

COEUR D'FEMME

The Heart of feminism



LET'S TALK ABOUT WHAT'S REALLY AT THE "COEUR" OF FEMINISM...

Feminism, similar other causes, hosts important moral and ethical roots that often get lost in translation, interpretation, and bias. If the word "feminist" leaves a bad taste in your mouth, a smirk of cynicism, or boiling blood - this zine is for you, for too often what is understood about feminism is laden with fear, judgment, and namely ignorance. Thinking people possess a healthy and curious desire to know what they feel, and why they feel it. Are you a thinking person?

At the ground level, Feminism serves to fight against, and resist, the perpetuation of economic, political, and social inequality - not just for the rights of women - but equal rights for all. Feminism works to identify seeds of supremacy - a power over others - that quietly and continuously develops into various weeds of oppression, choking out the full expression of a human life. Feminism is a maternal leadership, an internal empowerment, used for paying closer attention to the dehumanizing cultures within humanity.

Feminism lives at the intersection of race, sex, age, religion, sexuality, and class, and how one expresses it speaks only of their own interpretation.

The belief that all genders should have equal rights

The respect for diverse experiences, identities, knowledge, and perspectives

Equal rights and opportunities.
Knowledge, and strengths within a global community.

Audre Lorde (1934-1992), was a self-defined Black, lesbian, feminist, mother and poet warrior who refused to live a single-issue life, calling for a “multi-issued feminist movement”, and inviting an inclusive global community to unite towards common goals of increased humanity within the systems that bind us together.

“You do not have to be me in order for us to fight alongside each other. I do not have to be you to recognize that our wars are the same. What we must do is commit ourselves to see a future that can include each other and to work towards that future with the particular strengths of our individual identities. And in order to do this, we must allow each other our differences at the same time as we recognize our sameness.”

Feminism is a cause devoted to improving the health and development for all humanity, producing more modern, equitable, and better governed societies with an increase in performance on all dimensions of social well-being.

We should all be feminists.



The lingo

Patriarchy

A system of power that ranks social class, gender, race, and sexual orientation, relying on macro forms of oppression (violence) and micro forms of policy (laws) to perpetuate inequality. In a Patriarchal society, heterosexual white men are hierarchically positioned above all others.

Example: organizational leadership as predominantly male, men as “head of house”, or certain legislative/economic exclusions pertaining to the rights of women, BIPOC, and LGBTQ people.

Read: *Woman at Point Zero*, Nawal El Saadawi

Privilege

A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group; a special advantage or opportunity that is available only to certain people and indicates an imbalance of power.

Example: legal marriage unavailable to LGBTQ couples; over-abundance of makeup/skincare designed predominantly for light-skinned people; disproportionate pay rates for equal responsibility; resources and opportunity availability due to socio-economic structures.

Read: *Women, Race & Class*, Angela Davis.

Misogyny

Distrust, dislike, contempt, or ingrained prejudice against women. Misogyny is not about male hostility or hatred toward women — instead, it’s about controlling and punishing women who challenge male dominance.

Example: rewarding women who reinforce the status quo and punishes those who don’t.

Read: *Down Girl*, by Kate Mann.

Sexism

Prejudice or discrimination based on one’s sex or gender. Sexism can affect anyone, but it primarily affects women and girls. It has been linked to stereotypes and gender roles, and may include the belief that one sex or gender is intrinsically superior to another.

Example: referring to a female as a “girl” rather than a “woman”, implying that they are subordinate or not fully mature.

Read: *Invisible Women*, Caroline Criado Perez.

Other feminist authors:

Audre Lorde, Antonia Fraser, Mary Wollstonecraft, Bell Hooks, Toni Morrison, Margaret Atwood, Virginia Woolf, Octavia Butler, Gloria Steinem, Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Ann Crittenden.

Her story

A brief time line of feminist labours for equality and expanded opportunities.

1777 All states pass laws which take away women's right to vote.

1839 The first state (Mississippi) grants women the right to hold property in their own name, with their husbands' permission.

1848 At Seneca Falls, New York, 300 women and men sign the Declaration of Sentiments, a plea for the end of discrimination against women in all spheres of society.

1870 The 15th Amendment receives final ratification. By its text, women are not specifically excluded from the vote. The first sexually integrated grand jury hears cases.

1873 The U.S. Supreme Court rules that a state has the right to exclude a married woman from practicing law.

1875 The U.S. Supreme Court declares a state can prohibit a woman from voting. The court declares women as "persons," but holds that they constitute a "special category of nonvoting citizens."

1890 The first state (Wyoming) grants women the right to vote in all elections.

1900 By now, every state has passed legislation granting married women some control over their property and earnings.

1916 Margaret Sanger establishes rights for women to control their own bodies.

1920 The Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is ratified. It declares: "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."

1925 American Indian suffrage granted by act of Congress.

1938 The Fair Labor Standards Act establishes minimum wage without regard to sex.

1963 The Equal Pay Act is passed by Congress, promising equitable wages for the same work, regardless of the race, color, religion, national origin or sex of the worker.

1964 Title VII of the Civil Rights Act passes including a prohibition against employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex.

1969 California adopts the nation's first "no fault" divorce law, allowing divorce by mutual consent.

1972 Title IX (Public Law 92-318) of the Education Amendments prohibits sex discrimination in all aspects of education programs that receive federal support. The Supreme Court rules that the right to privacy encompasses an unmarried person's right to use contraceptives.

1973 *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 and *Doe v. Bolton*, 410 U.S. 179: The U.S. Supreme Court declares that the Constitution protects women's right to terminate an early pregnancy, thus making abortion legal in the U.S.

1974 Housing discrimination on the basis of sex and credit discrimination against women are outlawed by Congress. The Women's Educational Equity Act funds the development of non-sexist teaching materials.

1976 The Supreme Court upholds women's right to unemployment benefits during the last three months of pregnancy.

1978 The Pregnancy Discrimination Act bans employment discrimination against pregnant women.

1981 State laws designating a husband "head and master" are overturned with unilateral control of property owned jointly with a wife.

1981 Sandra Day O'Connor is appointed by President Ronald Reagan to serve as the first woman on the Supreme Court.

1984 Sex discrimination in membership policies of organizations is forbidden by the Supreme Court, opening many previously all-male organizations (Jaycees, Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions) to women.

1986 The U.S. Supreme Court held that a hostile or abusive work environment can prove discrimination based on sex.

1993 The Family and Medical Leave Act goes into effect.

1994 Congress adopts the Gender Equity in Education Act to train teachers in gender equity, promote math and science learning by girls, counsel pregnant teens, and prevent sexual harassment.

1994 The Violence Against Women Act funds services for victims of rape and domestic violence, allows women to seek civil rights remedies for gender-related crimes, provides training to increase police and court officials' sensitivity and a national 24-hour hotline for battered women.

1997 Elaborating on Title IX, the Supreme Court rules that college athletics...





...programs must actively involve roughly equal numbers of men and women to qualify for federal support.

2003 The Supreme Court rules that states can be sued in federal court for violations of the Family Leave Medical Act.

2005 The Supreme Court rules that Title IX prohibits punishing someone for complaining about sex-based discrimination.

2005 Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. The 2005 reauthorization allocates federal funds to aid victims, provides housing to prevent victims from becoming homeless, ensures victims have access to the justice system.

2009 Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act allows victims, usually women, of pay discrimination to file a complaint with the government against their employer within 180 days of their last pay check.

2010 The Affordable Health Care Act is signed into law. Under this law, private health insurance companies must provide birth control without co-pays or deductibles. The law requires private insurance companies to cover preventive services.

2011 Saudi women's rights activists used social media to organize a protest and grabbed the world's attention. They made some headway—one female driver was given a ticket rather than being arrested when she was pulled over—and the ban of women driving was finally lifted in 2018.

2013 The ban against women in military combat positions is removed; this overturned a 1994 Pentagon decision restricting women from combat roles. Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. The new bill extends coverage to women of Native American tribal lands who are attacked by non-tribal residents, as well as lesbians and immigrants.

2017 The New York Times and The New Yorker released stories detailing horrific allegations of sexual assault against Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein, and a pervasive culture of sexual harassment in the entertainment industry. #metoo movement reignited.

2020 Kamala Harris was elected vice president of the U.S. Born to an Indian mother and a Jamaican father, Harris is the first woman to become vice president, and she is also the first Black American and the first South Asian American to win the vice presidency.



Notable achievements for women in the last decade:

- As of 2010, Eleven women are serving as head of state and 12 are head of government.
- Countries electing their first female president: Namibia, Nepal, Marshall Islands, Taiwan, Estonia, Singapore, and Ethiopia.
- Finland formed an entirely women-led government, with the world's youngest Prime Minister, 34-year old Sanna Marin.
- "UN WOMEN" was formed to act as global champions for women and girls" and set a "global standard for achieving gender equality.
- The UN passed a resolution outlawing female genital mutilation and declared the first UN Day of the Girl on October 11 to highlight the challenges and needs of girls and women across the world
- The UN launched the Sustainable Development Goals, adding to the Millennial Development Goals, which include a goal specifically focused on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls with specific targets on ending violence against women and ensuring equal participation in the workforce.
- 28 countries have liberalized their abortion laws. Campaigns to liberalize abortion laws have also been growing across Latin America, with protests in Argentina, Mexico and Ecuador forming in the streets.
- In 2014, Malala Yousafzai became the youngest person ever to be awarded a Nobel Peace Prize at age 17 after standing up to the Taliban in Pakistan after they banned girls from attending school. She survived a Taliban assassination attempt and went on to become a global activist fighting for education for girls.
- Swedish climate change activist Greta Thunberg's "School Strike for Climate" spurred young people around the globe to walk out of classrooms and protest
- Women across the world flooded social media with revelations of sexual harassment and assault, naming names and demanding accountability. #MeToo reportedly reached 85 countries with over 1.7 million tweets, and included many variations such as #BalanceTonPore (#DenounceYourPig) in France, #WoYeShi in China, #QuellaVoltaChe in Italy and #EnaZeda in Tunisia.



Magazines dedicated to the work of feminism:

- ✧Ms. Magazine ✧Bitch ✧BUST ✧Jezebel ✧make/shift
- ✧Feminist Review ✧Women in Higher Education ✧Women Writers ✧Horizons ✧The Advocate ✧The Crunk Feminist Collective ✧Working Mother ✧Everyday Feminism



“The fact is, I can have any experience of life I want. I don’t have to choose any one thing or act in any one way to define myself as a woman now. I am one.”



-Ally Sheedy

“

WOMEN WILL ALWAYS BE DEPENDENT UNTIL SHE HOLDS A PURSE OF HER OWN.

-Elizabeth Cady Stanton

”

“Become a true expert in something. Anything. Then the question of you being a woman will barely raise its head.”

-Dr. Janine Cooper

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FEMINISM

MOST OFTEN TENDS

TO THE ABUSES OF

CAPITALISM.

“I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat.”

- Rebecca West



“Woman: the peg on which the wit hangs his jest, the preacher his text, the o

{ Her Words }

“Where did your Christ come from?
From God and Woman! Man had
nothing to do with him.”
- Sojourner Truth

“You do not have to be me in order for us to fight alongside each other. I do not have to be you to recognize our wars are the same. What we must do is commit ourselves to some future that can include each other and to work towards that future with the particular strengths of our individual identities. And in order to do this, we must allow each other our differences at the same time as we recognize our sameness.”
- Audre Lorde

“I WANT TO BE ALL
THAT I AM CAPABLE OF
BECOMING.”
-KATHERINE MANSFIELD

“A
CULTURE THAT AUTHENTICALLY
PROMOTES INDIVIDUAL
DEVELOPMENT WILL NEVER MAKE
A SLAVE CLASS OF ANY GROUP OR
GENDER.”

-DR. CLARISSA PINKOLA ESTES

cynic his grouch and the sinner his justification.” -Helen Rowland



» The Feminist Critique «

The Art of Paying Attention

“The vast majority of feminists are also humanists, believing that no one should attempt to limit another’s ability to develop based on characteristics such as sex, sexuality, race, age, class, disability, marital status, etc.” (*Hart, Modern Rhetorical Criticism*)

Paying attention means taking a closer look and tuning ones ears. It’s about looking at the current culture for cues of systemic discrimination, and listening for the language that serves to tether or oppress.

Each year, younger women take up the reins to their own future and advance towards family and career pursuits, making the labours of reflection, and evaluation of cultural behaviour and organizational well-being, a collective work.

However can we commit to such efforts of betterment unless we first diagnose the toxicity at hand? Feminist criticism identifies language and cultural norms that perpetuate inequality. Simply put: feminism is about paying attention. The advocacy for rights, equality, support, and expanded opportunity, is waiting for each of us to play our part, like a symphony resounding with individual instruments whose sounds collectively beautify the lives of all people.

The feminist critique works to increase the value of feminine

expression - whatever it may look like. And, while not all feminists are women, the feminist critique aims to look at the world with eyes keen to making more space for the others, to expanding diversity, and works to provide well- informed decision-making opportunities that help people navigate a healthier work/life balance.

Feminist critique is dangerous because it challenges oppressive behaviour and privilege, two behaviours that don’t prefer to be exposed, and rather hope to stay hidden and remain unnoticed. It exposes “appropriate” gendered behaviour by identifying:

- suggested looks, thoughts, feelings and behaviours
- challenges to liberated rights and freedoms of others
- reinforcements to the perpetuation of oppression and privilege.

Themes, imagery, and patterns reveal themselves through the analysis of text - both written and spoken - verbal and nonverbal, working to uncover deeply held attitudes and perceptions.

To look with feminist eyes means to become a watchful “mother” over our earth, our global citizenship, our nation, state, city and homes - and most importantly - ourselves.



In addition, applying a feminist critique lens seeks to expose gendered behaviour, identifying messages specifically to and about women within workplace culture.

A feminist critique standpoint serves to identify challenges to

maternal responsibility, highlight expectations of maternal behaviour, and work to increase awareness to the communicated value of care giving.



“I’m not a feminist, but...”

“...(Proceeds to state support of a feminist goal having to do with a woman’s right to education, livelihood, spirituality, partnership, parenting, pay, safety, etc.)”

Time to unpack this for yourself.

It’s your turn to look at the lens you view feminism through.

Women across the globe often finish this statement with some sort of belief in women’s equality, support for a femme-based issue, or alignment with a particular oppressed right that is distinctly feminist. So why not just identify as a feminist? Because it’s often too dangerous to express support for feminism.

To claim oneself as feminist can come with a target for harassment by conservative opinion leaders, create friction between patriarchal administration, or strain a religious affiliation. It actually takes courage to declare you support women’s rights; it takes courage to say that you stand for the rights of all women.

It is not uncommon for women and girls to face psychological and economic consequences for feminist work.

With each new wave of feminism comes a crowd who oppose the purposes, behaviours, attitudes and

actions of feminism - for reasons and biases that continue to grow. But at some point, every thinking person must take a moment to ask more questions about what they believe, why they believe it, and if that belief was conceived, adopted, or imposed - if it was independently formed or a blueprint from another time and place.

You don’t have to agree with feminists of the past to support feminist issues of the present. You get to decide how you practice your feminism and the unique ways in which you choose to engage in it.

Start with yourself.

What do you know about feminism? What do you know about the history of feminist work? Of feminist leaders?

Then, ask your mother.

Ask your father.

Inquire of those around you.

Dig into your own experience of inequality, or reflect upon your own obstacles to opportunity.

Listen to the stories of others and be intentional about listening to learn.

What gets in your way? In her way? What slows women down? What

creates stumbling blocks towards self-sustainability, safety, and freedom. And who's working towards eliminating those obstacles?

What might you do to help?

Ultimately, to care for the safety, freedoms and rights of others is to first care about your own. Loving yourself well helps you understand and practice ways to love others well.

Speaking up for yourself gives you the courage to speak up for others.

Cuban-born American journalist, Cristina Saralegui says, "I consider myself a feminist, and to me a feminist is nothing more than a full and complete human being with all the available rights and no limitations."

Most importantly- what do *you* say? ✨

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