

Females. By definition, females are the sex that can bear offspring or produce eggs, distinguished biologically by the production of gametes, which can be fertilised by male gametes. Femininity. What is femininity? Femininity can be defined as the quality of being female: womanliness. Feminism. What is your idea of feminism and what is the actual meaning of feminism. The accurate definition of feminism is the advocacy of women's rights on the ground of equality of the sexes.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, women had no place in national politics: they could not stand as candidates for Parliament- they weren't even allowed to vote. It was assumed that women did not need to vote because their husbands would take responsibility in political matters. The role of the female was to have children and take care of the home. They just simply did not have the mind for complex conversations. Women's minds were seen as delicate and simple. Could you imagine being told that you can't speak your mind or have a say? Could you imagine being told that you're not allowed an opinion in situations that concern you or even bigger situations about the society around you? Women had such greater minds than any man knew and that's why it is crucial that campaigns for women's suffrage came about. Campaigns for women's suffrage began appearing in 1866 and from 1888 women could vote in many local council elections. Nineteenth century feminists talked about "The Cause". This described a movement for women's rights generally. The issue of the vote became focus of women's struggle for equality. In 1903, the suffragettes came into the picture. They fought for women's right to vote using peaceful tactics. Eventually, in 1918, women over 30 gained the vote. Women, today, have the vote. However, this is not all they have. Women have a place in politics, places to get their opinions stated and their voices heard. They get to prove that women do have minds-intelligent ones. They are more than delicate flowers that need to be protected from the storm. Without the suffragettes, we would not only not have the vote but we wouldn't have a place in society. We would still be praying that our children were born sons so that they could make something of their lives instead of having to depend on their partner. We would still have to marry successful men to make our families proud rather than getting a degree or making something of our own lives to make them proud. However, just because women had the vote does not mean that sexism was eradicated.

So, what are feminists now and what purpose do they serve? Feminists are seen, by many, as loud, obnoxious, opinionated, people. However, they just want to get their voices heard. Some people are vocal and passionate because they want equal rights for the sexes. Should women have to go to work and worry about being paid less than their male counterparts? Women can do the jobs just as well as the men- was that not proved during World War One? Women should have a say because they have voices that need to be heard. Women have ideas that need to be appreciated. Women should not be paid less because they were born a daughter rather than a son. We should not be deprived of our human rights. Feminists are also viewed as power hungry women who just want to be superior over men. Yet, all that feminists want is a truly equal world, completely 50/50, where both groups triumph rather than one suffering. People tend to confuse feminists and what they stand for with extreme feminists- they are most definitely not the same. Extreme feminists are the feminists that are the most well known in the media. They are the feminists that believe women should be above men and act in irrational ways to try and portray this message. For example, some have made hate videos criticising men. Big companies, such as BuzzFeed, have promoted videos and articles surrounding this, causing more people to react and form a prejudice towards all feminists. Would you judge Christians because of the KKK? Would you judge a Muslim because of ISIS? No. So, why is it that feminists are judged because of a small minority who believe that women should have power over men? More than two thirds of Britons support gender equality but just 7% would call themselves feminists. Out of 8000 people surveyed, only 560 used the word 'feminist' to describe their views on equality. Feminism has gotten this label due to this small minority and has to face all

of the stereotypes that comes along with it. Not all feminists are career women that don't support stay at home moms. If women choose to stay at home and look after the children, then that is absolutely fine. However, women would like to be offered the same opportunities as men, regardless of the gender. A leading profession of feminism once said, "the simple truth is, if you want a more equal society for women and men then you are in fact a feminist".

Feminism and femininity. Two different words, two different meaning. But, are they so different? Feminists are seen as unfeminine women that aspire to be men. There are some feminists who want to be masculine but not everyone. Many like to wear trousers because they want to. It's their choice and if it makes them more comfortable, than they should be able to express themselves in that way. They are not doing it because they want to "keep up" with men, or try to survive in a "mans world". It is neither a competition or a race- both women and men should be able to be themselves, without it being held against them. \*(show picture of Emma Watson wearing a dress)\*. Here you see Emma Watson wearing a dress. Emma Watson is a feminist and fights for women's rights. This picture proves that women can be feminine and have the belief that there should be equality for the sexes, at the same time. Feminists objective is not to replace men but to work alongside them. Like Emma Watson said, "How can we effect change in the world when only half of it is invited or feel welcome to participate in the conversation?". Although feminists can be feminine, they can also be on the complete opposite side of the spectrum. Men, I would like to take this opportunity to address your role in feminism and inform you how gender equality is your issue too. Feminists do NOT need to be female of feminine. Back in the 20th century, it was mainly women that were feminists as the majority of men believed that the women should cook, clean, look after the household and be "sheltered" from the real world. They believed that they were superior to women- it was just the general view. However, times have changed. Women are not inferior to men, nor are men below women. And that's why there should be more male feminists. \*(show a picture of John Legend)\* Do you know who John Legend is? He is a famous male singer who is also a feminist. Back in 2013, before a concert, he spoke to the reporters about his views on feminism. John Legend said something particularly wise that more people need to pay attention to. He stated that, "All men should be feminists. If men care more about women's rights, the world would be a better place". Alan Alda is another male feminist that has had these beliefs for decades. He was deemed a feminist in the 1970s, when there was not many male feminists at all. I quote him when I say, "I think misogyny is like a disease that needs to be cured. And, if we could eradicate polio, I don't see why we can't eradicate misogyny".

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