

Green Feminism

WAVES

OF FEMINISM

The division of feminism into waves is particularly popular in the United States, where special attention is paid to the movement's relationship to racial justice during each wave. European feminism has tended to emphasise issues such as social class.

Of course, women's rights movements – or feminist movements, as we can call them today – **existed far before the period covered here**. People have been fighting for gender equality both alone and together at various points of human history, and they will continue to do so in the future.

Although it was not called feminism at the time, feminism started with the acknowledgement of fundamental differences between women's rights and men's rights.

FIRST WAVE

LATE 1700 – MID-1900

FIRST WAVE

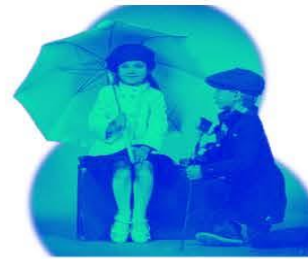
- Focused on fundamental rights, widely achieved universal and equal suffrage
- These achieved rights were nevertheless often limited to white and/or wealthy women



Right to
own property



Right for
education



Right for
custody of
children



Civil rights

Early works:

- *A Vindication of the Rights of the Women* by **Mary Wollstonecraft** (1792)
- *Dclaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Female Citizen* by **Olympe de Gouges** (1791)
- Seminal feminist work by **John Stuart Mill** (1869) *The Subjection of Women* focused on women's suffrage

“All women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self-will, and government by self-control, but submission and yielding to the control of others.”

- John Stuart Mill

Shaking the stiff gender roles.

SECOND WAVE

MID-1900S

Second wave in the United States centred around the objective of freeing housewives from the kitchen.

The objective was not shared everywhere: for example, being late to urbanise and industrialise, in Finland women worked alongside men in the farms. Instead, the second wave feminism in Finland demanded better opportunities for women to work and for men to express their feelings!

In her feminist classic, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), **Betty Friedan** discusses the frustrating nature of housework, the way monotonous and even simple chores fill all the time available in the day, and the way being buried in housework dulls the minds of competent women.



**“Men are not the enemy
but the fellow victims. The
real enemy is the women’s
denigration of themselves.”**

- Betty Friedan

Linking the gender factor with other oppressive factors.

THIRD WAVE

1990 ->



THIRD WAVE introduced intersectionality.

Intersectionality means, that feminism advocates not only for women's rights but also for an end of discrimination based on skin colour, class, sexual orientation, or disability. People are a sum of many characteristics that either cause them privilege or expose them to oppression.

Third-wave feminism embraced the individualism and diversity of women.

Riot grrrl - an underground movement began in United States and combined feminism, punk music and politics
Rebecca Walker - US writer, feminist & activist first introduced the term 'third wave'
Kimberlé Crenshaw - civil rights advocate, academic and lawyer developed intersectional theory
Judith Butler - an American philosopher and gender theorist whose work has influenced third-wave feminism and queer theory

**“The better we understand
how identity and power work together
from one context to another, the less
likely our movements for change are
to fracture.”**

- Kimberlé Crenshaw

On the surface, present-day feminism may simply look like silly online humour to many people. Of course it is more.

FOURTH WAVE

2010 ->

FOURTH WAVE

- With objectives largely the same in the third wave, but the tools of the 21st century
- Bypassing the rigid structures for communication by use of social media; based on sharing experiences of oppression



Empowerment



Social media



Intersectionality

Examples of social-media-accelerated intersectional movements of 21st century

- *#MeToo* – empowerment of sexually assaulted people through empathy; visual demonstration of victim numbers
- *#FreeTheNipple* – cultural and social liberation of female body, including challenging the distorted ethics of social media platforms
- Also *Black Lives Matter*, even though not a feminist movement per se, represents the same intersectional human-rights mobilisation with considerable online acceleration

“We use the term ‘empowerment through empathy’. And ‘Me Too’ is so powerful, because somebody had said it to me and it changed the trajectory of my healing process once I heard that.”

- Tarana Burke

activist, author, founder of #MeToo

CRITIQUE

While useful in many situations, the “wave” concept has its limitations too:

- It is very Western- and particularly US-centric, ignoring the distinct struggles and successes of other feminist activists around Europe and the world
- It glosses over diversity within feminist movements, and different streams such as mainstream, radical, and cultural feminism
- As a metaphor, it can reduce each wave to stereotypes and suggest sharp divisions between each generation, when in fact we also see continuity and building on the past