



# UNPACKING FEMINISM

THEORIES

**There are many versions of feminism,** each shaped by diverse thinkers and activists contributing to an ongoing history of struggle and resistance. These ideas and movements continue to bring about profound changes in power dynamics globally, fostering greater equality, justice, and dignity for all.

Feminism encompasses **various theories and movements aimed at eliminating discrimination based on gender, race, class, and other forms of social exclusion.**

Throughout history, feminist activism has driven significant shifts in power, advocating for equality and justice for all.

**Since the 1960s,** many forms of feminism have emerged, often overlapping on key points.

**LET'S EXPLORE THE  
FEMINIST THEORIES  
THAT HAVE EVOLVED  
OVER TIME.**





# FEMINIST THEORIES

## LIBERAL FEMINISM

This feminism **works within mainstream society** to integrate women and address individual rights without challenging the system or the ideology behind women's oppression, as seen in the suffragist movement.

## CULTURAL FEMINISM

Cultural feminism **focuses on the essential differences between men and women**, with women seen as possessing superior virtues that promote unity and sisterhood. Advocates believed that if women were in power, the world would be better, leading some in the 1960s and 70s to support women-only cultures.



## **RADICAL FEMINISM**

Radical feminism **views patriarchy and sexism as the primary factors in women's oppression, transcending race, age, culture, caste, and class.** It challenges the system and ideology behind women's subjugation. Emerging from civil rights, peace, and liberation movements, radical feminism has shaped the theory and analysis that inspire global women's movements.

## **ECO-FEMINISM**

Eco-feminism **views patriarchy and its focus on control and domination as a source of women's oppression and as harmful to humanity,** all living creatures, and the Earth. With a broader analysis of power and often a spiritual perspective, eco-feminists link women's rights and empowerment to political, economic, social, and cultural factors that benefit all living beings and Mother Nature.



## BLACK FEMINISM

This theory **argues that sexism, class oppression, gender identity, and racism are interconnected, a concept known as intersectionality**, coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. Crenshaw highlighted that the experience of being a Black woman cannot be understood through race or gender alone. The Combahee River Collective (1974) stated that Black women's liberation requires ending racism, sexism, and class oppression, benefiting all.

## GLOBAL FEMINISM

Transnational or global feminism **examines how globalization and capitalism affect people across various identities**. It emphasizes intersectionality, recognizing inequalities among women. While global issues impact women differently, they are central to feminist social justice, requiring integrated approaches for lasting change.



## MARXIST AND SOCIALIST FEMINISM

This theory sees **women's oppression as rooted in global capitalist power**. While some feminists stress class, they view patriarchy as the main force behind women's subjugation.

## VISIONARY FEMINISM

This theory, according to Bell Hooks, **challenging patriarchy, class, race, and other forms of oppression is essential**. Her approach centers on love, shared growth, and men's involvement in dismantling domination, ultimately leading to more free and equitable relationships.

## READING

**Feminist Theory:  
From Margin to Center**  
by Bell Hooks

