

Question:

Shed light on the first wave and third wave of feminism.

Answer:

FIRST WAVE OF FEMINISM (1848-1920)

I. INTRODUCTION

Women in the era of first feminism did not have any major rights. Most importantly, women suffrage was the right that women were fighting for.

"Suffrage was the right that if women had won, it would secure to her all others."

~ Susan B. Anthony

Women for almost 70 years did marches, protests and lectures to gain their rights.

II. BACKGROUND

Women were suffering from inequality in society. Patriarchy was prevailing in society in its worst form.

Mary Wollstonecraft, the grandmother of feminism, and Jane Austin, the foremother of feminism, helped a great deal in shaping women's consciousness.

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I French Revolution was the first time when women collectively began to express their voice.

III. Seneca Fall Convention 1848 - First Formal Movement

Seneca Fall Convention

Organized majorly by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott

200 women gathered

Passed 12 Resolutions

Prominently Women Suffrage

(i) Seneca Fall Convention emerged out of urban industrialization and liberal politics

After industrial revolution, people started to move towards cities. Education, literacy

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and knowledge level was rising. People were reading books, novels and magazines. Liberal politics arised from that. So people started to ask for their rights.

(ii) 12 Resolutions in Seneca Fall Convention

200 women met at New York Upstate to discuss about the Convention. 12 resolutions were passed regarding women's rights. The major one in this Convention was the women's suffrage.

Seneca Fall Convention played a major role in first wave of feminism.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton drafted the convention based on U.S. Independence Declaration.

IV. FIRST WAVE AND ABOLITIONISM

First wave feminism was also in favor of abolition of slavery. Fredrick Douglass, a famous abolitionist, supported and worked for first wave feminism.

(i) Women of color and their contributions

Several women of color were a part of first wave of feminism. They fought against ~~abol~~ slavery. They fought against women injustice. Prominent names are

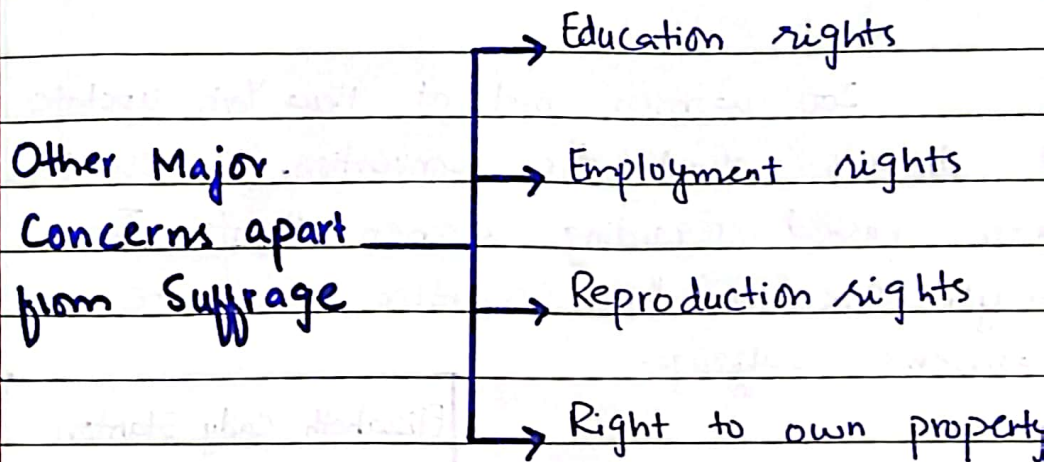
* Sojourner Truth

* Frances E.W. Harper

* Mary Stewart

These ladies fought with high spirit for women rights.

V. OTHER ISSUES OF ACTIVISM



(i) Education Rights

One major concern for the first wave feminism was that they wanted equal education rights as men.

Mary Wollstonecraft
~~Sojourner Truth~~ - A Vindication of Human Rights

Mary Wollstonecraft, ~~Sojourner Truth~~, in her book, "A Vindication of Human Rights", emphasized a lot of education importance for women. People got inspired from her work a lot at that time that they started asking for their rights.

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(ii) Employment Rights

Employment for women was also one of the rights that first wavers were fighting for. Women did not have equal rights of employment as men. A lot of people fought for this right.

Virginia Woolf - A Room of One's Own

Virginia Woolf, in her book, "A Room of One's Own", talked about how financial independence is important for women. This book also inspired a lot of women to ask for their rights.

(iii) Right to own Property

First wavers also fought for the rights to own property. They could not even apply for mortgages. They wanted to get this right for themselves.

(iv) Reproduction Rights

Use of contraception and right of abortion was not given to women. So first wavers asked for this right as well.

Margaret Sanger opened 1st birth control clinic in 1916.

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VI. SUCCESS OF FIRST WAVE

(i) 19th amendment in US

19th amendment in US granted rights to everyone to cast vote.

(ii) Australia - Commonwealth Franchise Act
In Australia, through Commonwealth Franchise Act, people got right of suffrage.

(iii) Finland, Switzerland and Great Britain - Suffrage rights

Other countries such as Finland, Australia and Switzerland also gave the right to vote to men and women equally.

V. CRITICISM ON FIRST WAVE

First wave and Racism -

15th amendment was passed in US. This gave rights to black men to cast vote. White women did not act very nicely to this.

Black women were also forced to walk behind white women during the march/protest.

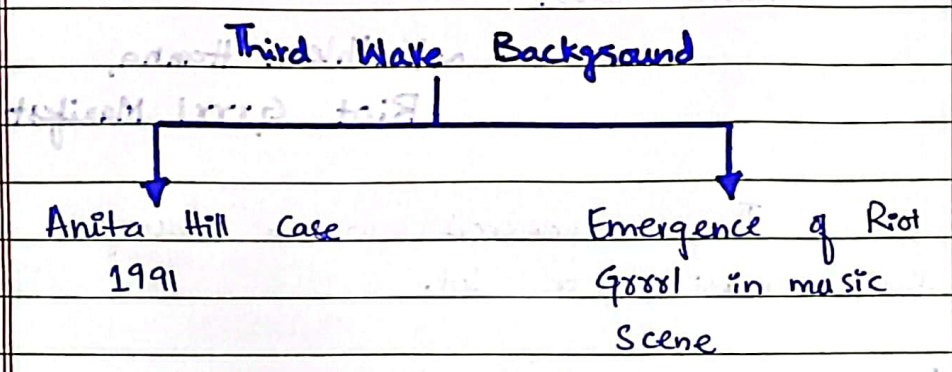
Overall, first wave was dominated by white women. The effect of first wave started to reduce. It needed another wave to rise.

THIRD WAVE OF FEMINISM (1990s - Present)

I: INTRODUCTION

After the second wave, a more diverse feminist wave was required. Hence, third wave of feminism came into scene. This wave of feminism was very diverse. Third wave of feminism has more cultural success than legal and structural success. A lot of literature was written in this era to inspire women and to wake them up.

II: BACKGROUND



Anita Hill Case - 1991
Anita Hill filed a case against Clarence, a Supreme Court nominee, that he sexually harassed Anita Hill. But the

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Court gave decision against Anita and Clarence Thomas later became Supreme Court Judge. Then many victims came forward with the cases of sexually harassment. Anita Hill case gave them courage that they need to speak and ask for their rights.

Emergence of Riot Grrrl in music
The Riot Grrrl Group
Combined feminism with pop culture and punk style

"Because doing/seeing/hearing things that validate and challenge us can help us gain strength and sense of community that we need in order to figure out how sexism, thinism, classism and heterosexism figures in our own lives."

~ Kathleen Hanna,
Riot Grrrl Manifesto

They empowered women through their music a lot.

III. Issues of Activism

(i) Broad Ideas

Third wave is so diverse that

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it adds a lot of ideas in itself.

"The confusion surrounding what constitutes third wave is in some respects its defining feature."

~ ~~Rebecca Walker~~

~ Elizabeth Evans

Third wave has a lot of broad ideas including

- Queer Theory
- Intersectionality
- Glass Ceiling
- ~~Gender inequality~~
- Reproductive Rights
- Income Inequality
- Gender Based Violence
- Pro Choice Activism
- Workplace Harassment
- Abolishing Gender Expectations
- Levitating Celebrities (Hollywood)
- Social Capital

(ii) Intellectual Roots

Kimberle Crenshaw coined the term "intersectionality". People really got to know that there are multiple personal identities of a person. This helped a lot in raising voice for all women, either they are black, white, rich, poor.

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Trans rights were also included.

Judith Butler is also a prominent name in third wave feminism. According to her, gender is performative.

(iii) Aesthetic Roots

Riot Grrrl Group inspired a lot of women. Women, after listening to their music, also got empowered and asked for their rights.

IV RECLAIMED DEROGATORY TERMS

Third wavers embraced the girliness. Second wave feminism was against the word "girl", but third wavers accepted this word. In fact they made it empowered and threatening by adding roar to it, "grrrl".

They also accepted the makeup and high heels that second wavers rejected.

I. RATIONALE OF THIRD WIVERS

Choice central

Third wave feminism stance was that the choice is the central

element. If a woman is alright with something, then it is her choice. They gave the idea that there is need to accept diverse choices.

Example:

If a girl likes burqa, then it is alright for her to wear it. There is nothing wrong in it. But if a girl does not want to wear burqa, then it is also her choice. No one should force her.

VI. SUCCESS OF THIRD WAVE FEMINISM

(i) More cultural than legal and structural

The success of third wave is more cultural. This wave is so diverse that women from all races, religions, ethnicity are part of it. Third wave feminism accepts diversity. That is why it is really inclusive.

(ii) #MeToo Movement

#MeToo Movement is a big achievement for third wavers. A lot of women got justice through this movement.

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Example:

Harvey Weinstein case is the major example of the success of #MeToo Movement. When a 16 years old model filed a case of harassment on him, a lot of other women came forward with the case on Harvey. That one case of 16 years old model gave them courage to speak up. The platform of #MeToo movement made it possible.

CONCLUSION - FIRST AND THIRD WAVE

Both waves have played a major role and got different types of rights for women. First wave feminism focused more on women suffrage. After a lot of struggle and criticism, they managed to get the suffrage rights. On the other hand, third wave focused more on diversity and inclusiveness. Third wave talked about choice. Overall, both waves of feminism have their own merits and played a huge role in helping women getting their rights.