

Foundational Knowledge Feminism / Feminist Theory A Brief Introduction

SECTION ONE

SOURCE:

[Encyclopedia of Activism and Social Justice](#). Ed. Gary L. Anderson and Kathryn G. Herr. Vol. 2. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Reference, 2007. p554-558. Copyright: COPYRIGHT 2007 by SAGE Publications, Inc.

Feminism

[Feminism](#) is the theory that [women](#) should have political, economic, and social rights equal to those of men; it is also the movement to win such rights for women. Because *feminism* is a word representing a movement, its meaning and application has changed over time. There continues to be discussion and debate over the usefulness and relevance of the term. In the 21st century, there are those who champion women's rights, yet share ambivalence about the use of the word *feminist* as being too narrowly focused on the West or the experience of Western women. Some have

“Human beings are sufficiently altruistic, intelligent, and rational to preclude oppression solely for the sake of oppression. In other words, at the root of **all forms of oppression (classism, disablism, ethnicism, racism, sexism, etc.) is **exploitation** for purposes that range from material aggrandizement to scapegoating to empire-building.**

OPPRESSION

NO TO TRUMPS AMERIKKKA

RACISM

PATRIARCHY

“Patriarchy is a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence.... Clearly we cannot dismantle a system as long as we engage in collective denial about its impact on our lives. Patriarchy requires male dominance by any means necessary, hence it supports, promotes, and condones sexist violence.

—BELL HOOKS (WRITER, TEACHER, FEMINIST INTELLECTUAL AND ACTIVIST)

ygm!

suggested adding to the definition to include a belief that women and men are inherently of equal worth. Because most societies privilege men as a group, [social movements](#) are necessary to achieve [equality](#) between women and men with the understanding that gender always intersects with other hierarchies.

Historically, women and men have always been involved in feminism; that is, movements specifically for women's rights. Women, and specifically self-identified feminist women, have historically been involved in all forms of struggles, organizations, and movements for [social justice](#). But the two types of struggles, seemingly interconnected have often been at odds. Not all social justice movements have supported feminist goals, and some [feminists](#) and feminist organizations have either been indifferent to, and in some cases hostile to, issues of social justice. In the modern world of private enterprise and representative governments, women have emerged as the backbone of social justice movements—movements that work for a common or collective good, such as equal distribution of wealth and resources, empowerment and justice for those marginalized, opposition to hierarchies of [power](#) and domination, and finally, nonviolence as a means to resolve personal, regional, or global conflict.

One of the oldest forms of social [injustice](#) has been men's power over women. Almost every society values and privileges boys and men over girls and women. Women have been historically subordinate to men, culturally demeaned, and reviled. Theories, poems, songs, and visual representations not just extol male virtue but condemn women as inherently weaker, dependent, wickedly sexual, or simply evil. The major religions buttress male authority by ordaining that men should rule over women. Yet women have historically critiqued and challenged their subordinate role as wife and mother, as well as the male claim to religious authority and power. One of the first *recorded* critiques of gender relationships and challenges to male authority came from *The Book of the City of Ladies*, written in 1405 by Christine de Pizan. Historians Bonnie Anderson and Judith Zinsser believe that the feminist movement began with Pizan, who created an ideology that united the women who embraced it, from the 15th to the 18th centuries. In Western Europe and the United States, political ferment about the role and status of women continued into the 18th century. The ideas of the Enlightenment, the triumph of rationality over a religious worldview, the radical and democratic implications of Protestantism, and the English and American Revolutions contributed to the ongoing debate regarding women's value. The same intellectual forces that were challenging male authority were both contradictory and confusing, for arguments centered on issues of nature as well as reason. Enlightenment thinkers saw women as closer to nature and therefore less capable of reason. They also exoticized non-Western people, claiming that like women, they too were closer to nature and thus inferior to Western European men. The cultural premises of the Enlightenment have shaped the debates about [race](#), equality, and difference into the 21st century.

Political ferment and direct challenges to male authority in the family, church, and state did not constitute a feminist movement. The French Revolution established the most important precedents for modern representative governments, including the doctrine of citizenship, [human rights](#), and popular sovereignty. French women mobilized and participated in the formation of [political parties](#), legislative assemblies, political clubs, the popular press, and other institutions of political

involvement. The feminist aspirations of the ladies from the salon met with the collective action of the women of the streets. Class and gender interacted with the ideals of *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*. In 1791, Olympe de Gouges, playwright and publicist, champion of the emancipation of the Jews and the abolition of slavery, drafted the *Declaration of the Rights of Women and the Female Citizen*, which called for equal [education](#), equality within marriage, the right of women to own and inherit property, public workshops for the unemployed, a national theater for women, and the right of women to legitimate their children regardless of marital status. Politically radicalized women such as the laundry workers, seamstresses, shop girls, and workers' wives organized themselves into what may just be the first exclusive female political activist group, the Society of Revolutionary Republican Women, demanding social justice for the people of the streets.

Amid the chaotic promise of liberty thrown up during the French Revolution, a radical

PATRIARCHY

- Unequal pay for the same work
- Sexual harassment and violence
- Demeaning / dehumanizing media depictions
- Objectification of personhood
- Arrogant claims over ownership of time / labor
- Persistent violations of human rights / civil rights
- Celebration of the culture of rape and misogyny
- Claims over ownership of the female body
- Arbitrary assignment of gender roles
- Male domination of the workplace
- Male domination of the political system
- Male domination of the economic system

"The enemy of feminism isn't men. It's patriarchy, and patriarchy is not men. It is a system, and women can support the system of patriarchy just as men can support the fight for gender equality."
—Justine Musk (Canadian Author)

Englishwoman and revolutionary participant, Mary Wollstonecraft, wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* in 1792, which was a 300-page instant bestseller that became the foundation for modern feminism. The *Vindication* drew from the past ideas of the Enlightenment, brilliantly described the present experience of women, and ushered in modern feminism by seeing the state as an agent for [social reform](#), demanding that the nation guarantee social justice for women as a sex.

Feminism could never had become so powerful if it had been confined to a body of ideas. In the 19th century, new forces such as capitalism, industrial growth, and republican, democratic, and socialist movements contributed to and sustained feminism. In the West, feminism as a social movement developed alongside a number of other social justice movements, but especially the abolition of slavery. The first manifestation of feminism, a woman's rights convention took place

in a small, bustling upstate New York town of Seneca Falls, where some 240 women and men met specifically to discuss women's rights. Stanton drafted the *Declaration of Rights and Sentiments*, which began by paraphrasing the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these rights to be self-

evident that all men and women are created equal." Introducing a litany of centuries-old grievances, the declaration demanded that women be given all the rights and privileges that belonged to all male citizens of the United States, including the right to vote. The suffrage resolution, introduced by the African American abolitionist and feminist Frederick Douglass, was the only resolution not unanimously supported by the conference.

The declaration expressed a strand of political thought within the women's movement defined as liberal or equal-rights feminism. While the *Declaration of Rights and Sentiments* expressed the finest of the Enlightenment ideals, it also expressed problematic ideas about race and class. The third grievance of the declaration stated that rights have been withheld from women that are given to the most ignorant and degraded men, both native and foreign. Here Stanton clearly articulated grievances of race, class, and ethnicity. In the era of Jacksonian democracy, suffrage had been extended to all white males, including workingclass white men. White middle-class women resented the fact that immigrants and other working-class men could possess an absolute tyranny over them. Herein lies the contradiction of feminism and social justice activism: As with the American and French Revolutions, the promise of universal rights excluded women, but at Seneca Falls the hierarchies of class and race compromised the promise of a universal sisterhood. While the *Declaration of Rights and Sentiments* represented a wide range of issues, women's suffrage became the dominant focus of feminist [activists](#).

The relationships among race, gender, class, ethnicity, and women's rights in the United States and Europe were complicating and conflicting. The birthplace of feminism was in part found in the antislavery movement. Many of the white abolitionist women were far more radical about ideas of race and social equality than were their male counterparts. A few free African American women, such as Sojourner Truth, spoke about the inseparability of race and gender. In the period after the U.S. Civil War, splits developed among former abolitionist and women's rights reformers about privileging race over gender or gender over race. In the latter part of the 19th and early 20th centuries, suffragists used racist, anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic, and anti-Semitic views to bolster their arguments for suffrage.

Similarly in Europe, class, race, and gender conflicts were apparent among feminists and in particular within the woman's suffrage movement. Middle-class women were raising claims of equal rights as builders of the nation and empire building and demanding equal rights on the same basis as men—in other words, class- and nation-based suffrage. Western women traveling abroad often took up the "white man's burden," defining colonized women as victims of uncivilized, brutish men, in need of rescue.

Another contrasting political movement to liberalism that opposed capitalism, private property, and the cruel consequences of the Industrial Revolution was [socialism](#). Just as liberalism nurtured [liberal feminism](#), socialism—with its early emphasis on social justice, egalitarianism, and the belief that workers, peasants, and artisans should collectively own and control the fruits of their labor—brought about radical and socialist ideas about feminism. Charles Fourier, the French utopian socialist coined the word *feminism*. He believed that the extension of privileges of women is the

general principle of all social progress. The early utopian feminists did not focus on suffrage but rather social issues such as dress reform, labor reform, and sexual freedom for women. In the latter part of the 19th century, Marxist socialism emerged that inspired an international, lasting political movement of workers, peasants, and intellectuals. Marxist theory contained a systematic analysis of women's oppression, believing that women's oppression was historically rooted with the emergence of private property, which led to the monogamous family and the patriarchal state. Marxists believed therefore that the destruction of private property, bourgeois monogamous marriage, and the patriarchal state would end the subordination of women. In 1920, Lenin wrote that real freedom for women is possible only through socialism. In the second half of the 20th century, mass socialist parties in Europe and mass socialist movements in countries such as China, for example, linked the issues of class to women's emancipation.

Despite the important theoretical breakthroughs and organizational achievements, Marxist theorists accepted gendered beliefs about women's physical inferiority, as well as the accepted ideas about the gendered division of labor within the family. The Marxist theoretical approach did not resolve

The Women Behind "Title IX" and Gender Equity

Dr. Bernice R. Sandler

Rep. Edith S. Green

Rep. Patsy T. Mink

Title IX

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under **any education program or activity** receiving federal financial assistance...."

(Title IX of the **Education Amendments of 1972**, renamed in 2002 as **Patsy Takemoto Mink Equal Opportunity Education Act of 1972** in honor, following her death, of one of its co-sponsors and co-author: Patsy Takemoto Mink.)

the contradiction between women's dual role as worker and mother. Finally, the Marxist tradition,

while supportive of and involved in women's emancipation struggles, was for the most part hostile to feminism, often labeling it as "petit-bourgeois," meaning too linked to the middle-class suffrage movement. Socialist feminists, active in a wide range of social justice issues, raised [sexual politics](#) around the issues of [birth control](#), organizing women workers, child rearing, [gender identity](#), and homosexuality and tried to connect socialism, feminism, and women's suffrage to the lives of working-class and peasant women.

World War I created an international crisis that unleashed forces of revolution and anti-colonial struggle. International feminism dominated by the West was thrown into confusion. Prior to 1914,

"Tweet" of the Year

"You cannot silence me or the millions of women who have gotten off the sidelines to speak out about the unfitness and shame you have brought to the Oval Office."

<https://t.co/UbQZqubXZv>

— U.S. Senator, Ms. Kirsten Gillibrand (@SenGillibrand) Dec. 12, 2017

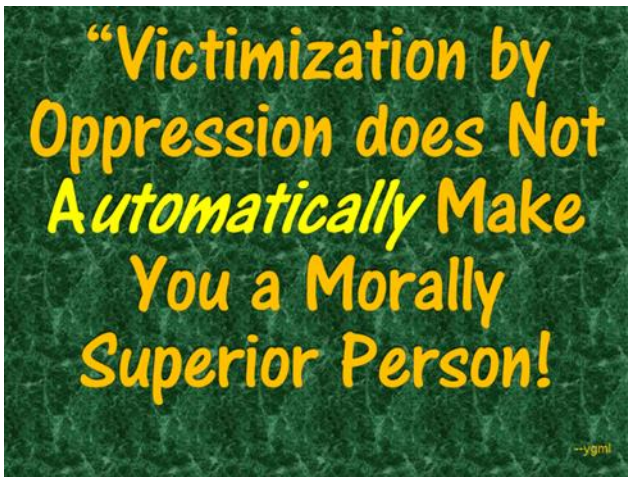
feminists opposed wars in principle; but when fighting broke out in 1914, many abandoned their principles of universal sisterhood, to support their own nation against sisters of other nations. The rise of fascism in Germany, Spain, Italy, and Portugal, Stalin's Soviet Union, and the advent of World War II silenced feminist movements globally.

Women's and feminist movements emerged in the African, Asian, and South American continents (although there were a few women's suffrage and education movements in Latin America in the 19th century) in the 20th century.

These movements, unlike their European counterparts, were connected to the struggle for national liberation and socialism. Women and feminist movements challenged both imperialist and gender hierarchies, thus contributing to a more expansive definition of feminism. Nationalist and anti-imperialist organizations could no longer ignore women. In order to succeed militarily and politically, women had to be mobilized, and this meant greater promises of greater social, economic, and political rights for women. For example, the feminist movement in China took up issues of education, foot binding, concubinage, child marriage, birth control, workplace reforms, and the role of Confucianism in Chinese society. When the Chinese Communist Party came to power in 1949, it proclaimed social and political equality for women, outlawing the most oppressive features of Chinese society.

Another manifestation of [nationalism](#) and [colonialism](#) was Pan-Africanism, and the largest black organization in modern world history was the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), founded by Marcus Garvey. The UNIA's feminism was promoted largely through Garvey's two wives, Amy Ashwood Garvey and Amy Jacques Garvey. In South America, feminists struggling for the vote and access to educational and employment opportunities chose not to challenge the particular gender roles of *machismo* and *marianismo*. The 1959 Cuban Revolution made important

strides for women. Following the Leninist model, Castro was a big supporter of women's rights, but hostile to feminism.



The rebirth in the 1960s and 1970s of feminist movements, created by women in the social justice, anti-war, and [civil rights movements](#), dramatically transformed the global landscape. Challenges to liberal, equal-rights, white, Western feminism was challenged. In 1977, the Combahee River Collective, an organization of black radical feminists, articulated a nonracist, nonhierarchical, and nonhomophobic feminism; their message was that if black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would be free because their freedom would necessitate the end of all systems of oppression. Women activists pressured

the United Nations, a bastion of male privilege, to take up women's issues, holding regular women's rights conferences beginning in 1975 that have raised issues of women's education, birth control, and [violence](#) against women. In 1995, the U.N. conference on women took up issues of women and poverty, education and training women, the economy, the media, the environment, and children and declared that women's rights were human rights.

Feminist organizations have played the major role in raising women's rights as human rights in the global catastrophes of war and occupation. It was largely through the efforts of feminist writers and organizations that took up the issue of rape in war, rape as a war crime, and violations of human rights in Bangladesh, Bosnia, or Darfur. Feminists have been the major voice in raising issues of sweatshops, trafficking, [reproductive rights](#) and reproductive health, and violence against women and children. Long before 9/11, feminists decried and organized against the Taliban's brutality toward women and supported Afghan's women's organizations. Feminist organizations in [Africa](#) have spearheaded the necessary education and mobilizations of women to combat AIDS, genital mutilation, violence against women in marriage, and the right of women to own land and reform marriage. Feminists and feminist organizations are also playing a leading role in the opposition to the U.S.'s war against and occupation of Iraq. In the global village of the 21st century, feminism is less equated with narrow equal rights, having connected more with global social justice issues.

By Barbara Winslow

Further Readings

Anderson, B., & Zinsser, J. (1988). *A history of their own: Women in Europe from prehistory to the present*. New York: Harper & Row.

Freedman, E. B. (2002). *No turning back: The history of feminism and the future of women*. New York: Ballantine.

Jayawardena, K. (1986). *Feminism and nationalism in the third world*. London: Zed Books.

Keddie, N. R., & Baron, B. (Eds.) (1991). *Women in Middle Eastern history: Shifting boundaries*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Lavrin, A. (1978). *Latin American women: Historical perspectives*. Westport CT: Greenwood Press.

Meade, T. A., & Weisner-Hanks, M. E. (2004). *A companion to gender history*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Reddock, R. (1994). *Women, labour, and [politics](#) in Trinidad and Tobago: A history*. London: Zed Press.

Rowbotham, S. (1992). *Women in movement: Feminism and social action*. New York: Routledge.

Smith, B. (Ed.). (2000). *Global feminisms since 1945: Rewriting history*. New York: Routledge.

Stroble M., & Chaudhuri, N. (Eds.). (1992). *Western women and imperialism: Complicity and resistance*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press.

Source Citation (MLA 8th Edition)

"Feminism." *Encyclopedia of Activism and Social Justice*, edited by Gary L. Anderson and Kathryn G. Herr, vol. 2, SAGE Reference, 2007, pp. 554-558. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*

SECTION TWO

SOURCE:

[Encyclopedia of Race and Racism](#). Ed. John Hartwell Moore. Vol. 1. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2008. p470-473. Copyright: COPYRIGHT 2009 Macmillan Reference USA, a part of Gale, Cengage Learning

Feminism and Race

The term [feminism](#) means advocacy for the well-being of [women](#) in both theoretical and practical ways. In the United States, feminist scholarship and practice in the nineteenth century was dominated by white middle- and upper-class heterosexual Anglo-American women, and the same was true in the twentieth century up until the 1960s. But from about 1970 onward, the concerns of women of color, poor women, and lesbians have become more prominent in feminist discourse, and they have also been explicitly recognized by traditional white [feminists](#), both in the academy and in mainstream organizations such as the [National Organization for Women](#) (NOW). Among the women at the forefront of this movement, bell hooks has insisted on a distinct identity for black women, Patricia Hill Collins has argued that black women need to bring their own life knowledge into the field of [sociology](#), and Paula Gunn Allen has shown that women were respected leaders in many indigenous societies before European contact.

Still, at the turn of the twenty-first century, establishment American feminism continued to be mostly white and middle class, although not exclusively heterosexual. However, lesbian feminism

has certainly grown as a field of inquiry, particularly through the work of Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, Marilyn Frye, Mary Daly, Sheila Jeffreys, and Monique Wittig. Also, some academic feminist scholars during the late twentieth century took up the postmodern theories of French feminists, such as Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray, who provided literary critiques of male-dominated Western culture by criticizing its canonical texts. As Cynthia Willett indicates in *The Soul of Justice* (2001), however, addressing women's problems via such criticism is usually restricted to privileged educated women.

At the same time, women's studies scholars have increased their recognition of feminism and women's problems and [social movements](#) in Europe, Latin America, [Africa](#), and Asia. The twenty-first century challenge for feminism is to include all women's voices, and to support and generate social movements that do not divide women by [race](#). When feminism, in both theory and practice, does not include the concerns of women of color, then women of color may view feminism itself as one of the causes of their social disadvantages.

THE HISTORY OF FEMINISM AND RACE

American feminists often refer to their history as comprising three "waves." The first wave occurred between 1790 and 1920. During this period, feminism overtly excluded women of color and was, at times, explicitly racist. The second wave took place between 1950 and 1980, and it began to address social divisions among women based on race. Unfortunately, these attempts at inclusion resulted in a fragmentation of feminism itself. The third wave began after 1980, and it will need to be inclusive across race if feminism is to remain credible as a movement for all women, even though scholarly work by feminists has historically supported a diversity of feminisms.

The first wave began with Mary Wollstonecraft's 1790 publication in England of *Vindication of the Rights of Women*. Wollstonecraft was inspired by the promise of universal human [equality](#) in the philosophies that motivated the French Revolution. She argued for the education of girls and the entry of wives and [mothers](#) into public life, with full rights as citizens. The philosopher and English political activist John Stuart Mill published *The Subjection of Women* in 1869. Both Wollstonecraft and Mill argued for child custody rights for divorced women, independent property ownership for married women, and suffrage for all women, precisely so that they could better serve their families and contribute to society as wives and mothers. However, those advocating for such rights were focused solely on white middle-class women, who had become overly domesticated and confined to their households after the Industrial Revolution. Wollstonecraft and Mills did not apply their arguments to poor women or women of color, who had always worked outside their homes in fields or factories, or in the homes of white women. For most of these women, such work was necessary to help support their families.

The Meaning of Oppression in a Capitalist DEMOCRACY

The oppressed have to work twice as hard, to get half as far. The reverse is true for the oppressors: they can work half as hard, to get twice as far.



Women did achieve the right to vote in both the United States and Great Britain by 1920. According to the historian Eleanor Flexner, in *Century of Struggle* (1974), as a social and political movement, the achievement of suffrage developed by fits and starts, in ways that were closely related to the abolitionist movement to free the American slaves. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott emerged as the leaders of the suffrage movement after the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention in upstate New York. Susan B. Anthony was the great organizer of this movement, while Stanton supplied much of its rhetoric. The Seneca Falls Convention had occurred, at least in part, because female abolitionists were frustrated at not being able to speak publicly against slavery. (Public speaking was generally a privilege reserved for men.) The suffragists were bitterly disappointed that the rights of women were not recognized when slavery was abolished, and some veered toward racist comparisons between themselves and uneducated blacks after blacks were granted suffrage.

As the first wave grew on a state by state basis in the second half of the nineteenth century, a strong women's club movement took shape, especially when temperance, or the outlaw of alcoholic beverages, became a women's issue (many women saw men's drunkenness as a

problem for their families). These clubs were mainly restricted to white women. African American women formed their own clubs and civic organizations to secure education in their communities,

ACKNOWLEDGING

RACIALIZATION

“Race continues to play a defining role in one’s life trajectory and outcomes. A complex system of racial bias and inequities is at play, deeply rooted in our country’s history, culture and institutions. This system of racialization — which routinely confers advantage and disadvantage based on skin color and other characteristics — must be clearly understood, directly challenged and fundamentally transformed. If our nation is to live up to its democratic ideals — that all people are created equal and treated fairly — then racial equity and inclusion must be at the forefront of how we shape our institutions, policies and culture.”

The Annie E. Casey Foundation, United States. *Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide*, 2014, p. 2.

protest against lynching, and create social standards for new generations (see Hine 1993).

Despite the [racism](#) within the first wave of the women's movement, the second wave, as a political movement that brought American women into the workforce and secured entry into higher education, was inspired and assisted by the civil rights movements of the 1960s. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, for example, outlawed [discrimination](#) "because of race, color, religion, [sex](#), or national origin." On the theoretical and ideological side, the second wave was inaugurated in the early 1950s through the publications of [Betty Friedan's](#) *The Feminine Mystique* and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*. Friedan proclaimed that the domestic lives of middle class women obstructed human fulfillment and de Beauvoir argued that women's social differences from men, which were based on ideas about their biological differences, resulted in a second-class status compared to men.

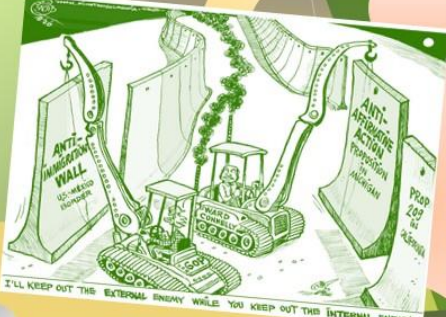
THEORETICAL ISSUES IN FEMINISM AFTER 1970

Throughout the second wave, American women gained unprecedented access to employment and higher education. Colleges and universities supported programs in women's studies, ethnic studies, and Afro-American studies. As a result, feminism developed a theoretical foundation across the humanities, with a strong focus on issues of racial and cultural difference. Supporting such diversity in feminism was an implicit and explicit realization that the capabilities of women and the

social roles they occupied were not determined by their female biology, but by historical events, cultural circumstances, and male rule. Indeed, it was on the issue of [patriarchy](#) that women of color began to protest that the concerns of white women did not mirror their own. They argued that for women of color, racism was as much or more of a problem than [sexism](#). The questioning of the ability of white feminists to speak for women of color raised wider questions about whether there was one essence that all women shared, which made them *women*. Elizabeth Spelman, in her 1988

What is Affirmative Action?

"You cannot fight racism with racism, or ethnicism with ethnicism or sexism with sexism or classism with classism! That, however, is *not* what affirmative action policies are about. By prying open historically-determined systems of privilege, affirmative action policies aim to create fairness in society by helping to correct the racist, ethnicist, sexist, classist, etc. inequalities of the past that continue to plague society today. Opposition to affirmative action implies that the present must continue to mirror the iniquitous past; in other words, the name of the game is plain hypocrisy: unfair historically-determined privileges enjoyed by one social group are retained by that group by *ideologically* perverting the true purpose of affirmative action in order to delegitimize it.



Affirmative action corrects some of our racist history.

- 65% of African Americans were excluded from benefits when Social Security began.
- Of the first 67,000 GI Bill mortgages in New York and New Jersey, fewer than 100 were for nonwhite people.

But there's more to do.

- The median white household has 13x as much wealth as the median black household.
- And 10x as much as the median Hispanic household.
- Even with a college education: The median white person has 7.2x the wealth of a similarly educated black person.
- And 3.9x the wealth of a similarly educated Hispanic person.

Sources: The Kohnstien, "When Affirmative Action Was White," 2002; data from the Federal Reserve's "Survey of Consumer Finances," 2002 Census report. 2011 infographic: Tracy Mathew Loeffler/2011

the Nation. ygml

book *Inessential Woman*, brought the question of women's commonality to the forefront of feminist theory. However, as Linda Alcoff pointed out in 1989, both the lack of a biological essence and the emphasis on culture could also lead to new oppressive assumptions that the lives of women of color were completely defined and shaped by their cultures. From the perspective of women of color, a new branch of feminism, known as *intersectionality*, developed. Proponents of intersectionality—such as Kimberle Crenshaw, in legal studies, and Irene Browne and Joya Misra, writing about labor markets in 2003—have held that women's "genders," or their social and economic roles and experiences, are a result of both racism and economic factors. Out of this perspective came the well-known equation, "race + class = gender." This means that women of color have different "genders" than white women. Insofar as theorists such as Judith Butler have viewed biological sex as an effect of social factors and beliefs, or as a social construction, feminism itself has become very divided according to racial divisions. It would likely be further divided according to class, except that poor women rarely have a direct voice in theoretical discourse.

FEMINISM AND WOMEN'S PROBLEMS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, there was wide recognition among U.S. feminists that the women's movement is global, and that much can be learned from feminisms in less affluent and more traditional cultures, and from those societies that are more proactive about women's rights and concerns. Women's groups in India, Latin America and Russia, for example, have often gained political support, not through advocacy of equality between women and men, but through demands for governmental and social support for women as wives and mothers. Throughout Africa and Southeast Asia, the practice of microfinance (usually taking the form of loans to women of several hundred dollars or less) and outright gifts of domestic animals have been important contributions to the [family](#) well-being of poor women responsible for providing food to their children and relatives. In Latin America and Russia, mothers' groups have effectively prevailed on government and military authorities to furnish information about missing husbands, sons, and brothers who have died or suffered in military service. In Norway after the 1970s, it became a legal requirement that 40 percent of all members of parliament be female, with the understanding among political elites that women in government have stronger interests in family welfare and social well-being issues than do men. Moreover, Norway's "Credo on Difference" recognizes that the political inclusion of "women's issues," such as education, pensions, and welfare, on the top tier of the national agenda benefits all members of society, and not just women.

As Gayle Rubin has pointed out, and as feminist followers of Karl Marx have stressed, women perform work in agricultural and industrial societies, which enables male heads of household to do their paid labor. Mothers are still not paid for child rearing, housework, social tasks, and other parts of "women's work," so that many women who work outside of their homes must also perform a "second shift" without compensation. While women have secured the vote, child custody rights after divorce, and reproductive autonomy, they are still not fully the political equals of men, in even the most affluent Western countries. Those women who do participate in political leadership, even women of color (e.g., Condoleezza Rice, who became the U.S. secretary of state in 2005), often do so without special attention to the concerns of women or people of color.

Intersectionality and the "second shift" problem present a challenge to feminism: Is it possible for feminism to be both a system of belief and a source of change in the world that furthers the interests of all women? For this to occur, it is necessary to recognize the historical disadvantages of women and their future potential, and to acknowledge both what women have in common and the ways in which they are different. One way that feminist theorists could do this would be to abandon attempts to posit a common essence in all women, and instead view women as human beings who have been assigned to, or identify with, a group that makes up at least half of humankind. To be assigned to this group or identify with it would not mean that one had to be a mother, a man's heterosexual choice, or a female at birth, but only that this was one's social identity. Surely it is as mothers, men's heterosexual choices, and human females that women have suffered the problems that first led to feminism and women's movements in many different social, national, cultural, and racial/ethnic contexts. Such a common basis for women's social identity would not negate the real-life differences, demands, and expectations of justice experienced by women on account of their

racial diversity. It would allow women to come together across their racial differences to address common problems, such as the second shift, while they continue to think about and act against specific race-based problems.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Afshar, Haleh, ed. 1996. *Women and Politics in the Third World*. London: Routledge.

Alcoff, Linda M. 1989. "Cultural Feminism versus Post-Structuralism: The Identity Crisis in Feminist Theory." In *Feminist Theory in Practice and Process*, edited by Micheline R. Malson, Jean F. O'Barr, Sarah Westphal-Whil, and Mary Weyer, 295–326. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Allen, Paula Gunn. 1986. *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Browne, Irene, and Joya Misra. 2003. "The Intersection of Gender and Race in the Labor Market." *Annual Review of Sociology* 29: 487–513.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 1990. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Flexner, Eleanor. 1972. *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States*. New York: Atheneum.

Hine, Darlene Clark, ed. *Black Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*, 2 Vols. Brooklyn, NY: Carlson, 1993.

hooks, bell. 1981. *Ain't I A Woman: Black Women and Feminism*. Boston: South End Press.

Moi, Toril. 1985. *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*. London: Methuen.

Nicholson, Linda J., ed. 1997. *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory*. New York: Routledge.

Rubin, Gayle. 1997. "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex." In *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory*, edited by Linda J. Nicholson, 27–62. New York: Routledge.

Skjeie, Hege. 1998. "Credo on Difference: Women in Parliament in Norway." In *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*. Stockholm, Sweden: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. Available from http://www.idea.int/publications/wip/upload/CS_Norway.pdf.

Spelman, Elizabeth V. 1988. *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Willett, Cynthia. 2001. *The Soul of Justice: Social Bonds and Racial Hubris*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Zack, Naomi. 2005. *Inclusive Feminism: A Third Wave Theory of Women's Commonality*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

By Naomi Zack

Source Citation (MLA 8th Edition)
"Feminism and Race." *Encyclopedia of Race and Racism*, edited by John Hartwell Moore, vol. 1, Macmillan Reference USA, 2008, pp. 470-473. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*

SECTION THREE

SOURCE:

[*Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Society*](#). Ed. Richard T. Schaefer. Vol. 1. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2008. p488-490. Copyright: COPYRIGHT 2008 SAGE Publications, Inc.

Black Feminism

The tradition of Black [feminism](#) or Black feminist thought is an articulation of the activist and intellectual tradition of African [women](#) in the United States. It is a paradigm for understanding oppression, inequality, and resistance. The most important analytic tool of Black feminist thought is intersectionality—a paradigm for reconceptualizing oppression and resistance. [Race](#), class, and gender intersectionality is a framework for analyzing ways in which various spheres of inequality work together to affect social life simultaneously. Intersectional analysis is not exclusive to other spheres of inequality. [Racism](#), class [exploitation](#), [sexism](#), heterosexism, imperialism, [ethnocentrism](#), religious chauvinism, elitism, ageism, and other hierarchical and oppressive concepts and practices configure people's lives in many ways. Thus, the social world cannot be understood without considering the ways in which these axes mutually construct one another. To unveil the socially constructed nature of hierarchy and difference, intersectional work examines the taken-for-granted aspects of the social order, including those things people have been socialized to view as “natural.”

Elements of Black feminist thought, including intersectionality, have been articulated by activists and scholars/activists within the humanities, the [social sciences](#), and law. Patricia Hill Collins, however, deserves special mention because she has attempted to summarize the views of women from these various perspectives and has made strides in delineating this perspective to [sociologists](#).

There is a historical legacy for intersectionality within the thought and action of women of color in the United States and elsewhere, surviving and working to create better living conditions for themselves and those they care about. This is the premise of Black feminist thought—that [Black women](#) have always had a standpoint from which to theorize about oppression and resistance. The



problem for intellectuals and for the academic canon has been that the thought of Black women has not been acknowledged.

SIMULTANEITY

According to the intersectional framework, it is not

Intersectionality—the Gender-Class-Race Nexus: Exploitation and Violence

enough to look at race, class, or gender in isolation, for example, to discuss gender and then point out that Black women and White women have different experiences. This is simply additive analysis because one is “adding on” race to a gender analysis. One must examine race, class, and gender simultaneously to get some sense of the ways in which these spheres of inequality support each other to maintain the status quo. The significance of simultaneity is expressed by the perspective emanating from Black feminist thought that there is no such thing as a singular experience representing all women. Women’s lived experience of sexism is conditioned by each woman’s social positioning. Black women’s experience is conditioned by class, [sexuality](#), nation, and other social locations.

For example, images associated with poor Black “crack moms” and White middle-class women seeking treatment for cocaine addiction are informed by racism, sexism, and elitism. These interlocking systems reinforce the notion that White women with high incomes are inherently good mothers who just need to get back on track and that poor Black women inherently cannot be rehabilitated. An additive analysis describes these two women’s experiences as simply different. But the two hypothetical women described by these images are not just different. Intersectional analysis tells us that all women are not the same gender in that their experiences of living as women are not the same. The simultaneity of racism and elitism means that their differences result from the same social system that, on the one hand, heaps privilege on women who are White and compounds it with the advantages of high [social class](#) standing and, on the other hand, withdraws resources from women who are Black and economically impoverished. Finally, the access to treatment, prenatal care, and other resources provided to middle-class White women and the lack of access for poor Black women are justified by these controlling images.

White women are not stigmatized in the same ways as Black women for cocaine addiction. Many petit bourgeois women working in professional jobs are often protected by health coverage that includes drug and employment policies stating that they cannot be fired for the disease of addiction if they are seeking treatment. Poor women have a more difficult time in gaining access to drug

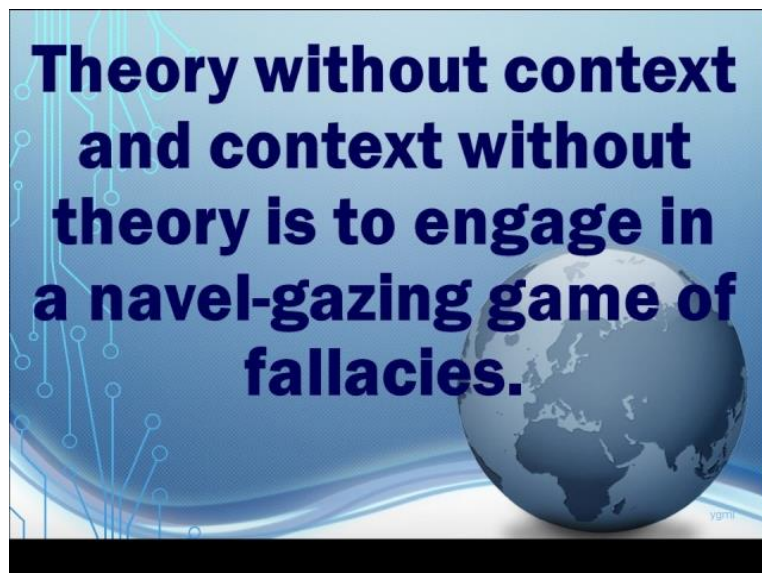
treatment because most low-income jobs do not provide medical coverage. Even if they could enter a treatment program, most women working for low wages would lose their jobs. For example, some temporary agencies have written policies stating that any evidence of drug use is grounds for immediate suspension. The fact that the same social system comprising U.S. health care and employment practices creates such different circumstances for women struggling with addiction demonstrates that the system is structured to implicitly value some women's lives more than others.

IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT

Points of view and understandings of the social world are conditioned by social location and experience therein. To achieve a Black feminist analysis, researchers must consider the influence of macro-level factors. Thus, social phenomena are examined by including contextual as well as individual factors. So studies of health indicators, such as infant and child mortality, must go beyond analyzing mothers' characteristics (e.g., race, income, number of prenatal care visits) so that the social environment is revealed. Contextual variables in such a study would include, for example, services that are available to women and accessibility of health services. Exploring context places individual experiences within social, economic, historical, and geopolitical settings appropriately.

ANALYZING RESISTANCE

Although intersectionality is most often used as a paradigm to analyze domination, it is dialectical in that it can also be used to analyze resistance and the creation of alternatives (i.e., intersections of resistance). It is important to use the intersectional framework to analyze women's resistance strategies, successes, and failures.



The Black feminist perspective does not view individuals as discrete categories; it promotes viewing individuals as whole beings. Black feminist analysts are called on to embrace their whole selves, even the elements of themselves that are considered "marginal" in a particular social context (whether the subject is a Black Christian woman in a decidedly agnostic Black male space or an immigrant working-class Black woman in an aggressively White elite female setting). By embracing and making visible subjects' complexity, researchers can fully understand subjects' political and social limits, influences,

and impacts. So the term *intersections of resistance* finally deconstructs a very important goal personally and in movements to create alternatives—wholeness.

An intersectional analysis of resistance and creating alternatives (e.g., building a new nonhierarchical social order) relates to the tapping of Black and other women's cultural heritages, experiences as gendered persons in the societies where they live, and the creativity they have needed to draw on as underresourced people to survive, create social movements, and work toward an alternative vision of the preoccupations of their lives.

RELATIONALITY

Although it is normally applied to those with relatively few resources, the intersectional perspective as an analytic tool is applied to explicate the realities of people who are assumed to be in privileged positions. In examining the connections between various groups' experiences, the investigator gets a fuller picture of the social world. Moving from an additive analysis to address the simultaneity of oppressions begins to reveal the relational differences between groups' experiences.

In looking, for example, at the relational difference between Black and White women, Black feminists assert that the lives of White middle-class women are enabled by poor and working-class immigrant women and other women of color. Examining how difference is relational helps the researcher to see that during the late 20th century, White middle-class women's diminished role in the domestic sphere and entry into the labor force were facilitated by White, Black, and Latina working-class and immigrant women's work in the formal and informal service sector as well as the exploitation of labor of women and men in the Third World. So their differences in access to [power](#) can influence their social locations.

Black feminist thought theorizes social reality in the singular. It says that one social reality, described by an overarching system of oppression and privilege, creates divergent experiences for individuals based on their social location. Work that considers such relationality uses a powerful tool to uncover the interconnectedness of spheres of domination.

AN ALTERNATIVE EPISTEMOLOGY

An alternative epistemology informs Black feminist methodology. Positivist methodological approaches have been criticized for requiring a distance between the researcher and the object of study, absence of emotions, withdrawal of ethics and values from the research process, and use of adversarial debate for ascertaining truth. An alternative epistemology describes "committed objectivity" as a necessary approach to research. In Black feminist thought, researchers approach their examination of social phenomena with an ethic of caring, empathy, and personal accountability. This alternative epistemology further posits lived experience as a crucial criterion for meaning and emphasizes dialogue with other members of the community or "humanizing speech" to assess knowledge claims.

Finally, Black feminist analysis is self-reflexive. Black feminists are called on to be self-critical. Intersectionality means that their position on the domination and resistance continuum is always shifting; they are always looking for the oppressor within.

By Assata Zerai

Further Readings

Agozino, Biko. 1999. "Committed Objectivity in Race, Class, Gender Research." *Quantity and Quality: International Journal of Methodology* 33:395–410.

Andersen, Margaret and Patricia Hill Collins, eds. 1998. *Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Brown, Elsa Barkley. 1995. "What Has Happened Here?' The Politics of Difference in Women's History and Feminist Politics." In *We Specialize in the Wholly Impossible': A Reader in Black Women's History*, edited by Darlene Clark Hine, Wilma King, and Linda Reed. Brooklyn, NY: Carlson.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2000. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. 2nd ed. Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman.

Lorde, Audre. [1984] 1993. "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Defining Difference." In *Sister Outsider*. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press.

Zerai, Assata. 2000. "Agents of Knowledge and Action: Selected Africana Scholars and Their Contributions to the Understanding of Race, Class, and Gender Intersectionality." *Cultural Dynamics* 12:182–222.

Zerai, Assata and Rae Banks. 2002. *Dehumanizing Discourse, Law, and Policy in America: A Crack Mother's Nightmare*. London: Ashgate.

Source Citation (MLA 8th Edition)

"Feminism, Black." *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Society*, edited by Richard T. Schaefer, vol. 1, SAGE Publications, 2008, pp. 488-490.
Gale Virtual Reference Library

SECTION FOUR

SOURCE:

[*Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*](#). Ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss. Vol. 1. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Reference, 2009.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the notion that one social category cannot be understood in isolation from another social category. It grew out of criticism that antiracist and feminist movements in the 1960s and 1970s homogenized categories of [race](#) and gender. While antiracist and feminist discourses were criticized for either ignoring or simply adding social categories together (race + gender + class + [sexuality](#)), intersectional scholars called for an approach that recognized that differences coincide simultaneously, multiplying social categories rather than adding them (race × gender × class × sexuality).

PATRIARCHY

“Patriarchy is a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence.... Clearly we cannot dismantle a system as long as we engage in collective denial about its impact on our lives. Patriarchy requires male dominance by any means necessary, hence it supports, promotes, and condones sexist violence.

—BELL HOOKS (WRITER, TEACHER, FEMINIST INTELLECTUAL, AND ACTIVIST)

North American law professor Kimberle Crenshaw was first to coin the term *intersectionality*. Joined by Black feminists, she pointed to the ways in which race and class intersect with gender as a type of crossroads or intersection where different types of dominations meet. This challenge was also made explicit in the titles of several books written throughout the 1980s and 1990s, such as *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave*, edited by Gloria T. Hull, Patricia B. Scott, and Barbara Smith, as well as *Ain't I a Woman? [Black Women](#) and [Feminism](#)*, written by Black feminist author bell hooks.

Intersectional theorists tend to view category formation as a social and cultural construction, and they challenge essentialist notions of identity. Social categories are not seen as merely discursive entities, however, but rather as entities that are constituted in communication and have real social consequences. Intersectional theorists are skeptical of work that seeks to deconstruct difference;

instead, they choose to demonstrate how power is clustered and frequently interwoven around particular social categories such as gender, race, sexuality, and class.

Crenshaw's work on intersectionality has laid the groundwork for intersectional analyses. She has explored the notion that [racism](#) and [sexism](#) intersect in "structural," "political," and "representational" intersections. In her analysis of violence against women of color, for instance, she illustrates how women of color frequently have limited access to housing, education, employment, and wealth. Shelter policies tend to locate women's experiences solely in light of an [ideology](#) of male domination and ignore the racial, socioeconomic, or legal realities of women of color as well as immigrant women. Consequently, women of color and immigrant women face a structural barrier when they turn to shelters for help in cases of violence, such as a lack of assistance related to



employment, translations, or legal matters. Politically, women of color and immigrant women are simultaneously located within two conflicting political agendas. While feminist politics fails to successfully interrogate race, antiracist discourses perpetuate sexist thinking. As a result, the experiences of women of color and immigrant women are politically unaccounted for.

Crenshaw has widely applied her intersectional approach to other cases as well. Her work on representational intersectionality explores how sexist as well as racist [stereotypes](#) underlie the representation of Black women in musical lyrics. In her analysis of the controversy surrounding 2 Live Crew's lyrics, for instance, Crenshaw shows how the accusations made against 2 Live Crew, which appeared under the disguises of antisexism, vividly supported a racist ideology in the representation of an uncontrollable Black male sexuality. Yet, if antisexist rhetoric serves to perpetuate a racist ideology, so does antiracist rhetoric perpetuate a sexist ideology. The argument that any critique of 2 Live Crew is racist because the lyrics represent a unique Black mode of communication disguises misogyny as just a matter of culture. Other intersectional scholars, such as Patricia Hill Collins, have demonstrated an intersectional approach in their analyses as well. Collins argues, for instance that

the politically popular concept of “family values” supports a particular (White, middle-class, heterosexual) way of thinking about race, gender, and nation.

Intersectionality operates at the methodological level of analysis as well. Focus rests with a limited number of intersections, in select contexts, such as Malaysian migrant women domestic workers in Singapore households or the communication that takes place between European American midwives and immigrant women from Mexico in California. Intersectional scholars call for a reflexive approach to research methodology. This entails critically interrogating, for instance, which research participants to include, as well as the researcher’s own position as a particularly gendered, raced, classed individual.

Scholars working within the field of postcolonial theory, critical Whiteness studies, queer theory, and critical studies of masculinity also critically interrogate intersections related to nationality, race, sexuality, and masculinity. In postcolonial theory and critical Whiteness studies, the intersectional focus rests with postcolonial power relationships and Whiteness as an unmarked category. The goal here is to make the unmarked category marked. In contrast, queer scholars critically interrogate intersections between sexuality and gender to show how heterosexuality serves as a regulatory frame through which gender is understood. Australian masculinity researcher Robert W. (now Raewyn) Connell has added an intersectional approach to the study of masculinity. According to Connell, “hegemonic masculinity” works to secure the dominant position of (some) men over women and (some) other men. Blending queer and masculinity research, North American scholar Judith Halberstam similarly interrogates intersections between masculinity and gender in her work on *female* masculinity. Jointly, these scholars theorize particular lines of difference.

While intersectional analyses have come to occupy an important theoretical and methodological space, one reoccurring question is which intersection(s) to analyze? Some scholars pinpoint many lines of difference, yet others are skeptical as to the political consequences of these. Feminist scholars might question whether gender as a category, for instance, is in danger of getting overlooked in favor of other categories, such as sexuality or race. An inability to speak on behalf of women as a group may, they note, serve the perpetuation of patriarchal ideology. Others point to the notion of strategic alliances as an alternative framework. Individuals make temporary (strategic) alliances for particular purposes, and thus, an intersectional approach that recognizes strategic alliances opens up a space for collective agency, which, because it is temporary, avoids viewing social categories as either closed or static.

Intersectional perspectives have gained in popularity throughout the communication discipline because they offer a more nuanced understanding of the interplay of social categories and communication. Such perspectives have been applied to a range of communication studies, from understanding multicultural issues to political rhetoric to considerations of gender mainstreaming.

By Charlotte Kroløkke

Further Readings

Collins, P. H. (1998). It’s all in the family: Intersections of gender, race, and nation. *Hypatia*, 13, 62–82.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 138–167.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43, 1241–1299.

Halberstam, J. (2002). The good, the bad, and the ugly: Men, women, and masculinity. In J. K. Gardiner (Ed.), *Masculinity studies and feminist theory: New directions* (pp. 344–368). New York: Columbia University Press.

hooks, b. (1981). *Ain't I a woman*. Boston: South End Press.

Hull, G. T., Scott, P. B., & Smith, B. (Eds.). (1982). *All the women are White, all the Blacks are men, but some of us are brave*. New York: Feminist Press.

Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Intersectionality and feminist politics. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 13, 193–209.

Source Citation (MLA 8th Edition)

Kroløkke, Charlotte. "Intersectionality." *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, edited by Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss, vol. 1, SAGE Reference, 2009, pp. 565-566. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*

SECTION FIVE

SOURCE:

[Encyclopedia of Law and Society: American and Global Perspectives](#). Ed. David S. Clark. Vol. 1. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2007. p350-353. Copyright: COPYRIGHT 2007 SAGE Publications, Inc.

Critical Race Feminist Theory

History of Critical Race Theory and Feminism

Critical race [feminists](#), like the white male founders of CLS in the 1970s, endorsed a perspective on the role of [law](#) that critiques both conservative orthodoxies and legal liberalism. Challenging the notion of law as neutral, objective, and determinate, critical race feminists often use the deconstruction methodology of European postmodernists such as Jacques Derrida (1930–2004) and Michel Foucault (1926–1984) to expose the way law has served to perpetuate unjust class, race, and gender hierarchies.

Some feminist and race scholars felt that certain adherents of CLS marginalized the perspectives of people of color and white [women](#), giving inadequate attention to the role that [sexism](#) and racism

play in all legal systems. As a corrective to this, critical race theory, with its emphasis on race and ethnicity, emerged as a self-conscious entity in 1989, although the intellectual underpinnings of CRT exist in the work of several scholars from the mid-1970s onward, most notably Derrick Bell.

Developed in part as a reaction to CLS, CRT has generated a vigorous collection of articles covering a wide array of topics, including affirmative action in education and employment, hate speech, hate crimes, criminal law, the death penalty, racial profiling, and federal Indian law—all challenging the ability of conventional legal strategies to deliver social and economic justice. While the intellectual fire in CLS has died down, the still relatively young CRT movement, of which CRF is a part, has produced hundreds of articles and a growing number of books. In addition, there are several energetic offshoots of CRT. Besides CRF, these include LatCrit, emphasizing Latinos and Latinas; AsianCrit; QueerRaceCrit; and critical white studies, with its focus on the way whiteness functions as a social organizing principle.

CRT has attempted to be multidisciplinary from its inception. It sometimes uses narrative or storytelling techniques (the methodology of ethnography, anthropology, and literary studies), for example, and endorses an approach to scholarship in which the law may be a necessary but not a sufficient basis for formulating solutions to racial dilemmas. Today, one can find CRT scholars in disciplines besides law and in countries other than the United States.

Also from CRT's inception, a number of scholars and commentators, mostly women of color, recognized a flaw in certain perspectives present in CRT literature: the assumption that the experiences of women of color were the same as those of men of color. Given that the experiences of females may differ significantly from those of males, CRF is thus a feminist critique within CRT.

CRF also constitutes a race critique within feminist discourse, in that it necessarily embraces the emphasis [feminism](#) places on gender [oppression](#) within a patriarchal system. Interestingly, most proponents of CRF have not joined the mainstream Western feminist movements. While reasons vary, in some cases the refusal to become associated is due to the way these movements have focused on generic women, conflating and collapsing the variable experiences of women of color within the experience of white middle-class women. To proponents of CRF, mainstream feminism has not paid sufficient attention to the central role white supremacy has played, through both white men and white women, in subordinating women of color. CRF has drawn energy and ideas from black feminism and "womanist" feminism in the liberal arts, as typified by the work of Audre Lorde, Patricia Collins, Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF CRITICAL RACE FEMINISM

While critical race feminism has strands that derive from CLS, CRT, and feminism, it has also made some analytical contributions distinct from these movements. The first is its use of antiessentialism. CRF provides a critique of the feminist notion that there is an essential female voice, that is, that all women feel one way on a subject. Instead, CRF notes that the essential voice actually describes the reality of some white middle-or upper-class women only, while masquerading as a representation for all women. CRF, then, places its focus on the situation of women of color, whose lives may not conform to an essentialist norm.

A concept linked to antiessentialism is the theory of intersectionality, popularized by Kimberlé Crenshaw. She believed that to understand the distinctive, antiessentialist plight of women of color, you must look at the intersection of their race and gender. Within the scope of antiessentialism and intersectionality, CRF scholars with a focus on the United States have written on subjects such as [abortion](#), adoption, affirmative action, divorce, drug use, gangs, criminal justice, constitutional law, employment [discrimination](#), torts, [domestic violence](#), sexual harassment, [reproductive rights](#), family law, the Internet, and even tax law.

While the initial focus of CRF was the United States, the field has moved beyond that and is today enhancing the development of international and comparative law, including subfields such as public [international law](#), international business transactions, and [human rights](#). These areas were developed primarily from principles first enunciated by American and European white male scholars. Men of color from the developing world did not become involved until their respective nations gained independence or sufficient influence through entities such as the United Nations.

Their voices are still muted, but often they rise in discussions of cultural relativism and human rights. Western women have only recently become engaged in attempting to reconceptualize international law from feminist perspectives. Global feminists note that international law has failed to address what takes place in the private sphere of the family, where most women spend a significant part of their time.

CRF has contributed to the development of international law, global feminism, and postcolonial theory by moving women of color away from the margins, in both a theoretical and a practical sense. Women of color are subject to domination from many forces: imperialism, neocolonialism, and occupation, not to mention local [patriarchy](#), culture, and customs. They have often had to choose between directing their energies toward the nationalist struggle for independence or nonalignment, or toward some form of self-determination in the struggle against patriarchy. Typically, the nationalist struggle has prevailed. While the energy of women helps throw off the yoke of outsider oppression, these same women may well be forced back into the "women's work" of taking care of the house and the children.

For women outside the Western tradition, openly accepting feminism carries risks. Others within their communities may view them as unpatriotic for embracing values that may be inimical to local culture. One of the dilemmas for those who do choose to be feminists is whether to embrace and how to reconcile the universality of women's international human rights within their own cultural contexts.

Global CRF themes have included those also addressed in the United States. In addition, scholars have considered multiculturalism, conflict between religion and custom, communitarianism versus individualism, bride burning, child brides, dowry, genocide, social construction of gypsies as black, honor killings, inheritance, [marriage](#), polygamy, immigration law, sexual slavery, torture, female genital surgeries, female infanticide, son preference, war crimes, economic development, and HIV and AIDS.

By Adrien Katherine Wing

Further Readings

Crenshaw, Kimberlé W. (1989). "Demarginalizing the Intersection between Race and Sex: A Black Feminist of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989: 139–67.

Matsuda, Mari. (1989). "When the First Quail Calls: Multiple Consciousness as Jurisprudential Method." *Women's Rights Law Reporter* 11: 7–10.

Wing, Adrien K., ed. (2000). *Global Critical Race Feminism: An International Reader*. New York: New York University Press.

_____, ed. (2003). *Critical Race Feminism: A Reader*, 2d ed. New York: New York University Press.

Source Citation (MLA 8th Edition)

"Critical Race Feminist Theory." *Encyclopedia of Law and Society: American and Global Perspectives*, edited by David S. Clark, vol. 1, SAGE Publications, 2007, pp. 350-353.
Gale Virtual Reference Library

SECTION SIX

SOURCE:

BBC Radio 4

- (a) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09pl66d>
- (b) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/312fXcsr5T1V9p509XNMYC4/why-are-even-women-biased-against-women>

Why are even women biased against women?

Women are sexist too: even avowed feminists are found to be unconsciously biased against women.

In the Radio 4 programme [Analysis](#), Mary Ann Sieghart asks, "Where do these discriminatory attitudes come from and what can we do about them?"

"Women are assumed to be incompetent unless proven otherwise, and men are assumed to be competent unless proven otherwise." That's the observation of someone who has the rare experience of having lived both as a man and as a woman: Professor Joan Roughgarden, formerly

of Stanford University. Her experience as a transgender woman confirms what women have always suspected: they have to work twice as hard to prove that they're good at what they do.

Why do women have lower expectations of other women? Catherine Nichols, a writer based in Boston, has first-hand experience. After she finished writing her novel, she sent out the first few chapters, plus a synopsis, to 50 literary agents, overwhelmingly female. She had just two positive replies from agents asking to see more of the manuscript.

Is there any scientific evidence for women being biased against women? The answer is yes. Several experiments have shown it.

This puzzled her, as writer friends had told her how good her novel was. So she conceived what she calls a "nutty plan": she sent out exactly the same material to 50 more agents, but this time under a male name. The result? She had 17 positive replies.

In other words, the mainly female agents seemed to think she was eight-and-a-half times better at writing under a man's name than a woman's. What's more, she received loads of constructive criticism on how to improve the novel, help she never got when she was writing under a woman's name. "It was shocking how fast it become obvious there was a big difference," she told me.

It's not as if there were commercial reasons for the disparity. Of the top ten literary fiction titles published last year, nine had female authors. But maybe Nichols's experience is just anecdotal. Is there any scientific evidence for women being biased against women?

The answer is yes. Several experiments have shown it. One, by Yale researchers, sent job applications and CVs for a lab manager post to male and female science professors. The applications were identical, except that half were given a man's name and the other half, a woman's.

And guess what? The professors – both male and female – said that the man's application was better, that they were more likely to hire him and more likely to mentor him. And they offered him a substantially higher salary.

PODCAST

[Listen to Why Are Even Women Biased Against Women?](#)

Mary Ann Sieghart asks where such discriminatory attitudes come from and what we can do about them.

So where does this bias come from? It comes from far back in our evolution, when we were learning to distinguish friend from foe. Our unconscious brain has hugely more processing power than our conscious brain, and it's always devising shortcuts, known as heuristics.

The Implicit Association Test suggested, to my dismay, that even I – a staunch feminist who's always had a career – may be slightly biased against working women.

These heuristics, part of our reptilian brain, are born of experience. So if, as a child, we burn ourselves on a hot dish from the oven, we quickly learn to associate "oven" with "hot" and "pain".

Equally, if our society is filled disproportionately with men in top positions, we are going to associate "male" with "leader", "success" and "competence" and "female" with "home", "children" and "family". This overrides any natural bias women might have (in favor of) their own kind.

There's a test for unconscious bias, known as the Implicit Association Test. To my dismay, it suggested that even I – a staunch feminist who's always had a career – may be slightly biased against working women. Male and female words, and words representing work and family, flash up on your screen. The test then measures how quickly you manage to associate each category and how many mistakes you make.

Professor Mazarin Banaji of Harvard is one of the test's creators. It told her that she may be biased too. "It was the single most important and transformative day of my life, when I came face to face with my own bias, with the fact that my mind and my hands were unable to associate female with leadership as well as male with leadership.

"When I come face to face with the fact that I cannot associate dark-skinned people with good as quickly as I can associate light-skinned people's faces with good things, that's very different from just awareness. That's like somebody putting a little dagger into me and turning it and asking me to sit up and take notice."

The Gender Career Test that we both took is a measure of how powerful our heuristics are, says Banaji. "It says that a thumbprint of the culture has been left on our brain." And on this test, 80 per cent of women and 75 per cent of men show some bias.

So next time you assume that a woman isn't competent until she proves otherwise, slap yourself on the wrist, realise that it's your reptilian brain talking and make a conscious decision to act like a 21st-century person, not a caveman – or woman.

So what can we do about it? Well, the first step is to be aware of it. However liberal and socially conscious you are, the chances are your unconscious brain is fizzing with the stereotypes you outwardly disdain. Undergoing unconscious bias training is a start, but it's not enough.

As Professor Banaji asks, "If I were to give you a lecture on fat and sugar and how our body converts that into energy, at the end of the three-hour training programme, will you have lost any weight?"

The important thing is to keep being aware of any possible bias. When you're interviewing job applicants, try to correct for any unconscious bias that may be telling you the timbre of a woman's voice lacks authority.

Make sure you aren't more forgiving of a man's shortcomings than of a woman's. Compare them both rigorously with the job specification and don't rely on your instinct or hunch.

It requires a bit of work. But surely it's worth it? Sexism is as vile as racism, and shouldn't have a place in modern society. So next time you assume that a woman isn't competent until she proves otherwise, slap yourself on the wrist, realise that it's your reptilian brain talking and make a conscious decision to act like a 21st-century person, not a caveman – or woman.

SECTION SEVEN

SOURCE:

By [Sharon Smith](#) SOURCE: <https://isreview.org/issue/91/black-feminism-and-intersectionality>

Black Feminism and Intersectionality

“The concept of the simultaneity of oppression is still the crux of a Black feminist understanding of political reality and, I believe, one of the most significant ideological contributions of Black feminist thought.”
—*Black feminist and scholar Barbara Smith, 1983*²

Black legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term “intersectionality” in her insightful 1989 essay, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics.”³ The concept of intersectionality is not an abstract notion but a description of the way multiple oppressions are experienced. Indeed, Crenshaw uses the following analogy, referring to a traffic intersection, or crossroad, to concretize the concept:

Consider an analogy to traffic in an intersection, coming and going in all four directions. Discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another. If an accident happens in an intersection, it can be caused by cars traveling from any number of directions and, sometimes, from all of them. Similarly, if a Black woman is harmed because she is in an intersection, her injury could result from sex discrimination or race discrimination. . . . But it is not always easy to reconstruct an accident: Sometimes the skid marks and the injuries simply indicate that they occurred simultaneously, frustrating efforts to determine which driver caused the harm.⁴

Crenshaw argues that Black women are discriminated against in ways that often do not fit neatly within the legal categories of either "racism" or "sexism"—but as a combination of both racism *and* sexism. Yet the legal system has generally defined sexism as based upon an unspoken reference to the injustices confronted by *all* (including white) women, while defining racism to refer to those faced by *all* (including male) Blacks and other people of color. This framework frequently renders Black women legally "invisible" and without legal recourse.

Crenshaw describes several employment discrimination-based lawsuits to illustrate how Black women's complaints often fall between the cracks precisely because they are discriminated against *both* as women and as Blacks. The ruling in one such case, *DeGraffenreid v. General Motors*, filed by

ygml

What is Aversive Racism?

Aversive racism is racist discrimination that works primarily at the individual level (but which may also be manifest, aggregatively, at the societal level) where, in contrast to traditional forms of racism, there is an **aversion** to associating with the target of the discrimination, the **racial Other**, but the perpetrator all the while claiming that he/she is not a racist and in fact firmly believes in such progressive values as: all persons are created equal; racist discrimination is inherently wrong; racial/ethnic diversity everywhere should be the natural state of affairs; and so on. While this dissonance between belief and actual behavior may, at first, appear to be a case of nothing less than blatant hypocrisy, it is not really so because the belief may be quite genuine given the subjection from infancy to adulthood to the socializational imperatives of a socio-cultural-political environment that *ostensibly* (repeat, ostensibly) champions these values, as in the case of Western capitalist democracies. What, then, is the source of this dissonance, which for the racial Other can be just as injurious as dominative racism? To put it very concisely: the historically determined persistence of institutional racism against the backdrop of a legislative environment that attempts to prohibit it.

A Few Examples of Aversive Racism

- Not objecting to attending a multiracially diverse educational institution, yet always avoiding interacting with the racial other (in the classroom, in the cafeteria, in the dorms, in hallways, on commuter busses, etc.).
- Avoiding eye-contact while speaking to the racial other in the workplace, and other similar interpersonal behaviors.
- Supporting the prohibition of racist discrimination in housing while all the while—in practice—accepting, and participating in residential segregation (a pervasive phenomenon, for example, in United States).
- Rationalizing racially discriminatory conduct in employment *in terms other than obvious racism*.
- Subjecting the racial other to different and hence debilitating standards of evaluation in places where evaluations are a norm (e.g. for purposes of promotions in the workplace, when grading coursework in educational settings, when determining pay rates, and so on).

Aversive racists genuinely believe in racial equality and justice but are unwilling to work to abandon their subconscious racist behavior because of growing up in a society that continues to be plagued by institutional racism.



five Black women in 1976, demonstrates this point vividly.

The General Motors Corporation had never hired a Black woman for its workforce before 1964—the year the Civil Rights Act passed through Congress. All of the Black women hired after 1970 lost their jobs fairly quickly, however, in mass layoffs during the 1973–75 recession. Such a sweeping loss of jobs among Black women led the plaintiffs to argue that seniority-based layoffs, guided by the principle "last hired-first fired," discriminated against Black women workers at General Motors, extending past discriminatory practices by the company.

Yet the court refused to allow the plaintiffs to combine sex-based and race-based discrimination into a single category of discrimination:

The plaintiffs allege that they are suing on behalf of black women, and that therefore this lawsuit attempts to combine two causes of action into a new special sub-category, namely, a combination of racial and sex-based discrimination.... The plaintiffs are clearly entitled to a remedy if they have been discriminated against. However, they should not be allowed to combine statutory remedies to create a new "super-remedy" which would give them relief beyond what the drafters of the relevant statutes intended. Thus, this lawsuit must be examined to see if it states a cause of action for race discrimination, sex discrimination, or alternatively either, but not a combination of both.⁵

In its decision, the court soundly rejected the creation of "a new classification of 'black women' who would have greater standing than, for example, a black male. The prospect of the creation of new classes of protected minorities, governed only by the mathematical principles of permutation and combination, clearly raises the prospect of opening the hackneyed Pandora's box."⁶

Crenshaw observes of this ruling that "providing legal relief only when Black women show that their claims are based on race or on sex is analogous to calling an ambulance for the victim only after the driver responsible for the injuries is identified."⁷

SOJOURNER TRUTH

After Crenshaw introduced the term intersectionality in 1989, it was widely adopted because it managed to encompass in a single word the simultaneous experience of the multiple oppressions faced by Black women. But the concept was not a new one. Since the times of slavery, Black women have eloquently described the multiple oppressions of race, class, and gender—referring to this concept as "interlocking oppressions," "simultaneous oppressions," "double jeopardy," "triple jeopardy" or any number of descriptive terms.⁸

Like most other Black feminists, Crenshaw emphasizes the importance of Sojourner Truth's famous "Ain't I a Woman?" speech delivered to the 1851 Women's Convention in Akron, Ohio:

That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I could have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen them most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?⁹

Truth's words vividly contrast the character of oppression faced by white and Black women. While white middle-class women have traditionally been treated as delicate and overly emotional—destined to subordinate themselves to white men—Black women have been denigrated and

subject to the racist abuse that is a foundational element of US society. Yet, as Crenshaw notes, "When Sojourner Truth rose to speak, many white women urged that she be silenced, fearing that she would divert attention from women's suffrage to emancipation," invoking a clear illustration of the degree of racism within the suffrage movement.¹⁰

Crenshaw draws a parallel between Truth's experience with the white suffrage movement and Black women's experience with modern feminism, arguing, "When feminist theory and politics that claim to reflect *women's* experiences and *women's* aspirations do not include or speak to Black women, Black women must ask, "Ain't *we* women?"

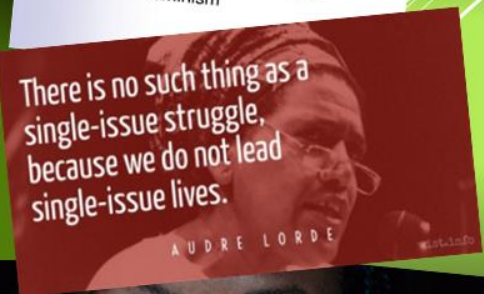
INTERSECTIONALITY AS A SYNTHESIS OF OPPRESSIONS

Thus, Crenshaw's political aims reach further than addressing flaws in the legal system. She argues that Black women are frequently absent from analyses of either gender oppression or racism, since the former focuses primarily on the experiences of white women and the latter on Black men. She seeks to challenge both feminist and antiracist theory and practice that neglect to "accurately reflect the interaction of race and gender," arguing that "because the intersectional experience is greater

What is Intersectionality?

Intersectionality refers to the complex web of different forms of oppression--such as sexism, racism, and classism--experienced simultaneously by marginalized individuals and groups in a society in such a way as to constitute *super-oppression*; that is, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts" (to borrow a well-known phrase from the Greek philosopher Aristotle).

Note: The theory behind intersectionality was first articulated by the African American legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in her article published in 1989 in the journal *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, titled "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." She had written it as a criticism of white feminists who, quite often, remained naively insensitive to the racism that black women experienced in United States--a problem that continues to plague them to this day because of their *colorblind racism*.



than the sum of racism and sexism, any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated."¹¹

Crenshaw argues that a key aspect of intersectionality lies in its recognition that multiple oppressions are not each suffered separately but rather as a single, synthesized experience. This has enormous significance at the very practical level of movement building.

In *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*, published in 1990, Black feminist Patricia Hill Collins extends and updates the social contradictions raised by Sojourner Truth, while crediting collective struggles waged historically with establishing a "collective wisdom" among Black women:

If women are allegedly passive and fragile, then why are Black women treated as "mules" and assigned heavy cleaning chores? If good mothers are supposed to stay at home with their children, then why are US Black women on public assistance forced to find jobs and leave their children in day care? If women's highest calling is to become mothers, then why are Black teen mothers pressured to use Norplant and Depo Provera? In the absence of a viable Black feminism that investigates how intersecting oppressions of race, gender, and class foster these contradictions, the angle of vision created by being deemed devalued workers and failed mothers could easily be turned inward, leading to internalized oppression. But the legacy of struggle among US Black women suggests that a collectively shared Black women's oppositional knowledge has long existed. This collective wisdom in turn has spurred US Black women to generate a more specialized knowledge, namely, Black feminist thought as critical social theory.¹²

Like Crenshaw, Collins uses the concept of intersectionality to analyze how "oppressions [such as 'race and gender' or 'sexuality and nation'] work together in producing injustice." But Collins adds the concept "matrix of dominations" to this formulation: "In contrast, the matrix of dominations refers to how these intersecting oppressions are actually organized. Regardless of the particular intersections involved, structural, disciplinary, hegemonic, and interpersonal domains of power reappear across quite different forms of oppression."¹³

Elsewhere, Collins acknowledges the crucial component of social class among Black women in shaping political perceptions. In "The Contours of an Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology," she argues that "[w]hile a Black woman's standpoint and its accompanying epistemology stem from Black women's consciousness of race and gender oppression, they are not simply the result of combining Afrocentric and female values—*standpoints are rooted in real material conditions structured by social class.*"¹⁴ [Emphasis added.]

FIGHTING SEXISM IN A PROFOUNDLY RACIST SOCIETY

Because of the historic role of slavery and racial segregation in the United States, the development of a unified women's movement requires recognizing the manifold implications of this continuing

racial divide. While all women are oppressed as women, no movement can claim to speak for *all* women unless it speaks for women who also face the consequences of racism—which place women of color disproportionately in the ranks of the working class and the poor. Race and class therefore must be central to the project of women's liberation if it is to be meaningful to those women who are most oppressed by the system.

Indeed, one of the key weaknesses of the predominantly white US feminist movement has been its lack of attention to racism, with enormous repercussions. Failure to confront racism ends up reproducing the racist status quo.

The widely accepted narrative of the modern feminist movement is that it initially involved white women beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s, who were later joined by women of color following in their footsteps. But this narrative is factually incorrect.

Decades before the rise of the modern women's liberation movement, Black women were organizing against their systematic rape at the hands of white racist men. Women civil rights activists, including Rosa Parks, were part of a vocal grassroots movement to defend Black women subject to racist sexual assaults—in an intersection of oppression unique to Black women historically in the United States.

Danielle L. McGuire, author of *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power*¹⁵ argues that

throughout the twentieth century...Black women regularly denounced their sexual misuse. By deploying their voices as weapons in the wars against white supremacy, whether in the church, the courtroom, or in congressional hearings, African American women loudly resisted what Martin Luther King, Jr., called the "thingification" of their humanity. Decades before radical feminists in the women's movement urged rape survivors to "speak out," African American women's public protests galvanized local, national, and even international outrage and sparked larger campaigns for racial justice and human dignity.¹⁶

THE INVENTION OF THE BLACK "MATRIARCHY"

In the 1960s, the contrast between white middle-class and Black women's oppression could not have been more obvious. The same "experts" who prescribed a life of happy homemaking for white suburban women, as documented in Betty Friedan's enormously popular *The Feminine Mystique*, reprimanded Black women for their failure to conform to this model.¹⁷ Because Black mothers have traditionally worked outside the home in much larger numbers than their white counterparts, they were blamed for a range of social ills on the basis of their relative economic independence.

Socialist-feminist Stephanie Coontz describes "Freudians and social scientists" who "insisted that Black men had been doubly emasculated—first by slavery and later by the economic independence of their women." Many in the African-American media also accepted this analysis. A

1960 *Ebony* magazine article stated plainly that the traditional independence of the Black woman meant that she was "more in conflict with her innate biological role than the white woman."¹⁸

This theme emerged full throttle in 1965, when the US Department of Labor issued a report entitled, "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action." The report, authored by future Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, describes a "Black matriarchy" at the center of a "tangle of pathology" afflicting Black families, leading to a cycle of poverty. "A fundamental fact of Negro American family life is the often reversed roles of husband and wife," in which Black women consistently earn more than their men, argues Moynihan.

The report states, "In essence, the Negro community has been forced into a matriarchal structure which, because it is so out of line with the rest of the American society, seriously retards the progress of the group as a whole." The report explains why this is the case:

There is, presumably, no special reason why a society in which males are dominant in family relationships is to be preferred to a matriarchal arrangement. However, it is clearly a disadvantage for a minority group to be operating on one principle, while the great majority of the population, and the one with the most advantages to begin with, is operating on another. This is the present situation of the Negro. Ours is a society which presumes male leadership in private and public affairs. The arrangements of society facilitate such leadership and reward it. A subculture, such as that of the Negro American, in which this is not the pattern, is placed at a distinct disadvantage.¹⁹

This example demonstrates why gender discrimination cannot be effectively understood without factoring in the role of racism. And Black feminists since that time have made a priority of examining the interlocking relationship between gender, race, and class that many white feminists tended to ignore at the time. In so doing, they demonstrated that women of color are not merely "doubly oppressed" by both sexism and racism. Black women's experience of sexism is shaped equally by racism and class inequality and is therefore *different* in certain respects from the experience of white, middle-class women.

"TWO SOCIETIES, ONE BLACK, ONE WHITE—SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL"

The 1950s and 1960s was also a period of intensive racial polarization in the United States, as the massive Civil Rights Movement struggled to end both Jim Crow segregation throughout the South and de facto racial segregation in the North. Interracial marriage was still banned in sixteen states in 1967 when the Supreme Court finally ruled such bans unconstitutional in the *Loving v. Virginia* decision.

Urban rebellions swept the country in the mid- to late-sixties, touched off by police brutality and other forms of racial discrimination in poverty-stricken Black ghettos. In 1967, the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, also known as the Kerner Commission, was established to

investigate the root causes of urban rebellions. In 1968, the Commission issued a report that included scathing indictment of racism and segregation in US society. The report concludes:

Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal... Segregation and poverty have created in the racial ghetto a destructive environment totally unknown to most white Americans. What white Americans have never fully understood but what the Negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it.²⁰

The Kerner Commission emphasized that much of the problem was rooted in “[p]ervasive discrimination and segregation in employment, education and housing, which have resulted in the continuing exclusion of great numbers of Negroes from the benefits of economic progress.” The Commission concluded that the degree of housing segregation was such that “to create an unsegregated population distribution, an average of over 86 percent of all Negroes would have to change their place of residence within the city.”²¹

In response to the extreme degree of racism and sexism they faced in the 1960s, Black women and other women of color began organizing against their oppression, forming a multitude of organizations. In 1968, for example, Black women from the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) formed the Third World Women's Alliance. In 1973, a group of notable Black feminists, including Florynce Kennedy, Alice Walker, and Barbara Smith, formed the National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO). In 1974, Barbara Smith joined with a group of other Black lesbian feminists to found the Boston-based Combahee River Collective as a self-consciously radical alternative to the NBFO. The Combahee River Collective was named to commemorate the successful Underground Railroad Combahee River Raid of 1863, planned and led by Harriet Tubman, which freed 750 slaves.

The Combahee River Collective's defining statement, issued in 1977, described its vision for Black feminism as opposing *all* forms of oppression—including sexuality, gender identity, class, disability, and age oppression—later embedded in the concept of intersectionality.

The most general statement of our politics at the present time would be that we are actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression, and see as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking. The synthesis of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives. As Black women we see Black feminism as the logical political movement to combat the manifold and simultaneous oppressions that all women of color face.²²

They added, “We know that there is such a thing as racial-sexual oppression which is neither solely racial nor solely sexual, e.g., the history of rape of Black women by white men as a weapon of political repression.”²³

THE CONSEQUENCES OF IGNORING CLASS AND RACIAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WOMEN

As noted above, Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, published in 1963, gave voice to the anguish of white middle-class homemakers who were trapped in their suburban homes, doomed to lives revolving around fulfilling their families' every need. The book immediately struck a chord with millions of women who desperately sought to escape the stultifying world of household drudgery.

Friedan's book, however, ignored the importance of the very real class and racial differences that exist between women. She made a conscious decision to target this particular audience of white middle-class women. As Coontz notes, "[T]he content of *The Feminine Mystique* and the marketing strategy that Friedan and her publishers devised for it ignored Black women's positive examples of Friedan's argument." Friedan surely knew better. She had traveled in left-wing labor circles during the 1930s and 1940s but decided in the mid-1950s (at the height of the anticommunist witch hunts of the McCarthy era) to reinvent herself as an apolitical suburban wife.²⁴

Few Black women or working-class women of any race would have been able to afford Friedan's proposal that women hire domestic workers to perform their daily household chores while they were at work. Thus, "Black women who did read the book seldom responded as enthusiastically as did her white readers."²⁵

Friedan praises those stay-at-home moms who had shown the courage to break from their traditional roles to seek well-paying careers, writing sympathetically that these women "had problems of course, tough ones—juggling their pregnancies, finding nurses and housekeepers, having to give up good assignments when their husbands were transferred."³¹ Yet she doesn't deem it worthy to comment on the lives of the nursemaids and the housekeepers these career women hire, who also work all day but then return home to face housework and child care responsibilities of their own.

Soon after *The Feminine Mystique* was published, left-wing civil rights activist and women's historian Gerda Lerner wrote to Friedan, praising the book but also expressing "one reservation:" Friedan had addressed the book "solely to the problems of middle class, college-educated women." Lerner notes that "working women, especially Negro women, labor not only under the disadvantages imposed by the feminine mystique, but under the more pressing disadvantages of economic discrimination."²⁶

It is also worth noting that Friedan introduces a profoundly anti-gay theme in *The Feminine Mystique* that would reverberate in her organizing efforts into the 1970s. She argues that "the homosexuality that is spreading like a murky smog over the American scene" has its roots in the feminine mystique, which can produce "the kind of mother-son devotion that can produce latent or overt homosexuality.... The boy smothered by such parasitical mother-love is kept from growing up, not only sexually, but in all ways."²⁷

REPRODUCING THE MYTH OF THE BLACK RAPIST

But racism was not limited to the more conservative wing of the women's movement. Susan Brownmiller, author of *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, published in 1975, describes the root of women's oppression in the crudest of biological terms, based on men's physical ability to rape: "When men discovered that they could rape, they proceeded to do it... Man's discovery that his genitalia could serve as a weapon to generate fear must rank as one of the most important discoveries of prehistoric times, along with the use of fire and the first crude stone axe. From prehistoric times to the present, I believe, rape has played a critical function." On this basis, Brownmiller concludes that men use rape to enforce their power over women: "It is nothing more and nothing less than a conscious process by which all men keep all women in a state of fear."²⁸

This theoretical framework, based purely on the supposed biological differences between men and women, allowed Brownmiller to justify reactionary assumptions in the name of combating women's oppression. She reaches openly racist conclusions in her account of the 1955 lynching of Emmett Till. Fourteen-year-old Till, visiting family in Jim Crow Mississippi that summer, committed the "crime" of whistling at a married white woman named Carolyn Bryant, in a teenage prank. Till was tortured and shot before his young body was dumped in the Tallahatchie River.

Despite Till's lynching, Brownmiller describes Till and his killer as sharing power over a "white woman," using stereotypes that Black activist and scholar Angela Davis called "the resuscitation of the old racist myth of the Black rapist."²⁹

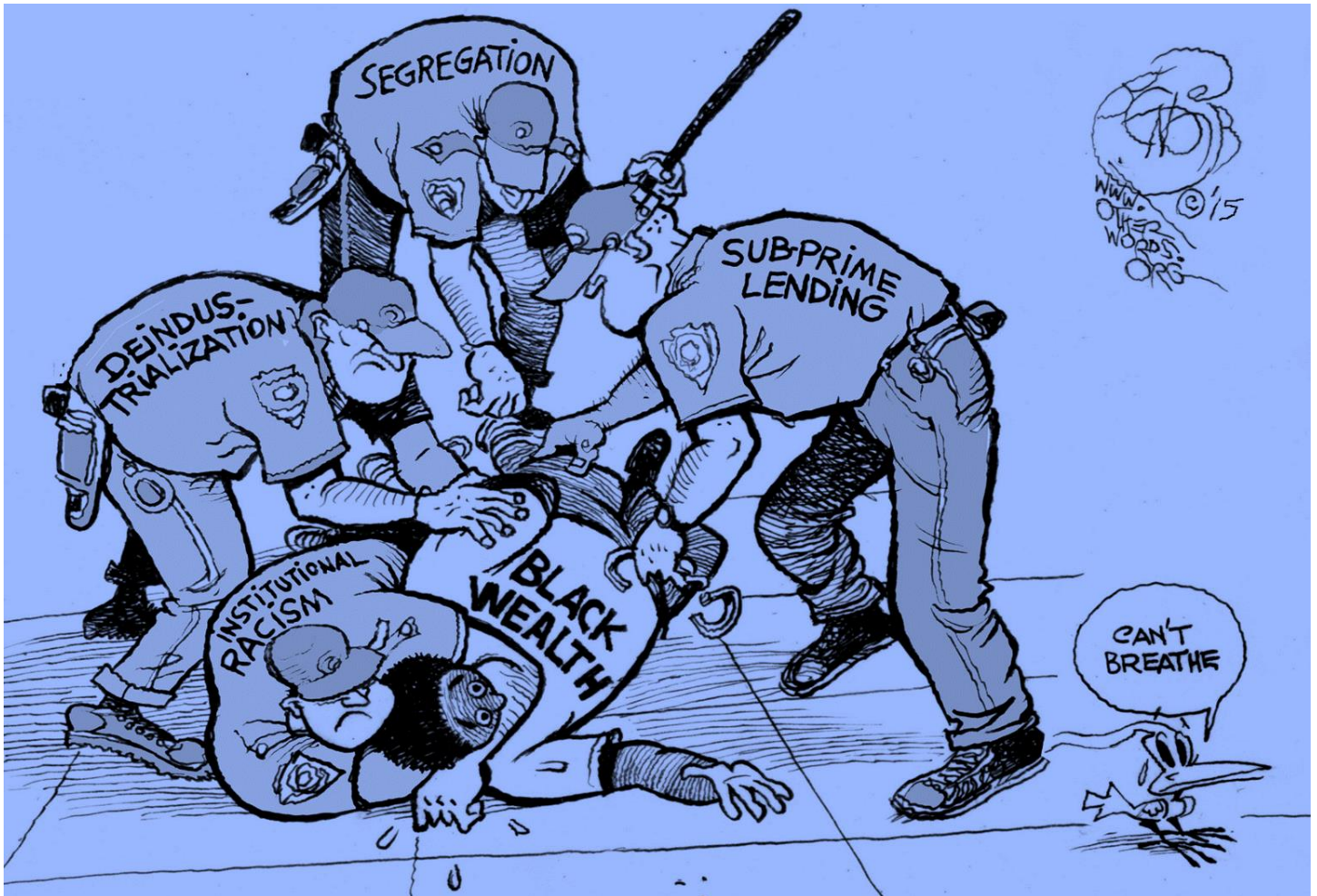
Brownmiller's own words illustrate Davis's insight:

Rarely has one single case exposed so clearly as Till's the underlying group male antagonisms over access to women, for what began in Bryant's store should not be misconstrued as an innocent flirtation... Emmett Till was going to show his black buddies that he, and by inference, they could get a white woman and Carolyn Bryant was the nearest convenient object. In concrete terms, the accessibility of all white women was on review.³⁰

Brownmiller also wrote,

And what of the wolf whistle, Till's 'gesture of adolescent bravado'?... The whistle was no small tweet of hubba-hubba or melodious approval for a well turned ankle... It was a deliberate insult just short of physical assault, a last reminder to Carolyn Bryant that this black boy, Till, had in mind to possess her.³¹

The acclaimed novelist, poet, and activist Alice Walker responded in the *New York Times Book Review* in 1975, "Emmett Till was not a rapist. He was not even a man. He was a child who did not understand that whistling at a white woman could cost him his life."³² Davis described the contradictions inherent in Brownmiller's analysis of rape: "In choosing to take sides with white women, regardless of the circumstances, Brownmiller herself capitulates to racism. Her failure to alert white women about the urgency of combining a fierce challenge to racism with the necessary battle against sexism is an important plus for the forces of racism today."³³



In 1976, *Time* magazine named Susan Brownmiller one of its "women of the year," praising her book as "the most rigorous and provocative piece of scholarship that has yet emerged from the feminist movement."³⁴ The objections to Brownmiller's overtly racist standpoint from accomplished Black women such as Davis and Walker went largely unnoticed by the political mainstream.

FIGHTING SEXISM AND RACISM IN THE 1970S

It must be acknowledged that many women of color who identified as feminists in the 1970s and 1980s were strongly critical of mainstream feminism's refusal to challenge racism and other forms of oppression. Barbara Smith, for example, argued for the inclusion of all the oppressed in a 1979 speech, in a clear challenge to white, middle-class, heterosexual feminists:

The reason racism is a feminist issue is easily explained by the inherent definition of feminism. Feminism is the political theory and practice to free all women: women of color, working-class women, poor women, physically challenged women, lesbians, old women, as well as white economically privileged heterosexual women. *Anything less than this is not feminism, but merely female self-aggrandizement.*³⁵

But during the 1960s and 1970s, many Black women and other women of color also felt sidelined and alienated by the lack of attention to women's liberation inside nationalist and other antiracist movements. The Combahee River Collective, for example, was made up of women who were veterans of the Black Panther Party and other antiracist organizations. In this political context, Black feminists established a tradition that rejects prioritizing women's oppression over racism, and vice versa. This tradition assumes the connection between racism and poverty in capitalist society, thereby rejecting middle-class strategies for women's liberation that disregard the centrality of class in poor and working-class women's lives.

Black feminists such as Angela Davis contested the theory and practice of white feminists who failed to address the centrality of racism. Davis's groundbreaking book, *Women, Race and Class*, for example, examines the history of Black women in the United States from a Marxist perspective beginning with the system of slavery and continuing through to modern capitalism. Her book also examines the ways in which the issues of reproductive rights and rape, in particular, represent profoundly different experiences for Black and white women because of racism. Each of these is examined below.

• *Reproductive rights and racist sterilization abuse*

Mainstream feminists of the 1960s and 1970s regarded the issue of reproductive rights as exclusively the winning of legal abortion, without acknowledging the racist policies that have historically prevented women of color from bearing and raising as many children as they wanted.

Davis argues that the history of the birth control movement and its racist sterilization programs necessarily make the issue of reproductive rights far more complicated for Black women and other women of color, who have historically been the targets of this abuse. Davis traces the path of twentieth-century birth-control pioneer Margaret Sanger from her early days as a socialist to her conversion to the eugenics movement, an openly racist approach to population control based on the slogan, "[More] children from the fit, less from the unfit."

Those "unfit" to bear children, according to the eugenicists, included the mentally and physically disabled, prisoners, and the non-white poor. As Davis noted, "By 1932, the Eugenics Society could boast that at least twenty-six states had passed compulsory sterilization laws, and that thousands of 'unfit' persons had been surgically prevented from reproducing."

"THE EMOTIONAL, SEXUAL, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL STEREOTYPING OF FEMALES BEGINS WHEN THE DOCTOR SAYS, 'IT'S A GIRL!'"

—**Shirley Chisholm** (U.S. Congress Woman, 1969-1983) "Unbought and Unbossed"

"I want history to remember me... not as the first black woman to have made a bid for the presidency of the United States, but as a black woman who lived in the 20th century and who dared to be herself. I want to be remembered as a catalyst for change in America." —*Shirley Chisholm (1924-2005)*



In launching the "Negro Project" in 1939, Sanger's American Birth Control League argued, "[T]he mass of Negroes, particularly in the South, still breed carelessly and disastrously." In a personal letter, Sanger confided, "We do not want word to get out that we want to exterminate the Negro population and the minister is the man who can straighten out that idea if it ever occurs to their more rebellious members."³⁶

Racist population-control

policies left large numbers of Black women, Latinas, and Native American women sterilized against their will or without their knowledge. In 1974, an Alabama court found that between 100,000 and 150,000 poor Black teenagers were sterilized each year in Alabama.

The 1960s and 1970s witnessed an epidemic of sterilization abuse and other forms of coercion aimed at Black, Native American, and Latina women—alongside a sharp rise in struggles against this mistreatment. A 1970s study showed that 25 percent of Native American women had been sterilized, and that Black and Latina married women had been sterilized in much greater proportions than married women in the population at large. By 1968, one-third of women of childbearing age in Puerto Rico—still a US colony—had been permanently sterilized.³⁷

Yet mainstream white feminists not only ignored these struggles but also added to the problem. Many embraced the goals of population control with all its racist implications as an ostensibly "liberal" cause.

In 1972, for example, a time when Native Americans and other women of color were struggling against coercive adoption policies that targeted their communities, *Ms. Magazine* asked its predominantly white and middle-class readership, "'What do you do if you're a conscientious citizen, concerned about the population explosion and ecological problems, love children, want to see what one of your own would look like, and want more than one?' *Ms.* offered as a solution: 'Have One, Adopt One.'" ³⁸ The children on offer for adoption were overwhelmingly Native American, Black, Latino, and Asian.

To be sure, the legalization of abortion in the US Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision was of paramount importance to all women and the direct result of grassroots struggle. Because of both the economic and social consequences of racism, the lives of Black women, Latinas, and other

women of color were most at risk when abortion was illegal. Before abortion was made legal in New York City in 1970, for example, Black women made up 50 percent of all women who died after an illegal abortion, while Puerto Rican women were 44 percent.³⁹

The legalization of abortion in 1973 is usually regarded as the most important success of the modern women's movement. That victory however was accompanied at the end of that decade by the far less heralded but *equally important victories against sterilization abuse*, the result of grassroots struggles waged primarily by women of color. In 1978, the federal government conceded to demands by Native American, Black, and Latina activists by finally establishing regulations for sterilization. These included required waiting periods and authorization forms in the same language spoken by the woman agreeing to be sterilized.⁴⁰

Davis notes that women of color "were far more familiar than their white sisters with the murderously clumsy scalpels of inept abortionists seeking profit in illegality,"⁴¹ yet were virtually absent from abortion rights campaigns. She concludes, "[T]he abortion rights activists of the early 1970s should have examined the history of their movement. Had they done so, they might have understood why so many of their Black sisters adopted a posture of suspicion toward their cause."⁴²

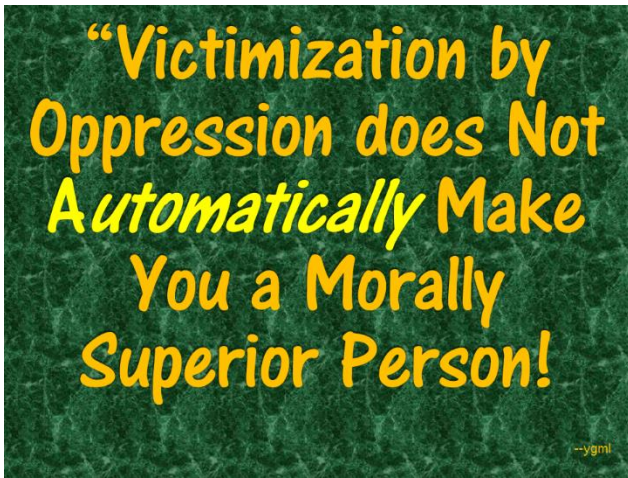
• *The racial component of rape*

Rape is one of the most damaging manifestations of women's oppression the world over. But rape also has had a toxic racial component in the United States since the time of slavery, as a key weapon in maintaining the system of white supremacy. Davis argues that rape is "an essential dimension of the social relations between slave master and slave," involving the routine rape of Black slave women by their white masters.⁴³

She describes rape as "a weapon of domination, a weapon of repression, whose covert goal was to extinguish slave women's will to resist and, in the process, to demoralize their men."⁴⁴ The institutionalized rape of Black women survived the abolition of slavery and took on its modern form: "Group rape, perpetuated by the Ku Klux Klan and other terrorist organizations of the post-Civil War period, became an uncamouflaged political weapon in the drive to thwart the movement for Black equality."⁴⁵

Black Marxist-feminist Gloria Joseph makes the following insightful observation of the shared experience of racism among Black women and men: "The slave experience for Blacks in the United States made an ironic contribution to male-female equality. Laboring in the fields or in the homes, men and women were equally dehumanized and brutalized." In modern society, she concludes, "The rape of Black women and the lynching and castration of Black men are equally heinous in their nature."⁴⁶

The caricature of the virtuous white Southern belle under constant prey by Black male rapists had its opposite in the promiscuous Black woman seeking the sexual attention of white men. As Davis argues, "The fictional image of the Black man as rapist has always strengthened its inseparable companion: the image of the Black woman as chronically promiscuous... Viewed as 'loose women' and whores, Black women's cries of rape would necessarily lack legitimacy."⁴⁷ As Lerner likewise



describes, "The myth of the Black rapist of white women is the twin of the myth of the bad Black woman—both designed to apologize for and facilitate the continued exploitation of Black men and women."⁴⁸

Brownmiller was not alone in failing to challenge racist assumptions about rape, with the consequence of reproducing them. Davis strongly criticizes 1970s-era white feminists for neglecting to integrate an analysis of racism with the theory and practice of combating rape: "During the contemporary anti-rape movement, few feminist theorists seriously analyzed the special

circumstances surrounding the Black woman as rape victim. The historical knot binding Black women—systematically abused and violated by white men—to Black men—maimed and murdered because of the racist manipulation of the rape charge—has just begun to be acknowledged to any significant extent."⁴⁹

LEFT-WING BLACK FEMINISM AS A POLITICS OF INCLUSION

This article has attempted to show how Black feminists since the time of slavery have developed a distinct political tradition based upon a systematic analysis of the interlocking oppressions of race, gender, and class. Since the 1970s, Black feminists and other feminists of color in the United States have built upon this analysis and developed an approach that provides a strategy for combating all forms of oppression within a common struggle.

Black feminists—along with Latinas and other women of color—of the 1960s era, who were critical of both the predominantly white feminist movement for its racism *and* of nationalist and other antiracist movements for their sexism, often formed separate organizations that could address the particular oppressions they faced. And when they rightfully asserted the racial and class differences between women, they did so because these differences were largely ignored and neglected by much of the women's movement at that time, thereby rendering Black women and other women of color invisible in theory and in practice.

The end goal was not, however, permanent racial separation for most left-wing Black and other feminists of color, as it has come to be understood since. Barbara Smith conceived of an *inclusive* approach to combat multiple oppressions, beginning with coalition building around particular struggles. As she observed in 1983, "The most progressive sectors of the women's movement, including radical white women, have taken [issues of racism], and many more, quite seriously."⁵⁰ Asian American feminist Merle Woo argues explicitly: "Today...I feel even more deeply hurt when I realize how many people, how so many people, because of racism and sexism, fail to see what

power we sacrifice by not joining hands." But, she adds, "not all white women are racist, and not all Asian-American men are sexist. And there are visible changes. Real, tangible, positive changes."⁵¹

The aim of intersectionality within the Black feminist tradition has been toward building a stronger movement for women's liberation that represents the interests of *all* women. Barbara Smith described her own vision of feminism in 1984: "I have often wished I could spread the word that a movement committed to fighting sexual, racial, economic and heterosexist oppression, not to mention one which opposes imperialism, anti-Semitism, the oppressions visited upon the physically disabled, the old and the young, at the same time that it challenges militarism and imminent nuclear destruction is the very opposite of narrow."⁵²

This approach to fighting oppression does not merely complement but also strengthens Marxist theory and practice—which seeks to unite not only all those who are exploited but also all those who are oppressed by capitalism into a single movement that fights for the liberation of all humanity.

PATRIARCHY

- Unequal pay for the same work
- Sexual harassment and violence
- Demeaning / dehumanizing media depictions
- Objectification of personhood
- Arrogant claims over ownership of time / labor
- Persistent violations of human rights / civil rights
- Celebration of the culture of rape and misogyny
- Claims over ownership of the female body
- Arbitrary assignment of gender roles
- Male domination of the workplace
- Male domination of the political system
- Male domination of the economic system

"The enemy of feminism isn't men. It's patriarchy, and patriarchy is not men. It is a system, and women can support the system of patriarchy just as men can support the fight for gender equality."
—Justine Musk (Canadian Author)

The Black feminist approach described above enhances Lenin's famous phrase from *What is to be Done?*: "Working-class consciousness cannot be genuine political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to *all* cases of tyranny, oppression, violence, and abuse, no matter *what class* is affected—unless they are trained, moreover, to respond from a Social-Democratic point of view and no other."⁵³

The Combahee River Collective, which was perhaps the most self-consciously left-wing organization of Black feminists in the 1970s, acknowledged its adherence to socialism and anti-imperialism, while rightfully also arguing for greater attention to oppression:

We realize that the liberation of all oppressed peoples necessitates the destruction of the political-economic systems of capitalism and imperialism as well as patriarchy. We are socialists because we believe that work must be organized for the collective benefit of those who do the work and create the products, and not for

the profit of the bosses. Material resources must be equally distributed among those who create these resources. We are not convinced, however, that a socialist revolution that is not also a feminist and anti-racist revolution will guarantee our liberation... Although we are in essential agreement with Marx's theory as it applied to the very specific economic relationships he analyzed, we know that his analysis must be extended further in order for us to understand our specific economic situation as Black women.⁵⁴

At the same time, intersectionality cannot *replace* Marxism—and Black feminists have never attempted to do so. Intersectionality is a concept for understanding oppression, not exploitation. Even the commonly used term “classism” describes an aspect of class oppression—snobbery and elitism—not exploitation. Most Black feminists acknowledge the systemic roots of racism and sexism but place far less emphasis than Marxists on the *connection* between the system of exploitation and oppression.

Marxism is necessary because it provides a framework for understanding the relationship between oppression and exploitation (i.e., oppression as a byproduct of the system of class exploitation), and also identifies the strategy for creating the material and social conditions that will make it possible to end both oppression and exploitation. Marxism's critics have disparaged this framework as an aspect of Marx's “economic reductionism.”

But, as Marxist-feminist Martha Gimenez responds, “To argue, then, that class is fundamental is not to ‘reduce’ gender or racial oppression to class, but to acknowledge that the underlying basic and ‘nameless’ power at the root of what happens in social interactions grounded in ‘intersectionality’ is class power.”⁵⁵ The working class holds the potential to lead a struggle in the interests of all those who suffer injustice and oppression. This is because both exploitation and oppression are rooted in capitalism. Exploitation is the method by which the ruling class robs workers of surplus value; the various forms of oppression play a primary role in maintaining the rule of a tiny minority over the vast majority. In each case, the enemy is one and the same.

The class struggle helps to educate workers—sometimes very rapidly—challenging reactionary ideas and prejudices that keep workers divided. When workers go on strike, confronting capital and its agents of repression (the police), the class nature of society becomes suddenly clarified. Racist, sexist, or homophobic ideas cultivated over a lifetime can disappear within a matter of days in a mass strike wave. The sight of hundreds of police lined up to protect the boss's property or to usher in a bunch of scabs speaks volumes about the class nature of the state within capitalism.

The process of struggle also exposes another truth hidden beneath layers of ruling-class ideology: as the producers of the goods and services that keep capitalism running, workers have the ability to shut down the system through a mass strike. And workers not only have the power to shut down the system, but also to replace it with a socialist society, based upon collective ownership of the means of production. Although other groups in society suffer oppression, only the working class possesses this objective power.

These are the basic reasons why Marx argues that capitalism created its own gravediggers in the working class. But when Marx defines the working class as the agent for revolutionary change, he is describing its historical potential, rather than a foregone conclusion. This is the key to understanding Lenin's words, cited above. The whole Leninist conception of the vanguard party rests on understanding that a battle of ideas must be fought *inside* the working class movement. A section of workers won to a socialist alternative and organized into a revolutionary party, can win other workers away from ruling-class ideologies and provide an alternative worldview. For Lenin, the notion of

political consciousness entails workers' willingness to champion the interests of all the oppressed in society, as an integral part of the struggle for socialism.

As an additive to Marxist theory, intersectionality leads the way toward a much higher level of understanding of the character of oppression than that developed by classical Marxists, enabling the further development of the ways in which *solidarity* can be built between all those who suffer oppression and exploitation under capitalism to forge a unified movement.

REFERENCES

1. The Combahee River Collective, April 1977. Quoted, for example, in Beverly Guy-Sheftall, ed., *Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought* (New York: The New Press, 1995), 235. The statement is available online at www.circuitous.org/scraps/combahee.html.
2. Barbara Smith, ed., *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000), xxxiv.
3. Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics," *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989, 139–67.
4. *Ibid.*, 149.
5. Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex," 142.
6. *Ibid.*, 143.
7. *Ibid.*
8. See, for example, Guy-Sheftall, *Words of Fire*.
9. Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?" Women's Convention, Akron, Ohio, May 28-29, 1851. Quoted in Crenshaw, 153.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*, 140.
12. Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, second edition (New York: Routledge, 2001), 11–12.
13. *Ibid.*, 18.
14. Quoted in Guy-Sheftall, *Words of Fire*, 345.
15. Danielle L. McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power* (New York: Random House, 2010).
16. *Ibid.*, xix–xx.
17. Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1964).
18. Stephanie Coontz, *A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s* (Basic Books, 2011), 124.
19. Office of Planning and Research, US Department of Labor, "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action, (March 1965)." Available online at www.dol.gov/asp/programs/history/webid-m...
20. *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), 1–29. Available online at www.eisenhowerfoundation.org/docs/kerne...
21. *Ibid.*
22. Combahee River Collective Statement.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Coontz, *A Strange Stirring*, 140.
25. *Ibid.*, 126.
26. *Ibid.*, 101.
27. Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 263–64.
28. Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (New York: Ballantine, 1993), 14–15.
29. Angela Y. Davis, *Women, Race, and Class* (New York: Vintage, 1983), 178.
30. Brownmiller, *Against Our Will*, 272.
31. *Ibid.*, 247.
32. Alice Walker quoted in D.H. Melhem, *Gwendolyn Brooks: Poetry and the Heroic Voice* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), 249.
33. Davis, *Women, Race, and Class*, 188–89.
34. *Ibid.*, 178.

35. Quoted in Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, eds., *This Bridge Called my Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (New York: Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1983), 61.
36. Davis, *Women, Race & Class*, 213–15.
37. Rickie Solinger, ed., *Abortion Wars: A Half Century of Struggle, 1950–2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 132; Committee for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse (CARASA) and Susan E. Davis, ed., *Women Under Attack* (Boston: South End Press, 1988), 28.
38. Quoted in Meg Devlin O’Sullivan, “‘We Worry About Survival’: American Indian Women, Sovereignty, and the Right to Bear and Raise Children in the 1970s,” Dissertation, (Chapel Hill: 2007). Available online at www.cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent?id=uuid:7a462a63-5185-4140-8f3f-ad094b75f04d&ds=DATA_FILE.
39. *Guardian* (US), April 12, 1989, 7.
40. Jael Silliman, Marlene Gerber Fried, et al., *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organize for Reproductive Justice* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2004), 10.
41. Davis, 204.
42. *Ibid.*, 215.
43. *Ibid.*, 175.
44. *Ibid.*, 24.
45. *Ibid.*, 176.
46. Lydia Sargent, ed, *Women and Revolution: A Discussion of the Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism* (Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press, 1981), 94.
47. Davis, 182.
48. Quoted in Davis, 174.
49. *Ibid.*, 173.
50. Smith, *op cit.*, xxxi.
51. Moraga and Anzaldúa, *The Bridge Called My Back*, 146.
52. Smith, *Home Girls*, 257–58.
53. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, “What Is To Be Done? Burning Questions of our Movement,” Lenin’s *Collected Works* Vol. 5 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1973), 412. Available online at www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1901/witbd/iii.htm.
54. Combahee River Collective.
55. Martha Gimenez, “Marxism and Class, Gender and Race: Rethinking the Trilogy,” *Race, Gender & Class* (2001: Vol. 8, No. 2), 22–33. Available online at www.colorado.edu/Sociology/gimenez/work/cgr.html.

NOTE: Slide images not in the original text. All images copyright by their respective owners. All rights reserved.