HeForShe" campaign, to call on men to speak up for oppressed women everywhere.

Watson, who admitted she may be dismissed by critics who wondered what "this Harry Potter girl" was doing at the UN, asked men to "take up the mantle" to speak up for their "daughters, sisters and mothers".

The actress, who studied at Oxford and Brown universities, said: "Men—I would like to take this opportunity to extend your formal invitation. Gender equality is your issue too."

Speaking of her own decision to call herself a feminist, she told an audience: "I started questioning gender-based assumptions when at eight I was confused at being called "bossy," because I wanted to direct the plays we would put on for our parents—but the boys were not."

She added she had seen her female friends dropping out of sports teams because they did not want to appear "muscly", while her male peers struggled to express their feelings.

"I decided I was a feminist and this seemed uncomplicated to me," she said. "But my recent research has shown me that feminism has become an unpopular word.

"Apparently I am among the ranks of women whose expressions are seen as too strong, too aggressive, isolating, anti-men and, unattractive. Why is the word such an uncomfortable one?"

She added: "I was appointed six months ago and the more I have spoken about feminism the more I have realized that fighting for women's rights has too often become synonymous with man-hating.

"If there is one thing I know for certain, it is that this has to stop."

The campaign, HeForShe, is described as a "solidarity movement for gender equality that brings together one half of humanity in support of the other of humanity, for the entirety of humanity".

Watson argued men were also suffering as a result of inequality, enduring mental illness but feeling unable to ask for help for fear of appearing "less macho".

"Both men and women should feel free to be sensitive," she said. "Both men and women should feel free to be strong.

"If we stop defining each other by what we are not and start defining ourselves by what we are—we can all be freer and this is what HeForShe is about. It's about freedom."

Reflection Prompt:
When we began studying medieval literature, you responded to an article on the role of chivalry in society today. During our discussion, the term feminist came up several times. You recently read "The Wife of Bath's Tale," through which the storyteller argues strongly that women ought to be in control of their husbands. What would Emma Watson say to The Wife of Bath?

What do you think of Emma Watson's definition of feminism, and/or of what the term means today? Do you think the HeForShe campaign is a good idea? Explain.

<div align="center">Work Cited</div>

Furness, Hannah. "Emma Watson: Being a feminist doesn't make me 'man-hating.'"

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