

## **I. The New Feminism:**

- While many ex-protesters moved into environmentalism, others considered pouring the energy of the antiwar movement into the New Feminism of the 1970s. The woman's movement of the 1970s is often seen as the most important legacy of the 60s protest spirit. Orienting around white middle-class women, the new feminism found white women starting to identify with minority groups and their movements.

- In 1920 American women won the vote. 1918 in Canada for federal elections. 1928 in the UK (1919 w/ limited rights). After the wave of Victorian feminism, which focused on protective rights for women specifically, feminism fell into a funk.

- 1963 Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*. Betty was a cynical journalist who traveled around America interviewing women, particularly fellow college alumni who had graduated in 1947. Most of Friedan's interviewees were living out the American Dream, and most of them felt it was frustratingly hollow. Some accused the suburbs of being "comfortable concentration camps" and that that existence left women with no outlets for intelligence or growth. The answer was for women to begin to fulfill "their unique possibilities as separate humans". This book is often seen as the beginning of the movement, but more accurate is to say that it gave voice to the movement.

### JFK:

- Also in 1963, JFK had established the President's Commission on the Status of Women. 1963 JFK passed the Equal Pay Act and in 1964, when LBJ passed the Civil Rights Act, women were noted in similar terms as blacks, in defense against discrimination. The feminine mystique referred to the idea of women being happy in purely domestic roles, however there was a contradiction.

- The 50s image had June Clever just at home, but by 1963 one-third of all women were already in the workforce (190m pop. 96m US women, 33m working). Moreover, women were finding unfair practices in that very workforce generating self-awareness of hypocrisy. The common middle-class complaint of a stifling domestic life compounded with the other issues.

## NOW:

- The biggest and most successful organization was the National Organization for Women (NOW), which was created in 1966. 15,000 members in 1970.

- At first demands were for libertarian equality: the right of the individual (equalism). [Eleanor Roosevelt] By the late-60s a more radical element had entered the New Feminism, often differentiated as Women's Liberation. This new element was defined by the type of women it was attracting: younger, affluent (protest is a luxury born of capitalist wealth), white (speak of a "worldwide revolution of human rights"), and educated (charged by university).

- Comparably older women were not for this new radicalism, and so age difference accounts for much of the variety within 1970s feminism. These new feminists were younger than the Betty Friedan generation and drew direct inspiration from the New Left and the counterculture. Some were involved in the black civil rights, most had some dealing with the antiwar movement (where they learn about protest culture, and even find gender discrimination within the protest movements). [Bell Hooks]

## Women's Liberation:

- By the early-70s women's libbers were offering critique far more harsh and angry than Friedan (who called suburbia a concentration camp). For Friedan, individualism was the answer to breaking down cultural norms that restricted one gender more than the other. For Women's Liberation, they claimed that "all avenue of power were in male hands" and that women needed to band together to assault the 'male power structure'. This polarizing language is what has made the word feminist now so charged.

- In the most radical form: rejection of marriage, family, reject heterosexual intercourse which was a vehicle of male domination. Few women embraced this, even most feminists. However, by the 1970s, millions of women, particularly younger women, became cognizant that the values of the middle-class and materialism did not favor the female gender: despite that the rise of the middle-class in North American and the dominance of consumerism were primarily driven by women.

- In practice, New Feminism was very grassroots and local, focusing on practical issues that women suffered. Women opened book stores, bars, and coffee shops as physical centers of their communities; started newspapers and magazines to control information; and created centers to assist victims of rape and abuse, clinics for women's health, day-care centers, and abortion clinics.

- Male society was able to retract much of its prejudices and women started to enter public prominence like never before. First woman Supreme Court Justice in 1981. First woman astronaut in 1983. Canadian female Prime Minister in 1993. 1979-90 Margaret Thatcher was the Prime Minister of the UK (in addition to being the first woman to ever head a major political party in the UK).

- Also, keep in mind that millions of women, even at the time, considered themselves anti-feminist. Their argument went as such: with the rise of consumerism and the middle-class, the domestic sphere had become so much more politically and economically powerful than before. Older feminists believed in protective rights, not the right of the individual per se, and worried that without protection women could sink lower. Others still, millions, liked traditional roles for both men and women and while very few people attempted to justify 'unequal pay for the same work' the attack on marriage, family, and heterosexuality was too weird.

### The Abortion Controversy:

- A particularly crucial aspects of women's grievances, especially younger women throughout the entire century, was to have a greater control over their own sexual and reproductive lives. In its least controversial form, this was manifested as awareness about rape, abuse, and wife beating. In the middle level of controversy, there was still some hostility to contraceptives and birth-control (explosive in the 20s with flappers, but by 1970 had mostly calmed); it was abortion that stimulated great controversy, starting particularly in the 1970s as a direct result of feminism and libertarianism.

- Now abortion has existed for all time and in tougher times peoples are tolerant even embracing abortion. No one ever made it an issue in the ancient world. Even though banned at the beginning of the 1900s, abortion continued secretly, and sometimes quite dangerously. Now, New Feminism and Women's Liberation pushed for the legalization of abortion.

- In 1973, through *Roe v. Wade* in the Supreme Court invalidated previous laws restricting abortion (in the first three months). Back in 1965 there was a case that argued, and won, that personal privacy should be a constitutional protected. This reasoning was applied to abortion, privacy being the driving force re-permitting abortion. The issue seemed settled, but abortion continued on as a heated topic in the 'culture wars' that gripped North America (after the popular abandonment of mass political challenges).

- As a response to *Roe v Wade* conservative Protestants and Roman Catholics organized a "Right to Life" movement and pressed for constitutional banning of abortion. They conceptualized that if the unborn fetus was human (say, had a soul) then terminating the fetus in the first trimester would be murder: paradoxically: "the murder of the unborn".

- Over time, Congress bowed to some pressure, and abortion has been crept against. In part it was bc the US lacked universal healthcare and so 'footing the bill' for someone else's abortion made abortions more problematic than in CAN/UK, even tho in those countries the debate, culturally, continued.

### 1970s Sexuality:

- The long shadow of the 1960s also existed in patterns of sexuality. In the 1960s, the counterculture challenged the conventional sexual code and this resulted in generally more relaxed sexual attitudes. In 1960, 30% of unwed 19-yr old women had a sexual experience. In 1980, more than 50% of unwed 19yrs old had sex. In 2000, the figure rose to 75%. The Right finds itself in a bind: the state should not be involved in ppl's sexuality, but they feel their lifestyle/cultural values are so threatened that they feel no choice but to use the government as a vehicle here.

### **Tea Party Feminism:**

- Left Women: collectivist social policy and gender quotas. "sisterhood". Claim the Tea Party is misrepresenting, misappropriating the concept of feminism.

- Right Women: prefer rugged individualism (is this not third-wave feminism?); free-market forces (men as unskilled labor, women as entrepreneurs); prefer weak state that once hurt them. Religious, pro-war, and socially conservative.

Why Join the Tea Party? - Simply, the two traditional Parties are too male entrenched, too traditionally gender separated. In lieu, women have often expressed themselves politically in marginal movements (abolition, prohibition), morality campaigns, street riots for bread. So, the Tea Party offers a non-entrenched system and fits into the traditional venue of populism, demagoguery, public intellectual discourse (lyceums). This can explain why the Tea Party is so female in composition.

Are Tea Party women then feminists? - The Leftist narrative traditionally paints white males as the enemy, a force of oppression and patriarchy. Right-wing women can portray a picture of women who fear the evaporating white, Christian nation (just as much as men). Right-wing women complicate the Leftist feminist narrative by drawing men and women closer together when confronted by class and race issues, like fear of immigration, laments over too much sexual openness, fear of secularization, pro-patriotism. This contradicts the collectivist attitudes spawned by progressives.

### **Analysis:**

- Women historical drift towards marginal groups, in politics, bc they were denied access to conventional forms of politics. Therefore we should expect women to be more concentrated on the edges of the spectrum vs the middle.

- Since the Reagan Revolution, Right-wing women have crystallized in identity, particularly traditionalism fused with individualism.

- Regarding the Tea Party, women quickly took over the movement. They took advantage of being stay at home mothers who are internet savvy.

- then, does the split bw libertarianism and statism over-ride gender?

- With the recession striking men in manufacturing, women have become more entrepreneurial, meaning they entered the work force working for themselves.

- Compared to men, politics have focused so much more on controlling women. Why?