

FEMINISM

Today we are going to tell you something about feminism. First we are going to tell you something about the history of feminism, then about the types, organizations, discrimination and finally stereotypes.

We'll begin by explaining 3 key terms:

1. **FEMINISM**-is a belief, theory and political movement promoting gender equality, women's rights and women's issues. Feminism is believing in women's rights, equal rights among the genders, in social, political and economic aspects. It is believing in equal opportunity and is the advancement of women. Feminism is not taking away from, or removing the rights of, men.
2. **SEXISM**-is prejudice or discrimination, especially against women on the grounds of sex.
3. **DISCRIMINATION**-unfavourable treatment based on prejudice.

There are different types of feminism:

1. **CONSERVATIVE FEMINISM**-criticizes equality of women as the death of the family element.
2. **CULTURAL FEMINISM**-views the differences between men and women as special and something to be celebrated.
3. **ECOFEMINISM**-is the union of ecology and feminism. It views the oppression of animals and the environment to parallel the oppression of women.
4. **INDIVIDUALIST FEMINISM**-advocates equal treatment for the genders. They also believe that women have freedom and choices as far as their body and the sexual choices they make.
5. **LIBERAL FEMINISM**-views everyone as equal and so everyone should be treated equally. It sees women's oppression as a result of the socialization process.
6. **RADICAL FEMINISM**-sees women's oppression as the most basic and fundamental form of oppression.
7. **SPIRITUAL FEMINISM**-focuses on women's religions, Goddess theory and the spiritual need of women.
8. **SEPARATIST FEMINISM**-which feels that men and women should be separate.
9. **SOCIALIST FEMINISM**-views women's oppression as a result of class structure.

FEMINIST ORGANISATIONS:

1. IN USA:

-NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN-it was established in 1966, it is still working today.

-FEMINISTS FOR LIFE OF AMERICA-is a women's rights organization that opposes abortion and promotes equality for women.

-WOMEN OF WASHINGTON/WOMEN OF LOS ANGELES-nonprofit, non-partisan organisation providing monthly forums to exchange ideas, support the community, learn from leaders, and help out personally and professionally.

2. IN AUSTRALIA:

-SOUTHERN WOMEN'S GROUP-Australian libertarian feminist organisation working towards the empowerment of women and the elimination of sexism.

3. IN CANADA:

-CANADIAN WOMEN'S MARCH COMMITTEE-committed to facilitating the mass mobilisation of women from across Canada for the World March of Women 2000.

4. IN GREAT BRITAIN:

-TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILDS-campaigns on issues affecting women in Britain, and is an organisation for women who want to make friends and try something new.

5. NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS:

-THIRD WAVE FOUNDATION-national activist and philanthropic organisation created for young women between the ages of 15 and 30

-NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN-advocates for women by working with shelters and centres, visible minorities, labour and more.

HISTORY OF FEMINISM:

- Throughout the entire history women were inferior to men and didn't have the right to an education and their own property. The movement to improve the position of women in society began with the French revolution.

One of the most important movements took place in the late 19th and early 20th century in Great Britain.

In 1887 the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies was established, or shorter the NUWSS. It was formed by seventeen individual groups of women joined together. Lydia Becker was elected as president, and then 3 years later Millicent Fawcett took her place. The NUWSS held public meetings, organised petitions, wrote letters to politicians, published newspapers and distributed free literature.

On June 1908 the NUWSS and the WSPU(Women's Social and Political Union) organised massive demonstrations in London in favour of women's suffrage. It was formed from former members of the NUWSS in Manchester, who were no longer willing to restrict to the constitutional methods favoured by the NUWSS.

A group of women, called the suffragettes fought for women's right to vote. Their name derives from the english word »suffrage«, which means voting right. Their struggle reached it's peak in 1913 when the authorities put 200 women in prison. They attacked ministers in the streets, trashed windows, chained themselves to fences, had hunger strikes. Their leader, the suffrage organizer, was Emmeline Pankhurst. Her introduction of militant tactics, including the hunger strikes, provoked strong reaction from the authorities and kept the suffrage cause in the newspapers.

Some of her most famous quotations were:

»The argument of the broken pane of glass is the most valuable argument modern politics.«

»As long women consent to be unjustly governed, they will be; but directly women say: »We withhold our consent,« we won't be governed any longer as long as government is unjust.«

»Trust in God: She will provide.«

This type of fighting for equality and better chances for education for women also appeared in the USA, France and the German Empire.

Women on both sides of the ocean were fighting for the right to vote at the same time. As we've already said, in Great Britain Emmeline Pankhurst as well as other women who fought by her side suffered imprisonment for protesting for their cause.

In America, the women's suffrage movement was often closely related to the Abolition movement even though women were fighting for their right to vote in the USA through the 2nd half of the 19th century beginning with the Seneca Falls Convention, the 1st feminist gathering, they didn't get the right to vote in federal elections until 1920 with the passage of the 19th amendment.

In 1919 6 major demands of the NUWSS were developed:

1. Equal pay for equal work, involving an open field for women in industry and the professions.
2. An equal standard of sex morals as between men and women, involving a reform of the existing divorce law which condoned adultery by the husband, as well as reform of the laws dealing with solicitation and prostitution.
3. The introduction of legislation to provide pensions for civilian widows with dependent children.
4. The equalization of the franchise and the return to Parliament of women candidates pledged to the equality programme.
5. The legal recognition of mothers as equal guardians with fathers of their children.
6. The opening of the legal profession and the magistracy.

OTHER IMPORTANT WOMEN IN HISTORY:

- Abigail Adams, Mercy Otis Warren, Emma Willard- first feminist fighters
- Marry Wollstonecraft who wrote the 1st important document about feminism

DISCRIMINATION:

Since the beginning of time the position of men and women in society hasn't been equal. The preancient history is probably the only period in history when women were superior to men. They were highly appreciated because of their role as mothers, they even made statues that symbolized their fertility. After that women slowly began losing their importance and even rights in society. The oppression of women lasted for centuries. It was only a few decades ago that women gained their basic rights.

It is hard to believe that even now, in this highly civilised world, there are still countries where women have no rights.

For example:

IN CHINA:

- due to the big number of births, there every year small babies are being killed right after they are born to prevent overpopulation. Because of the sex-selective policy, they only kill girls. They do this by simply throwing them onto the road and leaving them there until they die. Thousands of people pass without paying much attention to it. No one stops to save the baby, some don't even look at it.
- if a woman gets pregnant for the third time, the officials have the right to take her for a forced abortion. The woman has to pay a large fine and undergo sterilization.
- bride-selling has made a lucrative comeback. Vulnerable young women are kidnapped and smuggled to distant provinces, where they are sold to much older, illiterate farmers for around \$300.

IN KOSOVO:

- if a woman gets raped, she humiliates her family and can not get married and have children.
- The women who were raped are not allowed to prevent pregnancy by taking pills or other chemicals, because their religion forbids it.

IN AFRICA:

- women have to stay virgins until their marriage, or else they are punished in different ways (in the Krobo-tribe for example they hang stones on the girl's body and if they shake it means that the girl is not a virgin and they throw her off the mountain, in another tribe the mother watches her daughter's first sexual intercourse, to make sure she is a virgin.)
- because of the poverty in Kenya girls are sold to much older men by their parents when they are still very young (most at the age of 13)
- in Nigeria females are circumcised, to prevent them cheating on their husbands. Besides it being very painful it is also dangerous for their health, because it is not done by a doctor in a hospital, but by a close friend of the family or a relative.
- girls are not allowed to be educated about their bodies or sexuality, that is why when a girl gets pregnant, she will drink chemical mixtures to abort, but end up killing herself

IN AFGHANISTAN:

- women are forbidden to attend school at any level or hold jobs
- they are not allowed to leave their homes unless accompanied by a close male relative

IN THE USA:

The Equal Rights Amendment was (and still is) a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Its goal was to guarantee equal rights for Americans of both sexes. It is also supported by The National Council of Women's Organizations. Its supporters believe that equality in the sexes must be acknowledged at the Constitutional level.(it now only affirms for women to vote).

IN SLOWENIA:

In comparison to our colleagues in the EU the position of women is not bad. We have managed to keep a high level of employment, we have one of the longest maternity leaves, in the year 2002 women's paycheck was 8.5% lower than the men's. Even though we mostly own a higher education than men, there are only few of us at the leading positions. In the last couple of years the unemployment of women has grown and succeeds half the registered unemployed.

Nowadays there are still many **stereotypes** about women:

- a woman should stay at home and do all the housework and look after the children
- a woman should not be as educated and get as big of salary as a man
- a woman should always look perfect to please men
- a woman is a bad driver
- a woman is not a leader and should not lead the company
- a woman is not supposed to have an opinion or disagree with her man

FEMINISM

1.) WORD STUDY

legislation - a group of laws

to advocate - to recommend or say that you support a particular plan or action

oppression - a cruel and unfair treatment of a person or a group of people, not allowing them the same freedom and rights as others

suffrage - the right to vote in political elections

abolition - the act of ending a law or system officially

to condone - to accept or agree with sth that most people think is wrong

militant - ready to use force or strong pressure to get what you want

franchise - the right to vote in elections

circumcise - to remove part of a woman's sexual organs (clitoris), for religious reasons

2.) MATCH!

Feminism

a. the unfair treatment of people, especially women, because of their sex; the attitude that causes this

Discrimination

b. the belief that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men

Sexism

c. treating one person or group worse than others

3.) NAME 3 TYPES OF FEMINISM AND DESCRIBE IT!

1.

2.

3.

4.) What did the suffragettes fight for and how? (name 4 of their major demands)

Who was their leader? _____

5.) TRUE OR FALSE

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|---|----------|----------|
| 1. If a woman in China gets pregnant for the second time, the officials have the right to take her for a forced abortion. | T | F |
| 2. If a woman in Kosovo gets raped, she humiliates her family and can not get married and have children. | T | F |
| 3. Because of the poverty in Kenya, girls are sold to much older men by their parents when they reach 13. | T | F |
| 4. In Nigeria females are circumcised, to prevent them cheating on their husbands. | T | F |
| 5. In Afghanistan women are not allowed to leave their homes unless accompanied by a close friend. | T | F |