



Mainstream postfeminism in  
*American Horror Story: “Coven”*.  
A feminist critique of the witch  
stereotype.

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## INTRODUCTION

In this essay, I will offer an analysis of the postfeminist aspects found in “Coven”, the third season of a famous American TV series entitled *American Horror Story*. This series uses the controversial figure of the bad witch to embody the postfeminist ideal of femininity which is spread in popular media culture. This depiction of the witch, which represents one of the stereotypes of Western women of today, offers a contradictory message: on the one hand, it calls for action within the feminist movement in order to empower women, but on the other, the characters’ behaviour facilitates the backlash in the struggle, and reinforces some traditional patriarchal ideas.

The theme of witchcraft is used in the series as a symbol of feminism to represent powerful women who live unconventional lives exploiting their gifts in the form of powers. This way they intend to protect what they call ‘their species’ and resist the oppressive patriarchal system. The main characters are nine witches of different ages and backgrounds but who claim to be descendants of Salem’s witches. Five of them, Madison, Queenie, Zoe, Nan and Misty Day, are young girls who are training their powers in “Miss Robichaux Academy for Exceptional Young Ladies”. Fiona is their Supreme, the governess of the coven, and Cordelia, her daughter, is the one in charge of running the school. Then there is Myrtle, a member of the Council of Witchcraft and Marie Laveau, a black woman who belongs to the group of African Voodoo witches and represents the opposition to the white coven.

The fantasy of the plot is allegorical of the present situation of women characterised by a notorious recession in the feminist struggle due to the expansion of postfeminist ideas. My aim is to examine the postfeminist aspects and stereotypes on women typically found in popular culture, focusing mainly on the sources of empowerment. First, I will deal with empowerment through sexuality, which encompasses the idea of femininity, the importance of women’s beauty and youth and the issue of body cult, self-hypersexualization, dependence on men, and the so called “Girl Power”. Secondly, I will approach empowerment through violence, which puts the witch in relation to the figure of the “bad girl” or the “woman killer” through the association of magic powers with weapons. Then, I will discuss empowerment through money and consumerism, which in this case is much related to the topic of sexuality and physical appearance, addressing the individualistic concepts of “choice” and self-surveillance. Finally, I will comment on another postfeminist aspect which is the

internal division in feminism due to interlocking oppressions (with a special emphasis on race) and due to the individualistic values of competition.

Apart from the criticism, I will also address the positive and optimistic message that the series tries to disseminate in relation to the feminist struggle and the empowerment of women, since it problematises the current backlash and identifies some of the aspects that are causing the deterioration of the feminist movement.

## 1. SOURCES OF EMPOWERMENT

Since the 1980s, and boosted by the developments in technology and the boom of the audiovisual media, the image of women has been changing, especially in cultural representations. Following these changes, the commercial ideal of “Western women” which is based on neoliberalism and consumerism has altered the conception of feminism. Shannon A. Harry argues that “postfeminism is a universalized approach to the representation of gender and sexuality that most often assumes whiteness, Judeo Christian backgrounds, Western nationalities/cultures/ethnicities, heterosexuality, and upper middle class status for the femininity it produces” (Harry 9).<sup>1</sup>

This postfeminist discourse is articulated by a number of features that Rosalinda Gill exposes in her article “Postfeminist media culture. Elements of a sensibility” (2007). These are essentially:

the notion that femininity is a bodily property; the shift from objectification to subjectification; the emphasis upon self-surveillance, monitoring and discipline; a focus upon individualism, choice and empowerment; the dominance of a makeover paradigm; a resurgence in ideas of natural sexual difference; a marked sexualisation of culture; and an emphasis upon consumerism and the commodification of difference. (Gill 149)

Gill claims also that these features coexist and provoke exclusions of age, class, race and ethnicity, sexuality, disability and gender, of course.

Therefore we can already state that the basis of postfeminism is a redefinition of the concept of empowerment (Tortajada and Araña 24), through the assimilation of some patriarchal behaviours and the adoption of the values of consumerism and individualism. Thus, the main sources of female empowerment in a postfeminist context are sex, violence and capital. I will delve into these three topics illustrating them with

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<sup>1</sup> This is the concept used throughout this essay when referring to “Western women”.

examples taken from the series, in order to discuss the influence of cultural products on contemporary thoughts about women, because the postfeminism that we find in television “is also the mainstreamed lens through which many Americans negotiate and understand gender and sexuality” (Harry 19).

### 1.1.EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SEX

The first source of empowerment comes from the patriarchal system as it is granted directly by men and it is closely related to the female body, the concept of femininity, the subjecthood in sexuality, and the idea of natural sexual difference between men and women (Gill 2007). This postfeminist tendency was boosted by the ‘sex wars’ within the feminist movement between the late 1970s and the early 1980s, as a response to what some critics qualified as anti-sex feminism. They consisted in debates regarding issues about sexuality and sexual activity and they led to two positions: ‘anti-porn’ attitudes and ‘sex-positive’attitudes.<sup>2</sup>

Besides, it is important to contextualize this postfeminist idea of sexuality in a ‘culture of sex’ or ‘porn culture’ in which, as Gill explains, there is a “proliferation of sex discourses and the erotic presentation of girls’, women’s and (to a lesser extent) men’s bodies in public spaces” (Gill 150). The sexualisation of bodies, especially women’s, is a marketing technique which consists primarily in the ‘girlification’ of adult women and children, as girls are the most desirable sexual icons in media culture (Gill 159), and it gives rise to the so called ‘Girl Power’ phenomenon.

One main aspect of this culture of sex is the importance given to the female body as a source of power, and therefore it requires “constant self-monitoring, surveillance, discipline and remodelling (and consumer spending) in order to conform to ever-narrower judgements of female attractiveness” (Gill 149). The concept of sexiness in white Western culture excludes any type of body which is not normative and creates the obsession among women to fit in that restrictive canon. Being sexy is a sign of femininity, which is defined in postfemist terms as “a bodily property, rather than a social structural, and psychological one” (Gill 149). In this essentialist view of women, the body is the source of empowerment as well as the source of identity.

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<sup>2</sup> For an introduction to this debate see Adrienne Rich’s article “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” and Jess Butler’s article “For White Girls Only?: Postfeminism and the Politics of Inclusion”.

Another change introduced by postfeminism related to sexuality is the shift from objectification to subjectification: “Women are not straightforwardly objectified but are portrayed as active, desiring sexual subjects who choose to present themselves in a seemingly objectified manner because it suits their liberated interests to do so” (Gill 151). The difference here is that sexual objectification is not a passive process done by men, but “the freely chosen wish of active, confident, assertive female subjects” (Gill 153). The master’s tools –in Audre Lorde’s phrasing<sup>3</sup>—are being used by women apparently in their own favour. Here we get to the concept of ‘choice’ that we will deal with later on.

All these conceptions about the female body, femininity and sexuality create a great gap with the opposite sex in this form of binary thinking, but the thing is that postfeminism considers all these properties as natural and not as something constructed. Therefore, postfeminism supports the idea of the natural sexual difference between men and women and at the same time, reinforces and exaggerates those differences.

In “Coven”, almost all of the girls represent the idea of the postfeminist woman, but especially so Fiona and Madison, who embody all the aspects of empowerment through sexuality that I have explained above.

Fiona is a more mature woman, mother of Cordelia and Supreme of the coven, although she escapes her responsibilities and only cares about her image and her love affairs. She enjoys being in such a position but only because of the power that it represents: being the Supreme means being the most powerful witch in terms of magic and prestige. In fact, when the following Supreme is rising, the old one begins to fade, to lose her powers, vitality, beauty and health. This is closely related to the issue of aging which today concerns women so much: as their power rests on sexuality, which is at the same time granted by beauty and youth, when a woman gets old she is no longer attractive, and therefore, no longer powerful. Fiona is obsessed with looking younger to such a degree that she is capable of killing the next supreme to absorb her powers, or even of selling her soul to the devil. Moreover, she has cancer but rejects going through chemotherapy as that would harm her physical appearance. Therefore, we can state here that from a postfeminist point of view, beauty is the only valuable thing in a woman: “When the next Supreme is dead I’ll have 30 years of vitality until another one comes

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<sup>3</sup> “The master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.”

along, and the doors of every palace are gonna open for me” (episode 12, 33’55’’-34’08’’).

Rejuvenating is the key to get more power, and since that power belongs to men, seduction is the best strategy. This theme is remarkably present throughout the season, in fact, what Fiona is looking for all the time is another love affair to feel powerful and fulfilled. All her life has been concentrated on the seduction of men to acquire their power, especially the economic one. But the empowerment of Fiona implies the ruin or death of the man, so we can see that in this context empowerment is not a medium to get equality, but to reverse the roles and become herself the oppressing subject. Consider for instance the following scene:

But it’s always my dance. I make the first movement which is no movement at all. I’ve always just understood that they will eventually find themselves in front of me. Primitive beautiful animals. Their bodies responding to the inevitability of it all. It’s my dance. I have performed it with finesse and abandon with countless partners. Only the faces change. And all this time I never suspected the night would come when the dance would end. (episode 3, 5’12’’-5’48’’)

In this extract she expresses that sexuality is women’s weapon (although an ephemeral one) to which all men are vulnerable and, in addition, she presents this reversal of roles, she being the subject and men the sexual objects.

But since her sexuality is one of the main and few sources of power, she has a great dependence on men. She can’t be powerful on her own without receiving that power from someone else. That is why she is endlessly searching for a partner; she uses them and then she disposes of them. The Axeman, her current lover, tells her once after realising she is using him: “When was the last time your body made a light show, uh? My guess is never. Oh, you’re afraid. You’re afraid of your own pleasure. It makes you feel weak like you need somebody. That’s why you’re going” (episode 7, 26:30-26:52). He reveals her weaknesses: she needs to be in control of the man but also in control of her own emotions because falling in love would mean losing power over the relation and over herself.

The other character which represents postfeminism in full is Madison, a young actor and witch who belongs to an affluent family. She is eccentric and whimsical, but also malevolent as she does not care to harm others in order to get what she wants.

Madison is in fact a parallel figure to Fiona: she gives as much importance to her image and wants to get empowered at all costs.

Concerning sexuality, this is one of the most representative traces of Madison's identity: she also uses men to feel empowered and needs to attract so many as she can in order to preserve her self-esteem. With the help of Zoe, she accomplishes her idea of creating the perfect boyfriend by sewing the best body parts of dead boys and giving them life. Then, she uses him as a sexual tool for her own self satisfaction.

In the following dialogue with Myrtle, an elder witch member of the Council, the latter criticises her postfeminist attitude, highlighting her use of sexuality. Then, Madison expresses her wish to convert the coven (which was once feminist) into postfeminism, relating here to the idea mentioned above that feminism is seen as an anti-sex movement and postfeminism is considered a more up-to-date, sex-positive alternative (Butler 2013):

-Myrtle: Oh, Madison. You are the worst kind of Hollywood cliché, a bubblehead with crotchless panties.

-Madison: And you're a dried-up old Hot Pocket, but I don't judge.

-Myrtle: You can't speak to me in that way. I'm your elder.

-Madison: Welcome to the revolution, Carrot Top. As the next Supreme I'm gonna drive this coven out of the Dark Ages. Crotchless panties for everyone. (episode 11, 15'16''-15'37'')

On the other hand, although she does not represent the postfeminist desiring sexual subject like Fiona and Madison, Zoe, another pupil of the school, has the power of killing with her vagina when she has sexual relationships<sup>4</sup>. However, this is a passive power at the beginning, when she discovers it by accidentally killing her boyfriend. But then, she becomes aware of the utility of this lethal weapon and realizes she can make a profit of it: "My mother was right: the world isn't a safe place for me but maybe I'm not safe for the world either. And since I'll never be able to feel real love, I might as well put this curse to some use" (episode 1, 44'05''-44'18'').

In relation to the idea of feminine beauty, there are two girls in the coven who are excluded: one is Queenie, a black obese girl, and the other is Nan, who has Down syndrome. Besides their race and disability, they are excluded because of their appearance, as they do not fit the canonical beauty of the Western heterosexual blonde

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<sup>4</sup>This is a renewed representation of the misogynist classic trope of the *vagina dentata*.

and slim girl, and as a consequence, they are considered inferior to the other girls in the coven.

## 1.2.EMPOWERMENT THROUGH VIOLENCE

As Shannon Harry explains in her Ph.D. dissertation about postfeminist American culture *Whose Fantasy is This?* (2013), postfeminism is situated “within the scholarly discourse on Western constructions of difference” (Harry 10). This means that the concept ‘woman’ is constructed in opposition to the concept ‘man’, resulting in the identification of the woman as “the Other”, as theorized by Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (1949). In this binary, one of the sides is subjected to the other. Postfeminism legitimizes that system instead of trying to abolish it, and tries to invert the roles by attributing to women ‘masculine’ properties –that is, traditionally associated to men— related to violence and aggressiveness.

There is no struggle for equality, but for supremacy: pursuing power has become a life and death struggle in which the strongest wins, and for that reason in such competitive logics women are appropriating that violence of the patriarchal system. In the following words said by Fiona to her pupils she reproduces the patriarchal discourse of supremacy but reversing the subjected positions: “We, even the weakest among us, are better than the best of them” (episode 2, 11’47’’-11’53’’).

Women were usually represented in media as the victims of masculine brutality, but in a postfeminist context the representation has shifted and instead, women are portrayed as subjects entitled to exert violence. This shift from victims to executioners is justified by the need for revenge and it is accompanied by the erotizing of their image (Tortajada and Araüna 2014). So, as we can see, the adjective “violent” usually goes hand in hand with the adjective “sexy” when referring to the postfeminist “girl”. From this fusion of two forms of postfeminist empowerment comes the stereotype of the “bad girl”, or the more classic *femme fatale*, embodied by the popular heroine or the serial killer, and even the witch, who combines aspects of the other two.

In this particular series, the “bitchy witch” abuses her powers to harm the others. It is meaningful the fact that the black witches in “Coven” perform voodoo, a religion commonly worshipped by black slaves in the American continent, which involves the practice of magic. In the series as well as in many cultural representations, these practices are classified as black magic, and presented as the act of making someone

suffer physical pain. The attribution of the most violent powers to racialized people is an example of the racist characterization of the others in popular culture whose purpose is to reinforce the norm: in this case, the civilized well-intentioned white witch. In Shannon Harry's words "the postfeminist construction of gendered/sexed identity in popular media maintains its unmarked status at the price of binarizing or absenting its others, typically –but not necessarily individually or exclusively—racialized/ethnicized and classed women" (Harry 116). I will address this issue later on regarding other aspects that are also excluded from the category of "correctness".

This violence is of two kinds, mainly: the first one, violence as a response to violence, and the second one, violence as a means to compete. Concerning the first one, violence as a response to violence, it is usually a form of revenge against patriarchy or any other form of oppression (Tortajada and Araña 2014). In "Coven" patriarchy is clearly represented by The Corporation, an organisation of witch hunters composed only of men, among which are Fiona's husband, Hank Foxx, as an infiltrator in the coven, and his father, Harrison Renard, who is the head of the corporate organisation:

I'm part of a sacred order, a soldier in a shadow war, a war that has been raging since before the time of Salem; we are a brotherhood pledged in blood, dedicated to stamping out the pestilence of witchery on the North American continent. (episode 9, 12'49''-13'01'')

Fiona, in representation of white witchery, and Marie Laveau, the Voodoo Queen, join forces to destroy The Corporation by killing all of its members. Although both sides come for peace in order to establish a truce, the plan of the witches is to use violence as the only efficient means:

-Harrison Renard: Killing us is not gonna put an end to this war.

-Marie Laveau: Mmm, maybe, baby. But it's gonna be so fun just to watch it happen (episode 11, 36'22''-36'32'').

There are many other forms of violence associated to revenge in the series, as for instance, when Madison causes the death of a group of boys after being gang-raped by them; she responds to violence with more violence, she decides to avenge the crimes of patriarchy using the Master's tools.

On the other hand, since postfeminism is very much linked to neoliberalism (if not a product of it), one of its basic principles is the value of competition. So women use violence to compete with men, but also and especially with other women. In the

series the competition is omnipresent. To begin with, all of the girls in the coven are competing to see which one is the most powerful, and therefore, who will be raised as the Supreme. Some of them do not even mind to kill if necessary, like Madison or Fiona. The last one is the current Supreme and she wants to remove all her rivals by killing them, as we can see in the following words from Cordelia to one of the girls:

“My mother killed her because she thought Madison was the next leader of our coven. She wanted to absorb her power, her life force. So if she even thinks you’re next, you’re next.”(episode 7, 24’20’’-24’37’’)

Continuing with the theme of violence, there is a sharp contrast between the role of the witches as mothers and their role as killers. The comparison is based on the idea that women are the owners of life: they have the right to take another human’s life because they have the right and the ability to create it. This double side of women as donors of life and killers is represented by the magic powers of the witches: on the one hand, they have the power of “Vitalus Vitalis” which consists in bringing the dead to life, and on the other, they have many other dangerous powers which can easily lead someone to death. As an example, Madison and Zoe create with their powers the perfect boyfriend, but as this ‘creature’ pays more attention to Zoe than to Madison, the last one declares her aim to destroy him: “And as for you Ken doll.. Well, putting you together was fun. But taking you apart is gonna be even more fun” (episode 11, 15’37’’-15’48’’).

### 1.3.EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CAPITAL

Jess Butler notes in her article “For white girls only” that “postfeminism is, by definition, incredibly ambivalent: it simultaneously rejects feminist activism in favour of feminine consumption and celebrates the success of feminism while declaring its irrelevance” (Butler 44). Given that individualism and consumerism are the dominant values in Western neoliberal culture, empowerment is marketed not only through products directed specifically to women but also through an ideal of femininity produced in popular culture which is embodied by standard white and slim women (Harry 46).

Shannon A. Harry develops in “Postfeminism, Consumer Culture and Neoliberalism” the idea of postfeminist marketing (Harry 48), which consists in concerning women about their personal and individual well-being by convincing them to purchase those means which will allow them to achieve their goals: “a constant

message that women can fill a spiritual or emotional void with material life, that material life is itself the source of empowerment and agency, that women are at their best when participating in rampant, unchecked consumer practices” (Harry 46).

Rosalinda Gill puts emphasis on the concept of ‘choice’, ‘being oneself’ and ‘pleasing oneself’ through beauty, which leads to the commodification of bodies. She explains that postfeminism presents women as autonomous agents no longer constrained (Gill 153), agents who accept freely to monitor and survey themselves/their selves (grooming, attire, elocution and manners) in order to perform successfully their femininity (Gill 155).

Gill also addresses the ‘makeover paradigm’, a marketing technique which focuses on persuading women to think that their lives are defective in some way but they can success through reinvention or transformation, and this is achieved, of course, through the practice of appropriately modified consumption habits (Gill 156).

The examples of consumerism as a form of female empowerment that I have found in the series are mainly related to physical appearance and more in particular, to the issue of aging. As mentioned above, Fiona, the eldest of the witches, is very concerned about what she considers her biggest problem, growing old, because it supposes the loss of her sexual attractiveness, and therefore, an important loss of power. She relies upon drugs to preserve her vitality and seeks medical treatments and surgery but fails to find a “cure” that provides eternal beauty and youth. So she opts for other solutions, although in vain too: she asks Marie Laveau for an infusion of vitality that brings immortality, and she even attempts to sell her soul to the devil. These examples confirm the commercially-driven nature of sexualisation, which Madison also states with the following words: “Everything’s transactional: guy buys you dinner, he expects a blow job. Welcome to Earth!” (episode 10, 25’26’’-25’30’’).

Madison’s attitude, as a character parallel to Fiona, is quite based on her fame and her money: she dresses everyday as a ‘diva’, spends money on drugs and alcohol, and she is conscious of her superiority to the other girls, although her power is basically material.

Still on the theme of class, there is another example of the postfeminist strategy of Othering through the wide contrast between black and white witches, being the first presented as ghettoised people (a fact that points out the historical injustice of slavery), and the second ones, as the representatives of the white hegemonic high classes.

The link between patriarchy and capitalism is evident in the series through the witch hunters, presented as a corporation. Actually, when the witches want to destroy the organisation they attack at the economic level: the decrease in the profitability of the company weakens their power as witch hunters. This fact points out witches (women) as rivals for the economic system, and therefore, for the political one, and justifies their marginalisation within economic institutions and their restriction to the private sphere.

However, when the witches and The Corporation are negotiating a truce, the women ask not only for peace, but also for properties. This is indeed a very postfeminist image, being the women portrayed as subjects who underestimate the importance of feminism and equality in favour of economic power:

-Harrison Renard: This document is signed by every director in this room. It calls for a 100-years truce. No witch hunting of any kind until all of us are long dead. This is the end. We give up.

-Fiona: OK. Now this is my offer to you. You disband this little merry troupe of assholes vowing never to harm another witch until the end of time. I would also like you to sign over your house in Berkeley Square to me. But paint it first. God knows all the money in the world can't buy good taste.

-Marie Laveau: Well, now, I'd like a private jet.

-Fiona: And Marie wants a private jet. (episode 11, 33'50''-34'33'')

## 2. DISUNITY WITHIN THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT

“Last time I checked she (Fiona) was setting witches on fire...and we can't afford to lose a single witch if we want to survive. From now on, we watch each other's backs.” (episode6, 8'49''-9'10'')

These sentences reflect the internal conflicts of the coven, which at the same time represent the disunity within the category of women regarding feminist activism. The division is due to the fact that neoliberalism, the current dominant ideology, encourages women to compete against one another. The pursuit of empowerment which was once collective is, in this postfeminist context, totally individual. In addition, the rejection of feminist struggle in favour of postfeminist attitudes also provokes rivalry among women as they do not share the same ideas or a common objective.

In the series, the ideas of Cordelia, the Head of the school, and Fiona, her mother and the Supreme, collide, as the first one inculcates her pupils the feminist

values of respect and union, and the second promotes competition and violence to achieve power and recognition. The following quote shows how Fiona rejects the feminist values of her daughter: “You’re never gonna become great women of our clan sitting around here at Howarts under the confused instruction of my daughter” (episode 1, 35’57’’-36’04’’).

There are also many differences among the white and black witches in terms of class and race, which redirect us to the recurrent strategy of ‘Othering’. It is remarkable the fact that all the black characters in the series, except Queenie, represent the opposition to the white witches: on the one hand, Marie Laveau and her Voodoo tribe collaborate with The Corporation to destroy the coven, and on the other, the devil is embodied by a Voodoo spirit, Papa Legba. All these representations of binarized Others reinforce the postfeminist norms of whiteness, Westernness and heterosexuality, as theorized by Jess Butler (2013).

Moreover, the character of Queenie is in itself a special case: a black voodoo witch recruited in a school of white witches. She problematises the lack of representation of black witches in the media, as she actually did not know that she could be one of them:

“I grew up on white girl shit like Charmed or Sabrina the teenage cracker; I didn’t know there even were black witches. As it turns out, I am an heir to Tituba: she was a house slave in Salem, she was the first to be accused of witchcraft. Technically, I’m part of your tribe.” (episode 2, 6’44’’-7’03’’)

The theme of race in the series also raises awareness about the need for an intersectional approach within the feminist movement in order to unify the demands of both black and white women of different social classes, as bell hooks proposes in her essay “Black women: shaping feminist theory” (2000). The following conversation shows the division between feminism and black womanism due to their different backgrounds, histories and worries:

-Fiona: This concerns you and your people as much as it does mine.

-Marie Laveau: Don’t concern me a bit. Witch hunters is white women’s worry (episode 9, 6’20’’-6’27’’).

## CONCLUSIONS

After this brief critical analysis of postfeminism, it can be confirmed that it has introduced many negative changes regarding women's freedom and empowerment. However, the postfeminist discourse combines "both feminist and anti-feminist themes" (Gill 149), leading to what McRobbie calls the "double entanglement". Thus, neo-conservative values (the use of the Master's tools, in Audre Lorde's terms) co-exist with aspects of liberalisation, as well as it normalises many political issues raised by the women's movement.

What I wish to highlight in my conclusions is the optimistic message that this series (and the media in general) tries to spread regarding active struggle within the feminist movement. The character of Cordelia, who embodies the peaceful witch who does not need to use sexuality or violence to get empowered, is the one who defends and inculcates feminist values to younger generations. She represents the traditional witch studying nature and inventing solutions with potions. She is the feminist figure who preserves the values of the witches during the suffragist movement and who acknowledges more than anyone else the backlash that feminism is suffering: the recession in the number of witches joining the school each year is the most alarming fact, and this is accompanied by the rejection and consequent hiding of the power by many witches who fear not being accepted by society<sup>5</sup>. This way, she not only problematises the deterioration of the feminist struggle and denounces those postfeminist attitudes that are impeding women's empowerment, but she also raises the issue of invisibility by publicly showing the existence of the coven in the media. This is done for the purpose of getting the message across all women and, in a metaphorical sense, it can be understood as a claim for acceptance for the feminist movement and as a way to remove the ignorance surrounding the concept of feminism. She encourages women to stop hiding in the shadows in order to ask for protection and inspires them to fight, especially in these hard times, since "our powers always spike in times of crisis" (episode 12, 5'41''-5'45'').

Acknowledging the positive attitudes of young women of this "new era," aided by the progress achieved after many years of struggle, this series ends up with an encouragement to keep fighting and never give up, which I wish to share as a final conclusion to this essay:

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<sup>5</sup>This may be read as a metaphor of the contemporary attacks against feminism and women's reluctance to be identified as such.

“We survived. Up until now, that’s all we’ve done. But as I look at your faces, all of them beautiful, all of them perfect, I know together we can do more than survive. It’s our time to thrive” (episode 13, 44’56’’-45’17’’).

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