FEMINISM

1. “Belief in and advocacy of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes expressed especially through organized activity on behalf of women’s rights and interests” (“Definition of FEMINISM,” 1993)

EQUALITY

"The belief in social, economic, and political equality of the sexes. Although largely originating in the West, feminism is manifested worldwide and is represented by various institutions committed to activity on behalf of women's rights and interests." (Burkett, 2019)

History. (1913). A group of suffragettes march in a parade carrying a banner reading, 'I Wish Ma Could Vote. Retrieved from: https://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/the-fight-for-womens-suffrage#&gid=ci0260ccc2400026b3&pid=womens-suffrage-gettyimages-203523

UNDERSTANDING THE ANGER

"Throughout most of Western history, women were confined to the domestic sphere, while public life was reserved for men. In medieval Europe, women were denied the right to own property, to study, or to participate in public life. At the end of the 19th century in France, they were still compelled to cover their heads in public, and, in parts of Germany, a husband still had the right to sell his wife. Even as late as the early 20th century, women could neither vote nor hold elective office in Europe and in most of the United States (where several territories and states granted women's suffrage long before the federal government did so). Women wereprevented from conducting business without a male representative, be it father, brother, husband, legal agent, or even son. Married women could not exercise control over their own children without the permission of their husbands. Moreover, women had little or no access to education and were barred from most professions. In some parts of the world, such restrictions on women continue today." (Burkett, 2019)

History. (1915). Schoolgirls design posters with women's equality themes as they compete for a prize in a suffrage poster contest at the Fine Arts Club. Retrieved from: https://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/the-fight-for-womens-suffrage#&gid=ci0260ccc2400026b3&pid=womens-suffrage-gettyimages-52044185

"There is scant evidence of early organized protest against such circumscribed status. In the 3rd century BCE, Roman women filled the Capitoline Hill and blocked every entrance to the Forum when consul Marcus Porcius Cato resisted attempts to repeal laws limiting women's use of expensive goods. "If they are victorious now, what will they not attempt?" Cato cried. "As soon as they begin to be your equals, they will have become your superiors."

That rebellion proved exceptional, however. For most of recorded history, only isolated voices spoke out against the inferior status of women, presaging the arguments to come. In late 14th- and early 15th-century France, the first feminist philosopher, Christine de Pisan, challenged prevailing attitudes toward women with a bold call for female education. Her mantle was taken up later in the century by Laura Cereta, a 15th-century Venetian woman who published Epistolae familiares (1488; "Personal Letters"; Eng. trans. Collected Letters of a Renaissance Feminist), a volume of letters dealing with a panoply of women's complaints, from denial of education and marital oppression to the frivolity of women's attire."(Museum of London, n.d.)

The defense of women had become a literary subgenre by the end of the 16th century, when Il merito delle donne (1600; The Worth of Women), a feminist broadside by another Venetian author, Moderata Fonte, was published posthumously. Defenders of the status quo painted women as superficial and inherently immoral, while the emerging feminists produced long lists of women of courage and accomplishment and proclaimed that women would be the intellectual equals of men if they were given equal access to education." (Museum of London, n.d.)

"The so-called "debate about women" did not reach England until the late 16th century, when pamphleteers and polemicists joined battle over the true nature of womanhood. After a series of satiric pieces mocking women was published, the first feminist pamphleteer in England, writing as Jane Anger, responded with Jane Anger, Her Protection for Women (1589). This volley of opinion continued for more than a century, until another English author, Mary Astell, issued a more reasoned rejoinder in A Serious Proposal to the Ladies (1694, 1697). The two-volume work suggested that women inclined neither toward marriage nor a religious vocation should set up secular convents where they might live, study, and teach." (Burkett, 2019)" The Suffragettes were part of the 'Votes for Women' campaign that had long fought for the right of women to vote in the UK. They used art, debate, propaganda, and attack on property including window smashing and arson to fight for female suffrage. Suffrage means the right to vote in parliamentary and general elections."(Museum of London, n.d.)

" The move for women to have the vote had really started in 1897 when Millicent Fawcett founded the National Union of Women's Suffrage. "Suffrage" means the right to vote and that is what women wanted – hence its inclusion in Fawcett's title.

Millicent Fawcett believed in peaceful protest. She felt that any violence or trouble would persuade men that women could not be trusted to have the right to vote. Her game plan was patience and logical arguments. Fawcett argued that women could hold responsible posts in society such as sitting on school boards – but could not be trusted to vote; she argued that if parliament made laws and if women had to obey those laws, then women should be part of the process of making those laws; she argued that as women had to pay taxes as men, they should have the same rights as men."(Trueman, 2015)

“ Women’s Sunday in June 1908 was known as the first ‘monster meeting’ to be held by the WSPU. It brought Suffragettes from all over the United Kingdom to march in seven different processions through Central London to Hyde Park. The highly choreographed demonstration attracted a crowd of up to 300,000. They were drawn by the spectacle of the delegates dressed in the Suffragette purple, white and green colours (otherwise known as the tricolour) and carrying over 700 banners.

The Coronation of George V in 1911 inspired the WSPU to organise its own spectacular coronation pageant, which exceeded the numbers who attended on Women’s Sunday. The four-mile Suffragette Coronation Procession through central London culminated in a rally at the Royal Albert Hall and involved over 60,000 delegates dressed in national and historical costume.

(...) The end of militancy also resulted in the release of all Suffragette prisoners. militant efforts also saw the end of Suffragette hunger striking in Britain.

The Women’s Social and Political Union had not succeeded in achieving the vote, but its campaigning style eased the way for women to take a more active and public role in society during the war. It was this role that was acknowledged with the granting of the parliamentary vote to a limited number of women over the age of 30 in 1918.” (Museum of London, n.d.)

“The recent feminist strike movement began in Poland in October of 2016, when more than 100,000 women staged walkouts and marches to oppose the country’s ban on abortion. By the end of the month, an upwelling of radical refusal had already crossed the ocean to Argentina, where striking women met the heinous murder of Luda Perez with the militant cry: “Ni una menos.” Soon it spread to Italy, Spain, Brazil, Turkey, Peru, the United States, Mexico, Chile, and dozens of other countries. From its origins in the streets, the movement then surged through workplaces and schools, eventually engulfing the high-flying worlds of show business, media, and politics. For the last two years, its slogans have resonated powerfully across the globe: #NosotrasParamos, #WeStrike, #VivasNosQueremos, #NiUnaMenos, #TimesUp, #Feminism4the99. At first a ripple, then a wave, it has become a massive tide: a new global feminist movement that may gain sufficient force to disrupt existing alliances and redraw the political map.” (Cinzia Arruzza, Tithi Bhattacharya, & Fraser, 2019)

“What had been a series of nationally based actions became a transnational movement on March 8,2017, when organizers around the globe decided to strike together. With this bold stroke, they re-politicized International Women’s Day. Brushing aside the tacky baubles of depoliticization-brunches, mimosas, and Hallmark cards--the strikers have revived the day’s all-but-forgotten historical roots in working-class and socialist feminism. Their actions evoke the spirit of early twentieth century working class women’s mobilization-paradigmatically the strikes and mass demonstrations led mostly by immigrant and Jewish women in the United States, which inspired US socialists to organize the first National Women’s Day and German socialists Luise Zietz and Clara Zetkin to call for an International Working Women’s Day.

Re-animating that militant spirit, the feminist strikes of today are reclaiming our roots in historic struggles for workers’ rights and social justice. Uniting women separated by oceans, mountains, and continents, as well as by borders, barbed wire fences, and walls, they give new meaning to the slogan “Solidarity is our weapon.” Breaking through the isolation of domestic and symbolic walls, the strikes demonstrate the enormous political potential of women’s power: the power of those whose paid and unpaid work sustains the world.” (Cinzia Arruzza, Tithi Bhattacharya, & Fraser, 2019)

FIRST WAVE

"People have been suggesting things along the line of "Hmmm, are women maybe human beings?" for all of history, so first-wave feminism doesn't refer to the first feminist thinkers in history. It refers to the West's first sustained political movement dedicated to achieving political equality for women: the suffragettes of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

For 70 years, the first-wavers would march, lecture, and protest, and face arrest, ridicule, and violence as they fought tooth and nail for the right to vote. As Susan B. Anthony's biographer Ida Husted Harper would put it, suffrage was the right that, once a woman had won it, "would secure to her all others."

The first wave basically begins with the Seneca Falls convention of 1848. There, almost 200 women met in a church in upstate New York to discuss "the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of women." Attendees discussed their grievances and passed a list of 12 resolutions calling for specific equal rights — including, after much debate, the right to vote." (Grady, 2018)

History. (1916). A woman stands against an automobile, modeling a costume for the Chicago suffrage parade. Retrieved from: https://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/the=-fight-for-womens-suffrage#&gid=c0260icc2400026c3b&pid-womens-suffrage-gettyimages-640472481

“IF EDUCATED WOMEN ARE NOT AS FIT TO DECIDE WHO SHALL BE THE RULERS OF THIS COUNTRY, AS ‘FIELD HANDS,’ THEN WHERE’S THE USE OF CULTURE, OR ANY BRAIN AT ALL? ONE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE BEEN ‘BORN ON THE PLANTATION.”

(Stanton and Anthony’s newspaper , the Revolution, n.d)

"But despite the immense work of women of color for the women's movement, the movement of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony eventually established itself as a movement specifically for white women, one that used racial animus as fuel for its work.

The 15th Amendment's passage in 1870, granting black men the right to vote, became a spur that politicized white women and turned them into suffragettes. Were they truly not going to be granted the vote before former slaves were?

Despite its racism, the women's movement developed radical goals for its members. First-wavers fought not only for white women's suffrage but also for equal opportunities to education and employment, and for the right to own property.

And as the movement developed, it began to turn to the question of reproductive rights. In 1916, Margaret Sanger opened the first birth control clinic in the US, in defiance of a New York state law that forbade the distribution of contraception. She would later go on to establish the clinic that became Planned Parenthood.

In 1920, Congress passed the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote. (In theory, it granted the right to women of all races, but in practice, it remained difficult for black women to vote, especially in the South.)

The 19th Amendment was the grand legislative achievement of the first wave. Although individual groups continued to work — for reproductive freedom, for equality in education and employment, for voting rights for black women — the movement as a whole began to splinter. It no longer had a unified goal with strong cultural momentum behind it, and it would not find another until the second wave began to take off in the 1960s." (Grady, 2018)

Vogue. (n.d.). Retrieved from:
https://www.vogue.pt/o-direito-ao-voto-feminino-em-portugal

MANIFESTOS

"The second wave of feminism begins with Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique, which came out in 1963. There were prominent feminist thinkers before Friedan who would come to be associated with the second wave — most importantly Simone de Beauvoir, whose Second Sex came out in France in 1949 and in the US in 1953 — but The Feminine Mystique was a phenomenon. It sold 3 million copies in three years.

The Feminine Mystique rails against "the problem that has no name": the systemic sexism that taught women that their place was in the home and that if they were unhappy as housewives, it was only because they were broken and perverse. "I thought there was something wrong with me because I didn't have an orgasm waxing the kitchen floor," Friedan later quipped.

But, she argued, the fault didn't truly lie with women, but rather with the world that refused to allow them to exercise their creative and intellectual faculties. Women were right to be unhappy; they were being ripped off." (Grady, 2018)

History. (1917). Mrs. William L. Colt, of New York City, traveled to Washington, D.C. to join others picketing the White House. Retrieved from https://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/the-fight-for-womens-suffrage#&gid=ci0260ccc2400026b3&pid=womens-suffrage-gettyimages-514872332

"The Feminine Mystique was not revolutionary in its thinking, as many of Friedan's ideas were already being discussed by academics and feminist intellectuals. Instead, it was revolutionary in its reach. It made its way into the hands of housewives, who gave it to their friends, who passed it along through a whole chain of well-educated middle-class white women with beautiful homes and families. And it gave them permission to be angry.

And once those 3 million readers realized that they were angry, feminism once again had cultural momentum behind it. It had a unifying goal, too: not just political equality, which the first-wavers had fought for, but social equality.

"The personal is political," said the second-wavers. (The phrase cannot be traced back to any individual woman but was popularized by Carol Hanisch.) They would go on to argue that problems that seemed to be individual and petty — about sex, and relationships, and access to abortions, and domestic labor — were in fact systemic and political, and fundamental to the fight for women's equality.

So the movement won some major legislative and legal victories: The Equal Pay Act of 1963 theoretically outlawed the gender pay gap; a series of landmark Supreme Court cases through the '60s and '70s gave married and unmarried women the right to use birth control; Title IX gave women the right to educational equality; and in 1973, Roe v. Wade guaranteed women reproductive freedom." (Grady, 2018)

"The second wave worked on getting women the right to hold credit cards under their own names and to apply for mortgages. It worked to outlaw marital rape, to raise awareness about domestic violence and build shelters for women fleeing rape and domestic violence. It worked to name and legislate against sexual harassment in the workplace." (Grady, 2018)

"But perhaps just as central was the second wave's focus on changing the way society thought about women. The second wave cared deeply about the casual, systemic sexism ingrained into society — the belief that women's highest purposes were domestic and decorative, and the social standards that reinforced that belief — and in naming that sexism and ripping it apart.

The second wave cared about racism too, but it could be clumsy in working with people of color. As the women's movement developed, it was rooted in the anti-capitalist and anti-racist civil rights movements, but black women increasingly found themselves alienated from the central platforms of the mainstream women's movement.

The Feminine Mystique and its "problem that has no name" was specifically for white middle-class women: Women who had to work to support themselves experienced their oppression very differently from women who were socially discouraged from working.

Earning the right to work outside the home was not a major concern for black women, many of whom had to work outside the home anyway. And while black women and white women both advocated for reproductive freedom, black women wanted to fight not just for the right to contraception and abortions but also to stop the forced sterilization of people of color and people with disabilities, which was not a priority for the mainstream women's movement. In response, some black feminists decamped from feminism to create womanism. ("Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender," Alice Walker wrote in 1983.)" (Grady, 2018)

“I DON’T THINK OF MYSELF AS A FEMINIST, NOT FOR ME, BUT FOR THE GUY NEXT DOOR THAT WOULD MEAN THAT I’M A LESBIAN AND I HATE MEN”

(S.Bolotin, 1982)

“Even with its limited scope, second-wave feminism at its height was plenty radical enough to scare people — hence the myth of the bra burners. Despite the popular story, there was no mass burning of bras among second-wave feminists.

But women did gather together in 1968 to protest the Miss America pageant and its demeaning, patriarchal treatment of women. And as part of the protest, participants ceremoniously threw away objects that they considered to be symbols of women’s objectification, including bras and copies of Playboy.

That the Miss America protest has long lingered in the popular imagination as a bra-burning, and that bra-burning has become a metonym for postwar American feminism, says a lot about the backlash to the second wave that would soon ensue.

In the 1980s, the comfortable conservatism of the Reagan era managed to successfully position second-wave feminists as humorless, hairy-legged shrews who cared only about petty bullshit like bras instead of real problems, probably to distract themselves from the loneliness of their lives, since no man would ever want a (shudder) feminist.

Another young woman chimed in, agreeing. “Look around and you’ll see some happy women, and then you’ll see all these bitter, bitter women,” she said. “The unhappy women are all feminists. You’ll find very few happy, enthusiastic, relaxed people who are ardent supporters of feminism.”

That image of feminists as angry and man-hating and lonely would become canonical as the second wave began to lose its momentum, and it continues to haunt the way we talk about feminism today. It would also become foundational to the way the third wave would position itself as it emerged.” (Grady, 2018)

NEW SYSTEM

"It is almost impossible to talk with any clarity about the third wave because few people agree on exactly what the third wave is, when it started, or if it's still going on. "The confusion surrounding what constitutes third wave feminism," writes feminist scholar Elizabeth Evans, "is in some respects its defining feature."

But generally, the beginning of the third wave is pegged to two things: the Anita Hill case in 1991, and the emergence of the riot grrrl groups in the music scene of the early 1990s.

In 1991, Anita Hill testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee that Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas had sexually harassed her at work. Thomas made his way to the Supreme Court anyway, but Hill's testimony sparked an avalanche of sexual harassment complaints, in much the same way that last fall's Harvey Weinstein accusations were followed by a litany of sexual misconduct accusations against other powerful men." (Grady, 2018)

Dazed. (1991). The Riot Grrrls ! Retrieved from: https://www.dazeddigital.com/life-culture/article/43714/1/why-popular-culture-is-returning-to-the-riot-grrrl-aesthetic-and-values

"And Congress's decision to send Thomas to the Supreme Court despite Hill's testimony led to a national conversation about the overrepresentation of men in national leadership roles. The following year, 1992, would be dubbed "the Year of the Woman" after 24 women won seats in the House of Representatives and three more won seats in the Senate.

And for the young women watching the Anita Hill case in real time, it would become an awakening. "I am not a postfeminism feminist," declared Rebecca Walker (Alice Walker's daughter) for Ms. after watching Thomas get sworn into the Supreme Court. "I am the Third Wave."

Early third-wave activism tended to involve fighting against workplace sexual harassment and working to increase the number of women in positions of power. Intellectually, it was rooted in the work of theorists of the '80s: Kimberlé Crenshaw, a scholar of gender and critical race theory who coined the term intersectionality to describe the ways in which different forms of oppression intersect; and Judith Butler, who argued that gender and sex are separate and that gender is performative. Crenshaw and Butler's combined influence would become foundational to the third wave's embrace of the fight for trans rights as a fundamental part of intersectional feminism.

Aesthetically, the third wave is deeply influenced by the rise of the riot grrrls, the girl groups who stomped their Doc Martens onto the music scene in the 1990s." (Grady, 2018)

""BECAUSE doing/reading/seeing/hearing cool things that validate and challenge us can help us gain the strength and sense of community that we need in order to figure out how bullshit like racism, able-bodieism, ageism, speciesism, classism, thinism, sexism, anti-semitism and heterosexism figures in our own lives," wrote Bikini Kill lead singer Kathleen Hanna in the Riot Grrrl Manifesto in 1991. "BECAUSE we are angry at a society that tells us Girl = Dumb, Girl = Bad, Girl = Weak."

The word girl here points to one of the major differences between second- and third-wave feminism. Second-wavers fought to be called women rather than girls: They weren't children, they were fully grown adults, and they demanded to be treated with according dignity. There should be no more college girls or coeds: only college women, learning alongside college men.

But third-wavers liked being girls. They embraced the word; they wanted to make it empowering, even threatening — hence grrrl. And as it developed, that trend would continue: The third wave would go on to embrace all kinds of ideas and language and aesthetics that the second wave had worked to reject: makeup and high heels and high-femme girliness." (Grady, 2018)

MEDIA

"Feminists have been anticipating the arrival of a fourth wave since at least 1986, when a letter writer to the Wilson Quarterly opined that the fourth wave was already building. Internet trolls actually tried to launch their own fourth wave in 2014, planning to create a "pro-sexualization, pro-skinny, anti-fat" feminist movement that the third wave would revile, ultimately miring the entire feminist community in bloody civil war. (It didn't work out.)

But over the past few years, as #MeToo and Time's Up pick up momentum, the Women's March floods Washington with pussy hats every year, and a record number of women prepare to run for office, it's beginning to seem that the long-heralded fourth wave might actually be here.

While a lot of media coverage of #MeToo describes it as a movement dominated by third-wave feminism, it actually seems to be centered in a movement that lacks the characteristic diffusion of the third wave. It feels different." (Grady, 2018)

Wikydata. (n.d.). Can You Hear Me Now? Retrieved from: https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q42133786

"MAYBE THE FOURTH WAVE IS ONLINE,"

"That's come to be one of the major ideas of fourth-wave feminism. Online is where activists meet and plan their activism, and it's where feminist discourse and debate takes place. Sometimes fourth-wave activism can even take place on the internet (the "#MeToo" tweets), and sometimes it takes place on the streets (the Women's March), but it's conceived and propagated online.

As such, the fourth wave's beginnings are often loosely pegged to around 2008, when Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube were firmly entrenched in the cultural fabric and feminist blogs like Jezebel and Feministing were spreading across the web. By 2013, the idea that we had entered a fourth wave was widespread enough that it was getting written up in the Guardian. "What's happening now feels like something new again," wrote Kira Cochrane.

Currently, the fourth-wavers are driving the movement behind #MeToo and Time's Up, but in previous years they were responsible for the cultural impact of projects like Emma Sulkowicz's Mattress Performance (Carry That Weight), in which a rape victim at Columbia University committed to carrying their mattress around campus until the university expelled their rapist.

The trending hashtag #YesAllWomen after the UC Santa Barbara shooting was a fourth-wave campaign, and so was the trending hashtag #StandWithWendy when Wendy Davis filibustered a Texas abortion law. Arguably, the SlutWalks that began in 2011 — in protest of the idea that the way to prevent rape is for women to "stop dressing like sluts" — are fourth-wave campaigns.

Like all of feminism, the fourth wave is not a monolith. It means different things to different people. But these tentpole positions that Bustle identified as belonging to fourth-wave feminism in 2015 do tend to hold true for a lot of fourth-wavers; namely, that fourth--wave feminism is queer, sex-positive, trans-inclusive, body-positive, and digitally driven. (Bustle also claims that fourth-wave feminism is anti-misandry, but given the glee with which fourth-wavers across the internet riff on ironic misandry, that may be more prescriptivist than descriptivist on their part.)" (Grady, 2018)

“NOW THE FOURTH WAVE HAS BEGUN TO HOLD OUR CULTURE’S MOST POWERFUL MEN ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR BEHAVIOR. IT HAS BEGUN A RADICAL CRITIQUE OF THE SYSTEMS OF POWER THAT ALLOW PREDATORS TO TARGET WOMEN WITH IMPUNITY.”