

FEMINIST WAVES

The modern feminist movement of the 1960s and '70s originally focused on dismantling workplace inequality, such as denial of access to better jobs and salary inequity, via anti-discrimination laws → but → feminism [advocating women's rights] is known to go much further back in history

First-wave feminism → [Simone De Bovier – *The Second Sex*] was a period of feminist activity that occurred within the time period of the 19th and early 20th century throughout the world, particularly in the United Kingdom, Canada, the Netherlands and the United States. It focused on legal issues, primarily on gaining women's suffrage (the right to vote).

Second-wave feminism → [After women got the vote, and equality in law – they had to work on getting equality in everyday life] → The term first-wave was coined in March 1968 by Martha Lear writing in The New York Times Magazine, who at the same time also used the term "second-wave feminism". – At that time, the women's movement was focused on de facto (unofficial) inequalities [in fact, if not in law], which it wished to distinguish from the objectives of the earlier feminists.

Third-wave feminism (also known as Neo-Feminism) refers to several diverse strains of **feminist** activity and study, **whose exact** boundaries in the history of **feminism** are a subject of debate, but are generally marked as beginning in the early 1990s and continuing to the present.

Rebecca Walker coined the term "third-wave feminism" in a 1992 essay. It has been proposed that Walker has become somewhat of a symbol of the third wave's focus on queer and non-white women. [3] Third Wave feminists have broadened their goals, focusing on ideas like queer theory, and abolishing gender role expectations and stereotypes. [4] Unlike the determined position of second wave feminists about women in pornography, sex work, and prostitution, [5] third-wave feminists were rather ambiguous and divided about these themes (feminist sex wars) → rather most stood for eschewing victimization and defining feminine beauty for themselves as subjects. → gender-bending and leveling hierarchies

Fourth-Wave Feminism → [?] Still in the making – it involves **millennials** → a new generation transforming the focus of women's struggles into the battle against gender inequities → i.e., problems like sexual abuse, rape, violence against women, slut-shaming, the pressure on women to conform to a single and unrealistic body-type and the realization that women's gains in female representation in politics and business, for example, are very limited.

CANADA → The Persons' Case (1929)

{The Famous Five: Henrietta Muir Edwards, Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney, Emily Murphy and Irene Parlby}.

Issue: Can a women hold the office of Senator? [The Canadian government said no, but put the matter before the courts.

Question they put before Supreme Court → Does the word "Persons" in section 24 of the British North America Act 1867, include female persons?

The Supreme Court of Canada replied that the word "person" did not include female persons. Fortunately for Canadian women, the Famous 5 were able to appeal to an even higher court, the **British Privy Council**. The question was duly submitted to them and on October 18, 1929 they overturned the decision of the Supreme Court by deciding that the word "person" did indeed include persons of the female gender.

The word "person" always had a much broader meaning than its strict legal definition, and it therefore had been used to exclude women from university degrees, from voting, from entering the professions and from holding public office. → The **definition of "person" became a threshold test of women's equality.** Only when Canadian women had been legally recognized as persons could they gain access to public life. After 1929, the door was open for women to lobby for further changes to achieve equality. As women across Canada can confirm today, that struggle continues.

The 1929 Persons' Case is one of the major achievements by Canadians for Canadians. **The Famous 5 succeeded in having women defined as "persons" in Section 24 of the British North America Act and thereby, eligible for appointment to the Senate.** This victory symbolized **the right of women to participate in all facets of life, to "dream big" and to realize their potential.**