



## Lesson 92

### Feminism: The Three Waves

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Previous to 1989, there were three important movements. There was the Civil Rights movement, which fought for racial equality, there was Second Wave Feminism, which fought for gender equality, and then there was Stonewall, which fought for LGBTQ+ equality. Even though the formalization of the message dealt with LGBTQ+ equality, we still have things to learn about gender equality. In part one of this 2-part series on Feminism, we are going to look at the three waves of feminism; when they took place, and what events sparked their beginning and end.

## **First Wave Feminism**

### **1848: Beginning of the first wave**

The first wave of feminism began, roughly, around 1848. In 1848, there was a convention in (Seneca Falls) New York; it is called the Seneca Falls Convention today, but at the time it was called the Woman's Rights Convention. It was the first convention of its kind. This convention was only two days long- on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of July. It was not advertised widely yet around 300 people were present when it started. On the first day only women were allowed to join, but everyone was welcome on the second day (and some men even spoke that day). The convention was organized mostly by Elizabeth C. Stanton and Lucretia Mott; they met in 1840 when they were not allowed into the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London. Mary M'Clintock, Martha Coffin Wright (Mott's sister), and Jane Hunt (in M'Clintock's family) were also involved in organizing the convention; all of the women were abolitionists. Stanton was the main writer behind the Declaration of Sentiments which was the main point of the convention; it is modeled closely after the Declaration of Independence. On the first day she read the declaration: it has two parts, the first part was 19 injustices that women faced at that time (like the fact that they were basically denied an education and any money they earned belonged to their husband), the second part was 12 resolutions or things that women wanted, to help fix the previous problems. On the second day of the convention the 12 resolutions were voted on- 11 passed unanimously. The only one that did not was resolution 9: the right to vote. Many of the people there didn't like that idea and the resolution barely passed. The convention was ridiculed because of that resolution, but the Declaration of Sentiments continued to be used by them and suffrage became the main thing the women fought for. On August 2<sup>nd</sup> (1848) the convention convened again to affirm their positions and for decades after that suffragettes continued to fight for their rights. So, the first wave of feminism in the United States began with the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848.

### **1920: End of the first wave**

The first wave of feminism ended in 1920. On August 18, 1920, the United States Congress passed the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment which gave women the right to vote. It said, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex". It didn't single out white women, but black women still weren't able to vote due to discrimination. "After the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the momentum of the first wave began to dwindle. For many, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was the major legislative achievement they had been fighting for," *Women's History*.

## Second Wave Feminism

### 1963: Beginning of the second wave

The second wave of feminism began in 1963. The second wave of feminism was a fight against the “domesticity” of women after World War II. During the war, about 350,000 [American] women joined the military. They became nurses, repaired airplanes, drove trucks, and performed other jobs in the military. But after the war, sexism set in. Men expected women to return to working in the home, while they handled all of the business; this is what we call “domesticity”. In 1961, President Kennedy formed the “President's Commission on the Status of Women” (PCSW). This commission was chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt; and it gave the government a motivation to take gender equality in legislation seriously. However, the formation of the PCSW is not marked as the beginning of the second wave of feminism- that title is reserved for the book *The Feminine Mystique* of 1963. In 1963, Betty Friedman published a book titled *The Feminine Mystique*. The book argued against the post-World War II belief that women found “fulfillment” in domestic life- being housewives. She described how this wasted their potential, and among the women she surveyed, many of them were dissatisfied. This, Friedman called, the “problem that has no name.” *The Feminine Mystique* was a bestseller, it was translated into over twelve languages and sold more than 3 million copies during Friedman's lifetime. This book is what began the second wave of feminism- when people began to fight for equality. Some of the victories of second wave feminism include the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. So, second wave feminism began in 1963 when the book *The Feminine Mystique* was published.

### 1968-1970: Protests

Second wave feminists protested a lot for their rights, and a major protest took place in 1968- in the middle of second wave feminism. In 1968, there was a beauty pageant in New Jersey: the Miss America Pageant. A group of about 13 women, who were radical feminists (called the New York Radical Women) in New York would meet and talk about all of the sexism in their lives as well as around them. One day someone brought up the upcoming pageant and they decided to organize a protest because they could see the sexism in it. It was the first protest that they organized and thought of completely by themselves. They talked to the news stations and gave out leaflets to tell everyone about the protest; when they got to the bus station where they had rented two buses to take women from New York to New Jersey there were about 300 women there- so they had to rent more buses. They had the protest right outside of the building where the pageant was, and when they arrived there was a large diverse group of women from all over the country. The pageant was on September 7<sup>th</sup>, but it was hot; they stood out front all day, holding signs, giving out leaflets and buttons, and throwing beauty products into the “Freedom Trash Can”. They even had a real sheep representing the women in the pageant- how they were just being told what to do. While the pageant was happening (and live on TV) they sent in a few women who went into the balcony, and hung a large banner that said “Women's Liberation” over the edge. Two years later there was another pageant and another protests by feminists. In 1970, the Miss World pageant took place in London; the women that organized the protest were part of Britain's Women's Liberation Movement. There weren't that many when they came up with the plan, and women had protested outside of previous Miss World pageants, but this time they wanted to get inside. The day of the pageant some other unrelated group set off a bomb there, but the pageant was not canceled.

About 60 women bought tickets, dressed up so they could fit in, and went. They planned to throw rotten vegetables, flour bombs, and leaflets on stage when all the contestants were up there. This event was live on TV too and over 100 million people were watching all over the world. But during the event the host was being so sexist (calling women cows) that one of the protesters just started to shout and throw what she brought- the other protesters all over the building followed. The women were quickly escorted out, but they had succeeded in disrupting the pageant. Both of these protests- in 1968 and 1970- happened under the history of second wave feminism as women were fighting to end all forms of sexism.

## **1989: Intersectionality**

In 1989, the term intersectionality was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw. According to the Oxford dictionary, intersectionality means “the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage”. Basically, it’s the concept that the problems a white woman faces are not the same as a black woman. And why is that? Because there are levels of discrimination and they overlap. From the example above, a white woman faces sexism. But a black woman faces not only sexism but racism as well, which is something that the white woman will never face. There’s the issue of homosexuality as well. A black heterosexual woman will not face the same issues as a black homosexual woman. The former will experience racism and sexism while the latter will experience racism, sexism, and homophobia. That’s what intersectionality is: it’s pointing out that there are multiple levels of discrimination, and the discrimination one class of people experience can be totally different than that of another even if they’re the same race or gender.

## **1989: End of the second wave**

The second wave of feminism ended in 1989. In 1982, there was an accounting firm called Price Waterhouse. Ann Hopkins worked there as senior manager in an office of partnership, and in 1982 she proposed for partnership. Hopkins was praised by other partners as an "outstanding professional" and had a "strong character, independence, and integrity." But despite this, her partnership was put on hold for a year. Ann Hopkins met with the supervisor of her department, Thomas Beyer, and he said that to increase her chances of partnership, she needed to "walk more femininely, talk more femininely, dress more femininely, wear make-up, have her hair styled, and wear jewelry." He told her this because she didn’t conform to feminine stereotypes; some co-workers described her as aggressive, foul-mouthed, demanding, and impatient with other staff members. Hopkins resigned from the firm after she was rejected for a second year, and then sued the firm saying they violated her rights under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The District Court ruled that she was indeed discriminated against, but the court didn’t arrange for her to receive compensation because of her poor relationship skills that contributed to her denial of partnership. The case was then affirmed by the Court of Appeals, but this time they said that Price Waterhouse wouldn’t be liable if they could prove they would have denied Hopkins partnership even if they hadn’t discriminated. The case then went to the Supreme Court, and on May 1, 1989 the court ruled in her favor. They concluded that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act that outlawed discrimination based on whether someone is a man or woman, also outlaws gender stereotyping. This is a landmark court decision, and it further outlawed sexism. Previously we saw how the

second wave of feminism began in 1963; in 1989, the second wave ended, when feminists got what they were fighting for- greater equality.

## **Third Wave Feminism**

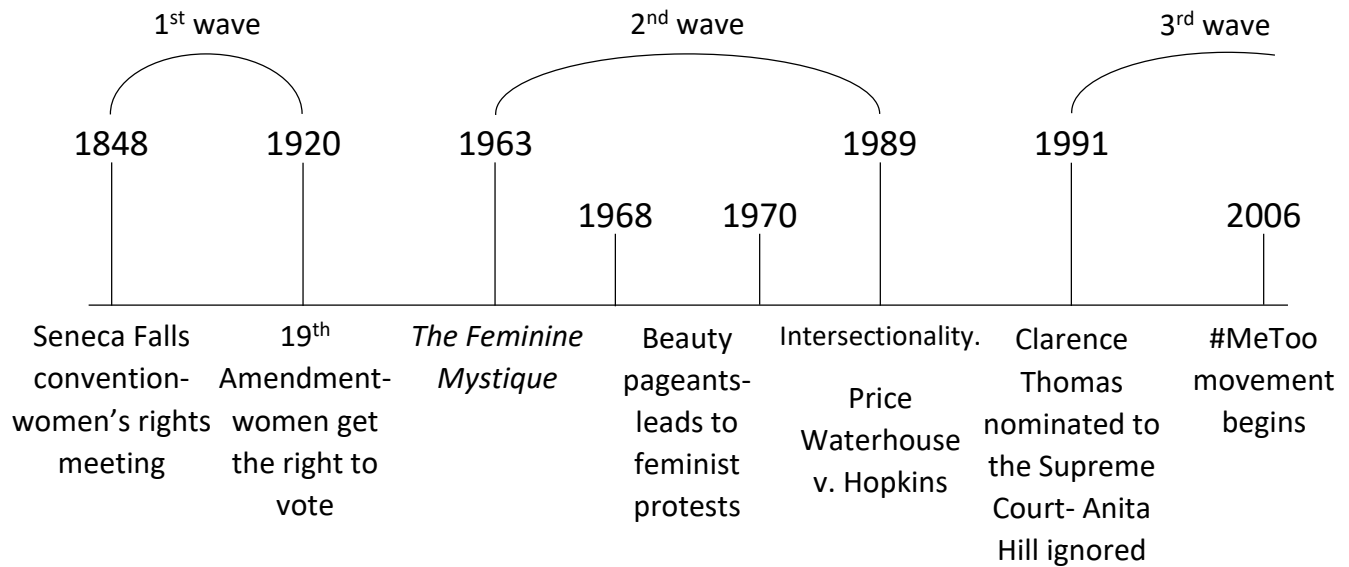
### **1991: Beginning of the third wave**

The third wave of feminism began right after the second wave ended. It began roughly in 1991. In 1991, the first African American US Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall said he would retire, in June. That meant the then current president George H. W. Bush had to nominate another justice. So Bush nominated Clarence Thomas, a conservative African American lower court judge, to take Marshall's place (Marshall was a liberal). After the president nominates someone to the court they go to a group in the US Senate called the Senate Judiciary Committee, that group has to approve the person by a vote. Then, the whole Senate has to vote and approve them before they are actually a Supreme Court justice. But after Thomas was nominated senators started to hear about a woman. Her name was Anita Hill and she was a law professor in the state of Oklahoma. Hill said she had been sexually harassed by Thomas when she had worked with him. Over the summer, people who worked in the Senate contacted her a few times to see what happened, but she wanted to stay anonymous and the leader of the Judiciary Committee didn't want to include her story in the consideration of Thomas. That leader was Joe Biden; he only wanted to focus on Thomas' work, not his character. Then, it was suggested that she report what happened to the FBI and they would investigate and give their findings to the Judiciary Committee, she agreed and she also gave them her name. This was around the time Clarence Thomas found out about her allegations. But she also sent her own statement to the committee because she wanted them to hear her own words. Biden did not give her statement to the committee until hours before they voted (and the Republicans on the committee didn't read it to days after they voted). The Senate Judiciary Committee still approved Thomas. But before the whole Senate voted some newspapers found out about Anita Hill and published her story. So the Democrats in the Senate delayed the vote for a little bit to allow her to have a hearing. Biden called Hill and told her that there would be a hearing so she went to Washington DC in October. She would have a hearing before the Judiciary Committee and Biden allowed Thomas to speak both before and after her. The hearing happened on October 11, 1991. Biden gave the opening statement. Thomas spoke next and he was upset at Biden for not saying he was a good man, and he was also upset at Hill for accusing him of harassing her. He attacked her before she even said anything. Hill spoke next and told her story of the harassment she had faced working under Thomas; she was alone until her family was allowed in later. She said Thomas was not fit to be a Supreme Court Justice. The Republicans on the Judiciary Committee attacked her, they even said she was delusional. Biden did not do anything to protect her, and the Republicans made it clear that they weren't listening to what he did say. Thomas spoke after- of course he denied everything Hill said. Hill in no way got a fair hearing. In the following days other people testified both for and against Hill's testimony. On October 15<sup>th</sup> Clarence Thomas was approved to be on the US Supreme Court anyway. When people, especially women, saw how Anita Hill was treated they were angered. That year began the third wave of feminism when women began fighting to change the mindset of society where things like stories of sexual harassment are either not believed or treated like they aren't important.

## **2006: #MeToo**

In 2006, Tarana Burke founded the MeToo movement. The MeToo movement was initially formed to connect survivors of harassment and assault with others who'd gone through the same thing. The term was reintroduced in 2017 by Alyssa Milano and it went viral on social media with over 10 million people using the hashtag. The MeToo movement succeeded in sending powerful people to jail for sexual assault. One such example is Harvey Weinstein who was a millionaire film producer who was accused of harassment and sued. But he was released in July of this year after being sentenced to 23 years in jail last year. The MeToo movement also led to states banning non-disclosure agreements which hampered the criminals from silencing their victims. The movement also led to the creation of the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund which provided survivors looking to sue their attackers a legal team. The MeToo movement is part of feminism because it supports women fighting for their rights against harassment and discrimination.

## In summary:



New official Youth Prophecy Group website!

[youthprophecygroup.org](http://youthprophecygroup.org)

If you have any questions or comments on any of the material contact us (YPG) at:

[youthprophecygroup@gmail.com](mailto:youthprophecygroup@gmail.com)

Find all our YPG lesson videos at:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeltzVajTXgSQRL-o2XOq\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeltzVajTXgSQRL-o2XOq_g)

Link to YPG Zoom meetings which are at 10:00am Pacific Time on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87170293849>