

= Feminism =

Feminism is a range of political movements , ideologies , and social movements that share a common goal : to define , establish , and achieve political , economic , personal , and social rights for women that are equal to those of men . This includes seeking to establish equal opportunities for women in education and employment . Feminists typically advocate or support the rights and equality of women .

Feminist movements have campaigned and continue to campaign for women 's rights , including the right to vote , to hold public office , to work , to earn fair wages or equal pay , to own property , to receive education , to enter contracts , to have equal rights within marriage , and to have maternity leave . Feminists have also worked to promote bodily autonomy and integrity , and to protect women and girls from rape , sexual harassment , and domestic violence .

Feminist campaigns are generally considered to be one of the main forces behind major historical societal changes for women 's rights , particularly in the West , where they are near @-@ universally credited with having achieved women 's suffrage , gender neutrality in English , reproductive rights for women ( including access to contraceptives and abortion ) , and the right to enter into contracts and own property . Although feminist advocacy is , and has been , mainly focused on women 's rights , some feminists , including bell hooks , argue for the inclusion of men 's liberation within its aims because men are also harmed by traditional gender roles . Feminist theory , which emerged from feminist movements , aims to understand the nature of gender inequality by examining women 's social roles and lived experience ; it has developed theories in a variety of disciplines in order to respond to issues such as the social construction of gender .

Some forms of feminism have been criticized for taking into account only white , middle class , and educated perspectives . This criticism led to the creation of ethnically specific or multicultural forms of feminism , including black feminism and intersectional feminism .

= = History = =

Charles Fourier , a Utopian Socialist and French philosopher , is credited with having coined the word " féminisme " in 1837 . The words " féminisme " ( " feminism " ) and " féminist " ( " feminist " ) first appeared in France and the Netherlands in 1872 , Great Britain in the 1890s , and the United States in 1910 , and the Oxford English Dictionary lists 1852 as the year of the first appearance of " feminist " and 1895 for " feminism " . Depending on historical moment , culture and country , feminists around the world have had different causes and goals . Most western feminist historians assert that all movements working to obtain women 's rights should be considered feminist movements , even when they did not ( or do not ) apply the term to themselves . Other historians assert that the term should be limited to the modern feminist movement and its descendants . Those historians use the label " protofeminist " to describe earlier movements .

The history of the modern western feminist movements is divided into three " waves " . Each wave dealt with different aspects of the same feminist issues . The first wave comprised women 's suffrage movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries , promoting women 's right to vote . The second wave was associated with the ideas and actions of the women 's liberation movement beginning in the 1960s . The second wave campaigned for legal and social equality for women . The third wave is a continuation of , and a reaction to , the perceived failures of second @-@ wave feminism , beginning in the 1990s .

= = = Nineteenth and early twentieth centuries = = =

First @-@ wave feminism was a period of activity during the 19th century and early twentieth century . In the UK and US , it focused on the promotion of equal contract , marriage , parenting , and property rights for women . By the end of the 19th century , activism focused primarily on gaining political power , particularly the right of women 's suffrage , though some feminists were active in campaigning for women 's sexual , reproductive , and economic rights as well .

Women 's suffrage began in Britain 's Australasian colonies at the close of the 19th century , with the self @-@ governing colonies of New Zealand granting women the right to vote in 1893 and South Australia granting female suffrage ( the right to vote and stand for parliamentary office ) in 1895 . This was followed by Australia granting female suffrage in 1902 .

In Britain the Suffragettes and the Suffragists campaigned for the women 's vote , and in 1918 the Representation of the People Act was passed granting the vote to women over the age of 30 who owned property . In 1928 this was extended to all women over 21 . Emmeline Pankhurst was the most notable activist in England , with Time naming her one of the 100 Most Important People of the 20th Century stating : " she shaped an idea of women for our time ; she shook society into a new pattern from which there could be no going back . " In the U.S. , notable leaders of this movement included Lucretia Mott , Elizabeth Cady Stanton , and Susan B. Anthony , who each campaigned for the abolition of slavery prior to championing women 's right to vote . These women were influenced by the Quaker theology of spiritual equality , which asserts that men and women are equal under God . In the United States , first @-@ wave feminism is considered to have ended with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution ( 1919 ) , granting women the right to vote in all states . The term first wave was coined retroactively to categorize these western movements after the term second @-@ wave feminism began to be used to describe a newer feminist movement that focused on fighting social and cultural inequalities , as well political inequalities .

During the late Qing period and reform movements such as the Hundred Days ' Reform , Chinese feminists called for women 's liberation from traditional roles and Neo @-@ Confucian gender segregation . Later , the Chinese Communist Party created projects aimed at integrating women into the workforce , and claimed that the revolution had successfully achieved women 's liberation .

According to Nawar al @-@ Hassan Golley , Arab feminism was closely connected with Arab nationalism . In 1899 , Qasim Amin , considered the " father " of Arab feminism , wrote The Liberation of Women , which argued for legal and social reforms for women . He drew links between women 's position in Egyptian society and nationalism , leading to the development of Cairo University and the National Movement . In 1923 Hoda Shaarawi founded the Egyptian Feminist Union , became its president and a symbol of the Arab women 's rights movement .

The Iranian Constitutional Revolution in 1905 triggered the Iranian women 's movement , which aimed to achieve women 's equality in education , marriage , careers , and legal rights . However , during the Iranian revolution of 1979 , many of the rights that women had gained from the women 's movement were systematically abolished , such as the Family Protection Law .

In France , women obtained the right to vote only with the Provisional Government of the French Republic of 21 April 1944 . The Consultative Assembly of Algiers of 1944 proposed on 24 March 1944 to grant eligibility to women but following an amendment by Fernand Grenier , they were given full citizenship , including the right to vote . Grenier 's proposition was adopted 51 to 16 . In May 1947 , following the November 1946 elections , the sociologist Robert Verdier minimized the " gender gap " , stating in Le Populaire that women had not voted in a consistent way , dividing themselves , as men , according to social classes . During the baby boom period , feminism waned in importance . Wars ( both World War I and World War II ) had seen the provisional emancipation of some women , but post @-@ war periods signaled the return to conservative roles .

= = = Mid @-@ twentieth century = = =

By the mid 20th century , in some European countries , women still lacked some significant rights . Feminists in these countries continued to fight for voting rights . In Switzerland , women gained the right to vote in federal elections in 1971 ; but in the canton of Appenzell Innerrhoden women obtained the right to vote on local issues only in 1991 , when the canton was forced to do so by the Federal Supreme Court of Switzerland . In Liechtenstein , women were given the right to vote by the women 's suffrage referendum of 1984 . Three prior referendums held in 1968 , 1971 and 1973 had failed to secure women 's right to vote .

Feminists continued to campaign for the reform of family laws which gave husbands control over

their wives . Although by the 20th century coverture had been abolished in the UK and the US , in many continental European countries married women still had very few rights . For instance , in France married women did not receive the right to work without their husband 's permission until 1965 . Feminists have also worked to abolish the " marital exemption " in rape laws which precluded the prosecution of husbands for the rape of their wives . Earlier efforts by first @-@ wave feminists such as Voltairine de Cleyre , Victoria Woodhull and Elizabeth Clarke Wolstenholme Elmy to criminalize marital rape in the late 19th century had failed ; this was only achieved a century later in most Western countries , but is still not achieved in many other parts of the world .

French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir provided a Marxist solution and an existentialist view on many of the questions of feminism with the publication of *Le Deuxième Sexe* ( *The Second Sex* ) in 1949 . The book expressed feminists ' sense of injustice . Second @-@ wave feminism is a feminist movement beginning in the early 1960s and continuing to the present ; as such , it coexists with third @-@ wave feminism . Second @-@ wave feminism is largely concerned with issues of equality beyond suffrage , such as ending gender discrimination .

Second @-@ wave feminists see women 's cultural and political inequalities as inextricably linked and encourage women to understand aspects of their personal lives as deeply politicized and as reflecting sexist power structures . The feminist activist and author Carol Hanisch coined the slogan " The Personal is Political " , which became synonymous with the second wave .

Second- and third @-@ wave feminism in China has been characterized by a reexamination of women 's roles during the communist revolution and other reform movements , and new discussions about whether women 's equality has actually been fully achieved .

In 1956 , President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt initiated " state feminism " , which outlawed discrimination based on gender and granted women 's suffrage , but also blocked political activism by feminist leaders . During Sadat 's presidency , his wife , Jehan Sadat , publicly advocated further women 's rights , though Egyptian policy and society began to move away from women 's equality with the new Islamist movement and growing conservatism . However , some activists proposed a new feminist movement , Islamic feminism , which argues for women 's equality within an Islamic framework .

In Latin America , revolutions brought changes in women 's status in countries such as Nicaragua , where feminist ideology during the Sandinista Revolution aided women 's quality of life but fell short of achieving a social and ideological change .

= = = Late twentieth and early twenty @-@ first centuries = = =

= = = = Third @-@ wave = = = =

In the early 1990s in the USA , third @-@ wave feminism began as a response to perceived failures of the second wave and to the backlash against initiatives and movements created by the second wave . Third @-@ wave feminism distinguished itself from the second wave around issues of sexuality , challenging female heterosexuality and celebrating sexuality as a means of female empowerment . Third @-@ wave feminism also seeks to challenge or avoid what it deems the second wave 's essentialist definitions of femininity , which , they argue , over @-@ emphasize the experiences of upper middle @-@ class white women . Third @-@ wave feminists often focus on " micro @-@ politics " and challenge the second wave 's paradigm as to what is , or is not , good for women , and tend to use a post @-@ structuralist interpretation of gender and sexuality . Feminist leaders rooted in the second wave , such as Gloria Anzaldúa , bell hooks , Chela Sandoval , Cherríe Moraga , Audre Lorde , Maxine Hong Kingston , and many other non @-@ white feminists , sought to negotiate a space within feminist thought for consideration of race @-@ related subjectivities . Third @-@ wave feminism also contains internal debates between difference feminists , who believe that there are important differences between the sexes , and those who believe that there are no inherent differences between the sexes and contend that gender roles are due to social conditioning .

== == Standpoint == ==

Standpoint theory is a feminist theoretical point of view that believes a person's social position influences their knowledge. This perspective argues that research and theory treats women and the feminist movement as insignificant and refuses to see traditional science as unbiased. Since the 1980s, standpoint feminists have argued that the feminist movement should address global issues (such as rape, incest, and prostitution) and culturally specific issues (such as female genital mutilation in some parts of Africa and the Middle East, as well as glass ceiling practices that impede women's advancement in developed economies) in order to understand how gender inequality interacts with racism, homophobia, classism and colonization in a "matrix of domination".

== == Post @-@ feminism == ==

The term post @-@ feminism is used to describe a range of viewpoints reacting to feminism since the 1980s. While not being "anti @-@ feminist", post @-@ feminists believe that women have achieved second wave goals while being critical of third wave feminist goals. The term was first used to describe a backlash against second @-@ wave feminism, but it is now a label for a wide range of theories that take critical approaches to previous feminist discourses and includes challenges to the second wave's ideas. Other post @-@ feminists say that feminism is no longer relevant to today's society. Amelia Jones has written that the post @-@ feminist texts which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s portrayed second @-@ wave feminism as a monolithic entity. Dorothy Chunn notes a "blaming narrative" under the post @-@ feminist moniker, where feminists are undermined for continuing to make demands for gender equality in a "post @-@ feminist" society, where "gender equality has (already) been achieved." According to Chunn, "many feminists have voiced disquiet about the ways in which rights and equality discourses are now used against them."

== Theory ==

Feminist theory is the extension of feminism into theoretical or philosophical fields. It encompasses work in a variety of disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, economics, women's studies, literary criticism, art history, psychoanalysis and philosophy. Feminist theory aims to understand gender inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations, and sexuality. While providing a critique of these social and political relations, much of feminist theory also focuses on the promotion of women's rights and interests. Themes explored in feminist theory include discrimination, stereotyping, objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression, and patriarchy. In the field of literary criticism, Elaine Showalter describes the development of feminist theory as having three phases. The first she calls "feminist critique", in which the feminist reader examines the ideologies behind literary phenomena. The second Showalter calls "gynocriticism", in which the "woman is producer of textual meaning". The last phase she calls "gender theory", in which the "ideological inscription and the literary effects of the sex / gender system are explored".

This was paralleled in the 1970s by French feminists, who developed the concept of *écriture féminine* (which translates as 'female or feminine writing'). Helene Cixous argues that writing and philosophy are phallogentric and along with other French feminists such as Luce Irigaray emphasize "writing from the body" as a subversive exercise. The work of Julia Kristeva, a feminist psychoanalyst and philosopher, and Bracha Ettinger, artist and psychoanalyst, has influenced feminist theory in general and feminist literary criticism in particular. However, as the scholar Elizabeth Wright points out, "none of these French feminists align themselves with the feminist movement as it appeared in the Anglophone world". More recent feminist theory, such as that of Lisa Lucile Owens, has concentrated on characterizing feminism as a universal emancipatory movement.

= = Movements and ideologies = =

Many overlapping feminist movements and ideologies have developed over the years .

= = = Political movements = = =

Some branches of feminism closely track the political leanings of the larger society , such as liberalism and conservatism , or focus on the environment . Liberal feminism seeks individualistic equality of men and women through political and legal reform without altering the structure of society . Catherine Rottenberg has argued that the neoliberal shift in Liberal feminism has led to that form of feminism being individualized rather than collectivized and becoming detached from social inequality . Due to this she argues that Liberal Feminism cannot offer any sustained analysis of the structures of male dominance , power , or privilege .

Radical feminism considers the male @-@ controlled capitalist hierarchy as the defining feature of women 's oppression and the total uprooting and reconstruction of society as necessary . Conservative feminism is conservative relative to the society in which it resides . Libertarian feminism conceives of people as self @-@ owners and therefore as entitled to freedom from coercive interference . Separatist feminism does not support heterosexual relationships . Lesbian feminism is thus closely related . Other feminists criticize separatist feminism as sexist . Ecofeminists see men 's control of land as responsible for the oppression of women and destruction of the natural environment ; ecofeminism has been criticised for focusing too much on a mystical connection between women and nature .

= = = Materialist ideologies = = =

Rosemary Hennessy and Chrys Ingraham say that materialist forms of feminism grew out of Western Marxist thought and have inspired a number of different ( but overlapping ) movements , all of which are involved in a critique of capitalism and are focussed on ideology 's relationship to women . Marxist feminism argues that capitalism is the root cause of women 's oppression , and that discrimination against women in domestic life and employment is an effect of capitalist ideologies . Socialist feminism distinguishes itself from Marxist feminism by arguing that women 's liberation can only be achieved by working to end both the economic and cultural sources of women 's oppression . Anarcha @-@ feminists believe that class struggle and anarchy against the state require struggling against patriarchy , which comes from involuntary hierarchy .

= = = Black and postcolonial ideologies = = =

Sara Ahmed argues that Black and Postcolonial feminisms pose a challenge " to some of the organizing premises of Western feminist thought . " During much of its history , feminist movements and theoretical developments were led predominantly by middle @-@ class white women from Western Europe and North America . However women of other races have proposed alternative feminisms . This trend accelerated in the 1960s with the civil rights movement in the United States and the collapse of European colonialism in Africa , the Caribbean , parts of Latin America , and Southeast Asia . Since that time , women in developing nations and former colonies and who are of colour or various ethnicities or living in poverty have proposed additional feminisms . Womanism emerged after early feminist movements were largely white and middle @-@ class . Postcolonial feminists argue that colonial oppression and Western feminism marginalized postcolonial women but did not turn them passive or voiceless . Third @-@ world feminism and Indigenous feminism are closely related to postcolonial feminism . These ideas also correspond with ideas in African feminism , motherism , Stiwanism , negofeminism , femalism , transnational feminism , and Africana womanism .

= = = Social constructionist ideologies = = =

In the late twentieth century various feminists began to argue that gender roles are socially constructed , and that it is impossible to generalize women 's experiences across cultures and histories . Post @-@ structural feminism draws on the philosophies of post @-@ structuralism and deconstruction in order to argue that the concept of gender is created socially and culturally through discourse . Postmodern feminists also emphasize the social construction of gender and the discursive nature of reality ; however , as Pamela Abbott et al. note , a postmodern approach to feminism highlights " the existence of multiple truths ( rather than simply men and women 's standpoints ) " .

= = = Cultural movements = = =

Riot grrls took an anti @-@ corporate stance of self @-@ sufficiency and self @-@ reliance . Riot grrrl 's emphasis on universal female identity and separatism often appears more closely allied with second @-@ wave feminism than with the third wave . The movement encouraged and made " adolescent girls ' standpoints central " , allowing them to express themselves fully . Lipstick feminism is a cultural feminist movement that attempts to respond to the backlash of second @-@ wave radical feminism of the 1960s and 1970s by reclaiming symbols of " feminine " identity such as make @-@ up , suggestive clothing and having a sexual allure as valid and empowering personal choices .

= = Sexuality = =

Feminist views on sexuality vary , and have differed by historical period and by cultural context . Feminist attitudes to female sexuality have taken a few different directions . Matters such as the sex industry , sexual representation in the media , and issues regarding consent to sex under conditions of male dominance have been particularly controversial among feminists . This debate has culminated in the late 1970s and the 1980s , in what came to be known as the feminist sex wars , which pitted anti @-@ pornography feminism against sex @-@ positive feminism , and parts of the feminist movement were deeply divided by these debates . Feminists have taken a variety of positions on different aspects of the sexual revolution from the 1960s and 70s . Over the course of the 1970s , a large number of influential women accepted lesbian and bisexual women as part of feminism .

= = = Sex industry = = =

Opinions on the sex industry are diverse . Feminists critical of the sex industry generally see it as the exploitative result of patriarchal social structures which reinforce sexual and cultural attitudes complicit in rape and sexual harassment . Alternately , feminists who support at least part of the sex industry argue that it can be a medium of feminist expression and a means for women to take control of their sexuality .

Feminist views of pornography range from condemnation of pornography as a form of violence against women , to an embracing of some forms of pornography as a medium of feminist expression . Feminists ' views on prostitution vary , but many of these perspectives can be loosely arranged into an overarching standpoint that is generally either critical or supportive of prostitution and sex work .

= = = Affirming female sexual autonomy = = =

For feminists , a woman 's right to control her own sexuality is a key issue . Feminists such as Catharine MacKinnon argue that women have very little control over their own bodies , with female sexuality being largely controlled and defined by men in patriarchal societies . Feminists argue that sexual violence committed by men is often rooted in ideologies of male sexual entitlement , and that these systems grant women very few legitimate options to refuse sexual advances . In many

cultures , men do not believe that a woman has the right to reject a man 's sexual advances or to make an autonomous decision about participating in sex . Feminists argue that all cultures are , in one way or another , dominated by ideologies that largely deny women the right to decide how to express their sexuality , because men under patriarchy feel entitled to define sex on their own terms . This entitlement can take different forms , depending on the culture . In many parts of the world , especially in conservative and religious cultures , marriage is regarded as an institution which requires a wife to be sexually available at all times , virtually without limit ; thus , forcing or coercing sex on a wife is not considered a crime or even an abusive behavior . In more liberal cultures , this entitlement takes the form of a general sexualization of the whole culture . This is played out in the sexual objectification of women , with pornography and other forms of sexual entertainment creating the fantasy that all women exist solely for men 's sexual pleasure , and that women are readily available and desiring to engage in sex at any time , with any man , on a man 's terms .

= = Science = =

Sandra Harding says that the " moral and political insights of the women 's movement have inspired social scientists and biologists to raise critical questions about the ways traditional researchers have explained gender , sex and relations within and between the social and natural worlds . " Some feminists , such as Ruth Hubbard and Evelyn Fox Keller , criticize traditional scientific discourse as being historically biased towards a male perspective . A part of the feminist research agenda is the examination of the ways in which power inequities are created or reinforced in scientific and academic institutions . Physicist Lisa Randall , appointed to a task force at Harvard by then @-@ president Lawrence Summers after his controversial discussion of why women may be underrepresented in science and engineering , said , " I just want to see a whole bunch more women enter the field so these issues don 't have to come up anymore . "

Lynn Hankinson Nelson notes that feminist empiricists find fundamental differences between the experiences of men and women . Thus , they seek to obtain knowledge through the examination of the experiences of women , and to " uncover the consequences of omitting , misdescribing , or devaluing them " to account for a range of human experience . Another part of the feminist research agenda is the uncovering of ways in which power inequities are created or reinforced in society and in scientific and academic institutions . Furthermore , despite calls for greater attention to be paid to structures of gender inequity in the academic literature , structural analyses of gender bias rarely appear in highly cited psychological journals , especially in the commonly studied areas of psychology and personality .

One criticism of feminist epistemology is that it allows social and political values to influence its findings . Susan Haack also points out that feminist epistemology reinforces traditional stereotypes about women 's thinking ( as intuitive and emotional , etc . ) , Meera Nanda further cautions that this may in fact trap women within " traditional gender roles and help justify patriarchy " .

= = = Biology and gender = = =

Modern feminism challenges the biological essentialist view of gender . For example , Anne Fausto @-@ Sterling 's book , *Myths of Gender* , explores the assumptions embodied in scientific research that support a biologically essentialist view of gender . In *Delusions of Gender* , Cordelia Fine disputes scientific evidence that suggests that there is an innate biological difference between men 's and women 's minds , asserting instead that cultural and societal beliefs are the reason for differences between individuals that are commonly perceived as sex differences .

= = = Feminist psychology = = =

Feminism in psychology emerged as a critique of the dominant male outlook on psychological research where only male perspectives were studied with all male subjects . As women earned doctorates in psychology , females and their issues were introduced as legitimate topics of study .

Feminist psychology emphasizes social context , lived experience , and qualitative analysis . Projects such as Psychology 's Feminist Voices have emerged to catalogue the influence of feminist psychologists on the discipline .

= = Culture = =

= = = Architecture = = =

Gender @-@ based inquiries into and conceptualization of architecture have also come about , leading to feminism in modern architecture . Piyush Mathur coined the term " archigenderic " . Claiming that " architectural planning has an inextricable link with the defining and regulation of gender roles , responsibilities , rights , and limitations " , Mathur came up with that term " to explore ... the meaning of ' architecture ' in terms of gender " and " to explore the meaning of ' gender ' in terms of architecture " .

= = = Visual arts = = =

Corresponding with general developments within feminism , and often including such self @-@ organizing tactics as the consciousness @-@ raising group , the movement began in the 1960s and flourished throughout the 1970s . Jeremy Strick , director of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles , described the feminist art movement as " the most influential international movement of any during the postwar period " , and Peggy Phelan says that it " brought about the most far @-@ reaching transformations in both artmaking and art writing over the past four decades " . Feminist artist Judy Chicago , who created The Dinner Party , a set of vulva @-@ themed ceramic plates in the 1970s , said in 2009 to ARTnews , " There is still an institutional lag and an insistence on a male Eurocentric narrative . We are trying to change the future : to get girls and boys to realize that women 's art is not an exception ? it 's a normal part of art history . " A feminist approach to the visual arts has most recently developed through Cyberfeminism and the posthuman turn , giving voice to the ways " contemporary female artists are dealing with gender , social media and the notion of embodiment " .

= = = Literature = = =

The feminist movement produced both feminist fiction and non @-@ fiction , and created new interest in women 's writing . It also prompted a general reevaluation of women 's historical and academic contributions in response to the belief that women 's lives and contributions have been underrepresented as areas of scholarly interest . Much of the early period of feminist literary scholarship was given over to the rediscovery and reclamation of texts written by women . Studies like Dale Spender 's Mothers of the Novel ( 1986 ) and Jane Spencer 's The Rise of the Woman Novelist ( 1986 ) were ground @-@ breaking in their insistence that women have always been writing . Commensurate with this growth in scholarly interest , various presses began the task of reissuing long @-@ out @-@ of @-@ print texts . Virago Press began to publish its large list of 19th and early @-@ 20th @-@ century novels in 1975 and became one of the first commercial presses to join in the project of reclamation . In the 1980s Pandora Press , responsible for publishing Spender 's study , issued a companion line of 18th @-@ century novels written by women . More recently , Broadview Press continues to issue 18th- and 19th @-@ century novels , many hitherto out of print , and the University of Kentucky has a series of republications of early women 's novels . A Vindication of the Rights of Woman ( 1792 ) by Mary Wollstonecraft , is one of the earliest works of feminist philosophy . A Room of One 's Own ( 1929 ) by Virginia Woolf , is noted in its argument for both a literal and figural space for women writers within a literary tradition dominated by patriarchy .

The widespread interest in women 's writing is related to a general reassessment and expansion of



the literary canon . Interest in post @-@ colonial literatures , gay and lesbian literature , writing by people of colour , working people 's writing , and the cultural productions of other historically marginalized groups has resulted in a whole scale expansion of what is considered " literature " , and genres hitherto not regarded as " literary " , such as children 's writing , journals , letters , travel writing , and many others are now the subjects of scholarly interest . Most genres and subgenres have undergone a similar analysis , so that one now sees work on the " female gothic " or women 's science fiction .

According to Elyce Rae Helford , " Science fiction and fantasy serve as important vehicles for feminist thought , particularly as bridges between theory and practice . " Feminist science fiction is sometimes taught at the university level to explore the role of social constructs in understanding gender . Notable texts of this kind are Ursula K. Le Guin 's *The Left Hand of Darkness* ( 1969 ) , Joanna Russ ' *The Female Man* ( 1970 ) , Octavia Butler 's *Kindred* ( 1979 ) and Margaret Atwood 's *Handmaid 's Tale* ( 1985 ) .

= = = Music = = =

Women 's music ( or womyn 's music or wimmin 's music ) is the music by women , for women , and about women . The genre emerged as a musical expression of the second @-@ wave feminist movement as well as the labor , civil rights , and peace movements . The movement was started by lesbians such as Cris Williamson , Meg Christian , and Margie Adam , African @-@ American women activists such as Bernice Johnson Reagon and her group Sweet Honey in the Rock , and peace activist Holly Near . Women 's music also refers to the wider industry of women 's music that goes beyond the performing artists to include studio musicians , producers , sound engineers , technicians , cover artists , distributors , promoters , and festival organizers who are also women . Riot grrrl is an underground feminist hardcore punk movement described in the cultural movements section of this article .

Feminism became a principal concern of musicologists in the 1980s as part of the New Musicology . Prior to this , in the 1970s , musicologists were beginning to discover women composers and performers , and had begun to review concepts of canon , genius , genre and periodization from a feminist perspective . In other words , the question of how women musicians fit into traditional music history was now being asked . Through the 1980s and 1990s , this trend continued as musicologists like Susan McClary , Marcia Citron and Ruth Solie began to consider the cultural reasons for the marginalizing of women from the received body of work . Concepts such as music as gendered discourse ; professionalism ; reception of women 's music ; examination of the sites of music production ; relative wealth and education of women ; popular music studies in relation to women 's identity ; patriarchal ideas in music analysis ; and notions of gender and difference are among the themes examined during this time .

While the music industry has long been open to having women in performance or entertainment roles , women are much less likely to have positions of authority , such as being the leader of an orchestra . In popular music , while there are many women singers recording songs , there are very few women behind the audio console acting as music producers , the individuals who direct and manage the recording process .

= = = Cinema = = =

Feminist cinema , advocating or illustrating feminist perspectives , arose largely with the development of feminist film theory in the late ' 60s and early ' 70s . Women who were radicalized during the 1960s by political debate and sexual liberation ; but the failure of radicalism to produce substantive change for women galvanized them to form consciousness @-@ raising groups and set about analysing , from different perspectives , dominant cinema 's construction of women . Differences were particularly marked between feminists on either side of the Atlantic . 1972 saw the first feminist film festivals in the U.S. and U.K. as well as the first feminist film journal , *Women and Film* . Trailblazers from this period included Claire Johnston and Laura Mulvey , who also organised

the Women 's Event at the Edinburgh Film Festival . Other theorists making a powerful impact on feminist film include Teresa de Lauretis , Anneke Smelik and Kaja Silverman . Approaches in philosophy and psychoanalysis fuelled Feminist Film Criticism , Feminist Independent Film and Feminist Distribution .

It has been argued that there are two distinct approaches to independent , theoretically inspired feminist filmmaking . ' Deconstruction ' concerns itself with analysing and breaking down codes of mainstream cinema , aiming to create a different relationship between the spectator and dominant cinema . The second approach , a feminist counterculture , embodies feminine writing to investigate a specifically feminine cinematic language . Some recent criticism of ' feminist film ' approaches has centered around a Swedish rating system called the Bechdel test .

During the 1930s @-@ 1950s heyday of the big Hollywood studios , the status of women in the industry was abysmal and , while much has improved , many would argue that there is still much to be done . From art films by Sally Potter , Catherine Breillat , Claire Denis and Jane Campion to action movies by Kathryn Bigelow , women now have a stronger voice , but are only too aware of the still lingering gender gap .

= = Politics = =

Feminism had complex interactions with the major political movements of the twentieth century .

= = = Socialism = = =

Since the late nineteenth century some feminists have allied with socialism , whereas others have criticized socialist ideology for being insufficiently concerned about women 's rights . August Bebel , an early activist of the German Social Democratic Party ( SPD ) , published his work *Die Frau und der Sozialismus* , juxtaposing the struggle for equal rights between sexes with social equality in general . In 1907 there was an International Conference of Socialist Women in Stuttgart where suffrage was described as a tool of class struggle . Clara Zetkin of the SPD called for women 's suffrage to build a " socialist order , the only one that allows for a radical solution to the women 's question " .

In Britain , the women 's movement was allied with the Labour party . In the U.S. , Betty Friedan emerged from a radical background to take leadership . Radical Women is the oldest socialist feminist organization in the U.S. and is still active . During the Spanish Civil War , Dolores Ibárruri ( La Pasionaria ) led the Communist Party of Spain . Although she supported equal rights for women , she opposed women fighting on the front and clashed with the anarcha @-@ feminist *Mujeres Libres* .

= = = Fascism = = =

Fascism has been prescribed dubious stances on feminism by its practitioners and by women 's groups . Amongst other demands concerning social reform presented in the Fascist manifesto in 1919 was expanding the suffrage to all Italian citizens of age 18 and above , including women ( accomplished only in 1946 , after the defeat of fascism ) and eligibility for all to stand for office from age 25 . This demand was particularly championed by special Fascist women 's auxiliary groups such as the *fasci femminilli* and only partly realized in 1925 , under pressure from Prime Minister Benito Mussolini 's more conservative coalition partners .

Cyprian Blamires states that although feminists were among those who opposed the rise of Adolf Hitler , feminism has a complicated relationship with the Nazi movement as well . While Nazis glorified traditional notions of patriarchal society and its role for women , they claimed to recognize women 's equality in employment . However , Hitler and Mussolini declared themselves as opposed to feminism , and after the rise of Nazism in Germany in 1933 , there was a rapid dissolution of the political rights and economic opportunities that feminists had fought for during the pre @-@ war period and to some extent during the 1920s . Georges Duby et al. note that in practice fascist

society was hierarchical and emphasized male virility , with women maintaining a largely subordinate position . Blamires also notes that Neofascism has since the 1960s been hostile towards feminism and advocates that women accept " their traditional roles " .

= = = Civil rights movement and anti @-@ racism = = =

The civil rights movement has influenced and informed the feminist movement and vice versa . Many Western feminists adapted the language and theories of black equality activism and drew parallels between women 's rights and the rights of non @-@ white people . Despite the connections between the women 's and civil rights movements , some tension arose during the late 1960s and early 1970s as non @-@ white women argued that feminism was predominantly white and middle class , and did not understand and was not concerned with race issues . Similarly , some women argued that the civil rights movement had sexist elements and did not adequately address minority women 's concerns . These criticisms created new feminist social theories about the intersections of racism , classism , and sexism , and new feminisms , such as black feminism and Chicana feminism .

= = = Neoliberalism = = =

Neo @-@ liberalism has been criticized by feminist theory for having a negative effect on the female workforce population across the globe -especially in the global south . Masculinist assumptions and objectives continue to dominate economic and geopolitical thinking . Women 's experiences in non @-@ industrialized countries reveal often deleterious effects of modernization policies and undercut orthodox claims that development benefits everyone .

Proponents of neoliberalism have theorized that by increasing women 's participation in the workforce , there will be heightened economic progress , but feminist critics have noted that this participation alone does not further equality in gender relations. Neoliberalism has failed to address significant problems such as the devaluation of feminized labour , the structural privileging of men and masculinity , and the politicization of women 's subordination in the family and the workplace . The ' feminization of employment ' refers to a conceptual characterization of deteriorated and devalorized labour conditions that are less desirable , meaningful , safe and secure . Employers in the global south have perceptions about feminine labour and seek workers who are perceived to be undemanding , docile and willing to accept low wages . Social constructs about feminized labour have played a big part in this , for instance , employers often perpetuate ideas about women as ' secondary income earners to justify their lower rates of pay and not deserving of training or promotion .

= = Societal impact = =

The feminist movement has effected change in Western society , including women 's suffrage ; greater access to education ; more nearly equitable pay with men ; the right to initiate divorce proceedings ; the right of women to make individual decisions regarding pregnancy ( including access to contraceptives and abortion ) ; and the right to own property .

= = = Civil rights = = =

From the 1960s on , the campaign for women 's rights was met with mixed results in the U.S. and the U.K. Other countries of the EEC agreed to ensure that discriminatory laws would be phased out across the European Community .

Some feminist campaigning also helped reform attitudes to child sexual abuse . The view that young girls cause men to have sexual intercourse with them was replaced by that of men 's responsibility for their own conduct , the men being adults .

In the U.S. , the National Organization for Women ( NOW ) began in 1966 to seek women 's

equality , including through the Equal Rights Amendment ( ERA ) , which did not pass , although some states enacted their own . Reproductive rights in the U.S. centered on the court decision in Roe v. Wade enunciating a woman 's right to choose whether to carry a pregnancy to term . Western women gained more reliable birth control , allowing family planning and careers . The movement started in the 1910s in the U.S. under Margaret Sanger and elsewhere under Marie Stopes . In the final three decades of the 20th century , Western women knew a new freedom through birth control , which enabled women to plan their adult lives , often making way for both career and family .

The division of labor within households was affected by the increased entry of women into workplaces in the 20th century . Sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild found that , in two @-@ career couples , men and women , on average , spend about equal amounts of time working , but women still spend more time on housework , although Cathy Young responded by arguing that women may prevent equal participation by men in housework and parenting . Judith K. Brown writes , " Women are most likely to make a substantial contribution when subsistence activities have the following characteristics : the participant is not obliged to be far from home ; the tasks are relatively monotonous and do not require rapt concentration ; and the work is not dangerous , can be performed in spite of interruptions , and is easily resumed once interrupted . "

In international law , the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women ( CEDAW ) is an international convention adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and described as an international bill of rights for women . It came into force in those nations ratifying it .

== Jurisprudence ==

Feminist jurisprudence is a branch of jurisprudence that examines the relationship between women and law . It addresses questions about the history of legal and social biases against women and about the enhancement of their legal rights .

Feminist jurisprudence signifies a reaction to the philosophical approach of modern legal scholars , who typically see law as a process for interpreting and perpetuating a society 's universal , gender @-@ neutral ideals . Feminist legal scholars claim that this fails to acknowledge women 's values or legal interests or the harms that they may anticipate or experience .

== Language ==

Proponents of gender @-@ neutral language argue that the use of gender @-@ specific language often implies male superiority or reflects an unequal state of society . According to The Handbook of English Linguistics , generic masculine pronouns and gender @-@ specific job titles are instances " where English linguistic convention has historically treated men as prototypical of the human species . "

== Theology ==

Feminist theology is a movement that reconsiders the traditions , practices , scriptures , and theologies of religions from a feminist perspective . Some of the goals of feminist theology include increasing the role of women among the clergy and religious authorities , reinterpreting male @-@ dominated imagery and language about God , determining women 's place in relation to career and motherhood , and studying images of women in the religion 's sacred texts .

Christian feminism is a branch of feminist theology which seeks to interpret and understand Christianity in light of the equality of women and men , and that this interpretation is necessary for a complete understanding of Christianity . While there is no standard set of beliefs among Christian feminists , most agree that God does not discriminate on the basis of sex , and are involved in issues such as the ordination of women , male dominance and the balance of parenting in Christian marriage , claims of moral deficiency and inferiority of women compared to men , and the overall

treatment of women in the church . The Christian Bible refers to women in positions of authority in Judges 4 : 4 and Kings 22 : 14 .

Islamic feminists advocate women 's rights , gender equality , and social justice grounded within an Islamic framework . Advocates seek to highlight the deeply rooted teachings of equality in the Quran and encourage a questioning of the patriarchal interpretation of Islamic teaching through the Quran , hadith ( sayings of Muhammad ) , and sharia ( law ) towards the creation of a more equal and just society . Although rooted in Islam , the movement 's pioneers have also utilized secular and Western feminist discourses and recognize the role of Islamic feminism as part of an integrated global feminist movement .

Buddhist feminism is a movement that seeks to improve the religious , legal , and social status of women within Buddhism . It is an aspect of feminist theology which seeks to advance and understand the equality of men and women morally , socially , spiritually , and in leadership from a Buddhist perspective . The Buddhist feminist Rita Gross describes Buddhist feminism as " the radical practice of the co @-@ humanity of women and men . "

Jewish feminism is a movement that seeks to improve the religious , legal , and social status of women within Judaism and to open up new opportunities for religious experience and leadership for Jewish women . The main issues for early Jewish feminists in these movements were the exclusion from the all @-@ male prayer group or minyan , the exemption from positive time @-@ bound mitzvot , and women 's inability to function as witnesses and to initiate divorce . Many Jewish women have become leaders of feminist movements throughout their history .

Dianic Wicca is a feminist @-@ centered theology .

Secular or atheist feminists have engaged in feminist criticism of religion , arguing that many religions have oppressive rules towards women and misogynistic themes and elements in religious texts .

= = = Patriarchy = = =

Patriarchy is a social system in which society is organized around male authority figures . In this system fathers have authority over women , children , and property . It implies the institutions of male rule and privilege , and is dependent on female subordination . Most forms of feminism characterize patriarchy as an unjust social system that is oppressive to women . Carole Pateman argues that the patriarchal distinction " between masculinity and femininity is the political difference between freedom and subjection . " In feminist theory the concept of patriarchy often includes all the social mechanisms that reproduce and exert male dominance over women . Feminist theory typically characterizes patriarchy as a social construction , which can be overcome by revealing and critically analyzing its manifestations . Some radical feminists have proposed that because patriarchy is too deeply rooted in society , separatism is the only viable solution . Other feminists have criticized these views as being anti @-@ men .

= = = Men and masculinity = = =

Feminist theory has explored the social construction of masculinity and its implications for the goal of gender equality . The social construct of masculinity is seen by feminism as problematic because it associates males with aggression and competition , and reinforces patriarchal and unequal gender relations . Patriarchal cultures are criticized for " limiting forms of masculinity " available to men and thus narrowing their life choices . Some feminists are engaged with men 's issues activism , such as bringing attention to male rape and spousal battery and addressing negative social expectations for men .

Male participation in feminism is encouraged by feminists and is seen as an important strategy for achieving full societal commitment to gender equality . Many male feminists and pro @-@ feminists are active in both women 's rights activism , feminist theory , and masculinity studies . However , some argue that while male engagement with feminism is necessary , it is problematic because of the ingrained social influences of patriarchy in gender relations . The consensus today in feminist

and masculinity theories is that both genders can and should cooperate to achieve the larger goals of feminism . It has been proposed that , in large part , this can be achieved through considerations of women 's agency .

= = Reactions = =

Different groups of people have responded to feminism , and both men and women have been among its supporters and critics . Among American university students , for both men and women , support for feminist ideas is more common than self @-@ identification as a feminist . The US media tends to portray feminism negatively and feminists " are less often associated with day @-@ to @-@ day work / leisure activities of regular women . " However , as recent research has demonstrated , as people are exposed to self @-@ identified feminists and to discussions relating to various forms of feminism , their own self @-@ identification with feminism increases . Roy Baumeister has criticized feminists who " look only at the top of society and draw conclusions about society as a whole . Yes , there are mostly men at the top . But if you look at the bottom , really at the bottom , you 'll find mostly men there , too . "

= = = Pro @-@ feminism = = =

Pro @-@ feminism is the support of feminism without implying that the supporter is a member of the feminist movement . The term is most often used in reference to men who are actively supportive of feminism . The activities of pro @-@ feminist men 's groups include anti @-@ violence work with boys and young men in schools , offering sexual harassment workshops in workplaces , running community education campaigns , and counseling male perpetrators of violence . Pro @-@ feminist men also may be involved in men 's health , activism against pornography including anti @-@ pornography legislation , men 's studies , and the development of gender equity curricula in schools . This work is sometimes in collaboration with feminists and women 's services , such as domestic violence and rape crisis centers .

= = = Anti @-@ feminism and criticism of feminism = = =

Anti @-@ feminism is opposition to feminism in some or all of its forms .

In the nineteenth century , anti @-@ feminism was mainly focused on opposition to women 's suffrage . Later , opponents of women 's entry into institutions of higher learning argued that education was too great a physical burden on women . Other anti @-@ feminists opposed women 's entry into the labor force , or their right to join unions , to sit on juries , or to obtain birth control and control of their sexuality .

Some people have opposed feminism on the grounds that they believe it is contrary to traditional values or religious beliefs . These anti @-@ feminists argue , for example , that social acceptance of divorce and non @-@ married women is wrong and harmful , and that men and women are fundamentally different and thus their different traditional roles in society should be maintained . Other anti @-@ feminists oppose women 's entry into the workforce , political office , and the voting process , as well as the lessening of male authority in families .

Writers such as Camille Paglia , Christina Hoff Sommers , Jean Bethke Elshtain , Elizabeth Fox @-@ Genovese , Lisa Lucile Owens and Daphne Patai oppose some forms of feminism , though they identify as feminists . They argue , for example , that feminism often promotes misandry and the elevation of women 's interests above men 's , and criticize radical feminist positions as harmful to both men and women . Daphne Patai and Noretta Koertge argue that the term " anti @-@ feminist " is used to silence academic debate about feminism . Lisa Lucile Owens argues that certain rights extended exclusively to women are patriarchal because they relieve women from exercising a crucial aspect of their moral agency .

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= = = Multimedia and documents = = =

Feminism on In Our Time at the BBC . ( listen now )

Early Video on the Emancipation of Women , documentary filmed ca . 1930 , which includes footage from the 1890s

Documents from the Women 's Liberation Movement , Special Collections Library , Duke University