

# FEMINISM: WE SHOULD ALL BE FEMINISTS!



## FROM FEMINISM TO ECOFEMINISM

Can you be a feminist if you consume dairy products?

### FEMINISM IS STRIVING...

for a world in which women and men have equal moral status, equal moral rights and equal social respectability.	to end the subjection of women.
for a society where both women and men can develop their capabilities to the fullest.	for a society where women can be free and do as they please <i>without harming other sentient beings including future generations.</i>

### ? WHY FEMINISM ?

- ? The project of emancipation is not completed. Examples of barriers are the glass ceiling, sexism, violence against women, forced marriage, 'honour' killings and unequal career opportunities.
- ? Special attention to women from Islamic or Hindu backgrounds because of risk of suppression. There is an urgent need for mixed mandatory secular science-based, liberal education.
- ? There is no guarantee that women's freedom in the West will remain. Vigilance is necessary.
- ? Feminism should be global and support the rights of women worldwide.

### ESSENTIALS OF FEMINISM

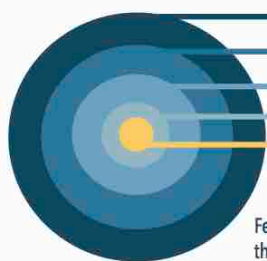
- Equal rights for women, including the right to vote, the right to stand for office and equal pay for equal work.
- Equal science-based, liberal education for women and men.
- Equal opportunities for women.
- Sexual education and freedom.
- Right to contraceptives.
- The right to live with the person(s) you love.
- Right to abortion.
- The right to divorce freely and easily.
- Stimulating the full flourishing of the individual (capabilities approach).
- Importance of individual liberty including the freedom for women to dress as they wish.

### PROBLEM OF ESSENTIALISM

There are statistical differences between women and men, but from this it cannot be deduced that there is a difference in moral standing.

### FEMINISM &

### THE EXPANDING MORAL CIRCLE



- Non-human animals
- Future generations
- LGBTQ-rights
- Women's rights
- Androcentrism

Feminism is part of the project of the moral progress of expanding the moral circle.

### CHALLENGES TO FEMINISM

- Multiculturalism & relativism**  
Multiculturalism is bad for women because it tolerates intolerance towards women, e.g. forced marriages. (Susan Moller Okin)
- Pseudoscience**  
Science itself is gender neutral. There is no 'male' science. However, (male) scientists may have a male gender bias.
- Postcolonial guilt**  
White western feminists versus (black) womanists.
- Small perspective**  
Me-feminism versus global feminism, such as Global Sustainability Goals. ('I am OK, so why should I care about feminism?')
- Fear for violence**  
In many cases women cannot speak out because of threat and fear of (male) violence.
- Ecofeminism**  
Expanding feminism towards ecofeminism by acknowledging other kinds of oppression (by men), such as non-human animals. Ecofeminism thus includes veganism. (Carol Adams)

### SOME HOTLY DEBATED ISSUES

- **Prostitution** Should we strive for humane working conditions of sex workers or is there a fundamental moral problem with prostitution?
- **Abortion** There still is strong opposition to abortion and the legalization of abortion. Feminists need to work for the global availability of legal abortion.
- **Female sexuality** Many cultures and religions are obsessed with suppressing and controlling female sexuality and nudity.
- **Pornography** Does pornography lead to rape, sexual violence and a distorted view of sexuality? Is (all) pornography degrading for women? Or is it liberating sexuality?
- **Femicide** The killing of females because they are females. (Diana Russell)

### OBSTACLES

- **Patriarchism**  
Men dominating women.
- **Sexism**  
There is sexism in many forms, even in feminist societies like the Netherlands.
- **Paternalism**  
Other people telling you what to do. In many cultures women have much less freedom than men.
- **Religion**  
Religions have a strong paternalistic tendency to limit the freedom of women.
- **Misogynic Customs**  
Female genital mutilation, 'honour' killings, female chastity & sexuality.
- **Culture**  
Fixed gender roles are difficult to challenge and change.

### ANTIFEMINISM

1. Claim that feminist theories of patriarchy and disadvantages suffered by women in society are incorrect or exaggerated.
2. Claim that feminism as a movement encourages misandry and seeks to harm or oppress men.
3. Hostility towards women's rights.
4. Extreme version of masculinism (machismo), in which, 'men are in crisis because of the feminization of society'.
5. 'Feminazi' is a pejorative term used by fervent antifeminists, mainly American Christian conservatives.

### HERSTORY

Protofeminism: Protesting against male dominance

1700	<i>Some Reflections on Marriage</i> by Mary Astell. 'If all men are born free, how is it that all women are born slaves?'
1791	<i>Déclaration des Droits de la Femme et de la Citoyenne</i> . by Olympe de Gouges.
1792	<i>A Vindication of the Rights of Women</i> by Mary Wollstonecraft.
1825	William Thompson states in <i>Appeal of One Half of the Human Race, Women, Against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men, to Retain Them in Political, and Thence in Civil and Domestic Slavery</i> that women are treated as slaves.
1843	<i>A Plea for Women</i> by Marian Kirkland Reid.
ca 1850	Elizabeth Smith Miller establishes the Rational Dress Movement against restrictive dress for women.
<b>First Wave: The right to vote</b>	
1859	<i>On Liberty</i> by John Stuart Mill.
1869	<i>On the Subjection of Women</i> by John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor. 'Marriage is the only form of slavery permitted by law.'
1893	New Zealand is the first country to grant women the right to vote.
1895	<i>The Women's Bible</i> by Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Feminist interpretation of the Bible.
1915	Publication of the utopian novel <i>Herland</i> by Charlotte Perkins Gilman about a peaceful and happy society of only women.
1903	Woman's Social and Political Union established by suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst. 'Deeds, not words!'.
1918	<i>Married Love</i> , controversial book about sexual education by Marie Stopes.
<b>Second Wave: Social and sexual liberation</b>	
1920	<i>What Every Girl Should Know</i> by Margaret Sanger: sexual education for girls.
1929	<i>A Room of One's Own</i> , Virginia Woolf: 'A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction'.
1948	The Kinsey Reports, <i>Sexual Behavior in the Human Female</i> . Challenged conventional beliefs about sexuality because they discussed subjects that had previously been taboo.
1948	Eleanor Roosevelt chaired the committee that established the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which grants equal rights to women and men. Article 1: 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.'
1949	<i>The Second Sex</i> by Simone de Beauvoir. 'Woman has always been man's dependant, if not his slave; the two sexes have never shared the world in equality.'
1957	Treaty of Rome: Equal pay for equal work principle.
1962	Introduction of the contraceptive pill.
1963	<i>In The Feminine Mystique</i> Betty Friedan argued against the traditional expectation for women to be full-time homemakers.
1970	<i>Sexual Politics</i> by Kate Millet. 'A sexual revolution begins with the emancipation of women, who are the chief victims of patriarchy, and also with the ending of homosexual oppression.'
1975	United Nations International Women's Year.
1979	<i>Women in Western Political Thought</i> by philosopher Susan Moller Okin: the herstory of philosophy.
1981	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW): 'To ensure elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises.'
1984	Legalization of abortion in the Netherlands.
1990	<i>Women, Art &amp; Society</i> by Whitney Chadwick on artherstory.
<b>Fourth Wave: Ecofeminism</b>	
1990	<i>The Sexual Politics of Meat. A feminist-vegetarian critical theory</i> by Carol J. Adams links feminism to veganism because both animals and women are victims of male dominance and suppression.
1993	In <i>Ecofeminism</i> Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies link feminism with ecology and state that paternalistic/capitalistic society has led to a harmful split between nature and culture.
2000	In <i>Women and Human Development</i> Martha Nussbaum argues that the capability approach focuses on what individuals are able to do.
2001	Legalization of same-sex marriage in the Netherlands.
<b>Third Wave: Emancipation of non-Western women</b>	
2002	In <i>The Son's Factory</i> Ayaan Hirsi Ali rails against the subjection of women in Islam.
2008	Feminist activist group FEMEN by Anna Hutsol from Ukraine: 'My body is mine, not somebody's honour.'
2009	In <i>Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows</i> psychologist Melanie Joy introduces the concept of carnism which is the hidden ideology that justifies institutionalized violence against non-human animals.
2011	In <i>Eradicating Ecocide</i> Polly Higgins, 'Lawyer for Planet Earth', proposes laws to stop corporations and political practices to plunder the environment.
2014	Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie argues for a powerful and outspoken feminism in her TED-talk and book <i>We Should All Be Feminists</i> : 'I am angry. We should all be angry. Anger has a long history of bringing about positive change.'
2015	UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

