

History of feminism critical thinking

[Sociology](#), [Feminism](#)



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The three periods of feminism development

In general, the history of feminism can be described as the narrative of the ideologies and movements which are aimed at establishing, defining and defending equal economic social and political rights for women. Feminists all over the world have always differed in goals, intentions and causes depending on culture, country and time. Irrespective of these differences, most western historians of feminist's interests have always considered all movements and acts that push for women's rights as feminists movements. History of the modern western feminist is divided into three periods of times. These periods vary slightly in their aims basing on prior progress. The first wave in the nineteenth century and some part of the twentieth century concentrated on the need to of women to be identified as full citizens, giving them the freedom and rights to vote.

Second wave that featured in 1950s. Women were undergoing a lot of conflict considering the duties they were expected to play. They were to play the role of mothers and wife. This was very unfair and discriminative. For

those who had acquired higher levels of education they would find something reasonable to do rather than being a mere wife. The second wave came in at this point to take care of the interests of women and to ensure that their voices were heard. The main struggles were focused on pay equity, affirmative action, domestic violence, rape, reproductive choice and, sexism and pornography in the media. The major fight involved reproductive choice where there was a demand to access and, information about birth control. There was clear gender discrimination when it came to birth control because it was illegal in to sell or promote birth control in countries like Canada. The struggle to decriminalize abortion was another factor. Abortion is a criminal offence and making it legal is violating the female gender.

The third wave came in the 1990s as a response to the shortcomings of the second wave. Even though it made a significant difference, the second wave had its backlash that was meant to be repaired by the third wave feminists.

Sisterhood is still Powerful

Coming up with the slogan “ Sisterhood is still” powerful was a major move in the fight of gender inequality. It is evident that most women had a problem with their self assertion and self-esteem. Females took less initiative, spoke less and when they spoke no one could hear them clearly. This displays inferiority and lack of confidence in within them. They were discouraged even by their own professors in school by being told that they were not as good as the male students. The movement of sisterhood is still powerful is a wonderful opportunity for women to cohesively come together and fight this inequality. It is clearly shown that women were violated psychologically even in school by their own teachers.

The enlightenment age was characterised by flowering of philosophical reasoning and secular intellectual reasoning. The rights of women were defended by enlightenment philosophers such as Catherine Macaulay and Mary Wollstonecraft. The most identified feminist writer at this time was Mary Wollstonecraft. One of her works, “ A vindication of the rights of Woman” was unambiguously referred to as feminist. By modern standards, this author compares women to nobility. The society has a stereotypic way in which it perceives women. They are seen as fragile, coddled and in great danger of moral and intellectual sloth. The biggest problem that arises is that both genders contribute almost equally to inequality. Women are attributed to certain features that make them look weak, and they comfortably settle within this description. To ensure that the necessary social changes take place, both genders need to be well educated on the need to appreciate gender equality.

Better working conditions and female education rights

The nineteenth and twentieth century feminist activity was aimed at winning women’s suffrage, better working conditions for women, female education rights and the removal of gender double standards. Educating the female gender is one major factor which every society must consider in the fight of gender equality. Educating the girl child opens a lot of ways for herself and to the society in general. An educated mind will always find a way to give back to the society. Making the girl child educated gives them the power to express them self, makes them aware of their rights, keeps them informed in of the legal channels to be followed in case their rights are violated and make them independent. The current world is making an effort to ensure

that there is equity in the education system for both genders. For example, several African countries give the females a lower cut off point entry into the university as compared to the males. This is done to balance admission numbers into these institutions to maximise the number of female students who access university education.

In the early twentieth century, women began to access more job opportunities. Women engaged into the labour market fully in World War 1, in large numbers. This made them discover abilities they possessed. This war also left a lot without their husbands so they had to step up and take care of their families on their own. Women being denied the opportunity of jobs did not only affect them but also pulled back the economy of the society. Many of our women are bright and smart with different qualities. Putting them in the labour market has a positive effect on the economy of the country.

CONCLUSION

Up to date, gender discrimination still exists within our society. The major question still remains, how the global world can achieve gender equity and women empowerment. This is a global situation, but it has a solution. The global community needs good leadership and political will to in order to do away with the issues of gender inequality. We need leaders who are keen not on their personal interests, but on the interests of the people they serve. Gender's inequality is deeply rooted within attitudes, market forces and societal institutions, therefore, only political commitment is essential in instituting policies that can effectively trigger social change within the global community.

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